

Planning for the future of North Kivu

François Tuyihimbaze Rucogoza

While North Kivu is still mired in the troubles of yesterday and today, the Administration is actively planning for the creation of a better future.

Ten years of political turbulence and insecurity have left North Kivu with its people having been internally displaced or as refugees in neighbouring Rwanda and Uganda.

Yet there is a vision for the development of the Province and a plan to achieve it. The vision is consonant with the Millennium Development Goals and the Plan with the national Document of Strategies and of Growth for the Reduction of Poverty in DRC (Document de stratégies et de croissance pour la réduction de la pauvreté en RDC (DSCR)), and it is all in the context of the Stabilisation Programme for Eastern DRC (STAREC).

Despite the difficulties, we come to this point with some successes and achievements to build on. There have been agreements between the Provincial Government and humanitarian partners; the Provincial Government has laid out a global plan for the return of refugees and IDPs and has been to the places of potential return to raise awareness about those returns; central government has carried out joint military operations with MONUC/MONUSCO to create security in the areas of return.

Several of the sites where people have been displaced have been emptied following security for return to those areas – more than 150,000 people have gone home from around Goma town since September 2009 and as of October 2010 scarcely 75,715 people remain displaced in North Kivu, mostly around Masisi and Rutshuru. Our humanitarian partners have accompanied the returnees with assistance in food and non-food items, and seeds to enable them to resume their lives in the villages.

However, obstacles still remain. Some of the areas of return are

still prey to the ‘inciviques’ such as the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and the Ugandan rebel Allied Democratic Forces – National Liberation Army of Uganda (ADF / NALU). And more resources are needed for a variety of purposes – adequate assistance to returnees; missions to promote voluntary return of refugees; and identification and counting of refugees in Rwanda and Uganda.

The Provincial Priority Action Plan (Plan d’Actions Prioritaires – PAP) takes these realities into account but has been built up through a series of stages, including wide local consultation, into a detailed and developed plan.

It takes as its framework the five ‘pillars’ of the national DSCR, namely

- Good governance, peace and security
- Macro-economic stability and growth
- Improved access to social services and reduction of vulnerability
- Fighting HIV/AIDS
- Strengthening of communities

and in each case develops them for the context of the Province and assigns responsibilities within the Provincial Government. For example, ‘Good governance, peace and security’ is framed as creating security and peaceful co-existence and ‘Fighting HIV/AIDS’ has been extended to also include combatting sexual violence.

Much has already been done to prepare for the implementation of the PAP. Terms of Reference and a timetable for the plan have been

elaborated; the different key actors have been identified and brought on board; UNDP has agreed to support the plan financially and technically; and the plan has been drafted for consultation and improvement by participants in local workshops. It includes a detailed matrix of programmes and projects, outputs, indicators, estimated costs and allocations of responsibilities.

A budget has been developed – estimated at US\$113,527,515 – and resources for its implementation will come from three sources: provincial taxes, duties and investments; an allocation from the national exchequer; and through an appeal for international solidarity in a global partnership for sustainable development.

Finally there is an element of participatory monitoring and evaluation, with six-monthly and annual reviews, involving all stakeholders, that is, local and provincial administration, civil society, donors and development partners.

Joint FARDC/MONUSCO military operations are securing more and more territory that has been occupied by ‘inciviques’ and thus areas of return are expanding. The government’s commitment to returns is assured by the two Tripartite Agreements between DRC, UNHCR and, on the one hand, Rwanda and, on the other, Uganda.

Soon refugees and IDPs will be able to return home and the social reintegration envisaged in the PAP and the North-Kivu Development Plan (Plan de Développement de la Province du Nord-Kivu) (2011-2015) will be able to take place. This is our plan and this is our hope.

François Tuyihimbaze Rucogoza is North Kivu Provincial Minister of Administration, Justice, Human Rights and Community Reinsertion.