



World Food Programme

WFP Republic of Congo

Country Brief

December 2018

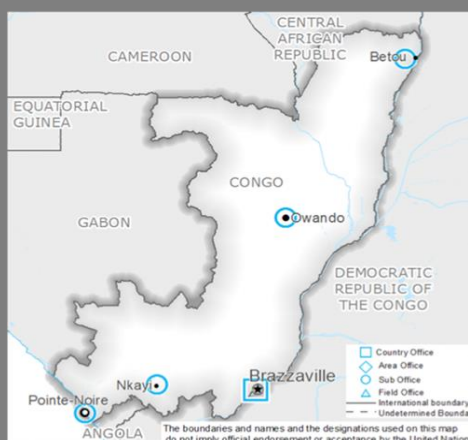


Operational Context

RoC ranks poorly on the Human Development Index, and its food production is below national requirements, with only 2 per cent of arable land currently under cultivation covering 30 per cent of the country's food needs. Forty-eight per cent of Congolese live on less than USD 1.25 per day.

In April 2016, the conflict between the Congolese government and rebels led by Pastor Ntumi in Pool escalated leading to thousands of Internally Displaced People (IDPs). Food production has been damaged as the region is one of few productive agricultural zones, with 90 percent of households dependent on agriculture. A ceasefire was signed between the government and the rebel group in December 2017. The Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) process started in August 2018

WFP's operations in RoC include assistance to this displaced population and other vulnerable people in the country contributing to the global efforts to reach Sustainable Development Goals 1 (End Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality) and 17 (Partnerships for the goals).



Population: **4.2 million**

2017 Human Development Index: **137 out of 189**

Income Level: **Lower middle**

Chronic malnutrition: **21.2% of children between 6-59 months**

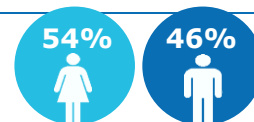
In Numbers

445 mt of food assistance distributed

US\$ 9,902 cash-based transfers made

US\$ 6.4 m six-month (January to June 2019) net funding requirements, representing 49% of the total

86,200 people assisted in December 2018



Operational Updates

- Following intercommunal conflicts in DRC in December, a significant number of displaced people have been observed in the Department of Plateau in the Republic of Congo. According to a UNHCR-WFP joint assessment carried out at the end of December, persons having fled to RoC are highly vulnerable and need immediate food assistance. The prevalence of malnutrition is also concerning as the rate of Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) is higher than 15%. On 28 December, the Government requested for the UN to assist 16,000 displaced people.
- In December, 310 malnourished children under the age of five received specialised nutritious food to treat moderate acute malnutrition, and some 2,000 children between 6 and 23 months were assisted to prevent malnutrition.
- In December, about 56,100 children (27,700 girls and 28,400 boys) were served meals at 276 schools, including those for indigenous children.
- Under the smallholder bean producer support project (*Projet d'Appui aux Petits Producteurs de Haricots*, PAPP), WFP purchased 6.7 mt in December. In total, 78.7 mt of beans have been procured from smallholder farmers in 2018. This is the largest quantity WFP RoC has purchased in a year from local smallholder producers.
- The Chinese Government has confirmed its contribution of US\$ 2 million for the nutrition support of populations in the Pool department.
- The Zero Hunger Strategic Review has been finalised, and the RoC Country Strategic Plan (CSP) is planned to be launched in January 2019.

WFP Operations

	Total Requirements (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	6 Month Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
Republic of Congo Country Strategic Plan (2019 – 2023)			
	13.1 m	6.7 m (51.1 %)	6.4 m (48.9 %)

*Period of 6 months, from December 2018 to May 2019

Gender Marker

Monitoring

- WFP, in coordination with a third-party monitor, conducted a Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) exercise in October, surveying over 770 households in seven districts in the Pool department.
- According to the preliminary results, nearly one in four households is still living in temporary shelter - such as Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps or with host families.
- Nearly two in five households (37 percent) were classified as either moderately or severely food insecure, and women-headed households were found to be more vulnerable to food insecurity (53 percent have poor or limited food consumption and 44 percent are moderately or severely food insecure).
- The proportion of households' budgets spent on food remains high with 27 percent (and 32 percent of women-headed households) spending more than 65 percent of their monthly budget on food.
- Malnutrition remains significant among children under five and pregnant or lactating women: 15.8 percent of non-beneficiary children and 9.6 percent of beneficiary children suffer from Global Acute Malnutrition, and nearly 20 percent of children in general are found to be chronically malnourished. More than 25 percent of PLW are malnourished (3 percent Severe Acute Malnutrition, 6 percent Moderate Acute Malnutrition and 17 percent at risk). The number of malnourished PLW is double among the non-beneficiaries compared to the WFP beneficiaries (rate of GAM 14.3 percent against 7.9 percent).

Challenges

- WFP Congo urgently requires funding to continue assisting conflict-affected populations in the Pool Department and to refugees from the Central African Republic (CAR) in the north of the country (Likouala Department). In December, no malnutrition treatment assistance was carried out due to the financial shortfall.
- The EMOP will come to an end at the end of 2018 with the activities continuing under the Country Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023. The Net Funding Requirement for the IDP and refugee operations for the next six months stands at US\$3 million.

People displaced from DRC

Following intercommunal violence in DRC in December 2018, a significant number of people have fled to Makotimpoko, Bouemba and Mpouya in the Department of Plateau in RoC. The RoC Government has requested for the UN to support 16,000 refugees.

During the UNHCR-WFP joint assessment mission, significant needs for food assistance were articulated by the local authorities and displaced populations. Displaced people fled without any means and lost their assets; thus, they cannot buy basic food they need. It was found that they could only have one meal per day compared to three meals before the crisis, and children shared their meals with other siblings in the family. At the moment, the host communities try to support them by sharing their already limited food, but this will not last much longer. A screening of 126 children showed that over 15% of them were acutely malnourished.

Vulnerable children do not have access to age-appropriate food. There is no source of clean water in Makotimpoko, and there are reports that diarrhoea cases are increasing.

The price of cassava flour has increased sharply because of the crisis' effect on trade and markets. The traders from DRC are currently staying away from RoC which is suppressing trade flows and local food availability. WFP is keeping track of developments using mVAM (mobile Vulnerability and Analysis Mapping) key informant phone calls.

Considering this urgent situation, the Government of Congo – Ministry of Social Affairs and Humanitarian Actions (MSAH) – officially requested the UN residential coordinator for UN multi-sectoral humanitarian assistances for these displaced populations. UN agencies, MSAH, the National Committee of Assistance to Refugees (CNAR) and other partners developed a Response Plan in January 2019 aiming to bring humanitarian assistance to the displaced populations from the DRC with identified actions in the priority areas under the leadership of UNHCR.

Limited access to the concerned zones is a critical challenge to humanitarian action. Makotipoko is only accessible by boat.

Pool Crisis Update

The first phase of Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) activities implemented in the Mindouli district in the Pool department in collaboration with ACTED, implementing partner, have been terminated and 65 targeted households have received cash-based transfers using SCOPE (WFP's beneficiary identity and benefit management system).

Donors

Government of Republic of Congo, USA, Japan, Brazil, European Union, France, Italy, China.