



Kinshasa

Multi-dimensional poverty analysis Update May 2020

This document is to serve as an update and complement to the MDPA report which was published in 2018. It should be read as an annex to the original document.

This update has been developed as part of the Embassy's process in developing the 2021-2025 Swedish Development Cooperation Strategy for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

While the living conditions of the Congolese people have not drastically changed since the 2018 MDPA mainly the political landscape has changed following the election of 2018 and the transition of power in 2019. It was therefore concluded that a short update was warranted. In addition, some data released after the publication of the report as well as some aspects not included in the report have been added.



Background and approach

The DRC experienced its first peaceful transition of power just over a year ago after which there is a slight positive momentum to reform processes. However, decision making remains challenged by the complexities in balance of power where the FCC alliance of the

former president retains the majority and remains in control of the national parliament, most of the provinces and many state institutions. Against this background, the aim of this MDPA update is to reflect the shifts in power and the ambitious reform agenda that has been put forward by President Tshisekedi.

According to Inform Risk Index, there is a very high and increasing risk for humanitarian crises, rating DRC as the 6th most vulnerable country in the world. According to the Humanitarian Response Plan 2020, the number of people in needs of humanitarian assistance and protection has increased to 15.6 million, the number of food security has doubled (from 7,7 million to 15.6 million) and the number of acutely malnourished children has increased to 3.5 million.

Economic Context

The macro economic situation in the DRC continues to be relatively stable, but the overall economy remains weak. The country is largely dependent on the mining sector, not the least the export of copper and cobalt. The country is also rich in other natural resources. It is also heavily dependent on imports, including of food and consumer goods. The government debt is relatively low (5 billion USD) compared to other African countries, mostly following previous debt write-offs.

As part of discussions on IMF support measures, the new government has introduced a number of steps to public financial reform. These are introduced into a setting where the state budget for 2020 was decided in December 2019 at close to 11 billion USD, but the expected state's revenues do not reach more than around 5 billion USD.

Economic growth for 2020 was projected to be 4.6%, to be compared with a population growth of 3.5%. Due to Covid-19, the economic growth forecast has been lowered and many believe in recession. Women continue to have very limited access to national economic resources and production factors compared to men.¹

Security Situation

Eastern DRC continues to suffer from armed conflict created by a complex landscape of close to 140 armed groups. The causes of conflict are mainly related to land rights, natural resources (especially minerals) and, to a certain extent, ethnicity. The political links with people in powerful positions in both Kinshasa and neighbouring countries have a significant impact.

¹ Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. <https://www.peacewomen.org/content/gender-inequality-and-social-institutions-dr-congo>

The presence of foreign armed groups continues to destabilise the country. The biggest of these groups, the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in North Kivu, stands out as the most serious security threat in eastern DRC. However, violence and insecurity are not concentrated only to the east. The massacre in Yumbi in western DRC in December 2018 was a reminder that unresolved root causes of conflict, in this case regarding land ownership, can lead to extreme violence and displacement. The use of physical and sexual violence as a weapon of war is well documented, having a traumatising impact on both individuals – women, girls, men and boys - and the society as a whole.

Positive development has been seen. In February 2020, the Ituri Patriotic Resistance Force (FRPI) signed a peace agreement with the government. However, the current standstill of the DDR process (PNDDR III) works as a disincentive for groups to disarm.

MONUSCO has started a drawdown of their military operations but a significant increase in police support is part of the renewed mandate. The mission will focus this support in provinces like Tanganyika and the Kasaïis where recent stabilisation is threatened by weak state institutions. The number of displaced people has increased to 5 million, making DRC the country in Africa with the largest IDP population.

The four dimensions of multidimensional poverty

Human Security

Violence in the DRC ranges from conflict in war-like situations to urban violence and crime as well as widespread domestic violence.

The Presidential election in 2018 did not lead to violent protest and social unrests. However, ACLED (Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project) data shows that violence grew in the first 6 months of Tshisekedi's presidency seeing 1.900 conflict-related fatalities.

Reported cases of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) include rape, sexual slavery, trafficking, forced/early marriage, intimate partner violence and sexual exploitation and abuse. (SGBV)² The MICS report from 2019 states that 29% of women are married before the age of 18³ and the UNDP Human Development Report 2019 states that 50.7% of the

² <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/democratic-republic-congo/document/dr-congo-gbv-sud-cluster-key-facts-and-priorities>

³ MICS Palu DRC 2018.

female population aged 15 and older have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner. SGBV victims also often experience denial of resources, such as access to land, financial means and natural resources and limited access to services, such as health care, infrastructure and education. DRC ratified The Maputo protocol on the rights of women in Africa in 2008. UN Women statistics on rights covered by the protocol in relation to human security show that 39% of Congolese women have been threatened or injured and that 27% are victims of harmful practices.

Resources

Having the second largest tropical forest area in the world, the DRC ranks as the fifth country as regards its rich flora and fauna diversity. Around 40 million (almost 70%) of the poorest Congolese depend on the forest for food, material, energy and medicine. Degradation and overexploitation of environmental resources are leading to deforestation, soil erosion and pollution of air, water and soil and therefore challenging peoples' ability to work and secure their livelihood.

