



WFP Democratic Republic of Congo SPECIAL OPERATION SO 200661

Country:	Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
Type of project:	Special Operation
Title:	Strengthening Food Security Cluster Coordination in the Democratic Republic of Congo
Total cost (US\$):	US \$ 1 522 378
Duration:	12 months (1 March 2014 to 1 March 2015)

Executive Summary

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) continues to suffer from instability and armed conflict, epidemics, nutrition crises and natural disasters in a context of high poverty levels.

The DRC presents one of the largest, most complex humanitarian crises in the world. Over 5.4 million people have died from violence in the East because of conflict, disease and malnutrition during the last decade. Since 2009, over 2.7 million¹ people are displaced by the conflict, mostly in the Eastern Provinces of the DRC. In early November 2013 the main rebel movement in North Kivu, the M23, was defeated by the UN-backed Congolese Government and surrendered accordingly. However the root causes of the conflict, which mainly include inter-ethnic tensions and land disputes, have not been resolved. The other IDPs not affected by the M23 are victims of a number of different other armed groups, which continue to commit gross human right violations in the Eastern part of the country.

The latest Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC) exercise conducted in December 2013 has identified some 6,7 million people in acute food security and livelihood crisis in DRC².

A weak government and corruption has also reduced the national capacity to respond to the crises in the country³. In addition to this, a persistent economic crisis, poverty, the poor nutritional status, poor utilisation of food, limited access to markets, lack of infrastructure are all compounding factors of food insecurity in DRC.

United Nations agencies are continuing to assist the vulnerable communities. WFP declared the DRC crisis a level 2 emergency in December 2013.

¹ WFP PRRO Democratic Republic of Congo SO 200540

² DRC 10th IPC analysis round – summary of findings.

³ OCHA Republique Democratique du Congo Plan d' Action Humanitaire Revue a mi-parcours 2013 ; the Strategic Response Plan-HAP for 2014 has not yet been released.

Consequently, the priority for Food Security Cluster (FSC) partners in 2014 will be to provide:

- Immediate life-saving assistance targeting the most vulnerable populations suffering from the consequences of armed conflict⁴, nutrition crises, epidemics, natural disasters; and
- Emergency support to livelihoods in crisis for protection, rehabilitation and assets creation⁵.

Project Background

1. Since the 2011 presidential elections, the security situation in the eastern parts of the country has deteriorated⁶. On 6 November 2013, the Armed Forces of DRC (FARDC) took complete control over territory formerly held by the M23 militia in North Kivu Province. Numerous other armed groups operate in the North and South Kivu and the Eastern region of DRC, and active fighting continues in many areas. After the military success over M23, the MONUSCO's Force Intervention Brigade (FIB) and FARDC are carrying out further operations targeting the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and Allied Democratic Forces together with the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda in the Masisi Territory of North Kivu which is expected to lead to additional displacement. While the defeat of M23 prompted some IDPs to return to their homes in North Kivu, new military operations could threaten return movements.⁷
2. From Province Orientale to Katanga, over 2.7 million people are displaced by the conflict, up from 1.8 million in early 2012, many of them having been displaced multiple times. Protection of civilians is a major challenge in the East; as human rights violations – and sexual violence, rape in particular – continue to be perpetrated at appalling levels, including as an intentional tactic of war.
3. The crisis in DRC also affects a number of other countries, notably Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and the Central African Republic (CAR). Furthermore, to add to the complexity, DRC hosts refugees from neighboring countries and refugees from DRC reside in neighboring countries. According to UNHCR, since December 2012, the Equateur and the Orientale Provinces in DRC are witnessing a new influx of refugees from CAR following clashes between the army and the rebel group “seleka”. The number of CAR refugees in DRC is now close to 48,000 and occurs in areas already affected by different shocks (armed conflict, ethnic conflict, etc.) thus further deteriorating the food security and nutrition situation in hosting communities.

⁴ OCHA Plan de Response Strategique: Republique Democratique du Congo. Janvier 2014 – Décembre 2014

⁵ OCHA Plan de Response Strategique: Republique Democratique du Congo. Janvier 2014 – Décembre 2014

⁶ WFP PRRO – Democratic Republic of Congo 200540 WFP/EB.A/2013/9-B/2 PRRO DRC 200540

⁷ WFP Decision Memorandum: Activation of a WFP Level 2 Emergency Response for the Democratic Republic of Congo, 12 December 2013

