



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

FAO'S ROLE IN THE 2008 HUMANITARIAN ACTION PLAN

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Background

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is one of the poorest countries in the world. Human suffering deeply roots in decades of civil unrest and conflict. Since 1998, famine, violence and disease have taken over 3.5 million lives. Though bearing Africa's highest potential for prosperity in terms of forests and mineral wealth, the vast majority of Congolese live in extreme poverty, with earnings of less than USD 1 per day.

The humanitarian situation in DRC remains among the world's most fatal and complex crises. Some 70 percent of the population is food insecure. Estimates reveal that only one out of ten infants reaches his/her first birthday. Human rights abuses are rampant, with sexual violence against women and children causing extreme physical, psychological and social damage.

DRC is at a defining moment in its history. The 2003 peace agreement, democratic elections of 2006 and the disarmament of numerous militias have increased prospects for peace, poverty reduction and the return of hundreds of thousands of displaced persons.

Against this background, the DRC 2008 Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP) has outlined strategic priorities to assist conflict-affected populations most in need. Agriculture and food security interventions form an integral part of assistance under the 2008 HAP. With agriculture as a means to sustainably improve household nutrition and food security, rehabilitation of the sector will be paramount to the country's progress towards recovery.

FAO's expertise in food security, farming, livestock, fisheries and forestry actively focuses on empowering rural communities to restore local food production and provide a sustainable exit from food aid – actions which are essential to lasting recovery and self-reliance. To achieve this, FAO provides vulnerable households with the productive tools and assistance necessary to resume livelihood activities.



Two-thirds of DRC's population depends on agriculture for its food security and livelihoods

In 2007, FAO interventions in DRC directly assisted over 500 000 households, equivalent to approximately 2.5 million people. Thanks to donor funding, FAO was able to provide seeds, farming tools, fishing equipment, livestock, veterinary supplies and training to beneficiaries. This assistance equipped households with the means to resume their livelihoods and produce food in a lasting way.

FAO distributed quality agricultural inputs that responded to the needs and difficulties faced by farmers, such as high-yielding seed varieties and cassava cuttings, which are tolerant to mosaic disease. FAO also rehabilitated feeder roads to reduce the isolation of rural communities and facilitate their access to basic services, markets and water points.

FAO dedicated special focus to increasing the reintegration of ex-combatants and involvement of women in agricultural activities. Priority attention was also dedicated to households with malnourished children, victims of sexual violence, people with disabilities, HIV/AIDS-affected families, displaced persons, returnees, repatriates and households headed by women.



FAO in DRC

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is the lead agency in the food security and agriculture sector. FAO has been helping communities affected by conflict and natural disasters in DRC through its emergency and rehabilitation programme for 20 years. Millions of rural households have received assistance through FAO's programme in DRC.

2008 HAP for DRC

The humanitarian community has appealed for USD 575 million through the 2008 HAP. The primary funding mechanism for DRC is the Pooled Fund, a multi-donor humanitarian fund that aims to strengthen coordination and increase the extent to which funding responds to priority humanitarian needs. FAO's activities form part of priority assistance dedicated to food security, nutrition and coordination efforts.





OBJECTIVE

Improve the food security and livelihoods of 800 000 households

Within the framework of the 2008 HAP, FAO aims to restore the food security and livelihoods of 800 000 households, equivalent to approximately 4 million people. With support from the donor community, FAO assistance will equip rural families with the support necessary to resume crop, livestock and fishery production in a sustainable and effective way. This will greatly contribute to increasing the food availability and nutritional status of families most at risk, enhancing self-reliance and income-generation potential, while reducing the tendency of families to resort to harmful coping strategies, such as the sale of production assets in order to afford food or other vital needs.

ACTIVITIES

Provide inputs and technical guidance needed to restart production

FAO's activities will primarily focus on providing the inputs needed by farmers, pastoralists and fishers in order to resume their livelihood activities and ensuring that their production is high yielding. The distribution of quality inputs will be coupled with knowledge sharing, technical training and assistance in improved agricultural practices.

With sentinel posts established throughout the country, FAO will continue to facilitate roll-out of the Integrated Humanitarian and Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), provide IPC training, strengthen the food-security information base and thus increase response effectiveness. Developed by FAO in collaboration with partners, IPC is a data collection and monitoring system established to respond to the need for improved analysis and more effective use of available information to ensure appropriate and needs-based responses.

PARTNERSHIP AND MULTI-SECTORAL APPROACH

Coordination and information sharing

In 1998, FAO established an Emergency Coordination Unit in DRC to support national and local authorities in the coordination of agricultural interventions throughout the country. The Unit also offers technical guidance and capacity building to national institutions and partner organizations. In addition, FAO sub-offices are present in 22 locations countrywide. Strengthened coordination enables partner agencies to better identify and respond to needs, improve information exchange and avoid duplication of response efforts.

For more information on the 2008 HAP for DRC, please visit <http://www.rdc-humanitaire.net>



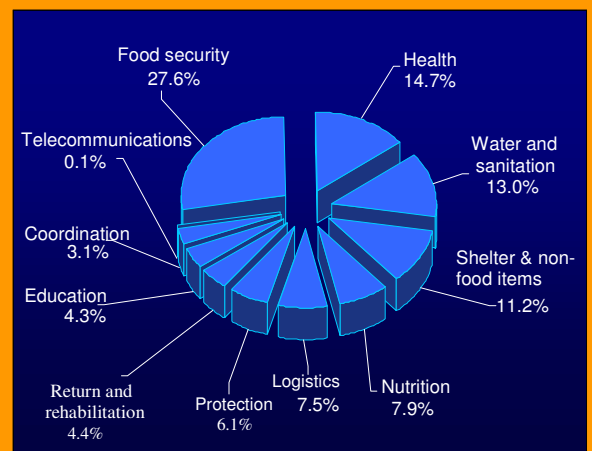
Inputs provided by FAO

- Quality-declared seeds
- Mosaic-tolerant and disease-free cassava cuttings
- Agricultural tools and equipment
- Healthy livestock and veterinary supplies
- Fishing gear

FAO activities and initiatives

- Livestock vaccination campaigns
- Seed multiplication programmes
- Training in improved agricultural practices
- Support to post-harvest processing
- Construction of fish ponds and irrigation systems
- Reconstruction of livestock holdings
- Vegetable production for household consumption, dietary diversity and sale to local markets
- Rehabilitation of feeder roads
- Assistance to nutrition centres

2008 HAP: Funding allotment per sector



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