

EMBARGOED UNTIL MONDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2006

Meeting real needs: a major change for donors to the Democratic Republic of the Congo 2006

13 February 2006

Summary

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is at a critical point in its history. While the forthcoming elections offer the country new opportunities, it is also facing rising tensions, and at least 42 million people still endure appalling poverty and suffering.

The DRC Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP) prepared by the UN represents a major change in humanitarian appeals, with a focus on reflecting needs more accurately. The request for almost \$700m in humanitarian aid – three times the amount sought for last year – is the subject of the donor conference taking place in Brussels on 13 February 2006. The size of the appeal is the result of a more comprehensive needs assessment, based on the full participation of all humanitarian actors in the DRC (field-based donors, UN agencies, and the NGO community), and coverage of the whole country rather than specific regions.

Oxfam calls on donors not to betray the people of the DRC or block the momentum behind this plan with a routine lukewarm response. Instead, they must rise to the challenge of meeting real needs in the DRC, which is at a critical point of both crisis and transition.

Aside from their important bilateral contributions, donors should respond to the HAP according to their 'fair share', as determined by their gross national income (GNI) – see Annex 1. This will require even existing donors with a good track record in 2005 (Belgium, Sweden, Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Ireland, and Finland) to increase their 2005 contributions by at least 100 per cent, given the threefold increase in the

appeal. Hitherto small or non-traditional donors to the DRC (such as Australia, Austria, Greece, Spain, New Zealand, Portugal, Denmark, and Luxembourg), all of whom gave below their fair share in 2005, should increase contributions by a greater magnitude, to help take on the burden of one of the greatest tasks facing the humanitarian community today. Of those donors who have given more regular or sizeable contributions and yet still give well below their fair share, Oxfam highlights six countries in particular – the USA, Japan, Germany, UK, France, and Italy – all of whom should increase their contributions to at least reach their ‘fair share’ in the 2006 HAP, requiring contributions to increase by two- to five-fold. Finally, multilateral donors who fall outside the GNI-based fair-share analysis are also urged to increase contributions, including the EU which has decreased ECHO and UN appeal funding relative to 2004.

Why the Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP) deserves the support of donors

The current investments in the electoral process undertaken by the international community are not accompanied by the necessary parallel investments in humanitarian and reconstruction efforts, or security sector reform. It is important to realise that elections – though of capital importance for the DRC polity – will not in isolation resolve ongoing tensions or bring about development in the country.

The 2006 HAP represents a major change for donors in their response to needs in the DRC. It reflects a new approach to the co-ordination and funding of humanitarian and transition action, driven by the UN, yet validated through a country-wide consultation with various stakeholders, such as national authorities, donors, and the NGO community. Oxfam believes the plan is a major change from the UN on both the quantity and quality of aid to the DRC, presenting a challenge to donors to respond in a commensurate way.

- **Quantity:** the humanitarian section of the 2006 HAP asks for \$681.6m - three times the size of the UN appeal for preceding years. Oxfam believes the request is a more accurate reflection of the DRC’s enormous ongoing humanitarian needs.
- **Quality:** following the principles of the 2003 Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) initiative, the 2006 HAP provides for a national strategy for co-ordination, implementation, and monitoring of humanitarian action.
 - The HAP 2006 addresses priority needs across all sectors and all areas of the country, i.e. it does not limit interventions to the eastern parts of the country, so avoiding the creation of so-called ‘forgotten areas’.
 - The 2006 HAP contains a flexible funding mechanism called a ‘Pooled Fund’, which is managed by the Humanitarian Coordinator. Priority unfunded projects will be submitted to the Pooled Fund, and thus have a better chance of receiving necessary funding in a timely manner.

- Following the GHD principle of 'linking relief with development', the 2006 HAP includes humanitarian projects and transition programmes in one strategic framework. This principle is threatened by the exclusive focus on humanitarian needs in the donor conference, but Oxfam is adamant that the links must be followed through at a further donor conference.

