

Country Brief

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

2023

A better quality of life for all in an
urbanizing world



A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL IN AN URBANIZING WORLD

We promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development and the achievement of adequate shelter for all.



UN-HABITAT

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Kinshasa, DRC: Credit: Afrik21

URBAN CONTEXT AND TRENDS

With a vast area coverage of 2,345,400 km², the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has the largest territory in sub-Saharan Africa. It is a great nation with enough untapped value-added resources for the prosperity of its people and other residents. It has the largest proportion of forest in Central Africa, which plays an important role in the climate crisis and the preservation of biodiversity in the years to come. This significant natural potential is also a well-being factor that is poorly capitalized to ensure a better planned occupation of rural and urban spaces in a context of climate change and difficulties in attracting investors. As a result, it contributes little to the process of economic growth and quality human development. As a result, most of the population is poor.

In DRC, the population has grown from just over 12 million in 1950 to 48 million in 2000. It is around 95 million in 2022. According to the projections of the PNSD, the population will increase from 133 to 191 million between 2030 and 2040 and then to 278 million in 2050. During this period, urbanization will not stop growing. According to the United Nations (2014), DRC had an urbanization rate of 39.9% in 2010 for a total population estimated at 62 million. This rate was estimated at 42% in 2015 and would reach 60% in 2050. The average annual growth to the urban population had been estimated at 4.1% over the last decade and this is reflected with the increase in the number of urban dwellers, 1 million per year.

In Kinshasa in particular, the annual population growth rate was 5.1% on average compared to 4.1% nationally between 1984-2010. Over the years and with regard to urban and rural landscapes, urbanization and rural development have not always produced quality frameworks according to planning and environmental protection standards.

In addition, the principles of market economy and economic agglomeration that underlie the dynamics of industrial production and wealth creation due to urbanization have been poorly valued over the past fifty years.

The main manifestations (or symptoms) of poorly managed urbanization are of various kinds: (i) With its 26 provinces, the DRC has an urban framework of the macrocephaly type structured around 145 mostly rural territories. It is dominated by Kinshasa, the capital city with more than 15 million inhabitants. In 2019, the country had 52 agglomerations with more than 100,000 inhabitants, 8 of which have at least 1 million people. These figures will increase to 70 and 13 respectively by 2030, and 81 and 15 in 2040. (ii) The physiognomy of these human settlements suggests an inadequacy of the tools for organizing land use, the development of rivers, lakes, and port fronts. Spatial sprawl is disorderly and uncoordinated between public services in charge of urban planning, the environment, water and electricity supply, drainage, and the construction of markets and social infrastructure. This justifies the increase in population in the peripheries or territories often characterized by security risk and difficulties to access. This is despite ongoing efforts to structure land tenure security and land use planning funded by the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI). Under these lenses, the Government has formulated sectoral policies and supported institutional and organizational reforms. Their operationalization will strengthen spatial planning at the provincial, city and territorial levels. (iii) Urban regeneration operations, particularly in Kinshasa, are carried out without any basis or urban planning framework relating to urban densification. This results in construction in non-edificant areas and often without compliance with national regulations on architecture. Open public spaces, green or blue, are rare and increasingly inaccessible to most of the population. Two vectors of these situations are the scarcity of urban planning tools and the weak application of existing ones by stakeholders.

FACT SHEET

Country urban figures

- Total Country Population (2022): 95 million
- Urban population (2015): 42%
- Urban growth rate: 4.1%
- Major Cities and population (YEAR): City (Population); City (Population);

Urban planning and Policy

- Few administrative territories have a Local Territorial Development Plan or a Special Development Plan for its capital.
- Only 7 cities have urban planning instruments.

Housing in DRC

- There is no well-organized sector in the DRC to produce social housing, including a production chain for building materials.
- DRC has a Housing deficit of about 4 million units, to bridge the gap, nearly 265,000 housing units would have to be built per year.
- Kinshasa are estimated at 54.4% of the overall deficit, or 143,092 housing units to be built per year
- The quality of housing and human settlements In rural areas, the quality of many habitats leaves something to be desired. Housing is eroded by rainfall, roofs are of very poor quality, and the women and children who live often do not have clean water, electricity, energy for cooking, and enough room to live in dignity. is a concern with the internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees, estimated at nearly 5.6 million (51% of whom are women) and 520,000 respectively across the national territory due to violent conflicts, insecurity, and disasters.

