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Provision of Humanitarian Air Service

Standard Project Report 2017

World Food Programme in Congo, Democratic Republic of the (CD)



World Food Programme

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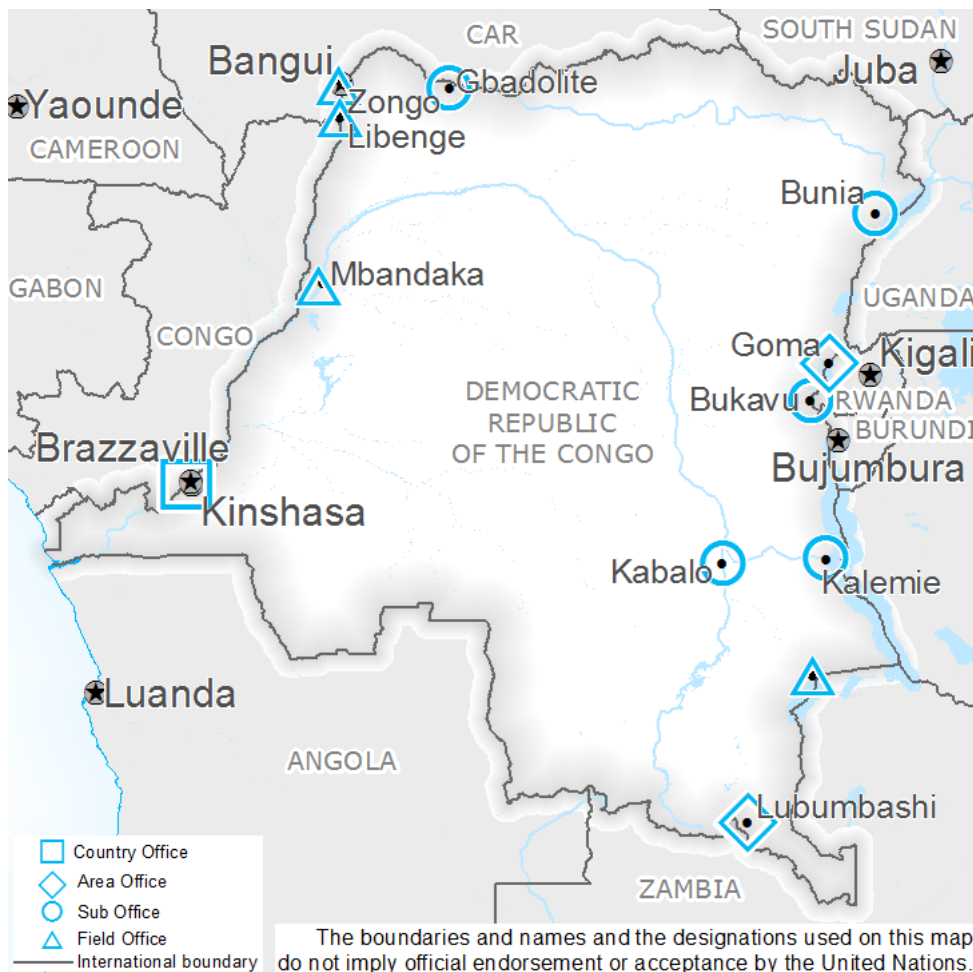
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Country Context and WFP Objectives



Achievements at Country Level

In a complex environment of conflict, political instability, widespread food and nutrition insecurity and poor infrastructure, WFP in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) rapidly scaled up life-saving food and nutrition assistance with the aim to reach some 500,000 people affected by the major humanitarian crisis in Kasai - an acute emergency in a region where WFP had not had a presence. The work of the WFP-led Logistics Cluster was vital to that response. The rapid establishment of logistics platforms in Kananga (Kasai province) and Tshikapa (Kasai Central province) enabled some 75 organizations to provide life-saving assistance to approximately 2.3 million vulnerable people in the provinces of Kasai, Kasai Central, and Kasai Oriental. A Kasai Response Strategy developed by the Food Security Cluster (co-led by WFP and FAO) guided the operation's food assistance activities.

The Kasai crisis came atop of new waves of internally displaced people in the provinces of North and South Kivu and Tanganyika, where almost one million people were displaced in 2017 alone in unrelated violence. WFP also assisted some 210,000 refugees in DRC from Burundi, Central African Republic and South Sudan (55 percent of them women and girls). In total, WFP assisted over 2.1 million people in DRC in 2017 with a combination of emergency, recovery and resilience activities, in the face of acute needs.