4. Overall the food security and nutrition⁸ situation remains very precarious. According to the recent Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) preliminary results, 38 percent of the rural population in DRC has poor⁹ (10 percent) or borderline (28 percent) food consumption. There were no significant differences between female and male headed households. However differences appear when disaggregated by province. The percentage of households with poor or borderline food consumption is higher in Equateur, Oriental Kasai and South Kivu.
5. Major epidemics continue to affect areas across the country. In the first six months of 2013, this included a large cholera outbreak (18,000 cases in the Katanga province alone), 4 million cases of malaria, and measles outbreaks affecting some 60,000 children.
6. All these factors have contributed to deteriorate the humanitarian situation in the country. According to the 2014 Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP), 6,3 million people (8,1 percent of the total population) need humanitarian assistance. The food security sector has targeted 4,8 million people for food and non-food assistance. The estimated total budget for the food security sector within the HAP is US\$ 256 million.
7. Within the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the Food Security Cluster (FSC) in DRC is tasked with the following functions: i) support service delivery/provision; ii) facilitate well informed strategic decision-making of the HC/HCT for the humanitarian response; iii) foster strategy planning and development; iv) carry out advocacy; v) ensure monitoring and assessment and vi) foresee and prepare a contingency plan. These activities were substantially covered through pooled fund contributions until 2011, thereafter it steadily decreased, while there is still a need to maintain the coordination mechanism at adequate standards of efficiency. Although both FAO and WFP are fully committed to ensure core functions (coordination meetings, IPC analysis, price monitoring, emergency food security assessments), financial gaps have led to many shortcomings: insufficient strategic food security analysis; provincial IPC analysis suspended, reduced understanding of which resources are scarce and why; slow and incomplete identification of the needs of the different members of the population in a crisis situation; inappropriate coordination of responses as well as the identification of on-going and major gaps; inadequate coordination and complementarity with the RRMP mechanism.
8. The food security and livelihood outlook for 2014 and 2015 in DRC will require the existing FSC coordination structure at national and provincial levels to continue providing a suitable forum for discussion on efficient use of resources, building of synergies, evidence-based identification of priorities, beneficiary targeting (disaggregated by sex and age) and sharing of information with food

⁸ The recent national nutrition survey indicates severe acute malnutrition rate of 5.2percent. GAM rates vary across the national territory with regions, such as Kasai and Katanga, where GAM is >15 percent, or the emergency threshold. Likewise, chronic malnutrition rates are above 40 percent throughout the country.

⁹ Poor FC = food consumption score <=28; Borderline FC = food consumption score >28 and <=42; Acceptable FC = food consumption score >42.

security and agriculture stakeholders. Further strengthening of the FSC coordination mechanism is needed to ensure that agencies are prepared and can effectively respond to food security and agriculture threats/emergencies. This means that the FSC is well prepared to coordinate effectively, manage and share vulnerability and response progress data, generate evidence-based gap analysis and advocacy – should the food security situation deteriorate further. Once it is strengthened properly, the FSC can be one of the building blocks on policy discussion on agriculture and food security recovery/resilience and development¹⁰.

Project Justification

9. The DRC is vast in size with a diverse and complex crisis. There are some 65 humanitarian agencies working in the food security sector with 17 subnational cluster/working groups. Therefore, coordination is essential to ensure an efficient and rapid response with the appropriate type of intervention to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people.
10. A global FSC (gFSC) mission to DRC was undertaken in early September 2012 to review the humanitarian coordination mechanisms that had been set up in the framework of food security under the overall transformative agenda (IASC). The mission highlighted that, in general, the role of the Government and coordination bodies in food security sector was not adequately recognized nor were the necessary linkages made¹¹. The gFSC mission, along with the FSC and the FSC partners identified the following four areas that required strengthening: i) co-leadership by the cluster lead agencies (commitment and accountability); ii) cluster management (within the cluster); iii) continue to improve services and; iv) partnership. The mission recommended that a more consistent funding should be pursued for the cluster through the development of a common strategy, including provision for dedicated coordination and information management at the national level and in selected sub-national clusters.
11. The following recommendations were followed and implemented: effective co-leadership between WFP and FAO, ONG co-facilitator has been nominated (Action Against Hunger-AAH) and advocacy for more dedicated resources. However, lack of funding for cluster coordination has heavily impacted the capacity to reinforce coordination activities especially at sub-national level. Especially, the coordination in the conflict affected areas has been weakened.
12. Through this project, the FSC will enhance the coordination within and with the other clusters (Nutrition, Protection, WASH, NFI, Logistics, etc.) in Kinshasa, North and South Kivu, Katanga and Orientale Provinces. The overall coordination of the food security activity in the western part of the country will be managed by the national food security cluster in Kinshasa. Emphasis will be put on strengthening the coordination and the complementarity with the RRMP (Rapid Response to the Population Movement) mechanism. Joint strategic response planning will take place with the key stakeholders including the food

¹⁰ WFP and FAO funding proposal.

