Executive summary

The main purpose of the multidimensional poverty analysis (MDPA) is to inform the mid-term review of the Strategy for Sweden's development cooperation with DR Congo 2015-2019. The general situation and trends in the DRC since the start of the current strategy are described in the annual strategy reports and the in-depth strategy report of May 2018. The MDPA process included various sub-analysis such as a Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis (SWOT), Portfolio Mapping, Risk Analysis, Analysis of linking factors and actors and input from framework consultant on several issues. A workshop with support from Sida Stockholm was held 3-4th May 2018, whereafter the recommendations for the next strategy were prepared and the MDPA finalized.

Main conclusions of the MDPA:

- ✓ Income poverty levels are staggering (77%) in DRC and there are no indicators of inequalities being addressed.

- ✓ Development interventions need to consider that the majority (74%) of the population is considered multi-dimensionally poor.

- ✓ Around 15% of population needs humanitarian assistance or is being helped by first responders (families, neighbors etc.).

- ✓ Economic diversification is very limited and a constraining factor for addressing monetary poverty.

- ✓ Imbalance in distribution of power as well as of (economic) resources that play out differently throughout the country, for example via ethnic tensions in the east, but also an east-west divide, and a small elite versus the rest of the population

- ✓ Vulnerabilities and lack of resilience are drivers of poverty (and conflict) and crosses into all four poverty dimensions. Need for resilience to be cross-cutting.

- ✓ Conflict prevention/transformation/peace building need to be at the center of the strategy. Even for less conflict prone areas, a preventive aspect is needed. Drivers of conflict are still present.

- ✓ Diminishing democratic space and lack of respect of human rights as an underlying factor for poverty and conflict and with implications on people's capacity to use their resources and power and voice (capability to function).

- ✓ Nepotic and kleptocratic power structures constrain opportunity and choice as well as power and voice; reduces access to productive employment, limits mobilization of the masses, and leads to the politization of civil society. Development cooperation actors need to identify and support true change agents.

✓ The population growth (the population is foreseen to almost double in the next 20 years) needs to be taken into consideration more explicitly in development cooperation.

✓ Majority of population under the age of 35, and mostly un- or underemployed, which is a driver of instability.

✓ Gender gap is not huge when looking at monetary poverty, but more explicit in opportunity and choice, with roots in power and voice. Human security has clear gender components as well (sexual and gender based violence, internally displaced persons, armed group recruitment etc.).

✓ There are geographic differences, and an urban-rural divide that needs to be addressed in development cooperation.

✓ Environmental challenges are sources of conflict (access and exploitation of natural resources, access to land etc.) and should be addressed more explicitly (not only in eastern Congo).

1 Background and approach

The main purpose of this analysis of multidimensional poverty is to inform the mid-term review of the Results strategy for Sweden's international development cooperation with DR Congo 2015-2019. The mid-term review took place January-May 2018 with the aim to determine the stategy's ongoing relevance and whether portfolio contributions are on track to deliver on stated objectives. The strategy has four main areas: strengthened democracy, gender equality and human rights; better opportunities and tools for poor people; improved basic health; and human security.

As per instructions, the DRC team conducted a multi-dimensional poverty analysis using the analytical tool presented in the Sida poverty tool box. Sida identifies four dimensions of poverty: resources, opportunities and choice, human security, and power and voice. The four dimensions – captured in the inner circle below – help identifying the main ways in which poverty and vulnerability manifests itself and how it is experienced by people living in poverty. Multiple causes interplay to push people into a situation of poverty and vulnerability – and to keep them there. Knowledge about this complexity and how it is manifested for different groups of people is fundamental to be able to define effective policy measures and approaches to reduce poverty. All the dimensions are interlinked. To be defined by Sida as living in poverty, a person needs to be resource poor and poor in at least one other dimension.

Figure 1. Multi-dimensional poverty model

The outer circle displays the development context, in which poor and vulnerable people live and act. Sida analyses the development context along four aspects – in terms of social, economic, political and institutional development as well as environment and conflict. A gender perspective permeates all these aspects. The outer circle is the explanatory framework for the degree and dimensions of poverty, and also contains the main elements of a development analysis that explains opportunities and constraints both for an inclusive and sustainable development as well as for people living in poverty to change their situation.

In DRC, these dimensions are clearly inter-connected and the multidimensional poverty analysis needs to take its point of departure in key risks for the livelihoods system, particularly the conflict, how the risks and stress factors are connected, and how they reinforce vulnerabilities and risks. According to the INFORM risk index, DRC is at high risk for humanitarian crisis, which is also the current situation of the country. The current humanitarian crises are estimated to affect at least 16 of the 26 provinces. The index measures hazards and exposure, vulnerability, and lack of coping capacity, and rates DRC as the 8th most vulnerable country in the world. Food insecurity, malnutrition, epidemics and effects of natural disasters are aggravating factors, adding stress on the population who lives under the poverty threshold in its large majority. According to the updated humanitarian response plan (2017-2019) a total of 13,1 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. 7,7 million people are estimated to be food insecure, with 2.2 million children severely acutely malnourished and 2,4 million children moderately acutely malnourished. This is an increase of almost 30% as compared to 2016.[1]

Sweden is the 12th largest development donor with approximately 247M SEK disbursed in 2017; an amount that is planned to increase to 323M SEK in 2018. Of bilateral donors Sweden is approximately the 4-5th largest donor. Sida is the 4th largest humanitarian donor in the DRC. USAID, ECHO, DfiD, Germany, Sweden, Japan, Canada and Belgium are the partners which are providing 90% of the humanitarian funding.

Compared as a share of DRC´s GDP, total allocated international support for 2016 was 7%.[2] The national state budget in the DRC in 2017 was approximately 7,6 billion USD, which can be compared

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[1] IPC (2017), DRC: Current Acute Food Insecurity Overview June 2017 - December 2017, URL: http://www.ipcinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ipcinfo/docs/IPC_DRC_AcuteFI_Situation_2017JunDec.pdf
[2] World Bank Data (2018), URL: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ALLD.CD?end=2016&locations=CD&start=1960

to Sweden's budget the same year of 116,8 billion USD.[3] The net ODA per capita to the DRC in 2016 amounted to 26,77 USD, compared to the average of 42,87 USD for the Sub Saharan Africa region. Compared to CAR (108,75 USD) and South Sudan (130,00 USD), the assistance per capita to the DRC was significantly lower.[4] The part of the DRC national budget that is invested in social sectors is minimal and primarily for paying wages, even if also this is erratic. The churches have a strong and long-standing role to increase access to social service, without this service provision would slump significantly.

The country has a territory of 2 345 410 km^2 and demographic density of an average 38,28 inhabitant / km^2, with strong variations depending on the provinces, since an estimated 17 million, hence over 20%, of the 83 million inhabitants live in Kinshasa for a density of 577 inhabitants / km^2. In Maniema, the density is 12 inhabitants / km^2, and 13 in former Orientale province.[5]

2 Overview of main poverty indicators

Data remains limited in the DRC, notably for the most recent year of 2017. The last Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) dates back 2010 and a new one is currently being carried out. The last health and demographic survey dates back to 2013-2014, and the second census has been planned for years, but is yet to be finalized. The World Bank is currently carrying out a poverty study and some preliminary data from their diagnostic has been included below. Humanitarian data, as well as perception surveys and a 2016 opinion poll are the basis for much of the analysis (as well as some sector specific data linked to human security).

