



Women and men in a protection committee training in North Kivu.
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‘FOR ME, BUT WITHOUT ME, IS AGAINST ME’

Why efforts to stabilise the Democratic Republic of Congo are not working

SUMMARY

The Second Congo War, estimated to have killed some 5.4 million people,¹ officially ended with a peace agreement in 2002. Since then, there have been more peace agreements, two sets of national elections, and the decade-long presence of the world's second largest peacekeeping mission.

Yet for millions of Congolese people, there is little peace and limited progress. The disputed 2011 national elections were marred by irregularities, and criticised by a wide range of credible voices. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is a vast country, including volatile areas that show little sign of becoming more stable. Violence still plagues parts of the eastern and northern provinces. Following an army mutiny at the beginning of April 2012, the situation deteriorated significantly and is currently the worst it has been for several years. Armed groups control large swathes of eastern DRC. Many Congolese people face death, sexual violence and exploitation at the hands of armed groups, members of the army and police, and others.

STABILISATION PLANS

As one response to this, the Congolese government and international community are implementing twin 'stabilisation' plans: the government's Stabilisation and Reconstruction Plan for War-Affected Areas (STAREC), and the International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy (ISSSS). While their objectives differ to some degree, the main aims of these stabilisation plans may be described as:

- improving security;
- re-establishing the authority of the state;
- supporting the return and reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) and socio-economic recovery.

However, there is **no shared vision on how best to achieve these aims or on what 'stabilisation' actually means**. The two plans have multiple components, with no consensus among the different levels of the Congolese government, or among the many international donors and implementers, on how to achieve the diverse objectives.

LIMITED RESULTS

For large numbers of Congolese people in the areas most affected by violence, these plans have delivered very limited results. They have not substantially improved security for people, or re-established the state to provide security and other services for them. In almost 80 per cent of interviews undertaken for this report where this issue was discussed,

respondents felt that their security was not assured; and in 2011, Oxfam's protection assessment found that more than 50 per cent of women and 35 per cent of men interviewed felt less secure than in 2010.²

Box 1: Research for this paper

This paper is based on Oxfam's experience in eastern DRC and extensive interviews in Kinshasa, Goma, Bukavu and Bunia from February 2011 onwards. It is also based on fieldwork in Irumu territory in Ituri district, Orientale province; in Masisi and Beni territories in North Kivu; and in Mwenga and Walungu territories in South Kivu, primarily in October and November 2011. This report deals with evolving issues and debates in DRC; the analysis principally reflects thinking up to the beginning of 2012. The debates around stabilisation in DRC are currently moving forward and include several positive developments. Nonetheless the issues this report discusses remain relevant.

During the fieldwork, Oxfam conducted individual interviews (with men and women) and focus group discussions with 200 people in 17 communities that differed according to their relative stability, remoteness, and classification (or not) as priority areas for stabilisation under the international support strategy (ISSSS). The interviews provide a snapshot of people's experiences and views on security, state authority and recovery.

Oxfam's analysis also derives from its protection programme, which works with communities across eastern DRC, and from its protection assessments conducted annually since 2007 in some of eastern DRC's most conflict-affected areas. During the assessment in April and May 2011, Oxfam and 15 partner organisations interviewed 1,705 people from 45 communities. Like the interviews for this paper, these assessments provide snapshots of people's experiences, and as such, it is impossible to be certain how representative they are of other parts of eastern DRC.

The twin stabilisation plans have achieved relatively little in eastern DRC when considered against their three principal aims:

- **Security** remains volatile, deteriorating further in many areas in 2011 and again more significantly in 2012. Stabilisation plans have not dealt effectively with armed groups. Military operations against them have not been decisive, and have often increased human suffering. The stabilisation plans have not tackled the problems of cohesion and remuneration within, and abuse by, the army, which behaves very differently in different areas. Without lasting improvements in security, progress on the other objectives necessarily remains limited.
- **The authority of the state** still does not reach many places, and efforts to restore it have focused primarily on infrastructure rather than governance. There remains a continuing failure to properly provide for state security forces, and, not coincidentally, the propensity of many of them to extort money and goods from civilians. According to the most recent available information from mid 2011, 55 per cent of police deployed along the ISSSS priority roads in North and South Kivu were not on the government payroll.³ Internationally supported stabilisation

programmes have built police stations, prisons and courts; but the government has been slow to put officials in them, or pay the officials that are there. Stabilisation programmes have failed to systematically support local structures that address community concerns and which could go some way to holding often abusive state authorities to account.

- **The return, reintegration and recovery (RRR)**, if poorly managed, could re-spark violence. The stabilisation plans have not made significant progress on this objective or solved the problems behind displacement, which has increased. Programmes have focused positively on local projects to support basic service delivery, economic recovery and conflict resolution with increasingly conflict-sensitive interventions. However, they achieve only so much in the absence of security and a legitimate, functioning state. In a context of continued volatility, overlapping needs in the same zone demand different types of assistance at the same time and require strong co-ordination between different types of aid. There are several barriers to effective co-ordination.

FUNDAMENTAL WEAKNESSES

The DRC's twin stabilisation plans have done too little to end the predatory behaviour of (some) state forces and armed militia alike.

Why? This paper does not claim to cover every one of the complex mix of local, national and regional reasons, but focuses on three weaknesses at the heart of the twin stabilisation plans:

- **The plans have not been strongly backed by the DRC's national government**, either financially or politically. The funds allocated for the functioning of STAREC in 2011 were less than a quarter of those to maintain the Prime Minister's official residence,⁴ and in total the government has allocated little more than \$20m to STAREC.⁵ Outside STAREC, the government has made limited progress on security and governance reforms that are essential for stability.
- **The plans have had insufficient international backing.** Like the international community's divided responses to 2011's contested elections, this reflects the lack of a strong, co-ordinated international position on the DRC, and lack of faith in the government. In addition, the UN Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO) has not put forward a strategic vision of a broader stabilisation agenda that would bring more coherence to its other activities by outlining how they contribute to stability.
- **The twin stabilisation plans came about through a non-inclusive process** in which large sections of the Congolese government and the general population were not involved. This has since improved, but civil society organisations, local government officials, traditional authorities and local communities are still not sufficiently involved. Despite the DRC's highly diverse and localised dynamics, the plans do not take adequate account of local views.⁷

*'What you do for me,
but without me, is
against me.'*

A traditional proverb repeated to Oxfam by an old man in North Kivu, October 2011.⁶

Contested national elections, delays to provincial elections scheduled for March 2012 and repeatedly delayed local elections have undermined the government's legitimacy in the eyes of international donors and many Congolese alike.⁸ In the light of this, and the frequent abuses carried out by state security forces, many donors find it difficult to know how to support the DRC state.

NEW DETERMINATION NEEDED

No one would deny that donors' disenchantment is understandable. But the impact on the stabilisation plans – and therefore Congolese people – is that donors have not given them strong enough co-ordinated political backing.

To succumb to 'Congo fatigue' would condemn millions of Congolese people to continued violence and poverty. It would also leave dangerous instability at the heart of Africa, with continuing threats to all those neighbouring countries that have, at one time or another, been involved in and affected by the violence in eastern DRC.

Failing to make 'stabilisation' work in the DRC is not an option. International donors must succeed, and encourage the Congolese government to succeed, not because it is easy, but because the cost of failure is too high.

WAY FORWARD

There is no simple or single way forward. But this paper points to part of the solution – grounding the DRC's stabilisation processes far more in local realities and perceptions of what must be done.

The Congolese people have a great desire to be involved in decisions that affect their lives – but they rarely are. They have ideas that would make stabilisation processes more responsive, effective and enduring. These include having STAREC act as a convenor for local chiefs to discuss common problems and having a say in where roads should be built.

Getting stabilisation 'right' in the DRC will not be easy or quick. But part of the answer must be to address the three fundamental weaknesses mentioned above. That could be done with the following:

- **Stronger support from the DRC government.** The Congolese government should do more to address insecurity and make progress on crucial reforms, including of the security sector. It should agree concrete and achievable goals with international donors, specific commitments (financial, technical and political), and benchmarks for progress to which funding should be tied. The Prime Minister and Minister for the Interior and Security should convene regular meetings of the STAREC steering and monitoring committees, to ensure regular high-level communication between and follow-up by the government, donors and MONUSCO on the progress of these plans.

- **Stronger and more co-ordinated international support.**
International donors, with support from the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General, should apply credible and co-ordinated political pressure to ensure that progress is made on the above plans and on reforming the security sector (including defence, police and the justice system), decentralisation, and preparations to hold free and fair provincial and local elections. Donors should also increase and tailor funding to reach a representative range of civil society organisations, at every level, to improve their ability to hold state bodies to account.
- **Greater engagement with local people and civil society organisations.** A representative range of civil society organisations should play a greater role in shaping stabilisation plans. Local civil society organisations should have a substantial influence in adapting stabilisation plans to local dynamics, holding state bodies to account at different levels, and providing services such as local mediation. The stabilisation programmes require strong context analysis, and an approach that is based in local concerns, sensitive to conflict, gender, and identity, and built on robust and sustainable monitoring. Interventions to support return, reintegration and recovery (RRR) should be co-ordinated with other aid programmes to respond to a range of needs in the same place.

ACRONYMS

ADF/NALU	Allied Democratic Forces/National Army for the Liberation of Uganda
ANR	National Intelligence Agency
CEPGL	Economic Community for Great Lakes Region
CLPC	Permanent local reconciliation committee
CNDP	National Congress for the Defence of the People
CSO	Civil society organisation
CTC	Joint technical committee
DDR	Disarmament ,demobilisation and reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (Congoese army)
FDLR	Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda
HAP	Humanitarian action plan
IDP	Internally displaced person
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ISSSS	International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy
JMT	Joint monitoring team
MONUC	United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
MONUSCO	United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
PEAR Plus	Programme of expanded assistance to returnees Plus
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PNC	Police Nationale Congolaise

RRR	Return, reintegration and recovery
SRFF	Stabilisation and Recovery Funding Facility
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary General
SSR	Security sector reform
SSU	Stabilisation Support Unit
STAREC	Stabilisation and Reconstruction Plan for War-Affected Areas
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNSSSS	United Nations Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy

1 INTRODUCTION

Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is currently at its most unstable for several years. Since April 2012 the Congolese army (FARDC) has been fighting a mutiny led by the former National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP) rebel group. To support its military offensive, the FARDC has pulled out of other parts of North and South Kivu provinces (the Kivus). Other domestic and foreign armed groups have opportunistically taken advantage to vie for control of areas left by the army. Armed groups now fight for, occupy and control large swathes of eastern DRC, resulting in widespread insecurity.

Fearing violence, many people have fled their homes, bringing the number of internally displaced people to more than 2 million (up from 1.7 million at the end of 2011),⁹ and causing others to seek refuge in neighbouring Uganda and Rwanda. Many civilians have inadequate access to basic services such as health and clean water and often face the daily threat of violence, including massacre, rape, extortion and forced labour. Levels of violence are localised and fluid, as some areas experience relative calm, while others undergo peaks in insecurity. The complex dynamics and volatility of the conflict mean that contexts change quickly and often unpredictably. This situation prevails despite a series of peace agreements, improved regional relations following a diplomatic thaw with Rwanda in late 2008, and two sets of presidential and national parliamentary elections.

Continued instability is linked to several factors. Following decades of neglect, which began under President Mobutu Sese Seko, state infrastructure and presence is often limited and sometimes non-existent. Some state institutions, such as the army and police, regularly extort and abuse local populations. Eastern DRC is home to a large number of domestic and foreign armed groups, ranging from the extensive Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) to the many local Mai Mai groups. In some areas, these groups take on state functions, such as collecting taxes and administering justice. They allegedly receive funds from a number of sources, including pillaging, taxes, mineral exploitation, supporters abroad, and sympathetic members of the FARDC.¹⁰

The conflicts in the DRC have regional dynamics too. Rwandan, Ugandan and Burundian rebel groups are all active on Congolese soil, and interact with domestic armed groups in different and shifting ways. Moreover, local conflicts shape and are shaped by higher-level dynamics.¹¹ Disputes over access to land and other resources are fuelled by: contests over power that oppose, for example, traditional and statutory authorities; perceptions of exclusion; questions of identity around ethnicity and contested Congolese citizenship; and incomplete and unclear legal frameworks.¹²

There is a clear need to find a lasting solution to eastern DRC's instability. Any successful attempt to stabilise the area by bringing broad-based security and socio-economic development has to address this daunting array of drivers and consequences of conflict.

2 STABILISATION IN THE DRC

Stabilisation was originally a Western policy framework intended to rebuild countries and governments in fragile and conflict-affected settings.¹³ It gained prominence after being used in Iraq and Afghanistan (experiences that still dominate international discussions) and has since broadened as a concept. The UN has incorporated it into peacekeeping missions in countries like Haiti and the DRC, and some national governments (e.g. Colombia) have also pursued stabilisation agendas.¹⁴ Despite its increasing prominence, however, the nature of stabilisation is still ‘vague and uncertain’ and understandings of it vary; it may aim to achieve many things from, or between, narrow security objectives or wider social and political transformation, state building and development.¹⁵ In the DRC, this uncertainty is particularly evident.

THE STABILISATION FRAMEWORKS IN THE DRC

Stabilisation in the DRC is officially a government-led process supported by the UN and (primarily Western) international donors. Initially, it was conceived narrowly within the UN Organisation Mission in the DRC (MONUC) in 2007, together with certain sections of the Congolese government (notably the Prime Minister’s office) eventually resulting in the United Nations Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy (UNSSSS).¹⁶ Stabilisation was, in the words of one senior UN official, ‘a semi-responsible exit strategy’ for the Mission, in the face of increased government pressure for it to leave.¹⁷

The Congolese government’s principal involvement did not come until later when, in June 2009, it launched its own Stabilisation and Reconstruction Plan for War-Affected Areas (STAREC). This drew both on the UNSSSS and its own Amani Programme for the disengagement and demobilisation of armed groups.¹⁸ In the final step, UNSSSS – in recognition that it was a broader international project – was recast, but not fundamentally reconceived, as an International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy (ISSSS), whose main aim is to support the government’s stabilisation efforts.¹⁹ In June 2010, MONUC became MONUSCO, with stabilisation explicitly added to the UN mission’s mandate.

