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Rebuilding Lives and Livelihoods in Eastern DRC after Years of War

The communities in Fizi and Uvira territories of the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) have been affected by years of war and now find themselves in need of rebuilding lives and livelihoods. Paulin Amuri, a 26 year old married father of five children, is among those who have fled from the war in eastern DRC. Mr. Amuri used to live in the village of Rwenena in South Kivu until 2004 when military clashes between rebel groups and the Congolese army compelled him to flee with his pregnant wife and two children across the border to Burundi.

They lived in a refugee camp in Rurama for about two years until they returned to the DRC in 2006. Back in his village of Rwenena, Mr. Amuri in-



Paulin AMURI

vested all his savings in his cassava field, but that venture did not succeed. To survive, he and his wife looked for work as day laborers in neighboring fields. Amidst these difficult conditions, Mr. Amuri managed to rebuild his house by himself, despite being barely able to feed his family a single daily meal. He was also without the help of neighbors who, facing the same problems and in competition for work, were not happy about his return.

Paulin Amuri became a beneficiary under the USAID-Funded project “JENGA JAMAA” implemented by Africare. Focusing on female-headed households and returnees, the project aims to reduce food insecurity among vulnerable populations in Fizi and Uvira territories. The JENGA JAMAA project has provided Mr. Amuri with basic farm tools and improved seed varieties, as well as technical agricultural training. Armed with the tools and the training, Mr. Amuri has replanted his own cassava

field which allows him to provide food to his family, as well as to share a little bit with his neighbors, building friendship and understanding.

JENGA JAMAA, which means “to build



A mother with her child going back home after receiving food from a USAID project in Fizi

family” in Swahili, is a component of a Multiyear Assistance Program (MYAP). ADRA is implementing activities in Fizi while Africare is focusing on Uvira. The project responds to the hope for a durable peace and the opportunity to rebuild lives and livelihoods in Fizi and Uvira territories. The program uses Food for Food rations for both seed protection and harvest protection that are distributed to participants of farmer field schools. Food for Work projects cover feeder roads, irrigation canals, reforestation, and returnee shelters.

The populations of Fizi and Uvira are estimated to be 211,216 and 217,650 respectively, providing a total population of 428,866 .■

A DRC Government Decree Officially Recognizes CARPE Landscape Activities in Congo Basin

In August 2009, José Endundo, Minister of the Environment for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), signed a decree designating Maringa-Lopori-Wamba (MLW) as an officially recognized landscape for the purposes of forest management. The decree also designated African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) as the lead agent to coordinate the pilot planning activities in this landscape.

MLW landscape is one of the 12 landscapes within the Congo Basin managed by USAID's Central African Regional Program for Environment (CARPE). MLW covers 74,000 km² and is located in Equateur province, northern DRC. The decree signed by the Minister of the Environment sets the stage for the entire landscape approach to be officially recognized.

Over the past years, CARPE has been

funding land-use planning efforts in 12 key landscapes in nine countries including: Gabon, Cameroon, the Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic,

Endundo, to the Director of AWF, Jef Dupain, took place on August 26, 2009 in Kinshasa with the presence of some key figures in the conservation world. "I

would like to mention this is a CARPE outcome. Thank you so much to USAID through CARPE on this partnership in the Congo Basin Forest and for your support", said José Endundo. Director of AWF Jef Dupain underlined that "this decree is a first not only for the DRC, but also for all CARPE programs implemented in the Central Africa region".

Since 1995, CARPE, an initiative of USAID, has been working hand-in-hand with

various environmental organizations to slow down the rate of forest degradation and biodiversity loss throughout the Central African Rainforest. ■



Photo: Alain Mukheba, USAID/DRC

DRC Minister of Environment José Endundo giving officially to the Director of AWF Jef Dupain the Government decree recognizing and designating the pilot landscape for forest management

Equatorial Guinea, Burundi, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe and the DRC.

