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Volcanic Risk Management in DRC: Lessons and Perspectives



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Pre-Eruptive Preparedness

The management of volcanic eruptions in the DRC emphasized the need for:

- Monitoring of precursor signals: seismicity, gas emissions, ground deformation.
- Enhanced integration between scientific surveillance and operational decision-making.
- Importance of structured and reactive communication procedures.
- Each volcanic eruption presents distinct challenges, underscoring the need for flexible and adaptive response mechanisms





Alert Management: Accuracy and Trust Demonstrated the importance of :

- Rigorous validation of signals before public dissemination.
- Centralized communication through official and trusted channels.
- Awareness campaigns for community relays on verified information sharing.





Mobility, Evacuation and Flow Management

Brought attention to the importance of:

- Evacuation coordination supported by multiagency mechanisms.
- Early warning issued to airlines and logistical actors.
- Identification of safe corridors and support from humanitarian services.





Decision-Making Coordination Chain

Confirmed the necessity of:

- Decisions based on coordination between OVG, RVA, and civil aviation authority.
- Activation of coordination committee upon early signs.
- Collaboration with regional information centers (ICAO ESAF/WACAF, VAAC).





Capacity Building

Stressed the importance of:

- Ongoing training and regular simulations (e.g., VOLCEX to be integrated at national level).
- Joint exercises with technical and humanitarian actors.
- Regional experience sharing to strengthen practices.





Technical Communication: Publication and Dissemination

Reinforced the relevance of:

- Production of VONA, SIGMET, ASHTAM, VAA in line with international standards, timely and properly distributed
- Strengthened multi-channel dissemination system.
- Proficiency in English for efficient international communication
- Improved accessibility for all concerned stakeholders.





Interinstitutional Synergies

Showcased the critical role of:

- Close cooperation between navigation services, OVG, humanitarian actors and MONUSCO.
- Logistical support for safety and clearance operations.
- Regular coordination meetings to align intervention strategies.





Contingency Planning and Regional Coordination

Highlighted the significance of:

- Plans aligned with ICAO guidance, to be updated periodically.
- Coordination with neighboring FIRs.
- Integration of feedback into future versions of contingency plans.





Conclusion

Lessons learned from volcanic emergencies in the DRC have reinforced the importance of :

- Strengthened intersectoral coordination.
- Continuous scientific vigilance.
- Regional cooperation to enhance resilience in AFI region.
- No two eruptions are alike, which calls for adaptable, scenario-based preparedness and response.