



Fast Facts

Country: Democratic Republic of the Congo

Duration: October 2008 to June 2010

Implementing UN Agencies: UNDP; FAO; UNCHR; UNICEF

Other Implementing Partners: Provincial Government Ministries; Local CSOs; National and International NGOs

Budget: \$5,112,574.24

Key Words: Post-conflict peacebuilding; youth; economic development; agricultural development; health; education

BACKGROUND

Despite its rich endowments in natural resources and the resilience and entrepreneurship of its population, the DRC entered the 1990s with little prospect for long-term peace and development. In particular, the district of Ituri, in the northeast of the country, faced limited opportunities. The presence of residual armed groups, continued inter-ethnic violence, lack of infrastructure and massive displacement corroded the

political and socio-economic conditions needed for long-term recovery. Yet, despite these challenges, the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the process of decentralization opened a unique window of opportunity to help reduce the probabilities of conflict, improve access to social services and economic opportunities, and help strengthen the human security of the people of Ituri.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The project was designed as an important vehicle for the consolidation of durable peace and recovery in post-conflict Ituri. Highlighting the multi-sectoral needs of the region, the project focused on: (i) restoring livelihoods and productive assets within the

participating communities; (ii) supporting community empowerment processes; (iii) improving the delivery of and access to basic social services, such as health, education and water; and (iv) promoting a culture of peaceful co-existence between diverse groups.

BENEFICIARIES

The project focused on the most conflict-affected and neglected areas of Ituri, giving priority to those communities identified as having the greatest risk of relapse into conflict or instability. Beneficiaries

included refugees, ex-combatants, vulnerable youth and women, as well as local government officials, numbering 8,500 direct beneficiaries across 100 villages.

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

(i) At the center of maintaining peace and stability in the region were the restoration of livelihoods and productive assets for the poorest and most affected by the conflict. To this end, the project adopted a multi-pronged protection and empowerment approach. By strengthening the technical and organizational capacity of 50 agricultural associations, improving the

quality of agricultural support services, constructing 10 agricultural storage and production facilities, and rehabilitating 3 market places, the project created an environment conducive to re-energizing the local economy. Meanwhile, vulnerable young people were empowered through capacity building for sustainable employment opportunities.



The construction of 3 vocational training centers increased the supply of jobs in the region and offered training on small-scale manufacturing, carpentry, engineering, as well as agriculture. Consequently, at the end of the project, beneficiaries stated that improvements in the economic environment and the expansion of livelihood opportunities had significantly contributed to maintaining peaceful cohabitation in the region.

(ii) To safeguard community and personal security, the project improved the delivery of and access to numerous basic social services. For example, towards restoring the State's authority and strengthening the capacity of the Congolese National Police, the project built two police stations and one sub-station and provided training sessions to upgrade the technical, managerial and organizational capacity of 365 police

officers. Moreover, three primary health centers were rehabilitated and 19 community health workers were trained to improve healthy behavior within the communities and schools. Meanwhile, the quality of and access to education was improved by training 600 teachers and through the provision of basic education to 4,000 vulnerable out-of-school children at 10 'Catch-Up Centers'.

(iii) Lastly, to ensure that these dividends of the peace process were not lost to a possible resurgence in violence, 50 community-based organizations were empowered to promote a culture of peaceful co-existence between communities. Furthermore, 3 youth centers were established to promote social cohesion and reconciliation activities such as sports, art, and life-skills training.

LESSONS LEARNED

By addressing the multiple human security threats faced by conflict-affected individuals and communities in Ituri, the project was able to promote a comprehensive protection and empowerment framework that was context-specific, people-centered and sustainable. As a result, the project addressed the full range of insecurities faced by the people of Ituri and proposed activities that helped strengthen civic engagement, reinforce State-society relations, and promote collaborative and peaceful activities towards the achievement of longer-term development, peace and stability. In this regard, the direct engagement of national and regional authorities, as well as local stakeholders in the development, implementation and

monitoring of the project was crucial in identifying the most targeted and effective responses. Moreover, by ensuring local and national ownership of the project, the continued advancement of human security was further guaranteed beyond the life of the project. Lastly, the application of the human security approach and its emphasis on the context-specificity of human insecurities permitted the project to evolve and adapt to the changing realities of the region, thereby allowing it to better respond to the needs of the participating communities. This further ensured the sustainability of the activities promoted under the project.