Artisanal mining has the potential to provide livelihood benefits and diversify household economies. It is estimated that it provides income to around two million people.^[1] With an average of four to five dependents for each mining worker, as many as 8 to 10 million people could depend on this activity for their livelihoods, or about 14 to 16% of the DRC's total population. However, there are significant challenges associated with artisanal mining in the DRC, including violence, sexual abuse, a complete lack of standards for safety, health, security and environmental protection, a high incidence of child labour, abuse of vulnerable groups and the spread of diseases. Gender-based discrimination throughout the Congolese society leads to women being exploited, more exposed to various infections and social abuse, paid less than men and subject to violence when claiming their due.⁴

Power and voice

After the transition of power in 2019, the number of human rights violations linked to restrictions on democratic space has been reduced by 26%. This contributed to a slight decrease (4 %) of total human rights violations compared to 2018. There are, however, still concerns in relation to the lack of investigations on documented human rights violations.⁵

[1] UNEP, 2011; Mining Weekly, 2017

⁴ Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. "Life at the bottom of the chain. Women in artisanal mines in the DRC" (2016)

⁵ JHRO (2020) "Analysis of the human rights situation in 2019".

Corruption is widespread and deeply entrenched throughout the Congolese society and its institutions and the DRC is ranked 168 out of 180 countries regarding fraud and corruption. Corruption is ultimately driven by a lack of good governance and poverty, favoured by weak rule of law and a lack of transparency and demonstrated in a system with political corruption, bribing, embezzlement and inefficient institutions. An analysis by Transparency International (2019) states that the patron-client corruption network exists throughout the political hierarchy with the most low-ranking officials and ordinary citizens at the bottom. Legal frameworks for fighting corruption are in place but are poorly implemented and impunity is widespread.

Women's political representation remains very low even after the slight increase perceived in 2018 elections. The proportion of women in the national parliament is 11 percent (up from 9,7%) and the proportion of female ministers is 17 percent (a slight increase from between 10 and 15 percent in the governments since 2006). Only one of the 26 provincial governors and four of the vice-governors are women.

Adolescents lack a voice and influence in the DRC, despite the fact that they constitute roughly 25% of the population⁶.

Opportunity and choice

Access to information enables people to participate in and contribute to societal development. Access to information is unequal in the DRC. The latest MICS^[1] reports that 52,7% of the men and 34,5% of the women between the age of 15-49 have access to either radio, television or a newspaper at least once a week. However, the figure for a man in Kinshasa is 89,3%, while being 2,8% for a woman in Maniema.

The introduction of the reform towards universal education could be an opportunity for DRC's children and youth, a main challenge being the financing of this reform. According to the most recent MICS data, 78% of school aged children are in primary school. There is a significant decrease in secondary school, where only 34% are enrolled. There is a remarkable difference in enrolment numbers when comparing rural and urban children⁷, whereas the differences between boys and girls are small at all levels⁸. Disabled children and youth constitute one of the most marginalised and poorest groups in the Congolese society.

⁶ MICS Palu 2018, boys and girls age 10-19.

^[1] République Démocratique du Congo, MICS-Palu 2018, Rapport Final Décembre 2019, p. 51-53.

⁷ Percentage of rural/urban children in primary school 87/72%, secondary first cycle 46/19% and secondary second cycle 50/20%.

⁸ Percentage of boys and girls in primary, first and second secondary are 79/77, 32/31, 36/33 respectively.

In the DRC, child marriage for girls remains an important practice and the number of incidents remains stable over time. Data from 2018 show that 30% of all women and 10% of all men then aged 20-24 years were married before the age of 18, with a higher degree in rural than urban areas.⁹

Tenure insecurity is affecting opportunity and choice. A household or an individual not being sure of having long-term access to land will be unwilling to make investments. This has an impact on sustainable management of resources, which may have a long-term negative impact on the quantity and quality of natural resources and ecosystems. Stress over current or future resource scarcities and livelihood opportunities typically result in overexploitation of agricultural lands and forest resources. Conservation efforts may reduce peoples' opportunities and choice, e.g. if forest or land conservation reduces communities' rights to, access to or utilisation of the resources.

In many parts of the country, women and girls must rely on male family members to own and inherit land under customary law. Given the crucial role that rural women play in managing resources, the lack of land and forest rights for women undermines efforts to address poverty, sustainable development and local livelihoods.

Access to electricity is very low in DRC and almost non-existent in rural areas. Access to affordable electricity is an enabler of choice, opportunity and voice as it provides opportunities for livelihoods, schoolwork and access to information. Wood and charcoal provide 95% of all domestic energy consumed in the DRC. This contributes to deforestation, loss of biodiversity and green-house gas emissions. It also results in high levels of indoor air pollution in the DRC, contributing to respiratory diseases mainly affecting women, children and elderly.

⁹ MICS Palu 2018.