The human cost of conflict – the facts

The current crisis in the DRC arises out of the colonial legacy, three decades of cumulative mismanagement under late President Mobutu, and seven years of conflict. Recent estimates state that 3.9 million people have died since 1998 as a result of the direct and indirect consequences of the ongoing conflict.¹ Between 1.4 and 1.6 million people are now displaced,² and an additional 1.3 million 'returnees' need assistance to rebuild their lives.

Rising disease and mortality rates

The deterioration of social (particularly health) services has led to the re-emergence of diseases in endemic and epidemic form and unprecedented mortality rates from common diseases, while the systematic practice of rape and sexual slavery in the conflict areas has contributed to the rapid – although as yet only anecdotally documented – advance of HIV/AIDS.

Reduced access to food in conflict-affected areas has created widespread food insecurity and areas of acute malnutrition. It is estimated that 75 per cent of the population – over 42 million people – are currently in a precarious food situation, while the Congolese Ministry of Public Health puts the overall figure for severe malnutrition at 16 per cent of the population.³

A Médecins Sans Frontières report, published in October 2005, states: 'DRC holds the sad world record for mother-child mortality with 1,289 deaths per 100,000 live births, which represents a loss each year of 585,000 children. The mortality rates for under-fives are around 213 deaths per 1,000 live births. This means that one in five newborn Congolese children will never reach the age of five years. Thirty per cent of these deaths are caused by malaria, which claims the lives of 300,000 children each year. Over 80 per cent of the Congolese survive on the equivalent of just \$0.30 (US dollars) a day.'⁴ In the DRC, life expectancy at birth is 42 years.

Persistent insecurity – exacerbating the human cost

The human cost of the conflict in the DRC continues into 2006 despite the hopes for peace offered by the 2003 Global and All-Inclusive Accord. While the main belligerents formed a government in 2003, the underlying causes of the war have not been adequately addressed. All of the former warring factions have maintained parallel structures of command in the army, the administration, and in the intelligence services. This has prevented the advancement of the country's unification process, including army integration, and has stalled the process of Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (DDR).

A peaceful DRC is critical for regional stability: it is the second largest country in Africa, has the third largest population, and shares borders with nine other countries. Still tensions continue into 2006, with pockets of violence and disorder in the east, notably in Ituri, the Kivus, and Northern Katanga. As recently as 18 January 2006, militiamen loyal to Laurent Nkunda – a former officer of the Congolese army charged with war crimes – attacked and occupied several towns in Rutshuru territory (North Kivu), forcing the newly integrated 5th brigade of the Congolese national army to flee. The continued fighting has already displaced thousands of civilians; this has included the movement of refugees into Uganda.

The arms factor

There is yet another face to the suffering in the DRC: the human cost of the arms trade. Oxfam knows from its own work the impact on the people of the DRC of an arms trade that is out of control, and the routine violation of UN embargoes.

Box 1: Nathalie's story

Nathalie told Oxfam her story from hospital. She was at home with her family on the evening of 12 November 2005 when four men came to her house and shot her husband in front of her. 'They ... shot him in the mouth, the chest, and the side. I was by him. He died immediately ... I carried my baby and ran outside. When I ran out, they shot again and hit me.' The bullet punctured the side of her buttocks and ripped out part of her anus as it left her body.

'I couldn't run fast and I couldn't feel the bullet, but I kept running and went into the woods. I stayed in the forest from 8 o'clock until 6 o'clock in the morning. My baby was crying while we were in the forest, but he wasn't hurt. I was hurting so bad that I could no longer get up. Lots of my blood was running. In the morning, the villagers found me and carried me here.' Because local services are so poor, her neighbours had to build a chair and carry her 32 kilometres along dirt paths to the nearest hospital. By the time she had arrived, her wounds were already infected and she had become incontinent.

