BACKGROUND

Since January 2014, IOM DRC has supported the Government of DRC’s efforts to stabilise two post conflict territories in North Kivu after M23 capture and occupation throughout 2013 and assist in the return and reintegration process.

These efforts are part of IOM’s Early Recovery and Resilience Programme which is currently being piloted through the Human Security in Rutshuru & Nyiragongo Territories project which aims to support the initial transition and recovery efforts of state authorities and civil society. The strategy of this project is structured around three pillars:

1. Community resilience promotion;
2. Activation and /or revitalization of civil society including local committees of peace and development; and,

In support of early community recovery, IOM accompanied the local government in establishing Local Peace and Development Committees (CLPD). Currently, CLPDs are operational in five groupements and have benefited from the construction and equipment of offices by IOM. Community structuring efforts continue at the village level by the establishment of the Noyau de Paix et de Developpment (NPD).

In this framework, activities of participative democratic dialogue between community and the state (in this case the Congolese National Police, or PNC) are planned to restore confidence and secure stable relations between different segments of society. This dialogue will also help to maintain collaborative relationships that would ensure harmony and cohesion needed for peace and stability in return areas.

In parallel, activities of awareness on SGBV are in progress including capacity building of specialized commissions of CLPD. IOM supports communities of returnees by the provision of livelihood packages to vulnerable returnees; 1 750 families are targeted to benefit of kits of seeds and farm tools in order to promote agricultural recovery in the Rutshuru and Nyiragongo territories.

Additionally, community farms to plant community reforestation nurseries in the five intervention groupements have been identified. Implementation will be held by technical support from FAO. The identification of priority needs of beneficiaries is underway in conjunction with local committees in the five groupements, with the support of local NGOs.

Within the restoration of State authority pillar, trainings of Trainers (ToT), SGBV and Community Policing Trainings were organized by IOM for officers from Rutshuru and Nyiragongo territories. The Trainings were concluded by three evaluations and joint assessments (DGEF / IOM / UNPOL) and the preparation of the Humanitarian Border Management (HBM) Training which is set for October 2014. Regarding support to the redeployment of state authorities, IOM will install and equip the work places of two Police Stations in Kiwanja and Kibumba.

Community- State Dialogue is promoted through joint activities with the community and the National Police and other elements of the Justice Sector. IOM recently started activities of participatory democratic dialogue in the return areas. These activities aim to restore the necessary trust between the different segments of society and maintain collaborative relationships.
The present advocacy is based on positive feedback received from Government partners as expressed through a letter by the Governor of North Kivu where he thanked IOM and the Government of the Netherlands for the activities completed and emerging results of the Human Security project. Activities were judged to have quick and real impact and wishes were made to extend the same activities to newly stabilization areas. Indeed, IOM aims to continue its support to the local government in establishing responsible community organizations and efficient state services. This necessitates further participation from stakeholders in identified areas and further rehabilitation of social infrastructure in order to increase the number and quality of collective services.

To realize this, IOM, in partnership with local government entities such as the Cellule Provinciale d’Appui à la Pacification (CPAP), SATEC, UNPOL, North Kivu Plan Ministry and Civil Society, will:

- Establish community organizations in return areas and villages of post conflict territories in North Kivu;
- Implement community-selected projects including capacity building of communities on Income Generating Activities (IGA);
- Train PNC in community policing and SGBV monitoring including follow up the redeployment of trained PNC;
- Implement trainings on Humanitarian Border Management;
- Monitor and ensure return assistance; and,
- Implement Early community recovery activities such as provision of reinsertion kits to returnees in post conflict areas in North Kivu in coordination with the local government and other non-governmental actors.

IOM seeks collaboration for promoting a recovery that meets IOM crosscutting issues and encourage community resilience. The aim being to stabilize the local economy and create cohesive relationships between segments of society. IOM’s proposed areas for partnerships and cooperation therefore include:

**Extend Early Recovery and Resilience activities in Bukoma, Binza and Bwito, the remaining return zones in Rutshuru Territory**

Initially, the activities of Human Security have been implemented in five groupements - Kibati and Kibumba in the Nyiragongo and Rugari Gisigari Jomba in Rutshuru. Thus, cross information on the importance of voluntary returns, return intentions collected and observed spontaneous departures on Goma displacement sites on one hand and the level of zone’s vulnerability combined with the guidance local government on the other hand, have led to the identification of these intervention areas. However, in Rutshuru territory, there remains other groupements - Bukoma, Busanza and Buito - recently declared as islands of peace that also require support in the context of community stabilization programs. IOM DRC plans, with new findings, to expand its activities into these new post conflict zones including in Beni territory.

**Support return assistance, peace building and reinforce local governance in additional post conflict zones in North Kivu**

With the joint tracking of ADF NALU rebels by FARDC and UN Intervention Brigade (FBI), gradually the territory of Beni and some chefféries in Masisi are recovering peace. However, humanitarian needs and restauration of state authority in these zones remain a priority for the government. With additional findings, IOM DRC is seeking new funding to assist in return assistance, re activate community organizations and provide support to stabilization efforts in newly identified zones.

Indeed, the establishment of mechanisms for prevention of conflicts, protection of victims and reintegration of vulnerable victims in the newly islands of peace will be focuses of the future.

In line with IOM DRC Emergency and Resilience Strategic plan, IOM will promote sensitization on SGBV and organize Community-State Dialogue and incorporate lessons learned into a durable solutions framework. IOM comparative vulnerabilities surveys in Rutshuru and Nyiragongo (2014) indicates that about 80% of returnees need reconciliation and peacebuilding activities are considered as priorities before development initiatives in post conflict zones.