



## GIEWS Country Brief The Democratic Republic of the Congo

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### FOOD SECURITY SNAPSHOT

- Below average 2018 season crops due to ongoing conflict, floods and infestations of Fall Armyworm
- Inflation rates expected to fall in 2018 but will remain relatively high
- Food prices generally at high levels driven by limited supplies
- Food security situation continues to deteriorate in regions of Kasai, Tanganyika and in eastern parts of country

### Below average 2018 season crops due to floods, pests and conflict

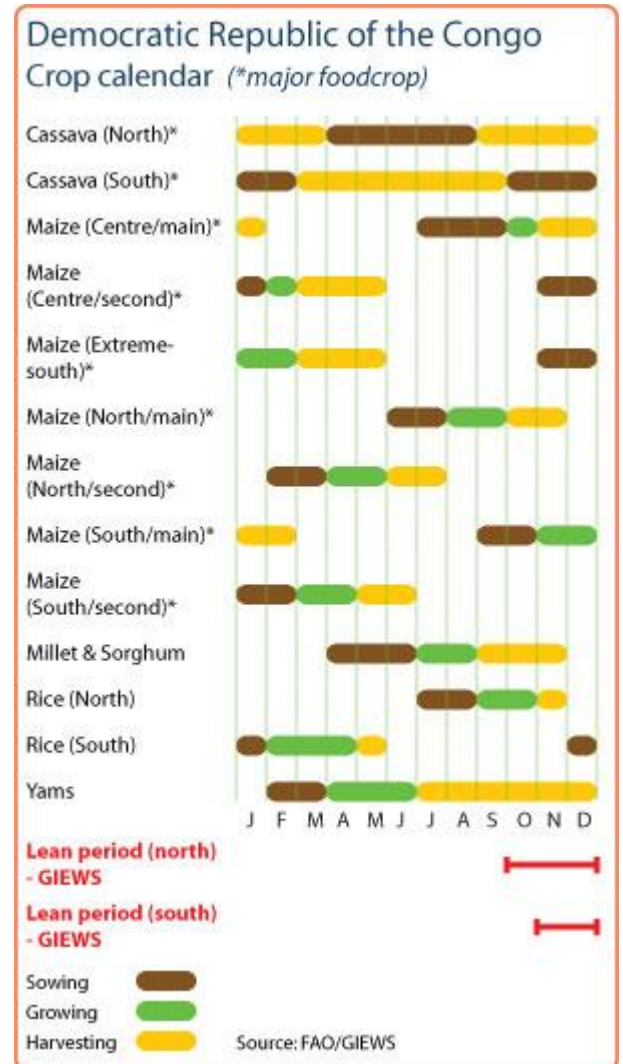
Harvesting of the main 2018 maize crop is underway in northern and central areas, while crops in southern regions are still at the vegetative stage and will be harvested early next year. Overall, seasonal cumulative rainfall amounts were above average. The heavy rainfall, particularly in North Kivu, South Kivu and Tanganyika regions, resulted in localized floods and consequent damage of crops.

Despite the overall favourable weather conditions, aggregate production of the 2018 season crops is expected at below average levels due to ongoing conflicts in the Kasai, North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri and Tanganyika regions which continued to disrupt agricultural activities and limited the available crop-growing areas. Moreover, infestations of Fall Armyworm throughout the country have caused significant crop damage and production losses particularly in maize-growing regions. According to preliminary estimates, national maize production in 2018 is estimated to fall significantly compared to the near average 2017 levels.

### High inflation and low market supply continue to hinder food access

In 2018, inflation is forecast at about 23 percent, well below the 42 percent registered in 2017, but still relatively high due to high Government spending combined with declining export revenues owing to low international prices of the mining sector's exported commodities.

The lean season had an early onset following depleted stocks as a result of the reduced harvests of the last two agricultural seasons. The low levels of supplies available on the markets has



consequently resulted in generalized increases of prices of major food commodities.

## Civil insecurity continues to negatively impact food security conditions

In June 2018, inter-ethnic clashes have resulted in new pockets of insecurity in South Kivu resulting in the displacement of about 76 000 people. Moreover, the escalation of the civil conflict since 2013, especially in eastern and southern areas of the country, severely disrupted the local livelihood systems and caused massive population displacements. Since September 2016, the Kasai Region is facing a major humanitarian crisis and the conflict has caused the displacement of nearly 2.4 million people. Due to a relative improvement in the security situation in the Kasai Region since late 2017, over 1.4 million refugees have returned to the country.

The total IDP caseload in the country is estimated at 4.5 million. Most IDPs lost their productive assets and 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 more than 538 000 refugees from Burundi, Central African Republic, Rwanda and South Sudan.