Oxfam's global campaign for tougher controls on the arms trade, with Amnesty International and IANSA, has collected testimonies from other victims in the DRC, including Beatrice and Claire who were traumatised by witnessing the murders of their parents, and Benjamin whose experience as a child soldier has left him with blood on his hands. These stories offer a glimpse into the fate of hundreds of thousands of Congolese civilians whose lives have been devastated by the influx of guns. Since 1998, as many as 85 per cent of those living near the front lines have been affected by violence.⁵

The need for a sustainable protection of civilians

The protection of civilians requires accountable national security services that protect rather than threaten civilians, and are clearly discernible from illegal armed groups, which should be prosecuted. The current army reform and integration plans lack adequate funding and both national and international political commitment. Oxfam fears the integrated brigades of the Congolese national army will not be able to provide the necessary security to the civilian population during the pre-election period.

The long-term establishment of peace in the DRC depends on good-quality reinsertion programmes for former fighters. The current approach to

reinsertion only considers the immediate demobilisation and short-term remuneration of armed fighters for reinsertion up to 12 months, but lacks a long-term vision of sustainable social rehabilitation.

Past UN appeals characterised by lacklustre response from donors

The international community is investing heavily in the electoral process in the DRC. Donors have raised the \$450m necessary for the 2006 elections, with the EU being the main donor providing \$180m. Initially planned for June 2005, the first round of the national legislative elections is now scheduled for 29 April 2006.

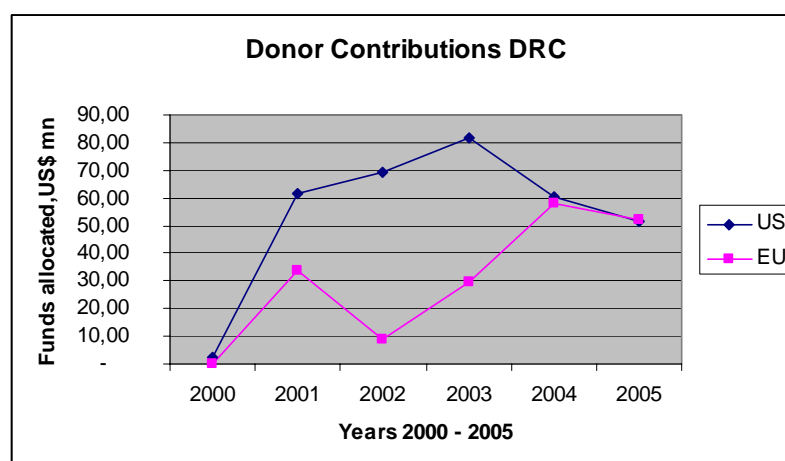
In contrast, although some donors have significantly increased their funding, the overall response by the international community to the relatively modest humanitarian appeals of recent years has been lacklustre. The plan presented by the UN this year offers a more accurate picture of the needs that must now be met.

Table 1: Response to UN Consolidated Appeals (CAPs) for DRC over the last 5 years

<i>Year of the appeal</i>	<i>Total amount requested</i>	<i>Percentage contributed by donors</i>
2001	\$122m	67%
2002	\$202m	49%
2003	\$229m	47%
2004	\$136m	73%
2005	\$220m	62%
2006	\$680m	?

As shown in Table 1, no humanitarian appeal in the DRC has ever been more than three-quarters funded, and the highest-ever total reached was only \$136m. By contrast, \$1.1bn was pledged to the tsunami appeal, meeting 85 per cent of the stated requirements, and \$320m was pledged to the South Asia earthquake appeal (though this figure is still only 58 per cent of the stated UN requirements, with almost \$700m pledged outside the appeal).

Figure 1: Track record USA/EU – last six years



Source: OCHA, Financial Tracking Service, <http://www.reliefweb.int/fts>

As shown in Figure 1, the two major humanitarian donors to the DRC, the USA and the EU, have been reducing their total humanitarian assistance in recent years. Oxfam calls for this trend to change in 2006.

