

**MULTI-ANNUAL STRATEGIC PLAN
2012-2015**

GREAT LAKES REGION

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The Multi-Annual Strategic Plan is a rolling document. The plan was presented by the Embassies in October 2011 and approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in December 2011. During the appraisal process, the focus of the strategy was enhanced and additional clarifications were received from the Embassies. These were incorporated in the final version. In some cases plans will have to be further elaborated and considered before they can be implemented as part of the strategic plan. The new policy priorities will be further developed and operationalized in dialogue with government, civil society and development partners during the coming year.

1. Management summary

The Great Lakes region has seen widespread conflict and catastrophic humanitarian crises over the past two decades. Although the situation has improved over the past few years and open conflict has receded, the region is not yet stable. Renewed conflict would badly impact an already vulnerable local population and the development of partner countries Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan. Durable peace and stability would not only greatly benefit the population but also allow the region to fulfill its considerable economic potential.

The main purpose of a Dutch regional approach for the Great Lakes is therefore contributing to stability. Against the complex and vast problems of the region the Netherlands involvement will need to be modest and realistic, but there are niches where the Netherlands can make a real contribution. The conflict-analysis that was conducted in July 2011 by the four embassies in the region (Kigali, Kinshasa, Kampala and Bujumbura) with the relevant departments of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and representatives of the Netherlands Ministry of Defense, concluded that there are three main lines of operation where the Netherlands can contribute: Security and Rule of law; Economic opportunity; Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Each line of operation will require a different track:

- Activities to support Security and Rule of Law will mainly be implemented on a national level within the partner countries and will be incorporated in the Multi Annual Strategic Plans (MASP) for these countries.
- Economic opportunities will require involvement both at the national and at the regional level and will therefore form the main body of this regional MASP.
- Eastern DRC will require a specific approach targeting the causes of destabilization of the region, which will be funded from central budgets at the Ministry in The Hague. This will also include the specific issue of (illegal) exploitation of natural resources in the region.

The Great Lakes regional approach therefore has three elements:

1. A regional programme delegated to the Embassy in Kigali with a largely economic perspective, focusing on cross-border issues and cooperation and specifically targeting: food security; water management; renewable energy.
2. Incorporation of a regional perspective in the bilateral programmes in partner countries Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, in particular within the spearheads Security and Rule of Law and Food Security. This will involve national activities with an indirect regional effect (Security Sector Development in Burundi; strengthening the Justice Sector in Rwanda and Uganda). It will also involve finding complementarity and synergy on Food Security between national programmes and the regional programme.
3. Targeted activities in eastern DRC to address some of the causes of destabilization in the region. These will be funded from central budgets such as the Stability Fund and the Reconstruction Fund.

This MASP will focus primarily on the regional programme that will be delegated to the Embassy in Kigali. The other elements will be part of either the MASP's for the partner countries in the region or of the relevant departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the first half of 2012 the relevant embassies and departments will further explore where complementarity and synergy can be achieved between the regional programme, the national programmes in the partner countries and the central funds of the Ministry.

2. Summary of Regional Strategic Analysis

Of late, overall stability in the Great-Lakes Region has somewhat improved. The Great-Lakes region, comprising Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and Eastern DRC, has come a long way from open cross-border and internal conflicts in the past two decades. Yet, the security situation continues to be fragile as underlying tensions and mutual distrust remain. In Eastern Congo armed combat is still common between the national army (*Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo* - FARDC) and rebel movements (*Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda* - FDLR, Allied Democratic Forces - ADF, Lord's Resistance Army - LRA, Forces Nationales de Libération - FNL and several Mai Mai-militia groups). Also the local population remains a regular target of armed attacks by the same rebel movements or elements from the national army, often resulting in rapes and killings. Uganda and Rwanda suffer from occasional bomb and grenade attacks, whilst in Burundi post-conflict tensions remain an issue. Both the DRC and Burundi still qualify as fragile states, as they have yet to fully recover from protracted civil and ethnic clashes during the 1993-2005 period. The entire land-locked region can be characterised as among the poorest in the world. Three key problem areas have been identified, as well as an indication as to how they need to be addressed, if regional stability is to be improved:

Institutional void in Eastern Congo

In the DRC rebel movements, and certain government forces, thrive as a result of weak governance structures and impunity. The presence of abundant mineral resources in East Congo adds to the already existing dynamics of the conflict. The illegal exploitation of these minerals has largely gone unchecked, accompanied by crimes such as rape, robbery and murder. Although some progress is being made in combating illegal mining and rebel activity connected to it, the lack of adequate governance and presence of a large variety of rebel movements remains a threat to regional stability. Legal and illegal mineral flows leave the region by air, or through Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda.

