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Country programmes and related matters

**Country programme outline for the Republic of the Congo
(2009-2013)**

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Introduction

1. This document is the outcome of meetings between the United Nations Development Programme, the Government of the Republic of the Congo, other national entities, the specialized agencies and bodies of the United Nations, and the country's development partners. It was drafted on the basis of national priorities as outlined in a number of strategy papers, including the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the related document containing additional analyses, as well as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

I. Situation analysis

2. Since 2002, the Congo has worked towards consolidating peace and security and reinstating the democratic process that was disrupted by conflict in the 1990s. In 2007, legislative elections involving all political parties were held throughout the country, including in the Pool region. Local elections are to be held in 2008 and the second presidential election, in 2009. The organization and institutional framework of the 2007 elections were criticized by some, who called for an independent electoral commission to be established. Since 2002, national stakeholders have sought to foster a peaceful political climate; such efforts need to be maintained. The participation of the people, especially women, in politics and decision-making, is unsatisfactory. The decentralization policy has encountered obstacles to the application of laws on the transfer of expertise and resources. There has been some political and administrative progress, but much still remains to be done.

3. Since 2005, the Congo has enjoyed a favourable economic situation owing to soaring oil prices, oil being the country's main export. Economic growth (3.6 per cent in 2004) stood at 7.7 per cent in 2005 and 6.4 per cent in 2006, before dropping back down to -1.6 per cent, owing to a major decline in oil production in 2007. The Congo has experienced a budget deficit since 2006; this in turn has halted implementation of the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF)-supported programme and establishment of a staff-monitored programme. The Congolese economy is not highly diversified and considerable inequalities make it difficult to reduce poverty rapidly. The increase in per capita income resulting from rising oil prices had little effect on poverty reduction; it affects 50.7 per cent of the population, according to 2005 estimates. A number of sources predict that annual growth of nearly 8 per cent would be necessary to halve poverty in the Congo by 2015. Poverty is more prevalent in rural and semi-urban areas and affects more women than men. Living conditions in the Congo are not commensurate with the country's resources. According to the Human Development Report for 2007-2008, the Congo is ranked 139th of 177 countries, with a human development index of 0.548, compared to 0.520 in 2006, when it was ranked 140th of 177.

4. The aforementioned problems are analysed in the PRSP. The main obstacles are poor macroeconomic management, lack of transparency and poorly targeted public spending, public sector inefficiency and the lack of a number of sectoral policies, as well as difficulty in implementing such policies. The Congo has therefore set the following national priorities: (i) consolidating peace and security and improving governance; (ii) promoting growth and macroeconomic stability; (iii) improving people's access to basic social services; (iv) improving infrastructure; and (v) stepping up the fight against HIV/AIDS.

II. Past cooperation and lessons learned from experience

5. The joint work of UNDP and the Government over the period 2004-2007 focused on three programmes, namely supporting good governance, supporting poverty reduction, and energy and sustainable management of the environment, and three cross-cutting themes: HIV/AIDS, gender equality and new information and communications technologies. In light of socio-political developments, UNDP also developed initiatives for weapons collection and socio-economic reintegration of young ex-combatants. The primary results achieved are described below.

6. Governance: (i) capacity-building of major stakeholders, including members of Parliament, local elected officials, political figures and women; (ii) improved awareness among peoples and communities of their rights; (iii) establishment of a framework for dialogue and code of conduct for political parties, as well as for political training sessions and meetings; and (iv) creation of a strategy for further developing telecommunications and ICT.

7. Poverty reduction: (i) capacity-building of the Government and other national stakeholders to facilitate the development of poverty reduction policies and strategies as well as a national plan for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); (ii) capacity-building of communities to deal with issues of local interest; and (iii) promotion of income-generating activities.

8. Environment: (i) capacity-building of stakeholders to address environmental issues, including challenges related to climate change; (ii) development of a national strategy on energy and drafting of a report on clean technologies; and (iii) dissemination of studies on options for adapting to climate change.

9. Cross-cutting themes: (i) national capacity-building in educational, religious and work environments, and within communities for the prevention of HIV/AIDS; (ii) national capacity-building for the mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS and a gender perspective in programmes and projects; and (iii) publication of pamphlets on the rights of people infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS.

