

5 Democratic Republic of Congo

5.1 Level of human development

In 2010, the DRC was ranked 168th out of a total of 169 countries in terms of HDI. On average the DRC's HDI has declined since 1980, and has been well below the sub-Saharan HDI average. Levels of human development vary throughout the DRC, with residents of the eastern provinces arguably experiencing the highest levels of underdevelopment in the country. Table 3 and figure 4 provide further details of the DRC's HDI.

5.2 Economic overview

The main GDP source in the DRC is agriculture, which contributes more than 40% (including the forestry sector). Mining adds more than a quarter to GDP, with other significant contributors being industry (16.1%) and services: (31.8%). Between 2006 and 2010 there was an average real GDP growth of 6.5%. Mining has been identified as a major growth area for the country, given the substantial reserves of cobalt ore copper, coltan, tantalum, tin and diamonds.¹⁷² The World Bank has suggested that mining could contribute as much as 25% to GDP.¹⁷³ Estimated mineral exports were in the region of US\$6.6 billion in 2008. Cobalt accounted for more than a third (38%) of the total value of mineral exports; copper, 35%; crude petroleum, 12%; and diamonds, 11%.¹⁷⁴ Nonetheless, agriculture will continue to be the bedrock of economic and livelihood security of the DRC in the foreseeable future.

The mineral (extractive) sector in the DRC has typically been dominated by state-owned industrial mining enterprises, but sustained war, poor governance

and neglect effectively rendered them “moribund and producing a fraction of the production of previous years”.¹⁷⁵ Consequently, government revenues from mining are substantially lower than they should be. Processes to restructure state mining companies have been underway, with a number of foreign mining companies that have invested in the DRC (Australia, Canada, China, South Africa and the United States). The involvement of the military and armed groups in the mining sector in the east, however, has constrained the contribution of mining revenues to improving human development. The artisanal mining sector critically produces the highest volume of mineral commodities in the DRC. For example, this sector was responsible for approximately 70% of the total of DRC diamond extraction.¹⁷⁶

GDP grew by an average of 6.5% between 2006 and 2010.

DRC forested areas are estimated to be 145 million hectares in size, of which 20 million hectares were granted as timber concessions to about 60 formal sector companies, but “only about a dozen companies are in operation”.¹⁷⁷ The formal sector production is primarily for export purposes, and exports are typically in the form of logs.¹⁷⁸ Between 1995 and 2010, timber production increased by 27.7%.

There was some diversification in the manufacturing, wholesale, retail and service sector in the DRC. Prominent business areas included: petroleum, cement, construction, hydroelectricity, beer brewing, sugar milling, palm oil, soap, cigarette making, fishing, textiles, plastics, transportation and telecommu-

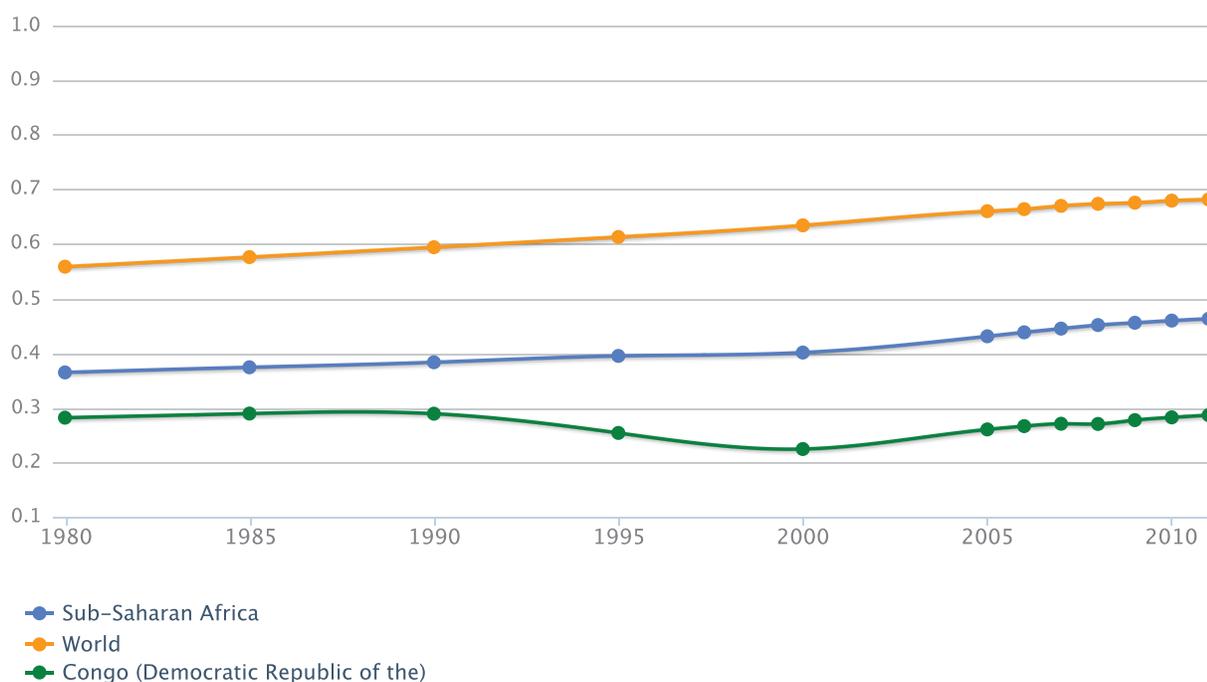
Table 3: Human Development Indicators DRC	
Indicator	DRC
Health	
Expenditure on health, public (% of GDP)	1.2
Under-five mortality (per 1,000 live births)	199
Life expectancy at birth (years)	48
Education	
Adult literacy rate (both sexes) (% aged 15 and above)	67.2
Combined gross enrolment ratio in education (both sexes) (%)	48.2
Expenditure on education (% of GDP) (%)	..
Internet users (per 100 people)	..
Mean years of schooling (of adults) (years)	3.8
Expected Years of schooling (of children) (years)	7.8
Income	
GDP per capita (2008 PPP US\$)	327
GNI per capita (2008 PPP US\$) LN	5.7
Household final consumption expenditure per capita PPP (constant 2005 international \$)	154
Inequality	
Inequality-adjusted education index	0.244
Inequality-adjusted income index	0.07
Inequality-adjusted HDI value	0.153
Poverty	
Multidimensional poverty index (k greater than or equal to 3)	0.393
Intensity of deprivation	53.7
MPI: Headcount (k greater than or equal to 3), population in poverty (% of population)	73.2
Gender	
Maternal mortality ratio (deaths of women per 100,000 live births)	1,100
Population with at least secondary education, female/male ratio	0.295
Gender Inequality Index, value	0.814
Gender Inequality Index (updated)	0.802
Composite indices	
Multidimensional poverty index (k greater than or equal to 3)	0.393
HDI value	0.239
Gender Inequality Index, value	0.814
Inequality-adjusted HDI value	0.153

Source: UNDP, <http://www.hdr.undp.org>

nications. There was also a significant small business component of the economy, with business persons primarily operating from makeshift stalls, or hawking goods on the side of the road in urban areas.¹⁷⁹ Figure 5 indicates the top ten commodities in terms

of production value (2009). The urban areas with the most vigorous economic activity include Kinshasa, Lubumbashi and Kisangani. However, there has been inadequate infrastructural links between these three cities.¹⁸⁰

Figure 4: Human Development Index Trends: DRC. 1980-2010



Source UNDP, <http://www.hdr.undp.org>

Government revenue has been derived from taxation and international donor aid, and in recent years, donor aid has comprised more than a third of government revenue.¹⁸¹ Publically available information on government spending was severely limited, with the Open Budget Index 2010 ranking the DRC as one of the least transparent states in Africa in terms of budgetary information.

Key demographic and socio-economic data are as follows:¹⁸³

- The DRC has an estimated population of 67.8 million people, 35% of which reside in urban areas.
- 75% of the urban population live in slums.
- Between 1992 and 2007 the food supply per capita declined by 25%.
- The DRC has a substantial domestic food deficit, and consequently, a number of basic food products are imported.
- The FAO estimates that 42% of the population is undernourished.