There are consequently two stabilisation plans: the DRC Government’s STAREC and the international ISSSS. The table below outlines the main objectives of each strategy:

International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy (ISSSS)	Stabilisation and Reconstruction Plan for War-Affected Areas (STAREC)
<p>1. Improve security</p> <p>Reduce threats to life, property and freedom of movement by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening security forces in areas formerly controlled by armed groups; • Supporting the disengagement and disbanding of armed groups through demobilisation or integration into security forces; • Improving operational and internal control systems for FARDC units to reduce rates of abuse of civilians, including sexual violence. 	<p>1. Security</p> <p>Consolidate gains in zones cleared by military operations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoring state authority (deployment of police, penal chain officials and civil administration); • Reinforcing the operational capacity of the FARDC; • Preventing the resurgence of armed groups; • Preventing exactions against the civilian population; • Providing for the regular payment and temporary housing of FARDC and PNC. <p>Establish a control mechanism for mineral and forestry resources to prevent illegal exploitation.</p>
<p>2. Support political processes</p> <p>Support national and provincial governments to advance peace processes by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping to improve diplomatic relations between the DRC and its neighbours; • Identifying and sanctioning spoilers, serious human rights abusers, etc; • Supporting political leaders to follow through on commitments made under key agreements. 	<p>2. Humanitarian and social</p> <p>Support for the voluntary return of Congolese refugees and internally displaced people (efforts to include full provincial government and community involvement):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic reintegration; • Protection of civilians.
<p>3. Strengthen state authority</p> <p>Restore and strengthen the state in areas where it has been weak or non-existent by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring reliable road access; • Deploying police, courts and prisons to uphold rule of law and ensure public order; • Re-establishing decentralised administrative services. 	<p>3. Economic recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-establish conditions for sustainable economic activities (rehabilitate roads, kick-start key sectors, including agriculture, fishing, small industry); • Establish regional projects to harmonise formal economic relations, in particular through reinvigorating the Economic Community for Great Lakes Region (CEPGL).
<p>4. Strengthen return, reintegration and recovery</p> <p>Ensure the voluntary and safe return of refugees and IDPs, and sustainable socio-economic reintegration in their areas of origin, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing priority social needs, restoring basic social services and infrastructure; • Promoting employment generation and agricultural productivity; • Facilitating local reconciliation and 	<p>4. Fight against sexual violence (added in 2010)</p>

conflict resolution linked to housing, land and property issues.	
<p>5. Combat sexual violence</p> <p>Strengthen prevention, protection and responses to sexual violence by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combating impunity and improving access to justice; • Preventing and mitigating threats and reducing vulnerability to sexual violence; • Addressing sexual violence in security sector reform processes; • Improving access of survivors to multi-sectoral services; • Improving data collection and mapping of cases of sexual violence. 	

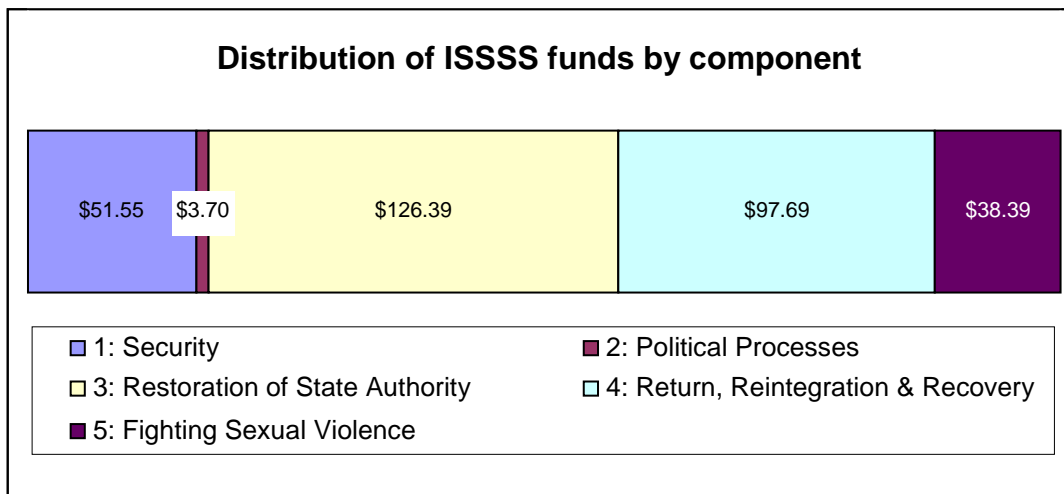
Source: International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy, Integrated Programme Framework, 2009–2012; Government of the DRC (2009) 'Programme de Stabilisation et de Reconstruction des Zones sortant des conflits armés (STAREC)'; STAREC Ordinance (No. 10/072, 30 October 2010).

The ISSSS

The cost of implementing the ISSSS from 2009-2012 was originally estimated at around \$800m.²⁰ By the end of 2011 international donors, notably the United States, Netherlands and the United Kingdom, had allocated around \$273m to the strategy,²¹ falling far short of the approximate funding requirement. The ISSSS is now entering a second phase of activities from 2012-2014, the cost of which is estimated at \$243m.²²

By March 2012 the total funding allocated to the ISSSS had increased to \$317.7m.²³ Figure 1 below illustrates the distribution of these funds by component; most have been allocated to the restoration of state authority and return, reintegration and recovery projects.

Figure 1: All ISSSS funding to date in US\$ millions. Source: ISSSS (2012) Quarterly Report, January–March.



To support the co-ordination of international efforts the ISSSS includes:²⁴

- A strategy document – the Integrated Programme Framework – laying out objectives and programmes to support STAREC. For 2012-2014

there is also a stabilisation priority plan based on priorities identified in provincial STAREC meetings.²⁵ It focuses on the restoration of state authority and return, reintegration and recovery components.

- A fund –the Stabilisation and Recovery Funding Facility (SRFF) – to provide a flexible mechanism for managing international stabilisation funds.
- A secretariat – the Stabilisation Support Unit (SSU) – established within the Mission’s Integrated Office and based in eastern DRC to co-ordinate and monitor stabilisation activities and manage the fund.

A range of international actors, including MONUSCO, implements the ISSSS. Those implementing activities under the first, second and third components are primarily MONUSCO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). The fourth return, reintegration and recovery component is primarily implemented by UNDP, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT). Some international and national NGOs have partnered with these UN agencies to carry out projects under the fourth component and from 2012-2014 more international NGOs will directly implement projects under this component.²⁶

Lastly, the sexual violence pillar is linked to the nationally and internationally endorsed Strategy on Combating Sexual and Gender-based Violence. Activities are co-ordinated by MONUSCO’s Sexual Violence Unit in co-operation with the Ministry of Gender. They are mainly implemented by UN agencies, mostly funded through the SRFF; as well as international NGOs funded bilaterally by the United States.²⁷ Activities under the sexual violence component are supposed to be integrated with activities under the other components.

STAREC

There are very few STAREC activities and the government has allocated only just over \$20m to the strategy.²⁸ This has been spent on projects to: rehabilitate roads; equip six vocational training centres; start to provide electricity in some towns; and support rice production.²⁹ In addition, the North Kivu government, with international support, has also established seven Permanent Local Reconciliation Committees (CLPCs) to support and resolve local conflicts around return and reintegration of refugees and IDPs.

STAREC’s current mandate was extended by presidential ordinance from the end of June 2011 for three years. At a national level STAREC consists of: a steering committee chaired by the prime minister to provide high-level backing and guidance for STAREC; a monitoring committee chaired by the Minister of the Interior and Security to provide strategic direction, ensure coherence with other activities and evaluate the progress of STAREC; and a technical secretariat under the Minister of Planning to co-ordinate the national strategy and mobilise resources.³⁰

At a provincial level joint technical committees (CTCs) are tasked with setting provincial STAREC priorities.³¹ Beneath the CTCs, technical sub-committees for each component of STAREC help to define priority actions that are then validated by the CTC. There are also provincial co-ordination structures to help co-ordinate and ensure the coherence of STAREC activities.

Beyond the twin stabilisation plans

Many national processes and expenditures fall outside STAREC. Security sector reform and decentralisation, for example, are national reforms that may be said to be essential for stability, but are not within the remit of STAREC. Likewise the majority of international money to DRC is not channelled through the ISSSS. Humanitarian assistance from 2008 to 2011 totalled approximately \$2.4bn, almost nine times more than the funds allocated to the ISSSS over a similar period.³² International development assistance in 2010 stood at more than \$1.5bn.³³ The 2011-2012 budget for the UN peacekeeping mission stands at almost \$1.5bn.³⁴ In addition, there is large-scale investment in DRC by non-traditional donors, most notably a multi-billion dollar minerals-for-infrastructure deal agreed with China in 2007. Thus while the aims of the twin stabilisation plans are ambitious and wide-ranging, their scale in DRC is relatively modest and, as such, they cannot alone be expected to bring stability.

LACK OF A SHARED VISION

Despite or because of these different plans there are significant differences of interpretation over what stabilisation in DRC means and how to achieve it. Government officials, multilateral and bilateral donors, MONUSCO, UN agencies, and international and national NGOs all have different understandings of stabilisation in the DRC.

The fact that the plans are similar but not the same, is part of the confusion. They both differ in geographical scope. The ISSSS primarily aims to concentrate projects along a number of strategic axes (roads and the areas around them). STAREC does not adopt this approach and covers a much broader geographical area (see Annexes 1 and 2 for maps of DRC).³⁵ ISSSS includes a political objective that involves (among other things) supporting the implementation of existing peace agreements; there is no such political objective in STAREC. Additionally, ISSSS does not include the delivery of humanitarian aid, whereas STAREC has a humanitarian component.

The lack of a coherent vision of stabilisation is evident within as well as between the two plans. Among those responsible for implementing the ISSSS, there is, for example, no clear agreement on whether the primary goal of stabilisation is to increase the security of the Congolese state or of its population.³⁶ Nor is there a common understanding of how the main objectives should be linked or whether – in particular, in the case of fighting sexual violence – they are all integral to achieving stability.

The international stabilisation strategy was originally based on a sequenced and counter-insurgency military logic of 'Clear, Hold, Build'.³⁷ MONUSCO and the Congolese army would secure priority axes (roads and the areas around them).³⁸ The rehabilitation of these roads and other state infrastructure such as police stations would follow, along with the deployment of police. In this improved security environment, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees would start to return and benefit from aid projects, providing social services and opportunities for economic recovery along the axes. Such improvements would ideally produce a knock-on effect in surrounding areas. UN peacekeepers would be able to hand responsibility for security to the police, and the army would be garrisoned.³⁹

However, many interviewees – including MONUSCO officials, donors and UN agencies – have emphasised and funded some aspects while attaching less importance to others and questioned the workability of this oversimplified framework as a whole. As an example, UN agencies charged with the delivery of the return, reintegration and recovery (RRR) component were sceptical about the military logic underpinning the plan, including the targeting of projects along pre-selected strategic axes and the linear approach where one component was supposed to follow another. One consequence of this is that some donors and UN officials support the entire stabilisation framework, while others unilaterally disregard aspects of it as unworkable, or use the framework and funding to pursue existing programmes under another name.

It is not always easy to distinguish between what is and what is not included under ISSSS and STAREC. There is, for example, often very little difference between ISSSS return, reintegration and recovery projects and other projects not included in the ISSSS but which have similar aims and activities such as supporting the delivery of local services. There is also no clear agreement on how ISSSS and STAREC link to other national and international activities outside their scope. The security component of the ISSSS has, for example, been poorly linked to national-level army reform initiatives.⁴⁰ This is, in part, due to a lack of co-ordination on army reform, but also because there is no common understanding of how the ISSSS relates to such reform. Some international stabilisation actors consider it an integral component of the ISSSS. Others do not, seeing the ISSSS as a more pragmatic approach to security in the context of a lack of progress on army reform.

This is symptomatic of the fact that for many within the UN mission – including at high levels- stabilisation is regarded as synonymous with the ISSSS and the work of the small number of stabilisation support unit officials in eastern DRC.⁴¹ Some MONUSCO officials interviewed saw stabilisation as a discrete set of programmes and did not think of themselves as part of or contributing to it.⁴² Several officials also noted that the addition of 'stabilisation' to the mission's mandate had resulted in almost no concrete change in the mission as a whole. This is because MONUSCO has not made progress in defining stabilisation more broadly than the ISSSS as an overarching framework, which includes and brings coherence to all the UN mission's different activities.

3 STABILISATION: THE PRACTICE AND THE PEOPLE

For large numbers of Congolese people in eastern DRC, the twin stabilisation strategies have delivered very limited results. They have not substantially improved security for people, or re-established the state to provide security and basic services. In almost 80 per cent of interviews undertaken for this report where the issue was discussed, respondents did not feel that their security was assured. In fact, many people feel increasingly insecure; Oxfam's 2011 protection assessment found that more than 50 per cent of women and 35 per cent of men interviewed felt less secure than in 2010.⁴³ Men and women are at risk and subject to different forms of violence. Men are more likely to be forced to join armed groups or transport baggage, while women are more vulnerable to extortion at checkpoints and abuse (including rape) when they travel to the forest for firewood, to the fields to cultivate or the market to sell their produce.⁴⁴ Gender-based violence is committed by a range of people including armed actors, state officials and also civilians. Indeed figures compiled by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), for example, show that, in the first nine months of 2011, civilians were responsible for a third of such violence in South Kivu and more than 70 per cent in Ituri district.⁴⁵

This section looks at what may be described as the three main aims of ISSSS and STAREC: improving security; re-establishing state authority; the return and reintegration of refugees and IDPs and socio-economic recovery. An examination of the sexual violence component and the strategy to combat it was outside the scope of this research. Success in reducing sexual violence is also dependent on the success of the other components, notably improvements in security and in impunity.

The twin stabilisation plans have, overall, achieved relatively little against these three objectives. Drawing on discussions with local communities, whose voices have been notably absent from debates on stabilisation, this chapter examines each aim in turn. Since most activities are implemented under the ISSSS and not STAREC the section focuses on these. It also looks at military operations against armed groups; although not explicitly included in the ISSSS and STAREC, UN stabilisation officials see joint military operations involving MONUSCO and the FARDC as the mission's main contribution to the ISSSS's security component.⁴⁶ In addition, the chapter discusses the relationship between return, reintegration and recovery activities and other aid projects, given the similarities between these. A discussion of the political component of the ISSSS is included in the section on security.

OBJECTIVE 1. IMPROVING SECURITY

Eastern DRC has long been unstable, but security is now at its worst for several years. Communities told of 'catastrophic' fighting in 2011 resulting from security gaps left when the army pulled out of many areas for restructuring; insecurity spiked again following contested election results.⁴⁷ Abuses are not limited to armed groups and rebels, but are also committed by state actors and civilians. State actors (primarily the army and police) were responsible for more than half of all protection abuses recorded in the Kivus in 2011.⁴⁸

Since April 2012, insecurity has risen dramatically following the army mutiny. Some previously stable areas have once again become unstable. Civilians have borne the brunt of violence; extortion, forced labour, forced recruitment and massacres are widespread. Children have been forcibly recruited into armed groups, including to bolster the army rebellion.⁴⁹ There have been numerous massacres; MONUSCO reported that 98 civilians in 11 villages in North Kivu were killed between 9 and 25 May.⁵⁰ Many observers note that inter-community tensions are on the rise; this can be seen in brutal and ethnically based reprisal attacks on civilians by the anti-Rwandophone Raia Mutomboki groups on the one hand, and the Rwandan FDLR on the other.