The process of state building that is required to bring the vast ungoverned spaces in eastern Congo under state control will require many years. As the DRC is no longer a partner country, Dutch policy will not focus on state building. For the MASP period of 2012-2015, the institutional void will largely remain a given. Dutch interventions will, however, need to target some of the most destabilising effects of weak governance in eastern DRC to prevent new humanitarian crises and to consolidate Dutch development efforts. The return of refugees, IDPs and former combatants to their old communities, with the ensuing ethnic and socio-economic tensions, are identified as important flashpoints for renewed violence. Stabilisation through reintegration, reconciliation and resilience in these areas is therefore identified as a particular target. This will require addressing some of the underlying causes of instability by focusing on economic opportunities and human security. The interventions for eastern DRC - outside the scope of the regional programme - will be managed from the Embassy in Kinshasa.

Economic opportunities and their obstacles

Any conflict has devastating socio-economic effects at the various levels, from the individual to the state. In the recent past, cross-border and internal conflicts have destroyed economic opportunities resulting in capital, both human and financial, leaving the Great-Lakes sub region. This opened up the region for less scrupulous traders, who focus on short-term gains to the detriment of the local population and long-term sustainability. Meanwhile, Rwanda and Uganda, and to a lesser extent also Burundi, have managed to regain stability and started to attract investors. Increased regional economic cooperation could bring important benefits to all countries in the region, both by providing economic opportunities for the population and by building trust and more constructive relations between the nations involved. Although this is primarily up to the relevant nations and regional organisations, the Netherlands can help remove barriers to trade, facilitate confidence-building measures and help stimulate economic development, particularly related to food security, energy and water. Such interventions will also provide an important contribution to peace dividend for the local population in the border areas. These efforts would complement programmes at the national level in partner countries Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, particularly on Food Security.

State security and individual security

Conflicts and their aftermaths have a huge impact on states and their people. Instability and conflict stand in the way of development and, hence, the chance for individuals to improve their lives. Stability and service delivery are important responsibilities of a state, but it does not end there. The state has to assure that groups and individuals remain safe from all forms of brutality and are able to exercise their civil and political rights. The Great-Lakes region shows a great variety when it comes to performance of states and respect of individual human rights. Differences which in themselves could become a source of conflict (corruption, lack of freedom of speech, low levels of health and education, etc.). When addressing issues of stability in the region it is imperative to always incorporate these differences in the various activities.

The elements of the continuum from conflict to good governance through rehabilitation, stability and development are sometimes seen in isolation from each other, or in a rigid sequence. In practice, these elements are not only interrelated, but often require simultaneous implementation. When dealing with governance issues, at all levels, Defence, Development and Diplomacy need to be applied in conjunction with each other.

At the regional level, the threat of armed groups will remain, as well as conflicting security interests between the various actors in the region. The Netherlands can have only limited impact on these cross-border security issues. Involvement in the security sector will therefore be primarily limited to national interventions.

Rationale for a regional approach

A regional approach in the Great Lakes region will require concerted actions at various levels. At the international level it means that the Netherlands maintains a coherent approach in relevant forums such as United Nations (UN), European Union (EU) and the International Contact Group for the Great Lakes. At the regional level the Netherlands will work, where appropriate, with relevant regional organisations (East African Community - ECA, International Conference for the Great Lakes Region - ICGLR, Communauté Économique des Pays des Grands Lacs - CEPGL) and will continue to implement a regional programme on cross-border issues and economic opportunities related to food security, rural infrastructure, energy supply and management of natural resources. At the national level, the MASP's of the countries in the region will also address national challenges with a regional impact, particularly in the field of food security. The regional programme, combined with increased information sharing and cooperation between the embassies, will yield greater complementarity and synergy between interventions on both sides of borders, thus enhancing their effectiveness with regard to improving stability in the region.

The Netherlands has become a reliable partner to countries in the sub region. The Netherlands has accrued a vast experience in the 3-D approach, which it also applies in the Great lakes Region: it supports peace keeping and demobilisation, regional development and integration, renewable energy development, private sector development, agricultural production, good governance, international justice, etc., all paired with a substantial diplomatic presence in the sub region. The current spearheads of the Dutch development policy cater well for the problems identified in the Great-Lakes sub region. They moreover provide ample opportunities to link up with other instruments of foreign policy within the context of the 3-D approach.

Binding constraints:

- *The institutional void in Eastern Congo hampers efforts to increase stability in the region;*
- *Lack of state and individual security, including food security, in Eastern Congo negatively affects development efforts and economic opportunities in the region at various levels.*

3. Objectives and outputs of the regional programme

3.1. Main objective and Netherlands' regional support approach

The regional programme aims "to increase stability and security through fostering economic development, self-reliance and job opportunities", through both on-going and new activities which are based on the agreed Strategic Analysis for the Great lakes. This is in line with the regional outcome envisaged by the Great Lakes countries themselves through their cooperation in various regional organisations, such as EAC, CEPGL and ICGLR. The regional programme will thereby complement and seek synergy with related non-delegated Dutch projects and programmes such as Trademark East Africa and the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund.

3.2. Embassy outputs

New activities are foreseen for Food Security, Water Management, Renewable Energy as well as Defence, Justice and Security, partly building on regional activities that are already on the ground. Dutch partners and institutions are well equipped to become involved in these themes.

