



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO COUNTRY REPORT

THE STATE OF THE HUMANITARIAN
SYSTEM 2026

2. METHODOLOGY, SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The DRC research team consisted of one country team leader, one deputy team leader, two research assistants in North Kivu and three research assistants in South Kivu. The sample constituted KIs with 20 individuals and five FGDs with a total of 30 participants (see Annex 1). Each participant provided their written or oral consent before participating in a KI or FGD, which were conducted in French, Kiswahili or a combination of both. Interviews and FGDs were recorded, anonymised and sent to a team of two transcribers who also translated the transcripts into English.

FGDs were conducted with people affected by conflict and KIs were conducted with women leaders, local chiefs, religious leaders, representatives of government, national NGOs (NNGOs), international NGOs (INGOs), international agencies and UN agencies operating both in the North Kivu and the South Kivu provinces. For each category of informant, we used interview guides or protocols with slightly different questions depending on each group (see Annex 2).

To maintain anonymity, we coded the names of research assistants, plus the names of study participants, their organisations and positions. The team coded all interviews in MAXQDA data analysis software, following existing codes derived from the overall SOHS research matrix (see [here](#)). We created new codes or sub codes for themes that did not have pre-existing codes in the software. From MAXQDA, we were able to compile an in-country research findings matrix to highlight key findings, narrative examples with transcript references, and related quotes with transcript references. Some contradictory evidence was found. As well as using pseudonyms, we put in place measures to manage ethical considerations, and we secured ethical clearance from the ODI Global Research Ethics Committee.

Limitations are twofold. The study is essentially qualitative rather than quantitative, and so it can only provide a textured 'snapshot' of the experiences of people interviewed. In addition, we collected data only in the North Kivu and the South Kivu provinces as access to Ituri province, and other parts of the country, was challenging because of the ongoing war. In addition, humanitarian crises have been mostly located in eastern DRC, and so the two provinces are a major hub for humanitarian organisations negotiating the outcomes of humanitarian aid in DRC. This also makes North Kivu and South Kivu key provinces for understanding and analysing the governance of humanitarian action in DRC.