In addition to emergency and protracted relief activities, WFP expanded its successful Purchase for Progress (P4P) programme and resilience work thanks to multi-year funding. 2017 saw the Three-Pronged Approach (3PA) – integrated context analysis and community planning and livelihoods programming – rolled out in DRC to strengthen the design and implementation of resilience-building initiatives. The Country Office developed an innovative model that integrated P4P and Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) to strengthen smallholder farmers' capacity to better

produce, handle, process and market their agricultural products while at the same time responding to their immediate food needs. The integration of school meals into this model is being explored. This approach supports peace and social cohesion, and has been adapted as a best practice by other countries. Support to smallholder farmers is now a joint venture between WFP, FAO and IFAD. Financial literacy training and access to microcredit were also provided for women.

WFP increased its use of unrestricted cash by 50 percent compared to 2016, bringing the total value of cash-based transfers (CBT) in the country to USD 18 million. Currently, 9 out of 10 refugees in the country are assisted with CBT, allowing for greater choice and beneficiary preference while supporting local economies. WFP also implemented a large-scale electronic voucher programme for some 30,000 Burundian refugees, replacing paper vouchers. This allowed for better identification of beneficiaries at distribution points, and streamlining of the payment and reconciliation processes.

WFP DRC developed a three-year Interim Country Strategic Plan (ICSP) in close collaboration with other UN agencies, NGO partners, and the government. Approved by the WFP Executive Board in November 2017, the ICSP considers the gendered vulnerabilities and needs of women, men, girls and boys and associated protection risks arising from the DRC context, and defines WFP's direction, objectives and contribution to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2 and 17.

Country Context and Response of the Government

DRC ranked 7th globally on the 2017 Fragile States Index, placing it in the highest risk category and reflecting widespread conflict and insecurity. Presidential and parliamentary elections planned for 2016 were further delayed, contributing to ongoing political instability.

DRC is the second largest country in Africa, covering 2.34 million km², with an estimated population of 71 million people. It is still recovering from a prolonged period of economic and social decline associated with two decades of conflict. Localized displacement and economic disruption continue in parts of the country.

WFP declared a Level 3 emergency for the crisis in the Kasai region in October 2017, based on data collected through WFP's Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) system. The crisis displaced some 1.3 million people, bringing the total number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the country to 4.35 million. Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) emerged as a key feature of the conflict. In view of the deepening crises in other regions of DRC, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee declared a system-wide Level 3 emergency for Kasai, Tanganyika and South Kivu immediately after the WFP Kasai L3 declaration.

More than 500,000 DRC nationals are refugees outside the country, including more than 30,000 recent arrivals in Angola as a result of the Kasai crisis. DRC itself hosts some 530,000 refugees from neighbouring countries.

Food insecurity is high across much of the country. A June 2017 Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis estimated that 7.7 million people were severely food insecure. While acute food insecurity and acute malnutrition are concentrated in areas affected by conflict – primarily in the east of the country and Kasai – chronic food insecurity is widespread. Post-distribution monitoring (PDM) has revealed that households headed by women are typically more vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition than those headed by men.

Food markets in DRC are poorly integrated, reflecting the country's limited transportation infrastructure and the distances between production areas and urban markets. A large portion of the agricultural sector is composed of subsistence-farmers who have limited capacity to cope with shocks and few links to formal markets. These challenges disproportionately affect women, who constitute most agricultural workers yet have unequal access to productive and community assets.

In 2016, DRC ranked 176th of 188 countries on the Human Development Index with women scoring 17 percent below men. The most recent Gender Inequality Index ranked DRC 153rd of 159 countries. In recent years, the government has taken steps to address the issue of conflict-related violence against women, including the appointment of a Presidential Representative on Sexual Violence and Child Recruitment, the prosecution of high-ranking army officers and the establishment of a military tribunal to prosecute members of armed groups. Reparations have also been paid to some survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

The HIV prevalence rate is 1.2 percent, with women disproportionately affected (1.6 percent vs 0.6 percent). The highest prevalence of HIV is found among internally displaced women (7.6 percent) and victims of sexual and gender-based violence (20 percent). In DRC, HIV stigma is still an issue. HIV affected people are often isolated to the extent that they cannot meet their own basic food needs. WFP assistance aims to fill that gap and improve adherence to HIV treatment while reducing the social exclusion. The prevalence of multidrug-resistant TB is 2.4 percent.