DRC is a poor country with 77 percent of the estimated 83 million population living under the poverty line (set at 1,90 USD/day), according to 2012 statistics. About 15 percent of the population is considered so vulnerable that they are in need of humanitarian assistance. More recent data from a national public opinion poll conducted by Congo Research Group and BERCI in 2016 put the number at 73,6% nationwide, with 75,7% of women and 71,8% men living in poverty. The urban-rural divide is 60% versus 78,1%.[6] A DFID poverty analysis from 2017 estimate that at the national level, the average poor person is 33,40 USD below the poverty line calculated at 100 USD/month, with a 23,49 USD versus 35,57 USD for urban and rural areas respectively, and women being poorer than men (39,75 USD below the poverty line versus 28,87 USD for men).[7] On the Human Development Index, the country ranks 176 out of 186, and the index value slightly increased over the years. There are obviously strong disparities between the various provinces, which are not all systematically identified.

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[3] Government of Sweden (2018), Statens budget 2017, URL: http://www.regeringen.se/sveriges-regering/finansdepartementet/statens-budget/statens-budget-i-siffror/)
[4] World Bank Data (2018), Net ODA received per capita (current USD), URL: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ODAT.PC.ZS?end=2016&locations=CD-AO-CF-ZG-ZM-SS&start=1960&type=points&view=chart
[5] http://drcongo.opendataforafrica.org/
[6] CRG & BERCI (2016), "Impasse in the Congo: What do the people think? Results from a National Public Opinion Poll", October 2016.
[7] DFID-EACP (2017), "Understanding poverty and social exclusion in DRC", DFID DRC Evidence, Analysis, and Coordination Programme.

Table 1. Overview of main poverty indicators DR Congo

| Poverty and inequality overview	2004	2012	2016
Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty lines (% of population)	69,3 (WB)	63,9 (WB)	73,6 (CRG-BERCI data) (75,7 women; 71,8 men)
Poverty headcount ratio at $1.90 a day (2011 PPP) (% of population)	94 (WB)	77,1 (WB)	77,1 (no new data)
Income share held by highest 10%	32,4 (WB)	32 (WB)	Data missing
Income share held by lowest 20%	5,7 (WB)	5,5 (WB)	Data missing
Human development index	0,355 (UNDP)	0,412 (UNDP)	0,435 (176) (2015) (UNDP)

The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)[8] is based on the 2013/2014 demographic health survey. What is most likely, given more recent data, is that the multidimensional poverty situation continues to deteriorate further. Based on the MPI, 75,1 % of the population is multidimensional poor, with 16,1 % of the population being vulnerable to poverty.[9] Out of the 75,1%, 44,9% are considered in sevbere poverty, and 35,3% are defined as destitute[10]. Looking at provincial differences, the multidimensional poverty situation is dire for most provinces, except the province-ville of Kinshasa. There are also clear urban-rural divides.[11]

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[8] From Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI): www.ophi.org.uk

[9] Poverty and Human Development Initiative (2016). "Congo DR Country Briefing", Multidimensional Poverty Index Data Bank. OPHI, University of Oxford. Available at: www.ophi.org.uk/multidimensional-poverty-index/mpi-country-briefings/.

[10] Those identified as 'Destitute' are deprived in at least one third of more extreme indicators described at the back of this briefing; for example, two or more children in the household have died (rather than one), no one in the household has at least one year of schooling (rather than five years), the household practises open defecation, the household has no assets (rather than no more than one).

[11] Poverty and Human Development Initiative (2016). "Congo DR Country Briefing", Multidimensional Poverty Index Data Bank. OPHI, University of Oxford. Available at: www.ophi.org.uk/multidimensional-poverty-index/mpi-country-briefings/.

Figure. 2 Headcount Ratios of the MPI Poor and Destitute at the Sub-national Level
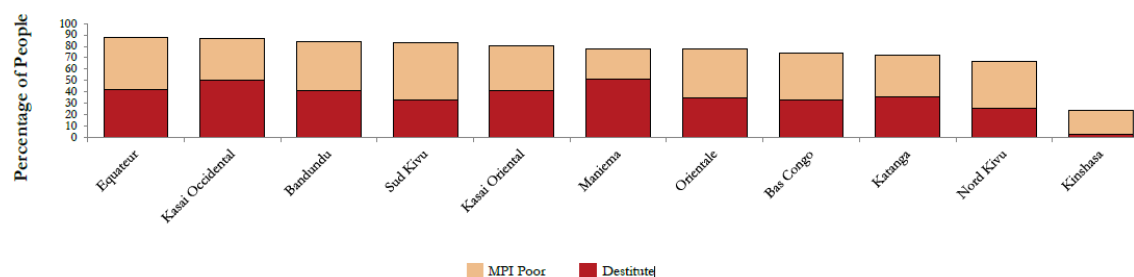
For the people considered multidimensional poor, the majority are deprived within the sector of "living standards" (indicators: electricity, sanitation, drinking water, floor, cooking fuel and assets), but with health indicators also reaching above 30%.[12] As is described further below, food insecurity has increased over the last years, indicating that it is likely that health indicators would today likely score even higher on deprivation indicators.

3 The development context

3.1 Conflict context

DR Congo has been plagued by protracted armed conflict for over twenty years, mainly in the eastern provinces of Haut-Uele, Ituri, North- and South Kivu, Maniema, and more recently also in Tanganyika, as well as in the greater Kasai area. The root causes and multipliers for conflict, and actors likely to engage in violence, continue to exist across the country. The number of armed groups continue to grow and new coalitions are formed. Access to land and control over natural resources are main drivers of conflict, linking the conflict and environmental contexts closely together. Identity politics, historical grievances, and political expediency are other important factors. At the same time, current governance arrangements are characterised both by absence (the inability of the state to replace or accommodate traditional conflict mediation structures) and by interference (the state's determination to project authority to local areas through a combination of political plotting, civilian actors, and the deployment of the armed forces). Combined with longer-term root causes, and the ongoing uncertainty around elections and succession to Kabila, this appears to be exacerbating previously latent conflicts. It is likely that the DRC will continue to face proliferation of a series of local conflicts, destructive to the communities that live amongst them.

The country rates in the bottom ten on most international indexes, such as the Global Peace Index (153/163 in 2017). Freedom House rating for 2017 puts DRC at an aggregated level of 17/100, which is a worsened situation since 2016 when the country was scored 25/100. This means that civil and political freedoms have been further restricted since the beginning of the strategy period. Political demonstrations are frequent, but mostly unsuccessful, and are met with violence from the state security forces. Human rights groups continue to document numerous cases of deaths and disappearances.

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[12] Poverty and Human Development Initiative (2016). "Congo DR Country Briefing", Multidimensional Poverty Index Data Bank. OPHI, University of Oxford. Available at: www.ophi.org.uk/multidimensional-poverty-index/mpi-country-briefings/.

Since 1999, DRC hosts the now largest peacekeeping mission to date, with approximately 16 000 uniformed personnel and 4000 civilians, and an annual budget of approximately 1.4 billion USD. The mandate is currently running until March 2019. The government has announced that the UN mission should leave by 2020, but a transition plan is yet to be established.