Infrastructure gaps

- It is estimated that 69% of this network is in a very advanced state of disrepair.
- In Kinshasa, urban mobility is dense and traffic jams are the cause of lost time and fuel when it is not acts of violence.

Under another prism, the unattractive urbanization that generates little opportunities for wealth creation in the DRC is partly explained by the modalities of access to land and specially to serviced spaces in urban areas. Throughout the country, several central or decentralized public institutions do not own land reserves. Their influences are based on individual or community subdivision and severance operations that do not always respect pre-established planning rules where they exist. In this context, the creation of residential areas is rarely regulated. Specifications that are almost non-existent or very often ineffective to normalize life in co-ownership or within communities. In another aspect, the ineffective implementation of existing land use plans and the poor control of land bases often lead to conflicts of use. It is commonly recognized in the DRC that a large majority of cases in urban courts are land-based.

In rural areas, land conflicts are, but not exhaustive, concentrated around concessions, relating to the exploitation of natural resources within or between communities or traditional land development fees, or caused by the presence of internally displaced persons or returnees. Despite the above, it should be noted that various technical and financial partners are supporting the land use and land use planning process. The World Bank, the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) led by FONAREDD, several United Nations agencies, bilateral actors such as the French Development Agency, the African Development Bank, the British, Swedish, Norwegian, and Dutch and German cooperation agencies are among the structures involved in this approach. Now, to strengthen the process of supporting land use mechanisms, this country program will support CAFI approaches aimed at consolidating the spatial planning process from the national to the territorial level. On another level, poorly controlled urban development and poorly organized rural development generate islands of insecurity. Many public spaces are no longer safe for school-age or unemployed youth, who are exposed to street children (Kuluna or Chegué) in the city, or armed groups in rural areas. In addition, the absence of recreational spaces does not promote the social inclusion and conviviality expected from the creation of agglomerations.

UN HABITAT IN DRC

UN-Habitat has more than 20 years' presence in the DRC and long-lasting collaboration with both the Ministries of Urban Planning and Land Affairs, and the Provincial Government of the city-capital of Kinshasa. UN-Habitat programme in the DRC focuses on land reform and conflict mediation Eastern DRC through the prevention and resolution of land conflicts for the strengthening of peace, stability and economic development.

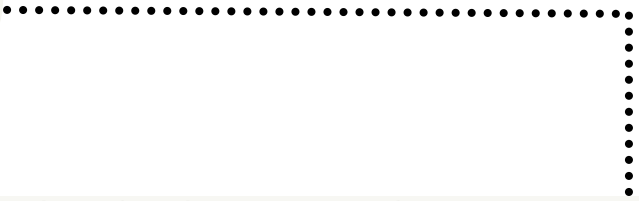
To date, UN-Habitat manages a rather modest portfolio in the Democratic Republic of Congo composed of four ongoing projects:

- **Land Reform Support Program : \$7,00,000**
- **Nyaragongo disaster relocation project : \$700,000**
- **The Slum Upgrading Project in the Massina district: \$350,000.**
- **The project on Land-Based Finance in Fragile States: \$168,125.**








The work of UN-Habitat in the country touches on land, housing, improvement of the living environment and land-based financing.



In the land sector, UN Habitat has been engaged since 2012 in a land reform process that integrates REDD+, with 3 priority projects, including land tenure security for local communities, which is a major challenge for REDD+. The national REDD+ framework strategy (adopted in November 2012) identifies land tenure security as one of its 7 pillars and the latest version (May 2013) of the Economic Governance Matrix, provides "In accordance with the National REDD+ Framework Strategy, the definition of the land reforms necessary to support economic development zones and the implementation of REDD+ pilot initiatives". In response to calls for expressions of interest launched by the National Fund for the Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (FONAREDD), UN-Habitat/GLTN has proposed a Land Reform and Land Administration Capacity Building Support Programme whose overall objective is to adopt an equitable land policy - including with regard to gender and vulnerable persons issues and local communities and peoples. indigenous - and ensuring sustainable and non-conflict-based land management and clarification of land rights with a view to limiting forest land conversion.





