



COUNTRY PROFILE



Children are often the unintended victims of conflict, as parents are unable to insure they are well-fed and healthy. USAID helps return malnourished children to health.

OVERVIEW

The installation of an elected government in 2007 presents the greatest opportunity since independence for a stable, representative democracy in the Democratic Republic of Congo. However, life expectancy in DRC is only 46, and nearly 83 percent of all Congolese have either only primary schooling or no schooling at all. The new government is now working to build institutions that can meet citizens' needs, while dealing with the interrelated structural problems of rampant corruption, inadequate infrastructure and human resources, and a limited ability to raise and manage revenues. USAID programs seek to end the ongoing conflict in the east and promote the country's emergence as a coherent entity that serves all Congolese.



PROGRAMS

PEACE AND SECURITY

USAID works to increase stability by mitigating the causes and consequences of conflict. Stabilization, conflict management and mitigation, and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration activities are designed to mitigate ongoing conflict, with the long-term goal of extending state administration and basic social services to the entire national territory. The U.S. Government will also address transnational crime, such as trafficking and migrant smuggling, and support programs that protect vulnerable people from sexual and gender-based violence.

GOVERNING JUSTLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY

Congolese expectations are high for government reform following the successful installation of a democratically elected president and Parliament. USAID assistance is intended to strengthen core governance institutions and build the new decentralized institutions mandated in the constitution. Programs support the creation of an effective and equitable justice system, promote good governance, protect human rights, fight corruption, strengthen independent media, promote civic participation, enhance political competition, and build the capacity of the legislature to function effectively and in consultation with a range of stakeholders. Building capacity among government workers and within civil society is fundamental to the transformation of each of these areas of governance.

DRC SNAPSHOT

Date of independence: 1960
Population: 66 million (2008)
GDP per person: \$300 (yr)

Source: U.S. State Department

USAID IN THE DRC

www.usaid.gov/cg



COUNTRY PROFILE CONTINUED

INVESTING IN PEOPLE: HEALTH

USAID support in the health sector is designed to improve the basic health conditions of the Congolese people by increasing their use of primary health care services and products. At the same time, USAID is improving the quality of health care and strengthening the capacity of government, the private sector, and civil society. Programs seek to reduce maternal, infant and newborn disease and death; respond to infectious disease threats including tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV/AIDS; increase access to family planning services; rehabilitate essential health infrastructure; and increase access to potable water.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE: EDUCATION

As a result of civil war, conflict, and the collapse of the social sector, school enrolment rates and the overall quality of education in the DRC have dropped dramatically. USAID activities have promoted access by reducing school fees and improved the quality of basic education by training teachers and providing learning materials. The introduction of innovative methods such as interactive radio instruction and student-centered learning have increased student attendance and achievement and improved teacher performance and effectiveness. Programs also promote community participation in school management with an eye toward increasing attendance, particularly among girls, and reducing conflict by addressing corruption and exclusion of vulnerable groups.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

USAID programs seek to increase agricultural productivity in order to restart the rural economy, and strengthen microenterprises to link small and medium-sized enterprises to market opportunities. U.S. assistance will also promote a framework for sound economic management, including stabilizing inflation and exchange rates and increasing budgetary transparency and discipline. Programs will also help to improve environment for doing business through policy and regulatory reforms and promoting public and private investments in transportation and energy. Recognizing the value of the natural environment to the DRC's economic potential, the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment will provide leadership in natural resource management and biodiversity protection.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

USAID humanitarian programs seek to save lives and reduce suffering by targeting areas that have been severely affected by conflict and that have the highest mortality and malnutrition rates. USAID provides food assistance as well as support for programs in the areas of water and sanitation, food security, settlement and shelter, and the transportation of humanitarian personnel and materials.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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