The humanitarian crisis has intensified since 2015. The humanitarian crisis in the DRC is primarily caused by armed conflicts but also closely interrelated with the country's weak financial and socio-economic performance as well as the deteriorating political crisis. The continuous armed violence is fueled by ethnic and land disputes, bad governance, under-development and competition for mineral resources. The number of displaced people has increased drastically in the last 18 months, reaching 4,5 million at the end of 2017, impacting all four dimensions of multidimensional poverty further addressed below.

3.2 Political and institutional context

A small elite controls power and much of country's resources, and appointments and nominations are linked to allegiances to the political power in one way or another. Overall, there is not much progress looking for example at the Worldwide Governance Indicators, except on government effectiveness, rule of law and control of corruption, which remained extremely weak overall. Voice and accountability decreased between 2006 and 2011 and increased slightly again until 2016. DRC ranks 147 out of 158 on Transparency International corruption index.

Figure 3. Governance index (2015)

After hosting two election in 2006 and 2011 with a varying degree of public and international approval, the DRC continues to face considerable and worsening challenges in realizing democracy, human rights and sustainable development. Popular credibility is further undermined by weak and opaque governance structures and the seemingly nearly complete absence of political agenda and vision for the reconstruction of the country. Arbitrary arrests, politically motivated imprisonment and forced exile, including of leading opposition and civil society actors, continue to constitute major concerns. Youth and church representatives are increasingly targeted by political clampdown while relevance of political opposition is hampered by fragmentation and personalization.

Planned elections in December 2016 never took place and was pushed to December 2017, when it also did not take place. In November 2017, the national election commission CENI announced the electoral calendar, with elections to be organized in December 2018. This was followed by the adoption of the electoral law, which has been criticized for, among other things, not promoting women's participation. This coupled with tight deadlines in the electoral calendar and an uncertainty in how the elections will be financed leaves many questionmarks in regards to the organization of the elections. Voter registration officially ended in January 2018, despite serious challenges in for example the Kasai region. After the process of cleaning the lists, the final number of eligible voters have been set to 40 million, with a 50-50 balance between men and women.[13] Although this provides opportunities to participate in the electoral process in theory, many registered just to be able to get an electoral card, which also serves as an ID card. Displaced populations were registered in the place they were displaced to, which means that were they to leave (return home or relocate) before the elections, it is not sure if they can vote and if so, how their votes would count. Congolese refugees were not able register for the most part. In addition, many Congolese do not prioritize casting a vote in an election which they have since long lost faith and hope in. Since many live off what they manage to earn that day, finding food for the family is prioritized by many.

The political nomination, intimidation and threat posed to lawyers and magistrates have weakened the performance of the judiciary system throughout the country. The poverty level of the population contributes to the promotion of the informal (traditional) justice system. Although reporting a crime to the police is in theory free, many police demand a fee from the victim. Pushing a case trough the courts is also cost- and time consuming and very few actually receive any monetary reparations at the end of it. In the informal system, many families believe at least they can find an amicable solution and receive some reparation (often in terms of livestock).

3.3 Social and economic context

Conditions for a rapid poverty reduction are not present in the DRC, which remains among the poorest countries in the world. In general, the country is scoring very low on indicators regarding the Sustainable Development Goals. For example, GNI per capita was estimated at 680 USD in 2016, compared to the Sub-Saharan Africa region's 3 383 USD. Life expectancy at birth is 59,1 years, and the mean years of schooling for girls is 4, and 8 for boys.[14] Very high corruption levels is a constraining factor for development, likewise the cleptrocratic nature of those who lead the country.

Overall economic indicators showed some progress since 2010 but this tendency was reversed in 2016. There is a constant progression of the GDP since 2001, with a decrease in 2016 from 36,19 in 2015 to 31,93 billion USD. The economy was strongly affected by a depreciation of the Congolese Franc of around 20% in December 2017 compared to December 2016, which increased inflation, 48,3% in September 2017 compared to one year prior, which affected the living standard of the population. The change reserve of the country was only 668,03 million USD at the end of September 2017, equivalent to 2,9 weeks of imports of goods and services, which affects the credibility of the whole Congolese banking and financial system. The economy relies strongly on the mining sector,

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[13] ADD FOOTNOTE

[14] UNDP (2018), Human Development Indicators. URL: http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/COD

which increased in 2017 compared with 2016.[15] Agro-industry still remains a high potential sector, notably for high productivity and high added value branches, sectors in which the country had strong competitive advantage decades ago.[16]

2017 was marked by the depreciation of the Congolese Franc, and an exchange rate level at record high 1800 FC/USD at one point. Since mid-2017 the economic situation seems to have stabilized with signs of economic growth, in particular in the mining sector.[17] The majority of the population has not benefitted from the somewhat stabilized economic situation. At the same time as more revenues are entering into the state tresory, costs for local transportation have increased drastically, coupled with increased petrol prices. Even if GDP has increased since 2015 and the macroeconomic progress has been positive overall, there are still fundamental challenges regarding the quality of services delivered to citizens. The GDP growth rate of 2,4% is the lowest point measured for the country since 2001.[18] Together with a population growth of approximately 3,3%, the GDP per capita shrank between 2015 and 2016 from 391 USD to 388 USD.[19] As a consequence, the inequity among the population has not been reduced. The population growth is expected to increase the coming years causing a possible scenario of a doubled population within 25 years.[20] According to the African Development Bank, the DRC needs to create 2 to 4 million new jobs annually to accommodate the employment needs of its young population. Demographic pressures result in problems for young people to find employment due to limited number of jobs and the mismatch between training and the skills sought by employers.

Graph 1. Population structure (World Bank, 2017)
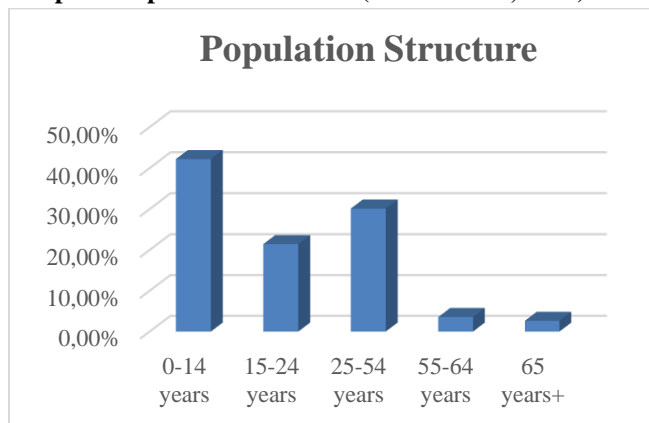
DRC has the ambitious goal of turning the country into an emerging market economy by 2030, and a developed country by 2050. One of the most difficult changes would be to shift the economy from informal to formal, as the informal sector accounts for 80% of the economy.[21] There is also a need for a more diversified economy. The informal sector is made up mostly of subsistence farming and

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[15] Copper +9,3%, cobalt +18%, zinc +48%, gold +5,7%, diamond +13%. Agro- industry production increased 3,8% for sawn timber and 2,1% for palm oil, while coffee decreased by 33% and caoutchouc remained rather steady.

