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BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (DCHA)  
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)

## ***Democratic Republic of the Congo – Complex Emergency***

Situation Report #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2006

May 16, 2006

*Note: The last situation report was dated September 30, 2005.*

### **BACKGROUND**

Since 1998, regional armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has resulted in an estimated 4 million deaths due to fighting, disease, and malnutrition, and caused the displacement of more than 3 million residents. In August 1999, the governments of the DRC (GDRC), Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda (GOU), and Zimbabwe and the main Congolese opposition groups signed the Lusaka Peace Accords. Further conferences led to the formation of a transitional government in June 2003, and following ratification by a country-wide referendum and presidential promulgation, a new constitution was adopted by the National Assembly in May 2005. Presidential, parliamentary, and local elections scheduled for July 2006 will be the first pluralistic, open polls in the DRC in 40 years. The U.N. Mission in the DRC (MONUC), with approximately 16,640 troops, is the largest U.N. peacekeeping operation in the world. Armed opposition groups such as the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR)/Interahamwe, Rwandans implicated in the 1994 genocide who subsequently fled to eastern DRC, and Mai-Mai factions, bands of local DRC citizens originally formed to resist Rwandan army occupation, continue to create insecurity in eastern DRC. Joint offensives by MONUC and the DRC armed forces (FARDC) have to date been unsuccessful in restoring order.

Due to the effects of conflict and continued insecurity, more than 1.6 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), as well as 1.5 million former IDPs and refugees returning to their areas of origin, require emergency assistance, according to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Poverty is widespread, and the health care system has eroded due to a lack of resources and continuous looting. Sporadic insecurity restricts access to agricultural land and traditional markets and prevents the remaining displaced populations from returning home.

<b>NUMBERS AT A GLANCE</b>	<b>SOURCE</b>	
<b>IDPs</b>	1,660,000	OCHA – November 2005
<b>Refugees in the DRC</b>	257,170	UNHCR <sup>1</sup> – December 2005
<b>DRC Refugees in Tanzania, Republic of Congo, Zambia, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Angola, Sudan, and the Central African Republic</b>	374,200	UNHCR – December 2005

**Total FY 2006 USAID/OFDA Assistance to the DRC .....\$6,573,105**  
**Total FY 2006 U.S. Government (USG) Humanitarian Assistance to the DRC .....\$25,811,605**

### **CURRENT SITUATION**

**Security outlook.** Upcoming national elections may shift the balance of power negotiated in 1999 and result in further destabilization of the DRC. To assist MONUC in maintaining security during the election process, the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) has approved the temporary deployment of a battalion of peacekeepers from the U.N. Mission in Burundi and a 1,500-member European Union reserve force. Since December 2005, MONUC and FARDC have also increased efforts to disarm dissident armed groups in eastern DRC. However, these groups have since retreated further into the DRC's interior, causing additional population displacements in the provinces of Katanga and the Kivus, as well as Ituri District. Also, as neither MONUC nor FARDC have sufficient troops to maintain a strong presence in newly secured areas, militia often return after offensives, increasing attacks on the local population. FARDC troops who participate in these campaigns are regularly accused of abusing the local population via extortion, looting, beatings, rape, and summary executions.

**Deteriorating conditions in Katanga Province.** FARDC offensives against dissident Mai-Mai in Katanga Province have displaced an estimated 170,000 people since November 2005, according to UNHCR. Most IDPs are in Dubie, Pweto Territory, and towns in Mitwaba Territory, 400 kilometers north of Lubumbashi in north-central Katanga Province. IDPs have been reluctant to return home, fearing both sporadic Mai-Mai attacks and harassment by local FARDC forces.

According to Médecins Sans Frontières/Belgium (MSF/B), a preliminary study in Mitwaba revealed global acute malnutrition (GAM) rates of 30 percent, double the emergency threshold. A lack of infrastructure, however, has hindered the provision of assistance. Poor road conditions delayed attempts by the U.N. World Food Program (WFP) to deliver food assistance. A truck convoy departing in mid-February took nearly a month to transport food from Lubumbashi to Mitwaba. MONUC helicopters delivered food in the interim, but the quantity was enough for only the most vulnerable IDP groups. On April 5, WFP began to air-drop food for the first time in

<sup>1</sup> The Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

the DRC, eventually delivering assistance to an estimated 34,700 IDPs in Nyonga, Dubie, Mitwaba, and Sampwe, according to WFP reports.

Following a March 2006 assessment, UNHCR deployed long-term staff to Mitwaba and Dubie on April 22. UNHCR aims to provide ‘protection through presence’ and, on May 2, began working with MSF/B to register IDPs and better identify needs. In late April, 149 MONUC peacekeepers, the first of a 750-member force, arrived in Katanga to bolster security. On May 12, the surrender of a prominent dissident Mai-Mai leader to MONUC forces at Mitwaba marked an extremely positive development, and may result in the restoration of security to the area if other local Mai-Mai groups follow suit. According to USAID/OFDA field reports, however, for overall security to improve, it is also critical that the GDRC put an end to abuse of civilians by FARDC forces.