The second area in which UN-Habitat intervenes in the DRC relates to the improvement of the living environment. Indeed, since 2017, UN-Habitat has been working in the Democratic Republic of Congo to improve the living environment of populations, especially those living in slums. The PPAB Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme is one of these programmes. It aims to improve the slums and its inhabitants. It is in this context that UN-Habitat supports the Municipality of Massina, Matadi district as part of the Participatory Slum Improvement Programme (PPAB). The general objective of the project is to contribute to the improvement of the living environment of local populations living in urban areas by creating a participatory community dynamic around the fight for the improvement of slums in Kinshasa. The project targets at least 10 million slum dwellers with the ambition of halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

In addition, UN-Habitat has also been working in the DRC since 2021 on issues related to the mobilization of taxes and property taxes for the financing of basic social services. This initiative comes in the overall context of the land reform process initiated in the country since 2012. The Norad project: "Land and real estate taxation in fragile states for service delivery, reconstruction, citizenship building and peacekeeping" is thus in line with the content of the National Land Policy Document (DPFN), the draft land law and the development of the urban planning and construction code, all of which advocate, streamlining the tax system and discussing the need for revenue generating models and mechanisms for local governments. The project is funded by NORAD with the objective of contributing to the improvement of land and real estate revenue and expenditure systems for the province, as well as for public procurement in the cities of Goma and Beni.

Country office Thematic focus.



Priority Area 1. Managed urbanization, housing and reduction of inequalities: UN-Habitat intends to contribute by encouraging and promoting controlled and economically viable systems of urban governance and territorial planning of urbanization and housing, through;

- The development and support for the implementation of a national urbanization and housing policy;
- The development of urban planning tools and the promotion of adequate habitats,
- The strengthening of the capacities of public and private administrations in governance, planning, and participatory urban management,
- The improvement of the access of households and disaster victims, returnees and returnees to adequate housing in urban and rural areas.



Priority Program 2: Land tenure and territorial prosperity: This program aims to support the DRC in establishing multi-stakeholder mechanisms for land tenure security that contribute to territorial prosperity are strengthened. This will be done through:

- Support for the implementation of land reform for sustainable forest management and peace;
- Promotion of rural mechanisms in integrated spatial planning for land tenure security of agricultural projects and inclusive development of agricultural value chains in the 145 territories;
- Organizational development and institutional capacity building of specialized public, private and community technical structures.

Country office Thematic focus.



Priority Program 3: Climate Change and Community Resilience: This priority program contributes to strengthening the resilience of women and youth to climate change, disasters, and the effects of biodiversity degradation. To this end, UN-Habitat intends to;

- Mobilize its partners around strengthening rainwater and waste management and reducing the effects of flooding in the city of Kinshasa;
- Strengthen the capacities of 36 cities and 145 territories in promoting climate-energy plans to accelerate green growth and low-carbon development;
- Contribute to the promotion of urban and rural biodiversity restoration to increase women's and youth's access to green jobs.



Priority Programme 4: Inclusive prevention of crises and delinquency.

This priority programme commits UN-Habitat and its partners to strengthening social cohesion and stabilizing territories backed by the participatory prevention of juvenile delinquency and land conflicts through;

- Strengthening the capacities of cities and territories to reduce violence through localized and root-cause approaches;
- Support for the improvement of relations between law enforcement agencies (FMOs), local authorities and women populations to assist victims of violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, particularly in localities in transition after the departure of MONUSCO.

PIPELINE PROJECT IDEAS



Phase 2 of the land reform and land administration capacity-building support programme. Its objective is to improve administrative and customary systems of land and real estate governance conducive to inclusive management of forest ecosystems and sustainable peace in the DRC. With a budget of \$ 15,000,000 with funding from CAFI / FONAREDD for a period of 36 months, the project will have both a national and provincial scope and will be a continuation of phase 1 of the land reform support program.



The PBF Youth Mobilization for Access to Safe and Inclusive Civic Spaces project. The objective of the project is to encourage greater participation of young women and men peacebuilders from Tshipaka in civic spaces, both traditional and beyond, for peacebuilding and sustainable peace. More specifically, it is a question of ensuring the safety, protection, and security of the young peace actors of Tshipaka in connection with the expansion of their civic space, to contribute to their commitment to sustainable peace. The budget of the project amounts to \$2,000,000 for joint submission with other UN agencies. Funding: PBF for a period of 18 months. The project will take place in Kasai province, particularly in the city of Tshipaka.



Project to support the promotion of durable solutions and long-term resilience of displaced persons affected by the Nyaragongo volcanic eruption in Goma, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Funded by the National Housing Fund of the Government of the DRC to the tune of \$ 700,000, the overall objective of the project in question is to increase the long-term resilience of displaced people victims of the Nyaragongo volcanic eruption and vulnerable host communities in the city of Goma through durable solutions. In terms of duration, the project spans 24 months.