10. The main lessons learned were: (i) the need to concentrate efforts on capacity-building in order to ensure ownership and sustainability of programmes; (ii) the need to strengthen monitoring and evaluation; (iii) the importance of coordinating the activities of the country's various partners; and (iv) the need to adapt to changes in the country's situation in order to focus on national priorities.

III. Proposed programme

A. Links to the common country assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)

11. A study conducted in addition to the PRSP validated national priorities and led to the inclusion, in the 2009-2013 UNDAF, of a number of support areas that took into account the comparative advantages of the United Nations system. The cooperation programme presented herein will contribute to achieving the objectives contained in the UNDAF corresponding to the mandate of UNDP.

B. Strategic focus

12. The work of UNDP, which will take into account the cross-cutting themes of capacity-building and a gender perspective, will focus on the following: (i) promoting democratic governance and consolidation of peace; (ii) reducing poverty and achieving the MDGs; (iii) crisis prevention and support to rehabilitation; and (iv) energy and the environment. Implementation of this programme will result in the forging of new partnerships and consolidation of existing ones. In each area, the activities of UNDP will be carried out within the framework of a capacity-building programme for the implementation of national priorities based on national bodies, which have already been evaluated, in order to strengthen national ownership and ensure sustainable results.

13. With regard to democratic governance, UNDP will support the consolidation of peace and security, the establishment of democratic governance and the promotion of human rights. As elections often give rise to conflict, UNDP will help build the capacities of the national bodies responsible for organizing elections, as well as the press agencies that cover elections. UNDP will have to meet the needs expressed by the Government by seeking coherence between its own actions and those of other partners and by helping to ensure democratic elections, particularly the presidential election in 2009.

14. The support of UNDP will also be necessary with regard to decentralization, in order to foster inclusive and participatory local governance. UNDP will provide support for the training of local elected officials to help them better carry out their responsibilities. Local officials will be trained in drafting and implementing local development plans as a means to establishing the foundations for development with a focus on the needs of the people. The programme will also serve to build capacity in Parliamentary institutions and the *Cour des comptes* (audit court) by offering information and training sessions on their roles. It will support State reform and agencies working against corruption, misappropriation of public funds and fraud (National Anti-Corruption Commission, Anti-Corruption Observatory, NGOs and other relevant institutions), which are essential for the consolidation of democracy and good governance. Finally, support to capacity-building in the coordination and management of public investment and assistance (principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness) will contribute to the effective utilization of tools for planning, implementation, monitoring, follow-up and evaluation of policies.

15. With regard to human rights, UNDP will devote its efforts to capacity-building of legal institutions and improving access to legal services by the community and the most vulnerable groups through intensifying the activities of legal clinics, which provide legal advice.

16. As to reducing poverty and achieving the MDGs, the contribution of UNDP will focus on national capacity-building for the development of appropriate sectoral policies, the national human development report, revision of the PRSP, and initiation of concrete actions to combat poverty; the establishment of reliable baseline figures through the development of socio-economic databases; the promotion of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and microenterprises; and implementation of the national employment policy.

17. UNDP will support activities targeting agricultural production, livestock and fisheries in order to boost incomes. It will also contribute to the establishment of

integrated development centres, such as the Songhai Center, promote employment of youth and persons with disabilities and the socio-economic reintegration of youth and other disadvantaged groups through labour-intensive jobs. UNDP will encourage self-employment through the development of an efficient institutional and regulatory framework for the promotion of microfinance in order to help low-income populations to become involved in income-generating activities.

18. UNDP initiatives for crisis prevention and rehabilitation are designed to reduce insecurity associated with illegally owned weapons by collecting and destroying such weapons belonging to ex-combatants and civilians and improving the regulatory and legal system to control their circulation. Supporting the renovation and management of armories will also contribute to the arrangements.

19. UNDP will support civil society organizations working in conflict prevention, human rights and democracy. It will establish a partnership with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to implement initiatives such as Assisting Communities Together. Likewise, socio-economic reintegration initiatives for former combatants and other at-risk youth will be pursued in order to prevent them from being won over by destabilizing factions.