There is a high prevalence of malnutrition, particularly in children under 5, with 8 percent wasting and 43 percent stunting. Stunting rates exceed 50 percent in Kasai, North and South Kivu, Sankuru and Tanganyika. Micronutrient deficiencies are common, with anaemia affecting 47 percent of children under 5 and 38 percent of women of reproductive age.

In DRC, malnutrition is driven by various factors. The lack of food contributes, but is not a key driver. Usually, food is available, but it is not nutritious and diversified. Micronutrition and protein consumption is very low, notably among rural people who rely heavily on starchy food, mainly cassava and maize. In general, poor access to basic service contributes heavily to malnutrition. Diarrhoea is common among children as access to potable water is very limited. Poor rural households cannot afford healthcare. Typically barely functional, health centres are poorly equipped and stocked. Low education levels limit mothers' ability to properly feed their children, although various food items are available.

Despite improvements over the past decade, poverty in DRC remains among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa and progress has been uneven across regions. The government has set out plans for growth and poverty reduction, including three consecutive poverty reduction strategy papers focused on reducing external debt and achieving progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

As part of the African Union's 2063 Agenda, the government completed a draft National Strategic Development Plan (PNSD) in 2016. The plan, which has not yet been approved, focuses on making DRC an emerging economy by 2030 and a developed country by 2050. The PNSD Strategic Framework, set out in the country's Five-Year Plan (2017–2021), highlights four pillars into which the SDGs have been integrated. SDG 2 has been integrated into pillars 2 and 4, which include agriculture, health, nutrition, education and social protection. Once it is formally adopted, the PNSD will be the government's primary framework for achieving the SDGs.

The Five-Year Plan includes several objectives in line with SDG 2, including:

- significantly reducing hunger through a sustainable increase in agricultural productivity.
- improving access to quality food, especially for vulnerable populations such as women, girls and boys through social safety nets and other programmes.
- strengthening the national system for monitoring and managing food security, nutrition and markets, including the establishment of a national early warning system and sustainable management of strategic reserves;
- improving the resilience of rural and urban populations to reduce the risk of food insecurity and famine;
- and investing in nutrition to ensure the productivity of human resources for sustainable social and economic development in the country.

The PNSD also includes objectives related to gender equality and social protection, with a focus on mainstreaming gender and protecting vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

WFP Objectives and Strategic Coordination

In 2017, WFP focused on providing humanitarian assistance to people affected by conflict and other shocks in DRC. In support of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 (zero hunger), WFP provided food assistance within the framework of two Emergency Operations (EMOPs) and a Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) which focused on lifesaving interventions and the reduction of acute malnutrition in conflict-affected areas. WFP implemented recovery activities to rehabilitate social and productive assets in stabilized areas.

WFP's emergency programmes in DRC are integrated within the UN Humanitarian Response Plan, which ensures a coordinated and coherent approach to assisting conflict-affected and refugee populations. WFP's recovery and development-oriented interventions are reflected in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2013-2017.

WFP worked with FAO to revive agricultural production and commodity markets through the Purchase for Progress (P4P) initiative with the aim of supporting smallholder farmers to rehabilitate their livelihoods while contributing to the recovery of the local economy. WFP's P4P activities also contribute to the empowerment of women through the provision of financial literacy training, access to microcredit and training for key positions in farmer organization management teams

Based on the recommendations of a Country Portfolio Evaluation (CPE) conducted in 2014 and in line with a global shift, WFP has been progressively increasing cash-based transfers (CBT) and transitioning interventions towards recovery where resources permit.

In support of SDG 17 (partnerships), WFP leads the Logistics Cluster, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster and co-leads the Food Security Cluster, and provides access to deep field locations for the humanitarian community through the provision of humanitarian air services. The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster was activated in

the last quarter of 2017 for the Kasai crisis, with the deployment of WFP staff to the region.

WFP continued to provide technical assistance to long-term government initiatives, including through the establishment of a national social protection policy, which is awaiting validation. WFP has also influenced the shift towards long-term nutrition planning by supporting the government in defining its strategic orientation while addressing key nutrition and health priorities through continued engagement with the Scaling up Nutrition (SUN) movement and the Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger (REACH) initiative, and maintaining a strong operational collaboration with the National Nutrition Programme (PRONANUT) at central and local levels.