The official handover of this decree by the Minister of the Environment, José

USAID Supports New Project for Better Choices in Health Policy in the DRC

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Ministry of Health officially launched in Kinshasa in September a project to establish the National Health Accounts (NHA) in the DRC in order to have a better understanding of financial flows in the DRC health sector.

The development of NHAs requires collection of primary and secondary data. These data will influence health policies of the Government as well as those of donors. This 18-month project will be implemented by the non-governmental organization Health Systems 20/20. This program of about \$2 million—funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)—will also help to determine the burden of health expenditures in Congolese households.

"I particularly thank USAID for supporting the DRC Ministry of Health in implementing the NHA project and for

raising, describing, and analyzing funding of the national health systems, including funding from the public and private sector, as well as development partners."

"A better understanding of financial flows in the health sector will help all stakeholders in the health system move towards better planning, better implementation of projects, and equitable distribution of resources," noted the Coordinator of NHAs in the DRC, Marie Jeanne Offossé, during her presentation.

Health Systems 20/20, a five-year (2006-2011) cooperative agreement funded by USAID, of-

fers USAID-supported countries help in solving problems in health management, finance, operations, and capacity building. ■



Photo: Alain Mukheba, USAID/DRC

USAID/DRC Mission Director Stephen Haykin pronouncing a speech at the central forum on the occasion of the launch of the National Health Account in the DRC

the launch of this first exercise," said Dr. Kabeya, the Representative of DRC Minister of Health. Dr. Kabeya further underlined that "the NHAs are a tool recognized at the international level: summa-

Girls' and Boys' Academic Performances Improved Through a USAID Program in Luozi

“Boy and girl scholars are attending school regularly and performing well academically in Luozi. The academic achievement for scholars who took the *Test National de fin d'études primaires* was 77 percent from 2006 to 2007, and 82 percent from 2007 to 2008. And we hope that the curve will keep the same

trajectory in the future,” said Blaise Bulembe, a representative of *Paroisse Notre Dame de Fatima* (PNDF). PNDP, a sub-partner of USAID, is a faith-based group that coordinates the Ambassadors' Scholarship Program (AGSP) in Luozi, Bas-Congo province, in the

southwestern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). PNDP is one of the sub-partners in the DRC working in conjunction with the non-governmental organization *Initiatives pour le Développement Intégral* to support community based-social and humanitarian projects throughout the DRC.

AGSP is a five-year project launched in 2004 to address the constraints to girls' participation, retention and achievement in school. Initially the program provided comprehensive support only for girls' education in the form of scholarships, mentoring, and parent and community

awareness programs. Recently, the program has been expanded to include orphaned boys. The project is funded by USAID through the Africa Education Initiative (AEI) and implemented by Academy for Education Development (AED) in Bandundu, Bas-Congo, Equateur, Kinshasa, Katanga and Kasai



During the AGSP Mentor day in Luozi, teachers and AGSP scholars performed a short play denouncing the negative impacts of early marriage and child rights

Photo: Alain Mukelaba, USAID/DRC

Oriental provinces. AED works with six local partners in the DRC including PNDP.

In July 2009, AGSP Mentor Day was held across the country in areas where the program is implemented. The purpose of AGSP Mentor Day was to celebrate and appreciate the work that Mentors are carrying out to improve AGSP scholars' academic performance. On this occasion, PNDP conducted in Luozi a mentors' training session on puberty, adolescence, and female reproduction. A total of 49 Mentors from Kundi, Bandakani, Mpudi, Luozi, Kindezi, Nkonka, Mambedi vil-

lages attended the event. It was an opportunity for Mentors to share experiences and success stories. “One day a girl came to me and said that she es-

caped sexual abuse by a group of young boys because of the advice given at my group study,” revealed a Mentor during the AGSP Mentor day. Regularly, Mentors provide essential life skills to boys and girls at school and at students' homes .

