

November 2015

# DRC

## Country Profile



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### Summary indicators

Indicator	Value	Year
Population number (last census)	34,962,676	1984
Population number (projection)	74,877,030	2014
Population growth rate	3.2%	2014
Population density	33/km <sup>2</sup>	2014
Urban composition	42.5%	2015
Average household size	6	2004
Net migration rate	-0.33/1,000	2014
Age distribution	43% under 15	2014
Life expectancy at birth	49.9 years	2013
Under-five mortality	98.3/1,000 live births	2015
Maternal mortality	540 per 100,000 live births	2010
Malnutrition prevalence	8.5% GAM	2013
HDI ranking (value)	186/187 (0.338)	2013
Corruption Perceptions Index ranking (value)	154/157 (22/100)	2014
People below the poverty line	77.2%	
% of population living under USD 1.90 a day		2012
Gender Inequality Index ranking (value)	147 (0.587)	2014
Literacy rate	61%	2013

Sources: CIA Factbook 2015, World Bank Data 2015, UNICEF 2013, UNDP 2014, Transparency International 2014, International Rescue Committee 2007.

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is located in sub-Saharan central Africa. Its surface area of 2.3 million km<sup>2</sup> equals two-thirds of the area of the European Union. It shares borders with Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Zambia, Angola, Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, and South Sudan. DRC has the potential to be one of the richest countries in Africa thanks to 80 million hectares of arable land and over 1,100 minerals and precious metals on its territory (The World Bank 2015).

The country has 40km of coastline on the Atlantic Ocean but is otherwise landlocked. A coastal plain along the Atlantic Ocean rises gradually from the sea to a low mountain range, the Mayombe Massif. Most of the country is composed of the central Congo basin. High plateaus border almost every side of the central basin and rise between 915m and 1600m. The northeast is made up of a vast 155,000 km<sup>2</sup> plain, which floods annually. The

country's eastern border consists of lakes and mountains (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2015). The country is divided into four major climatic regions: equatorial, tropical and subequatorial, Atlantic, and mountain climate zone. 60% of the country –133 million hectares – is forest (DRC Ministry of Health 03/2010; Encyclopaedia Britannica 2015; Mongabay 04/02/2006).

DRC's capital is Kinshasa. The country was originally divided into 11 provinces. The 2006 constitution mandated that they would be divided into 26, and this officially took place on 16 July 2015 (The National Law Review 12/06/2015, Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum 2015).

## New administrative map of DRC



Source: OCHA, 21/04/2015

## Hazard profile

**Natural hazards:** Southern provinces suffer from periodic droughts. Communities along the Congo River are affected by floods during the September–April rainy season. In the

Great Rift Valley in eastern DRC, there are active volcanoes. Mount Nyiragongo is still highly active and constantly threatens the safety and livelihoods of more than 800,000 people around Goma in Nord-Kivu. Its most recent eruption occurred in 2002 (UNOPS Risk Management Unit; CIA Factbook 2015).

**Environmental issues:** The major environmental issues in DRC are poaching, which threatens wildlife, water pollution, deforestation of the Equatorial rainforest, soil erosion, and illegal mining of minerals. The country loses 0.6% of its forests every year through deforestation, for timber, fuel wood and charcoal (CIA Factbook 2015; Teachit 2015; The Guardian 07/09/2015).

## Society and communities

DRC is a rapidly urbanising state and the second most ethnically diverse nation in the world. Ethnicity still causes tensions and contributes to continued violence, which drives a high level of displacement.

### Age distribution

Age (years)	% of the population
0–14	43
15–24	21.4
25–54	29.4
55–64	2.5
>65	2.6

Source: CIA Factbook 2015

**Urbanisation:** 42% of the population is urban; the annual rate of urbanisation was 4% in 2010–2015. Major urban areas are the capital Kinshasa with more than 11.5 million inhabitants, followed by Lubumbashi (1.8 million, Haut-Katanga), Mbuji-Mayi (1.7 million, Kasai Oriental) and Kananga (1.06 million, Kasai Central) (CIA Factbook 2015).

**Ethnic or tribal groups and languages:** The majority of the population accepts its national identity, but incorporate it into that of individual

ethnic or subethnic groups. Some ethnicities, for instance Hutu and Tutsi, cross national borders, which contributes to spillover of conflict and manipulation by neighbouring governments. Ethnicity still causes tensions and contributes to continued violence (World Bank 02/03/2011; Italian Institute for International Political Studies 19/08/2013; Handbook of Ethnic Conflict 29/09/2011).

More than 200 African ethnic groups are represented in DRC; Bantu people constitute around 80% of the population. The biggest tribe is Luba or Baluba (south-centre), followed by Mongo (centre) and Kongo (south). Other important groups include Sudanic-speaking tribes in the north and northeast. The Pygmy groups (the Bambuti, the Twa, and the Babinga) are thought to have been the earliest inhabitants of the Congo basin. They inhabit the forests in the regions of Lakes Kivu and Tanganyika, and areas near the Lualaba, Tshuapa, Sankuru, and Ubangi Rivers. Pygmies make up 1–3% of the population (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2015; CIA Factbook 2015; Indigenous Peoples, Poverty and Development 2012; IWGIA 2016). Most recently, several thousands of European, Chinese, Japanese, and Indian migrants arrive in Kinshasa and mineral-rich provinces in order to work for mining

companies. Their number has been growing (China Insider 01/10/2013; Embassy of India in DRC 07/2015).

More than 200 languages are spoken in DRC. French is the official language, national languages are Swahili, Tshiluba (also Luba or Western Luba), Lingala, and Kongo. All the national languages belong to the Bantu language group. They are used in regional commerce and on the radio. Most children are educated in the Bantu language native to their region in primary school, and switch to French in secondary school (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2015; Regions, Languages, and Tribes in Northeastern Congo 1990; The Lingua File 08/12/2014).

**Religion:** 50% of the population is Roman Catholic, 20% Protestant, 10% Kimbanguist (the largest independent African church, which some consider to be a branch of Christianity, believes that its founder Simon Kimbangu is the Holy Spirit), 10% Muslim, 10% other (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2015, CIA Factbook 2015).

**Gender equality:** Women in DRC endure violence on a daily basis in the form of discrimination, sexual and gender-based violence, and continued lack of representation. Women are traditionally placed on a second footing to men. According to customary law, they are unable to buy or inherit land. About 12% of the country's women has been raped at least once in her lifetime (The Guardian 12/05/2011; UN Volunteers 2013; Women for Women International 2016). Women are underrepresented in the formal workforce, especially in decision-making positions. The official matrimonial system is monogamy, however, polygamy is widely practiced (WILPF 12/2010).

**Displacement:** Prolonged conflict and widespread human rights violations in the eastern provinces have forced millions of people to flee. Internal displacement is usually short-term (several weeks) and repeated due to recurrent armed attacks and intercommunal clashes. Host communities' capacity, as well as access to livelihoods, education and health services, diminishes with every new wave of displacement (IDMC 05/2015).

As of 2016, there are about 1.5 million IDPs in DRC, and nearly 90% have been displaced due to armed attacks. Nord-Kivu has the largest IDP population, at more than 744,000, followed by Sud-Kivu with over 322,000 IDPs (OCHA 20/10/2015; 31/01/2016). DRC hosts almost 250,000 refugees, including over 100,000 from CAR, 117,000 from Rwanda and at least 20,000 from Burundi. Most are in Sud- and Nord-Kivu and Nord- and Sud-Ubangi (OCHA 21/10/2015; 18/09/2015; UNHCR 17/11/2015). Over 200,000 families host IDPs or refugees (OCHA 06/2015). At least 550,000 DRC refugees are in neighbouring countries, mainly in Uganda and Tanzania (OCHA 21/10/2015).

The DRC diaspora is known for its contribution to the peace process in the country through social movements and organisations established outside DRC. The first DRC inhabitants started to arrive in Europe, especially Belgium, in the 1960s, primarily to study. From the 1990s, people fleeing violence have made up a larger proportion. The diaspora was very active after the 2011 disputed presidential elections, when demonstrations in 2011 in Belgium led to violent clashes between the police and protesters. The diaspora has a

pressure group called Fighters that is known for its opposition to Kabila. It is made up of exiled militants, and organises demonstrations across Western Europe (Forced Migration Review 11/2010; African Diaspora 2013; Jeune Afrique 08/09/2015).