Building on successful engagement with the government in adapting and expanding the mobile VAM (mVAM) system under the lead of the Prime Minister's Office, WFP plans to develop a national Food Security Information system. Close collaboration with national actors and government institutions continued to enhance capacities in disaster risk management and emergency preparedness.

In the fragile context of the DRC, WFP interventions give special consideration to gender and protection, which are referenced in all WFP-led assessments and partnerships. Context analyses were carried out to understand the potential risks and threats to activities and the people served.

Country Resources and Results

Resources for Results

Years of persistently high humanitarian needs, ongoing political uncertainty and competing global priorities all impact funding opportunities for humanitarian and development operations in DRC. In 2017, funding levels for WFP's operations in the country reached only 62 percent of the total requirements. This trend continues to affect WFP's capacity to fully meet project objectives. To adapt to this level of resourcing, WFP prioritised life-saving interventions, particularly for refugees and newly displaced populations, and scaled back planned asset creation activities and capacity development interventions under PRRO 200832.

Funds received for cash-based transfers were largely earmarked for South Sudanese and Central African Republican refugees under PRRO 200832 and Regional EMOP 200799 respectively, restricting flexibility to allocate resources to other priority areas. WFP relied on multilateral allocations to provide CBT to Burundian refugees in South Kivu's Lusenda camp as direct contributions towards this group of refugees continued to decline. CBT activities were limited to refugees, which impacted WFP's ability to reach the planned levels of CBT to internally displaced people under PRRO 200832.

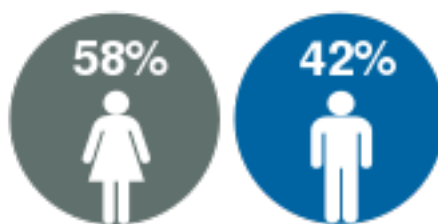
2017 saw increased food assistance needs in active conflict zones such as the Kasai region, Tanganyika and South Kivu. To meet growing needs in the country, the UN system successfully mobilised funds from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and other UN Pooled Funds. WFP utilised WFP's Immediate Response Account (IRA) and multilateral funds to ensure that food assistance to IDPs was maintained, particularly in the Kasai region where a corporate Level 3 Emergency was declared in October 2017.

The United States Agency for International Development / Food-for-Peace (USAID/FFP), remains the biggest donor for WFP's operations in DRC, while Canada, Japan, UN Pooled Funds, CERF, Belgium, the United Kingdom (UK), the European Commission (EC) and Switzerland also provided much-needed resources. WFP continues to engage with donors to sustain and increase funding levels and donors like Germany and Sweden are coming forward with multi-year funding for resilience-building interventions.



Annual Country Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Total
Children (under 5 years)	191,058	232,036	423,094
Children (5-18 years)	377,982	472,477	850,459
Adults (18 years plus)	333,994	560,862	894,856
Total number of beneficiaries in 2017	903,034	1,265,375	2,168,409



Annual Food Distribution in Country (mt)

Project Type	Cereals	Oil	Pulses	Mix	Other	Total
Regional EMOP	259	37	79	212	3	591
Single Country EMOP	5,132	350	1,113	73	58	6,727
Single Country IR-EMOP	486	36	116	14	5	657
Single Country PRRO	24,904	1,977	6,958	3,106	357	37,302
Total Food Distributed in 2017	30,781	2,401	8,267	3,405	424	45,277



Cash Based Transfer and Commodity Voucher Distribution (USD)

Project Type	Cash	Value Voucher	Commodity Voucher
Regional EMOP	5,523,593	675,481	720,467
Single Country PRRO	6,791,793	5,072,131	-
Total Distributed in 2017	12,315,385	5,747,611	720,467

Supply Chain

In 2017, WFP continued to purchase commodities locally where possible, in line with its strategy to boost local economies and support smallholder farmers, as well as to cut costs and reduce lead times. Regional purchases (from Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia) through WFP's Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF) covered the gaps that local purchases could not fill.

WFP continued to explore the possibility of increasing local purchases and expanding the food basket to include other locally available commodities, engage medium and small-scale farmers and further develop local agriculture.

Transport costs remain high due to extremely poor road and bridge infrastructure, much of which becomes impassable during the rainy season. In 2017 insecurity in 2017 was the biggest challenge to accessing people in

need.

WFP contracted 104 commercial transporters (road, air, river and railway) in 2017 to supplement 106 WFP trucks for the delivery of food assistance. The combination of commercial transporters and WFP trucks allowed timely deliveries to beneficiaries. The use of WFP's own trucks was key to the timely delivery of assistance to areas not covered by private transporters, particularly in the Kasai region.