In 2009, the program awarded 3,024 boys and girls in Luozi. Since 2004, a total of 80,559 scholarships have been awarded in the DRC. From the 2007 to 2008 academic year, the passing rate of AGSP scholars ranged from 80% to 100% by school. According to UNICEF statistics for 2007, the gross primary school enrollment rate for females is 54 percent and 68 percent for males. ■



Since March 2008, **Hamadi Kasanga** has been the Financial Analyst at USAID/DRC. Previously, Mr. Kasanga worked as an Accountant at the Mission. Before joining USAID, Mr. Kasanga worked for Education Development Center (EDC) as the Chief Accountant. He also served in the private sector before working in international organizations. Mr. Kasanga holds a Bachelor degree's in Business Administration from the Protestant University in Congo (UPC) and has a post secondary degree in Accounting and Finance from the Institut Supérieur de Commerce de Kinshasa.

| NUMBERS AT A GLANCE [RDC] | % |
|--|----|
| Youth (15–24 years) literacy rate, 2000–2007*, male | 78 |
| Youth (15–24 years) literacy rate, 2000–2007*, female | 63 |
| Primary school enrolment ratio 2000–2007*, gross, male | 68 |
| Primary school enrolment ratio 2000–2007*, gross, female | 54 |
| Primary school attendance ratio 2000–2007*, net, male | 55 |
| Primary school attendance ratio 2000–2007*, net, female | 49 |

* UNICEF



Arthur Brown is the new USAID/DRC Deputy Mission Director. Previously, Mr. Brown served in a senior leadership capacity securing financial resources and providing fiscal oversight within USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA). Mr. Brown also worked in several USAID Missions including Nigeria, Guinea, Sierra Leone, covering Namibia from the regional operations out of Botswana. Mr. Brown also participated in extended Temporary Duty assignments to Benin and Madagascar. Prior to coming to the DRC, Mr. Brown represented USAID at the National Defense University where he attended the National War College and received a Master's Degree in National Security Strategy. Mr. Brown also holds a Master's degree in Business Administration from Johns Hopkins University and a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Virginia.



USAID/DRC welcomes **Alexandria Isabel Huerta** who will serve as a Program Officer through the Development Leadership Initiative (DLI), which is a multi-year effort to increase the size of USAID's overseas presence and enhance the agency's capability to effectively deliver U.S. foreign assistance. Ms. Huerta was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Mali and Mozambique, and she worked as a volunteer consultant in Serbia and Montenegro. Before joining USAID/DRC, Ms. Huerta worked as a Program Officer/Technical Specialist at World Vision, covering programs in Tanzania, Mali, Chad, Mauritania, and Niger. Ms. Huerta has a Bachelor's Degree in Agriculture from the University of Georgia. She also holds a PhD in Agriculture from Purdue University and a Master's Degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Tennessee.



Arriving in August 2009, **Joseph Hirsch** is the new Economic Growth Team Leader at USAID/DRC. Previously, Mr. Hirsch served in USAID/Ethiopia as Program Officer, Mission Environment Officer, and most recently as Agriculture Officer. Prior to joining USAID, Mr. Hirsch worked as a high school biology teacher and as an Adjunct Professor at New Mexico State University, Marymount University and Virginia Community College. Mr. Hirsch holds a Bachelor's and a Master's Degree in Philosophy from St. John's College and New Mexico State University, respectively. He also has a Master's Degree in Evolutionary Ecology and a Bachelor's degree in Conservation Biology from New Mexico State University.



Ruxandra Datcu, Deputy Democracy and Governance (DG) Team Leader, returned to post in September 2009. Prior to joining USAID/DRC in February 2008, Mrs. Datcu worked for USAID/Romania, where she managed several DG programs and led the Democracy and Social Sector Reform Office. Before joining USAID in 1995, she worked as an Assistant Manager and Researcher. Mrs. Datcu has a Master's Degree in Computer Science from ASEBUSS Bucharest and a Master's Degree in Business Administration from Kennesaw State University in the United States.

U.S. Agency for International Development
USAID/DRC
Mobil Building
198 Avenue Isiro
Gare Centrale/Gombe/Kinshasa
For more information contact us: amukeba@usaid.gov