¹¹ gFSC “Rapport final suite a la mission en RD congo (15 Octobre)

security cluster partners, other clusters and donors. This will strengthen the response and accountability to the affected populations and contribute towards the implementation of the Strategic Response Plan for 2014.

13. The FSC will be the platform whereupon food security needs are jointly assessed, analysed and disseminated to all relevant stakeholders for appropriate response targeting.
14. The FSC will endeavor to coordinate all elements of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) project cycle including assessments (VAM, Multi-Sector Assessments-MSA- and joint missions), data analysis (IPC, EFSA), response analysis, monitoring and evaluation and contribute to the HAP process.
15. This special operation will fill the current coordination gap underlined by the global food security cluster mission undertook in 2012. With more staff deployed in the field in the eastern conflict affected, areas (North Kivu, South Kivu, Maniema, Province Orientale and Katanga), the food security cluster will ensure that adequate service and support are provided to the cluster members. Furthermore, the project will allow better coordination of rapid assessments to complement other mechanisms which are already in place.

Project Objectives

16. Through this Special Operation, WFP and FAO as the co-leads and ACH (Action Against Hunger- ACH) facilitator of the FSC will support relief efforts in DRC with the following actions:
 - Deliver predictable and accountable leadership and coordination in the food security cluster;
 - Strengthen existing national and local humanitarian management and coordination systems, building on local capacities through the active participation of women and men from the affected population;
 - Ensure the coordination of rapid food security response to the displaced people and through the development of strategic action plans that include multi sector assessments, response analysis, IPC (Integrated Phase Classification);
 - Optimize collaboration and partnerships with UN agencies, NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, donors and other stakeholders to ensure a holistic response with the existing mechanism such as the RRMP;
 - Provide surge support for coordination and information management needs and other technical expertise as required;
 - Ensure mapping of food security interventions (4W), identification of gaps and partners support in implementing responses; and
 - Advocating and mobilizing resources for a rapid response.

Project Implementation

17. ***Coordination of the food security cluster:*** together with the cluster members, the co-leads (WFP and FAO) and the co-facilitator (Action Against Hunger), the FSC will endeavor to strengthen existing coordination teams which work closely with the Government and the humanitarian community to identify needs and

eventual gaps and avoid duplications in the humanitarian response. The FSC will ensure that appropriate mechanisms of coordination with the others sectors and RRMP stakeholders are in place to ensure an efficient and effective response to displaced and other vulnerable people (refugees, returnees and repatriates). The FSC will work closely with the other clusters, especially the Nutrition, Health, WASH and logistics. Cross-cutting issues such as protection and gender will be closely monitored together with the appropriate cluster leads. The FSC will contribute towards the informed decision making of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).

18. ***Planning and coordination of needs assessments:*** For a better planning and coordination of the response, the FSC will build capacity at the field level to conduct joint food security assessments and other relevant data collection. The FSC will ensure that the assessment team work jointly with the RRMP missions and produce joint reports and harmonized targeting mechanism. The FSC will serve as a platform to strengthen emergency food security assessments (EFSA) and the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) analysis. The FSC will ensure that reports produced meet the cluster requirements (data disaggregated by gender and age and other specific requirement).
19. ***Management of the information flow and reporting:*** The FSC will collect lessons learned and best practices on emergency food security program implementation. These will be shared through the humanitarian stakeholders including the government and donors. Feedback collected through partners monitoring and evaluation activities will be continuously used to self-correct and deliver results. The FSC will provide analysis to the response provided to the food security crisis and identify gaps and advise on how to address them.
20. ***Advocacy and resources mobilization for timely and strategic response:*** To address the funding gaps both for the coordination and the response, the FSC will organize regular meetings with keys donors to inform on ongoing response and gaps. The forecast humanitarian needs will be assessed through the IPC analysis, needs assessment and response analysis workshops. The food security cluster will also seek the opportunity to get staff from standby partners. Preliminary consultation has already been done jointly by FAO and WFP with positive feedback and expectation from some local donors. The two agencies will continue joint resources mobilization efforts with support from the global food security cluster and headquarters.

Project Management

21. The country Director of the WFP DRC will be the fund manager for this Special Operation and the Finance Officer will be the allotment manager.

Project Cost and Benefits

22. This Special Operation has a total cost of US\$ 1 522 378. This budget includes staffing (coordination at national and field level), information management, assessment and joint missions, monitoring and evaluation, rental or facility,

offices supplies and transportation leasing. The budget also includes staff cost (half time) for the NGO (ACF) which is assuring the co-facilitation role. This will help to ensure adequate NGO representation and contribute to promote more accountability.