Post-delivery losses were minimal at 0.027 percent (compared to 0.12 percent in 2016). Losses occurred primarily during transportation and distributions conducted by cooperating partners, and in WFP warehouses. The value of transport losses was automatically recovered from transporters' invoices.

WFP continued to strengthen capacity by improving warehouse management and food quality control. Blue boxes, tools for assessing grain quality, were positioned in field locations and training conducted for WFP staff.

In 2017 WFP contracted 27 food traders in Bili camp, North Ubangi, for the introduction of value vouchers, and in Lusenda, South Kivu, for the introduction of e-vouchers. The launch of e-vouchers increased operational efficiency for both WFP and retailers, facilitating a smooth reconciliation process and timely invoice payment. Market assessments were a prerequisite for the implementation of any cash-based transfer interventions, as was assessment of retailer capacity prior to the implementation of the voucher modality.



Annual Food Purchases for the Country (mt)

Commodity	Local	Regional/International	Total
Beans	4,020	-	4,020
Corn Soya Blend	-	1,000	1,000
Iodised Salt	77	244	321
Maize Meal	16,304	1,690	17,993
Ready To Use Supplementary Food	-	530	530
Vegetable Oil	556	-	556
Total	20,956	3,464	24,420
Percentage	85.8%	14.2%	

Annual Global Commodity Management Facility Purchases Received in Country (mt)

Commodity	Total
Corn Soya Blend	1,284
High Energy Biscuits	115
Peas	415
Ready To Use Supplementary Food	319
Split Peas	610
Vegetable Oil	672
Total	3,415

Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations and Lessons Learned

Multi-sectoral cash-based transfer (CBT) assessments were carried out across WFP's areas of operation in DRC. This led to a shift from commodity vouchers to direct cash assistance in Inke camp and from food to value vouchers in Bili camp for CAR refugees. Overall, WFP increased its use of unrestricted cash by 50 percent compared to 2016, in line with global recommendations. Regular market monitoring was carried out to adjust the cash transfer value to beneficiaries as needed and resources permitting, to support the implementation of cash distributions in refugee camps in Bas Uele, South Kivu, and North and South Ubangi provinces.

A large-scale electronic voucher programme for some 30,000 Burundian refugees was introduced in Lusenda camp, replacing paper vouchers. Paper vouchers were found to be error-prone and costly, hence the introduction of a more efficient means of transfer.

In 2017 WFP reviewed the transfer mechanism of direct cash to beneficiaries. In discussions with partners, some concerns were raised about the potential risks involved in moving large sums of cash through remote areas, the lack of insurance in the case of any security incidents and the costs involved in such operations. WFP therefore increased the use of financial service providers for the distribution of direct cash to mitigate those risks. Direct cash for CAR refugees is now handled completely by a financial service provider.

A 2016 Preparedness and Readiness Cross-Functional Mission in DRC focused on preparing the Country Office for a potential rapid CBT intervention in urban areas, including Kinshasa. In implementation of the recommendations arising from this mission, WFP DRC carried out an urban food security assessment in the city in 2017 to determine the existing levels of economic vulnerability and food insecurity, with a view to gathering preparatory information should a response strategy be needed. Final results are expected in early 2018.

A Kasai emergency food security assessment (EFSA) defined the targeting and scale of the Kasai Emergency Operation and informed the development of a Food Security Cluster strategy to guide food assistance for the duration of the response. Assistance under the IR-EMOP had been provided to IDPs based on status. However, following discussions with partners, and based on the EFSA results that revealed the extent of food insecurity in the area, WFP revised its implementation approach and moved to blanket feeding across prioritised geographical areas.

UNICEF undertook a nutrition end-line study of the WFP and FAO joint Stunting Reduction and Prevention project implemented in Bunyakiri territory of South Kivu province. The study recommended the extension of the project until 2020, and that WFP commence monitoring the minimum diversity diet of beneficiaries. To date, the joint effort is focused on improving infant and young child feeding practices, dietary intake of children and pregnant and lactating women (PLW), improving household food security and strengthening multi-sectoral coordination. WFP acts together with FAO in food security, providing a daily ration to households based on cereals, peas, oil and salt for seed protection.