- Life expectancy is 48 (African average of 53), and the infant mortality rate is 126 (African average of 80).
- 59% of the population live on less than US\$ 1 a day (African average: 52.8%).
- 70% literacy of the population aged 15-24 (African average 75).

5.3 Livelihood support

Approximately 80% of the DRC population derive a livelihood from the informal sector. As indicated above, agriculture provides the greatest contribution to GDP in terms of productive sectors, and it has been estimated that close to 60% of the economically active population derive a livelihood from agricultural sector,¹⁸⁴ with there being both subsistence and commercial (predominantly for export) agricultural production.¹⁸⁵ Nonetheless, only 10% of land in the DRC is used for agricultural pur-

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poses, and agriculture only receives 0.64% of the total national budget.¹⁸⁶ The principal subsistence crops include: cassava, plantains, maize, groundnuts, and rice. The key export crops are: tobacco, coffee, sugar, wheat, palm oil, cocoa and rubber.¹⁸⁷

Inland fisheries contribute between 25% and 50% of the population's protein intake. In addition, it is estimated that more than 600,000 people derive a livelihood (both directly and indirectly) from the fishing sector (capture, possessing, marketing, fishing supply, transportation, boat construction and equipment repairs) with most fish being caught in lakes and rivers (inland fisheries).¹⁸⁸ However, those communities that are located in close proximity to the inland fishery areas are amongst the poorest in the DRC.¹⁸⁹

As indicated in figure 5, meat, particularly bush meat, was a noteworthy commodity in DRC, as the prevalence of disease restricts animal husbandry in the forest areas (which make up 68% of the territory of the DRC). A significant number of households survive and/or derive a livelihood from hunting wild animals, such as duikers, monkeys, rodents, wild pigs, buffa-

loes, reptiles and birds¹⁹⁰. It has been estimated that the annual consumption of bush meat by the DRC population is between one and two tonnes. In some of the more isolated areas, bush meat is one of only products "that can provide income that outweighs transportation costs".¹⁹¹

Households also generated livelihoods through the informal timber trade (pit-sawing), alluvial mining and petting trading, either running a market stall, or engaging in cross border trading. Details on these economic activities are provided in the section on the informal economy below.

5.4 Constraints and barriers to the formal economy

There were significant structural and process barriers to the average DRC resident establishing and maintaining a formal sector business, particularly high start-up costs (DRC is one of the most expensive countries in the world to establish a business), as well as government regulations/bureaucracy. For example, in 2011 it took on average ten procedures, 84 days, and cost 735% of income per capita to start a business.

Table 4 provides the ranking of the DRC relative to other economies in terms of "doing business".¹⁹²

Registering a property took six procedures and 54 days; and paying taxes took 336 hours.¹⁹³ For many years there was a lack of a property register, which prevented businesses from effectively using property assets to leverage credit. In addition, there allegedly has been "double taxation" (at the provincial and national levels).¹⁹⁴ The growth of formal sector businesses was also hampered by widespread corruption. For example, Transparency International ranked DRC 164 out of 178 states on its Corruption Perceptions Index 2010, with a low ranking being equated with high levels of perceived corruption.¹⁹⁵

Figure 5: DRC Top 10 commodities production value, 2009

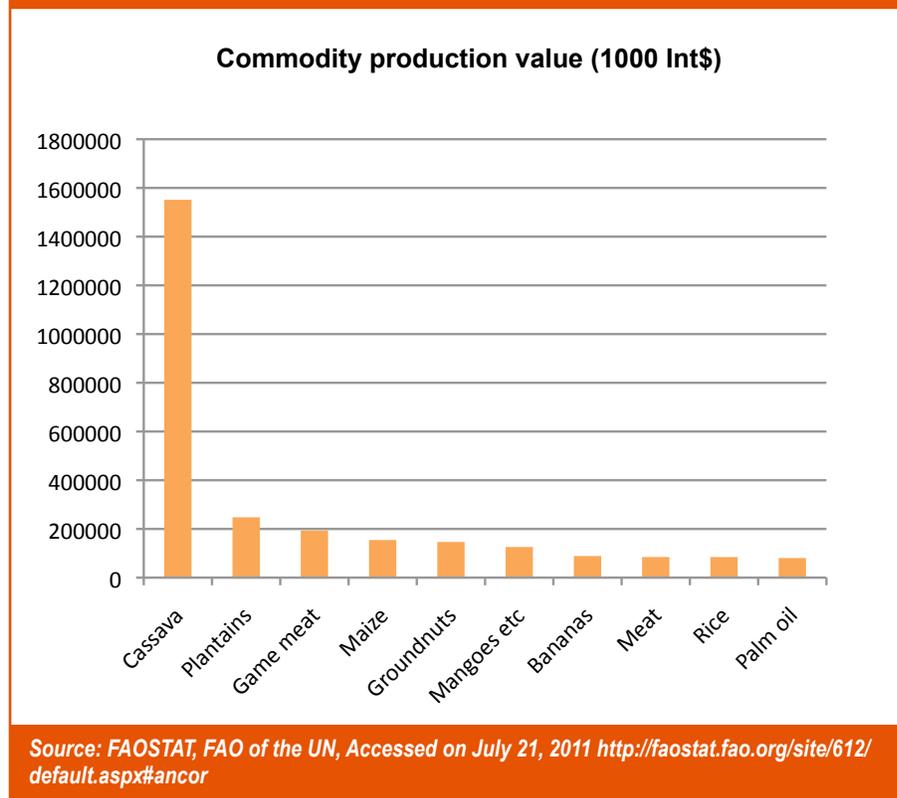


Table 4: Indicators of barriers to formal sector business development (DRC)		
Procedure	DRC rank	Sub-Saharan average rank
Ease of doing business	176	137
Starting a business	145	126
Registering property	113	121
Getting credit	170	120
Protecting investors	153	113
Paying taxes	163	116
Trading across borders	167	136
Enforcing contracts	170	118
Resolving insolvency	165	128

Banking services and access to credit for private sector businesses, especially small and medium sized enterprises, has been severely limited. Most commercial banks (of which there were 18 registered in 2009) tended to prioritise credit for international institutions. Consequently, it was estimated in 2009 that in excess of 80% of the money supply was not within the banking system. In the same year, the DRC Central Bank estimated that there were only 60,000 individual bank accounts in the entire country.¹⁹⁶ However, the microfinance sector has seen some growth in recent years. In 2010 there were US\$ 59.2 million in microfinance loans provided by 18 institutions to 91,649 borrowers.¹⁹⁷

The costs and regulation of engaging in formal sector cross-border trade were also prohibitive to most Congolese, as for exports, eight documents are required, and it took 44 days to transfer the goods at a cost of US\$ 3,055 per shipping container. To import it required nine documents, 63 days and costs US\$ 3,285 per shipping container.¹⁹⁸ Added to this, the poor conditions of the road and rail network contributed to trade delays and increased transport costs.

5.5 The informal sector

Economic dynamics in the informal sector mimic the formal sector, with the most financially viable activities taking place in the agricultural/forestry, small business and extraction (mining) sectors. In the eastern regions of the DRC, a number of informal sector activities have been linked to, or shaped by the

residual armed conflict, as well as the economy of the various armed groups.