[16] Financial Times, url: https://www.ft.com/content/50db825c-9152-11e7-bdfa-eda243196c2c

[17] IMF (2018), Presentation on DRC economic development, Kinshasa 22 February 2018.

[18] World Bank data (2018) GDP Growth (annual %) URL: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG?locations=CD&view=chart

[19] Unit: constant 2010 USD

[20] World Bank (2017), Nouveau Cadre de Partenariat 2018-2023 entre la République Démocratique du Congo et le Groupe de la Banque Mondiale. Power Point Presentation.

[21] KPMG, DRC Economic Snapshot H2 2017, url: https://home.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/za/pdf/2017/12/DRC-2017H2.pdf

services, where 65,3% work with agriculture and 28,9% in the service sector.[22] The economy and incomes for the government are dependent on the industry and natural resource commodity prices, however only 5,8% of the work force are found in the formal industrial sector.[23]

Despite the high yield potential of DRC's land, its agricultural sector is chronically plagued by inefficiency and low productivity. Agriculture was ranked as the most unproductive sector in DRC in 2014.[24] The lack of agricultural productiveness is the result of uncoordinated and inconsistent developmental strategies, on the one hand, and a progressive and steady withdrawal of the government from agricultural-supporting activities, on the other. The government removed all agricultural price supports and subsidies in 2002. This has left farmers using rudimentary equipment and poor-quality inputs (e.g., seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides). Despite minor improvements in roads and market access, the overall poor quality of infrastructure has served as another inhibitor. This has been exacerbated by environmental shocks, such as pest diseases, famine, droughts, and flooding.[25] The consequences are severe for the affected individuals. As an illustrative example, several large cities, including Kinshasa and Goma, have reported cholera outbreaks in the past year. This is in part linked to heavy rain falls and floodings and flawed sewage and rain evacuation systems.

The international community was the primary source of health financing 2008-2013, contributing with up to 40% of the health expenditure, followed by households (mainly out-of-pockets) with 39%. This trend continues. The government's part has represented only 15% of the health expenditure.[26] These imbalances imply that without significant international support it is likely that the health sector would collapse and access to basic services for the most vulnerable would be even more compromised. The government budget's allocation to health is insignificant (4%), used to pay salaries and not for any investments.

3.4 Environmental context

DRC is also scoring low on various environmental and climate change indexes. On the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index DRC receives a high vulnerability score and low readiness score in 2016, which means that there is a great need for investment and innovations to improve readiness for climate change and a great urgency for action. DRC is the 12th most vulnerable country and the 5th least ready country in terms of economic, governance and social rediness and exposure, sensitivity and capacity to adapt to the negative effects of climate change. DRC ranks 178/180 countries on the Environmental performance index in 2018.

DRC possesses enormous natural resources with the Congo Basin being the second largest tropical forest in the world. However, with an estimated deforestation rate from 0,2% in 2015 to 0,4% in 2018, the forest area is lost by half of Belgium each year. Main causes of deforestation are slash and burn

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[22] KPMG, DRC Economic Snapshot H2 2017, url:
https://home.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/za/pdf/2017/12/DRC-2017H2.pdf
[23] KPMG, DRC Economic Snapshot H2 2017, url:
https://home.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/za/pdf/2017/12/DRC-2017H2.pdf
[24] Otchia, "Agricultural Modernization, Structural Change and Pro-poor Growth: Policy Options for the Democratic Republic of Congo", *Journal of Economic Structures* 2014, 3:8, cited in DFID-EACP (2017), "Understanding poverty and social exclusion in DRC", DFID DRC Evidence, Analysis, and Coordination Programme, p.13.
[25] DFID-EACP (2017), "Understanding poverty and social exclusion in DRC", DFID DRC Evidence, Analysis, and Coordination Programme, p.14
[26] World Bank : Investing in Universal Health Coverage. Opportunities and Challenges for Health Financing in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 2014.

subsistence farming techniques, as well as the fact that fuelwood accounts for 95% of rural households' energy consumption, and close to 90% of that of urban households.

Figure 2. Carbon stock DRC (REDD+ secretariat 2016)
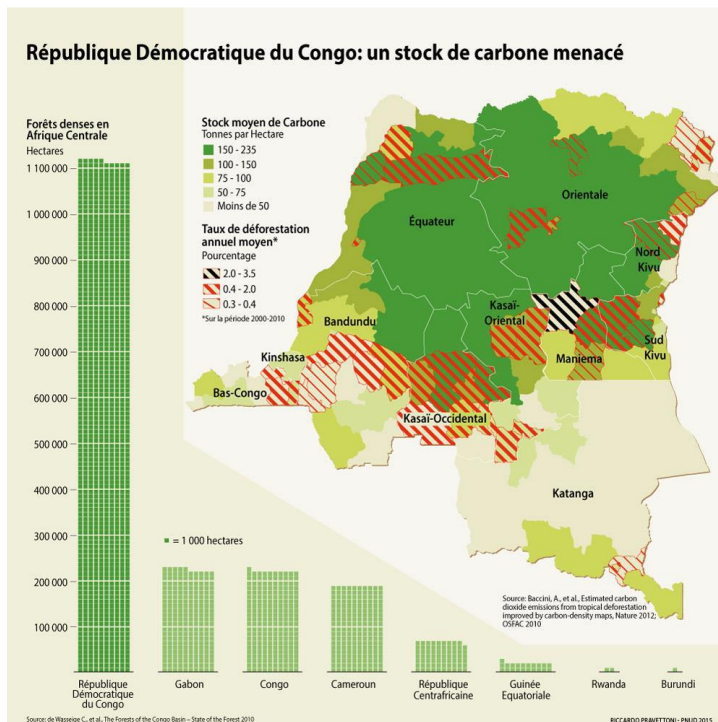
In terms of mining resources, DRC is among the richest and most diversified countries in the world, with sources of coltan, cobalt, copper, diamond, tantalum, tin, and gold just to mention the main natural resources available. Mining is the country's largets source of export income, despite much being smuggled across the borders and its revenues not making it into the national tresory. There is often talk of the "curse of natural resources" in DRC, with access and control being a key driver of conflict.

Only 10% of the country's 80 million hectar of non-forest arable land is cultivated, and only one third of the consumed food is produced locally. Currently DRC is a net importer of food products, with a $ 1.7 billion annual deficit in the food trade reported. Despite its huge potential for large-scale farming, the country suffers from food insecurity and widespread and chronic malnutrition.

As a country DRC is not able to prepare for and mitigate the risks and impacts of environmental shocks such as droughts and floodings, despite the fact that such heavy rainfalls are common every year. Landslides and several deaths are often reported with each heavy rainfall throughout the country.

4 The four dimensions of multidimensional poverty

4.1 Resources

Throughout the country, communities face several shocks, largely related to armed attacks, and to a lesser extent epidemics, in addition to structural weaknesses of access to basic services and poverty, including nutrition and school. The main consequences, in addition to mortality, are displacements

(detailed in the human security section), as well as the inability to cultivate, destruction of crops and lack of access to lands because of the insecurity, which compromises the livelihoods. The share of the population in multipoverty went from 74,4% (2010) to 72,5 % in 2014 according to UNDP. In 2016: 39.6% of the population was identified as very poor (less than 50USD/month) and 33.9% poor (between 50-100 USD/month).[27] Displaced populations (to date approximately 4,5 million people) have limited, if any resources, with further decreased access to for example basic social services such as health and education, and with limited power and voice, as is detailed further below.