Sustainable Neighborhoods Project to ***Improve the Living Conditions of Low-Income Workers at Plantations and Oil Mills of Congo (PHC) in the Democratic Republic of Congo***. The project aims to contribute to improving workers' access to decent and affordable housing and contribute to the improvement of living conditions and poverty reduction. Ultimately, it is expected that

- access to decent housing for middle- and low-income workers will be improved;
- employment opportunities, social cohesion and integration are strengthened.

Through this project, we envision cities and human settlements that fulfil their social function, including the social and ecological function of the land, with a view to progressively achieving the full realization of the right to adequate housing, as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, without discrimination, universal access to safe and affordable drinking water and sanitation, and equal access for all to public goods and quality services. Funded by Plantation et Huileries du Congo (PHC) to the tune of \$ 700,000, the project will extend over a period of 24 months.



Project for the Participatory Reduction of Juvenile Delinquency through Sustainable Waste Management in Kinshasa/DR Congo.

Budget \$344,665. The project focuses on the transformation of young offenders Kuluna and Shegués into brigadiers of sanitation / cleanliness in the sustainable management of waste and development of public spaces as well as the cleaning of rivers through psychosocial supervision, training, granting equipment and support to the 3 municipalities for the coordination of public health by heads of neighborhoods in the city of Kinshasa. The project aims to reduce juvenile delinquency of at least 200 Kuluna/Shegue youth (each year) through sustainable waste management and development of spaces in Masina, N'sele, Kalamu in Kinshasa city province. In terms of duration, the project will last 18 months and will mainly take place in the city of Kinshasa.



Project to **support the commitment of young boys and girls for the sustainable economic reintegration of ex-combatants through secure access to land in the territory of Uvira in South Kivu, DRC.**

Budget 3,600,000. The general objective of the project is to contribute to the participation of young boys and girls from host communities in land tenure security and socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants. This contribution will be made through

- Support for the establishment of an integrated geolocated register for the identification and management of ex-combatants, young people in conflict with the law, and street children;
 - Support for the strengthening of multi-stakeholder dialogues by customary authorities on the drivers of land conflicts and inclusive land security mechanisms for ex-combatants;
 - The promotion of the design and implementation by HIMO approach of instruments to support the improvement of mobility for bringing together public administrations, traditional chiefs and populations;
 - Facilitating skills development, citizenship, and economic production of ex-combatants and youth in conflict with the law.
- The duration of the project is estimated at 36 months.



Project to promote **women's participation in ex-combatants' access to secure land and economic factors of production in Irumu Territory in ITURI Province in DRC.** Budget \$3,600,000. The project

seeks to contribute to the sustainable improvement of the well-being of ex-combatants and communities affected by the adverse effects of armed groups. This contribution will be made through;

- The promotion of inclusive socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants based on the strategic orientations of the simplified land use (or land use) plan of Irumu,

- support for the promotion of access of young people and women heads of household to local jobs through the implementation of the integrated strategy for the implementation of inter-community peace improvement projects, stabilization and development,
- support it in improving the system for managing early warnings of criminal acts and consolidating the reintegration of ex-combatants according to gender. Again, in terms of duration, the project will last 36 months.



Project on **alternatives technologies to charcoal cooking in Restaurants of Kinshasa and surroundings (Grand Kinshasa)**. The project intends to support a transition to cleaner cooking fuels in DRC by piloting the first with Malewas and standard restaurants in Kinshasa. The program will achieve this goal by implementing six overarching objectives, as listed below. This support will be done by:

- Identifying and removing market barriers to enable increase in the malewas' use of alternative technologies and fuels (ATFs),
- Promote land acquisition for municipalities-led transformation of waste to bio-charcoals and biogas,
- Facilitate the use of biogas by restaurants;
- Increase public perception of the negative impact of charcoal production on high value and urban forests as well as on communities' wellbeing mainly women and children (Implement a social behavior change marketing initiative for better consumption of low emission charcoal ATFs),
- Measure the adaptation of communities, malewas and restaurants tenants' vis-à-vis the new technology and climate change.