In terms of forestry, the Congolese Association of Small Scale Loggers has estimated that on average there are 8,000 active logging companies (rough estimate) operating in the informal sector in the DRC, commonly referred to as *scieurs de long*. These logging companies primarily engaged in pit sawing for both the domestic (for furniture and construction) and export markets. Included in this number were part-time and full-time enterprises, with personnel numbers varying between businesses. The common feature, however, was that these entities generally operated without licenses from the national government. However, these business entities paid taxes and royalties to local authorities and traditional leaders respectively.¹⁹⁹

In 2007, annual timber production from this sector was estimated to be between 1.5 and 2.4 million square metres, which equated to about half a million square metres of sawn wood. In addition, it has been suggested that the output of informal sector exceeds the formal sector by close to 1000%. The reason for this was that the informal sector was more adaptive to conditions of armed conflict, due to low levels of technology, small business entities and its ability to cope with adverse infrastructural conditions.²⁰⁰

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Included in the informal timber sector were artisanal businesses (such as carpentry and furniture making) and fuel wood consumption (charcoal production and use) and trade. Charcoal, as in many other underdeveloped African countries, is the primary energy source for households in DRC, and was estimated to constitute 72 million cubic metres of timber per year.²⁰¹

Much of the bush meat trade is located in the informal sector. As indicated above, bush meat was not only a prevalent source of protein for many households, it was also a means to generate an income. Typically hunters catch and slaughter wild animals in the deep forest areas, then transport it to urban marketplaces. In some cases the meat is smoked (to preserve it) prior to transportation. However, the trade was allegedly subject to numerous informal fees, which results in

the relatively high cost of the meat in the urban marketplace. For example, bush meat sold in Kinshasa has reportedly been as much as five times higher than the sum the hunters received.²⁰²

As with most economies in the Great Lakes region, there is a significant small business component to the informal economy in the DRC. Congolese law is protectionist on this matter, as only indigenous Congolese are permitted to own small businesses. However, this was not widely enforced and non-Congolese have been openly trading in marketplaces. There have been alleged incidents of xenophobia as a consequence of increasing levels of competition in this sector.²⁰³

Many households, particularly in urban areas, derive an income for running market stalls, however, the majority of consumer goods that are sold in marketplaces, including agricultural produce, are imported from other countries. Given the considerable costs associated with importing goods in the formal sector, there was consequently a vibrant informal trade between the DRC and its neighbours. For example, the DRC was the second largest destination for Ugandan informal sector imports in 2009 and 2010.²⁰⁴

Artisanal and small-scale mining are arguably the most important components of the informal economy in the DRC. The reason for this is that low-level mining was estimated to provide direct and indirect livelihood support to 10 million people in the DRC, with women and children reported to constitute 20%

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and 40% of the artisanal mining community respectively. This sector is often considered to be the “backbone of the trading economy in the DRC”.²⁰⁵ As with the informal timber sector, output from the informal mining sector was substantially higher than the output from the formal (large-scale, commercial) sector, especially in the eastern provinces, where large-scale mining operations are yet to gain momentum. It is estimated that artisanal mining accounted for 90% of mineral production in the DRC.²⁰⁶

Artisanal (subsistence) miners are typically individuals that are not legally employed by mining companies, and who use low technology (often merely hand

tools) to mine for valuable minerals. Small-scale mining, usually takes the form of a collection of artisanal miners who either collaborate in a joint mining venture, or are employed by an entrepreneur. More advanced technology, compared to artisanal mining, is often utilised.²⁰⁷

In the DRC, artisanal miners are involved in extracting a wide spectrum of valuable minerals, such as gold, diamonds, copper, cobalt, cassiterite and coltan (with diamonds being the most popular). These miners generally settle in camps with their dependents on or near the mining site, and living in conditions characterised by abject poverty and insecurity. Many artisanal miners operate on concessionary land that has been allocated to large-scale mining companies. This effectively means that such mining are activities illegal, and that the livelihood of these subsistence miners are tenuous. In mining camps women who do not engage in digging often generate an income through the transportation, washing, sorting, grading of minerals, as well as trading in consumable goods, tools and materials. Some have established restaurants, while others have entered the sex trade.²⁰⁸

According to the DRC Mine Law (2002): small-scale mining permits and “diggers” cards should be made available; and artisanal mining zones should be established. Nonetheless, the implementation of this legislation has been feeble, and there was consensus that the legal protection afforded to informal sector miners was woefully inadequate. Only a minority of miners secured “diggers” cards, as the annual cost of US\$25 and time required to respond to the bureaucratic requirements were perceived to be excessive. In addition, the DRC government has not been able consistently protect the concession rights provided for in the permits and cards. The DRC government, has however, had some success in providing technical support through the Small-Scale and Artisanal Mining Extension Service (SAESSCAM).²⁰⁹

Due to poor infrastructure in most mining areas, there have been numerous reports of miners being exploited and fleeced by government officials, intermediaries (*négociants*), militias/armed groups, soldiers and criminal organisations that have preferential access to transport networks. In many cases, miners have only been paid a fraction of the market value of the minerals they mined. The relationship with the *négociants* is

however complex, as these incendiaries often provide the capital to artisanal miners.²¹⁰

In the case of armed groups, the UN Security Council Group of Experts estimated in 2010 that the *Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR), one of the main rebel groups in the eastern DRC, generated 75% of its revenues from illegally taxing artisanal gold miners. Other armed groups have reportedly attacked and pillaged mining areas, and/or employed middlemen to extract resources from miners. Elements within the government armed forces, the *Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo* (FARDC), have been linked to the illicit mineral trade as a result of their occupation of strategic mining areas. Evidence also exists of informal sector miners being subject to human rights abuses by members of the armed forces. For example, in September 2010, DRC President Joseph Kabila publicly condemned the *Mafioso* activities by some members of the armed forces, and the Minister of Mines referred to “the manifest involvement of certain local, provincial, and national authorities, both civilian and military, in the illegal exploitation and illicit trade of mineral substances”.²¹¹

5.6 DDR programming

The DRC was the stage for multi-state armed conflicts in the mid to late-1990s involving militaries from various states, as well as an assortment of rebel/militia groups. The first phase of the armed conflict was initiated by a rebellion in the eastern DRC, backed by Rwanda and Uganda. The rebellion was in response to repression by the Mobutu regime of certain ethnic groups, as well as to the threat posed by Rwandese rebels (associated with the 1994 Rwandan genocide) who were operating in the area. The rebellion succeeded, and Mobutu was forced into exile. In 1998 another rebellion in the eastern DRC was ignited, again supported by Rwanda and Uganda. Other Africa states then entered the fray, namely: Angola, Burundi, Chad, Namibia and Zimbabwe.

Peace was secured through the Lusaka Ceasefire Accords (1999), and was later consolidated with the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (2002) and the deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission. Post-conflict democratic elections were held in 2006, with Joseph Kabila being elected president. However, Hutu rebels, the FDLR continued to operate from the eastern DRC, along

with other armed groups. In 2007, a rebel group, the *Congrès national pour la défense du peuple* (CNDP), reactivated the armed conflict in the eastern DRC. The violence was restrained through a peace accord in 2009, with it being agreed that the bulk of the CNDP forces, as well as some militia groups, would be incorporated into the Congolese armed forces. However, despite this, certain areas in the eastern DRC remained unstable, with a mishmash of armed/militia groups remaining active.

Consequently, it has been no surprise that the DDR process that has unfolded in the DRC has arguably been the most complex and multi-faceted programme ever implemented in Africa. It was comprised of, among other elements, a national programme; programmes to disarm and repatriate foreign combatants and their dependants; processes for special needs groups (such as women, disabled ex-combatants and children); and projects to disarm members of militia groups and reintegrate them into civilian life. There was also a specific DDR programme for Ituri, which was located within the national DDR programme. The World Bank and the UN, predominantly through the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP), were the main facilitators of the DDR process in the DRC, along with the DRC government.