Although data is not fully representative, the CRG/BERCI data indicates that three of the poorest provinces belong to Grand Equateur (Sub-Ubangi, Tshuapa and Mongala); two of the top six were in former Bandundu (Mai-Mdombe and Kwango); two of the top seven were in former Kasai Oriental (Kasai Oriental and Lomami). These provinces and others make up the eleven that still have poverty rates above 80%.[28]

Figure 3. DRC poverty and multidimensional poverty map (World Bank 2012, OPHI 2016)
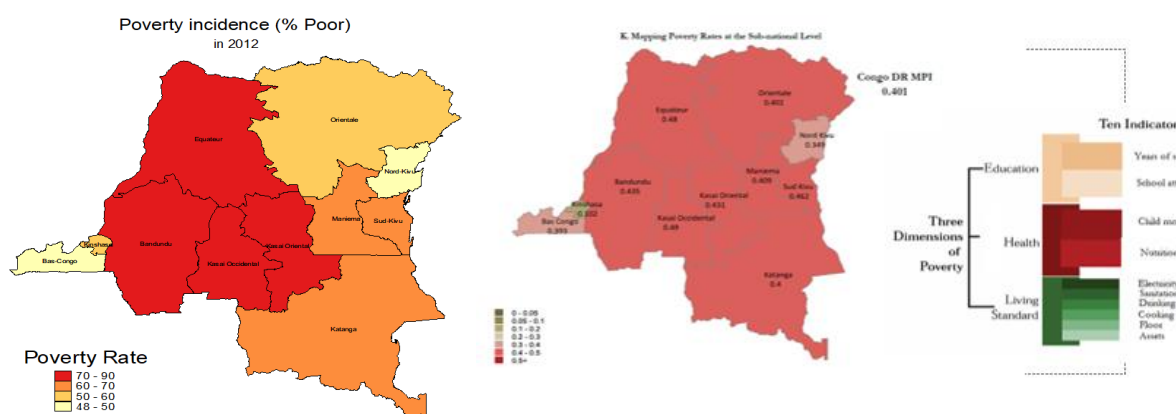
Despite the potential of agriculture in the country, 7 million people are estimated to be food insecure, with 2.2 million children under five severely acutely malnourished and 2,4 million children moderately acutely malnourished. 26% of urban residents have only one meal a day versus 16,5% of rural residents. A larger percentage of women consume two meals a day compared to men, though they are less nutritive overall.

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[27] DFID-EACP (2017), "Understanding poverty and social exclusion in DRC", DFID DRC Evidence, Analysis, and Coordination Programme, p.11.
[28] DFID-EACP (2017), "Understanding poverty and social exclusion in DRC", DFID DRC Evidence, Analysis, and Coordination Programme, p.11.

Figure 4. Food insecurity (ICP June 2017)
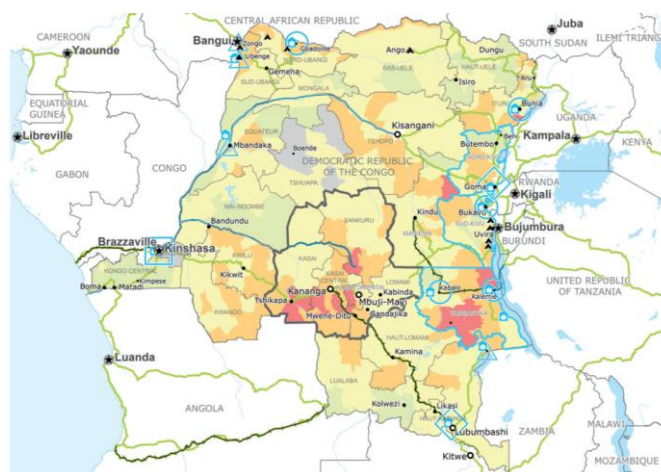
Maternal mortality (846 per 100 000 live births) and fertility rates (6,6) remain among the highest in the world. The high population growth hampers the health interventions gains and impacts negatively on other indicators such as malnutrition. Child malnutrition (stunting) affects more than 42% of the children in the country. The SRHR situation is also worrying. The modern contraceptive prevalence rate is very low (8%). Early childbirth (births from 15-19 represent 10% of total births) and early marriage (50% of women aged 15-19 are married by 18 years) are some determinants of the high fertility rate in the country. Adolescent (15-19) fertility rate is high compared to the African average: 135 per 1,000 live births compared to 120 per 1,000 live births. More than one adolescent girl out of four (27%) have already started their reproductive lives; 21% have already given birth to at least one child.[29]

Mortality rates have decreased over thet past years (see below), but still remains above the average of other sub-Saharian countries. Life expectancy increased from 48 in 2012 to 59 in 2016, but is still below 60 years, and the fertility rate is over 6 children per woman. The literacy rate is 20% weaker for women than for men, and though the level of attendance to primary school is rather high, the drop out rate is significant and very weak for secondary school. Education indicators did not improve much over the years and the attendance rate to primary school even decreased from 90 % in 2012 to 83% in 2016.

4.1.1   Who is poor and vulnerable

As noted above, there is a gender gap of approximately 4% (2016) in terms of resources, with women being more vulnerable than men. Women tend to be poorer when they are heads of household than men. Female heads of household are more likely to be divorced, separated or widowed, categories that are associated with a greater prevalence of poverty. Being married greatly improves the poverty status of men over any other category and over women, while being single has the same effect on women. Although the proportion of female homemakers is significantly larger than men of all matrimonial statuses, the gap surges for married women. The data generally supports the view that being married reinforces traditional socio-economic roles and reduces the economic agency and earning potential of women. Women also tend to have lower rates of asset ownership (e.g., mobiles phones and

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[29] DHS DRC 2013-2014

televisions) compared to men, yet calorie consumption is higher in female-headed households (7 to 5% higher, on average), and this is likely driven by the fact that female-headed households tend to be smaller, as female heads of houses are often single, divorced, or widowed.[30]

There are persistent inequalities in access to economic opportunities in DRC. If employed, Congolese women also face the risk of discrimination of remuneration in the labor market. Women also has limited access to land/right to inherit land, an obstacle that has no legal support but is rather reinforced by traditions and customs. Another inhibiting factor is women's overall lower literacy rate.

Congolese urban residents, men and women, are both more vulnerable than their rural counterparts, but also have more opportunities for income generation. The poverty rate among people who live off agriculture are the highest (84,1%). More than 65% of people working in the education sector fall below the poverty line. 58% of civil servants remain in poverty.[31]

Internally displaced people have, as noted above, very limited, if any resources to talk about. Often they only own what they manage to carry. More women and children tend to be displaced adult men.

4.1.2 Coping strategies

The resilience of the communities remains rather limited, though some local coping strategies exist, such as small-scheme savings cooperatives between individuals, food savings and trying to prepare for natural disasters, for example drought or floodings. The traditional solidarity mechanisms have been damaged by the persistence of the conflict and poverty, for example, in terms of cash management in remote areas. There are efforts to promote for example approaches using local resources such as implementation of community based dynamics, for example for nutrition or WASH.