## Historical background

DRC has experienced armed conflict and political instability since the colonial era. Armed conflict is concentrated in the eastern provinces and involves a large number of actors.

**Colonial era and early post-colonialism:** King Leopold II of Belgium took possession of the territory of modern DRC in 1885, calling it Congo Free State. It became Belgian Congo in 1907. Colonisation was particularly brutal, with millions of people enslaved. The country developed little in the way of infrastructure, governance, or education. This led to an unstable government upon obtaining independence in 1960. The first five years of independence became known as the 'Congo Crisis' due to a series of civil wars. Less than a week after independence, Katanga announced it was seceding. A violent conflict ensued and Katanga was reintegrated in 1963, when its leaders surrendered after military defeat. In 1965, Lieutenant Colonel Mobutu led a coup and became President of a single-party state, renaming the country the Republic of Zaire. During his despotic reign, the government set up a system of patronage. In 1990, funding for the patronage system was running dry and Mobutu created a multi-party system. External sources of funding decreased dramatically due to the collapse of commodity prices in the late 1980s (World Bank 02/03/2011; Insight on Conflict 06/2014; BBC, 12/08/2013; The Ultimate History Project 2016)

**The First Congo War (1996–7):** The 1994 Rwandan genocide prompted the First Congo War as an estimated two million refugees, mostly Hutu, crossed Rwanda's border into Zaire. The refugee camps served as army bases for alleged perpetrators of the genocide. In 1996, Rwanda's Tutsi-dominated government invaded Zaire in pursuit of the former genocide perpetrators and Hutus in general. Uganda and Rwanda formed a loose coalition: the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (AFDL). Mobutu's army was crumbling, and it took little more than six months for the AFDL to seize control of the country, put an end to Mobutu's reign, and rename the country the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1997. In May, the AFDL leader, Laurent-Desiré Kabila, took the presidency (Insight on Conflict 06/2014; CSMonitor 2011).

**The Second Congo War (1998–2003):** Peace did not last long. Kabila ordered all Rwandan and Ugandan military forces out of DRC in July 1998, and relations between Kabila and his former allies deteriorated. Weeks later, Rwandan and Ugandan armies re-entered DRC and took control of Goma, Bukavu, and Uvira in order to protect the Tutsi of eastern Congo. They were represented by the proxy armed group Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD). Zimbabwean, Namibian, and Angolan troops backed Kabila, which led to a balance in military strength and a halt to fighting in 1998. Meanwhile, local militias

emerged and took control of local economies, including the mining industry (World Bank 02/03/2011; Insight on Conflict 06/2014).

The country turned into a vast battleground, involving eleven African countries. Rwanda and Uganda, later joined by Burundi, held eastern parts of the country. Kabila and his allies controlled the western part. A ceasefire agreement was signed in Lusaka, Zambia, in July 1999, and by November, the UN Security Council had authorised the creation of the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to monitor the implementation of the Lusaka agreement. However, the war continued to rage until 2002. An estimated 2.5 million people died between 1998 and 2001. Among the deadliest clashes were between Lendu and Hema communities in Ituri, over 1999–2003 (World Bank 02/03/2011; Insight on Conflict 06/2014; Fletcher Law School 08/2013; HRW 21/08/2009; IBT 29/10/2015).

**Transition period:** President Kabila was assassinated by his bodyguard in 2001 and succeeded by his son, Joseph. In 2002, DRC's government signed a peace deal for Rwandan and Ugandan troops to withdraw from the country. That same year, another peace deal was negotiated with armed groups (Congolesse Party for Democracy (RCD), The Movement for the Liberation of the Congo (MLC), RCD-Movement for Liberation, RCD-National and Mayi-Mayi groups) that promised a power-sharing interim government, which came into force with a new constitution in April 2003. Despite the deal, violence persisted. Armed groups often sought to maintain or establish control of mineral wealth (BBC Timeline 08/2015; Enough Project 2015, World Bank 02/03/2011; Accord global et inclusif sur la transition en RDC 17/12/2002).

**Post-transition:** The first democratic elections in DRC took place in 2006 and saw Joseph Kabila become President. Regional and organisational involvement included the UN, EU countries, and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). However, the international community reduced its engagement rapidly after the peaceful elections, although the national government struggled to exercise its essential functions (Insight on Conflict 06/2014; World Bank 02/03/2011). In August 2007, armed conflict erupted in Nord-Kivu. The renewed fighting pitted the DRC army (FARDC) against the CNDP. The immediate cause of the fighting was a breakdown in attempts to integrate CNDP forces into the FARDC. Mayi-Mayi ethnic militia and FDLR were also involved. Despite 22 armed groups signing a peace agreement in January 2008, fighting continued (Eastern Congo Initiative 2015; ICRC 2009).

The most recent escalation of violence in DRC took place in 2013 as the FARDC, supported by UN peacekeepers, defeated the March 23 (M23) armed group. The group first appeared in April 2012 in Nord-Kivu following the signature of a peace deal between CNDP and the government. It was made up from deserters from FARDC who had been previously integrated from CNDP and opposed the peace deal (Global Witness 20/03/2015; BBC 05/11/2013). Their offensive in Nord-Kivu had dire humanitarian consequences: nearly one million people were displaced and the combatants have been accused of widespread rape, killing and torture (BBC 31/07/2013; ICRC 24/11/2014). Since then, FARDC and MONUSCO

have launched several joint offensives in the east to disarm other armed groups. As of 2016, FARDC is carrying an offensive against FDLR in Nord- and Sud-Kivu; against ADF in Beni territory, Nord-Kivu; and against Raiya Mutomboki in Sud-Kivu (Radio Okapi 20/07/2015; 29/10/2015; 28/02/2015; 07/01/2016).

## Governance

High levels of corruption and poor accountability contribute to weak governance in DRC. Freedom of expression has been deteriorating with the approach of presidential elections.

**The legal system** is based on Belgian civil law and tribal law. The constitution entered in force on 18 February 2006. The country accepts the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court (ICC) (WIPO 2015; UN 08/2007; ICTJ 07/2015). The court system is divided into three jurisdictions: judicial (civil and criminal), administrative, and military. The Supreme Court of Justice is divided into three separate high court instances: the Constitutional Court, Supreme Court and Supreme Court for Administrative Matters. The judicial system faces difficulties due to the lack of financial resources, shortages of judges, corruption, and lack of independence. Malfunctioning of formal justice and security institutions leads to mob justice, largely in the east (African Development Bank 06/2013; International Bar Association 08/2009; LSE 02/12/2013).

**Political institutions:** Since the July 2006 elections, the country has a semi-presidential, decentralised system. The constitution establishes procedures to ensure the effective separation of powers between the legislature, executive, and judiciary. Executive powers are divided between the President and the Prime Minister. Both report to the National Assembly. One presidential term lasts five years and is renewable once (UN 08/2007). Legislative power is exercised by the parliament, consisting of the National Assembly's 500 deputies elected by direct suffrage for a five-year term, and the Senate's 108 members elected indirectly by provincial assemblies (USAID 11/2012; Open Society Foundations 11/2010). High levels of corruption and low political accountability undermine the government's effectiveness and confidence in national institutions (African Development Bank 06/2013).

**Local government:** There are three levels of government: national, provincial, and local. Decentralisation, envisaged in the 2006 constitution, became official on 16 July 2015, when 11 provinces were divided into 26. Each province has an elected provincial assembly, which has to elect a governor and a provincial administration. President Kabila has appointed special commissioners to administer the newly created provinces until governors are elected. Within each province, towns, communes, and chiefdoms exercise local rule (USAID 11/2012; AFP 16/09/2015).

Provincial responsibilities include health, environment, agriculture, and education. The provinces share authority with the central government in matters of security, justice, taxation, mining and land rights. Provinces represent significant counter-power to central

government. Chiefdoms, towns and communes manage local public infrastructure, markets, and the police, and they also issue civil documents (USAID 11/2012).

**Elections:** The 2006 elections were widely regarded by both international and national observers as technically sound, transparent and credible (UN 2006). However, confidence in democracy was undermined in the 2011 presidential elections, when over 1 million votes went missing. There have been no provincial or local elections since 2006. In the absence of elections, mayors and others continue to be appointed by Kinshasa. They are typically political clients and are therefore more likely to be accountable to their patrons than to local citizens (National Democratic Institute 2015; USAID 11/2012).