20. In the areas of natural disaster and risk management, energy and the environment, UNDP will support the development of a national strategy for disaster management, updating the contingency plan and setting up local disaster prevention units. UNDP will facilitate capacity-building for national stakeholders in coordination of prevention measures, with a view to improving preparedness for natural disasters and other risks.

21. UNDP will help the country take measures to adapt to climate change and to develop a frame of reference for activities in sustainable management of the environment. Support models for sanitation in urban areas will be promoted through the establishment of partnerships between the private sector, municipalities and civil society. UNDP will support the elaboration of a strategy for energy development in rural areas through pilot projects promoting alternative and renewable energy sources.

22. Regarding the cross-cutting themes of HIV/AIDS, gender equity and equality, and new information and communications technologies (NICT), UNDP will assist with national response coordination and with mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS in programmes and projects by developing the necessary skills within national bodies. UNDP will support national capacity-building to promote the rights and responsibilities of people living with HIV and to promote income-generating activities for them. Studies on a gender perspective and HIV/AIDS will be carried out and mechanisms for mobilizing resources to support people living with HIV/AIDS will be put in place.

23. UNDP will encourage the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in programmes by training focal points within national administrative bodies and agencies. It will support women's leadership within decision-making bodies and the participation of women in the electoral process. Special emphasis will be placed on the inclusion of gender equality in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme. Human rights training for police and security forces will be supported with a view to reducing violence towards women and girls.

UNDP will continue to promote the use of NICT by updating national policy and supporting its implementation.

C. Expected results

24. The expected results of the programme and resources framework (2009-2013) are contained in the annex.

D. Cooperation strategy

25. UNDP will develop a cooperation strategy by consolidating existing partnerships and establishing new ones. It will encourage the conclusion and revitalization of cooperation agreements through bilateral and multilateral partnerships and will promote South-South cooperation. The use of cost-sharing mechanisms will be encouraged in order to secure the involvement of national, international and private partners interested in the development of the Congo. Efforts will be made to encourage decentralized cooperation with cities and institutions in other countries. Implementation of joint programmes identified in the UNDAF will help to make the reforms in the United Nations system a reality.

26. UNDP will continue to support the Ministry of Planning to ensure better coordination of initiatives by donors and other development partners. The national United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV) will be consolidated to promote the sound utilization of national expertise in the implementation of programmes and projects. The same approach will apply to local capacity-building, with a view to identifying the concerns of the people and involving them in the management of basic infrastructure and social amenities.

27. Implementation of the country programme may be affected by political factors, particularly as related to the presidential election of 2009; security factors, since the weapons collection process is not yet complete in the Pool region; and social and economic factors, owing in part to social demands that have not been met despite high revenues from oil production. To reduce the potential impact of such factors, UNDP will support the Government in the prevention and mitigation of potential conflicts by promoting democratic governance and consolidation of peace and by supporting initiatives for socio-economic reintegration and job creation; capacity-building in order to help reduce poverty and achieve the MDGs; capacity-building in the areas of energy and environmental management as well as disaster prevention and recovery.

IV. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation

28. The programme will be managed on the basis of the national execution modality. The Office will therefore emphasize national capacity-building to ensure effective implementation of the modality, particularly through cooperation with the Support Centre for Programmes and Projects. Considering that the country has recently emerged from conflict, the direct execution modality will be employed on an exceptional basis, in consultation with the Government and in accordance with the procedures established by Headquarters. Monitoring and evaluation will rely on

the mechanisms defined in the UNDAF. The Office will set up an evaluation plan, which will be used as a model for those programmes and projects submitted for approval by the steering committees; they will be executed by project teams which will draft the necessary reports in accordance with current UNDP rules and procedures. It will make a significant contribution to national capacity-building in terms of monitoring and evaluation within the framework of a national capacity-building programme.