4.2 Opportunity and Choice

DRC notes some progress on a few social indicators, such as immunization rates and access to primary education. Yet, immunization rates still vary between 70 and 80% without a clear trend towards increasing, indicating the limitations in terms of access to the various groups of the population and logistics. Primary school enrollments rates are high for both boys and girls but recent data is missing. Drop-out rates are still high for girls, and enrollment rates for secondary education were just 43% in 2014.[32] Access to education has a limited impact on a household's poverty level, according to DFID's analysis. This is partially due to poor quality education and partially due to lack of opportunities in rural areas.[33]

Considerable challenges faces the population. Access to health remains limited, in particular in rural areas, with issues in the quality of services provided. Access to improved sanitation facilities concern less than 30% of the population, and even access to improved water sources in rural areas covers less than 32%, which is obviously a concern for health purposes. Around 20% of the population only has

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[30] DFID-EACP (2017), "Understanding poverty and social exclusion in DRC", DFID DRC Evidence, Analysis, and Coordination Programme.

[31] DFID-EACP (2017), "Understanding poverty and social exclusion in DRC", DFID DRC Evidence, Analysis, and Coordination Programme.

[32] World Bank country diagnostic 2018, draft.

[33] DFID-EACP (2017), "Understanding poverty and social exclusion in DRC", DFID DRC Evidence, Analysis, and Coordination Programme, p.21

access to basic sanitation. There are significant disparities within the population. On birth registration for example, the rate is 15,7 for the poorest 20% of the population, and 38,4 for the richest 20%, which overall remain extremely low. On child marriage before the age of 15, while the DRC average is 10%, this varies from 15% and more in South Kivu and Maniema, followed by the former Orientale and Equateur areas, while this is less than 7,5% in Bas-Congo and Kinshasa. This, however, only captures the number of registered marriages, whereas the majority of early marriages are never officially registered.

Less than 15% of the population has access to electricity. For rural areas the number is below 1%, with a tendency to decline even further due to maintenance issue of the limited network, and lack of functioning of basic services. Even when people have access to the national power grid, SNEL, it does not actually mean that they have electricity since power provision is extremely limited. Around half of the population subscribes to mobile telecommunication, indicating the potential of this kind of tools and modern technology.

It is almost impossible to talk about unemployment in DRC, since the informal sector absorbs the majority of the working population in one way or another (representing over 88%). It is more relevant to talk about under-employment since many do not have a stable, full-time income. Congolese who can find formal paid employment remain the minority, at approximately 20% if part-time work is included. Self-employment and informal employment provide the main source of income among the poor. Self-employment provides them an income about half that of wage employment.[34] Agriculture is the main source of employment for the rural poor and most of these agricultural workers are self-employed.

Regarding financial inclusion, access to credit and savings is very low. About 52% of the population does not have access and only 12% have a bank account.[35] According to the latest activity report of Microfinance (2016) published by the Central Bank of Congo, more than 1,9 million accounts were registered at the end of 2016, which is a 2,7% increase from 2015. Geographic coverage has also increased with 16 out of 26 provinces now covered. The Central Bank report also indicates that the number of women account holders increased to 47,5% in 2016 (from 40,2% in 2015), whereas the number of male account holders decreased from 59% to 52,5%.[36]

4.2.1   Who is poor and vulnerable

For oppportunity and choice, youth is considered a main at-risk group also for under-employment. Child labor is also very frequent in the country, because of the level of poverty of the families. Furthermore, children run a risk of not accessing education due to the deteriorated situation. Often classes are delayed or equipment destroyed. At times schools cannot be used for education purposes as they may be occupied by IDPs, or by armed groups. Even in more stable provinces, drop-out rates are higher for girls from secondary school and up. Adolescent girls often also have their sexual and reproductive health rights violated, mainly due to lack of family planning options and (forced) early marriages. In general lack of access to quality maternal and child health care affect women and children. Women are also the main responsible for the household which means that disruptions in

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[34] DFID-EACP (2017), "Understanding poverty and social exclusion in DRC", DFID DRC Evidence, Analysis, and Coordination Programme, p.12.

[35] Rapport Finscop et Banque Centrale du Congo, Rapport d´activités de la Microfinance 2016

[36] Banque Centrale du Congo, Rapport d´activités de la Microfinance 2016

market access, water points etc direct impact women firstly, as well as all of the family as a consequence.

Although opportunity and choice is limited for many Congolese, IDPs are at higher vulnerability risk. A majority of the IDP population is not in displacement camps/sites but are living in host communities. Limited resources for both the displaced and the host families result in low access to basic services, such as health and education. Although primary education is technically free in DRC, families are asked to pay different kinds of fees for their child to access (and finish) school, which is one of the main reasons why girls' drop out rates in particular are high.

4.2.2 Coping strategies

People do what they can to survive. As noted above, many are engaged in self-employment, and then mostly in petty-trade. The rural poor also rely on subsistence farming, on small plots of land. Working on family farms (without a paid wage) is by far the most common form of work in rural areas, with 92% of the working rural population employed in this manner.

There are also local saving schemes developed at various level and ambition. Most common is the "likelemba" usually arranged informally between a limited number of people. This is how most people manage to pay for example school fees for their children. Many NGOs support savings- and loans associations in an effort to build on exisiting coping mechanisms, but also introduce a bigger savings component into the mix.

4.3 Power and voice

Power and voice are negatively affected by political instability and insecurity. An increase in human rights violations were noted in 2016, believed to be linked to a large number of violations related to restrictions to democratic space, in particular due to the postponement of national elections. Such trends were confirmed and reinforced in 2017, with over 20% of the violations documented (and verified) by the UN Joint Human Rights Office being linked to the restriction of democratic space and fundamental freedoms.[37] Between January 2017 and February 2018, at least 47 persons (including four women and three children) were killed by security or defence forces, while participating in demonstrations or in conjuction with such events.[38]

Access to power and voice in DRC is mainly linked to ethnicity, gender, and other allegiances (ethnic and religious groups). Discrimination is linked to sex, disability, ethnicity and political affiliation. No real data exist that captures ethnicity and power at a national level and one would need to analyze each province and territory closer in order to get a better understanding. The DFID poverty analysis looks closer at the CRG/BERCI dataset and concludes a correlation between ethnicity and poverty. The data shows a descending proportion of people living in poverty, the more "Congolese" one feels. This could be because the poorer you are the more likely you are to fall back on ethnicity as a means to access networks of survival.[39] Another contributing factor to income poverty and power and voice is

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[37] JHRO (2018a), « Analysis of the human rights situation in 2017".
[38] JHRO (2018b), « Recours illegal, injustifie et disproportionne a la force lors de la gestion des manifestations publiques en republique democratique du congo de janvier 2017 a janvier 2018 »
[39] DFID-EACP (2017), "Understanding poverty and social exclusion in DRC", DFID DRC Evidence, Analysis, and Coordination Programme, p.38

language. Ability to speak French is associated with significant less poverty. Lingala and Swahili, associated with power and resources in more resource-rich provinces, report a poverty level similar to the national level. According to the DFID report, despite Congo Central being one of the richest provinces, Kikongo-speakers are the poorest of the four national languages. People who do not master any of the four main languages, nor French, are even poorer on average.[40]