The delay in holding local elections is caused by insufficient capacity and will. Presidential elections are supposed to be held in November 2016, however it is likely that they will be postponed up to four years, for the same reasons. It is therefore possible that Kabila will stay in office beyond the end of his mandate in November 2016 (USAID 11/2012; Radio Okapi 03/11/2015).

**Security forces:** Military expenditure represents 1.7% of GDP. The national military, the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC), numbers an estimated 150,000 troops; half are deployed in the east. They are made up of AFDL combatants, who brought Kabila's father to power, and remnants of Mobutu's army. FARDC's policy is to incorporate former members of armed opposition groups, militias, and the Mayi-Mayi. However, the quality of integration is low and most groups remain under their former leadership and deployed in their home areas. As a result, FARDC is very fragile in the east and its soldiers engage in looting and violence against civilians. Another common pattern is that previously integrated fighters desert FARDC to launch a new insurgency (USAID 11/2012; CIA Factbook 2012).

The national police have about 100,000 officers. The main police forces are the Police d'Intervention Rapide, which carries out most large security operations, special services, and the road traffic police. The road traffic police engage in extortion of the population (USAID 11/2012).

**Corruption:** With a Corruption Perceptions Index score of 22 out of 100, DRC is ranked 147 out of 167 countries. The government has implemented a zero tolerance strategy on corruption but the results remain unsatisfactory. Favouritism and the poor functioning of the justice system, exacerbated by low basic public sector salaries and the absence of effective control and accountability mechanisms all contribute pervasive corruption. Sectors most affected are mining, forestry, tax and customs administration, state-run enterprises and the army. Judges, magistrates, and traffic police openly accept bribes (African Development Bank 06/2013; Transparency International 08/10/2010; 2015; USAID 11/2012).

**Freedom of expression:** DRC is ranked 150 of 180 countries in the World Press Freedom Index. DRC authorities are allegedly involved in threats against journalists and human rights activists. They tolerate arbitrary arrest and abduction, and allegedly commit

violations against political opponents. Such repression results in self-censorship (UK Government 12/03/2015; Reporters without Borders 2015).

With presidential elections due in November 2016, the repression of those speaking against the government has been rising. Journalists, activists and political leaders are being increasingly targeted by security forces, and subjected to arbitrary arrest and prolonged incommunicado detention (Amnesty International 25/11/2015). Newspapers and radio stations are being closed, including two TV channels in Haut-Katanga closed on 2 February 2016 for alleged non-payment of taxes. Both belong to the former governor of Katanga and opposition politician Moïse Katumbi (Reporters without Borders, 01/02/2016). More than 70 newspapers, radio, and TV stations were closed in 2014, and a first journalist was killed after more than six years (Freedom House 2015; OHCHR 08/12/2015; Reporters without Borders 2015).

## Political stakeholders

There are approximately 400 political parties in DRC, but the number of effective parties is much smaller. There are two types: those with genuine structure and those established around a patron's network. The UDPS (Union for Democracy and Social Progress) and PALU (Unified Lulumbist Party) belong to the first type. PALU is the second largest party and is part of the government. UDPS is the main opposition party. The ruling PPRD (People's Party for Reconstruction and Democracy) falls under the second type. It was set up by Joseph Kabila in 2002 (USAID 11/2012).

Some 70 armed groups are operating in eastern DRC. Most groups are small, not numbering more than 200 fighters. In 2008, there were around 20 armed groups; most of the groups present today are factions of these (Congo Research Group 12/2015). Political parties and armed groups are loosely linked. Small regional political parties allegedly use armed groups to intimidate their rivals (Afrikarabia 22/20/2015).

**Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR)** is the largest group in terms of geographical spread and number of fighters. It was formed by Rwandan Hutus who had fled the 1994 genocide. Laurent-Desiré Kabila formed an alliance with them to battle Rwanda's influence in eastern Congo. However, in 2009 Joseph Kabila allowed Rwandan troops to enter DRC and hunt FDLR fighters. In 2015, there were 1,000–2,500 FDLR fighters, mainly Rwandan Hutus, compared to 6,000 in 2008. They have allied with other armed groups, including some Mayi-Mayi militias. FDLR has not complied with several ultimatums to disarm, the latest being 2 January 2015. Their attacks on villages are often to take control of territory and resources. FARDC has been carrying out an offensive against FDLR in Nord-Kivu, where most attacks take place. DRC and Rwanda agreed in September 2015 to cooperate in the repatriation of FDLR combatants (IBT 13/07/2015; Irin News 15/06/2010; AllAfrica 25/09/2015; UN 07/10/2015; Congo Research Group 12/2015; All Africa 23/01/2009; The New Times 25/09/2015).

**Allied Democratic Forces/National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF/NALU)** was founded in the 1990s in Uganda to establish an Islamic state. The group crossed into DRC in 1996 because it was not able to gain a foothold in Uganda. It is active in Beni territory in Nord-Kivu, and its main interest is to make use of gold and timber mining and engage in illegal trading. ADF/NALU counts an estimated 1,200–1,500 fighters. They attack and abduct civilians, especially women and children. MONUSCO and FARDC launched an offensive against them in January 2015, and renewed it in October 2015 (ACLED 10/2015; Irin News 15/06/2010; Radio Okapi 29/10/2015; IBT 29/10/2015; MONUSCO 2015; ICG 19/12/2012; Enough Project 29/01/2014).

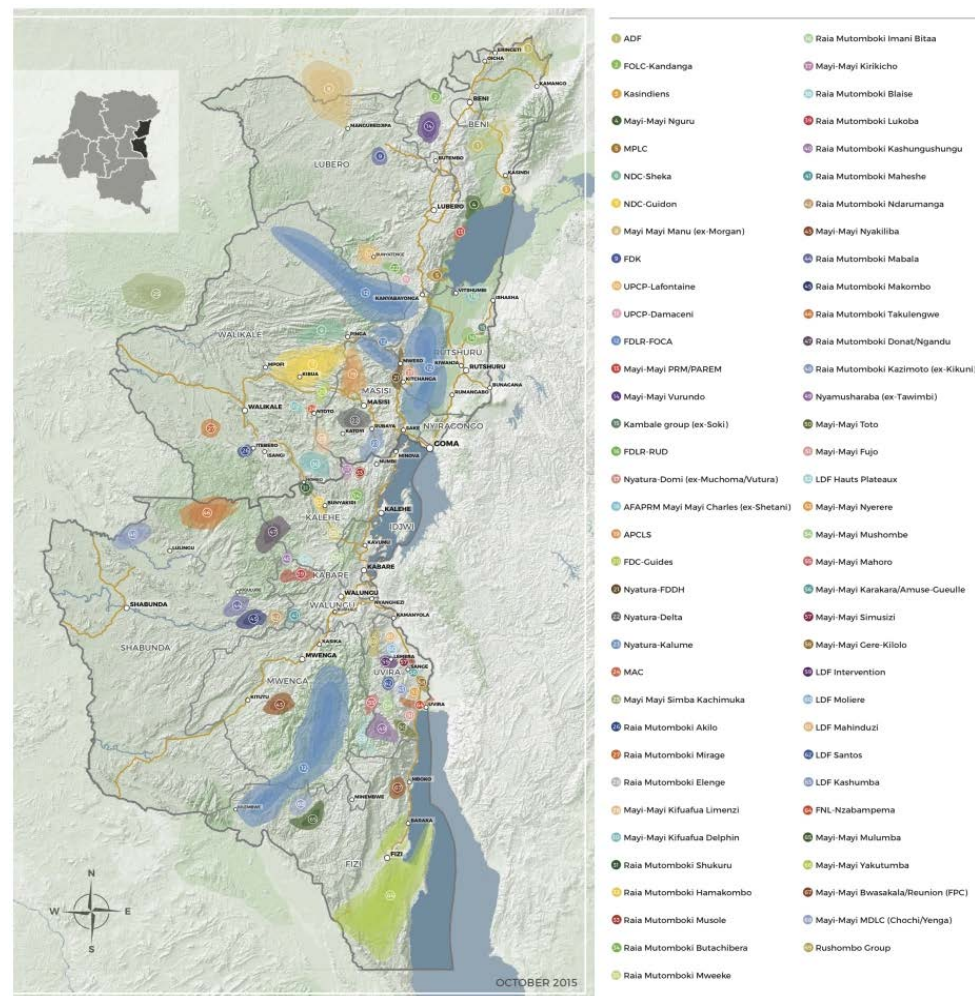
**Front of Patriotic Resistance in Ituri (FRPI)** was set up in November 2002 from the Ngiti ethnic group (subgroup of Lendu) in order to fight for the region's rich natural resources, which include coltan and gold. Its former leader Germain Katanga is currently on trial at the ICC for crimes committed in clashes between Lendu and Hema communities in 1999–2003. The group is currently active in southern Ituri. The number of combatants is unknown. FARDC launched an offensive against them in June 2015, which is still ongoing (TRAC 2015; Irin News 15/06/2010; 20/04/2005; AFP 24/06/2015; International Justice Monitor 2016).