DDR was further complicated by two other developments. Firstly, security sector reform, a necessity brought about by peace accords, which paved the way for the formation of a new national army and the *Structure Militaire d'Intégration* (SMI). The SMI was the process by which the armed components of most of the significant armed groups would be incorporated into the FARDC. Secondly, stabilisation initiatives, and particularly those dealing with the various armed groups and their access to mineral resources.²¹²

The DRC was the most significant component of the MDRP, with 50% of the entire budget being devoted to DDR-related projects in this country. The final report of the MDRP also revealed that the DRC segment accounted for 36% of all demobilised beneficiaries; 41% and 22% of reinsertion and reintegration beneficiaries

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respectively; and four out of the five special projects for child soldiers were implemented in the DRC.²¹³

In December 2003, the DRC government established an interdepartmental committee, the *Comité interministériel chargé de la conception et de l'orientation en matière de DDR* (CI-DDR) to oversee the National Program of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (PNDDR) (adopted May 2004). The *Commission Nationale de la Démobilisation et Réinsertion* (CONADER), with the support of UNDP, became the entity responsible for implementing the PNDDR. Re-grouping Centres were set-up to implement the disarmament targets, while Integration and Training Centres were established for reintegration purposes.²¹⁴ The DDR process in the DRC however, faced similar challenges to other African DDR processes, which included a lack of capacity, inefficiency, mismanagement, institutional rivalries and alleged corruption.²¹⁵

MONUC played a key role in the DDR programme, assisting with the implementation of the national programme, and focused almost exclusively on disarmament. The main focus, however, was the dismantling and disarming of foreign armed groups, particularly the FDLR, which was pursued via the UN Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement (DDRRR) programme.

DDRRR interventions often included armed peacekeepers, which provided protection and security to those combatants that were voluntarily seeking to abscond from an armed group. The reason for this is that such combatants may have been violently assaulted or killed by their fellow fighters if their efforts to desert the armed group proved unsuccessful. Following surrender to MONUSCO, the former

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combatants were transported to the transit centres in Uvira, Bukavu, Beni, Dungu, and Goma, where they were provided with clothing and food. After three days these individuals were repatriated to their countries of origin where they received reinsertion and reintegration support.²¹⁷

The SMI was established in 2004, and was linked to the DDR system through national legislation, with combatants being provided with the option of either join-

ing the FARDC or undergoing DDR. The following armed groups (and their combatants) were identified for integration into the FARDC: *Forces Armées Congolaises* (FAC) (former DRC government military); *Forces Armées Zaïroises* (FAZ); the three RCD factions, MLC; Mai-Mai; and a number of other armed groups. The first step of the SMI was that all combatants were assembled at FARDC-run *centres de regroupement* and then transferred to *centres d'orientation*, which were administered by CONADER, where combatants were required to select integration in FARDC or demobilisation.²¹⁸

In response to the teething problems associated with the operationalisation of the national DDR programme, an emergency initiative, the *Désarmement et Réinsertion Communautaire* (DCR) was created. It sought to disarm and pacify those armed groups that were not party to ceasefire/peace accords, and were considered to be a considerable destabilising force. The actions of armed groups were acutely problematic in Ituri, and consequently the focus of the DRC programme was in that region.²¹⁹ The DCR contributed to the demobilisation of 15,811 combatants (which included 4,525 children). However, the reintegration support was described as “chaotic”, “half-hearted” and “problematic” due to prolonged implementation delays.²²⁰

The national DRC DDR programme sought to provide ex-combatants with assistance to facilitate their transition to civilian life, which included ‘safety transition allowances’, and reintegration support. Various donor governments provided considerable financial and technical support, with a total of US\$ 272 million being made available for DDR processes through the MDRP.²²¹ Ex-combatants that underwent demobilisation received an initial payment of US\$ 110 (for transport, food and other expenses), and thereafter a monthly allowance of US\$ 25 for a year.

A variety of socio-economic support was made available to ex-combatants through non-governmental organisations (NGOs), international organisations and UN agencies, such as the International Labour Office (ILO), the FAO and Caritas. Targeted programmes for female ex-combatants and children were also offered. Reintegration training was provided in a variety of fields, including, but not limited to, agriculture, fishing, sewing/tailoring, woodwork, bricklaying, driving, and metal work.²²²

The MDRP concluded all its activities in the greater Great Lakes region 2009. At this time, 102,014 former combatants had received both demobilisation and reinsertion support in the DRC, and 52,172 had received reintegration support.²²³ The TDRP, financed by the African Development Bank and a range of donor governments, has provided follow-up DDR assistance.

In July 2010, UN Security Council Resolution 1925 (2010) extended the UN operation in the DRC, with MONUC being re-labelled the UN Stabilisation Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO). The resolution also reaffirmed the UN objective of DDR with respect to Congolese armed groups, and the DDRRR of foreign armed groups, particularly the FDLR, Allied Democratic Forces/National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (ADF-NALU), the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and *Forces nationales de libération* (FNL).²²⁴

MONUSCO in cooperation with FARDC has made steady progress in its DDRRR efforts, despite the complexities and insurmountable odds confronted the various interventions, particularly the history of poor governance and ongoing violence and activities of armed groups in the eastern provinces. However, further achievements have been stymied by domestic political dynamics. For example, in December 2010 the UN Peace-building Fund allocated funds for the DDR of some 4,000 members of Congolese armed groups, but this programme was suspended by the DRC government, and consequently did not materialise.²²⁵

Between 2002 and mid-2011, the DDRRR section of the UN mission in the DRC repatriated more than 25,000 foreign ex-combatants (58% of total repatriated) and their dependants, and destroyed 1,435 arms and 46,006 rounds of ammunition. Rwanda was the destination of 80% of the total repatriated group. A strategic success was the facilitation of the demobilisation and repatriation of some FDLR officers, including FDLR liaison officers from North and South Kivu, which reportedly interrupted the recruitment, logistical support, and illicit trading by the armed group.

5.7 Reintegration and the informal sector: Ituri

In the eastern DRC territory of Ituri, the reintegration of former combatants into civilian life has been

mixed, but generally there have been positive developments. The vast majority of former combatants, despite the socio-economic and security challenges in the Eastern DRC, have been able to pursue economically productive livelihoods. In the town of Bunia the most popular economic activity for ex-combatants appeared to be motorcycle taxi driving, with most motorcycle taxi drivers being ex-combatants. Outside of the urban centre, thousands generate an income as artisanal miners, mostly working gold concessions held by industrial mining companies.²²⁶

5.7.1 Motorcycle taxis in Bunia

There is one motorcycle taxi association in Ituri, called the *Association des Chauffeurs du Congo/Moto-Ituri*. There are however several hundred other motorcycle taxi drivers in Bunia that were not members of the association. The association began as an independent organisation, but became affiliated to the national association in 2005. The association claimed 2,475 members in Bunia town, which has an estimated population of 330,000. Members pay a US\$ 20 joining fee, and then US\$ 5 per year thereafter. 90% of the members are under 30, and in excess of 90% were ex-combatants. The association included ex-combatants from all the Ituri militias, as well as a number of deserters from the FARDC. According to the president and vice-president of the association,

Motorcycle taxi driving is appealing because it requires no academic qualification nor any workplace skills except driving and courage.

“In our association, everyone’s objective is to earn a living. So we are not fighting each other. You see how that helps us mentally? Some of our members were colonels, or majors in the armed groups. But they are leaving behind their dreams of that, and are working to make a living...”²²⁷

According to ex-combatants, part of the appeal of motorcycle taxi driving was that it requires no academic qualifications, nor any workplace skills except driving, and ‘courage’. Few ex-combatants in Ituri attained academic qualifications, and consequently struggled to secure government or formal sector employment, where these qualifications are required. Another aspect of the appeal was:

“It is *à la mode*. Young women think you have good money if you drive a taxi, so we always have girlfriends.”²²⁸

There were three types of taxi driver: those who work for themselves; those who work for others; and those who work temporarily (by contract). The association reckoned that among its members, half own their own motorcycles, 30% work for the motorcycle owners, and the balance work by contract. Owning a motorcycle was the most profitable of the three options, and those who do not own their own bikes are reported to aspire to do so. Those driving for others must remit all their earnings to the motorcycle owners for the Monday to Friday trade, and were only permitted to retain Saturday’s takings.