There is a dual system of customary power and administrative power, often causing conflict and being used for political manipulation. Larger groups in a province are considered "originaires", with their ancestry traced to that province. There is a general understanding that such groups should receive material advantages, as well as guaranteed access to power and voice, such as the customary power.[41]

Article 14 of the Constitution explicitly gives women the right to non-discrimination in the public and political spheres, including the right to vote, the right to stand for elections to all publicly elected bodies, the right to participate in the formulation of government policy and its implementation, and the right to hold public office and to perform all public functions at all levels of government. Despite this, women's political representation remains very low in DRC. Only 9,7% of the MPs elected in 2011 were women. In 2017, the number was 8,4% in the national parliament, and 7% on average in provincial parliaments. The more progressive provinces are North and South Kivu with 21% and 19% female provincial members of parliament respectively. In the five governments since 2006, the proportion of women ministers has been between 10 and 15 percent. In the most recent government (installed May 2017), women account for 10,1% (6 of 59 positions). Only two of the 26 provincial governors and four of the vice-governors are women. A new electoral law was passed in 2015, and a parity law promulgated the same year. But these laws have not ended up facilitating greater women's representation in politics as was expected.

Data is missing for more details on access to justice at the national level. UNDP perceptions surveys from North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri, indicate that between 7 and 44 % of the population consider that judges treat everybody in the same fair way, with a majority around 7-15% (2017). Even less believe that decisions are taken in a fair manner. Around 30% of the population feel safe to complain to authorities if they are victims of a crime.[42]

4.3.1   Who is poor and vulnerable

As for power and voice, (young) women's lack of voice and influence is striking throughout the country. Although female role models exist (and they inspire more and more action), women are mostly active in civil society and the link between civil society engagement and politics is weak. Another marginalized group is persons of autochtone origine, or any ethnic group not in power in any given location. Rights are often denied, and abusive practices by other groups are frequent. This is often a source of conflict, as noted above. Access to justice is weak for a majority of the population not living close to an administrative center. Even when having actual access, the justice system is rather flawed and corrupt so justice is likely not served to the victim, unless money can be paid.

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[40] DFID-EACP (2017), "Understanding poverty and social exclusion in DRC", DFID DRC Evidence, Analysis, and Coordination Programme, p.38
[41] DFID-EACP (2017), "Understanding poverty and social exclusion in DRC", DFID DRC Evidence, Analysis, and Coordination Programme, p.38
[42] http://www.peacebuildingdata.org/interactivemaps/drc-polls#/?series=Latest&indicator=13_4_3

As within the other dimensions, IDPs again face vulnerabilities linked to power and voice. Although some IDPs managed to register to be able to vote, it is still not clear how they will actually vote on election day. Furthermore, they are facing additional social exclusion due to their displaced situation.

4.3.2 Coping strategies

Despite rather gloomy looking descriptions of the capabilities to function for a big part of the population, there are some positive signs. There is a willingness to act for change, in particular among youth and women. The population has started to mobilize to push for change. Women's political participation, weak as it is in terms of numbers, also seems to be getting stronger, and it motivates other women to get involved. Community-based change agents do exist, both men and women, but they need ot be identified and strengthened in order to achieve impact. Faithbased organisations and actors play a crucial role for behavioral and attitude change as well, in particular at the local level.

Overall, the institutional framework exists allowing for power and voice of all Congolese, but the implementation and respect of such laws are still flawed. The Consitution is one of the more liberal ones globally, for example. A major step forward was the adoption of the new family code in 2016 which opened up new possibilities for gender equality, in theory. Some major changes include the abolition of marital authorization for a married woman and the obligation of the spouses to agree on all legal acts in which they commit themselves. The new code also asserts the principle of the concerted participation and management of the household by the spouses, particularly as regards to property and expenses. However, not much has changed on the ground in reality.

4.4 Human security

There is no clear indication of an improvement in the security situation in the country. Standard indicators hardly account for the reality of the situation in the DRC and the numerous vulnerabilities that are accentuated due to the various crises. Short term effects of the insecurity adds to structural violence in terms of access to livelihoods trade, and impacts social cohesion. Overall, the number of people affected by the crisis has doubled since 2015. In 2017, DRC became the country with the largest displaced population in Africa (over 4.5 million IDPs, including 2.7 million children).[43]

The country faces a proliferation of non-state armed groups all over the territory, of which several are of foreign origin (Uganda, Burundi, and Rwanda). According to the OCHA Humanitarian Needs Overview from 2015, the number of active armed groups were 48. However, this estimation is low, as the armed groups in the Kivus alone are believe to have become even more fragmented since 2012. Today, the number is estimated to be around 130 for South- and North Kivu, if one considers all splinter groups and newly established smaller militias.[44] More modest numbers indicate around 70 armed groups in the east.[45] The distinction between armed groups and criminal action is however not always clear, and the armed groups are in constant evolution, and as noted above, the number continues to grow and new coalitions are formed. The main victim of increased insecurity is the civilian population.
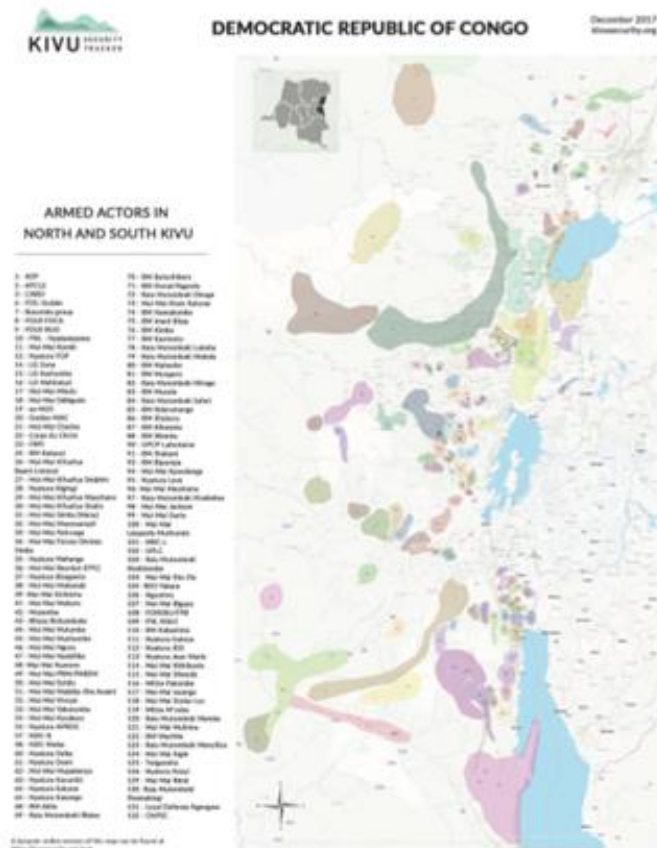
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[43] OCHA (2018), DRC, IDPs (31 December 2017), URL: https://reliefweb.int/report/democratic-republic-congo/democratic-republic-congo-internally-displaced-persons-and-4
[44] Kivu Security Tracker (2018)
[45] UNICEF data 2018