Insecurity in eastern DRC has deep roots in the country and in the region, which the stabilisation plans do not claim to tackle in their totality. There have been no specific STAREC programmes to tackle insecurity and, as its own reports acknowledge, the ISSSS plays a 'limited role' under its security component.⁵¹

Limited impact of stabilisation plans on security

Continued existence of armed groups

To date, there has been no successful strategy to deal with the problem of armed groups as demonstrated by their proliferation across eastern DRC. The ISSSS was originally based on the analysis that there existed an opportunity and the appropriate political frameworks (the Nairobi Communiqués, the Goma Accords and 23 March Agreements) to consolidate peace.⁵² However, this has not been the case. The implementation of these agreements remains incomplete and many signatories feel left out of the process.⁵³ As this has happened and as the UN has not been included by the government in important negotiations, the political component of the ISSSS to support the implementation of these peace agreements has stagnated.⁵⁴ The political component has received only around one per cent of total funds allocated to the ISSSS.

In addition, efforts to disarm, demobilise and reintegrate (DDR) domestic armed groups were suspended in 2011 at the request of the Ministry of Defence, causing an ISSSS DDR programme for 4,000 combatants to be postponed.⁵⁵ While there are understandable concerns that DDR programmes may create incentives for armed groups hoping to benefit from them, without a viable alternative, the only option for disarmament is currently a forced one.

Military operations are a principal part of efforts to deal with armed groups (particularly the FDLR), both by the government and by MONUSCO, through its support to joint operations with the Congolese army. Operations have weakened some groups, but have failed to defeat them decisively and have also caused considerable civilian suffering.⁵⁶ They have pushed armed groups into more remote areas where a state presence is almost non-existent. These areas become a sanctuary for armed groups hiding from the FARDC, which has difficulty in penetrating them and maintaining their presence because of weak logistical capacity.⁵⁷ People here suffer doubly from renewed conflict, which may force them to flee their homes, and from limited access to basic services. Several interviewees suggested that military operations had increased local tensions, as armed groups that had been cohabiting with the population turned on them when threatened with attack by the FARDC.⁵⁸

Box 2: Operation Rwenzori – no lessons learned

In June 2010, the FARDC launched Operation Rwenzori against the ADF/NALU (Allied Democratic Forces-National Army for the Liberation of Uganda), a Ugandan rebel group active in the northern part of North Kivu. These operations caused considerable displacement; in July 2010, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) reported that 90,000 people had been displaced in the affected areas.⁵⁹

Intended to last only three months, these operations are ongoing. Despite this, the ADF/NALU remains active in the area, attacking and killing civilians trying to get to their fields, and continuing to attack the army, even in population centres like Beni town.⁶⁰ During fieldwork for this report, some of those who were originally displaced described how – their houses destroyed and without access to their fields – their lives were worse now than in 2008, when the stabilisation agenda was beginning.

Despite this, and in addition to ongoing unilateral FARDC operations, the FARDC and MONUSCO launched joint operations in North and South Kivu in early 2012 to clear areas of armed groups and then to maintain state control in those areas. However, the FARDC has historically had difficulty in holding captured ground. This proved to be the case again in 2012 during Operation Amani Kamilifu in South Kivu, where, even with MONUSCO support, the FARDC was not able to hold areas due to a lack of logistical capacity. This left security vacuums that were filled by armed groups.⁶¹ Following the army mutiny, joint military operations were suspended, the FARDC focused its resources on fighting the rebellion, and armed groups reclaimed large areas of territory. The success of military approaches to deal with armed groups has been limited. However, at the time of writing, yet another round of joint military operations is being planned.

Mixed performance and perceptions of the army

Intrinsic to stability in eastern DRC is the ability of the army to ensure security. However, the FARDC is not a cohesive force. Some battalions have been well trained by foreign armies, others have not. Some former rebel groups integrated into the army retain their former command

structures and identities and refuse to deploy their troops outside the Kivus. The recent wave of desertions across the Kivus illustrates the fragility of this integration process. The army is not uniformly able to protect the population and is frequently abusive. This has not been helped by the un-vetted integration into the army of militia fighters, including known human rights abusers. In addition, soldiers are ill-paid, and their social and physical well-being, and that of their families, is very inadequately provided for.

The effect of the army's heterogeneous nature is that its ability to provide security and its legitimacy in the eyes of the population varies widely in different areas. Levels of confidence in the FARDC are localised and depend on a range of factors. These include the presence of armed groups, the training and behaviour of the deployed unit and its commander, the impact it has on levels of security and people's ability to make a living, and the group's composition in terms of ethnicity and perceived or actual allegiances.⁶²

In areas where abuse by armed groups is perceived as relatively worse than by the army, people often appreciate the army's protective role. For example, displaced families from Shabunda, in South Kivu, stressed that they wanted the army to retake positions near where they lived, so that they could return home. However, in a relatively more stable village in Mwenga territory, South Kivu, several people – looking to the longer term – said that they wanted FARDC forces to leave as soon as armed groups no longer posed a threat. According to them, the existence of these groups allows the army to justify its presence, which itself often comes with many abuses.

In parts of the Kivus, where the FARDC is dominated by certain former rebel groups, some community members feel disadvantaged and victimised. This is especially so where FARDC soldiers deployed in the area have previously committed human rights violations there. Sometimes there are also underlying identity-driven tensions. For example, in parts of South Kivu that have been affected by the actions of specific armed groups, several people interviewed said they felt less secure when the local FARDC hierarchy was from the same ethnic group.⁶³ This was even the case, one local representative of civil society admitted, when in objective terms the security situation had actually improved.⁶⁴

These local perceptions of the army are important, because where the army has limited legitimacy as a security provider in the eyes of part or all of the population, people may turn to armed groups as the best guarantors of their security and interests. For example, one educated trader in South Kivu said that in the absence of an adequate state-led solution to the FDLR, it made most sense to support the Raia Mutomboki armed group, which he felt constituted a local solution.⁶⁵

Feelings of mistrust of the army and exclusion from the state provision of security can take on an ethnic dimension and can increase the inter-community tensions and reinforce prejudices and racism between different groups. These tensions are one of the drivers of the DRC's many conflicts. This has happened in part of Masisi, North Kivu, where

tensions over land and identity increased as some communities accused the FARDC of pursuing a partisan agenda.⁶⁶ The UN Group of Experts also notes a case in South Kivu where support for local Mai Mai groups increased with the news of the forthcoming deployment of soldiers led by officers from certain ethnic groups.⁶⁷ As one local government official put it, stability needs to entail 'security for everyone', not just a part of the population.⁶⁸

The ISSSS has not addressed the issues of mixed and overall inadequate army performance and its sometimes negative interaction with communities and inter-community tensions. It has included some initiatives to improve army effectiveness through building garrisons and supporting Prosecution Support Cells to improve FARDC discipline and reduce impunity, but these have had extremely limited impact on the overall performance of the army. This requires much broader holistic reform that takes seriously local identity issues and perceptions of security.

OBJECTIVE 2. RESTORING STATE AUTHORITY

Both the ISSSS and STAREC include aims to restore and strengthen state authority. In many ways, this goes hand in hand with the security objective; where communities are isolated and there is no rule of law, they are more likely to experience and are more vulnerable to insecurity. There is a marked absence of state authority in many parts of eastern DRC. Communities repeatedly express the importance of strong and accountable state institutions, including justice. For example, although the police themselves commit abuses, people may equally recognise their importance as a state institution.

At the same time, people lack confidence in the state and, in many places, are more likely to see it as abusive rather than as a provider of services. As an example, people interviewed said that, if possible, they try to avoid taking a problem to the police and judicial authorities because they do not have confidence in the procedures, or see them as primarily extortive. In areas where the police are present, but judicial authorities are not, the police may judge criminal cases themselves, benefiting from any fines they levy.⁶⁹ Other state officials, including customary authorities and functionaries of the National Intelligence Agency (ANR), also abuse their power.⁷⁰

Focusing on infrastructure rather than delivery

Both STAREC and ISSSS aim to improve state authority in the areas of policing, justice, and civil administration, and to improve road access.⁷¹ Internationally supported stabilisation efforts have primarily involved building infrastructure (e.g. police stations, prisons and courts) and training police and other state officials along the six priority roads. To date, this includes more than 600km of rehabilitated road,⁷² 81 police

buildings, more than 900 trained police, and almost 200 trained administrative officials.⁷³

While the rehabilitation of roads can improve trade, market access, and security for some communities, people have not seen significant improvements in access to justice, holding perpetrators to account, and improving the delivery of state services.⁷⁴ The ISSSS has focused much less on governance than on infrastructure. However, restoring confidence in the state at a local level is a time-consuming process that must involve a strong governance element. One NGO governance specialist explained: 'We shouldn't just assume that reinforcing the state automatically creates stability; rather, that improving governance is a long-term, negotiated process between people and their state.'⁷⁵

In addition, construction projects funded by the international plans have not been matched with national investment in service delivery. While international stabilisation actors have paid for many new buildings, the government has been slow to deploy officials to them and to provide for the salaries and functioning costs of officials already in place. According to the most recent available information from mid 2011, 55 per cent of police deployed along the priority roads in the Kivus were not formally on the government payroll; nor were more than 60 per cent of civil servants along the priority roads in the Kivus and in Ituri district.⁷⁶ In some cases, the government has not provided the police with fuel for their vehicles.⁷⁷ One police officer told us he had received a new computer, but could rarely use it because he had no fuel for the generator to power it.⁷⁸

There are also areas where the police have been deployed but other personnel have not. As of June 2012, only 26 of the 298 judicial and penal officials supposed to be working along the ISSSS's priority axes were in place.⁸⁰ Five peace tribunals had been built under the ISSSS, but no magistrates had been deployed, either because judicial personnel have not been assigned or because they do not want to live in insecure or remote areas. Despite some successes, the maintenance of rehabilitated roads has also proved difficult, as international actors have tried to hand over responsibility to the relevant state institutions.⁸¹

Without adequate and well-paid staff and without improved governance, it is unlikely that infrastructure will increase confidence in the state. One community leader we spoke to warned that these buildings might reinforce the corruption of already corrupt state structures. The positioning of some buildings has also ignored decentralisation plans, thereby missing an opportunity to reinforce the state at its most local level and potentially undermining the ability of decentralised authorities to establish their legitimacy. In some cases, buildings have been built in towns and villages along ISSSS's priority roads, following the strategic logic behind the plan, instead of being built in the actual local administrative capitals.⁸² Interviewees suggested that this had sometimes created local tensions and shifted power dynamics between the towns and villages that had benefited and the administrative capitals, which, under decentralisation plans, will be responsible for local government.⁸³

'Even if the administration worked under trees [and had no buildings] but we heard the roads were working, that there was security and that the army and teachers were paid, we would be happy.'

Headteacher in Ituri district⁷⁹

Understanding local power and the rule of law

There are few systemic constraints to prevent those with power exploiting those without, particularly when people do not know the law and their rights. A number of factors (including wealth, ethnicity and gender) may determine power. Several communities reported that wealthier people were more likely to go to the police to resolve problems – such as community disputes over money owed – as the police and judiciary commonly favoured those wealthy enough to pay.

Almost all interviewees had more confidence in resolving their problems through local/traditional mediation mechanisms (including traditional authorities and civil society-supported structures such as local peace committees and the Church) than through the police and justice institutions. People talked about the potential for subsequent conflict if one villager were to take another to court, and reporting someone to the police or involving them in a judicial procedure was seen more as an act of vengeance than anything else.

Box 3: Establishing the rule of law in Niangara

In Niangara town, in Haut Uélé district of Orientale province, customary mechanisms to deal with crimes exist alongside formal state structures. People have confidence in the customary mechanisms, but in some instances they may offer little redress to the individual victims (for example, in cases of sexual violence where a woman may be pressured into marrying her attacker).

Sensitisation to the rule of law means that the police increasingly deal with criminal cases such as sexual violence. In these cases, three policemen are required to transfer the accused 147km on foot to Isiro town, because there are no courts in Niangara. This reduces the number of policemen in Niangara by 20 per cent for the eight days it takes to travel to Isiro and back. This journey is made on foot due to lack of transport and poor roads.

From 2012, the ISSSS plans to extend its activities to Haut Uélé and, depending on funding, build a court in Niangara. In principle, this is much needed, but previous ISSSS experience suggests that magistrates are unlikely to be deployed. In such situations, what is the best use of money? Should it be spent on buildings that may not be occupied, on mobile courts that come to the community from time to time, or on supporting customary mechanisms in which the community has confidence, but which may offer an unfair deal to victims? The answer is not likely to lie exclusively in one or other of the options, and the most appropriate action may vary according to each area.

Stabilisation efforts in the DRC have not fully taken these local dynamics into account. In focusing on reinforcing police and judicial institutions in which local communities may have limited confidence, there is a risk of reinforcing pernicious and unequal local power dynamics. This is especially so where only parts of the state are reinforced; for example, where the police are in place, but judicial officials are not. There has also been no systematic attempt to strengthen local structures and mechanisms and institutionalise their relationship with state structures,

when these local structures are perceived as more legitimate than state institutions. There has been limited monitoring of the impact of such interventions on civilians and on local dynamics. MONUSCO's joint monitoring teams (JMTs) – composed of civilians and police – are an exception, and have monitored the deployment of police and other authorities under stabilisation. However, lack of funds means that, of the original five JMTs and 12 civilian observers, there is currently only one civilian observer and barely one JMT, which only covers parts of North Kivu.⁸⁴

OBJECTIVE 3. SUPPORTING RETURN, REINTEGRATION AND RECOVERY

The third main objective of the stabilisation strategies covers a broad mix of socio-economic goals, with huge needs and challenges to be met. It aims to provide a durable solution for Congolese refugees and IDPs and stimulate the socio-economic recovery of communities in eastern DRC more generally. Activities under this objective in the ISSSS are also intended to serve as a bridge between short-term emergency relief and longer-term development assistance.⁸⁵ They have involved building and equipping health centres and schools, training staff, supporting local conflict resolution and development committees and support to livelihoods. With such a broad remit and considerable overlap with the plethora of other aid and peacebuilding initiatives that are not funded under the ISSSS and STAREC plans, it is hard to consider all the different elements of this objective. This section therefore concentrates on two central issues: the impact of the stabilisation plans in ensuring RRR in a context of continued insecurity and poor governance; and how given the context of a chronic crisis RRR activities should best be delivered and co-ordinated with other types of aid.