**The Patriotic Forces for the Liberation of Congo (FPLC)** is an armed wing of the Congolese Patriotic Union established by Thomas Lubanga in 2001, who is currently on trial at the ICC. They are active in Nord-Kivu and have a few hundred combatants. The group recruits child soldiers and is involved in killings, sexual violence, and torture. The group is largely Hema and was heavily engaged in fighting between Hema and Lendu in Ituri between 1999 and 2003 (IBT 29/10/2015; BBC 23/09/2009; Irin News 20/04/2005).

**Mayi-Mayi militias** are local self-defence militias. Formed on an ad hoc basis, they often recruit young men along ethnic lines. Mayi-Mayi are present in Nord- and Sud-Kivu and Katanga. The main groups in the Kivus are Mayi-Mayi Yakutumba, Raiya Mutomboki, and the Alliance of Patriots for a Free and Sovereign Congo (ACPLS). In Katanga, Mayi-Mayi Gedeon and Kata Katanga are the groups causing most insecurity. Mayi-Mayi groups are only loosely connected, if at all. They gather for large operations, for instance several attacks on Lubumbashi in 2013. The Mayi-Mayi militias are often manipulated and used by local politicians (Enough Project 2015; Irin News 15/06/2010; Jamestown Foundation 04/04/2014).

The Mayi-Mayi believe that Rwandophone communities are trying to take over their land. This is why they call themselves self-defence militias. Mayi-Mayi operate in small groups, and are responsible for looting, mass-rape, and terrorising of villagers. Mayi-Mayi in Katanga call for secession and condemn the unequal distribution of wealth between the north and south of the province. One of their bastions is Katanga's 'Triangle of Death' between the towns of Manono, Mitwaba, and Pweto. The militias have been attacking villages in the area since 2011, when their leader escaped from prison, and are responsible for hundreds of thousands of displaced people (Enough Project, 2015; Irin News 15/06/2010; Jamestown Foundation 04/04/2014; OCHA 11/04/2013).

## Armed groups in Nord-Kivu and Sud-Kivu



Source: Congo Research Group 30/11/2015

**Lord's Resistance Army** was established by Joseph Kony in Uganda in 1989. It crossed into Garamba National Park, Haut-Uele, in 2005. The group used to have around 800 combatants but military offensives have reduced the number. By 2015, only an estimated 200 combatants were left, and the LRA had become primarily a criminal network involved in extortion (IBT 29/10/2015; Irin News 15/06/2010).

**National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP)** was established by Laurent Nkunda in the Kivu region in December 2006. It is a Tutsi militia founded to protect the Tutsi in eastern DRC from Hutu forces. It is a successor of the Congolese Party for Democracy (RDC) and fought the FDLR in 2007. When Nkunda was arrested in Rwanda in 2009, Bosco Ntaganda became leader. In March 2009, the CNDP became a political party and 3,000–4,000 of its fighters joined FARDC. An estimated 1,000–2,000 are resisting integration and involved in illegal mining, trafficking, and extortion in Nord-Kivu (IBT 29/10/2015; Reuters 23/01/2009; Irin 31/10/2013).

## Foreign relations

### Recent relations with neighbouring countries

DRC's relations with neighbouring countries have been the source of destabilisation and conflict. Rwanda and Uganda have been accused of supporting armed groups in DRC, for instance M23. Both countries also invaded DRC at the beginning of the Second Congo War. The cross-border presence of ethnic groups, for instance Hutu and Tutsi, facilitates spillover of crisis (Al Jazeera 17/10/2012; Insight on Conflict 06/2014).

In October 2004, DRC joined Rwanda and Uganda in signing a Great Lakes regional security agreement that established a Tripartite Commission to address issues peacefully. Burundi joined a year later (Global Security 2015). In September 2007, DRC and Uganda signed the Ngurdoto Agreement committing to bilateral efforts to eliminate all illegal armed groups operating between the two countries. With significant assistance from the UN, EU and US, DRC reached a similar agreement known as the Nairobi Communiqué with Rwanda in November 2007. Relations among the three countries have improved since then and they cooperate in combating armed groups operating across their borders. New security talks between Rwanda and DRC were launched in September 2015. They have focused on the defeat and repatriation of FDLR combatants (Global Security 2015; AllAfrica 25/09/2015).

### UN Stabilization Mission in DRC (MONUSCO)

In July 1999, DRC, Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe signed the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, and shortly afterwards the UN Security Council established the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). MONUC's initial mandate was to monitor the implementation of the ceasefire agreement. Later, new tasks were added, for instance to protect civilians and humanitarian personnel, and to support the government in stabilisation and peace consolidation. On 1 July 2010, MONUC was renamed MONUSCO, but its mandate remained the same. The mission comprises civilian, judiciary and correction personnel: nearly 20,000 military

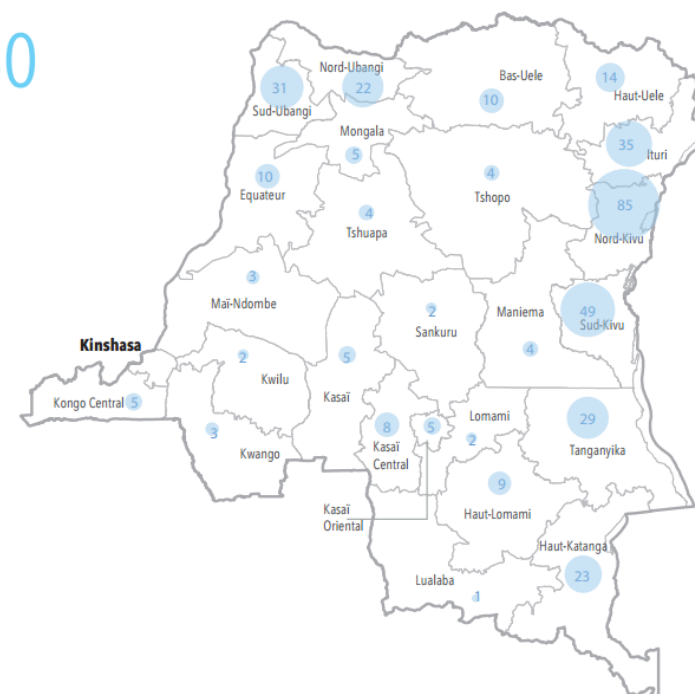
personnel, 760 military observers and 1,500 police. In March 2013, the UN Security Council established an intervention brigade within MONUSCO, whose mandate is to carry out targeted offensive operations against armed groups. It comprises 3,069 troops. MONUSCO and FARDC stopped cooperation for a year, from February 2015, after two FARDC generals suspected of human rights abuses were placed in charge of what was supposed to have been a joint FARDC-UN operation against FDLR (MONUSCO 2015; 02/02/2016; VOA 12/10/2015; UNSC 28/05/2010; Global Observatory 10/04/2013; UN 10/05/2013).