In 2017, following discussions with partners on protection and accountability to affected populations (AAP), WFP signed a memorandum of understanding with a call centre to manage a beneficiary complaint and feedback hotline. This was established in the last half of 2017 in areas of the country with network coverage. The hotline complements existing in-person complaint and feedback mechanisms, ensuring WFP is well equipped to capture two-way communication with beneficiaries and respond quickly to any protection issues.

Only 12 percent of calls on the hotline came from women, mainly because of women's limited access to phones in rural areas. Households often share one telephone managed by the headmen of the households. WFP initiated advocacy with the telecommunication companies to allow free access to all women beneficiaries, reinforcing the mobile solutions for AAP.

WFP extended its market and food security system through its mobile Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (mVAM), reaching about 4,000 displaced households in South Kivu, North Kivu, Tanganyika, and Ituri provinces. The scope of indicators collected through mVAM were also extended to include the food consumption score, coping strategy index, household diversity score, minimum diversity diet for women and food prices. mVAM has proven to be an efficient tool to collect timely information on the food distribution process, and has led to a mobile post-distribution monitoring (PDM) approach tested in Tanganyika province.

Building resilience amid instability in DRC

Agriculture remains the largest sector in DRC's economy, employing over 70 percent of the population. Yet nearly 99 percent of DRC farmers are smallholders and the sector is dominated by subsistence farming. Agricultural production has fallen by 40 percent since 1990.

Given successful implementation of Purchase for Progress (P4P) in DRC in recent years, WFP and FAO have developed an innovative approach that combines Food Assistance for Assets and Food for Training with building smallholder resilience following the P4P model. Focused on the provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu and Tanganyika, where agricultural production has been severely impacted by unrest but where internally displaced persons (IDPs) are beginning to return to restart their lives, this approach responds to the population's urgent need for food to protect a fragile peace while also developing beneficiaries' capacity for self-reliance.

The integrated approach consists of a combination of economic, social, technical and financial interventions to quickly revitalize the local economy and the livelihoods of the local population. Targeting is across ethnic groups and community-based, ensuring all beneficiaries – including both male and female smallholder farmers, communities hosting IDPs, refugees and returnees – receive all categories of support within an inter-ethnic inclusive effort. Following the P4P model based around farmer organizations, beneficiary households are grouped into community-based organizations, through which programme activities are implemented.

Activities are grouped into five main categories:

1. **community mobilization:** this component aims to empower vulnerable households and facilitate integration and social cohesion through: support to farmer organizations (FOs) to obtain legal recognition; awareness campaigns and training on governance, human rights and gender equality; establishment of community radio stations and clubs to discuss societal issues such as gender equality and peaceful cohabitation.
2. **food assistance for assets and inclusive financing:** this component helps rehabilitate infrastructure through transfers on two levels: WFP provided transfers to cover immediate household food needs, freeing up people's time to rehabilitate and build community infrastructure; FAO complemented the FFA transfers, providing cash to those engaged in sustainable agricultural or environmental practices, such as reforestation activities. In turn, the cash was invested in local village-based savings and loans (VSLAs) systems, which provided the rural communities with access to credit and allowed them to diversify their sources of income.
3. **capacity building in agricultural production and processing:** this component aims to strengthen the productive capacities and means to engage in profitable and sustainable livelihoods. Key activities include: providing trainings through Farmer Field Schools (FFS); supporting pro-smallholder animal farming to diversify income sources; improving availability of quality agricultural inputs, tools, and seeds through local providers; easing access to smallholder friendly technologies and machineries;
4. **post-harvest management and market access support:** to improve the beneficiaries' transport capacity to collection points and to larger markets. Key activities include: promoting food conservation and storage best practices; building and/or rehabilitating warehouses and market infrastructure; developing market information sharing systems to facilitate commodity marketing; creating linkages between buyers and FOs and facilitating WFP procurement from smallholders;
5. **Conflict mitigation and peacebuilding:** WFP and FAO work with partners renowned for their expertise in peace building, to lay down the basis for durable economic results. Key activities include: establishing community dialogue and participatory mechanisms for peace and reconciliation; establishing early warning and conflict mitigation system at community level; establishing community dialogue and participatory mechanisms for peace and reconciliation.