Virtually all the drivers drove Chinese motorcycles, which at the time of research retailed for US\$ 600. These models were considerably cheaper than the Japanese motorcycles available for purchase, but drivers readily conceded that the Chinese motorcycles, when subjected to Bunia’s poor roads, and those of the surrounding areas, and persistent over-loading, generally only lasted up to eight months. Drivers preferred the Chinese bikes nonetheless because of their allegedly superior carrying capacity, which meant they were more profitable to drivers despite their short lifespan. Although inexpensive compared to Japanese bikes, the cost of Chinese bikes far exceeded the amount given to ex-combatants for their demobilisation packages, and it appeared that very few, if any, ex-combatants used the packages to purchase motorcycles.

There seemed to be a strong association between motorcycle taxi drivers and artisanal miners in Ituri. The main reason, according to miners and taxi drivers was that ex-combatants dominated both economic activities. Additionally, artisanal miners used motorcycle taxis to travel between Mongbwalu and other digging sites to Bunia and back, and often invest their profits in motorcycles.

Like most Congolese entrepreneurs, Bunia’s motorcycle taxi drivers considered themselves to be excessively taxed, though it seems they actually pay a lower proportion of their income than most economically active residents of the town. According to representatives of the motorcycle taxi association, operators must pay a US\$ 6 tax to the mairie and a US\$ 20 fee to the province annually. In addition, they were required

to pay US\$ 74 for insurance and US\$ 85 for a vehicle licence each year.²²⁹

Despite the popularity of motorcycle taxis among ex-combatants in Bunia, the involvement of international agencies distributing DDRRR kits in this and related activities was negligible. The UNDP gave motorcycles to a small number of ex-combatants, as did a local NGO called the *Fédération des Mamans de l’Ituri*. These interventions encountered problems, however, because the motorcycles were not donated to individuals, but to groups of ex-combatants, resulting in disputes between the members about who was entitled to use the motorcycles. As a result, before long, the groups disbanded and the motorcycles passed to individual owners.²³⁰ Due to the popularity of motorcycles among ex-combatants in Bunia, there has been considerable demand for motorcycle mechanics. A number of ex-combatants indicated that they would have chosen a mechanics had it been available as one of the reintegration support options.

5.7.2 Mining

Ituri is rich in gold, and gold mines have been in operation in the area since the early twentieth century. Ituri’s gold mines were nationalised during the presidency of Mobutu Sese Seko, and the *Office des mines d’or de Kilo Moto* (OKIMO) established. Like other nationalised mines during the Mobutu era, poor management, and the excessive theft, which resulted in chronic under-investment, beleaguered OKIMO. As gold output fell, and OKIMO’s ability to generate employment declined, artisanal gold mining increased, with output typically sold by diggers to *négociants*, who consolidated the material and then re-sold it. Most of the gold was then smuggled across the DRC’s eastern borders, usually to Uganda and Kenya, and from there to Dubai.

Mobutu’s government authorised artisanal gold mining in Ituri in 1982. By the turn of the century, industrial gold production had ceased entirely in Ituri, while artisanal gold mining had become entrenched, employing tens of thousands of people as diggers and crushers, and a smaller number as *négociants* and traders. International mining companies entered into joint ventures with OKIMO to revive the Kilo Moto gold mines in the early 2000s, and have since carried out extensive exploration, but none have yet started large-scale production.

The strong presence of ex-combatants among the artisanal miners of Ituri was extensively documented in a 2009 study, conducted by Channel Research. The study found that while some ex-combatant artisanal miners had been miners before the Ituri conflict, the majority turned to mining after the fighting, attracted by its 'high risk and high return' profile, which mirrored their military experience. The study further found that ex-combatant miners from different militia and different ethnic groups worked together on mining sites side-by-side without conflict. Importantly, the study also concluded that roughly half of all demobilised ex-combatants in Ituri were artisanal miners.²³² Interviews confirmed the main findings of the Channel Research report. According to one NGO worker, who works with ex-combatants in Mongbwalu:

"Most of the demobilised in Mongbwalu are artisanal miners."²³³

According to the Mongbwalu representatives of the *Association des Orpailleurs pour le Développement et la Reconstruction de la Paix en Ituri* (AODERPI):

"There are so many of us demobilised fighters in the mines. There is no other work for us to do."²³⁴

AODERPI and NGO representatives working with artisanal miners agreed that members of different militia mined side by side without conflict. According to AODERPI:

"We have members all the militias in our association. UPC, FNI, PUSIC...but that is over. We have reconciled. Our hate was manipulated. I don't think we will fight again. Some people have tried to stir us up, but they failed."²³⁵

There was concurrence among AODERPI representatives and NGO workers that it was unfortunate that there had been no DDR kits for artisanal mining. According to one NGO worker:

"Because most of the demobilised round here are diggers, I proposed that the demobilisation kit system be adapted to this truth. It would have been a very good idea if there had been a kit for diggers. That would be adapted to the reality here. Instead, everyone round here just sells their kits. None of these miners want bicycles..."²³⁶

AODERPI and NGO representatives also concurred that most ex-combatants that had taken up artisanal mining had not disarmed, even though many had surrendered weapons in order to receive demobilisation kits. This consequently posed a risk to industrial mining companies, who were planning to evict artisanal miners from their concessions, in preparation for industrial development.²³⁷

Most ex-combatants turned to mining after the fighting, attracted by its 'high risk, high return' profile.

In late 2010, OKIMO gave permission for its gold tailings at Galayi, about 50 kilometres from Mongbwalu, to be exploited by artisanal diggers. Despite poor transport connections between Mongbwalu and Galayi, and no mobile phone reception at the site, within only a few months hundreds of artisanal diggers had settled in Galayi. A small town emerged in the forest clearing, complete with bars, shops and brothels. By March 2011, there were, however, no schools or clinics. The site was controlled by CECOKI, which presented itself as a cultural association, though its detractors have claimed it is a front for the business interests of powerful politicians and military commanders.²³⁸ According to a CECOKI representative, more than half of the residents are ex-combatants.²³⁹

There were eleven *négociants* in Galayi, who buy the gold the diggers produce, which was then subjected to a 30% tax by CECOKI. According to Mapa Majo, the president of the Galayi *négociants*:

"I buy about 30 grams of gold a day. So far, I have had no security problems. There is no banditry. The military are invested in the pits here. That is why they do not bother us... None of the *négociants* here in Galayi are ex-combatants. I don't know why, but that is how it is."²⁴⁰

There are reported to be between 60 and 70 gold *négociants* in Mongbwalu. Very few of them, it seems, are ex-combatants:

"I have been a *négociant* here in Mongbwalu for 17 years. I am not an ex-combatant, and neither are most of the *négociants* here. There

are some though... I buy from the small *négociants*, since I am a big *négociant*. I then sell to the OKIMO comptoir here, or in Butembo. Sometimes I sell in Bunia. I also have a pit at Pili Pili²⁴¹ where I have 346 ex-combatants working for me. I don't care which militia they used to be in."²⁴²

As in Monbwalu, there are a few ex-combatants among the gold *négociants* of Bunia, though the majority are not, according to the *Association des Négociants d'Or – Ituri* (ANORI):

“There are 45 *négociants*, big and small, in our association. ANORI was created two years ago, after the wars here, to regroup *négociants* in a peaceful way, so that diggers can sell gold peacefully, regardless of their tribe. We have also disseminated the mining code, to persuade *négociants* to sell legally. It is thanks to ANORI that there are now two gold buying *comptoirs* in Bunia, though it is true that not all our members sell all their material to them. The problem is that the *comptoirs'* prices are too low, and taxes are too high. This encourages smuggling.”²⁴³

5.7.3 Economic impact of DDR kits

A range of Ituri's recipients of DDR kits were interviewed, including people who received kits for bread baking, tailoring, shop keeping, fishing and hairdressing. Interviews were also conducted with government officials, and representatives of UN and non-governmental organisations responsible for distributing DDR kits. There were – unsurprisingly - marked differences

DDR kits best succeeded when recipients were reentering professions they conducted before they were combatants.

in performance among the interviewees. Some of the businesses were flourishing. Others showed signs that they might be sustainable. Other businesses were stagnating and the remainder had either already failed or had never been initiated, with the equipment sold to cover the recipients' day-to-day expenses.