To ensure full funding of the 2006 HAP will require existing donors with a good track record in 2005 (Belgium, Sweden, Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Ireland, and Finland) to increase their 2005 contributions by at least 100 per cent (See Annex 2 - DRC UN Consolidated Appeals 2005).

It also requires non-traditional donors to the DRC (such as Australia, Austria, Greece, Spain, New Zealand, Portugal, and Luxembourg) to make contributions to help take on the burden of one of the greatest tasks facing the humanitarian community today. As shown in Table 2, these countries have made no, irregular, or small contributions to the DRC over the past five years.

Table 2: Total humanitarian assistance per donor 2000-2005

	2000 \$m	2001 \$m	2002 \$m	2003 \$m	2004 \$m	2005 \$m
Australia	-	-	-	0.02	-	0.06
Austria	-	0.03	0.01	-	-	-
Belgium	4.64	6.77	3.73	4.97	13.92	11.36
Canada	1.77	3.41	5.12	6.30	10.58	11.81
Denmark	2.68	0.36	1.60	1.49	2.60	4.27
Finland	0.48	1.25	0.52	1.04	2.92	2.97
France	-	0.21	0.03	-	1.56	2.08
Germany	1.86	5.36	4.53	1.51	7.93	19.22
Greece	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ireland	0.34	1.08	1.26	1.27	2.63	3.75
Italy	0.42	1.34	1.30	2.23	2.86	3.25
Japan	-	5.76	3.95	7.27	5.62	9.78
Luxembourg	-	-	0.59	-	0.53	0.21
Netherlands	3.54	5.86	6.61	7.60	7.68	11.15
New Zealand	-	-	-	0.29	0.05	0.18
Norway	2.64	1.42	0.54	6.10	3.12	5.28
Portugal	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spain	-	-	-	-	-	4.17
Sweden	3.60	5.53	5.56	6.95	7.87	12.18
Switzerland	0.21	3.42	1.25	2.51	1.21	3.77
UK	2.25	6.92	6.43	13.48	16.83	22.48
US	2.36	61.35	69.17	81.95	60.18	51.60
EU	-	33.56	8.65	29.74	58.29	52.10

Source: OCHA, *Financial Tracking Service*, www.reliefweb.int/fts

Oxfam believes that donors should respond according to their 'fair share' of the appeal, based on their gross national income (GNI). Oxfam's analysis shows that six countries in particular – the USA, Japan, Germany, the UK, France, and Italy should increase their contributions to reach their 'fair share' in the 2006 HAP (See Annex 1: DRC Humanitarian Action Plan 2006 – Fair Share Analysis).

The ambitions of the international community should go beyond ensuring the success of the elections in 2006, and should support the millions of people who need only the support of basic services to go home, and for

preventable diseases to diminish. Donors should strive to make a contribution that ensures that people caught in conflict will not be left to die. Through the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative, donor governments made a commitment to meet global humanitarian need. The 2006 Humanitarian Action Plan is their chance to remedy past neglect.

Oxfam's experience with affected communities

Oxfam has worked in the DRC since the 1960s. Oxfam affiliates support activities in eight provinces: Province Orientale (Ituri, Haut-Uélé); North Kivu; South Kivu; Maniema; Bas-Congo; Bandundu; Equateur; and Kinshasa.

In eastern DRC, we provide emergency assistance – including water, sanitation, and public health promotion – to over 300,000 displaced people. Countrywide, through our longer-term programmes, we work on education, livelihoods, inter-community dialogue and reconciliation, social and political participation, refugee reintegration, and reinsertion of ex-combatants.