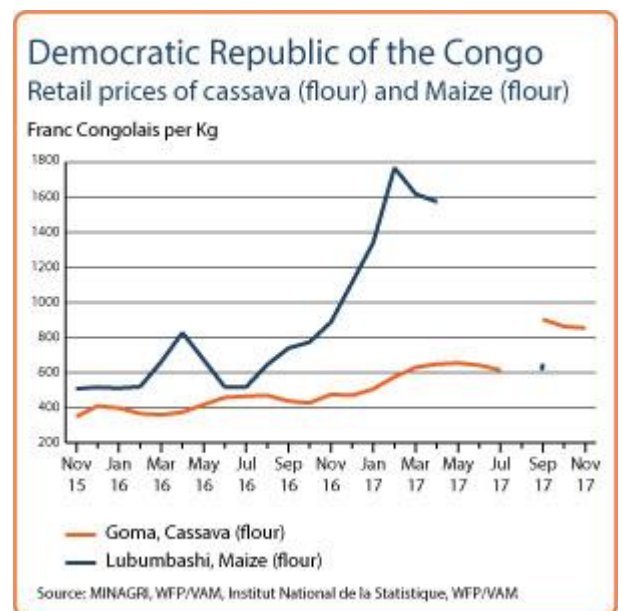
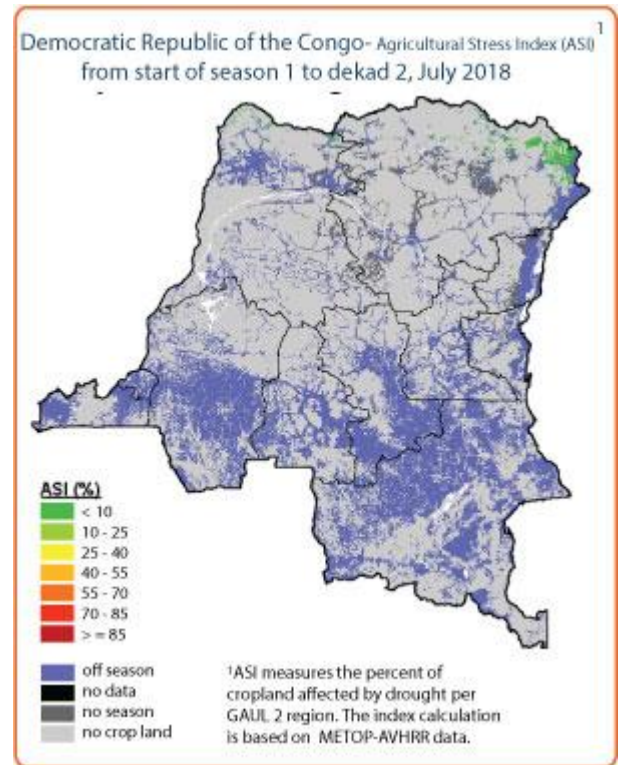
Most households in North Kivu, South Kivu, Tanganyika, Ituri, Kasai, Central Kasai and Ecuador regions are facing serious food access constraints. The quantity of food intake and the dietary diversity has also drastically diminished since late 2014 by the substitution of more nutritious cereal and vegetable staples with cassava and the sharp reduction of animal proteins intake. The widespread dietary deterioration raises serious concerns in terms of nutrition and health. On 1 August 2018, the country declared the tenth outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in 40 years and, as of early November 2018, about 300 cases have been confirmed.

According to preliminary results of 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"). Most of the severely food insecure people are currently located in Ituri, North Kivu, Kasai and Tanganyika regions. The rise in armed conflict in Ituri and South Kivu; the escalation of conflicts in the eastern and southern areas; as well as the humanitarian crisis in the Kasai Region are the key drivers of the deterioration of food insecurity.

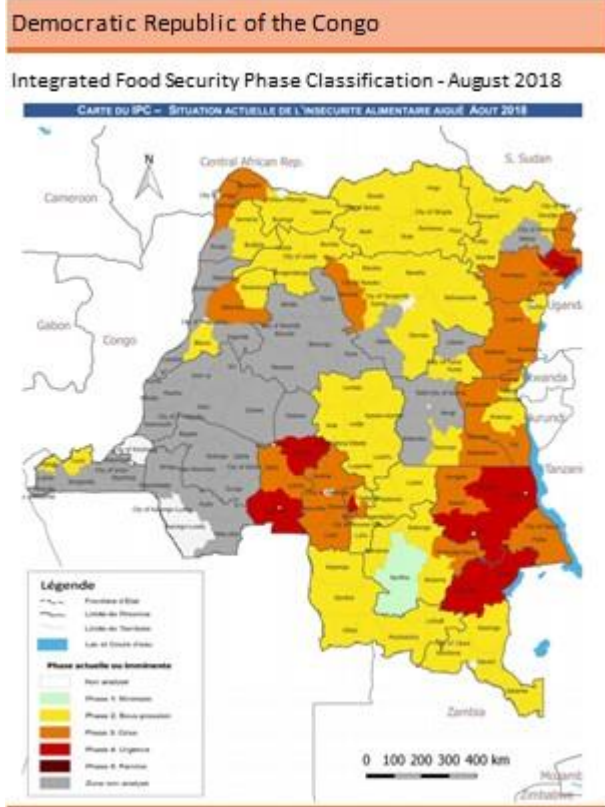
In the framework of the 2017-2019 Humanitarian Action Plan, FAO has allocated about USD 7.4 million to assist 2.1 million people (about 350 000 households), mainly residing in North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri, Haut Uélé, Maniema, Tanganyika, Bas Uélé, North Ubangi and South Ubangi provinces.

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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Source: FAO/GIEWS Earth Observation System.