Nonetheless, the DDR kits have added up to a significant recapitalisation of the Ituri economy. Money, livestock, seeds, foods and equipment (from the kits) was injected into the local economy in a widely dis-

persed manner into the province, and arguably has had a positive impact. For example, the kits that were sold were subsequently bought by others presumably better placed to make use of them. That said, the kits have been at their most effective when used by their recipients to start or re-start successful businesses, capable of generating incomes over not just the short but also the medium term. According to Dziju Malozi Jacqueline of the *Fédération des Mamans de l'Ituri*, a Bunia-based NGO founded in 2001, that has worked with large numbers of ex-combatants, and particularly women:

“Fewer women ex-combatants than men sold their kits. In my view, this is because the main responsibility for keeping households going falls on women, so they have had more motivation to keep the materials that were given them, and to make good use of them.”²⁴⁴

Ms. Malozi complained that ex-combatant women had been unfairly discriminated against in the DDR process, and had consequently received fewer demobilisation kits than they should have:

“The circumstances of women ex-combatants were not taken into account properly during the process. To get the demobilisation package you needed to surrender a weapon. But women ex-combatants often did not have weapons. Where they had weapons, often their commanders took them off them, so they were unable to present a weapon at the demobilisation camps. And others did not have weapons to start with, since they were performing other tasks, such as carrying messages, providing sex, and cooking. Another issue was that with some women who did receive kits, their husbands or their families stole them.”²⁴⁵

The most common complaint about the kits, voiced by nearly all interviewees, was that they were insufficient, providing too little money and equipment. NGO representatives also voiced frustrations that the kits they had distributed were inadequate, though some acknowledged that had the kits been more generous, the resentment of non-ex-combatants, most of whom had suffered greatly during the war at the hands of the very fighters apparently being rewarded for their violence, would have been far greater. A common theme

among interviewees was that DDR kits had best succeeded when recipients were re-entering professions they had conducted before they were combatants. Examples are outlined below:

Besica-Duku Tchekedis was the president of *Encadrement des Jeunes pour le Développement de la Pêche* (EJDP), an association of 25 fishermen in Kasenyi, on the western shore of Lake Albert. The EJDP's membership included ex-combatants from several Ituri militia, but there have, reportedly, been no tensions or conflict between the ex-combatants. Tchekedis reported that the EJDP had received a boat with an outboard motor, a fridge and a generator from the UNDP, and its members had used their own kits to purchase a net and a motorcycle. The EJDP is a successful business, which according to Tchekedis was because:

“We were all fishermen before and know what we are doing. Fishing is not an easy business, and many of the ex-combatants who chose it had no experience in it before. They have all failed, while we have succeeded.”²⁴⁶

According to representatives of the FAO in Bunia, it had been the same experience with recipients of farming DDR kits, with those who were farmers before the conflict proving more likely to succeed and make use of their kits than those who were not. Access to land for farmers, however, proved to be a constraining factor.²⁴⁷

Similarly, obstacles affecting the fate of donor-assisted fishing projects for ex-combatants on Lake Albert included: poor road infrastructure between the lake and Bunia; no electricity in the lakeside settlements (caused by destruction of power lines during the period of armed conflict; and looting of replacement power lines after it); and increasingly problematic over-fishing in the lake, including in the fish breeding grounds.²⁴⁸

Very few of those interviewed for this study made any use of banking services, though there appears to be considerable latent demand for them. In addition, there were numerous references to the lack of availability of affordable credit. Related to this, a common complaint among DDR kit recipients was that excessive taxation was damaging their business prospects. According to Tchekedis of the EJDP in Kasenyi:

“We pay so many taxes. You would be amazed. The FARDC takes two kilograms of fish from each of our boats, every day. That is illegal, but what can we do? Then we pay \$25 per year tax on our motor, another US\$ 25 on our boat, and then there is the tax we pay to the collectivité. We pay another tax on our fish. And another one for our fishing permit. Then there is the provincial tax, and a hygiene tax... This is why we are not progressing. We pay so much tax.”²⁴⁹

5.7.4 Crime

The lack of disarmament among Ituri ex-combatants, and the high rate of economic insecurity in the territory, would appear to be a perfect recipe for armed criminality. Encouragingly, however, this does not appear to be the case. According to Bideko Murhabazi Juvenal, the Bunia police chief:

“When I arrived here 16 months ago, armed crime was a serious problem. After 6pm, no one was moving and there was always shooting at night. There were ten armed robberies a night. Now it's more like one every three months... Much of this criminality was coming from ex-combatants, though there was also involvement of the FARDC and even police officers. But in collaboration with MONUSCO, we have controlled the situation, largely through extensive patrolling, and at this stage I would say Bunia is the most secure town in eastern DRC, particularly when compared to Goma.... I will not pretend there is no banditry. The criminals have been weakened but not defeated, and they have not surrendered their arms. They still use their weapons, but to threaten, not to shoot. These days you hardly hear any shooting.”²⁵⁰

Other interviewees confirmed the police chief's thesis, noting that armed criminality had greatly declined since 2009. There was a similar situation in Mongbwalu, where AODERPI representatives reported:

“People do fight sometimes but they don't use arms for their fights. We don't have a problem of armed criminality. In Bunia we hear that there is this problem, but not here in Mongbwalu.”²⁵¹

5.8 Reintegration and informal sector: South Kivu

In the South Kivu province, as with other provinces in the eastern DRC, thousands of ex-combatants have been demobilised since the late-1990s in successive waves of DDR interventions. The majority of these individuals have reintegrated into civilian society, albeit precariously, with many pursuing livelihoods in the pervasive informal sector. Examples of ex-combatant income-generating activities included: small market businesses; fishing cooperatives; cross-border trading; agriculture; cattle rearing; artisanal mining; and transport. A significant number of marginalised younger ex-combatants were, however vulnerable to recruitment by armed groups.

Most ex-combatants, in pursuit of economic opportunities settled in the urban centres of Bukavu and Uvira, or in mining areas. In towns, former combatants often congregated and set-up homes in the same neighbourhoods. In Uvira, for example, the suburbs (quartiers) of Kilibula and Kalundu received a fairly large number of demobilised ex-combatants and their dependents.²⁵² In mining areas ex-combatants, lived in squalid conditions.

5.8.1 Cooperatives and small businesses

Some ex-combatants used their DDR kits to enhance their income generating potential, while others sold the disposable components of the kits to invest in business ventures or for short-term consumption. A reintegration development has been that in some locations, former combatants, for a variety of reasons, established businesses and self-help cooperatives with individuals who did not have a military background. Limited assistance through the official DDR mechanisms was available to some ex-combatants, but was only supplementary in nature. Examples of some relatively successful business and cooperative venues are outlined below.

Former combatants established the *Action Communautaire pour le Développement de Kalundu* (ACDK) in Uvira in 2008. They subsequently approached several potential donors for financial and/or material support and eventually received support from CONADER, now the *Unité Nationale pour le désarmement, la démobilisation et la réintégration* (UEP-NDDR), through Caritas, an international NGO.

