

IMPLEMENTING LAND INTERVENTIONS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO WITHIN THE POST CRISIS CONTEXT



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Located in Central Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the second largest country in Africa with a total area of 2,345,409 km². Since the 1990s, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and particularly the eastern provinces North Kivu, South Kivu and Orientale have been shattered

by one of the deadliest conflicts in the world. In this post-conflict situation in Eastern DRC, where large numbers of internally displaced people and refugees are waiting return to their places of origin, disputes over scarcely available land has the potential to generate new outbreak of large-scale conflict.

KEY CHALLENGES

As in many other contexts in Africa, access to and use of land in DRC can be characterized as complex and fragmented. Land tenure and governance has many, and often conflicting, systems, legal frameworks, practices and institutional arrangements. These are further impaired by the lack of coordination among the land actors, inadequate capacity and resources to address the issues and the lack of integrated national land policy. Moreover, local authority and legitimacy of customary chiefs has been seriously affected by reported malpractices and in some cases, by their dubious positions during the conflict.

The population of the DRC is also increasing quickly. With respect to urban areas and spatial (land-use) planning, the Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF) observed that the rate of urbanization would increase from 39 per cent to 51 per cent between 2010 and 2020.

Land access patterns in conflict-affected areas have radically changed, partly as a result of forced displacement, but also because of the loss of authority of customary chiefs and local administrations. The return of refugees to their areas of origin has instigated new land claims, intensified tensions between local communities, affected ethnic cohabitation and worsened security conditions.

GLTN INTERVENTIONS

GLTN, in collaboration with UN-Habitat Country Office and Université Chrétienne Bilingue du Congo (UCBC), works with different provinces in Eastern DRC to support land dispute resolution by improving tenure security through the implementation of GLTN land tools and approaches. GLTN also supports advocacy and awareness building activities to support the DRC land reform process and has been implementing capacity development interventions.



Community members being trained on participatory enumerations and mapping. Photo@UN-Habitat/Christol Paluku

In 2016, UN-Habitat in close collaboration with the Government of DRC launched a Community Participatory Land Use Planning (CLUP) programme. This DFID-funded programme, which seeks to promote the concept of integrated land use planning at community level to mitigate the risk of land disputes, improve tenure security, while unlocking the potential land disputes for increased socio-economic development in the three provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri, is currently being supported by GLTN. GLTN is also providing technical support to the newly launched project funded by CAFI (Central Africa Forest Initiative) which primarily aims to develop a National Land Policy in close collaboration with the National Commission of Land Reform (CONAREF).

In summary, and within the post crisis context, GLTN interventions in the DRC include the following:

- ❑ Supporting the land administration office (Circonscription fonciere de Masisi) to implement the fit-for-purpose approaches in Luhonga and Sake villages.
- ❑ Implementing pro-poor and gender responsive land tools to improve land tenure security (Beni, North Kivu).
- ❑ Supporting the Land Governance for Peace, Stability and Reconstruction, in the DRC Post-Conflict Programme, through community participatory land-use planning in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri.
- ❑ Providing technical support in the CAFI-supported National Land Policy Development Programme and related multi-stakeholder dialogues and consultation processes.



The North Kivu Provincial Minister for Land Affairs, M. Carly Nzanzu Kasivita accompanied by other officials interacting with project implementers during a monitoring visit in Masisani. Photo @UN-Habitat/Armand Ndilmbaye

EMERGING OUTCOMES

- ❑ 24 organizations including members of provincial platforms and the Consultation Framework for Civil Society and Indigenous Organizations (CACO) at the national level agreed to work together to support land reforms in the DRC.
- ❑ With the use and application of GLTN land tools, an estimated 27,712 people have been identified as potential beneficiaries of land mediation in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri.
- ❑ 609 returnees' households in Luhonga, Masisi territory, have gained access to land and basic infrastructures.
- ❑ Establishment of the UCBC resource centre in Beni city to facilitate coordination of key stakeholder in Masisani neighbourhood, where the Social Tenure Domain Model (STDM), land mediation and other relevant GLTN tools and approaches are being implemented.
- ❑ Knowledge in land mediation and gender issues of about 30 change agents has been enhanced.

Implementing Partners: UN-Habitat Regional Office for Africa (ROAF), Université Chrétienne Bilingue du Congo (UCBC)

In close collaboration with: CONAREF (National Commission of Land Reform), Local Municipalities, Ministry of Urbanism and Land Affairs, Provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri and target communities.

NEXT STEPS

GLTN will continue to support land reforms in DRC through organizing capacity development initiatives for government authorities and other land stakeholders, and implementation of tools to improve tenure security and facilitate conflict mediation in select areas. GLTN is also committed to supporting the multi-stakeholder dialogues in the development of the National Land Policy.

Moreover, GLTN will continue to work for the implementation of community participatory land-use planning in North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri and other land governance and tenure-related interventions in DRC.

In the coming months, GLTN will focus on:
(i) effective community participation in land-use planning and management processes;
and (ii) improving land tenure security for peaceful community and economic growth through the implementation of the participatory enumerations, STDM, land mediation and other relevant land tools.



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