Results and resources framework for the Republic of the Congo (2009-2013)

National priority: Improve governance and consolidate peace and security					
UNDAF outcome 1: By 2013, national institutions and agencies will promote democracy, respect for of human rights and effective, transparent management of public resources, with a view to consolidating peace, security, and the rule of law.					
Component	Programme results	Outputs	Indicators, baselines and targets	Partners	Indicative resources (in US\$)
1. Democratic governance	1.1. Capacity-building of institutions and the establishment of democratic, transparent and accountable governance at the national and local levels.	1.1.1. National capacities are evaluated, and a capacity-building programme for implementing national priorities in democratic governance is designed and implemented. 1.1.2. National institutions and agencies are capable of promoting and protecting human rights. 1.1.3. Capacity-building of national institutions and agencies for political dialogue, civic engagement for peace. 1.1.4. Women are more involved in decision-making processes. 1.1.5. Capacity-building of national stakeholders to ensure mainstreaming of gender perspective in programmes and projects.	Indicators: Capacity assessment report; reports on human rights. Baselines: 0 reports; poor protection of human rights; low involvement of women; very limited capacity. Targets: 85 per cent of human rights violations reported. Functional framework for dialogue among political parties; 25 per cent increase in the representation of women in decision-making bodies, currently at 4 per cent; 30 per cent increase in the number of draft bills presented by female members of Parliament.	UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, European Union, Ministries of Justice, and Promotion of Women, CNDH, legal clinic, human rights federation. Ministries: National Defence, and Security and Public Order, HCICEM, HCREC, civil society, Japan. Parliament, Ministry of Land Administration, political parties.	Regular resources: 700,000 Other resources: 2,600,000
	1.2. National institutions and other bodies effectively use tools for the planning, monitoring and follow-up/evaluation of policies, development programmes and budgets.	1.2.1. Institutions, including the <i>Cour des comptes</i> (audit court) and Parliament, and other bodies are able to plan, monitor, follow-up and evaluate policies, programmes and budgets. 1.2.2. Civil servants and national stakeholders have the capacity necessary to contribute effectively to combat corruption, and thus help build an efficient public sector. 1.2.3. The institutional framework for the management of external assistance and public investment is made more coherent and functional. 1.2.4. The legal instruments of the Registered Management Centres are accessible.	Indicators: Number of trained managers and staff employed by national institutions; number of trained civil servants and other stakeholders; amount of methodological materials developed; number of relevant texts. Baselines: Few managers and staff capable of monitoring or evaluation; no anti-corruption plan and no framework in place for managing external assistance. Targets: 50 per cent of managers and staff are trained in planning and monitoring; existence of national anti-corruption plan; functional framework; availability of legal texts.	<i>Cour des comptes</i> , Parliament, Ministries of Finance and Planning, United Nations system. Ministries of Planning, Trade, Agriculture, Animal Production, Industry, and Land Administration, SMEs, communities.	Regular resources: 420,000 Other resources: 1,900,000