Essential for stability, but not achieved

Return, reintegration and recovery is crucial for people's longer-term security in eastern DRC as well as for political stability, since the return of refugees and IDPs is one of the provisions of the 23 March Agreements of 2009 between the DRC government and the CNDP.⁸⁶ As well as being essential for stability, return, reintegration and recovery (RRR) of IDPs and refugees are conflictual issues in eastern DRC. They are potentially explosive and need to be carefully managed. Population movements are closely linked to sensitive issues of power, identity (who is Congolese and who is not), and ownership of land, which lie at the heart of the conflicts in eastern DRC. Indeed, since 2009, thousands of people have crossed from Rwanda into the DRC. These population movements have the potential to cause new problems or fuel existing conflicts, especially as a lack of clear information about them creates opportunities for powerful actors on all sides to exploit and manipulate people's fears for their own purposes.⁸⁷

The stabilisation plans have not solved the problems of displacement and have not made significant progress on return, reintegration and recovery. At the beginning of 2012, there were still almost 500,000 registered Congolese refugees living abroad, including 55,000 in Rwanda.⁸⁸ By mid-May a further 38,000 people had sought refuge in Rwanda and Uganda following the recent rebellion.⁸⁹ The number of IDPs is increasing; in South Kivu, numbers rose by 35 per cent from 635,000 to 856,000 between January and March 2012.⁹⁰

Inter-community tensions around return of IDPs and refugees and other issues remain high. Access to basic services and economic recovery is limited. Extortion and informal taxes levied by state and non-state actors at barriers on roads reduce the profit people are able to make from selling their goods at market. In one community, leaders noted that as the security situation had improved, officials representing state services started to return; they all levy taxes, making it difficult for people to increase their income.⁹¹

There is also the issue that not all internally displaced people want to return home. Many would prefer a durable solution, involving either local integration in the areas they have been displaced to or resettlement elsewhere in the country. Recent research by the Norwegian Refugee Council in four camps in Masisi territory found that almost 35 per cent of internally displaced people surveyed preferred these options. These are not supported under the international stabilisation strategy, which focuses solely on return.⁹²

Impact of stabilisation plans

While the stabilisation plans have proven unable to promote sustainable voluntary return in eastern DRC, individual projects under the ISSSS have registered some successes in local conflict resolution and service delivery for returnees. This has included local-level programmes to support agricultural and economic recovery and the restoration of basic social services. There has also been an increase under the ISSSS in local peacebuilding initiatives and conflict-sensitive programming. For example, UN-HABITAT is involved in mediation over land conflicts, in partnership with Congolese NGOs.

With regard to conflict-sensitivity, UNICEF's Programme of Expanded Assistance to Returnees (PEAR Plus) combines water and sanitation, health, education, and protection components and includes a strong focus on local conflict dynamics. UNICEF works with Search for Common Ground, which conducts a monthly conflict scan in PEAR Plus areas, so that those responsible for other elements of the project are made aware of and can try to resolve any community tensions or resentment their actions may have caused. However, there is still more to be done to ensure that aid programmes – both under the ISSSS and similar initiatives outside it – are conflict-sensitive. Box 4 below demonstrates the importance of conflict sensitivity.

Box 4: The importance of local analysis when increasing agricultural production

STAREC and the ISSSS both aim to increase agricultural productivity as part of stimulating economic recovery. Emergency interventions in areas judged too insecure for return, reintegration and recovery activities often pursue a similar aim in the short-term.⁹³ When based on strong local analysis, such projects have had a positive impact on people's livelihoods and even on their feelings of security.⁹⁴ However, if they are not underpinned by such analysis and do not take their cue from people's perceptions of risk and their strategies for coping in a volatile setting, they may do more harm than good.

For example, in some areas, people purposefully do not increase their agricultural production because doing so may expose them to greater risks of violence. They may also choose to grow low-value crops such as cassava because high-value crops are more likely to be raided. A women's forum in Fizi territory in South Kivu said that they under-produce to avoid going to their fields too often because of insecurity. They don't see the incentive for producing more than they need to survive, because travelling to market exposes them to potential violence and abuse.⁹⁵

'Before the war we cultivated a hectare, now we don't cultivate more than half. People ask themselves: "Why? There will be another war." If you produce more than you need, people come and steal it. Profit attracts insecurity, so we just produce enough to survive.'

Man in Fizi territory, South Kivu

The impact of RRR interventions is limited, in part due to their small scale when compared with the huge needs across eastern DRC. But more critically, widespread insecurity, poor governance and exploitation and abuse – both by state and non-state actors – stand in the way of success. For example, the UN Group of Experts reported that a man who took a grievance over stolen land to UN-HABITAT in North Kivu was tortured for doing so by a local militia leader.⁹⁶ In addition, there are concerns that lack of strong government backing and support at a provincial level will limit the success of a series of permanent local conciliation committees (CLPCs), set up by the state to manage the return of refugees and internally displaced people, and any conflicts arising at a local level. There should not be undue expectations of what local-level interventions can achieve without corresponding improvements in security and governance.

Delivering RRR projects in a chronic crisis

Given the continued insecurity, the absence of a functioning state in eastern DRC, and the (likely) possibility that these conditions will remain for several years, there are questions over how, when and where it is most effective to deliver RRR projects.

The volatility of the context means that hard-won gains can be quickly lost, areas can destabilise with little prior warning, and the nature of people's needs can change rapidly. For example, in the northern part of North Kivu in 2010, Operation Rwenzori destabilised an area that was previously stable and resulted in the temporary suspension of UN agency-led RRR projects there.

'We may live in an insecure area, but we still want to recover.'

Woman in Ituri District⁹⁷

The complexity of the situation also means that different types of needs commonly overlap in the same geographical areas, so that delivering

only one type of aid will not address the range of needs in that zone. In unstable areas, even when they are controlled by armed groups, people may express a desire for longer-term, non-emergency assistance. As a displaced person in Masisi put it in 2009, 'It is an emergency for you but not for us. This is our life.'⁹⁸ Box 5 below illustrates these points in relation to one area of Ituri district.

Box 5: Needs in southern Irumu, Ituri district

During Oxfam's visit to southern Irumu in October 2011, discussions with communities highlighted two points about their needs:

1. Different needs in the same area

- People living along the main road, despite some insecurity, had long-term development needs.⁹⁹
- People who had returned to the area relatively recently had greater need for support to re-establish their lives.¹⁰⁰
- Some people, displaced from more remote villages because of insecurity, live along the main road in small camps. Internally displaced people in these camps cannot access their fields, and face a deteriorating economic situation.¹⁰¹ The burden falls heavily on women, who are responsible for running and feeding the household under these extraordinarily hard conditions. These people require a long-term safety net to meet their most basic needs, until they have viable options to earn a living.
- Other displaced people live with host families rather than in camps. Along with these host families, they are likely to have different types and levels of needs from other groups, according to their means and livelihood options.

2. Long-term development needs despite some insecurity

Notably, despite insecurity in the area related to the presence of two militia groups, many people expressed a desire for longer-term, more durable assistance. As one woman said, 'Even if there isn't total security, we still live here and need support for sustainable livelihoods so we ourselves can work to meet our needs.'

In February 2012, the security situation in southern Irumu deteriorated when the army withdrew from the zone to participate in a restructuring process and militias seized control of several towns and villages along the main road. This insecurity increased emergency needs and the area is a priority for short-term humanitarian assistance in the second half of 2012. However, even under militia control, an assessment in March 2012 found that in Bukiringi, children were still attending school, health centres were still open, and markets and small trade continued to function.¹⁰²

Households may have emergency needs, but at the same time their longer-term needs remain.

The ISSSS originally envisaged that RRR activities would be focused along priority axes, building on gains made under the security and state authority components. However, as we have seen, the security and state authority pillars have not made significant progress. UNICEF, FAO and UNDP resisted the push for them to focus their RRR programmes along the pre-selected axes and in 2010 developed their own strategy for

delivering the RRR component.¹⁰³ It proposed that an analysis of needs and social problems and a participatory community approach should be among the guiding principles for these projects.¹⁰⁴ It also proposed that more stable zones should receive longer-term, more durable assistance, while unstable zones should receive short-term emergency assistance, provided by humanitarian organisations.

The UN agencies' strategy was an important move to ensure that RRR projects were rooted in an analysis of local dynamics, rather than delivered in pre-defined areas. However, the idea of allocating different types of assistance by geographical area does not match the local realities described above. The strategy is only an outline of general principles for programming and individual projects are based on context and conflict analysis. However, it underlines that there is not yet a clear understanding of the how, when and where of RRR programmes in the context of eastern DRC.

Co-ordinating RRR projects with humanitarian and development aid

The analysis above points to the need for an approach to aid in which it is common to give humanitarian, recovery, stabilisation (RRR) and development assistance in the same areas at the same time. It suggests that the volatility of the situation necessitates flexibility within programmes to scale up and scale down to respond to changing needs. To do this, a project could, over its lifetime, legitimately receive humanitarian, RRR and development funding to address different needs. This requires that stabilisation programmes to support RRR have to be well co-ordinated with other types of aid.

The scale and breadth of the broader aid context is huge. Humanitarian assistance from 2009 to 2011 totalled almost \$1.8bn, almost 20 times more than the money allocated to the RRR component of the ISSSS over a similar period.¹⁰⁵ Co-ordination between the humanitarian and development categories of this vast portfolio of aid, each with their distinct priorities and ways of working, is a long-recognised problem and not easy to solve.

With regard to ISSSS and STAREC, there are several barriers to improved co-ordination with other types of aid. First, there is no clear agreement of what the relationship between the aid components of ISSSS and STAREC and the broader aid effort should be. While both stabilisation strategies support recovery, ISSSS aims solely to follow on from and build on emergency projects funded under the Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP), while STAREC actually includes humanitarian action within its scope. Interviews with different stabilisation actors revealed different working understandings of how stabilisation, humanitarian relief and recovery should relate. For example, while a MONUSCO stabilisation official said that STAREC's humanitarian component did not include humanitarian action, a government stabilisation official said it did. While one UN agency official said that aid under stabilisation and early recovery were the same, another suggested they were different

depending on whether they took place in areas of government or armed group control; yet another said that early recovery was closer to short-term humanitarian relief, and stabilisation was closer to longer-term development.

Second, some of those NGOs implementing humanitarian programmes do not, on principle, want to be involved in stabilisation plans. While some NGOs do carry out stabilisation projects, others consider it would jeopardise their ability to operate. They are concerned that strong political association with the government and MONUSCO and their military operations could compromise their ability to negotiate access and deliver aid to people in areas where armed groups are present or in control. Given that involvement in stabilisation plans is a serious concern for some humanitarian aid actors, it will be difficult for RRR and some humanitarian activities to be effectively co-ordinated.

Third, the RRR component of stabilisation is not well co-ordinated with other transitional-type projects. Many NGOs carry out programmes that aim to link relief to development and do so outside the ISSSS and STAREC plans. The organisation and leadership of the government's STAREC sub-committees, tasked with defining priority 'humanitarian and social' and 'economic recovery' activities, has also been varied.¹⁰⁶ Additionally, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which provides support to the government on stabilisation and is mandated to provide leadership on early recovery, has reduced its field presence and capacity in eastern DRC. One possibility for improving co-ordination between all the different aid actors is the government co-ordination structures, set up in the Kivus under the so-called Provincial Edicts. However, it remains to be seen how effective these will be.

4 THREE REASONS WHY STABILISATION ISN'T DELIVERING

This paper does not claim to cover all of the complex mix of local, national and regional reasons behind the failure of stabilisation plans to achieve their objectives. However, it isolates three fundamental weaknesses at the heart of stabilisation efforts in the DRC.

INSUFFICIENT NATIONAL BACKING

National support for and ownership of the stabilisation frameworks is essential if they are to be successful. Yet the central government has given little backing to STAREC. The \$20m the government has allocated to STAREC is a minimal amount given the ambitions of the plan. And in 2011, the funds allocated for the functioning of STAREC were less than a quarter of those set aside for the upkeep of the Prime Minister's official residence.¹⁰⁷ The lack of sufficient backing is also demonstrated by the failure to deploy and provide for some officials in the new buildings, as described above. In addition, according to one MONUSCO official, none of the essential issues raised in meetings of STAREC's high level steering committee has been addressed following these meetings.¹⁰⁸

The lack of engagement with STAREC is symptomatic of a broader lack of progress on national reforms essential for stability and on establishing the democratic legitimacy of the government. The presidential and legislative elections, held in November 2011, have been widely contested, raising questions about the current government's national and international legitimacy.¹⁰⁹ Provincial assembly members and the provincial governors they elect are also now at the end of their five-year term, but provincial elections, previously scheduled for March 2012 are now due to be held in February 2013.¹¹⁰ Local elections, originally slated for 2005 but now scheduled for 2013, have also been repeatedly delayed, meaning the democratic legitimacy of local authorities has not been established.¹¹¹

Decentralisation

There has been limited headway made on decentralisation since 2006, despite its importance for longer-term stability by improving governance, democratic accountability and service provision.¹¹² Formally enshrined in the Constitution, decentralisation involves the transfer of some administrative powers and moneys from central to provincial and local levels. In so doing, decentralisation aims to increase the accountability between elected politicians and those they represent and consequently to improve governance.¹¹³ Decentralisation is also important for public service provision and development, since these are largely the

responsibility of the provincial and local governments.¹¹⁴ Indeed, as a UNDP report notes, lack of progress on decentralisation does not encourage ‘the participation and ownership of people in the management of their local communities: the only way open to improving their living conditions and for sustainable human development’.¹¹⁵

To date, the legal framework for decentralisation has not been fully developed, provinces do not retain 40 per cent of the revenues they collect (to which they are constitutionally entitled), and power remains centralised. According to many DRC analysts and others (including the Ministry of Decentralisation), one of the explanations for this has been the lack of political will to move the process forward.¹¹⁶

Security sector reform

A professional, well-paid, cohesive army and police force and functioning judicial system are essential if the Congolese state is to protect and assure stability for its people. But there has been little progress on security sector reform since 2006. The impact of the absence of all of these is clearly visible on the lives of civilians suffering from the insecurity in eastern DRC.

Analysts broadly agree that limited progress is largely due to a lack of government will and also capacity.¹¹⁷ For example, despite widespread impunity and a weak justice system, less than 0.1 per cent of the state budget in 2011 was allocated to the justice ministry.¹¹⁸ There is also ‘no comprehensive vision... for defense and security policies’, and changes in the structure of the army (such as the regimentation process in 2011) are not in line with military planning.¹¹⁹ The army remains ill-paid and ill-disciplined. In addition, the government, wary of previous strong international involvement in the DRC, has resisted greater donor co-ordination on security sector reform, meaning that initiatives have overall been piecemeal.

