



Democratic Republic of Congo

Total Population mid-2018	91 million
	51% women
	49% men
Population Annual Growth Rate	3.3%
Adult Literacy	48.3% women
	74.5% men
Maternal Mortality Rate	693/100,000 live births
Infant Mortality Rate	92/1,000 live births
Total Fertility Rate, per woman	6%
People Living with HIV and AIDS	450,000
HIV incidence(new infections) all ages	0.2%
HIV prevalence	
(% of people living with HIV)	1.2%
Annual GDP (2018)	US\$44.7 billion
GDP Annual Growth Rate (2018)	5.8%

Socio-Economic Empowerment of Women

Women with account at financial institution or mobile money	24.2%
Mandatory paid maternity leave	98 days
Proportion of:	
Farmers who are Women	73%
Households headed by Women	25%
Parliamentarians who are Women	17%
Parliamentarians who are Women	31.8%

Women Economic Empowerment and Gender Responsive Budgeting

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has ratified or acceded to the following international and regional instruments, in addition to the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948);
- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) ratified in 1985;
- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted in 1995 by the Fourth World Conference on Women;
- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003, called the Maputo Protocol) ratified in 2018;
- United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on the changing nature of warfare in which civilians are increasingly targeted; and
- UNSCR 1820 which declares rape and other forms of sexual violence as war crimes.

Productive Resources and Property

Livelihoods in the DRC have been adversely impacted by the years of violent conflict, collapse of the economy, mismanagement of natural and financial resources, and corruption. During colonial times, only Europeans were permitted to own land on a private basis and all other land was governed by traditional rulers as communal land was subject to customary law. The vast majority of Congolese lived in rural areas and received land allocations from traditional authorities. Over time, land allocations became increasingly individualized, and informal land transactions became common in some areas. During 1965–1997 all land in the DRC was officially nationalized, but the system of customary land tenure continued to operate parallel to the formal system, with a wide gap for equal access to land for women and men.

The Constitution of the DRC provides for equality of women and prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. However, many of the country's formal laws continue to discriminate against women. A married woman must obtain her husband's permission to purchase or lease land, to open a bank account, and to accept a job. Husbands have a right to their wives' property, even if the couple enters into a contract to the contrary. Women and girls have low literacy rates at 48.3 percent compared to 74.5 percent for men (INS, 2018). Access to justice for women is therefore limited by



lack of education, financial resources and access to information. According to a 2015 FAO report, 95 percent of rural women work in agriculture and dominate agricultural production in the DRC.

Women represent 60 percent of agricultural labourers and 73 percent of farmers, and produce 80 percent of food crops for household consumption, yet the majority do not own any land.

Women often have decision-making authority over the cultivation of the land allotted to them and the right to the harvest from the land, but they are not considered owners of the land. In most areas, ultimate authority over the land remains with male family members.

In addition, women are affected by multiple security threats facing the DRC, particularly in the northeast region. Security threats directly affect land security as people are often displaced, an impact which is felt in unique and acute ways by women and other excluded groups in the area.

Credit

The Central Bank recognizes the challenges that women face in accessing loans, which include outdated laws requiring a husband's consent to open bank accounts and start enterprises. These challenges limit women participation in the business sector. Fur-



thermore, married women often cannot sign certain contracts, including those needed to obtain bank loans, open accounts or start businesses. In general, women have difficulties to access credits that require mortgages and are most often forced to take microcredit.

As a result, most financial activities which women engage in happen outside the regulated sector. Differences between women and men are also seen in access to formal financial services, only 2.4 percent of women have a bank account compared to 5.8 percent of men. Of those with an account, 65.2 percent of men receive credit against 58.1 percent of women.

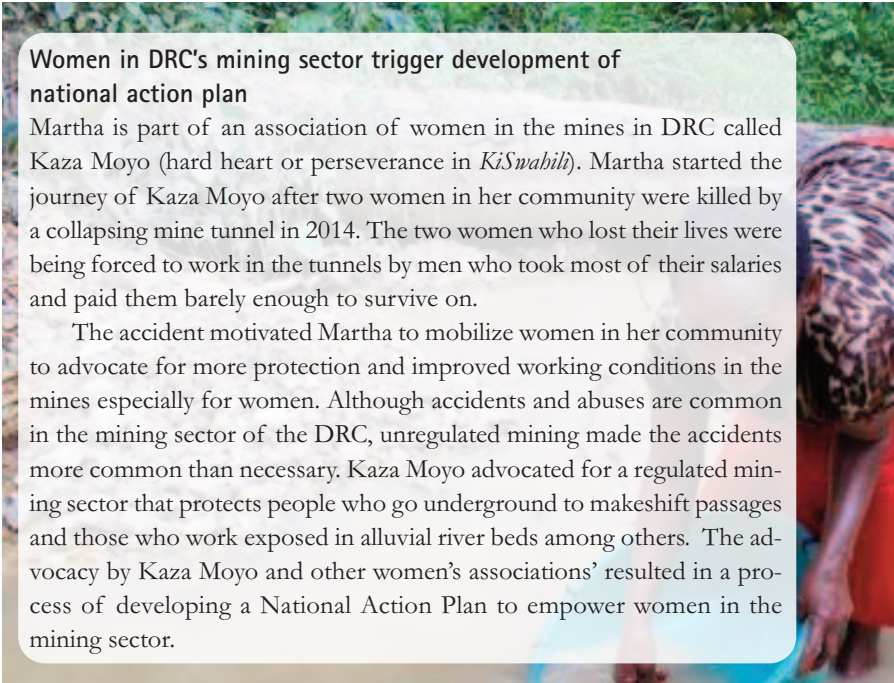
Mining

The eastern part of DRC is rich in ores containing several minerals including the world's largest cobalt deposits and tin-bearing ores (cassiterite and its derivatives) of incomparable grade that attract the attention of many investors. For example, the ore in and around the Bisie deposits in the Walikale area can produce 3.25 tonnes of tin per 100 tonnes of ore, whereas most other mines can only produce 0.7 tonnes. With such an abundance of minerals, the majority of those who benefit are men. In the mining sector, cohabitation is difficult between artisanal miners and mining companies that have contracts with the Government. The majority