***Ituri stabilization process falters.*** By December 2005, joint FARDC/MONUC operations against dissident militias had led to increased security and the return of many IDPs in Ituri District, Orientale Province. However, in March 2006, a failed offensive against the Mouvement Révolutionnaire du Congo (MRC) in Tcheyi, southern Ituri District, gave area militias time to regroup and triggered attacks on numerous formerly-secure areas. At the present time, humanitarian agencies are unable to travel safely to many parts of southern and central Ituri that were peaceful and accessible only months ago, and significant population displacements have restarted. German Agro-Action (GAA) has registered 18,000 IDPs in one site along the Bunia-Kasenyi road alone.

***Increased displacements in North Kivu Province.*** In January and February 2006, FARDC/MONUC offensives against the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU) led an estimated 65,000 persons to flee areas in northern North Kivu. Although some IDPs returned in March and April, the FARDC has requested the permanent relocation of an estimated 10,000 IDPs who previously lived in Virunga National Park.

Areas in southeastern North Kivu have also experienced rising insecurity and population displacements. In January 2006, clashes between newly integrated FARDC brigades and battalions of old, largely ex-Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD)/Goma forces caused an estimated 50,000 IDPs to flee the Kiribizi area in Rutshuru Territory, northeast of Goma. According to OCHA, IDPs are staying with host families in the Kanyabayonga-Kirumba area and have received food and emergency supplies, but rely on international assistance to meet water needs. In March, renewed FARDC offensives led relief agencies to suspend activities, according to WFP.

***Ongoing insecurity in northern South Kivu Province.*** Since January 2006, joint FARDC/MONUC offensives against FDLR and dissident Mai-Mai groups have led to

increased population displacement from rural areas to larger towns in the region as well as deteriorating humanitarian conditions. In Bunyakiri, northeastern North Kivu, USAID/OFDA partner International Medical Corps (IMC) normally provides primary health care and nutrition assistance, but has been unable to access its project area for three months due to ongoing conflict.

In Shabunda and Mwenga territories, northwestern South Kivu, FARDC/MONUC offensives have met with mixed results. While the February 2006 FARDC capture of a prominent dissident Mai-Mai commander led to improved security in the southern parts of Shabunda and Mwenga Territories, FARDC/MONUC operations in Kalehe and Walungu pushed FDLR forces into the northern parts of these territories in April. As a result, an estimated 30,000 residents abandoned their fields and fled to Mwenga and Kamituga centers.

***Refugee returns in southern South Kivu Province.***

In February 2006, a USAID/OFDA team traveled to Baraka and Fizi, bordering Lake Tanganyika in southern South Kivu Province, to assess changes in the humanitarian situation since UNHCR began to facilitate the repatriation of 152,000 DRC refugees from Tanzania. The team found that the population of Fizi had doubled to approximately 20,000 since October 2005, with an average of 1,000 persons continuing to arrive each week. Reintegration appeared to be going relatively well for refugees who arrived since UNHCR opened offices in May 2005, but the near-total lack of support for all of the spontaneous returns that occurred prior to UNHCR’s arrival has resulted in considerable tension between refugee groups.

***WFP faces challenges in meeting food needs.*** In 2006, WFP has faced challenges in meeting food needs in eastern DRC. According to USAID’s Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP), elevated conflict has increased food needs. At the same time, WFP’s 2006 food allocations were cut significantly due to advance funding from the 2006 budget received to meet overwhelming needs in 2005. WFP offices have had difficulty responding to new displacements with already limited food resources, transport funds, and implementing partners. To meet increased needs, WFP has in some areas stopped non-emergency activities and reduced emergency rations.

***Improvements in Maniema and Equateur provinces.***

According to USAID/OFDA field reports, no serious security incidents have been reported in Maniema since November 2004. By December 2005, all of the nearly 260,000 former IDPs and ex-combatants in the province had returned home, and humanitarian actors can now access all areas without impediment. USAID/OFDA partner Medical Emergency Relief International (Merlin) continues to support the health care system, although the private sector has begun to fill the gap. Through a USAID/OFDA-funded food security program, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has contributed to the increased availability of reasonably priced food, and GAM rates are below emergency levels.

Security and humanitarian access also have significantly improved in southern Equateur, and IDPs have returned home and are currently engaged in livelihood activities. USAID/OFDA partner Action Against Hunger (AAH) has increased food production capacity and reduced the traditional yearly food shortage period from seven to three months. According to USAID/OFDA reports, both provinces are ready for a transition to development assistance.