Figure 6. Armed groups in North-and South Kivu 2017

As noted above, the humanitarian response plan estimates that around 13 million Congolese are in need of protection of some sort. From January to December 2017, UNJHRO documented 6 497 human rights violations and abuses throughout the country, which represents an average of more than 541 human rights violations per month and a 25 % increase compared to 2016. Violations of the right to liberty and security of person were the most reported type of violations documented in 2017. A total of 3 360 people had their physical integrity violated. Among those victims, at least 510 women, 219 children and 30 men endured conflict-related sexual violence (a 53% increase compared to 2016). For a majority of the cases of sexual violence (74%), combatants of armed groups and armed militiamen were the perpetrators, while 26% of the cases were attributable to State agents, mainly FARDC (20%).[46]

The national situation regarding sexual and gender-based violence (not just conflict-related) continues to deteriorate, although under-reporting is still believed to be a significant problem. Furthermore, different structures report different numbers. The national database under the Ministry of Gender reports on all forms of SGBV based on unverified reporting from various structures and NGOs. While there was a decrease in numbers reported to the database since 2015 (from 19 456 to 13 045 in 2017)[47], an effort was made in 2017 to improve national coverage. As such data from the national health statistics system (SNIS) was also included (excluding the lowest number of reporting from any given province, regardless of database). This brought the number of cases of sexual and gender-based violence up to a total of 38 705, a majority being rape. What is worrisome is not just the high total

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[46] JRHO (2018a), Analysis of the human rights situation in 2017.
[47] Ministère de la Femme, Famille, Enfant (2018), Données sur la violence sexuelle et basée sur le genre.

number but also that increased numbers of sexual violence are now coming from different parts of the country. At the same time, the numbers in the Kasai region and from the Tanganyika province are believed to be severely under-reported, mostly due to lack of structures capable of providing support to survivors.

Table 2. Reported SGBV cases 2012-2017 (Ministry of Gender, Children and Family)

Year	Women	Men	Total	# Rape
2012	18 512	454	19 656	9747
2013	24 851	655	27 339	17 004
2014	18 526	364	21 964	12 376
2015	21 376	681	26 738	17 552
2016	21 517	511	22 075	14 996
2017	12 278	718	13 045**	8171

** Revised number for 2017: 34 778 cases of SGBV, mainly rape

Another vulnerability facing the population is the risk of enrolment of children in armed groups. UNICEF Children DDR data has identified over 10 000 children who have exited armed forces and groups since 2015. Twenty percent of these children were released in 2017. According to the UN Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM), 2391 children were recruited and used by armed groups in 2017. At least 88 children were killed and maimed,. The rape of 266 children (mainly girls) was verified. A total of 60 attacks on schools and hospitals were verified. A total of 1020 boys and girls were abducted.[48] These numbers do not include the Kasai area, which reported staggering numbers on some of the violations in 2017: 665 cases of recruitment, 46 cases of abduction, 154 cases of sexual violence, 80 cases of killing an maiming, and 406 attacks on schools and hospitals.

In 2017 DRC was delisted from the list of countries whose state armed forces recruit and use child soldiers. Despite the success of the zero vision of recruiting child soldiers in the armed forces, the armed forces are still accused of continuing to commit brutal abuse of children. MONUSCO has noted cases where children who are freed from groups are sometimes held for several months by the security forces.

4.4.1 Who is poor and vulnerable

In terms of human security, women and children are faced with a variety of threats and protection risks, particularly in times of conflict. Women and children make out majority of IDPs, women are the main victims of sexual violence, and children run a risk of being recruited into armed groups. Although the number of combatants is hard to specify, the main at-risk group for recrutement is in majority young men. Over 5000 (former) combatants have gone through the national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme since 2015, but with the high number of armed groups still exisiting (albeit varying size and capacity), many combatants still remain.

4.4.2 Coping strategies

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[48] MRM (2018)

Living in constant insecurity means that the local population has developed their own protection mechanisms, in particular since the police and armed forces are not seen as capable or present to actually fulfill this role. Local early warning mechanisms exists throughout the communities, and local protection committees are frequently set up, sometimes involving the security forces, but most often not. Local solutions for conflict resolution are many, often based on the traditional customary power system and the role of the mwami/customary chief. This position is at times contested and have been the source of conflict, which can be seen most recently in Kasai Central.

Since high share of human insecurity is closely linked to poverty, the above mentioned strategies for survival impacts this dimension as well. Trying to find a more sustainable income for a majority of the population is believed to decrease the risk of recruitment into armed groups. This does not however necessarily impact the security vacuum often experienced at the local level; another crucial driver of conflict. The fact that the responsibility to protect is often taken by local initiatives may not necessarily increase people's security, since this is also how many armed groups started (as local defence groups protecting the own ethnic group). Human security is in many ways linked to ethnicity, geography and access to land.

5 Conclusions

One of the main conclusions of the multi-dimensional poverty analysis has been that there is not sufficient updated (reliable) data available in DRC. Although several sources have been included in the above analysis, the analysis should be seen as a living document that shold be reviewed once the MISC and DHS data are available.

Another conclusion is that the humanitarian crises and development challenges impact people's resilience capacity. This capacity is weakened by the presence of armed groups impacting the coping strategies of a population who is used to not being settled in one place more than a few years at a time. In this context it is not enough to speak only about bridging the gap between humanitarian and development without including a focus on peace (building) as well. In other words there needs to be increased focus on resilience and the link between humanitarian assistance and development cooperation, taking into account the conflict context in which this assistance is being implemented.

There is a need to increase resistence towards shocks at the local level. Vulnerabilities and lack of resilience are drivers of poverty (and conflict) and crosses into all four poverty dimensions. There is thus a need for resilience to be cross-cutting and conflict prevention/transformation/peace-building need to be at the center of the strategy. Even for less conflict prone areas, a preventive aspect is needed since drivers of conflict are still present. Furthermore, environmental challenges are sources of conflict (access and exploitation of natural resources, access to land etc.) and should be addressed more explicitly (not only in eastern Congo) in development cooperation.

Income poverty levels are staggering (77%) in DRC with geographic differences, and an urban-rural divide that needs to be addressed in development cooperation. Development interventions need to consider that the majority (75%) of the population is considered multi-dimensionally poor, according to OPHI. Around 15% of population needs humanitarian assistance or is being helped by first responders (families, neighbors etc.). The gender gap is not huge when looking at monetary poverty at a national level, but more explicit in opportunity and choice, with roots in power and voice. There are also a difference between men and women, as well as social and marital status. Human security has

clear gender components as well (sexual and gender based violence, internally displaced persons, armed group recruitment etc.).

The population growth (the population is foreseen to almost double in the next 20 years) needs to be taken into consideration more explicitly in development cooperation. The majority of the population is under the age of 35, and mostly un- or underemployed, which is a driver of instability. Economic diversification is very limited and a constraining factor for addressing monetary poverty. Imbalance in distribution of power as well as of (economic) resources that play out differently throughout the country, for example via ethnic tensions in the east, but also an east-west divide, and a small elite versus the rest of the population

Diminishing democratic space and lack of respect of human rights are underlying factors for poverty and conflict and with implications on people's capacity to use their resources and power and voice (capability to function). Nepotic and kleptocratic power structures constrain opportunity and choice as well as power and voice; it reduces access to productive employment, limits mobilization of the masses, and leads to the politization of civil society. Development cooperation actors need to identify and support true change agents.