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DR Congo: Medair joins efforts to step up COVID-19 vaccinations



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Lausanne, Switzerland, 24 November 2021 – With DR Congo currently facing one of the lowest COVID-19 vaccinations rates in the world, Medair – an international emergency relief organisation – is partnering with the Congolese Ministry of Health and other humanitarian agencies to launch a vast campaign in North Kivu Province (Eastern Congo).

Medair plans to vaccinate at least 80,000 people in a 7-month long campaign, focusing first and foremost on the most vulnerable, such as the elderly, people with underlying health conditions, and frontline health workers. Multiple vaccination sites are being set up across the province in general hospitals and health facilities, while more remote and at-risk communities will be reached by mobile vaccination teams.

“Since the start of the pandemic, Medair has integrated COVID-19 prevention and awareness-raising to its existing projects – such as messaging on the importance of handwashing, social distancing, mask-wearing, and recognising symptoms,” says Kirolos Fares, Medair’s COVID-19 Vaccination Coordinator. *“We are excited about*

this new phase and this joint effort which will help bring the vaccine to as many people as possible in a timely fashion.”

Medair is also launching a vast communications campaign that will help provide local communities with relevant information on COVID-19 and the benefits of the vaccine, help counter the spread of false information, and offer practical details on how to get a vaccine.

“In the past year, access to vaccines in DR Congo and, more generally, across Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has been challenging,” adds Fares. “While people in other parts of the world are receiving their third dose, only 10% of people in SSA have received their first dose. As we can see in the news, this pandemic is far from over and until everyone in the world has had a chance to be vaccinated, no one will be truly safe. The Congolese people already face many health challenges, such as malaria, cholera, and Ebola. We hope our efforts will lead to an increased and more equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, especially for the most vulnerable among us.”

This effort is part of Medair’s global vaccination campaign that is providing COVID-19 vaccines to thousands of vulnerable people, including refugees and internally displaced persons in Bangladesh, DR Congo, Lebanon, Somalia and South Sudan.

Medair’s vaccination campaign in DR Congo is supported and funded by the [European Commission](#).

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For media

Media enquiries should be directed to:

In DR Congo:

- **Jonathan Kyle**, Communications Manager (English, French)
+243 (0) 815 287 506 jonathan.kyle@medair.org

In Switzerland:

- **Daniela Dönges**, Press Officer (German, English, French)
+33 (0)6 20 09 40 53 daniela.doenges@medair.org

Medair is an international humanitarian NGO that provides emergency relief and recovery services to families made vulnerable by natural disasters, conflicts, and other crises.

In DR Congo, Medair provides health, nutrition, and water, sanitation, and hygiene services within existing health facilities and beyond, to displaced populations and host communities alike. Medair has been present in DR Congo since 1996.

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