

Country Policy Brief

Democratic Republic of Congo

Sebastien Tshibungu, National Expert in Aid Management and Coordination, UNDP DR Congo

Esther Schneider, Policy Analyst, UNDP RSC Addis Ababa

OCTOBER 2014

Contacts: sebastien.tshibungu@undp.org ; esther.schneider@undp.org

A. Introduction

The Democratic Republic of Congo counts a GDP of 660 USD/capita (2012) and an average economic growth rate of 6% since 2004. With 71% (2006 est.) of its 67 million inhabitants living underneath the poverty line¹, the country is still facing major development challenges and figures currently amongst the world's least developed countries (HDI value 0.304 in 2012). With regards to the upcoming Millennium Development Objectives, DRC is likely to realize 2 out of 7 MDGs. (MDG 2 and 4).

After a decade of conflict and political instability, economic and democratic reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was launched in 2006 with the country's first presidential and legislative elections. Since then, strong efforts were made in order to consolidate the country's institutions and development results.

DRC is one of the signatory countries of the Busan Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation and has been engaged in the global Aid/Development Effectiveness Process since 2005. In the context of the preparations for the Busan high-level meeting, the Government of DRC has actively participated in the regional consensus building process as well as in the first global exercise of monitoring of the implementation of the Busan principles, and the results of the monitoring revealed the existence of several challenges to improve development cooperation.

At the country level, DRC has been very active in setting up mechanisms that facilitate the implementation of the partnership principles and is continuously working to improve their functionality.

Furthermore, DRC is an active member of the New Deal for the Fragile State, and the Fragility Assessment is realized since 2013. One of the main challenges encountered at this stage is currently to establish the necessary synergies around several ongoing processes, most particularly the M&E mechanism of the Addis Ababa Framework Agreement, the New Deal Process and other programmatic frameworks.

In order to further operationalize these mechanisms and resolve institutional and technical challenges step by step, the Government of DRC is leading a number of evaluations and stakeholder discussions that are ongoing and will be further explained during this brief.

Most recently, in October 2014, the Government has organized a national workshop on the Global Partnership, the New Deal and Aid management with the objective to identify the areas of implementation of the Mexico Outcome and create efficient synergies between the different processes. After an interactive multi-stakeholder exchange, this workshop has led to a Roadmap that defines actions to be taken in order to further strengthen National Ownership and Mutual Accountability for inclusive development and the implementation of the New Deal, most particularly, by ensuring coherence between the different ongoing processes.

In order to contribute to the global dialogue around development effectiveness and share some of the lessons learned with other countries, this paper takes stock of the country's progress and challenges in implementing mechanisms that move the GP principles forward.

¹ World Bank Data

B. Development cooperation and partnership framework

According to OECD DAC reports, DRC has received total ODA allocations of 2 859 Million USD in 2012, with an annual national budget of approximately 8 billion USD. Within the total ODA allocations, approximately 10 % have been disbursed for humanitarian aid, 60 % for actions in relation to debt and the remaining 30 for development related sectors. Only 34% of the funds scheduled for the Government sector have been recorded in the Government budget and national financial management and procurement systems have not been used at all.

DRC does not have its own partnership policy, but has developed national development strategies, programmes and action plans related to development effectiveness. (Outlined under C.)

With a large number of development partners operating in the country and the country's engagement in several global processes, relationships and priority setting between the different frameworks and programmes have not always been clear. Whereas development partners have created their consultation framework through a "Partner Consultation Group" ("Groupe de Consultation des Partenaires"), a Government led coordination mechanisms and harmonization process is still at the initial stages and needs to be further operationalized.

As outlined by the Roadmap issued at the recent Partnership workshop, this process and the elaboration of a partnership policy need to become a priority in order to achieve the national development objectives.

C. Progress and Challenges in Effective Development Cooperation

The Democratic Republic of Congo has participated in the 2014 Monitoring Exercise of the Global Partnership (See table below). Results have shown significant progress in the area of annual predictability of disbursed external aid (Indicator 5a: from 65% in 2010 to 83% in 2013) and the untying of aid, but a decline of practices when it comes to the recording of aid on budgets that are approved by parliaments (Indicator 6) and the use of the country's financial management and procurement systems (Indicator 9a).

