Purchase for Progress - **P4P**
Democratic Republic of Congo

QUICK FACTS

Project start date:
August 2009

Number of farmers' organizations (FOs): 13

Number of members:
9,346 (34% women)

Sales to WFP:
US$ 145,168 (340 mt)

Sales to other markets:
An estimated US$ 423,486 (992 mt)

Main commodities:
Maize, rice and niébé (cowpeas)

Main P4P activities
- Capacity development
- Constructing and rehabilitating infrastructure
- Linking producers to traders
- Identifying and grouping smallholders in FOs, which are then organized in unions

Funding
In DRC, P4P's technical and administrative costs are sponsored by the governments of Belgium and France, as well as UPS. All food purchases are financed by donations to WFP's regular operations.

Figures as of March 2014

P4P in the Democratic Republic of Congo

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), P4P focuses on reviving agricultural commodity markets damaged by years of mismanagement, disruption and armed conflict. P4P works in two regions: Kabalo and Bikoro, where smallholders are organized into farmers' organizations (FOs) and then grouped under larger unions. The initiative has rehabilitated and expanded transportation infrastructure in order to connect farmers to traders, and is establishing marketing infrastructure in rural areas to facilitate the bulking of commodities and the addition of value to crops. Partners such as FAO and Oxfam are strengthening the capacity of FOs to aggregate and market commodities, facilitating their access to seeds and tools, and providing technical assistance. In DRC, one of the main characteristics of P4P is to re-establish trader networks and link FOs to sustainable markets, with WFP acting as an assured buyer primarily if there are surpluses left unsold after the trading season.

Background
Until the mid-1970s, the agricultural sector in DRC was highly diversified. Large plantations of coffee, cocoa, palm oil, cotton and rubber thrived in North and South Kivu and in the Equateur provinces, while food crops were cultivated throughout the country. Unfortunately, the agricultural sector, pillar of the DRC economy, was destroyed due to armed conflict. Today, the sector is predominantly characterized by subsistence farming and smallholder agriculture on small and fragmented parcels of land. Farmers have very little access to credit, agricultural inputs and equipment, and almost no incentive to invest in producing surpluses.

Learning and sharing
P4P has emphasized an honest and transparent examination of what works and does not. After five years of testing various approaches on the ground, the pilot is currently being evaluated. Key lessons are being compiled and will be shared widely.

Achievements

- **Sustainability**: Smallholders have been organized into legally documented organizations to facilitate collective marketing. These FOs have been linked to traders to ensure their access to a sustainable market, and have sold more than 900 mt of commodities to markets beyond WFP.

- **Gender**: The participation of women in P4P-supported FOs has increased from 15 percent at the beginning of the pilot to nearly 35 percent in January 2014. Today, a number of FOs are also led by women. P4P and partners have provided nearly 2,000 women with literacy training, allowing them to become active and engaged participants in their FOs. Women also gain skills and knowledge by carrying out quality control checks.

- **Infrastructure**: P4P and partners have worked to construct and rehabilitate infrastructure. In the Kabalo area, 239 kilometres of feeder roads have been rehabilitated through community participation, seven mobile storage units have been installed and three markets have been built. In Bikoro, two warehouses were rehabilitated and five warehouses were constructed using community contributions such as sand, clay bricks and rubble stones.

- **Capacity development**: Farmers and small traders have received training in negotiation, business planning, FO management, quality control, post-harvest handling, agricultural techniques and warehouse management.

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Moseka is currently undergoing literacy training provided by P4P partners BUCODED and Oxfam. She is married with children. She says that although she wanted to go to school, she was unable to because her father was only willing to pay school fees for her brother. Instead, she performed household tasks in preparation for marriage.

"P4P has opened my eyes, moving me from the darkness into the light. I can now read and write and can also learn new agricultural techniques. I hope that more funds will be given to P4P in order to blossom out and empower more women."

KEY PARTNERS

- Advising Bureau for Sustainable Development (BUCODED)

- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

- Netherlands Development Organization (SNV)

- Oxfam GB

- Rural Development Inspectorate (IDR)

- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

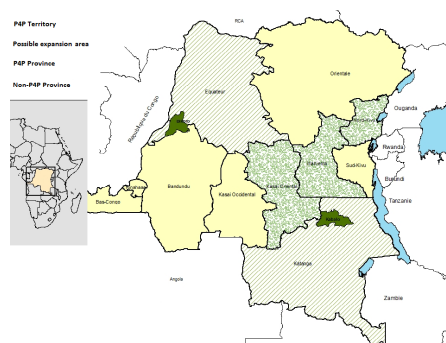- United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

- **Equipment**: P4P has provided FOs with equipment including trolleys, bicycles and pick-up trucks, as well as warehouse equipment such as sewing scales, shellers, huskers, and mills. FOs have also been equipped with "Blue Box" quality control field testing kits, and trained on how to use them.

- **Sharing market information:** A market information system has been established to help traders and farmers access and share information about market prices and the availability of commodities.

- **Ripple effect**: Some smallholders not directly supported by P4P now take part in collective marketing. In part, this is because community awareness-raising campaigns have exposed them to the positive impact that collective marketing can have on the prices they receive for their produce.

Challenges
- **Funding**: In DRC, funding for P4P is unpredictable, making it difficult to create long-term plans.
- **Climate variation**: Flooding and unusual droughts caused extensive loss of crops during 2013 in Kabalo and 2012 in Bikoro.
- **Lengthy procurement process**: While recognizing the benefits of collective marketing, many farmers still sell individually to acquire immediate cash for their families' primary needs, such as healthcare and school fees. This is partly due to the lengthy process of WFP procurement.

Partnerships

In DRC, P4P partners with organizations including BUCODED, FAO, IDR, Oxfam GB, SNV, UNFPA and UNOPs. These organizations develop smallholders' capacity in production and marketing, enabling them to more effectively aggregate and market their yields. BUCODED and Oxfam carry out a literacy programme, and are also responsible for identifying and organizing smallholders into FOs, which are then grouped into unions. Oxfam and UNOPs carry out infrastructure rehabilitation, and a community-driven road maintenance programme is facilitated by IDR. SNV set up the market information system and has facilitated the creation of links between producers and traders.

Read more about

WFP in DRC

Rebuilding infrastructure

P4P helps build a new generation of farmers

Income increase enables business diversification

WFP ACTIVITIES IN DRC
In DRC, WFP targets populations made vulnerable and food insecure by armed conflict, lack of basic social services, low agricultural productivity and chronic poverty. WFP has implemented two emergency operations: one to address the needs of displaced populations, and another to assist populations in conflict and food insecure areas with high malnutrition rates. Relief activities include general food assistance to internally displaced persons (IDP) and their host families, and the treatment and prevention of moderate to acute malnutrition. Recovery activities include school feeding, food for assets and support to HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis (TB) patients. Through the PRRO, WFP has enhanced the government's capacity to carry out food security and nutrition assessments. Commodities purchased through P4P modalities are used in the food for work and school feeding programmes.

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