Food security

Output 1: Increased agricultural productivity, efficient markets and trans boundary trade in inputs and outputs, as well as increased off-farm job opportunities, notably in agribusiness.

- Although the region has great agricultural potential, Burundi and DRC are among the most food-insecure countries in the world. Using a value chain approach, the International Centre for Soil Fertility and Agricultural Development (IFDC) Catalist project since 2006 addresses agricultural production, agricultural policy, private sector development, access to input and output markets, construction of feeder roads, etc. This approach remains important to tackle regional food security issues, since many value chains have cross-border aspects: depending on the season, agricultural produce moves back and forth from East Congo to neighbouring countries.
- Furthermore, regional cooperation will offer scope for economies of scale, both for the input and output markets, and for reducing transactions costs. Regional cooperation is also key to maintaining quality standards (particularly of seeds and fertilisers, but also outputs), legislation and control, as well as the development of market information systems.
- More job opportunities provide an alternative for joining rebel groups in the region.

Water Management

The Great Lakes region has many shared water resources (lakes, rivers) that require joint management, if only for gas and oil extraction (Lake Kivu, Lake Albert), hydropower plants and irrigation for food security.

Output 2: Improved coordination on management of joint watersheds and ecosystems:

- Assistance to the new Lake Kivu Water Basin Authority (ABAKIR) in managing water resources for the joint electricity generation programmes (hydropower, methane gas) and irrigation;
- The on-going Virunga programme contributes to formal cooperation between three countries in managing the protected Virunga ecosystem which is of importance to tourism-related employment opportunities in the region, as well as to the joint management of shared water resources;
- Guiding sustainable management of natural resources: oil and gas resources are being developed in trans-boundary lake zones along the Albertine Rift, shared by Uganda, Rwanda, DRC and Burundi. Governments and civil society together must ensure that these resources are developed in an environmentally friendly, transparent and equitable manner to the benefit of all populations.

Renewable energy

Energy projects are funded from the special renewable energy fund of the previous government and now form part of the Dutch contribution to the Copenhagen Agreement (COP15) to address climate change issues in developing countries.

Output 3: Increased use of renewable energy from biomass and 'green' electricity.

- Projects address constraints in regional energy infrastructure and contribute to food security in the region. Moreover, in the Great Lakes region there are examples of good cooperation between countries in electricity generation (hydropower) and distribution in existing and planned projects (Rusizi I and II where cooperation has lasted more than 20 years; also joint planning of new hydropower plants: Rusizi III and IV, Rusumo Falls). There is a clear link between these regional hydropower plants and the regional approach to water management under output 2.
- Increased cooking wood availability. Trees planted for watershed protection and fuel wood (used by 95% of the population) relate to water management and food security.
- Voluntary credits generated from climate change funds for tree planting. This activity aims at mobilising funding to make large scale plantations for watersheds and fuel wood financially viable.

*Defence, Justice and Security***Output 4: Strengthening the rule of law and restoring international legal order.**

Several projects fall under this heading, but are generally funded from The Hague, such as:

- the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) programme;
- Training and equipping peace-keeping forces;
- mineral tracing and certification and repatriation of Rwandan combatants;
- the UN peacekeeping force Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo (MONUSCO).

From delegated funds so far two activities are being funded:

- Great Lakes Reconciliation Media Programme: Radio La Benevolencija and
- Radio Okapi (MONUSCO).

3.4. Programmatic Risks

The biggest risk which may arise is that of conflict between countries in the region, which may jeopardise cooperation and implementation of regional projects. This risk seems acceptable for the following reasons:

- Currently there is no sign of a conflict brewing between any two countries of the region; on the contrary, cooperation seems to intensify between all countries showing commitment to enhance cooperation;
- The main aim of the regional programme is to increase stability and cooperation, an aim that is also pursued by regional organisations with which countries seek active cooperation. These organisations act as a platform for dialogue and should be able to address and mitigate potential conflicts among them.

3.5. Cross-cutting issues

Gender, environment and governance are (and will continue to be) part and parcel of regional projects. In two on-going projects IFDC is implementing gender strategies, developed by the projects themselves. In infrastructure projects for energy and water governance issues will be addressed through broad stakeholder consultation processes and the routine application of mitigating measures on the basis of environmental and social impact studies. Climate change is an issue which is already prevailing in the planning of countries and in that of regional organisations: mitigation through the application of renewable energy and adaptation in relevant sectors will be addressed throughout the project cycle.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS of the regional programme

Financial ODA implications 2012-2015 in € (Policy area, budget-code, description)

2.5 Reconstruction	8,500,000
2.5 Security, good governance and rule of law	1,000,000
4.1 Food security	15,000,000
4.2 Environment: biodiversity and forest reserves	3,400,000
4.3 Environment: climate, energy and technology	42,263,000
5.1 Water management	3,000,000
total budget 2012-2015	73,163,000