Since 2009, the Government has taken important steps to improve its national planning and financial management systems such as integrating external aid into its national budget and creating an Orientation Committee on the Public Finance Reform which has already incentivized several reform plans and laws.

In order to operationalize these reforms and guarantee that the country's development process is built on effective and strong institutions, it will be crucial to reverse the negative trends with regards to the use of country systems and that all development interventions are united under the umbrella of the Government's development strategy.

2014 GPEDC Monitoring Exercise - Democratic Republic of Congo

	2010 (for reference)		2010 (for reference)		2010 (for reference)		2010 (for reference)		2010 (for reference)		2010 (for reference)		
	5a	5b	6	7	8	9a	9b	10	10	10	10	10	
	Development co-operation is more predictable (Annual)	Development co-operation is more predictable (mid-term)	Aid is on budget that is subject to parliamentary scrutiny	Mutual accountability strengthened through in-clusive reviews	Gender equality and women's empowerment	Effective Institutions: Developing countries systems are strengthened	Effective Institutions: Developing countries systems are used	Aid is untied					
Congo Dem	83%	65%	35%	34%	72%	no	no	2,5	2,5	0	12%	88%	81%
Total Africa (22 countries)	80%	74%	66%	61%	49%	14/22 (64%)	7/18 (39%)	3.26	3.26	3.26 (21 countries)	34%	40%	85%
Total (46 countries)	83,80%	n.a.	70%	64%	n.a.	27/46 (59%)	11/35 (31%)	3.35 (33 countries)	3.35 (33 countries)	48 % (38 countries)	49%	79%	77%

Compilation of data: KICG, UNDP RSC Addis Ababa according to GPEDC Progress Report

National Development strategies

During the political tensions of the 1990s the planification process in DRC had come to a deadlock and was mainly revived under the pressure of the International Community in 2001. The growth and poverty reduction strategy of that time was influenced by international standards, but has allowed the country to achieve the completion point and the relief of its debt in 2010. This has led to the transition from a situation of crisis management to a more sustainable development management with the drafting of the DSCR 2 in 2011.

At present, DRC continues the process of elaborating the long term vision (RDC Vision 2035), but has adopted a mid term development strategy (DSCR 2010-2015), which establishes a unique planning, monitoring and evaluation framework with technical and political responsibilities. The latter has been translated into a Priority Action Programme and other operationalization documents.

Furthermore, the Government has presented its Action Programme 2012-2016 and is currently elaborating an Integrated Reconstruction Programme, which is under discussion with major stakeholders. The Government has expressed the intention to adapt this programme to become a framework programme for all levels of development projects within the country.

These documents are forming a set of planification and strategic intervention tools that have the potential to lay out a coherent Government owned strategy that can be operationalized, but their correlations need to be defined further.

This challenge was addressed at the recent Partnership Workshop around the Global Partnership, the New Deal and Aid management mechanisms and the roadmap issued on this occasion has

established a clear definition of the interrelation between these tools and their effective implementation as one of the priorities.

Stakeholder Coordination

Stakeholder coordination in DRC has been working poorly and on an informal ad hoc basis since the 1990, when the work of the national body created for this purpose, the External Resource Coordination Committee (CCRE), has come to a hold following a period without structural cooperation. Attempts to revitalize the committee have not been successful.

The need to restore the framework for a multi-stakeholder dialogue and aid coordination mechanisms has been recognized at the First National Aid Effectiveness Forum that was organized in 2009 and has issued the Agenda of Kinshasa. It was agreed that the new framework should take into account the current context and provide an inclusive platform for all actors involved into the aid and development management process in DRC.

The analysis of needs and good practices in other countries was deepened in 2011 by the Planning Ministry. Two working groups in charge of the coordination mechanism and the revitalization of the national planning process were put in place under the wing of the Planning Ministry's chief of staff.