INSUFFICIENT INTERNATIONAL BACKING

Overall, international backing for stabilisation has been weak. This is partly shown by the difference between the total funds allocated to the ISSSS and the estimated cost of implementing it, as described above. Of the funds allocated, less than 5 per cent have gone through the Stabilisation and Recovery Funding Facility (SRFF), which was set up to provide greater coherence to international stabilisation interventions.¹²⁰ Channelling funds through the SRFF also allows the provincial and central governments to be more involved in deciding how funds are spent.¹²¹ However, donors have instead preferred to allocate most funding bilaterally and according to their own priorities, meaning some projects are only nominally aligned with the ISSSS. This reflects the scepticism of some donors about the level of government commitment to stabilisation and the viability of the strategy as a whole. It also

demonstrates that some donors do not see the value of or have confidence in the SRFF as a common fund; some of those that have contributed money, for example, have been frustrated by the slow procedures and delays in the disbursement of funds.¹²²

The ISSSS has also not been adequately backed by and linked to robust, high-level MONUSCO and donor efforts to ensure national progress on security and governance reforms and to ensure that relevant government ministries are deploying, paying and providing for staff in the new buildings.¹²³ In this context, the ISSSS has primarily involved technical projects that have moved forward without the necessary political progress to ensure their success.

The weak international backing for the ISSSS in particular reflects the absence of international co-ordination and collective political will on the DRC more generally. The co-ordination and influence of the international community has decreased since attention shifted from the DRC following the 2006 elections, as donors pursue their divergent political and economic interests in the country, and as the increase in importance of non-traditional donors such as China has seen the relative influence of Western powers decline.¹²⁴

The lack of co-ordination and collective will is evident in the international approach to security sector reform, particularly army reform, which has involved mainly piecemeal, bilateral projects that lack in overall coherence. For example, the Belgian, American, South African and Chinese governments have all trained rapid reaction troops, but it is not clear how, following their different trainings, these troops will work together and with others in a national Congolese army.

The absence of a strong unified international response to widely reported flaws in the 2011 national elections also underlines the lack of collective political will on strengthening democracy and commitment to longer-term stability. Having funded the elections, Western donors were, to varying degrees, critical of electoral irregularities, but did not take a strong position and, in the absence of a better alternative, seemed to tacitly accept the results. Meanwhile, African governments, including South Africa, praised the conduct of the elections.¹²⁵

A NON-INCLUSIVE PROCESS

Provincial engagement – improvements

The success of ISSSS and STAREC has been hindered by the non-inclusive nature of their design in Kinshasa. Parts of the national government and large sections of the provincial governments were left out of the initial process, in the hope – according to one senior UN official – of moving it faster.¹²⁶ Provincial government officials were uninformed about the plan and did not feel included in it, perceiving in some cases that stabilisation was a national government and UN endeavour.¹²⁷ Even

UN staff at a provincial level and UN agencies felt that their perspectives and assessments of the local situation were not taken into account.¹²⁸

These non-inclusive origins did not help to move stabilisation faster, but checked its progress. They have contributed in part to the lack of shared purpose around the process, because a common understanding was not developed at the outset. Of equal importance, stakeholders, on whom the success of stabilisation partially depended, were left out of the process. Provincial officials, for example, have an important role in governance and service provision under decentralisation, making it essential that they are heavily involved in any stabilisation agenda. With regard to the national government, one donor representative observed that in originating in the Prime Minister's Office and at the top level of MONUC, other national government ministries were uninformed about programming. This was even the case when their active involvement was essential for success – for example, in deploying and providing for government officials.¹²⁹

Much has now been done to address these problems. Since 2010, provincial and district governments and a broader range of international actors have been involved together in STAREC's provincial-level joint technical committees to define priorities for a new phase of stabilisation. One provincial official in the Ministry of Planning noted how much more involved he had been in this phase.¹³⁰

Civil society and local engagement: still lacking

Civil society in the DRC encompasses a huge range of non-government institutions and associations. Most powerful and influential is the Catholic Church. It has the clout to stand up to the government, as it did following national elections in 2011. Along with churches of other denominations, the Catholic Church has an important role in providing services, running health centres, hospitals, schools and universities. There are countless development and human rights NGOs (associations set up to support third parties); and socio-economic associations (set up to promote their members' interests), many of these at the grassroots level. These include farmers' unions and women's associations. In addition, there is a multitude of networks and platforms of civil society organisations, including church and NGO networks and a formal civil society network, supposedly including all civil society actors in structures at local, provincial and national level.¹³¹

Despite their importance and proliferation in Congolese society, civil society organisations (CSOs) are barely mentioned in the ISSSS and STAREC strategies. CSOs have limited knowledge of the stabilisation plans and involvement in defining what stabilisation entails. For instance Congolese CSOs have in many cases not been involved in provincial joint technical committees to discuss priorities for the stabilisation plans.¹³³

The same is also true of many local government officials, traditional authorities, grassroots associations and local communities. While many individuals have received trainings or benefitted from projects, they have

'Why are you asking me what stabilisation means? It's your concept.'

Priest in Masisi territory, North Kivu¹³²

largely not been involved in defining a stabilisation strategy that would address their concerns and locally-relevant benchmarks against which to measure it. There has also not been an inclusive and broad local dialogue to identify local blockages to stability such as specific inter-community tensions and prejudices and to work together to find solutions to these problems.¹³⁴

The feeling of having been left out of defining and guiding the stabilisation plans was evident in several interviews conducted for this report. One local government chief in Ituri, for example, felt that stabilisation had been ‘parachuted in from Kinshasa’.¹³⁶ Another local administrator from South Kivu said that while they welcomed investment in stabilisation initiatives to restore the state in their area, they had not been consulted on the most appropriate project.¹³⁷ The head of one Congolese conflict resolution NGO said that stabilisation was a strategy thought up in an office, and was out of tune with everyday realities. He added that stabilisation had not done enough to listen to people’s concerns and priorities.¹³⁸

The lack of civil society, local government and community involvement in stabilisation plans and the lack of a broader, local discussion about what stability entails and how it should be measured is important. At a community level some civil society groups and local authorities have more legitimacy than provincial and national politicians, who may be regarded with mistrust.¹³⁹ As an example, in an analysis of peace initiatives conducted with civil society International Alert found that civil society initiatives involving local populations were generally seen as more successful than state-led initiatives like STAREC.¹⁴⁰

The perspectives and perceptions of local officials, grassroots associations and communities can also differ from those of provincial, national and international actors. The national government, for example, has over recent years advanced a narrative that ‘peace and security reign’ throughout the country and, in 2011, President Kabila called for the UN mission to reduce its focus on peacekeeping and increase its emphasis on economic development.¹⁴¹ Interviews conducted before the current spike in violence showed that at a provincial level this narrative was given less credence and that in many local areas it bore little relation to the lived reality and feelings of insecurity of many people, including government officials. This suggests that it is not enough to assume that priorities for stabilisation defined by national and provincial officials represent the priorities and concerns of local communities.

‘When a doctor treats an adult, he asks them what is wrong. When he treats a young child, he does not ask. We are not children.’

Local government official, Ituri district¹³⁵

5 THE WAY FORWARD

International ‘Congo fatigue’ is perhaps unsurprising in the face of the scale of the problems facing the DRC – and the lack of progress on the solutions. Wide-scale violence, displacement and killings are seen as the norm and barely register in international reporting and response. Without a robust, holistic and politically and financially backed vision for stabilisation that puts Congolese people at its centre, violence and poverty will continue. Eastern DRC will remain unstable and prone to spikes in insecurity.

Failure to make stabilisation work in eastern DRC is not an option. Donors must succeed and encourage the Congolese and regional governments to succeed, not because it is easy, but because the human and financial cost of failure is too high. There is no simple answer, but significant effort in the three areas below could help to transform the stabilisation programmes into something that offers real change for the DRC.

STRONGER SUPPORT FROM THE DRC GOVERNMENT

A prerequisite for lasting stability in the DRC has to be better engagement from the government in Kinshasa. A signal of renewed commitment needs to come from the highest levels; the Prime Minister and Minister for the Interior and Security should convene regular meetings of the STAREC steering and monitoring committees. These should ensure regular high-level communication between government, donors and MONUSCO on progress of these plans, and identify and address specific blockages. In this way, the government should take more of a leadership role in stabilisation, agreeing on and achieving concrete and achievable goals with MONUSCO and international donors.

The government also needs to invest more in its STAREC programme through, for example, guaranteeing the deployment, payment and functioning costs of officials in all new buildings. Allocating more money to STAREC would demonstrate government commitment to the plan; as ISSSS is doing, this money could fund priorities identified in the provincial-level joint technical committees.

Beyond STAREC, the government needs to explore a wider range of non-military solutions to armed groups, including providing an option for demobilisation other than a forced one. It must make real progress on security sector reform, ensuring, for example, that officials, soldiers and police are adequately paid and provided for. There also needs to be concrete progress on implementing decentralisation, as outlined in the Constitution. The government needs to commit to a realistic and fixed calendar for provincial and local elections, with necessary provisions to minimise the risk of conflict.

‘The war was resolved through politics; we want to know if politics is also going to help us consolidate peace.’

Deputy headteacher in Masisi territory¹⁴²

STRONGER AND MORE CO-ORDINATED INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

No substitute for high-level diplomatic engagement

To catalyse and complement national engagement, MONUSCO and international donors need to reinvigorate their political engagement in the DRC. Donors need to move on from ‘Congo fatigue’ or frustration at their inability to influence Kinshasa, and pull together constructively as an international community. This must involve traditional Western donors, as well as the Chinese government, African governments (including South Africa and Angola) and African organisations such as the African Union and Southern African Development Community.¹⁴⁴

Engagement with the state should be highly strategic. This means that as well as engaging at the highest levels, it should be based on the interests, capacity and willingness of different institutions and ministries at different levels. It should also be based on achieving both carefully identified and concrete changes which the state can make in the immediate term to ensure real improvements in people’s lives, and on ensuring progress on longer-term reforms.

To make progress on these longer-term reforms, international engagement must prioritise working with the government of the DRC and its neighbours to find non-military solutions to conflicts. Work with the Congolese government on comprehensive security sector reform must address issues of impunity, take account of local gender and identity dynamics, and not privilege particular groups at the risk of fuelling further conflict and worsening inter-community tensions.

Alongside this, international engagement should focus on the need to make progress on decentralisation and to hold credible provincial and local elections. If carefully managed to avoid conflict, these processes could establish closer links and increase accountability between elected officials and those they govern. None of these recommendations is new or easy, but they remain crucial.

ISSSS – Part of the solution, but not the whole solution

ISSSS, as it stands, is a programmatic framework that can provide a contribution to overall stability, but cannot alone bring stability. It must therefore be strongly connected to and backed by high-level MONUSCO engagement in Kinshasa with the government on STAREC and in seeking progress on national reforms. Otherwise, essentially technical ISSSS projects will continue to be out of sync with the political progress that must underpin them.

‘The political process is stalled. Unless you have some serious pressure from the top to solve the problem of armed groups in the Kivus, I don’t see what you can actually do.’

MONUSCO political affairs official¹⁴³

To improve the co-ordination of ISSSS with other initiatives, MONUSCO needs to articulate a clearer vision of a broader stabilisation agenda, of which ISSSS is only one part. This could be done in a high-level forum involving the Congolese government, donors, the UN Country Team, and representative civil society actors. The resulting vision should define how the different activities of the UN mission and international engagement more widely can contribute to stability in the DRC. It should recognise the tensions and synergies between stabilisation and humanitarian approaches and aim to bring greater coherence to international involvement in the DRC. It should also provide clear responsibilities for all actors and clear benchmarks for success that could eventually provide a basis for the withdrawal of the UN mission.

With regard to the RRR component specifically, aid actors should work together to define a framework for aid that responds to complex and overlapping emergency and structural needs in the same geographical areas. This would involve a multi-track approach to aid in which humanitarian, recovery and development projects and funding would need to be better co-ordinated and also provided at the same time. Defining such a framework should include the Congolese government, development and humanitarian donors and aid agencies and those funding and implementing the return, reintegration and recovery component. It would also require that the UN agencies revise their strategy for the RRR component, to take into account the need for different types of assistance in the same area.

ENGAGING WITH CIVIL SOCIETY, LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND LOCAL DYNAMICS

Strengthening civil society and increasing engagement with local authorities and dynamics is crucial for longer-term stability and increasing the involvement of these actors in stabilisation plans is essential for their success.

The breadth of civil society in the DRC can be daunting. It is fragmented, reflecting the divisions and tensions within society as a whole. Alongside brave and effective actors for social and political change, there are mercenary or negatively politicised groups that contribute to rather than resolve inter-community tensions. Donors therefore need to invest in strengthening civil society wisely and in the long term. Effective engagement with and support for Congolese civil society needs to take into account its diversity and divisions. Support should be based on an analysis of the positioning, background, activities and capacity (not solely financial) of civil society organisations and ideally build long-term relationships. It is important to take the time to understand which organisations have legitimacy and for whom, and to work with CSOs that represent different groups, since no one organisation will be seen as representative of all.

International financial and technical support to civil society should not focus too heavily on its formal co-ordination structures, as has happened in the past. The head of a Congolese research NGO, noting the politicisation of these structures in North Kivu, said that donors should seek out and support the 'silent forces of civil society' – NGOs and associations without a strong voice, but doing effective work.¹⁴⁵ Some information on such organisations already exists and should be used. The Eastern Congo Initiative, for example, has mapped and analysed a large number of community-based organisations, concluding that there are many with 'effective systems and controls in place to readily absorb funding and implement projects that meet important community needs'.¹⁴⁶ International Alert has also conducted a mapping of local peace NGOs in the east and the initiatives they undertake.¹⁴⁷

Much civil society strengthening work will and should remain outside ISSSS, but nonetheless be co-ordinated with the stabilisation plans. Within the ISSSS and STAREC plans, civil society actors could inform and contribute to their goals both providing a counter-balance to the state and helping to define and implement the plans.

As counter-balance to the state

Civil society organisations could be given a more formal role in the stabilisation plans to hold the state accountable at different levels for progress towards stability. At a local level, the efforts of active citizens – whether a prominent local figure or a grassroots association – to lobby state authorities, such as the army and police, can make small, but concrete, improvements to people's everyday lives. Community members report that such efforts can get people released following arbitrary arrests, and informal taxes reduced. Increasing people's awareness of the law can also make them less vulnerable to exploitation. In one village in North Kivu, representatives of the community have successfully gained a place on the local security committee – a move towards ensuring that people's security concerns are taken into account.

One advantage of such local governance initiatives is that they are flexible and adaptable to the volatile context that characterises eastern DRC. Community-level committees can change the issues on which they advocate to authorities, as they become more or less important. Even when state security forces lose control of an area, it can be possible to continue advocacy to the non-state armed groups that take over (see Box 6). This is not an ideal solution, but it recognises the reality of eastern DRC in a way that the linear logic behind the ISSSS does not.