	<p>1.3. Local groups apply the decentralization policy effectively.</p>	<p>1.3.1. Local groups and communities are capable of developing and implementing local development plans that incorporate issues such as HIV/AIDS, gender equality, the environment and disaster management. 1.3.2. Capacity-building for follow-up and evaluation of decentralized entities, with a view to promoting monitoring and participation of beneficiaries in local governance. 1.3.3. The legal framework for implementation of the decentralization policy is strengthened.</p>	<p>Indicators: Number of local development plans; existence of a legal framework. Baselines: No local development plans; poor local capacity for follow-up/evaluation; no legal framework. Targets: 25 local development plans drafted and implemented; implementation of a capacity-building plan, staff trained at duty stations; completed legal framework.</p>	<p>Ministries of Land Administration, Planning, and Finance and Budget, local communities, civil society, NGOs, grass-roots organizations. Ministries of Land Administration, Planning, and Finance and Budget, local communities, civil society, NGOs, grass-roots organizations. Ministries of Land Administration, Planning, and Finance and Budget.</p>	<p>Regular resources: 400,000 Other resources: 2,300,000</p>
<p>National priority: Improve people's access to high-quality basic social services UNDAF outcome 2: By 2013, people will have equal access to high-quality services in the areas of health, education, water, sanitation, social protection and HIV/AIDS, and will use them.</p>					
<p>2. Poverty reduction and achievement of the MDGs</p>	<p>2.1. National capacity-building for the development of policies, strategies and baseline human development indicators, and advocacy of and follow-up to MDGs.</p>	<p>2.1.1. National capacities are evaluated and a capacity-building programme for implementation of national priorities in the area of poverty reduction and achievement of the MDGs is designed and implemented. 2.1.2. Mechanisms for following up and evaluating programmes and national policies within the framework of the MDGs and the PRSP are strengthened. 2.1.3. The integrated information system provides data on demand for the development, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of national policies and programmes for overall, sectoral and decentralized development.</p>	<p>Indicators: Capacity assessment report; number of relevant mechanisms. Baselines: 10 reports; no follow-up mechanisms; no CongoInfo. Targets: 11 reports on programme implementation; 1 national report on MDGs and 2 national human development reports; access to CongoInfo.</p>	<p>Ministry of Land Administration, local communities, civil society, NGOs, grass-roots organizations. Ministries of Planning, Finance and Budget, Education, Health, Trade, and Land Administration, local communities, United Nations system.</p>	<p>Regular resources: 500,000 Other resources: 900,000</p>
<p>2.2. Capacity-building in local development and community management.</p>	<p>2.2.1. Capacity-building for community management and development to contribute to efficient management of schools. 2.2.2. Millennium Villages offer a minimum package of basic social services to communities. 2.2.3. Capacity-building of national institutions and stakeholders for the effective</p>	<p>Indicators: Number of Millennium Villages. Baselines: 0 Millennium Villages; poor grasp of the three guiding principles. Targets: 25 villages identified.</p>	<p>World Bank, UNESCO, communities, Ministries of Education, Land Administration, Health, Energy, Animal Production, and Agriculture, United Nations system, BDEAC, UNICEF, WHO, UNAIDS,</p>	<p>Regular resources: 600,000 Other resources: 3,500,000</p>	

	<p>2.3. Jobs creation and improvement of living conditions.</p>	<p>application of the three principles guiding the national response to HIV/AIDS.</p>	<p>Indicators: Number of jobs created; institutional framework for microfinance. Baselines: Unemployment rate: 19.4 per cent; no framework; weak capacity of SMEs and microenterprises and low utilization of ICTs. Targets: 10,000 jobs created; framework adopted; 15 ICT training sessions held for SMEs.</p>	<p>NAC, civil society, private sector.</p>	<p>Regular resources: 461,000 Other resources: 3,000,000</p>
<p>3. Environment, crisis prevention, recovery and natural disaster and risk management</p>	<p>3.1. National capacity-building in terms of conflict prevention and natural disaster and risk management. 3.2. National capacity-building in terms of coordinating planning and management, and environmental and low-cost energy issues.</p>	<p>3.1.1. National capacities are evaluated and a capacity-building programme for implementation of national priorities in the areas of the environment and crisis prevention is designed and implemented. 3.1.2. 10,000 small arms and light weapons are collected and destroyed and mechanisms for reducing the illegal circulation of arms and managing armories are developed and implemented efficiently. 3.1.3. Capacity-building for conflict prevention and disaster and risk management. 3.2.1. Capacity-building of institutions and stakeholders for the development and implementation of an environmental policy. 3.2.2. The measures and systems needed for energy management and adaptation to climate change are adopted and implemented.</p>	<p>Indicators: Evaluation report; number of weapons collected; number of reintegrated former combatants and at-risk youth; texts and prevention units; texts and provisions. Baselines: 0 reports; 35,000 illegal weapons in circulation; 10 units and 2 texts under way; no sectoral policy document; lack of specific climate change measures. Targets: Available report; collection and destruction of 10,000 small arms and light weapons, updating of Congolese legislation on small arms and light weapons; 25,000 beneficiaries reintegrated; adoption of decrees on the coordination of humanitarian action, revision of contingency plan, 15 local units are trained and become functional; policy document and climate change measures are taken.</p>	<p>Ministries: Planning, National Defence, and Security and Public Order, HCREC, NGOs, Japan. Ministries: Humanitarian Action, Planning, Environmental Protection, Social Affairs, and Land Administration; ICRC, civil society, FAO, UNICEF, UNESCO, Ministries of the Economy, Forestry, Industry, Planning, and Education, SMEs, NGOs, civil society, private sector.</p>	<p>Regular resources: 1,403,000 Other resources: 3,500,000</p>