***Foreign incursions in Orientale Province.*** According to OCHA, members of the armed opposition groups the Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army continue to operate out of northeastern Orientale Province, harassing local residents and generating population displacements. In January 2006, eight MONUC peacekeepers were killed in a covert operation against LRA forces. The GOU has repeatedly threatened to send the Ugandan army into Congolese territory to disarm LRA forces, and, on April 19, called on the UNSC to support forcible disarmament of LRA forces in the DRC. In May, MONUC deemed as credible reports of Ugandan army incursions into the DRC.

#### **USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE**

On October 17, 2005, U.S. Ambassador Roger A. Meece redeclared a disaster for the ongoing complex emergency in the DRC. To date in FY 2006, USAID/OFDA has provided more than \$6.5 million in emergency assistance to the DRC. This is in addition to more than \$26 million provided in FY 2005. Targeting conflict-affected populations, USAID/OFDA provides assistance in the health and nutrition sectors, supplies emergency shelter and household equipment to IDPs and returnees, contributes to the transportation of humanitarian personnel and materials, and supports the return of agricultural production in areas where stability has been

restored. USAID/OFDA projects and programs are implemented through multiple international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and several U.N. agencies. In addition, USAID/OFDA supports two Program Officers in the DRC who monitor the humanitarian situation and provide program recommendations to USAID/OFDA in Washington, D.C.

To date in FY 2006, USAID/FFP has provided 17,290 metric tons (MT) of P.L. 480 Title II emergency food assistance to implementing partners WFP and Food for the Hungry International (FHI), valued at \$16.5 million. This is in addition to 34,990 MT, valued at \$29.8 million, provided to WFP in FY 2005. These commodities are used to provide assistance to vulnerable populations including women and children, IDPs, and refugees, and to support the national Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration, and Resettlement (DDRRR) initiative through the provision of food to ex-combatants.

In FY 2005, the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) provided more than \$13 million to UNHCR, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the U.S. Embassy to support the return of refugees from neighboring countries, victims of conflict in eastern DRC, and the rehabilitation of a Congolese medical center that assists Rwandan refugees returning home. In FY 2006 to date, State/PRM has provided \$2.75 million to UNHCR for ongoing program of assistance to refugees in the DRC. On May 5, U.S. President George W. Bush approved a drawdown of \$12 million from the Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance (ERMA) fund to support the repatriation of Congolese refugees. President Bush also approved a drawdown of \$8 million in ERMA funds to support UNHCR protection and assistance to IDPs in the DRC and Uganda.

## U.S. GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE DRC

<i>Implementing Partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<b>USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE<sup>1</sup></b>			
GOAL	Health, Food Security, and Infrastructure	South Kivu	\$796,788
Première Urgence	Food Security, Agriculture, and Rehabilitation	Ituri District	\$1,037,444
IMC	Health	South Kivu	\$800,000
Air Serv International	Humanitarian Air Service	Eastern DRC	\$1,826,815
FHI	Food Security	Eastern DRC	\$516,968
AAH/USA	Food Security and Agriculture	South Kivu	\$148,040
U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF)	Health, Nutrition, Rehabilitation, and Water and Sanitation	Countrywide	\$1,000,000
	Administrative Support	Countrywide	\$447,050
<b>TOTAL USAID/OFDA</b>			<b>\$6,573,105</b>
<b>USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE<sup>2</sup></b>			
WFP	12,710 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Countrywide	\$11,387,000
Food for the Hungry International (FHI)	4,580 MT of P.L. 480 Title II Emergency Food Assistance	Northern Katanga	\$5,101,500
<b>TOTAL USAID/FFP</b>			<b>\$16,488,500</b>
<b>STATE/PRM ASSISTANCE<sup>3</sup></b>			
UNHCR	Multi-sectoral Refugee Assistance and Protection		\$2,750,000
<b>TOTAL STATE/PRM</b>			<b>\$2,750,000</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE DRC IN FY 2006</b>			<b>\$23,061,605</b>
<b>TOTAL USG HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE DRC IN FY 2006</b>			<b>\$25,811,605</b>

<sup>1</sup> USAID/OFDA funding represents anticipated or actual obligated amounts as of May 16, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Estimated value of food assistance.

<sup>3</sup> State/PRM also provided more than \$8 million to UNHCR and NGOs for assistance to DRC refugees living in neighboring Tanzania, Rwanda, and the Republic of Congo. In addition, State/PRM provided \$34.4 million in unearmarked funds for UNHCR in Africa and \$32.7 million to ICRC for its Emergency Appeal for Africa. A portion of the unearmarked funds supported UNHCR and ICRC programs in the DRC and programs to assist DRC refugees located outside the country.



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