The model harnesses the comparative advantages of the Rome-based agencies (RBAs): FAO expertise on quality inputs and agricultural production and rural micro-finance, and WFP on post-harvest handling, logistics, commodity storage and market engagement. In 2017, the RBAs in the DRC adopted the Three-Pronged Approach (3PA), an enhanced means to strengthen the design, planning and implementation of programmes in resilience building, productive safety nets, disaster risk reduction, and preparedness. In North Kivu, an Integrated Context Analysis (ICA) was conducted as a first step in the 3PAs implementation in June 2017. Given the size of DRC, this exercise focused on eastern provinces, namely North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri. The ICA was followed by a seasonal livelihood programming workshop in October 2017. Between November and December 2017, five Community-based Participatory Planning (CBPP) exercises were organized. The CBPP consisted of community/village level analysis. It helped identify the root causes of vulnerability, ensuring that communities have a strong voice in setting priorities and that the interventions were tailored to their needs.

Gender equality is cross-cutting through all activities. Functional literacy trainings have reached more than 2,300 women, teaching basic financial and organization skills and the use of technological tools, including for commodity quality management and testing. These trainings have contributed to women's empowerment in rural areas,

encouraging them to become more active in their communities and take up community-based organization management positions. Today, many community-based organizations, agricultural input shops and processing units are managed by women. Through sensitization and awareness-raising campaigns, the approach challenges bias and promotes gender equality. By bringing communities together to work for their common advancement, and by ensuring all ethnic groups participate and benefit from the activities, it is contributing to strengthening social cohesion. The initiative is consequently recognized among the best practices for economic recovery, stabilization and peace in the DRC.

Project Results

Activities and Operational Partnerships

DRC is a complex emergency in which humanitarian actors face challenges in reaching vulnerable communities. With its vast landmass and poor roads, air transport is the most viable means of travel. However, local and commercial air operators in the country do not meet international aviation standards. The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO), Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), the Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission (ECHO) and International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) provide some air transport services but cannot cover the needs of the humanitarian community.

UNHAS, the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service, was established in 2008 by WFP to provide safe, flexible, efficient and cost-effective air transport services to the humanitarian sector, UN agencies, NGOs, diplomatic missions and donor representatives; transport light cargo such as medical supplies and information and communications technology equipment; and provide timely medical and security evacuations if required. Special Operation 201016 succeeded Special Operation 200789 (2015-2016).

In 2017 the UNHAS operational fleet consisted of eight fixed-wing aircrafts and two Mi-8 (21-seat) helicopters. These assets were strategically positioned in Kinshasa, Goma, Kananga, Dungu, Kalemie, Lubumbashi and other locations as required, and tasked to effectively respond to humanitarian needs by serving regular and ad-hoc destinations across the country.

One dedicated Mi-8 helicopter operated throughout June for the Ebola response in the Tshopo region of north-eastern DRC. The other started its operation in December 2017 for a planned duration of three months to respond to the humanitarian crisis in the Kasai region. A Beechcraft 1900 ended its operation in May 2017 and a dedicated C208B started operation in July 2017, also in response to the Kasai crisis.

With support from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), organizations are registered as UNHAS users through an established procedure. Passenger bookings are checked against the list of staff submitted by the user organization, and controls are in place to ensure the proper identification of passenger and purpose of travel.

Stakeholder engagement is fostered through User Group Committees which meet regularly in locations where aircrafts are based and in other locations around the country. The committees handle administrative matters, provide feedback on service quality and identify destinations to be served. A Steering Committee is also in place in Kinshasa to define operational requirements and air transport priorities, and to determine the eligibility of service users. A total of 34 User Group Committee meetings and three Steering Committee meetings were held in 2017.

Identification of routes is linked with the destinations to be served and decisions are made with user organizations following a consultative process through User Group and Steering Committee meetings.

In addition to stakeholder consultations, surveys carried out on customer satisfaction and access provision to receive feedback from a wider audience and to tailor the use of air assets to meet demands.

Capacity development activities, including staff trainings, were carried out in 2017. UNHAS staff participated in Aviation Emergency Response Plan exercises, International Air Transport Association (IATA) online Dangerous Goods Regulations (DGR), Electronic Flight Management Application (E-FMA), and language training, among others. These training initiatives were actively complemented with on-the-job training for airfield focal points and other staff.

In 2017, UNHAS actively engaged in building partnerships. Technical Service Agreements with MONUSCO, WHO (in response to the Ebola outbreak) and the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) were maintained. Over this period, MONUSCO Technical Service Agreements benefited UNHAS with ground and passenger handling, aviation fuel, security and safety services in most of the airports where UNHAS operated.