'I saw the distance growing between the population and the authorities. Since people don't know their rights, the authorities suck the life out of them. The idea of creating a link with authorities and having a dialogue with them pleased me. I became a bridge to bring community concerns to the authorities and bring the authorities to listen.'

Oxfam protection committee member, Mwenga territory¹⁴⁸

Box 6: Active citizens and civil society

Active citizens and civil society can help to increase stability even in insecure areas where the state is not present. As a result of local advocacy by a protection committee, supported by Oxfam, armed fighting on market days in a village in Uvira territory has stopped. Previously, Mai Mai groups and the FDLR fought over food they had forcibly collected from the population, firing shots and sometimes injuring or even killing members of the community. Now, local authorities collect food on market days and divide it between the armed groups. This has reduced the level of violence experienced by the population, who say their lives have become easier and they feel more secure.

Civil society organisations also have a role to play in engaging with the state at the territorial, provincial and national levels.¹⁴⁹ There is a long way for civil society to go in improving its ability to influence the state. This is partly because of the complex and fragmentary nature of the power structures to be influenced, many of which are informal, and because of the tendency for political co-option and the political ambitions of many individuals in civil society.¹⁵⁰ Civil society actors recognise their own weaknesses in this area, but may not have clear proposals on how best to strengthen their role as a counter-balance to the state.¹⁵¹

There are some notable exceptions, however, whereby civil society actors have successfully advocated to the state at different levels. Congolese NGOs 'Appui-conseils aux projets et initiatives de développement endogène' (APIDE) and Ceprospan both support local protection committees. They have conducted successful advocacy by bringing community-level concerns raised by the committees to the attention of territorial authorities. Several factors have contributed to their success. They have strong ties to the population and other civil society actors, and good relationships with territorial administrators in the areas in which they work. They are respected by the authorities for their work prior to the influx of large-scale humanitarian funding.

Another example is the role of a civil society organisation, the Forum des Amis de la Terre (FAT), which influenced the development of reforms launched by the Ministry of Agriculture, known as the agricultural code. On their own initiative, FAT and other organisations became involved in the process of developing the code, joined the negotiations, held participatory workshops, and developed proposals for the inclusion of the interests of small farmers. They ensured that these proposals were taken on board through informal lobbying by a coalition of actors. Their success came from the broad-based community legitimacy they enjoyed, their ability to move continually between politicians and people to take the concerns of small farmers to the highest level, and the support they received from important Congolese politicians.¹⁵²

ISSSS and STAREC could learn from these examples. Stabilisation projects that reinforce the state at a local level through infrastructure and training should be accompanied by governance projects that support and empower representative CSOs or local committees to lobby authorities

and hold them accountable. These committees should adequately include women as well as men and representatives of minority groups (ethnic or otherwise) in the area where they are established. They should be supported by national and/or international NGOs to manage any risks to which they may be exposed and to provide some external legitimacy to exchanges between community members and authorities.¹⁵³

Larger Congolese NGOs supporting such committees could themselves receive financial and technical support (potentially from international NGOs) to take community concerns to higher levels, and then relay information back to communities. These NGOs could be given a specific role in reporting on ISSSS and STAREC activities to STAREC's joint technical committees at a provincial level. Meetings between the NGOs working in different provinces could be arranged to discuss concerns and share examples of successes and failures; this could potentially lead to coalition work and would ensure that differing local experiences contribute to evaluating ISSSS and STAREC. A smaller group from these NGOs could then report on the progress of stabilisation to STAREC's steering and monitoring committees in Kinshasa. For this to work, there would need to be more political backing behind the high-level stabilisation committees. Donors could encourage this by making further funding for stabilisation conditional on the concerns of communities, relayed by civil society actors, being adequately addressed.

International support for civil society to engage with the state should not be solely financial. Local-level committees, for example, can work well when their members are volunteers and provided with minimal financial support.¹⁵⁴ An important way in which international governments can support civil society activists to act as a counter-balance to the state is by ensuring that they have the necessary political space in which to work. This includes ensuring a free and independent media. This would mean vocally criticising arbitrary arrest or repression and supporting initiatives to prosecute officials in instances where they have abused their authority.¹⁵⁵

As stabilisation actors

Civil society organisations such as churches, NGOs and grass-roots associations have long had a role as a service provider in the DRC and they have played an important role in health care, education and extra-judicial conflict resolution. Focusing stabilisation strategies mainly on reinforcing the state does not fully capture the DRC's dynamics. For example, under its 'Strengthening state authority' pillar, ISSSS should give greater emphasis to civil society-supported mediation or conciliation mechanisms where these are perceived as more legitimate and locally relevant than state penal and judicial structures (though the state is necessary to provide institutional legitimacy to these decisions). It is important not to reinforce or create parallel governance structures, and stabilisation programmes could search for ways to institutionalise the relationship between state judicial and non-judicial structures.¹⁵⁶ To support this monitoring, donors could fund a mapping of extra-judicial conflict resolution structures, traditional mechanisms, and state institutions, and the ways in which these interact.

Civil society actors could be given a stronger role under the stabilisation plans in promoting constructive dialogue and debate, carrying out peacebuilding activities to address inter-community tensions, and generating evidence-based analysis to confront rumours, stereotypes and prejudices. This could involve conducting a wide programme of participatory research at a local level to produce analysis on the issues surrounding different conflicts. Such research can create space for dialogue and enable people to move beyond preconceived notions to propose appropriate solutions to the conflicts they face.¹⁵⁷ Given the regional dimensions of the DRC's conflicts, donors could also give more support to civil society initiatives to address cross-border conflicts, particularly as there are not many peace initiatives that do this.¹⁵⁸ UN stabilisation officials are currently redefining parts of the stabilisation agenda to increase the focus on local peacebuilding activities and peace processes. Donors should strongly support this.

Lastly, a broad range of civil society actors, local authorities, and communities should be given a greater role in defining priorities for stabilisation. People have ideas on what stabilisation should involve and how it should be measured. For example, one local chief in Ituri suggested that STAREC could help to bring neighbouring chiefs together to discuss the problems in the area and to identify possible solutions. To raise people's voices and create a more inclusive dialogue around stability, stabilisation plans could also selectively work with Congolese media outlets to support phone-in radio programmes to encourage live debate on a range of issues.¹⁶⁰ This would allow people to have their voices heard as part of a stabilisation process and help to ensure that stabilisation plans are relevant at the local level.

'You will know there is stability when you see members of different ethnic groups and communities circulating freely and without tension in the town.'

Head of a North Kivu women's association¹⁵⁹

By taking into account local dynamics and perceptions to 'do no harm'

In order to be relevant, responsive, effective and safe, all stabilisation efforts must be rooted in an analysis of local dynamics. To do this effectively means taking the time to develop an understanding of intra- and inter-community conflicts, who or what has legitimacy and who does not, the effect external projects might have on these dynamics, and different people's priorities and needs. In practical terms, this requires close community consultation (or better participation) in defining, carrying out and monitoring projects, both while they are being implemented and after they have ended. More effective local engagement also entails robust context and conflict analysis in deciding how to channel assistance. This could be done through the type of research suggested above. Projects could also increase their conflict-sensitivity by working with specialist NGOs, such as Search for Common Ground, along the lines of UNICEF's PEAR Plus programme.

Projects should take gender dynamics into account. Many women interviewed in the Kivus reported becoming more empowered during and after the war when they took on much greater, if not all economic responsibility for the household. Many men, on the other hand, found their economic power reduced – for instance, from periods where their

wives were able to access fields or trade, but they were not – and feel threatened as they find themselves unable to live up to their pre-war gender roles. Gender research and programme experience increasingly point to the need for an approach that includes both men and women. In the context of changed gender roles, projects that focus only on women's rights can be perceived as threatening to men and may lead to increased domestic violence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Efforts to stabilise eastern DRC should aim at a sustainable and broad-based situation of stability for the people, with the state as an active guarantor. Oxfam believes that national and international actors should invest politically and financially in a way forward that follows the three principles described in Chapter 5. These do not claim to address all of the drivers of instability in DRC, but we believe that they are necessary to achieve significant and sustainable improvements in stability. More specifically, we encourage action on the following recommendations.

Reframing 'stabilisation'

The government of the DRC, MONUSCO, and other international actors should:

Convene a high-level forum to define a shared strategic vision of stabilisation in the DRC. This forum should be informed and preceded by a period of consultation with government officials at all levels, as well as civil society organisations, local communities, and aid agencies in eastern Congo. The resulting shared vision should:

- Define clear benchmarks for success, with Congolese people at their centre; and define responsibilities for all actors and commitments (financial, technical and political) and benchmarks for progress to which funding should be tied;
- Ensure that the roles of different levels of the state have been clearly and realistically conceived;
- Ensure that all ISSSS interventions are co-ordinated with, and support, other reform processes;
- Elaborate and formally define a role for civil society groups in the stabilisation strategies, in consultation with a representative range of civil society organisations at different levels;
- Ensure that projects can be and are adapted to different local contexts.

The government of the DRC and the UNDP should:

- Provide stronger leadership and co-ordination on recovery programming. This should include working with humanitarian NGOs to

examine how current short-term projects could include or develop into recovery programmes, and to review completed recovery projects.

The Prime Minister and the Minister for the Interior and Security should:

- Convene regular meetings of the STAREC steering and monitoring committees respectively to ensure that there is regular communication and follow-up at a high level between the government, donors and MONUSCO on the progress of the plans.

MONUSCO and international donors should:

- Outline how the UN mission and the international community's activities outside the ISSSS contribute to a broader stabilisation agenda to bring greater coherence to different initiatives. This should be co-ordinated with or part of the high-level forum;
- Encourage the Stabilisation Support Unit (SSU) to play a facilitation role, regularly bringing together a range of actors to discuss the synergies and tensions of their different approaches;
- Task and sufficiently resource the SSU or another body to provide an improved co-ordination role, so that it maps not only ISSSS and STAREC projects, but all other relevant projects in eastern DRC. This mapping should include, for example, donors' security sector reform initiatives and NGO governance and recovery projects; it should not be branded as 'stabilisation' to encourage a broad range of NGOs to participate.

Reforms necessary for stabilisation

The government of the DRC should:

- Make concrete progress on decentralisation, as outlined in the Constitution, with necessary provisions to minimise the risk of conflict;
- Commit to a realistic and fixed calendar for provincial and local elections, with necessary provisions to minimise the risk of conflict;
- Make concrete progress on security sector reform, ensuring that: reform initiatives, such as the restructuring of the army in eastern DRC in 2011, do not have a detrimental effect on civilians by pulling soldiers out of key areas and leaving the population unprotected; the composition and deployment of army units is sensitive to local perceptions of ethnic identity; and the justice sector receives adequate attention through, for example, increasing its budget.

The government of the DRC and its international partners should:

- Develop a common strategic framework for all international support to the security sector, including defence, police, and justice. Civilian oversight and ownership – including civil society engagement and particular attention to consulting women – must be at the heart of the process and the outcomes of the reform project.

International donors and governments and MONUSCO should:

- Commit to providing adequate financial and technical support to provincial and local elections;
- With support from the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, provide credible and co-ordinated political pressure to ensure that progress is made on security sector reform (selecting a lead donor), decentralisation, and preparations to hold free and fair provincial and local elections.

Engaging with civil society, local authorities and local dynamics**The government of the DRC, international donors, MONUSCO and UN Agencies should:**

- Establish and fund a joint mechanism for monitoring the evolution of community behaviour towards, and perceptions of, stabilisation activities in eastern DRC. The UN and the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative are beginning to do something akin to this; this is a very positive development and every effort should be made to ensure that the results shape future strategic developments;
- Commit to using such information as a basis for determining future priorities and benchmarks and designing new programmes for stabilisation.

International donors should:

- Increase and tailor funding to reach different civil society organisations at national, provincial and local levels, to improve their ability to hold the state accountable at different levels. They should: conduct a risk analysis of the organisations they support; support a representative range of organisations (ensuring inclusion of women, and different ethnic and socio-economic groups); ensure that transparent financial mechanisms are in place; and give support through international NGOs as necessary;
- Fund, in a flexible and co-ordinated manner, stabilisation projects defined in the stabilisation priority plan for 2012-2014 as well as other longer-term recovery projects outside the stabilisation frameworks;
- Ensure that all projects funded are conflict-sensitive, respond to people's priorities and needs, and do not put them at greater risk; and ensure that projects address gender issues in an inclusive manner;
- Adopt a multi-track approach to aid, providing humanitarian, recovery and development funds simultaneously, and fund projects that address the causes as well as the consequences of conflict. This also entails not reducing levels of humanitarian aid prematurely.