This financial support enabled ACDK to buy fishing nets and a pirogue (canoe), which they used to fish on Lake Tanganyika. They would fish overnight and sell the bulk of their catch at the port of Kalimabenge (Uvira) the following morning. A small portion of the catch was reserved for family consumption, and was shared equally among the families.²⁵³

With the savings made from fish sales, the ACDK purchased an additional pirogue, lamps (used for attracting fish at night), and nets. ACDK also diversified its activities, and from January 2011 the members divided themselves into three categories: eight focusing on fishing; 15 on crop farming; and five livestock rearing. However, the cost of renting agricultural land was prohibitive to ACDK, and they subsequently only undertook small-scale 'kitchen' (subsistence) farming. At the time of this research, ACDK had 34 members (eight of which were not former combatants), of whom four were women and 30 men. ACDK's daily fish sales were on average between US\$30 and US\$ 40.²⁵⁴

The ACDK also opened a bank account with a cooperative credit society in Kalundu, the *Coopérative d'Épargne et de Crédit* (COOPEC), into which they deposited their savings. The advantage was that COOPEC administered a micro credit facility that ACDK members could access on relatively favourable terms. The savings account also came handy during the *Saison Ndenga* time of a year when the moon is too bright to effectively fish at night. Consequently, fish catches are substantially reduced, with ACDK barely being able to acquire sufficient fish for their own subsistence.²⁵⁵

Ex-combatants in South Kivu have also sought to generate income through small businesses, with varying degrees of success. Most ACDK members, for example, established their own small businesses through the loans accessed from COOPEC. The businesses included the selling of petrol on the roadside (commonly referred to as 'le Quadaffi'), welding, motorcycle transportation and kiosks. Others generated an income as dockworkers and porters. Two specific individual examples include:

- Mokili wa Bongo travelled to Bujumbura every Saturday to buy fuel so that he could resell it in Uvira for a profit. Mokili hired a motorcycle for US\$ 20 and then transported two 20-litre con-

tainers of petrol from the Burundian capital. He made a profit of between US\$ 35 and US\$ 50 per 20-litre container.^{256 257}

- Mafikiri ya Nzoni, accessed a loan from COOPEC, and set up a kiosk in Uvira. He used the bicycle he received as part of the reinsertion kit for transporting merchandise to his kiosk. He made a profit of between US\$ 30 and US\$ 40 USD per month.²⁵⁸

In Luvungi, Paul Mukeba, a former combatant, who, after being demobilised in 2005, established a small kiosk with a US\$ 60 loan from his sister (who was employed as a tailor in Bukavu at the time) and sold cigarettes and beans. In 2007, he set up a second hand clothing business with Issa Kagera, a non-combatant neighbour in which they would buy clothing in Bujumbura and then resell it in Luvungi at a profit.²⁵⁹ The rationale for the joint venture was that Mukeba did not have the necessary identity document to cross the border into Burundi (due to his previous combatant status). Kagera on the other hand was able to travel to Bujumbura legally.

In 2008 two newly demobilised ex-combatants joined them in their business venue with contributions of the US\$ 310 (which was part of the reintegration support), and kit provided by Caritas. Thereafter, a Caritas agricultural extension officer encouraged the four businessmen to create a self-help group that would open up their business to investments from more ex-combatants (including non ex-combatants). The motivation was that this would in turn enable them to diversify into other areas such as cattle rearing.

The entrepreneurs consequently established a self-help group called *l'Initiative Locale pour le Développement de Luvungi* (ILDELU). With a collective saving of US\$ 1,500, the four bought three cows, and the remaining US\$ 620 was reinvested in the trading business. The agreement under ILDELU was that heifers produced by the cows would be shared between the members of ILDELU, while the breeding cows remained the property of the association. At the time of this interview, ILDELU had a total of eleven members, with seven having received their share of heifers. The association also had a stock of second hand clothes, beans, corn and cassava estimated at US\$ 3,400.²⁶⁰

In Kiliba location, 22 ex-combatants teamed up with

17 non ex-combatants in 2009 to form a self-help group called *L'Action Communautaire pour le Développement Agro-pastorale de Kiliba* (ACDAKI). According to Munyereza Alimasi, the chairperson of ACDAKI, the creation of the group was motivated by the successes of the ACDK. ACDAKI approached Caritas for support in the form of training and start-up capital.²⁶¹ Caritas provided training on agriculture, including livestock keeping, after which it leased three acres of land in the Plains of Ruzizi to ACDAKI for a once-off single harvest period as a start-up package. The group grew maize, cabbages and beans, and generated US\$ 3,280 in income from the first harvest.²⁶²

Another example of small business dynamics in South Kivu included: Lualua Josue, who was demobilised in Kitona in 2006 and used his reintegration package for short-term consumption, borrowed US\$ 80 from his brother (who made a living baking bricks near Bukavu) in 2007, to start a sugarcane business. He then used the proceeds from his sugarcane enterprise to purchase a kiosk in Panzi location. He reportedly make a profit of between US\$ 120 – 150 a month.²⁶³

However, the small business sector has been constrained by excessive bureaucracy and taxation. For example, female business owners have reported that they have been required to pay as many as 24 different taxes/fees to a variety of government officials and military personnel, from those responsible for overseeing local markets to the *Administrateur du Territoire*.²⁶⁴ The owners of businesses were taxed on their business income as well as their net profit. Small informal businesses were required to pay a site tax. Other taxes are levied at a variety of levels of government. There have also been numerous allegations of corruption associated with the system of taxation.²⁶⁵

5.8.2 Transport businesses

As with other towns in the eastern DRC, the motorcycle taxi sector in the urban centres of South Kivu is relatively vibrant, with similar characteristics to the motorcycle taxi enterprises in Ituri province. A number of ex-combatants, particularly young men, have derived an income from this trade. The experience of an ACDK member in this regard provides some insightful information.

Byamungu Kambaza benefitted from a COOPEC loan of US\$ 600 and purchased a second-hand motorcycle,

which he subsequently used as a taxi to ferry people between Uvira and Baraka. In the dry season Kambaza undertakes a return trip from Uvira to Baraka every day, a total distance of approximately 180km, in which he transports both passengers and cargo. He charged between US\$ 10 and US\$ 20 per trip depending on the size of cargo and the number of passengers. Passengers sharing the motorbike paid less compared to single passengers. In a week Kambaza made a profit of between US\$ 60 and US\$ 80. According to Kambaza,

“The biggest threat to my business is the ambushes that armed groups such as the Mai Mai Yokutumba stage along the Baraka-Uvira road. Two weeks ago armed men attacked Lupofu, a motorcyclist friend of mine and took away his bike and the passenger’s goods. The mama and Lupofu were left to trek from Vitobola where the attack took place, to Lweba...I always fear for myself, but I cannot abandon the job, as it is my only means of survival. Twice, armed rebels have intercepted me. The first time by two people whom I thought were FNL elements from Rokoko swamp and another time by a group of Yokutumba rebels.”²⁶⁶

To discourage ambushes, Kambaza and three other motorcycle taxi drivers made their trips in convoy. Unlike Kambaza who owned his motorcycle, his three colleagues were renting theirs from a local businessman. The agreement was that the drivers could retain all proceeds over-and-above the US\$ 40 rental cost per day and fuel costs.²⁶⁷

Ex-combatants have also been involved in water transportation. For example, in Mboko town, which is located in Tanganyika District, on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, ex-combatants have been operating boats to transport timber, minerals and other goods to Rumonge (Burundi) on the other side of the lake. One such ex-combatant business was comprised of eight Mai Mai former ex-combatants who voluntarily demobilised when their group joined FARDC. The group owned two canoes (one of which was motorised).²⁶⁸

5.8.3 Mineral sector

The mineral trade is a key component of the South Kivu economy, with coltan, cassiterite and gold be-

ing actively mined (mainly in the Kahuzi-Biega National Park, and in the area south of Fizi), by artisanal miners. In addition, some of the main *comptoirs*, the trading houses that buy, sell and export minerals mined in the eastern Congo, are based in Bukavu. A significant number of former combatants have pursued a livelihood from mining, and their role in this sector has been diverse. The FDLR and armed groups in the mining areas have exploited some former combatants, while others have been fortunate to avoid the predatory activities of these groups. However, some ex-combatants have been implicated in human rights abuses and illegally taxing other miners.²⁶⁹

Some ex-combatants have generated income from trafficking of minerals. As was the case with Claude Bulukwa and two friends who opted for demobilisation when the CNDP rebel group integrated into the FARDC. According to Bulukwa:

“Life of a demobilised soldier is the most difficult thing here. We can hardly get employment and therefore we have to fend for ourselves in any way possible. The easiest way out has been to revive our contacts with our friends who were reintegrated into FARDC, and who are deployed in mining locations [Shabunda, Mwenga and Walungu territories]. This way, they channel the minerals through us to the markets in Bukavu, Uvira and Bujumbura... However, the danger is that often we get intercepted by armed groups such as FDLR and Mai Mai and have to part with the entire ‘tola’ (pack of minerals, notably gold).²⁷⁰

5.9 Reintegration and the informal sector: North Kivu

The economic environment in North Kivu is similar to those in South Kivu, with some of the dimensions being more pronounced, particularly the linkages between demobilised ex-combatants, the mineral trade and criminality. Similar to the other provinces in the eastern DRC, ex-combatant livelihood decisions were informed by the omnipresence and activities of armed groups and the Congolese military.