of accidents and abuses take place in the artisanal and small-scale mining sector. It is estimated that about two million people work informally in the artisanal and small-scale mining sector with at least 40 percent being women. Workers in these mines suffer a variety of labour and social problems but the economic benefits of this work disproportionately goes to men. Women get the lowest pay despite being responsible for the most physically demanding tasks, such as transporting large sacks of soil and manually grinding stones. Mining in the DRC can also be territorial, women wanting to enter a certain mining site are sometimes forced to trade sex for entry. In a research conducted by the World Bank, 30 percent of women working in the mines reported to being harassed by men.

These and more challenges being faced by women in the mining sector resulted in women coming together to form associations that would lead to the protection of women in the sector.



Women in DRC's mining sector trigger development of national action plan

Martha is part of an association of women in the mines in DRC called Kaza Moyo (hard heart or perseverance in *KiSwahili*). Martha started the journey of Kaza Moyo after two women in her community were killed by a collapsing mine tunnel in 2014. The two women who lost their lives were being forced to work in the tunnels by men who took most of their salaries and paid them barely enough to survive on.

The accident motivated Martha to mobilize women in her community to advocate for more protection and improved working conditions in the mines especially for women. Although accidents and abuses are common in the mining sector of the DRC, unregulated mining made the accidents more common than necessary. Kaza Moyo advocated for a regulated mining sector that protects people who go underground to makeshift passages and those who work exposed in alluvial river beds among others. The advocacy by Kaza Moyo and other women's associations' resulted in a process of developing a National Action Plan to empower women in the mining sector.

Trade and SMEs

Cross-border trade is a major feature of DRC's economic and social landscape with the majority of cross-border traders being women. Statistics on cross-border traders are not readily available for DRC, however, many research activities have established the challenges being faced by traders, particularly women. Studies conducted at various border locations across Sub-Saharan Africa indicate that corruption and harassment (including gender-based violence against women) are regular features of cross-border trade with body searches for women in some cases being conducted by male officers. These challenges are perpetuated by weak implementation of rules and regulations, unprofessional behaviour by immigration officials and lack of awareness of cross-border traders of their rights. These challenges contribute to financial loss through bribing officials for passage and to making Congolese borders unfriendly and unsafe for small-scale traders, especially women.

In the SME sector, DRC has two discernible types of women entrepreneurs. The first are those who start a small business out of necessity to make ends meet – these are the women who try to earn a living by cooking extra food and selling it on the streets; who resell manufactured goods or mass-market products in rural areas; or who cross the border to trade small quantities of goods from neighbouring countries. The second are those who start small and grow the company to pursue bigger market opportunities. Research shows that in urban areas, these women-led SMEs are mainly concentrated in small-scale trade, services, and agriculture.

Employment and Benefits

In the DRC, work is a fundamental human right enshrined in the Constitution of 2006 and Labour Code of 2016. However, despite the existence of a favourable legal framework, the proportion of women in structured jobs remains low for example, in government, public and private enterprises, armed forces and police. The popu-

lation of the DRC is more women (51 percent) with a significant proportion being of working age (more than 20 million). There is almost 50/50 representation of women and men in the total employment figures although only 20 percent of the women are in the formal sector. This sector brings together a minimum of conditions including labour law, social protection and social dialogue, and gives rise to a competitive income and favourable and secure working conditions. The presence of women is more noticeable in the informal economy where it outperforms men with over 53 percent. Unfortunately this sector remains insecure and offers less opportunities and benefits (INS 2016).

The structured labour market in the DRC is unbalanced due to the supply of labour being more than that needed by employers. In this regard, it is women who pay a heavy price as they represent less than 20 percent of formal jobs against 80 percent for men. The employment rate in the formal sector is 11.4 percent and is distributed as follows: public sector 21.8 percent women and 78.2 percent men while the formal private sector has 19.8 percent women and 80.2 percent men.

Multiple Roles of Women

Unpaid care and domestic work is in most cases the preserve of women, even those who work outside their homes. Although this situation has often been criticized, specific studies have not yet been conducted on the time budget of Congolese women. Nevertheless, some indicators can inform about the overload of the women in particular as the person in charge of the collection of water when this resource is not available at home. For this purpose, an enquiry conducted in 2018 shows that when it takes 15 minutes or more to draw water, it is 75 percent of women or girls over 15 who are responsible for this task. The DRC does not yet apply the provisions on the multiple roles of women, in line with the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. Unpaid care work and domestic work are not valued.

Gender Responsive Budgeting

No gender responsive budgeting initiatives in the DRC are readily identifiable, however the UNDP office in the DRC is making efforts to strengthen the capacity of the government to undertake gender-responsive planning and budgeting. UNDP is providing technical support to the government on gender mainstreaming in budget development processes; strengthening the capacity of various government departments on gender responsive budgeting, supporting national and provincial women's organizations to monitor gender-related and women empowerment commitments, and action research on gender responsive budgeting (UNDP, 2017).

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