Box 2: Oxfam's experiences with humanitarian responses in eastern DRC

Ituri

Little Moïse lives with his mother and five siblings in the remnants of Camp Aéro in Bunia. He has lived in Camp Aéro since 2003 when violent ethnic clashes forced thousands of people to flee to the edge of a UN military base in search of security. At its peak, the camp had up to 20,000 inhabitants. Moïse has been fortunate: situated less than 5km from Bunia town centre, Camp Aéro was easily accessible for humanitarian aid workers. The humanitarian community and local camp representatives worked together to organise different aspects of camp life. Moïse received an education thanks to a school that was set up next to the camp. Medical care was provided by a nearby Médecins Sans Frontières hospital. Oxfam provided clean water and sanitation to the camp. Other aid agencies delivered food rations and plastic sheeting to keep out the rain. As Bunia town and its surroundings grow safer due to the presence of international peacekeepers, camp inhabitants are now returning to their villages.

North Kivu

Oxfam has been working in the Beni area for more than two years, providing assistance to over 40,000 people, mainly 'old' internally displaced people (IDPs) who fled the fighting in Ituri. Most of these people face difficulties in returning home due to persisting insecurity. Funding for assistance to most IDP sites on the Beni-Erengeti axes, close to the Uganda-DRC border, was terminated in August 2005. The phasing-out of assistance was ill-prepared: while food rations were still distributed up until July, no coping strategies were developed to prepare the people for the withdrawal of assistance. Over 20,000 people remain in the area, without adequate funding to return, or to rehabilitate looted houses and destroyed farms.

This lack of funding has a detrimental impact. Trapped in IDP sites without assistance or access to land, displaced people resort to a variety of coping mechanisms such as manual labour, small commerce, or prostitution. In Oicha, a nearby town, women prostitute themselves for \$1, or a plate of food. Sex without a condom is worth a pitiful \$2.

Recommendations

Humanitarian funding should be based on real needs

Donors must commit sufficient resources (in cash and in kind) to the DRC to address the ongoing humanitarian crisis:

Donors should commit to full funding of the 2006 HAP. At least half of the \$700m requested must be pledged during the conference, and the rest by June 2006.

- The 'fair share' analysis for the 2005 CAP showed Belgium, Sweden, Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Ireland, and Finland had contributed more than their 'fair share'. These previous 'good' donors should increase the contribution they made in 2005 by at least 100 per cent as a reflection of the threefold increase in the appeal.
- Less traditional donors for DRC must come on board to share the burden of one of the largest humanitarian crisis situations in the world – Australia, Austria, Greece, New Zealand, Spain, Portugal, and Luxembourg should step in and take on their fair share.
- Oxfam calls upon the 'Top 6' states especially to contribute their fair share to the 2006 HAP: the USA, Japan, Germany, the UK, France, and Italy.
- Donors should commit to an agreed date for a follow-up conference to ensure the \$300m funding for transitional activities set out in the HAP. This conference should be just prior to the elections; leaving it until afterwards is likely to result in these needs being lost among other important planning processes, such as the Consultative Group meeting in the second half of 2006.

Annex 1

What donors should be paying to the DRC, based on their gross national income (GNI)

DRC HUMANITARIAN ACTION PLAN 2006 - FAIR SHARE ANALYSIS

Donor	Donor's GNI, 2004, (\$trillion)	% of all Donors' GNI	Fair share of funding (\$m) *
Australia	0.54	1.80	12.27
Austria	0.26	0.87	5.94
Belgium	0.32	1.07	7.32
Canada	0.91	3.01	20.54
Denmark	0.22	0.73	4.98
Finland	0.17	0.57	3.88
France	1.86	6.18	42.15
Germany	2.49	8.28	56.44
Greece	0.18	0.61	4.17
Ireland	0.14	0.46	3.12
Italy	1.50	5.00	34.09
Japan	4.75	5.79	107.71
Luxembourg	0.03	0.08	0.57
Netherlands	0.52	1.71	11.68
New Zealand	0.08	0.27	1.87
Norway	0.24	0.79	5.41
Portugal	0.15	0.50	3.40
Spain	0.88	2.91	19.86
Sweden	0.32	1.07	7.29
Switzerland	0.36	1.18	8.07
UK	2.02	6.70	45.72
USA	12.15	40.40	275.53
	30.08	100.00	682.00

