



GIEWS Country Brief

The Democratic Republic of the Congo

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FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- **Below-average 2018 crop production due to ongoing conflict and pest outbreaks**
- **Inflation expected to fall in 2019, but still remains relatively high**
- **Food prices generally at high levels driven by limited supplies**
- **Food security situation remains dire particularly in regions of Kasai, Tanganyika and in eastern parts of country**

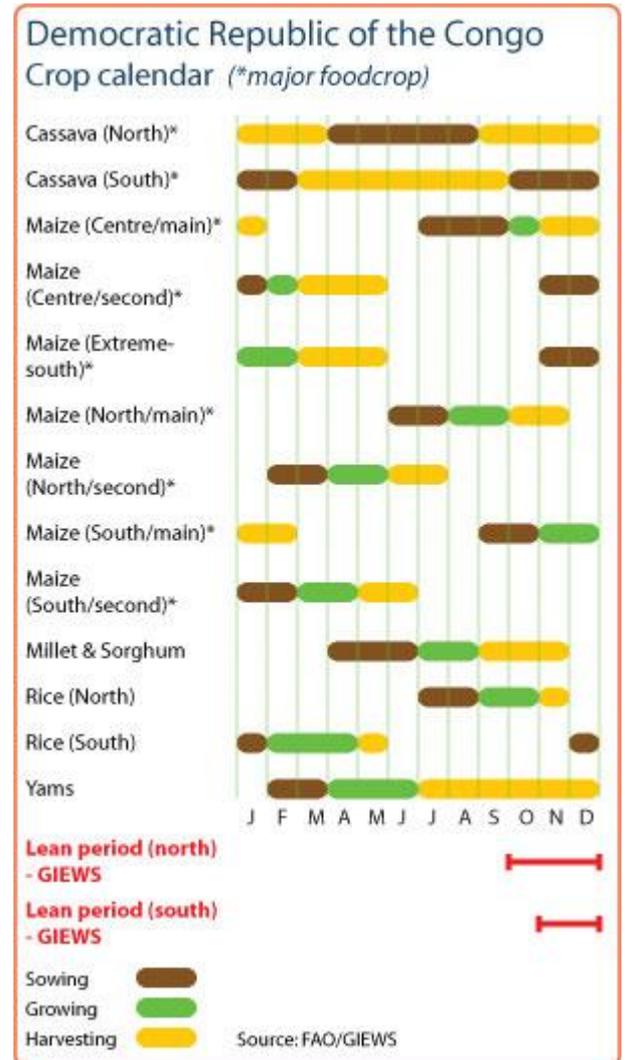
Below-average harvest expected due to ongoing conflict and pest outbreaks

In northern and central regions, the harvest of the main season maize crops was completed in January, while in southern provinces it is expected to finalize at the end of February. Although crops benefitted from adequate rains during the season in the main producing areas, the ongoing conflict in the Kasai, North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri and Tanganyika regions continued to disrupt agricultural activities and limited farmers' access to crop growing areas. Moreover, Fall Armyworm infestations throughout the country have caused significant crop damage and production losses, particularly in maize-growing regions. As a result, aggregate production of the 2018 crop production is expected below the near average level of 2017.

Low market supplies put upward pressure on food prices

The ongoing political strife has resulted in the local currency depreciating by more than 100 percent since 2015. The weak currency is putting upward pressure on domestic food supplies due to reduced imports from neighbouring countries. Moreover, imported inflationary pressure has contributed to higher food prices and diminishing of households' purchasing power.

In recent months, prices have increased in several parts of the country, particularly in the southeastern part of the country. The upward pressure on the prices of maize is due to limited supplies available in the markets owing to the recent below-average harvests. Moreover, import restrictions from Zambia and the United Republic of Tanzania have also impacted availability in many local markets.



Food security situation remains dire due to persisting conflict

Ongoing insecurity continues to cause widespread disruption of agricultural and marketing activities as well as exacerbated the massive displacements, with a severe negative impact on both food availability and access. However, since December 2018, there has been a relative improvement in the security situation, allowing for the population to return, particularly in the Kasai Region and Tanganyika Province.

The total IDP caseload in the country is estimated at 4.5 million. Most IDPs face extremely limited access to livelihoods. A significant portion of them live with host communities, whose limited resources are put under additional stress with the high risk to fall into unsustainable coping mechanisms and livelihood strategies. The country also hosts about 535 000 refugees from Burundi, Central African Republic, Rwanda and South Sudan.

Most households in North Kivu, South Kivu, Tanganyika, Ituri, Kasai, Central Kasai and Ecuador regions face serious food access constraints. The dietary diversity has drastically diminished since late 2014 by the substitution of more nutritious cereal and vegetable staples with cassava and the sharp reduction of animal proteins intake. On 1 August 2018, the country declared the tenth outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in 40 years and, as of end-January 2019, about 698 cases have been confirmed.

According to the latest Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), valid for the period from August 2018 to June 2019, about 13.1 million people are estimated to be in need of urgent assistance (IPC Phase 3: "Crisis" and IPC Phase 4: "Emergency"). This is about 70 percent more than in the previous IPC. The most severely food insecure people continue to be located in Ituri, North Kivu, Kasai and Tanganyika regions due to the lingering effects of persisting conflict.

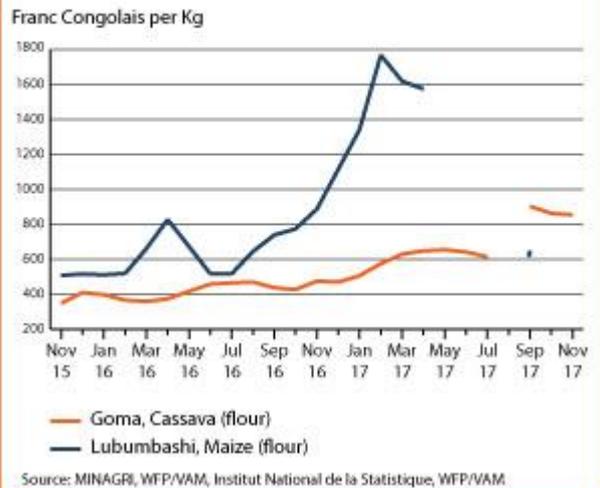
In the framework of the 2017-2019 Humanitarian Action Plan, FAO has allocated about USD 7.4 million to assist 2.1 million people (about 350 000 households), mainly residing in North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri, Haut Uélé, Maniema, Tanganyika, Bas Uélé, North Ubangi and South Ubangi provinces.

The main activities include:

- Support to food production through agricultural, fishing and livestock-rearing input distributions.
- Cash-for-work activities.
- Promotion of income-generating activities, particularly for vulnerable women.
- Strengthening households' resilience through the implementation of the "Caisses de Résilience", a community-centred approach which brings together sustainable agricultural practices, improved access to credit and strengthened social cohesion through farmers' groups and women's associations.

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Democratic Republic of the Congo Retail prices of cassava (flour) and Maize (flour)



Democratic Republic of the Congo

Integrated Food Security Phase Classification - August 2018