First conclusions have been presented to development partners in 2012, following which it was suggested to include a partner consultation space and to place the political coordination at the level of the Prime minister's office.

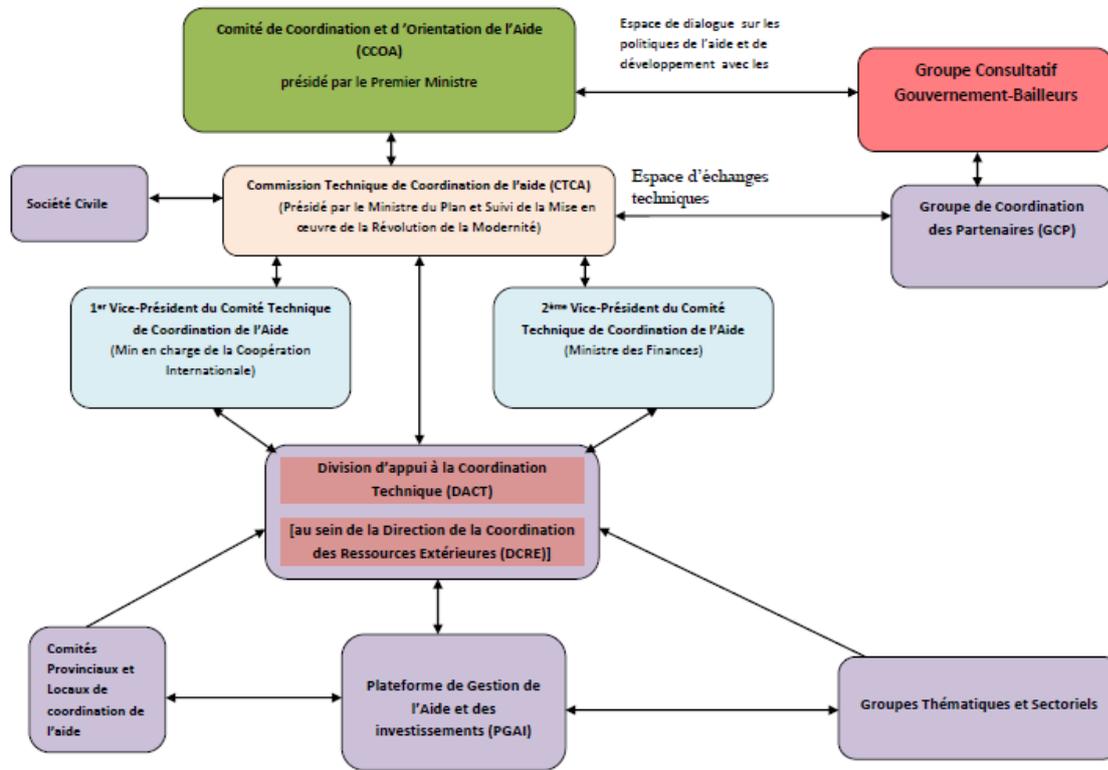
These suggestions have been taken into account in order to create a coordination mechanism based on the following criteria:

- 1) Strengthening Government leadership through political high level coordination (Prime minister's office)
- 2) Restore the role of the Planning Ministry for the technical coordination of the country's economic and social development planning process
- 3) Include the main actors involved into the external resource mobilization process and end multiplication of ad hoc coordination mechanisms

The proposed Aid coordination mechanism includes a technical body, presided by the Planning Minister with Vice-Presidency from the Ministry of International Cooperation and the Ministry of Finance, and a political body that will be presided by the Prime Minister (See figure below). As a draft decree for its creation is currently under discussion at the Governmental level, it is worth noting that institutional challenges have occurred as the different ministries have expressed different views on the responsibilities they should hold and the Ministry of International Cooperation prefers to revitalize the former External Resource Coordination Committee.

In order to resolve such challenges and to harmonize the views of the different ministries, it is envisaged to review experiences of other countries in the regulation of their aid coordination mechanism.

