17 confirmed dead in the Bundibugyo floods, search and rescue continues.

Background
On 6th 12. 2019 at about 3:00pm, heavy rains hit Bundibugyo and continued up to 12 noon of 7th 12 2019. Many places flooded as a result and affected a number of households. Many people displaced, houses destroyed and others lost life. Houses, latrines, crop gardens, places of worship, and Cocoa gardens were also sub merged, causing devastation and suffering among people.

A total of 12 sub counties were adversely affected and these included:

Halugare, Busaru, Ngite, Bundibugyo town council, Bubukwanga, Kirumya, Ntotoro, Tokwe, Bukonzo, Busunga, Kisuuba, and Sindila

Current Situation
The situation is still life threatening, worrying as many people are traumatized, on tension and stranded. They are not able to predict what will happen next as rains continue to fall. A total number of 1,152 households composed of 6,768 individuals has been affected

17 bodies have so far been retrieved by the Uganda Red Cross RCATs

A total of 800 persons are currently displaced living in churches and school buildings with others being hosted by relatives in the neighborhoods.

2 injured persons are admitted at Busaru Health Centre III.

The displaced persons whose houses have been destroyed and have nowhere to sleep have been sheltered at nearby schools and churches (Busuru Catholic Church, Kihoka Primary school, Izahura primary school and Kibale Catholic church).

Uganda Red Cross Response
A team of Red Cross Action Team was deployed in the different sub counties affected for a rapid assessment of needs of the people on ground

The Red Cross Action team has helped in the tracing of the missing community members and 17 dead bodies were retrieved

The discovered dead bodies have been dressed and well prepared by the Red Cross action team and handed to the hospitals and some have been left with their families after
Provided Body bags and blankets for covering the resumed dead bodies for easy transportation
Liaised with the local and district leaders to do a joint assessment
URCS mobilised with the Government through the OPM to get some immediate support for the affected persons
Provided psycho social support for the bereaved families and affected families and community members
Evacuated the affected persons who were in critical conditions and took them to the hospital
Provided health promotion and psychosocial support
The Red Cross Volunteers were on ground and mobilized for sleeping materials from the community members and prepared porridge for the displaced people who were sheltered at Busaru
Red Cross Community Volunteers together with the local police and UPDF have since continued to manage the search and rescue activities
The search and rescue operation is still ongoing.

**Key figures**

**17 deaths**

1,152 households composed of 6,768 individuals are affected
A total of twelve (12) sub counties have been affected

**Over 800 people are displaced**

50 Red Cross Volunteers conducting emergency rescue services, and assessment
2 injured, and admitted in hospital, one with fractured limbs

**Other threats / Risks**
- Continued rainfall
- Likelihood of disease outbreaks like Pneumonia in children, cholera due to poor hygiene & sanitation, diarrheal diseases among others.
- More likely deaths due to all the above conditions.

**Immediate needs**
- Food
- Safe Shelter
- Clean water / Water purifiers
- Latrine facilities
- Nonfood items (household items)
- Warm clothes and blankets

During assessment a number of challenges were experienced:

1. Most roads were impassable; volunteers could not access some areas.
2. Some of the missing bodies could not be retrieved at all.
3. Limited transport means as the motorcycles could not be used at all due to flooded roads.
4. Some of the affected families were too far on mountain tops and volunteers.
5. There was no food to serve to the people that have been sheltered at the churches and schools.
6. Inadequate manpower; most volunteers could not connect from one place to another due to submerged roads hence over straining the few resources and limiting the coverage of the areas affected.

Map showing the affected area.
Quote:

“We are deeply saddened by the incident Bundibugyo. We identify with the families that lost their loved ones. Uganda Red Cross is always committed to supporting people affected by disasters and will do whatever we can to mobilise resources and support the affected families. After the assessment, we will be able to offer meaningful support to meet the critical needs of the people. I call upon other partners to join us in this effort of saving lives of people.” Says Robert Kwesiga – Secretary General – Uganda Red Cross Society.

Editor’s Notes
According to information from the Uganda Metrological authority, projected rains are still with us until the end of December. Climate change effects like flooding, destruction, lightening, are common during heavy rains. Communities are called upon to be on high alert.

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