GIEWS Country Brief
The Democratic Republic of the Congo

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**FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT**
- Food production in 2021 affected by conflict, displacements and COVID-19 restrictive measures
- Despite expected decline in 2021, inflation will remain high
- About 27.3 million people estimated severely food insecure in first half of 2021, an all-time high

**Food production in 2021 affected by conflict, displacements and COVID-19 restrictive measures**
Harvesting of the 2021 secondary maize crop is underway in the bi-modal rainfall northern provinces and the production outlook is generally favourable as precipitation amounts have been at near-average levels in most cropping areas. In the bi-modal central provinces, harvesting of the 2021 secondary season maize crop finalized in May, under overall favourable weather conditions, except in South Kivu Province, where heavy rains in mid-April caused localized flooding, resulting in some damage to standing crops. Increased violence in the eastern provinces, coupled with the eruption of the Nyiragongo Volcano, caused new population displacements, resulting in localized disruption of agricultural operations, including harvesting of the 2021 secondary season maize and land preparation of the 2021 main season maize crops, planting of which is currently underway. In the southernmost uni-modal rainfall areas, harvesting of the 2021 maize crops finalized in June. Despite irregular rainfall distribution during the season, cumulative amounts were near average and overall agro-climatic conditions were conducive for an adequate crop development.

Ongoing conflict and displacements, coupled with restrictive measures to control the COVID-19 pandemic, are expected to continue affecting agricultural activities and limit farmers’ access to crop growing areas and inputs, with a negative impact on the 2021 crop production.

**Despite an expected decline in 2021, inflation will remain high**
Since mid-March 2020, reduced cash crop exports, due to the slowdown of trade flows amid the COVID-19 pandemic,
resulted in a significant decrease of foreign exchange earnings, causing the depreciation of the Congolese franc and triggering significant price increases. The average annual inflation, which amounted to about 5 percent in 2019, spiked to an average of 14.6 percent in 2020. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), inflation in 2021 is expected to decline to about 11 percent.

**About 27.3 million people estimated severely food insecure in first half of 2021, an all-time high**

According to the March 2021 IPC analysis, about 27.3 million people (28 percent of the total population) were estimated to be severely food insecure (IPC Phase 3: “Crisis” or above) between February and July 2021, the highest level on record. This is mainly due to movement restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which continued to limit cross-border trade and access to the markets, to the severe impact of COVID-19 on the local economy and to the ongoing conflict in eastern provinces, which causes displacements and locally disrupts crop production. In eastern areas, violence has increased in early 2021, causing new displacements and leading to the declaration, on 6 May 2021, of a one-month “State of Siege” in the provinces of North Kivu and Ituri. The “State of Siege” was prolonged various times, with the latest two-week extension decided on 19 July 2021. Tensions remain also in South Kivu Province and, to a lesser extent, in Tanganyika Province. The displacement of an additional 415 000 people was caused by the eruption of the Nyiragongo Volcano in North Kivu Province on 22 May 2021.

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