

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Country Overview



Language: French (official), Lingala (lingua franca trade language)

Religion: Roman Catholic 50%, Protestant 20%, Kimbanguist 10%, Muslim 10%

Capital: Brazzaville

Currency: Congolese Franc

Government: Semi-Presidential Republic

President: Joseph Kabila

Population below poverty line: 63%

Willow Creek Partner: Congo Initiative

Location: North Kivu (Eastern Congo)

Environment: Rural & Urban

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www.willowcreek.org/globalinfo

Background

The Democratic Republic of the Congo has massive natural resource wealth, with an estimated \$24 trillion of untapped mineral resources. However, this mineral wealth has fueled violence and provides financial means for rebel groups to operate and buy arms. The violence and conflict combined with the instability of the economy has caused many socioeconomic problems, including high infant and maternal mortality rates, malnutrition, poor vaccination coverage, lack of access to improved water sources and sanitation, and frequent and early fertility. Violence, mismanagement of resources, and government corruption have resulted in increased poverty and have caused human rights abuse throughout the country.

Conflict

- ◆ The current violence in the DRC started with the massive refugee crisis and spillover from the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. After Hutu perpetrators of the genocide fled to eastern DRC and formed armed groups, Rwanda and Uganda invaded in an effort to stop the groups from planning an invasion in Rwanda
- ◆ Despite the signing of a peace deal and the formation of a transitional government in 2003, weak governance and institutions, along with corruption have contributed to ongoing violence by armed groups against civilians in the eastern region.
- ◆ The conflict has subjected Congolese civilians to widespread human rights violations, and extreme poverty. The United Nations, African Union, and neighboring countries have struggled to address the rebel groups and to create sustainable solution.

About Willow's Partner: Congo Initiative

Congo Initiative is a community of Christ-centered Congolese leaders and global partners united in the goal of a sustainable Congolese society, empowering leaders, and developing initiatives for peace, hope, and justice. They work to educate the next generation, empower young women, equip Christian Communities, engage in current issues, and elevate peace and justice.