DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

OVERALL SPENDING

The latest spending update by Government Spending Watch (GSW) for the Democratic Republic of Congo suggests that total public expenditure remains steady. In contrast to a forecast decline in the 2015 report (based on planned 2014 data), the country registered a slight increase of 0.54% of GDP, going from 17.91% in 2014 to 18.45 in 2015.

However, our 2015 update shows that there is a decline in public expenditure in social sectors as % of the total expenditure as shown in the figure below:

![Social Sectors Spending (% of total expenditure)](image)

SECTORAL EXPENDITURE

As reported in our GSW 2015 Report, DRC performed very well in terms of allocating expenditure to social sectors, almost reaching the regional targets for education (20% of total spending), agriculture (10%) and health (15%), scoring just under the spending targets agreed by African governments. GSW’s most recent 2015 update shows a slight rise in education spending with almost a doubling of expenditure for basic education, which keeps the country closer to the education target, an encouraging direction but still below the benchmark.

Social protection spending, which includes items such as protection for senior citizens, illness and disability provisions, anti-exclusion and anti-unemployment programmes, is also on the rise, albeit a timid one, with a 0.25% of GDP increase from 2014 to 2015.

However, planned expenditure in other social sectors in DRC took a somewhat worrying turn. GSW has found that from 2014 to 2015:

a) **Health** spending is registering a significant fall, dropping 130m Congolese Francs of planned expenditure, over 0.5% of GDP reduction.

![Health (% GDP)](image)

b) Expenditure related to the **environment** sector takes a dip of 30m Congolese Francs owing to a fall in water supply spending, although waste...
Water management expenditure remains pretty much the same.

c) But it’s the agriculture sector which seems to be hit hardest, with a massive decline expenditure of 232m Congolese francs and a huge drop in GDP share going from 1.55% to 0.78.

**CONTEXT**

Why such a plunge in these three key sectors while DRC should be spearheading public investment policies to meet the spending targets?

Looking at the non-social sectors, we notice a significant hike in “public order and security” spending, 300m Congolese Francs more spent on “extractives industries, processing industries, construction & public works” and “transport”, as well as some increase in defense and housing.

This [UNDP report](in French) explains that more emphasis has been put on security in line with DRC’s commitment to the Peace and Security Addis Agreement, job creation and socially-focused infrastructure projects in the energy and transport sectors – away from spending in key social sectors. It describes the shift in budgetary priorities as being in line with the newly approved Sustainable Development Goals’ framework.

However, the challenge for DRC will be to make sure that essential services in key social sectors do not bear the brunt of this change in public expenditure policy, and that Government continues to invest enough public funds in crucial areas which play a role in reducing poverty and building a more equitable society.

GSW hopes this change of course of DRC’s budgetary stance is temporary and that essential social sectors will be back at the heart of the Government’s priorities in 2016-2017.

**What is Government Spending Watch?**

Government Spending Watch (GSW) is a joint initiative by Oxfam and Development Finance International. The database is the first ever to track how much developing countries are spending on the MDGs. Since our launch in 2013, we track spending across social sectors related to the commitments made by world leaders in 2000 when they agreed to the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): health, education, agriculture, WASH, environment, social protection and gender.

As of August 2016, the database has spending data for 75 low- and lower-middle income countries from 2008 through to 2014.

For more information or to make enquiry about how to use the data, email: [gsw@development-finance.org](mailto:gsw@development-finance.org)