## Humanitarian and development stakeholders

### Operational presence of humanitarian actors

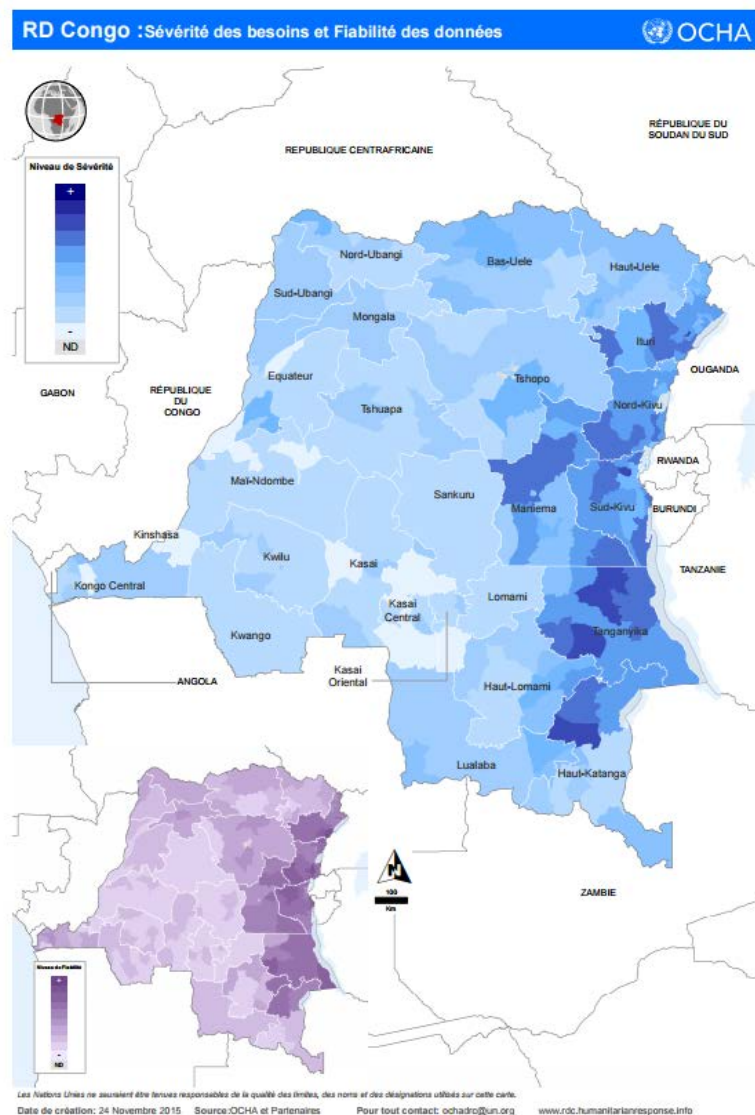
#### PRÉSENCE OPÉRATIONNELLE : NOMBRE DE PARTENAIRES

260



Source: OCHA 24/11/2015

## Severity of needs and reliability of data



Source: OCHA 12/2015

As of 2016, some 580 humanitarian organisations are present in the country; 260 have ongoing programmes and operations. 85 are in Nord-Kivu and 49 in Sud-Kivu. Other provinces with high humanitarian presence are Tanganyika, Haut-Katanga, Ituri, and Nord-

and Sud-Ubangi (OCHA 12/2015). The Rapid Response to Population Movement programme (RRMP) provides multisectoral evaluation and assistance to victims of complex emergencies, natural disasters, and epidemics in Nord- and Sud-Kivu, and former Katanga and Orientale provinces. It assists mainly IDPs. It was launched in 2004, and is managed jointly by OCHA and other international NGOs (UNICEF 10/2013; Humanitarian Response 2015).

Main governmental bodies dealing with humanitarian affairs are the Ministry of Social Affairs, Humanitarian Action and National Solidarity, and Directorate of Assistance to Victims of Natural Disaster and Other Calamities. DRC does not have a national disaster response plan.

Contributions from donors do not go through government bodies due to corruption and delays in implementation (NORAD 2015; IFRC 2011; Logistics Capacity Assessment 25/06/2015).

### Humanitarian access

Affected populations face security and physical constraints accessing assistance. Bad road conditions and clashes between armed groups are of main concern. Humanitarian actors are targeted by armed groups, mostly in Nord-Kivu. Incidents such as kidnappings or robberies are reported (OCHA 12/2015).

### Economy

Although rich in natural resources, instability and corruption negatively impact revenue and external output. DRC's relations with international financial institutions and donors were cut off in 1993 due to financial mismanagement and conflict. They were resumed in 2003. Renewed formal activity in the mining sector has boosted GDP growth in recent years. Its growth rate was 9% in 2014, 7.1% in 2010, 6.1% in 2005. Most state-owned companies operate in industry, agriculture, transportation, and financing. 80% of the population still operate in the informal sector and its activity is not included in GDP (CIA Factbook 2015; UN Data, 2013; IMF 04/2004; World Bank Data 2015). Poverty remains high despite economic growth. 77.2% of the population lives on less than USD 1.90 a day. The country ranks second last on the Human Development Index, and its per capita income is among the lowest in the world (World Bank 07/04/2015; World Bank Data 2015).

**Gross National Income per capita:** USD 380 in 2014, compared to USD 160 in 2003 (World Bank 2014).

**GDP per capita:** USD 711.5 in 2014; real growth rate 9% (World Bank Data 2014)

**GDP composition by sector of origin:** 44.3% agriculture, 21.7% industry, 34% services (CIA Factbook 2015)

**Currency:** Congolese franc (CDF); USD 1 = CDF 928; CDF is not pegged or part of a currency union (XE; Oanda 2015)



**Inflation:** 1.3% in 2014. It has been sharply decreasing since 2009, when it reached 34% because of the global financial crisis (World Bank 2014; 19/11/2015)

**Budget:** USD 8.9 billion in 2015 (UNDP 2015)

**Banking:** The banking sector is weak. Banks operate in US dollars, which is costly. Domestic credit is scarce, expensive, short-term, and highly concentrated. Only 4% of adults hold a bank account. There are 18 licensed banks, no stock market or debt capital market. The microfinance sector has been expanding since 2001 – between 2009 and 2013 microdeposits and loans almost doubled – but is still underdeveloped. Microfinance institutions' activity is highly concentrated in loans to small enterprises (IMF 10/2014).

**Labour force per occupation:** 70% in agriculture (FAO 2012)

**Main export products:** Diamonds, copper, gold, cobalt, wood products, crude oil, coffee (CIA Factbook 2015)

**Main export partners:** China (54.3%), Zambia (22.6%), Belgium (5.7%) (CIA Factbook 2015)

**Main import products:** Maize, wheat, foodstuffs, mining and other machinery, transport equipment, fuels (CIA Factbook 2015; FAO 2012)

**Main import partners:** South Africa (22.3%), China (15.3%), Belgium (8%), Zambia (6.9%), Zimbabwe (5.6%), France (4.9%), Kenya (4.7%) (CIA Factbook 2015)

**Agriculture:** Main products: coffee, sugar, palm oil, rubber, tea, cotton, cocoa, quinine, cassava, bananas, plantains, peanuts, root crops, maize, fruit. Main crops vary by region, but maize and cassava are major staples; most areas support livestock production (CIA Factbook 2015; FAO 2012).

**Key industries:** mining, mineral processing, consumer products (textiles, plastics, footwear, cigarettes), metal products, processed food and beverages, cement, commercial ship repair (CIA Factbook 2015)

**Extractive sectors:** DRC is among the world's largest producers of cobalt, copper, diamonds, tantalum, and tin, as well as several other minerals. In 2012, the extractive sector accounted for 99% of total DRC exports, 64% of the government budget, 24% of formal employment, and 13% of GDP. Mining activities are concentrated in the east and southeast (EITI 2012).

**Informal sector:** About 80% of the active population operate outside the labour market. Informal activities represent 20% of GDP. Most activities take place in agricultural, small business and extraction sectors (African Economic Outlook 2012; WTO; TDRP 12/2011).

**Remittances:** Many families (up to 80% in large cities) depend on remittances. They are transferred through informal channels and used to cover immediate needs. 0.73% of GDP comes from remittances (UNDP HDI 2014; IOM 2010).

## Infrastructure

**Airports:** The country has 198 airports; 26 have paved runways (CIA Factbook 2015)

**Roadway:** The majority of provincial capitals can only be reached by air. The country has over 153,000km of roads, but only 2,800km are paved. 55,237km are impassable during the rainy season (CIA Factbook 2015; African Development Bank 06/2013; Logistical Cluster 07/10/2013; Logistics Capacity Assessment 01/04/2014).