Monitoring & Evaluation

23. Through this Special Operation, the FSC will provide adequate technical support and guidance to enhance the monitoring of food security projects implemented by the stakeholders at field level.

24. The key performance indicators are:

- i. Technical guidelines prepared by the FSC shared and disseminated;
- ii. People trained in food security assessment; data analysis and reporting including the government;
- iii. Coordination of assessments and responses and provision of strategic response guidance;
- iv. Strategic Response Plan prepared with all stakeholders for national and sub-national coordination;
- v. Application of technical standards and collection/dissemination of best practices;
- vi. Mapping (4W), monitoring, gaps identification and reporting
- vii. Joint field monitoring mission coordinated with food security cluster stakeholders;
- viii. Advocacy and resource mobilisation; and
- ix. Coordination meetings held at national and sub national level.

Risk Assessment and Mitigation

25. A number of factors could impact the implementation of the Special Operation. The political and security environment present in the DRC creates numerous challenges when operating in country. The FSC will undertake the following mitigation activities to address key risks.

26. Contextual Risks:

- The deteriorating security situation in country as well as the inaccessibility of some regions may hinder effective implementation of the food security response; and
- Protection of staff is at stake due to the volatile political circumstances, inadequate capacity, infrastructural resources the FIB which is perceived as part of the conflict.

These risks will be mitigated by:

- Liaising with UNDSS to monitor the security situation and receive regular notifications on accessible and secure areas;
- Requesting the HC to intervene or resolve issues with the appropriate authorities on behalf of FSC; and

- Advocating to the UN, Humanitarian and Donor Community for basic human rights, humanitarian access, stability and security.

27. Programmatic Risks:

- Lack of access for staff due to heightened insecurity in country, may restrict access of FAO, WFP and partners for assessments, implementation and monitoring;
- Inadequate funding (minimum level: 50%) of co-lead agencies' and partners' response plans. In this case, only the minimum service will be delivered by the cluster, focus mainly on the core function:
 - Coordination with a minimum geographic coverage (number of clusters will be reduced. Only the national cluster in Kinshasa and the Goma cluster will be kept);
 - Situation and gap analysis through IPC exercise.

Depending on the funding level (medium funding: 50% – 70%), the other activities to be undertaken in priority will be:

- Joint need assessment mission with RRMP and other multi-sectorial assessments;
- Information management;

Finally with adequate funding (high level: more than 70%) the cluster will be able to ensure all activities mentioned above.

- Access and capacity constraints render it difficult for humanitarian actors to actively coordinate and share information on actual and planned operations which may lead to potential over or under support to affected populations, gaps and overlaps.

These risks will be mitigated by:

- Regular and informative cluster meetings, involving the humanitarian community and ensuring that the FSC is capturing and reporting on all food security related activities and comparing this against the estimated caseloads from assessments;
- Regular donor briefings with the donor community highlighting the current level of coordination with FSC members and resource constraints and other access related challenges; and
- Engagement of local and regional NGOs as much as possible to reinforce the inclusive nature of the FSC.

28. Institutional Risks:

- Reputational risk for FSC co-leads agencies and partners, if coordination responsibilities are not managed properly;
- Accountability to the donor community if the operation does not meet the required expectations and results; and
- Politicisation of UN humanitarian efforts affecting the engagement of non-governmental and international organisations in cluster coordination.

These risks will be mitigated by:

- Promoting an effective governance structure that encourages buy-in from different stakeholders and is conducive to consensus-building;

- Participating and engaging in broader coordination to raise awareness of the value added services provided by the FSC to humanitarian agencies responding to food insecurity within the Democratic Republic of Congo;
- Increased response capacity to respond to UN demands – co-lead agencies, and including: (i) Humanitarian Needs Overview and Strategic Response Plan; (ii) mid-year reviews; (iii) CHF management; (iv) Programme reporting requirements; and (v) participation in all coordination forums.

Exit Strategy: ownership and capacity building to the government

29. It is anticipated that this Special Operation will come to an end in at the end of February 2015. The FSC will continue to work closely with the Government through the ministry of agriculture, the ministry of health, the National Nutrition Program (PRONANUT) and the National Institute of Statistics and build their capacity. This Special Operation will build upon on the already existing capacity and provide appropriate training to the government body.

RECOMMENDATION

This Special Operation covering the period from 1 March 2014 to 1 March 2015 at a total cost to WFP of US\$ 1 522 378 is recommended for approval by the Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer, under the Executive Director's delegated authority, with the budget provided.

APPROVAL

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Amir Abdulla

Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer

ANNEX 1: Food security cluster presence in DRC



Cluster Sécurité Alimentaire