NOTES

- ¹ International Rescue Committee (2008) 'Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo: An Ongoing Crisis', http://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/migrated/resources/2007/2006-7_congomortalitysurvey.pdf (last accessed 2 April 2012). This report estimates that 5.4 million excess deaths occurred between August 1998 and April 2007, a figure which has been contested, but which nonetheless illustrates the enormity of the war.
- ² Oxfam International (2011) "We are Entirely Exploitable": The Lack of Protection for Civilians in Eastern DRC', Oxfam International, <http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/we-are-entirely-exploitable-drc-civilians-protection> (last accessed 18 June 2012).
- ³ Calculations based on STAREC/ISSSS presentation, Kinshasa, 30 January 2012. This aggregate figure does not show considerable variation between provinces: in North Kivu 71 per cent of police officers deployed along the axes were formally on the government payroll, compared with none in South Kivu.
- ⁴ The budget allocation to STAREC was 250,000,000 Congolese francs compared to 1,104,455,866 Congolese francs for the functioning of the Prime Minister's official residence. Figures from 2011 Budget, www.ministredubudget.cd (last accessed 20 February 2012). See also P. Kambale (2010), "Tolérance Zéro" en quelques chiffres dans le budget 2011', *Le Potentiel*, December 30.
- ⁵ See International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy (ISSSS) (2012) Quarterly Report, January–March. Email correspondence with the STAREC Co-ordination staff member in Kinshasa, 27 June 2012, also confirms the total allocated to STAREC as \$20,184,326.
- ⁶ Oxfam interview, members of a local NGO, Sake, North Kivu, 14 October 2011.
- ⁷ For a short discussion of civil society in the DRC, see Chapter 5.
- ⁸ For the new electoral timetable see Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (2012), 'Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendante Communiqué de Presse, 6 June, http://www.ceni.gouv.cd/all_docs/Calendrier%20C3%A9lectorale%202012-2014.pdf (last accessed 27 June 2012). See also B. Shepherd (2011), 'Elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Local Matters', Chatham House.
- ⁹ UNOCHA (2012), 'Humanitarian Co-ordinator visits eastern DRC as humanitarian crisis deepens', Kinshasa, 14 May. The number of internally displaced people was more than 2 million as of 31 March.
- ¹⁰ See, for example, United Nations Security Council, Group of Experts Report, 2 December 2011, S/2011/738.
- ¹¹ See, for example, S. Autesserre (2010) *The Trouble with the Congo: Local Violence and the Failure of International Peacebuilding*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations, Cambridge University Press.
- ¹² See, for example, C. Huggins (2010) 'Land, Power and Identity: Roots of Violent Conflict in Eastern DRC', International Alert; and International Refugee Rights Initiative/Social Science Research Council (2010) 'Who Belongs Where? Conflict, Displacement, Land and Identity in North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo' Citizenship and Displacement in the Great Lakes, Working Paper No. 3.
- ¹³ Information in this paragraph comes from S. Bailey (2011) 'Humanitarian Action, Early Recovery and Stabilisation in the Democratic Republic of Congo', HPG (Humanitarian Policy Group) Working Paper, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), p. 5; and S. Collinson, S. Elhawary and R. Muggah (2010) 'States of Fragility: Stabilisation and its Implications for Humanitarian Action', HPG Working Paper, ODI.
- ¹⁴ Collinson *et al.*, 2010, p 3.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶ Oxfam interview, senior MONUSCO official, Kinshasa, 27 June 2011; see also E. Paddon and G. Lacaille (2011) 'Stabilising the Congo', Forced Migration Policy Briefing 8, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, December, p 12.
- ¹⁷ Oxfam interview, senior MONUSCO official, Kinshasa, 27 June 2011. In the second phase of stabilisation from 2012 to 2014 the ISSSS is 'expected to prepare either for an exit strategy or a transition from stabilisation to larger development programming by mid-2014' (see International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy, Stabilisation Priority Plan, 2012–14, p 9.)
- ¹⁸ See F. Thomas (2010) 'Return in the political context of North Kivu', *Forced Migration Review* 36, 50-1.
- ¹⁹ International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy (ISSSS), Integrated Programme Framework, 2009–2012, p 7.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*
- ²¹ ISSSS (2011) Quarterly Report, October-December.
- ²² International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy, Stabilisation Priority Plan, 2012–14, p 39.
- ²³ ISSSS (2012) Quarterly Report, January–March. The donors to the ISSSS in order of their financial contribution are: the United States, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the Peacebuilding Fund, Sweden, Belgium, Canada, Japan, Spain, the European Commission, Germany, Norway, and France.
- ²⁴ This information comes from the ISSSS, Integrated Programme Framework, 2009–2012, p 6.

- ²⁵ It is also based on a situation assessment of North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri co-ordinated by the SSU in 2011.
- ²⁶ International NGOs like Oxfam have been implementing partners for UN-agency led return, reintegration and recovery programmes. Care and the Norwegian Refugee Council are due to implement projects during the 2012-2014 phase of stabilisation. International Alert, a peacebuilding NGO, has also been significantly involved.
- ²⁷ ISSSS (2012) Quarterly Report, January–March, pp 53-4.
- ²⁸ See International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy (ISSSS) (2012) Quarterly Report, January–March. Email correspondence with the STAREC Co-ordination staff member in Kinshasa, 27 June 2012, also confirms the total allocated to STAREC as \$20,184,326.
- ²⁹ STAREC Co-ordination staff member in Kinshasa(2012), Correspondence with author, 26 January.
- ³⁰ See most recent STAREC Ordinance (No. 11/109, 29 October 2011).
- ³¹ *Ibid.*
- ³² Based on UN OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS) data, accessed 2 February 2012, and \$273.02m, the total amount allocated to ISSSS up to the end of 2011 according to the ISSSS Quarterly Report October–December 2011. Note that OCHA FTS provides an indication of humanitarian assistance, but there are funding flows, which it does not capture. Note also that the first project included under the ISSSS actually started in January 2006, but the next did not start until April 2008. Comparison over exactly the same timeframes is impossible, but this calculation is accurate enough to give an idea of the difference between humanitarian and stabilisation funding.
- ³³ Figure from Global Humanitarian Assistance (GHA), <http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/countryprofile/democratic-republic-of-congo> (last accessed 28 June 2012). This figure represents GHA's estimate of total aid minus humanitarian assistance. Note that some money allocated to the ISSSS and which is classified as Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) is captured in this figure; however, it still provides a general indication of the amount of the scale of development spending compared to the ISSSS.
- ³⁴ The approved budget of MONUSCO from July 2011 to June 2012 is \$1,489,390,500. 'UN Peace Keeping Fact Sheet', <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/resources/statistics/factsheet.shtml> (last accessed 6 February 2012).
- ³⁵ The original STAREC Ordinance (No. 09/051, 21 June 2009) did not include Sud-Ubangui District in Equateur Province; this district was added a year later in Ordinance (No. 10/072, 30 October 2010). The 2010 Ordinance also added a clause stating that STAREC could also be extended to other parts of the country, following a decision by STAREC's national level monitoring committee. This clause was retained and the geographical scope of STAREC was unchanged in the most recent Ordinance (No. 11/109, 29 October 2011).
- ³⁶ Former UN stabilisation official (2012), Correspondence with author, 17 February.
- ³⁷ Oxfam interview, UN stabilisation official, Goma 26 February 2011. An early presentation of the United Nations Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy also shows this logic. Source: MONUC (2008), 'Briefing. United Nations Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy for Eastern DRC', PowerPoint presentation on file with author.
- ³⁸ The original priority roads were chosen by the peacekeeping mission in Kinshasa on the basis of factors including their strategic and economic importance, whether they had been formerly controlled by armed groups, and the likelihood that stability on these roads would have a positive knock-on effect on the surrounding area. The 2012–2014 ISSSS priority plan envisages additional areas to be covered under ISSSS, including Walikale territory in North Kivu and the Uélé districts of Orientale province. Oxfam interviews, UN officials, Goma, May 2011; Kinshasa, June 2011, and ISSSS Integrated Programme Framework 2009–12.
- ³⁹ MONUC (2008) *op. cit.*
- ⁴⁰ Oxfam interview, UN stabilisation official, Goma, 20 August 2011; Oxfam interview, MONUSCO official, Kinshasa, November 2011.
- ⁴¹ UN stabilisation official (2012), Correspondence with author, 16 May.
- ⁴² This point came up in several interviews. For example: Oxfam interview, MONUSCO Civil Affairs Official, Goma, 4 June 2012; Oxfam interview, UNDP officials, Goma, 31 March 2012.
- ⁴³ Oxfam International (2011) 'We are Entirely Exploitable': The Lack of Protection for Civilians in Eastern DRC', Oxfam International, <http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/we-are-entirely-exploitable-drc-civilians-protection> (last accessed 18 June 2012).
- ⁴⁴ For example: Oxfam Interview with women's focus group, Masisi territory, North Kivu, 6 October 2011; Oxfam interview with mixed focus group, Mwenga territory, South Kivu, 9 November 2011. See also Oxfam (2010) 'Women and Children First: on the frontline of the war in the Kivus', Oxfam.
- ⁴⁵ United Nations Population Fund sexual and gender-based violence figures from 1 January 2011 to 30 September 2011, on file with author.
- ⁴⁶ Oxfam interview, UN stabilisation official, Goma, 29 February 2012.
- ⁴⁷ See, for example, ISSSS (2012) Quarterly Report, January–March, pp 12–13.
- ⁴⁸ Calculations based on UNHCR Protection Monitoring Figures for North and South Kivu for 2011.
- ⁴⁹ For one, but not the only, example of this see Human Rights Watch (2012) 'DR Congo: Ntaganda Recruits Children by Force', 15 May 2012, <http://www.hrw.org/print/news/2012/05/15/dr-congo-bosco-ntaganda-recruits-children-force> (last accessed 27 June 2012).
- ⁵⁰ N. Long (2012) 'UN Condemns Upsurge in "Blind Violence" in Eastern Congo', Voice of America, 30 May,

http://www.voanews.com/content/us_condemns_upsurge_massacres_violence_eastern_congo_drc/1145322.html
(last accessed 27 June 2012).

- ⁵¹ ISSSS (2012) Quarterly Report, January–March, p 14.
- ⁵² For example, the Nairobi Communiqué, which provided a basis for DRC-Rwandan co-operation to tackle the FDLR, and the 2008 Goma Accords and the 23 March peace agreements of 2009, which were signed between the government of the DRC and Congolese armed groups.
- ⁵³ Oxfam interview, MONUSCO political affairs official, Goma, 11 November 2011; International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy (2012) Quarterly Report, January–March, pp 20–21.
- ⁵⁴ Oxfam interview, MONUSCO political affairs official, Goma, 11 November 2011.
- ⁵⁵ ISSSS (2011) Quarterly Report, January–March, p 17.
- ⁵⁶ See, for an early example of this point, Oxfam (2009) 'Waking the Devil: The Impact of Forced Disarmament on Civilians in the Kivus', Oxfam International, July.
- ⁵⁷ Oxfam Interview with Judith Verweijen, Goma, 4 February 2012.
- ⁵⁸ Oxfam Interview, priest in Mwenga territory, South Kivu, 7 November 2011; Oxfam Interview with mixed focus group, Mwenga territory, South Kivu, 9 November 2011; Oxfam Interview with representative of NGO APIDE, Bukavu, South Kivu, 14 November 2011.
- ⁵⁹ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Monthly Humanitarian Report, North Kivu, July 2010.
- ⁶⁰ See, for example, 'Nord-Kivu : les rebelles ougandais ADF-NALU attaquent les FARDC à Beni', (2011) *Radio Okapi* 6 December, <http://radiookapi.net/actualite/2011/12/06/nord-kivu-les-rebelles-ougandais-adf-nalu-attaquent-les-fardc-beni/> (last accessed 18 June 2012).
- ⁶¹ ISSSS (2012) Quarterly Report, January–March, p 15.
- ⁶² Research, including the fieldwork for this report, Oxfam's protection programme experience, and Oxfam (2011) "We are Entirely Exploitable": The Lack of Protection for Civilians in Eastern DRC", Oxfam, 28 July 2011. The author is also grateful to Judith Verweijen for her comments on this section.
- ⁶³ For example: Oxfam interview, key informant focus group, village in Mwenga territory, South Kivu, 4 November 2011.
- ⁶⁴ Oxfam interview, civil society representative, Mwenga territory, South Kivu, 5 November 2011.
- ⁶⁵ Oxfam interview, trader, Mwenga territory, South Kivu, 6 November 2011.
- ⁶⁶ ISSSS (2012) Quarterly Report, January–March, pp 12–13. For more information on this, see United Nations Security Council, Group of Experts Report, 2 December 2011, S/2011/738.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp 76–77.
- ⁶⁸ Oxfam interview, local government official, Masisi territory, North Kivu, 6 October 2011.
- ⁶⁹ Oxfam interview, Richard Nunn, Oxfam protection programme manager, 20 September 2011.
- ⁷⁰ Oxfam (2011), 'Oxfam and Partners Protection Assessment Report', unpublished, 2011.
- ⁷¹ While rehabilitation of roads is included under the 'Restoration of state authority' component of ISSSS, STAREC includes it under its economic recovery pillar.
- ⁷² ISSSS (2011) Quarterly Report, October–December 2011.
- ⁷³ UN stabilisation official (2012), Correspondence with author, 20 June.
- ⁷⁴ Oxfam interviews in ISSSS priority areas in North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri, October–November 2011; Oxfam interview with UN stabilisation official, Goma, 22 November 2011; International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy (2012) Quarterly Report, January–March, p 24.
- ⁷⁵ Oxfam interview, NGO governance specialist on DRC, Bukavu, 3 August 2011.
- ⁷⁶ Calculations based on STAREC/ISSSS presentation, Kinshasa, 30 January 2012. Note that these aggregate figures do not show variation between provinces. For example, in North Kivu 71 per cent of police officers deployed along the axes were formally on the government payroll, compared with none in South Kivu.
- ⁷⁷ Oxfam interview, UN stabilisation official, 29 September 2011. This was also noted during the fieldwork and in Tamagnini et al. (2010), 'Strategic Review of the International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy for Eastern DR Congo, July.
- ⁷⁸ Oxfam interview, Major of Police Nationale Congolaise, Ituri district, 26 October 2011.
- ⁷⁹ Oxfam interview, headmaster, Irumu territory, Ituri District, 21 October 2011.
- ⁸⁰ All 26 were in North Kivu. STAREC/ISSSS presentation, Kinshasa, 30 January 2012; UN stabilisation official (2012), Correspondence with author, 14 June. Note that the estimated number of penal and judicial personnel required along the priority axes is currently under revision.