**Rail:** There are over 4,000km of railway, but the network is not maintained and barely operational (FAO 2012; CIA Factbook, 2015).

**Ports:** The country has approximately 15,000km of waterways. Main ports on the Congo River are Kindu, Kisangani, Bumba, Mbandaka, Kinshasa, Matadi, and Boma. Banana lies on the Atlantic coast. Lake Kivu has two important ports: Bukavu and Goma. Kalemie on Lake Tanganyika is another big port (FAO 2012).

**Electricity and fuel:** The electrification rate is 6%, the lowest in Africa. Hydroelectricity provides almost all electricity generated in DRC (FAO 2012; Teachit 2015; CIOB 12/08/2015).

## Media and communication

The media sector is quite strong despite growing censorship and financial challenges. Radio and television stations have proliferated in recent years. Nearly all newspapers are published in French. Other national languages are widely used in radio and television (Reporters without Borders 2015; USAID 11/2012; Internews 22/03/2013).

**Radio:** There are over 300 radio stations. 43% of households have a radio and it is the main source of news and information (Ministere de Sante Public and ICF International 2014; USAID 11/2012).

**Printed media:** There are several daily and weekly newspapers, but with very small circulation. Newspapers are only available in Kinshasa and a handful of other large cities (Internews 22/03/2013).

**Internet:** As of 2013, only 4.6% of households own a computer and 1.6% have Internet access at home. 6.6% of the population were Internet users, using it mainly at Internet cafes (Internews 22/03/2013; ITU 2013).

**Telephone:** As of 2013, 0.4% of the population had fixed telephone subscriptions; 105% had mobile subscriptions. Mobile phone use is widespread and growing, but the network coverage is limited to big towns and surrounding rural areas (Internews 22/03/2013; ITU 2013).

## Food security and livelihoods

Nearly 60% of the population suffers from extreme poverty (under USD 1.25 a day) and is unable to meet its basic needs. Rural areas are more affected than urban areas: the poverty rate can exceed 90% outside big cities. Six provinces have poverty levels above 70%: the former Equateur and Bandundu provinces have the highest poverty rates, followed by Sud-Kivu, Congo-Central, former Katanga, and Orientale. Both eastern and western provinces have very low agricultural productivity due to frequent flooding and conflict limiting access to land. Food security is worse in rural areas, where 39% of the population is food insecure, compared to the urban areas, where food insecurity affects 19% of the population (USAID 24/02/2015; AFDB 10/08/2010; Royal Academy of Overseas Sciences 30/11/2013).

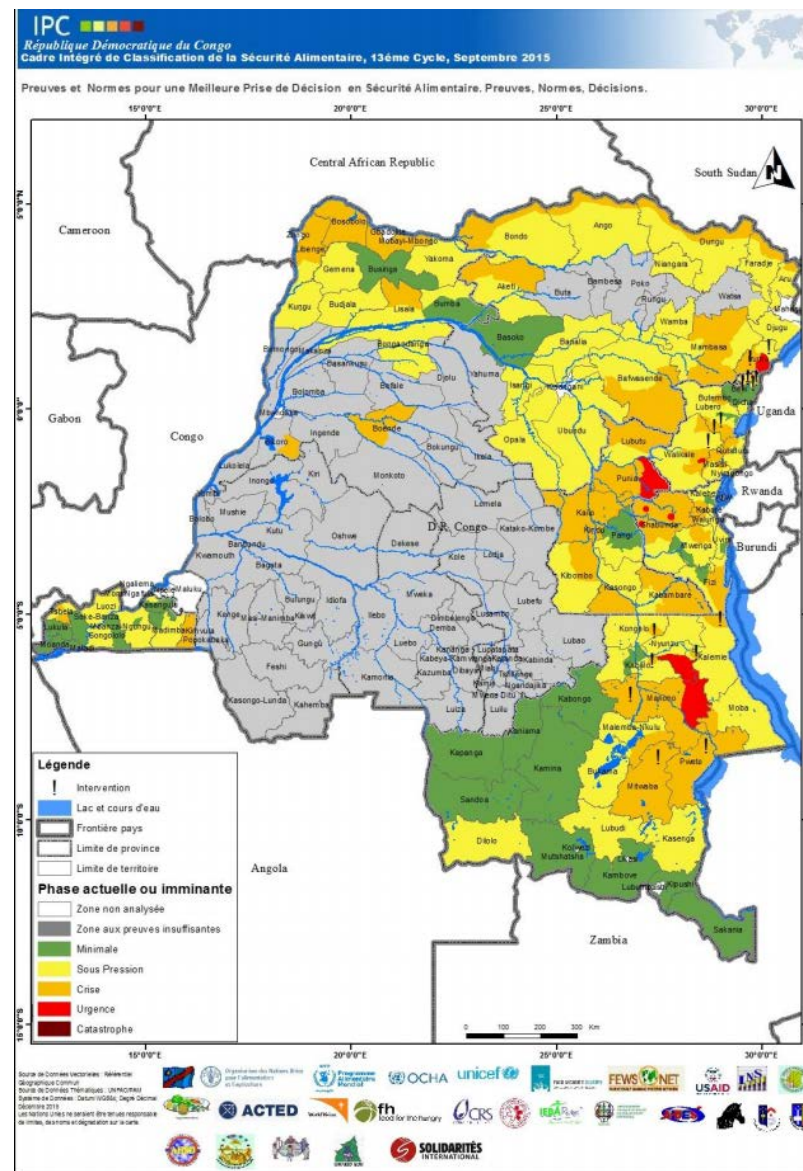
**Food security:** Average daily food consumption is less than 1,500 kilocalories per person, below the minimum of 1,800 required to maintain good health. As of November 2015, 6.5 million people were facing Crisis (IPC Phase 3) or Emergency (IPC Phase 4) food security outcomes. Irumu (Ituri), Punia (Maniema), Shabunda (Sud-Kivu), Manono, Nyunzu (Tanganyika), Beni, Walikale (Nord-Kivu) were all in Emergency phase. This represents 1.05 million people, which is an increase of half a million people since January 2015. Apart from Punia, all the territories are affected by conflict and have a large IDP population (WFP 30/10/2015; FAO 30/06/2015; USAID 02/11/2015; IPC 17/11/2015).

Domestic food production is decreasing, but the decline has been slowing since 2006: from -3.5% between 1996 and 2001 to -2.81% between 2001 and 2006 and to -0.62% between 2006 and 2011. 90% of arable land is not cultivated, largely due to insecurity. 20% of the country's imports are food, mainly meat, cereals, and dairy products (FAOSTAT 2013; FAO 2011).

**Livelihoods:** The escalation of civil conflict in 2013 severely damaged local livelihood systems in the east. Countrywide 90% of economic activity occurs in the informal sector. Farming is the main livelihood activity for 92% of rural households, contributing to 64% of their food consumption. Fishing is the second livelihood activity, followed by wage labour and mining (FAO 17/06/2015; USAID 02/11/2015; Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium 07/2012).

**Social protection systems/coping mechanisms:** National policy on social protection reaches only a small proportion of the population, mainly in urban areas. 86,000 people (0.1% of the population) receive social security and 42,000 older people (0.05%) benefit from pensions. Informal transfers, from friends and family, are perceived to be the strongest support mechanism. Traditional social mechanisms, based on kinship, are mobilised to deal with food insecurity. These include cultivation of collectively owned land (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium 07/2012).

## Food security in DRC



Source: IPC Info 09/2015

## Health

Medical needs are enormous; people struggle to access the most basic healthcare services. At 50 years, life expectancy is among the lowest in the world. Ebola, cholera, malaria, and measles outbreaks are endemic. Half of all worldwide cases of sleeping sickness occur in DRC, particularly in Haut- and Bas-Uele. Prevalence can reach 5% in some areas, well beyond the threshold of 0.3% needed to consider it a public health problem. Under-five mortality is 146/1,000 live births. Malaria is the leading cause of mortality and morbidity in DRC, killing 1.2 million people, including 300,000 children under five, every year (UNDP HDI 2015; MSF 18/11/2011; USAID 11/2012; The Guardian 24/04/2012).