* Column 3 shows what each donor can be expected to pledge according to their gross national income, in \$m. Thus Australia should provide \$12m, Austria \$6m etc. out of the total appeal of \$682m. If they were to give according to national income, the donors would be ranked as follows, with the most generous first: USA, Japan, Germany, UK, France, Italy, Canada, Spain, Australia, Netherlands, Switzerland, Belgium, Sweden, Austria, Norway, Denmark, Greece, Portugal, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Luxembourg.

Annex 2

DRC UN Consolidated Appeals 2005

Donor	Donor's GNI, 2004, (\$trillion)	% of all Donors' GNI	Fair share of funding (\$m)	Actual funding given (\$m)	Actual share of funds as percentage of fair share (%) *	Gap between actual share and fair share (\$m)
Australia	0.54	1.80	3.96	0.06	1.61	3.89
Austria	0.26	0.87	1.92	-	-	1.92
Belgium	0.32	1.07	2.36	10.72	454.05	-8.36
Canada	0.91	3.01	6.62	10.95	165.23	-4.32
Denmark	0.22	0.73	1.60	0.62	38.63	0.98
Finland	0.17	0.57	1.25	1.62	129.40	-0.37
France	1.86	6.18	13.60	2.08	15.27	11.52
Germany	2.49	8.28	18.21	6.31	34.65	11.90
Greece	0.18	0.61	1.35	-	-	1.35
Ireland	0.14	0.46	1.01	2.77	274.46	-1.76
Italy	1.50	5.00	11.00	3.25	29.55	7.75
Japan	4.75	15.79	34.74	2.21	6.35	32.54
Luxembourg	0.03	0.08	0.19	-	-	0.19
Netherlands	0.52	1.71	3.77	7.85	208.28	-4.08
New Zealand	0.08	0.27	0.60	0.18	29.47	0.43
Norway	0.24	0.79	1.74	4.42	253.70	-2.68
Portugal	0.15	0.50	1.10	-	-	1.10
Spain	0.88	2.91	6.41	4.17	65.12	2.23
Sweden	0.32	1.07	2.35	8.05	342.48	-5.70
Switzerland	0.36	1.18	2.60	1.68	64.48	0.93
UK	2.02	6.70	14.75	5.65	38.30	9.10
USA	12.15	40.40	88.88	39.77	44.75	49.11
	30.08	100	220			

* Column 5 calculates what each donor has given compared to what it should give according to its gross national income. The higher the figure (as a percentage), the more generous the donor. Thus in terms of ranking in order of generosity, the most generous in the 2005 appeal for \$220m were: Belgium, Sweden, Ireland, Norway, Netherlands, Canada, Finland, Spain, Swiss, USA, Denmark, UK, Germany, Italy, New Zealand, France, Japan, Australia, and equal last Austria/Greece/Luxembourg/Portugal.

Notes

¹ International Rescue Committee (IRC) (2006) 'Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: a Nationwide Survey', *The Lancet*, Vol. 367, Issue 9504, 7 January 2006, pp44-51, available at www.thelancet.com.

² OCHA RDC, Section des Déplacements Internes (October 2005).

³ Food and Agricultural Organisation of the UN (2004) 'The State of Food Insecurity in the World'.

⁴ Médecins Sans Frontières (October 2005) 'Access to Healthcare, Mortality and Violence in Democratic Republic of the Congo', p.4.

⁵ Belgian Senate, 'Report on the Exploitation of the Riches of the DR Congo', February 2003.

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This paper was written by Eva Smets. Oxfam acknowledges the assistance of Jamie Balfour-Paul in its production. It is part of a series of papers written to inform public debate on development and humanitarian policy issues.

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