The land reform support programme paves the way for securing the land tenure of indigenous peoples' local communities by offering options for national land policy and subsequently legislation adapted to the new context of the country. Still in the Land sector, a range of support has been made to local initiatives in terms of documentations, mapping, registration, and certification of land rights. These initiatives supported through the formulation of inclusive policy, legal and regulatory frameworks have the prevention and management of land conflicts by encouraging and supporting the efforts of local communities and dialogue with national and territorial authorities for a concerted and peaceful management of land tenure. For example, Concretely, thanks to the program it has been possible, it has been possible to:

- Make functional CONAREF, as a national institution responsible for the implementation of the land reform for the preparation and implementation of the reform, integrating a dialogue on the clarification of the recognition and security of local land rights;
- Support communities and develop methodological guides to strengthen cadasters, capitalize on lessons learned from pilot experiences, including land conflict management, harmonization and tenure security for the development of the DRC Land Policy Document;
- Develop and validate in a participatory manner the DRC Land Policy Document and legal texts (land law amending and supplementing the 1973 land law) in accordance with the land policy and harmonized.



As part of the decentralization of its activities, UN-Habitat supported local communities in the provinces of Ituri and Mai Ndombe in terms of land tenure security. The development of methodological guides for the identification, mapping, documentation, and registration of their land rights through the establishment of a Community Land Registry has led to the registration of more than 591 households in Ituri (337 households) and Mai Ndombe (254 households). More than 60 people received individual customary land certificates in Ituri. With a view to land pacification, 100 conflicts have been identified and resolved in the Mambasa Territory. 60 land conflicts have been mapped and documented, half of which have been resolved in the Inongo Territory in Mai Ndombé.

Our Achievements



As part of the implementation of the PPAB, the achievements of the sanitation sectors through the Household Waste Management Unit, which received equipment consisting of trolley/rack packs, personal protective equipment (gowns, gloves, boots) and cleaning equipment. In terms of training/technical and operational capacity building, the residents' committee composed of local communities has been strengthened on the management tools of associations to guarantee their management autonomy and therefore their sustainability, a series of awareness-raising actions against insalubrity including related disease prevention measures (Ebola, Covid 19), the provision of sanitary equipment. Capacity building actions also cover institutional communication, including the production of media and material for visibility and capitalization of success stories. The achievements also include the fencing of the toilets, the development of the playground and the installation of pipes.



UN-Habitat provided the Municipality of Massina/Matadi district with a dynamic of citizen engagement at the local level on issues of improving safety and health at the scale of a slum through public developments. Today this dynamic is embodied by a Residents' Committee composed of young people from the neighborhood who have all the knowledge and skills to manage their association in the service of the development and improvement of their living environment of the populations of Matadi.



The development of the playground for the benefit of the youth, the construction and fencing of public toilets testify to an integrated overall vision around the setting and living conditions of the population, especially young people in disadvantaged areas at the level of large agglomerations such as Kinshasa. The municipality of Massina has welcomed its achievements which give it ideas on possible and sometimes inexpensive approaches in terms of resources to boost development in the Municipalities.



In the area of property and property taxation, UN-Habitat's interventions have received strong political support from national, provincial, and urban authorities. This was clearly demonstrated by the fact that all stakeholders invited to the different work actively participated by presenting and sharing experiences and data from their tax collection system. Stakeholders, including political authorities, CSOs and the private sector, have made it clear that they support the project and are committed to its implementation. As such, they insisted that the project be extended to other cities, given its importance.

Although it is still a relatively young and small programme in terms of funds, it has still managed to secure the necessary political support, collect the required baseline data, meet with various stakeholders to exchange ideas, raise awareness, and develop and validate a diagnostic analysis, which provides recommendations to improve land and property revenue and expenditure systems for the province. as well as for public markets in the cities of Goma and Beni. The potential for property tax revenues is considerable. Based on a 2015 census potential calculation, property taxes are expected to contribute more than 29 per cent of own revenues for the province, up from the current 2 per cent. As for the tax on displays and deposits in public markets in Goma and Beni, it is expected to contribute 21 per cent of the cities' own revenues, whereas it is currently only 5 per cent.



UN HABITAT COOPERATIONS IN DRC

UN-Habitat, as part of its interventions in the Democratic Republic of Congo, works closely with the Ministry of Land Affairs, the Ministry of Territorial Planning and Reconstruction of Cities, the Ministry of Urban Planning and Housing, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and their respective technical services.

With the United Nations System in the DRC, UN-Habitat is a member of the various existing frameworks in which the agency regularly participates in meetings (UNCT, PMT, UNWTO, RCO, Youth Group etc.) and participates in the implementation and monitoring of the various joint programmes underway in the DRC.

Currently the agency is engaged in a PBF process with other United Nations agencies such as UNESCO, UNICEF, or the United Nations Joint Office for Human Rights.



Donors and Partners



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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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