UNHAS DRC continued to support the DRC Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) in implementing ECCAIRS 5 (European Coordination Centre for Accident and Incident Reporting Systems) and with participation in the Global Humanitarian Aviation Conference held in Lisbon, Portugal. Other partners, such as Caritas, MONUSCO, COOPI and Action Contre la Faim, supported UNHAS through airstrip maintenance.

Results

In 2017 UNHAS provided 229 humanitarian organizations, including UN agencies, NGOs, donors and diplomatic missions, access to 45 scheduled and 35 non-scheduled locations within DRC and across the border in Republic of Congo and Central African Republic. These locations were serviced by fixed-wing aircraft of varying capacities and 21-seater Mi-8 helicopters performing an average of 473 flight hours per month, operating on a regular fixed schedule.

The response to the Ebola and Kasai crises led to an increased number of passengers, cargo and destinations served. However, during the reporting period, some flights were cancelled due to bad weather and scheduled aircraft maintenance. These factors, with priority given to medical evacuations, reduced the percentage of passenger bookings served.

UNHAS published a weekly flight schedule, with flexibility to adjust requests for special flights. In cases of emergency, UNHAS increased flights to rapidly respond to the needs of the humanitarian community (as was done in 2017 for the Kasai crisis). Flights to Kasai region increased from once a week to five times a week and from 2 to 9 destinations. The schedule was reviewed regularly to meet changing humanitarian needs.

During the year 28,827 passengers were transported and 609.25 mt of cargo airlifted - an increase of 10 percent and 11 percent respectively compared to 2016. A hundred percent of all requested medical evacuations were performed.

Two customer satisfaction surveys carried out in 2017 showed overall positive results with some 93 percent of respondents expressing satisfaction with UNHAS services. UNHAS users were regularly requested to provide feedback online by WFP's Aviation Unit in Rome. Responses were compiled analysed by WFP and discussed in User Group Meetings.

Performance Monitoring

The Performance Management Tool (PMT), developed by the WFP Aviation Service, was used to monitor and maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the UNHAS fleet. The system tracked the percentage of bookings served, the operational cost per passenger, aircraft utilization and on-time performance, and analysed traffic to destinations. UNHAS deployed a modern flight management application (Take-flite) for flight planning, reservations, reporting and financial management of the operation. Take-flite offers a user-friendly platform that enables online booking for users.

The operation's risk and quality levels are monitored and reviewed regularly by the WFP Aviation Safety and Quality Assurance Unit, who performs routine evaluations to ensure that the operation maintains the highest standards of safety and compliance. In 2017 an Aviation Security, Quality and Safety Assessment was also conducted.

The operation was also supported by the WFP Aviation Safety Unit (ASU) through the Regional Aviation Safety Office (RASO) in Johannesburg. The safety officer deployed to DRC thrice in 2017 to evaluate the operational risk level of operators and undertook aircraft inspections that ensured the operation was conducted according to acceptable safety standards.

A safety management and occurrence reporting system to promote aviation safety was used for risk mitigation. This included a thorough follow-up of provisions of the project's Aviation Safety Program (ASP) and Aviation Emergency Response Plan (A-ERP).

A thank you message from a partner

[To WFP,]

"I wanted to thank you for the support UNHAS provided the UK team for our VIP visit last week. By allowing us to use the UNHAS flight and by shifting the timetables to give our visitor(s) the maximum amount of time in the various locations, we were able to give the visitor(s) enough time on the ground to meet with key implementing partners, officials and beneficiaries and to get a good understanding of the complexity and challenge of working in the DRC. We had a very successful visit and that is in no small part due to you and your highly professional UNHAS team. So, thank you again. It was very much appreciated." (Chris Gabelle, Deputy Head of DFID, DRC)

Figures and Indicators

Data Notes

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Loading an UNHAS flight in Muma, Likati district, in response to the outbreak of Ebola in May 2017.

Project Indicators

Outcome Indicators

Outcome	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
SR5 Countries have strengthened capacity to implement the SDGs				
To enable the humanitarian community to access and supervise projects				
User satisfaction rate				
<i>DRC, Project End Target: 2017.12, Base value: 2016.12, WFP survey, WFP Monitoring, Latest Follow-up: 2017.12, WFP programme monitoring, WFP Monitoring</i>	=100.00	85.00	-	93.00

Output Indicators

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
CRF SO4-SR5: Service provision and platforms activities				
Metric tons of cargo transported	metric ton	480	618	128.7%
Number of destinations served	unit	40	80	200.0%
Number of passengers transported	individual	26,400	29,964	113.5%