



***Solidarité des femmes pour
le développement,
l'environnement et
les droits de l'enfant au Congo***

SOFEDC RDC
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A CALL FOR SUPPORT TO COMBAT THE EBOLA OUTBREAK!

by Anuarite Siirewabo Muyuwa, SOFEDEC Coordinator

Since 20 May 2026, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has recorded more than 200 deaths and nearly 900 suspected cases of the Ebola virus. Several cases have been discovered in Ituri province, and there are also alerts in North Kivu province and the city of Goma. The crisis linked to the armed conflict in eastern DRC is complicating the response. Women are the most at risk: they care for the sick at home, tend to the dead and thus face stigmatisation. Local women's organisations in the Kirotshe health zone in North Kivu are at risk of suspending their activities for fear of threats and the confiscation of equipment.

Without urgent support, prevention messages will not reach displaced women, and local women's organisations risk closing their service centres permanently.

Types of risks, threats and violations faced by women and women's organisations:

A. Health and direct risks to women:

There is a high risk of infection, as Ebola is transmitted through direct contact with a patient's blood, vomit, sweat or faeces. At home, there are no gloves, masks or disinfectants. Women are the primary carers, and if they become infected, they infect the whole family.

B. Risks of rejection: By encountering the sick, women are excluded from their families

- ✓ Women are caught in the middle: they are threatened by officials if they hide and equally threatened by their husbands and families if they report the infection.
- ✓ Risks associated with funeral rites, as in some cultures it is the women who wash the bodies. This is extremely dangerous in the event of a death caused by Ebola

C. Risks specific to women's organisations:

- ✓ Risks linked to a lack of necessary equipment or to reprisals often lead to a halt in awareness-raising activities
- ✓ Risks of violence: Teams assigned by the government to the response encounter tensions with families when they come to collect patients.
- ✓ Trauma among the staff involved in awareness-raising
- ✓ Risk of criminalisation of their work: local women's organisations going door-to-door to say "bring the sick to the centre!" are sometimes perceived as government spies or hostile NGOs. In conflict zones such as the East, they are accused of working for one side. This results in threats, arbitrary arrests, the confiscation of phones and data.

This is why urgent protective measures are needed.

Therefore, SOFEDEC urgently needs gloves, masks and disinfectants for the protection against Ebola, an extremely dangerous virus!

You can effectively support SOFEDEC with a donation:

Bank: Equity Banque Commerciale du Congo, Kinshasa, DR Congo

IBAN: 0001 1150 6552 0004 2934 294; **Swift:** BCDCCDKI

Receiver: SOFEDEC organization, Coordinator Ms. Anuarite Siirewabo Muyuwa Goma City, DR Congo

Thank you in advance!