**Health system:** The system is structured around a central level including the Ministry of Health and Directorates of national disease-specific programs; an intermediate level of 48 administrative health districts managed by provincial health departments; and the peripheral level of 515 health zones with over 6,000 health centres. The country has 1.1 physicians per 10,000 inhabitants. Health facilities face logistical, financial, and management difficulties. Insufficient infrastructure, including roads, electricity and water supply, complicates access to and functionality of health facilities (Government 11/2011; UNDP 2015).

Annual per capita government expenditure on health was USD 7 in 2011, 10.8% of total government expenditure and 2% of GDP. Out-of-pocket costs constitute a major barrier to healthcare. Healthcare is largely privatised, with most hospital and primary healthcare services provided through charity. International donors are mainly involved in immunisation campaigns and response to epidemics (MSF 18/11/2011; WHO 2011; 2012; Health Care Systems Around the World: A Comparative Guide 2013; PubMed 05/11/2014).

**Traditional sector:** Healers and traditional medicine practitioners are active throughout the country as they are cheaper and more accessible than modern medicine. Their practice is regulated by a decree from 2002. When working outside rural areas, they can offer their services only in centres of traditional medicine (World Bank 05/2005; WHO 2001; University of Liege et al. 07/2013).

**Maternal health:** 25% of women have at least one child by the age of 18. The adolescent birth rate is at 135/1,000 live births. 80.4% of women give birth in the presence of a skilled attendant, and 75% deliver in a health facility. Maternal mortality has been decreasing: in 2001 it was 1,289 per 100,000 live births, in 2013 it was 846 per 100,000 live births. Neonatal mortality is 44/1,000 live births. Total fertility rate is 4.8 children per woman. 35% of all female deaths are attributed to maternal causes, including pregnancy at an early age, closely spaced pregnancies, and clandestine abortions, and lack of access to adequate care during childbirth (UNICEF 24/12/2013; PAI 2014; CIA Factbook 2015; Irin 22/12/2009; UNDP 09/2015).

**Mental health:** DRC has one mental health outpatient facility, six psychiatric hospitals, and around 40 psychiatric doctors, nearly all of them in Kinshasa. In the east, a large

portion of the population meets criteria for post-traumatic stress disorder and does not receive any assistance (The Guardian 05/11/2013; WHO 2011; Irin 05/01/2016).

**Vaccination:** The country has been polio-free since the end of 2011, managed by synchronised vaccination campaigns held at least twice a year across several provinces. Immunisation coverage is between 70% and 80% for essential vaccines. 45% of children aged 12–23 months receive all recommended vaccines; 6% do not receive any. Coverage ranges by province and socioeconomic level. The main obstacles are access due to insecurity and the refusal of vaccination due to cultural and religious beliefs (MSF 18/11/2011; OCHA 10/09/2014; CDC 13/11/2015; UNICEF 21/06/2012; 24/12/2013).

**HIV:** Prevalence is 1.1%, which represents an estimated 823,650 people. 85% of people living with HIV (an estimated 700,000 people) are unable to access treatment. The country lacks a strategy on HIV testing and prevention. 78% of women and 84% of men have never been tested for HIV (MSF 18/05/2015; UNICEF 24/12/2013; VOA 10/07/2012; Ministère de Sante Public and ICF International 2014).

**TB:** Prevalence is 0.5%. DRC is considered one of the 22 high-burden countries that account for 82% of all cases worldwide. A major constraint in fighting the disease is frequent stock-outs of routine TB drugs. 2.2% of TB cases are people with multi drug-resistant TB, which requires more complicated treatment. TB incidence is assessed as stable, at around 115,000 reported cases per year (TB facts 2014; USAID 2015; WHO 2014).

**Measles:** DRC experiences regular measles outbreaks, and several vaccination campaigns were conducted between 2010 and 2015. Despite this, over 36,000 cases, including 470 deaths, were registered in 2015; 80% were in Katanga. This was the largest outbreak since 2011, when 77,000 cases were reported, including 1,085 deaths (Al Jazeera 03/09/2015; OCHA 21/10/2015; MSF 03/08/2015).

**Ebola:** DRC has experienced six Ebola outbreaks. The first was recorded in Tshuapa in 1976, followed by Haut-Uele, Kasai, and Kwilu provinces. The most recent occurred in Mongala between August and November 2014, with 66 recorded cases (WHO 21/11/2014; CDC 31/12/2015).

## Nutrition

About 43% of children under the age of five are chronically malnourished and show signs of growth retardation. The Congo Basin, especially the former Equateur, Kasai and Kasai Central provinces, are most affected (Royal Academy of Overseas Sciences 30/11/2013; WFP 30/10/2015).

Global acute malnutrition is 10.7%. The figure has remained the same for almost ten years (WFP 30/10/2015; OCHA 09/2007). Since 2010, around 2.5 million are severely malnourished every year (WHO 27/09/2015; UNICEF 2010).

## WASH

**Water:** DRC is considered the most water-rich country in Africa, yet poor development and protection of water sources constrains access. 46% of households have access to an improved source of drinking water: 29% in rural areas and 80% in urban areas. This is only a 6% increase since the 1990s, during which access to safe water dropped to 22%. Lack of land-use planning puts water sources at risk, and weak state capacity has led to an informal water service. Rapid urban population growth and high water prices are challenges in urban and peri-urban areas. Rural areas face low access to improved water sources and a high incidence of bacteriological contamination. 60% of rural water systems are not operational. The country has only 1,000 deep-drilled wells (Water and Sanitation Programme 2011; UNICEF 24/12/2013; UNEP 01/2011).

**Sanitation:** 31% of the population has access to improved sanitation, including safe drinking water and hygiene facilities. Only 14% has access to hygienic toilets; 4% of households in rural areas, 36% in urban areas. Sanitation systems in the country suffer from dysfunction (Water and Sanitation Programme 2011; UNICEF 24/12/2013; Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium 07/2012).

**Waste management:** The National Cleaning Programme, Office of Road and Drainage, and the National Service of Rural Hydraulics are in charge of solid waste management. The system is decentralised and delegated to units at the provincial level. Waste management is not efficient, and many towns, including Kinshasa, see trash left on the streets and in water (Logistics Capacity Assessment 02/04/2014; Radio Okapi 30/04/2013).

**Vector control:** The distribution of long lasting insecticide-treated bed nets (LLINs) is the main method of malaria vector control in DRC, with at least 14.5 million LLINs distributed between 2006 and 2011. Mass distribution campaigns are organised every three years. 51% of households have at least one insecticide-treated bed net (ITNs), 38% of children sleep under ITNs (UNICEF 24/12/2013; AIRS 2015).

Vector control efforts in fighting sleeping sickness have proved successful but recently a new and much more effective tool has become available: so-called ‘tiny targets’. These are small insecticide-treated screens that attract tsetse flies and kill them (Institute for Tropical Medicine 22/09/2014; Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases 2004).

## Shelter and NFIs

Eastern provinces face continued displacement caused by armed clashes. Many houses are burned and looted during attacks. As a result of this, there is a constant need for shelter and NFIs.

Across the country, more than half of housing units are one-room adobe, straw, or mud structures. A massive urban influx started after independence in the 1960s, creating

demand for housing, especially in Kinshasa. It led to the construction of illegal settlements on the outskirts of the cities, which remain in place today (Encyclopedia 2007).

**Fuel and heating:** Domestic energy consumption is almost entirely based on fuelwood and charcoal. Most fuelwood is burned in traditional three-stone cooking fires. As the areas around towns are deforested, the price of fuel wood is rising as it has to be transported over increasing distances (FAO 2012; Teachit 2015; CIOB 12/08/2015; UNEP 06/2013).

## Education

Access to education has been increasing in recent years. However, continued fighting remains a significant constraint, as schools are used for military purposes and insecurity prevents children from attending school. Primary education is mandatory, from the age of 6 till 11. Schools in DRC can be divided into three categories: confessional (70%), state (20%) and private (around 10%). Free education is not available in most of the country. Students have to pay a variety of fees, for instance a payment of teachers, insurance, the maintenance of school buildings, state exams, etc. If fees fail to be paid, students can be denied education (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium 07/2012; HRW 27/10/2015; AFD 2015; World Bank 2005; Irin 14/11/2011).

In 2009, there were 34,500 primary schools with 274,450 teachers, and 10.2 million students; 16,930 secondary schools with 4.4 million students and 212,270 teachers. On average, there is one teacher for 37 pupils; in rural areas there can be up to 100 pupils per teacher (Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium 07/2012; World Bank 2013; Irin 14/11/2011).