It appeared that younger former rebel/militia members were more vulnerable to being recruited into armed groups and/or engaging in criminal activities. Such endeavours included: smuggling of gold; armed

robbery; drug trafficking; and gunrunning. Those former combatants with families/dependents opted for more legitimate and stable livelihood options, mainly operating small businesses (such as retail, fishing, transport and construction) and engaging in cross-border trading. Those ex-combatants without the skills, networks and start-up capital for small businesses typically opted for livelihood options such as artisanal mining, subsistence agriculture and casual labour.

Some ex-combatants used the training and resources acquired from the DDR process to generate income in the civilian economy. Nonetheless, a number of former rebel/militia group members utilised the skills acquired (some of which were unsavoury), and personal networks that they had developed whilst operating as combatants, for livelihood purposes. These individuals typically deserted from the various armed groups, and did not receive any significant reinsertion/reintegration support. Below are examples of the livelihood options that have been pursued by a variety of former combatants.

There were three key observations from the research relating to ex-combatant livelihoods. Firstly, many ex-combatants engaged in a variety of income-generating activities in order to survive. Secondly, a number of entrepreneurial ex-combatants with meagre resources started modest businesses, which they subsequently expanded with savings and/or including partners/investors. Thirdly, livelihood success for most ex-combatants was primarily determined by individual persistence and perseverance. The examples below provide a micro-analysis of the livelihood choices and consequences for some ex-combatants in North Kivu.

5.9.1 Small businesses and cross border trading

The village of Kibumba is close to the border with Rwanda and is located on the slopes of the volcanic Mt Nyiragongo. However, Kibumba has perennial water scarcity due to the difficulty in drilling boreholes through the multiple layers of lava that have formed as a result of frequent eruptions. Some ex-combatants in the area established businesses to address the demand for water. For example, Tumaini Hamisi, an ex-combatant²⁷¹ entered into business partnership with a friend to transport water from the Rwandan side of the border to Kibumba on his *chukudu*²⁷². According to Tumaini, the pair would generate a daily income

between US\$ 10 and US\$ 15, of which Tumaini would be paid an average of US\$ 5 a day. Through saving, Tumaini was able to invest in other trading endeavours and purchase additional equipment, steadily expanding his business. At the time of the research he owned five *chukudus* of which he leased out four (at US\$ 20 each per month) and operated the fifth himself. His monthly income reportedly ranged between US\$ 100 and US\$120.

Younger former rebel members are more vulnerable to engaging in criminal activities.

Kambamba Makenga, an ex-FRF (*Forces républicaines fédéralistes*) combatant used the approximately two kilograms of gold he had amassed from the mines in Shabunda whilst a member of the armed group to finance a *vieti* (second-hand clothing) business. At the start he bought bags of used clothing from wholesalers and hawked them around Goma until he secured a trading space on a street corner. According to Makenga:

“Since I got this location in February 2010, I have built confidence in my customers because they know they can always find me here as opposed to when I used to roam around. In a week I get to sell between three to five bags, which earns me a profit of about US\$ 50 week...I have two friends who handle the [three] *chukudus*...and they go out to look for businesses around those hardware stores and nearby market places...These *chukudus* are a lifesaver; unlike motorcycles and bicycles, they cost almost nothing to maintain, and don't require petrol to run. If I make more money I will buy more of them.”

Maisha Bora, an ex-combatant from FDLR received six months of carpentry training at Tumaini centre²⁷³ as part of a DDR package. After graduating Maisha worked for nine months as a carpenter in Mabanga suburb of Goma, where he earned between US\$ 30 and US\$ 50 a month. However, according to him:

“When I got married I was compelled to look for alternatives, as the earnings from carpentry could not make my ends meet. I almost went back to the bush although dangerous, life was easier there with a gun. One day an old friend with whom we served in the war, informed me of his flourishing gold business.

He bought gold from old friends in Walikale and sold it in Rutshuru”.

Bora subsequently used the US\$ 150 he had saved from carpentry, and accompanied a fellow former combatant on two occasions to buy gold in Walikale. From the two trips (made mostly at night), he generated US\$ 2,500. He discontinued his involvement in the gold trade after his colleague was shot and killed. Thereafter Bora bought a motorcycle in January 2011 at a cost of US\$ 1,550 to use as a taxi. He then provided a taxi service along Rutshuru-Ishasa road (despite the activities of the FLDR rebels in the Virunga National Park), carrying two or three passengers a trip, for which he charged US\$ 5 per passenger. According to Bora:

“In January [2011] when I bought the *moteur* [motorcycle] I used to make between US\$ 20 and US\$ 30 per day after subtracting fuel costs, but now there are too many *moteurs*, making the competition too stiff. Also, accidents are too many, which makes me fear all the time. I now make between US\$ 15 and US\$ 25 a day, which I still find better than carpentry and less risky than gold smuggling...”

From the profits generated out of the motorcycle transport, he opened a *quaddaffi* (petrol) selling point outside his house in Rutshuru town in March 2011, which his wife was managing, as well as selling cell phone vouchers. The *quaddaffi* business generated a weekly profit of approximately US\$ 25. He indicated that these earnings provided him with the resources to pay school fees for his two children and meet the daily living expenses.

5.9.2 Armed crime

Katamba Bisheko, an ex-combatant, was operating a small trading business (with a *chukudu*) in Masisi territory at the time of the research. Prior to this he had served as a major in the FDLR and then surrendered to MONUC. He was then transferred to *Centre d'appuis aux jeunes démobilisés* (Centre for Demobilised Youth), where he was provided with clothing. At the Centre he was promised reintegration training, but this did not materialise, and Bisheko subsequently returned to his home village. Bisheko claimed there were little in the way of economic opportunities in the village, so he and two other ex-combatants formed an armed gang. The gang targeted gold smugglers and

then sold the loot onto senior FARDC commanders. Katamba and his colleagues also trafficked in cannabis for soldiers and armed groups. According to Katamba:

“Soldiers exchange cannabis for ammunition and minerals with rebels, who occupy mines and possess plantations of cannabis in the high plateaux, deep in the forest. Everyone in the trade abides by the same rules, and betrayal is often met with death”.

Katamba spent eight months with the armed gang, until one of the gang members killed a motorcyclist who was childhood friend of Katamba's. According to Katamba:

“If some form of economic support had been availed to me when I quit the rebel life, I could never have joined that murderous gang. Besides, people in my village know about my former affiliation with the armed groups and therefore treat me with a lot of fear...I had to struggle within my own means to get this *chukudu* in order to quit that criminal life. Although what I earn is pittance compared to life with a gun, I am much more at ease, and able to support my wife and child”.

5.9.3 Construction and fishing

Jacques Kaembe, also a Tumaini graduate established his own masonry business as he was unable to secure employment with construction companies. At the time of the research he was employing five other masons and in July 2011 they secured contracts to construct two maisonettes. For Kaembe, it takes an individual ex-combatant's own initiative to break the legacy of the war and embark on economic progress.

Bahati Kahimbi and two ex-combatant colleagues sustained themselves by fishing on Lake Kivu after leaving the CNDP rebel group in 2009. They established a commercial fishing venture called the Kawaida Group, which is comprised of eight fishermen. They fished at night and then sold their catch to restaurants and hotels, and generated a daily average income of between US\$ 120 and US\$ 160. According to Kahimbi:

“This is a skill that we acquired during the war. We used to go fishing to supplement our food in the bush...We used to hijack civilian canoes including their catch...”