Annexe 1 : Schéma national de coordination de l'aide et de concertation avec les bailleurs de fonds proposé par le Ministère du Plan et SMRM



Transparency and Mutual Accountability

The Democratic Republic of Congo has participated in the 2013 Survey on Mutual Accountability, but does currently not have a partnership policy or an established set of indicators for mutual assessment reviews.

However, efforts to establish inclusive reviews are undergoing and civil society organizations are well organized into a national platform that plays an important role in national planning and evaluation processes. Equally, CSO's and provinces have actively participated in the New Deal Fragility Assessments.

In order to move forward the MA and transparency framework in DRC, the Sector Groups and the Aid Information Management System, both integrated into the technical level of the suggested Coordination mechanism, have an important role to play.

Thematical and Sector Groups have been put in place in DRC since 2008 in order to establish an effective dialogue and information flow between the Government and Development Partners. Following an assessment in 2012, a decree

Mission of the Thematical and Sector Groups:

- Apporter l'appui à l'élaboration, à la mise en œuvre et au suivi-évaluation de la stratégie nationale, provinciale ou locale de développement ;
- s'assurer de l'appropriation des politiques, des stratégies et des programmes sectoriels par les différentes parties prenantes ;
- aider à mobiliser et à coordonner les financements pour la mise en œuvre des politiques, stratégies et programmes sectoriels de développement ;
- promouvoir l'harmonisation des interventions sectorielles des bailleurs de fonds afin de garantir l'efficacité de l'aide apportée à la RDC;
- accompagner les Ministères dans la définition, élaboration, mise en œuvre et suivi-évaluation de leurs politiques, stratégies et programmes de

establishing a new operational framework for Thematical and Sector Groups was validated in May 2013.

Although some of the Thematical and sector Groups need to be further strengthened, there has been significant progress in operationalizing the Thematical and Sector groups as a technical tool and they have contributed to increase ownership, alignment and better coherence with development politics and strategies. It is now important to further increase their role as a contributor to stakeholder dialogue at all levels.

Simultaneous, the creation of the Aid Information Management System in 2008 represents another opportunity to increase transparency for more tangible development results. The AIMP is operating within the planning ministry and roles of the different stakeholders are defined by an interministerial order in December 2011.

To date, the Congolese AIMP has registered more than 6000 development activities amounting to several billions of dollars in development and humanitarian aid. The database includes information on past, present and future activities.

A September 2013 evaluation of the platform shows that, although all actors recognize the platform as a “unique database”, it needs to be further strengthened at different levels in order to increase data availability and usage.

As set out in the roadmap issued at the recent Workshop on the Global Partnership, the New Deal and Aid management in DRC, the implementation of the specific recommendations should be one of the priorities in the near future.

D. Development Effectiveness Agenda and Contribution of the Global Partnership

The Democratic Republic of Congo has endorsed the global process around aid and development effectiveness and has actively participated in the regional consensus building process that is in place since the preparations of the Busan High Level Meeting.

Implementation of the principles at the country level has been a dynamic process with a number of activities and initiatives launched during the past years. Not only have the planning, coordination and transparency mechanisms been improved, but, starting from the First National Workshop on Aid Effectiveness in 2009 with the launch of the Kinshasa Agenda, roadmaps and action plans aiming at a better implementation of the GP have subsequently been put in place.

Currently, the Kinshasa Agenda is under evaluation and, as recognized at the October 2014 Partnership workshop, lessons learned from its evaluation should lead to the preparation of a new Action Plan and a partnership policy that will support the implementation of the national development strategy and further strengthen the institutions and mechanisms put in place.

Furthermore, in order to ensure further progress in the regional Development Effectiveness agenda, the Government of DRC has accepted to host the upcoming Africa Meeting on Implementation of the Africa Action Plan on Development Effectiveness in the Context of the Global Partnership organized by AUC/NEPAD with support of UNDP and the GPEDC Joint Secretariat. Building on the NEPAD Agenda, the Common African Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda as well as the Mexico HLM Communiqué, this meeting will take stock and exchange experiences in order to connect efforts in the implementation at the country level of the Africa Action Plan on Development Effectiveness that was developed at the Abidjan meeting in February 2014.