80% of school-aged children attend primary school and 43% secondary school. In primary schools, there are 3% fewer girls than boys, in secondary schools, there are 25% fewer girls than boys. The majority of children who are out of school are in former Katanga (30–40% of all children in the province), Nord- and Sud-Kivu, former Kasai Occidental and Equateur (20–30% of children in each of these provinces). Children of forest dwellers, Pygmies, street children, orphans, child soldiers, and refugees have lower participation rates (Radio Okapi 10/03/2015; EPDC 2010; UNICEF 2014; World Bank 2005).

**Literacy rate:** 61.2%: 77% male, 46% female (CIA Factbook 2015)

## Protection

Civilians are victims of armed group attacks as well as intercommunal clashes. The attacks are usually brutal and include killing, mutilation, and rape. Most are reported in Nord- and Sud-Kivu, Ituri, Tanganyika, Haut-Katanga, and Haut-Lomami (HRW 2015).

**Children:** An estimated 30% of armed group members are under 18 years old. In 2014, over 240 new child soldiers were recruited, the majority in Nord-Kivu. However, the

situation has been improving and the figures are decreasing every year (UNICEF, 02/02/2015; MONUSCO, 02/2015).

The number of working children aged 5–17 has fallen from 71% in 2007 to 38% in 2014. 41% of girls are working, compared to 36% of boys. The worst forms of child labour, for instance mining or begging, are most widespread in former Katanga, Orientale, Equateur, and Congo-Central provinces. Early marriage is of concern, as 9.3% of girls are married before the age of 15, 40% before 18 (UNICEF, 24/12/2013; 12/06/2015).

**Sexual violence:** Armed groups as well as members of FARDC use rape as a weapon of war to punish civilians belonging to a particular ethnic group, or those they accuse of supporting the enemy. The victims, the majority women (73%) and children (25%), often experience rape accompanied by other atrocities such as mutilation, forced participation of family members in rape, gang rape and sexual slavery. It is estimated that between 1.69 and 1.80 million women are raped during their lifetime, and between 3.07 and 3.70 million are abused by a partner. Sexual violence in communities and homes is less severe but more common than conflict-related sexual violence (HRW, 10/06/2014; European Parliament, 11/2014).

Female genital mutilation is not widely practised and forbidden by law. In 2007 the prevalence was estimated to be less than 5%, with cases reported in Nord-Kivu, Kasai, the former Katanga provinces, and in the rural areas of Kinshasa region (Canada: Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, 17/04/2012).

**Minorities:** DRC's indigenous people are strongly marginalised. The government estimates about 600,000 Pygmies to be in DRC, while civil society organisations argue that there are up to 2 million. They live without access to any public or social services and do not have titles to their land. Pygmies also lack legal documentation. They have been attacked by almost all armed groups because of beliefs that Pygmies hold supernatural powers and that ailments can be cured by having sex with Pygmy women. It is a frequent excuse for rape (Irin, 01/09/2010; 03/2006; 03/2006; IWGIA 2016).

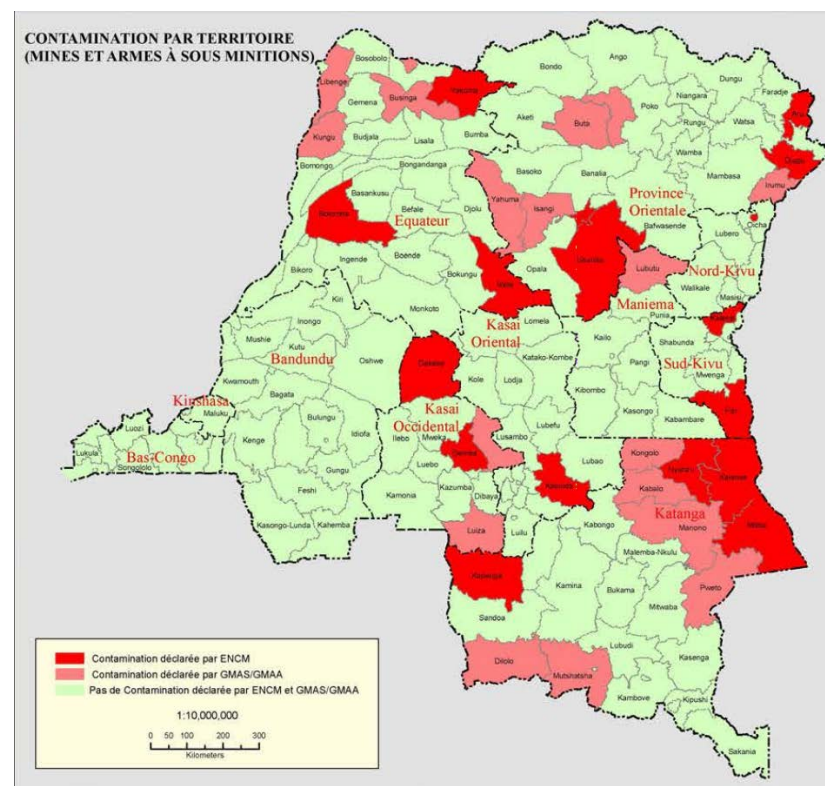
**Torture:** Rape has been used by state officials to punish politically active women in Kinshasa and across the country. Serious human rights violations by police, including extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances, are also reported (UK Government, 12/03/2015).

**Detention:** Detainees live in deplorable conditions, without access to enough food, healthcare, or sanitation. Many do not have access to judicial support. 10% of deaths in detention centres between 2010 and 2012 were attributed to ill-treatment and torture. Between January and September 2015, 649 people were arbitrarily held, and often denied access to their families and lawyers (OHCHR 13/03/2013; Avocats sans frontières 12/01/2015; IBT 09/12/2015).

**Mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW):** The conflict that took place over 1996–2003 left the country contaminated by landmines and ERW. One-eighth of the mine-affected land had been cleared in 2014, with over 15,000 ERW and landmines destroyed. Only three provinces have been declared landmine-free: Congo-Central, Kinshasa, and

former Bandundu. Since 2002, 2,540 casualties have been registered. Before launching the mine action programme in 2002, there were on average 350 victims each year. Since then, the number has dropped to 47 in 2014 (MONUSCO, 13/07/2009; 01/04/2015; 19/02/2014; MAG, 2015).

## Mine contamination per territory



GIS Unit; MONUSCO 02/2014

## Key documents

- USAID (2012) *Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Assessment of the Democratic Republic of the Congo*
- Congo Research Group (2015) *The Landscape of Armed Groups in the Eastern Congo*
- World Bank (2011) *World Development Report*
- Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (2012) *Livelihoods, Basic Services and Social Protection in Democratic Republic of the Congo*
- Ministry of Public Health (2014) *Demographic and Health Survey 2013-14*
- African Development Bank (2012) *African Economic Outlook*
- CIA (2015) *The World Factbook*
- Insight on Conflict (2015) *DR Congo: Conflict Profile*

## Seasonal and critical events calendar

Key seasonal data	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Average rainfall precipitation 1990-2012 (mm)	114.6	119.8	160	175.2	157.1	67.5	45.9	75.2	129.3	205.2	208	139.3	
Average temperature 1990-2012 (Celsius)	24.9	25.5	25.9	25.8	25.5	24.2	23.5	23.7	24.2	24.8	25	23.8	
School year													
Rainy season													
Critical events													
Elections (presidential & parliamentary)							2006				2011 2016		
Floods	Seasonal floods (Congo River)								Seasonal floods (Congo River)				
Measles*			2015				2010						
Ebola*	2009				1995	2012		2012 2014	2012 2014	2007 2012 2014	2007 2012 2014	2008	
Cholera*			2011				2012			2015			
	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	

\* Epidemics: month of the start of the outbreak

World Bank, 2015; DRC Ministry of Education, 2014; SADC 2015; MSF 10/06/2015; National Institutes of Health, 22/05/2013; WHO, 17/08/2012; CDC, 2015; Oxford Journals, 1999; WHO, 23/07/2012; WHO, 22/07/2011; MSF, 17/06/2013; Logistical Cluster, 01/04/2014; CDC 30/12/2015