- ⁸¹ During the second phase of stabilisation, there is due to be greater emphasis on road maintenance.
- ⁸² This is no longer happening and all new buildings follow the logic of decentralisation. It does demonstrate, however, the degree to which local dynamics were initially ignored.
- ⁸³ Oxfam interview, local government officials, Masisi territory, Kivu, 15 October 2011; Ituri district, Orientale province, 25 October 2011. Oxfam interview, head of Congolese conflict resolution NGO, Bukavu, 15 November 2011. Oxfam interview with senior MONUSCO official, Goma, 5 May 2011.
- ⁸⁴ MONUSCO Joint Monitoring Team official (2012), Correspondence with author, 24 March.
- ⁸⁵ Stabilisation and Recovery Funding Facility for the Democratic Republic of Congo (2009) Terms of Reference, 5 November, updated 23 November 2011.
- ⁸⁶ For a copy of the agreement see http://www.iccwomen.org/publications/Peace_Agreement_between_the_Government_and_the_CNDP.pdf (last accessed 28 June 2012).
- ⁸⁷ See for example on this last point, Pole Institute (2010) 'Le retour des réfugiés congolais du Rwanda: a qui profite la peur?', Goma, March.
- ⁸⁸ The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees cites 476,693 refugees originating from the Democratic Republic of Congo as of January 2011 (UNHCR (2012) UNHCR Country Operations Profile – Democratic Republic of the Congo), <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e45c366.html#> (last accessed 2 April 2012); of which around 55,000 in Rwanda (UNHCR (2012) UNHCR Country Operations Profile – Rwanda), <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e45c576&submit=GO> (last accessed 2 April 2012).
- ⁸⁹ UN (2012) 'UN refugee chief alarmed at fresh displacement from DRC Congo clashes', UN, 16 May.
- ⁹⁰ UNOCHA (2012) *op. cit.*
- ⁹¹ Oxfam interview, community key informants, Mwenga territory, South Kivu, 4 November 2011.
- ⁹² Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and Norwegian Refugee Council (2012) 'Quel avenir pour les personnes déplacées vivant dans les camps de Masisi centre?', Norwegian Refugee Council.
- ⁹³ See 'Stratégie des Programmes Conjoint des Agences des Nations Unies. Quatrième Composante de la Stratégie International de Soutien à la Sécurité de l'Est de la RDC' (2010); and OCHA (2011) Plan d'Action Humanitaire: République Democratique du Congo 2012. New York/Geneva: United Nations.
- ⁹⁴ UNICEF official (2012), Correspondence with author, 9 April.
- ⁹⁵ Anecdotal evidence from discussions with households in parts of Masisi territory in 2009 corroborates this. Source: Oxfam interview, Solange Fontana, former Emergency Food Security and Livelihoods Advisor for Oxfam, 22 January 2012.
- ⁹⁶ United Nations Security Council (2011), Group of Experts Report, S/2011/738, 2 December, p 74.
- ⁹⁷ Oxfam interview, women's focus group, Irumu territory, Ituri District, 26 October 2011.
- ⁹⁸ Interview by Solange Fontana, Masisi territory 2009 as reported to the author, 5 August 2011.
- ⁹⁹ Oxfam interviews with people and local key informants living along the Bunia–Boga road, Irumu territory, Ituri district, 19 October 2011 and 26 October 2011
- ¹⁰⁰ Oxfam interview, returnees to Irumu territory, Ituri district, 20 October 2011.
- ¹⁰¹ Oxfam interviews, displaced women and president of displaced people, village in Irumu territory, Ituri district, 19 October 2011.
- ¹⁰² Joint Medair/Oxfam assessment to Irumu, unpublished, March 2012.
- ¹⁰³ UNICEF stabilisation official (2012), Correspondence with author, 9 April.
- ¹⁰⁴ 'Stratégie des Programmes Conjoint des Agences des Nations Unies. Quatrième Composante de la Stratégie International de Soutien à la Sécurité de l'Est de la RDC' (2010).
- ¹⁰⁵ Based on UN OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS) data for 2009–2011, accessed 2 February 2012, and \$273.02m, the total amount allocated to ISSSS up to the end of 2011 according to the ISSSS Quarterly Report (2011), October–December. Note that OCHA FTS provides an indication of humanitarian assistance, but there are funding flows, which it does not capture. Note also that the first project included under the ISSSS actually started in January 2006, but the next did not start until April 2008. Comparison over exactly the same timeframes is impossible, but this calculation is accurate enough to give an idea of the difference between humanitarian and stabilisation funding.
- ¹⁰⁶ The research did not address this issue in detail, but suggests that the performance of the sub-committees and joint technical committees varied by province. This may be due to differing levels of government leadership, differing levels of oversight by the stabilisation support unit and differing levels of willingness among MONUSCO and UN officials to engage in the process.
- ¹⁰⁷ See footnote 5 above.
- ¹⁰⁸ UN stabilisation official (2012), Correspondence with author, 22 June.

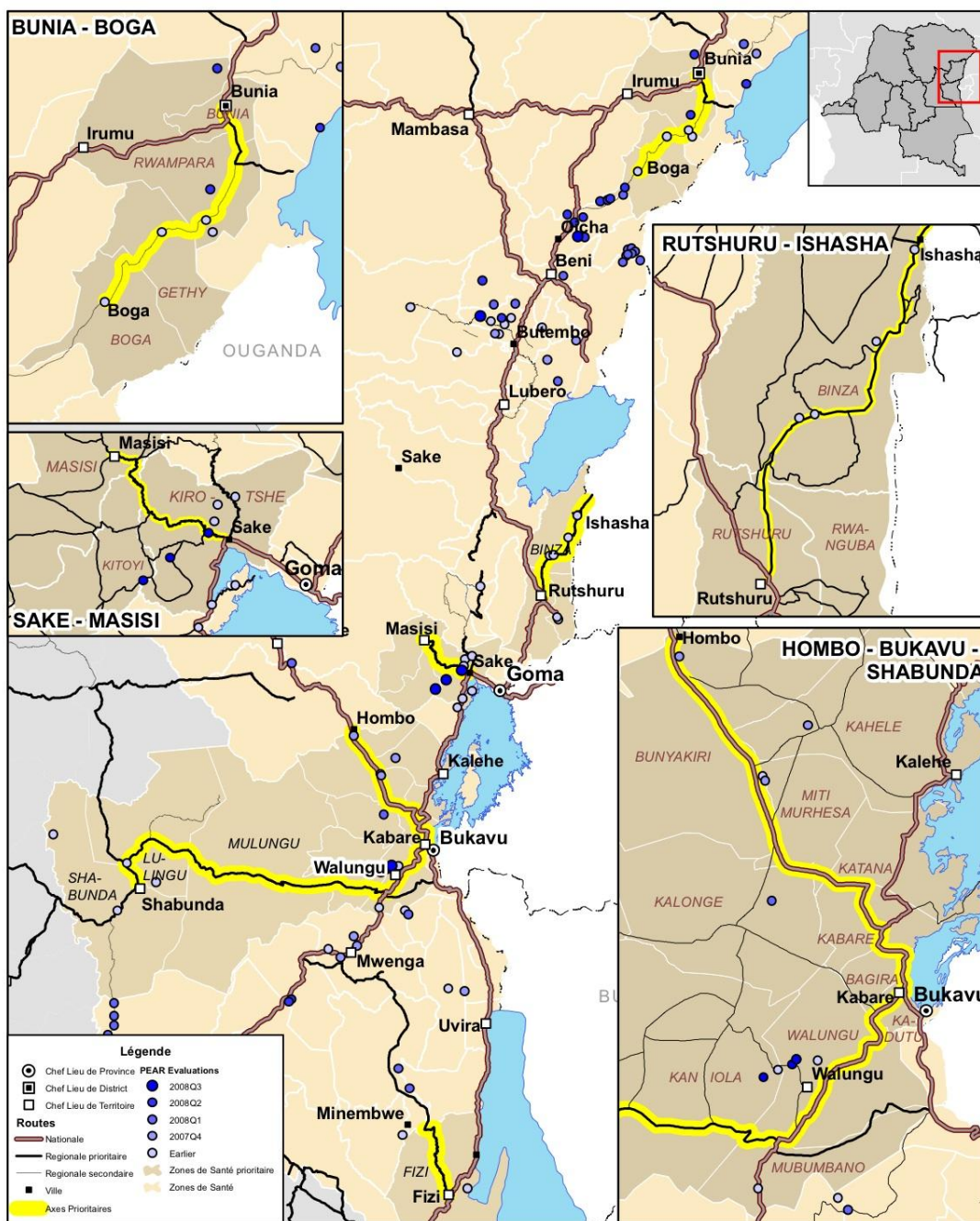
- ¹⁰⁹ Following the elections, the Catholic Church, Congolese civil society organisation 'Act for Transparent and Peaceful Elections' (AETA), the Carter Centre, and the European Union were among those who questioned the results and highlighted irregularities.
- ¹¹⁰ Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (2012), 'Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendante Communiqué de Presse, 6 June, http://www.ceni.gouv.cd/all_docs/Calendrier%20%C3%A9lectorale%202012-2014.pdf (last accessed 27 June 2012).. See also B. Shepherd (2011), 'Elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Local Matters', Chatham House.
- ¹¹¹ See also B. Shepherd (2011), 'Elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Local Matters', Chatham House.
- ¹¹² E. Paddon and G. Lacaille (2011) 'Stabilising the Congo', Forced Migration Policy Briefing 8, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, December; The International Crisis Group (2010) 'Congo: A Stalled Democratic Agenda', Africa Briefing No. 73, Nairobi/Brussels, 8 April.
- ¹¹³ See The International Crisis Group (2010) *op. cit.*
- ¹¹⁴ Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (2006), 'Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Congo', Article 204.
- ¹¹⁵ Translation from UNDP (2011) 'Rapport National Du Développement Humain 2010, "La décentralisation et la gouvernance démocratique face à l'impératif du développement humain", February.
- ¹¹⁶ See for example Paddon and Lacaille (2011) *op. cit.* See also Ministère de la Décentralisation et Aménagement du Territoire (2009) Cadre Stratégique de Mise en Oeuvre de la Décentralisation, July, p. 20.
- ¹¹⁷ Joint NGO report (2012), 'The Democratic Republic of Congo: Taking a stand on security sector reform', April; Oxfam America (2010) 'No Will, No Way: US-funded security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo'.
- ¹¹⁸ Joint NGO report (2012), 'The Democratic Republic of Congo: Taking a stand on security sector reform', April, p 9.
- ¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p 9.
- ¹²⁰ Calculation based on figures from ISSSS (2012) Quarterly Report, January–March. See also Stabilisation and Recovery Funding Facility for the Democratic Republic of Congo (2009) Terms of Reference, 5 November, updated 23 November 2011.
- ¹²¹ ISSSS, Stabilisation Priority Plan, 2012–14, p 13.
- ¹²² Oxfam interviews, international donor representatives, Goma, 11 August 2012.
- ¹²³ Oxfam interview, international donor representative, 7 December 2011; Oxfam interviews, UN stabilisation officials, Goma 22 November 2011 & 25 June 2012.
- ¹²⁴ See also Paddon and Lacaille (2011), p 21.
- ¹²⁵ See T. Vircoulon (2011) 'Les leçons du scrutin présidentiel', *Afrikarabia*, 29 December and J. Stearns (2012) 'Bleak choices for the path ahead in the Congo', *CongoSiasa*, 25 January, congosiasa.blogspot.com (last accessed 27 June 2012).
- ¹²⁶ Oxfam interview, MONUC (now MONUSCO) official, Goma, 5 May 2011.
- ¹²⁷ Oxfam interview, provincial Ministry of Planning official, 22 September 2011. Also 'Democratic Republic of Congo Case Study', shared by former UN stabilisation official, on file with author.
- ¹²⁸ Oxfam interviews, senior MONUC (now MONUSCO) officials, Bunia, 12 April 2011, and Goma, 5 May 2011.
- ¹²⁹ Oxfam interview, international donor representatives, Goma, 11 August 2012.
- ¹³⁰ Oxfam interview, provincial Ministry of Planning official, 22 September 2011.
- ¹³¹ The short description of Congolese civil society here is based on descriptions in: Bourque et al. (2003) 'Civil society, a factor for peace in DRC'; 'Civil Society and Extractive Industries in the Democratic Republic of Congo' (2010); and H. Morvan and J-L Kambale Nzweve (2010) 'Small steps towards peace', International Alert.
- ¹³² Oxfam interview, Catholic priest, Masisi territory, North Kivu, 6 October 2011.
- ¹³³ Oxfam interview, UN stabilisation official, Goma, 22 June 2012.
- ¹³⁴ There have been some important peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives under the ISSSS and more such initiatives, including local dialogue, are envisaged for the second phase. To date, however, such local involvement has primarily been at the level of individual projects and programmes. There has not yet been a broader local dialogue for stability.
- ¹³⁵ Oxfam interview, local government official, Irumu territory, Ituri district, 25 October 2011.
- ¹³⁶ Oxfam interview, local government official, Irumu territory, Ituri district, 25 October 2011.
- ¹³⁷ Oxfam interview, customary official, Walungu territory, South Kivu, 1 November 2011.
- ¹³⁸ Oxfam interview, head of Congolese NGO, Bukavu, South Kivu, 16 November 2011.
- ¹³⁹ International Alert (2012) 'A Peacebuilding Agenda for the Eastern DRC 2012–17. Draft report for section 2: Civil society peacebuilding priorities from provincial perspectives', draft report seen by author.

- ¹⁴⁰ International Alert (2012) 'A Peacebuilding Agenda for the Eastern DRC 2012–17. Draft report for section 2: Civil society peacebuilding priorities from provincial perspectives', draft report seen by author.
- ¹⁴¹ 'Discours de son excellence Monsieur Joseph Kabila Kabanga, Président de la RDC a l'occasion de la 66ème session de l'assemblée générale des Nations Unies, 22 September 2011, New York.
- ¹⁴² Oxfam interview, Deputy headteacher, Masisi territory, North Kivu, 12 October 2011.
- ¹⁴³ Oxfam interview, MONUSCO political affairs official, 4 October 2011.
- ¹⁴⁴ Western diplomatic official (2012), Correspondence with author, 5 April.
- ¹⁴⁵ Oxfam interview, Head of Congolese NGO, Goma, 30 May 2012.
- ¹⁴⁶ Eastern Congo Initiative (2011) 'Community-based Organisation Landscape Analysis', <http://www.easterncongo.org/about/publications/landscape-analysis> (last accessed 20 February 2012), p 5.
- ¹⁴⁷ H. Morvan and J-L Kambale Nzweve (2010) *op. cit.*
- ¹⁴⁸ Quoted in M. Canavera (2011) "We cannot wait for others to come protect us." Lessons Emerging from Oxfam GB's Community-Based Civilian Protection Programme in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo', internal Oxfam document, p 6.
- ¹⁴⁹ In North and South Kivu provinces, the territory is an administrative level directly below the provincial level. In Ituri district, the territory is an administrative level directly below the district level.
- ¹⁵⁰ International Alert (2012) *op. cit.*; Morvan and Kambale Nzweve (2010) *op. cit.*, p. 41.
- ¹⁵¹ International Alert (2012) *op. cit.*
- ¹⁵² Morvan and Kambale Nzweve (2010) *op. cit.*, p. 42.
- ¹⁵³ Canavera (2011) *op. cit.*, p. 7.
- ¹⁵⁴ This is the experience of Oxfam's protection programme.
- ¹⁵⁵ 'Civil society and extractive industries in the Democratic Republic of Congo' (2010).
- ¹⁵⁶ This recommendation is borrowed from Morvan and Kambale Nzweve (2010) *op. cit.*, p. 52.
- ¹⁵⁷ Morvan and Kambale Nzweve (2010) *op. cit.*
- ¹⁵⁸ Morvan and Kambale Nzweve (2010) *op. cit.*, p 4.
- ¹⁵⁹ Oxfam interview, Head of women's association, Masisi territory, North Kivu, 14 October 2011.
- ¹⁶⁰ The Pole Institute, a Congolese think-tank based in Goma, currently supports such an initiative.

ANNEX 1: MAP OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO



ANNEX 2: MAP OF EASTERN DRC, INCLUDING ORIGINAL ISSSS PRIORITY AXES



Source: Données Géographiques: Groupe de Travail SIG; Données Thematiques: UNICEF BD PEAR, MONUC Bureau Intégré
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This map shows the original 6 priority axes of the ISSSS. The 2012-2014 priority plan involves: consolidating work on existing axes; extending the axes from Hombo and Masisi to Walikale to link both Bukavu and Goma to Walikale by road; creating two new axes in Haut and Bas Uélé districts of Orientale province; and also activities in the north of North Kivu (the 'Grand Nord') and in Maniema and Katanga provinces.

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