



CARSOC-IRSC



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**Center for Support to the Strengthening
of Civil Society and Good Governance in
the Democratic Republic of Congo**

**Institute for the Reconstruction
of Congolese Society**

**PERMANENT PROGRAM FOR SUPPORTING
THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONGOLESE
CIVIL SOCIETY (PADSOC)**



Duration : 2026 – 2030



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I- JUSTIFICATION

1. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is a State whose development has been compromised by the quality of its past and present leaders, who impose widespread practices of poor governance across society. Today more than ever, Congolese civil society bears the burden of defending itself and defending the nation against a political class that, moreover, denies its role as the primary sovereign. Consider the following:

- In 2018, a losing candidate was substituted for the winner of the elections to become President, because such had been decided by the outgoing President in order to share power with him.
- In 2023, voting machines were deliberately distributed to supporters of those in power to stuff ballot boxes in favor of their candidates. Results: re-election of the incumbent President; 480 national deputies out of 500 for the ruling party; none or almost no provincial deputies for the opposition across the country's 26 provinces.
- In 2024, a project to amend the Constitution was announced by those in power. The approach consisted of seeking to circumvent the two-term presidential limit imposed by the current Constitution. All indications suggest that this project has not been abandoned, although the process was slowed by the victories of the AFC/M23 rebellion in January–February 2025 (capture of the cities of Goma and Bukavu). Amending the Constitution to allow for the extension of the mandates of officials elected in 2023 and to avoid holding elections in 2028 due to the war would be the new strategy.

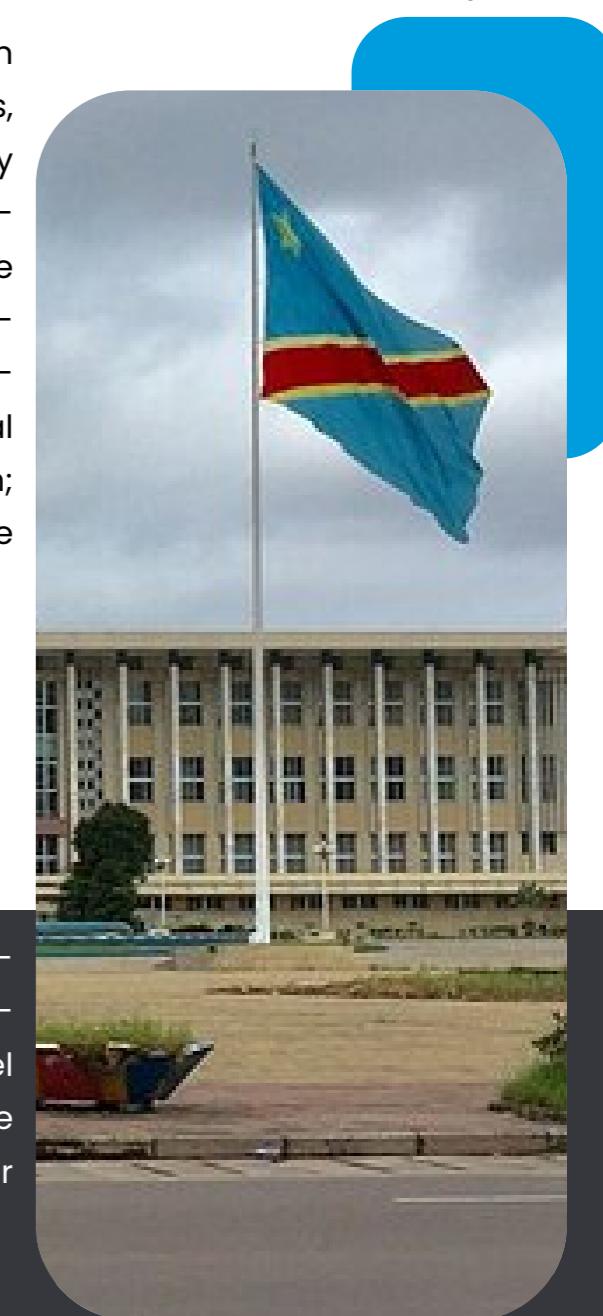
2. It therefore becomes urgent to revitalize civil society in order to enable the Congolese people to reclaim their status as primary sovereign, confiscated by a small group of individuals, and to change this political class by making their voice heard and respected before, during, and after upcoming elections. This is all the more necessary as opposition political forces—supposed to carry the political struggle—have lost much credibility and influence among the Congolese population. Without changing the political class, not only will the institutionalized system of predation be impossible to dismantle, but no effective political-institutional and socio-economic governance can be implemented, let alone produce socio-economic well-being for the Congolese people.

II- OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

3. Project DRC 2028+ pursues the following four objectives:

Objective 1: Foster the emergence of a mobilized and mobilizable civil society.

4. Project DRC 2028+ will bring about, within each territory of Catholic or Protestant parishes, one or more structures composed of local lay elites; strengthen their organizational and operational capacities; mobilize them to strengthen the capacities of other formal and informal organizations operating within the territories of these parishes; organize them into local and supra-local action networks to coordinate mass mobilization; and finally mobilize them to achieve the three other objectives set out below.



Objective 2: Prevent regressive change to the 2006 Constitution.

5. The local structures created within the territories of the respective parishes and their supra-local networks will act upstream of, or in parallel with, the evolution of the constitutional change project by mobilizing citizens to express their voices.

Objective 3: Securing the Integrity of the 2028 Elections (or later, hence "2028+")

6. The most important struggle for Congolese civil society starting in 2026 is to secure the integrity of any election that may be organized in the future. This integrity will, for example, make it possible to thwart any attempt at regressive constitutional change through a referendum. It is also what will make it possible to achieve the democratic revolution by changing the political class through credible elections.

7. With this in mind, the local structures created in the territories of the respective parishes and their supra-local networks will be engaged in demands aimed at securing the integrity of the respective ballots that may be organized in the near future. These would include, for example, the requirement for a new, more credible electoral commission; revision of the electoral law; withdrawal of voting machines from all elections; a credible audit of the electoral register; etc.

Objective 4: Changing the Congolese Political Class

8. The ultimate objective of Project DRC 2028+ is to change the Congolese political class within the framework of a peaceful revolution through the next general elections. The demand in this regard is today widespread across all segments of Congolese society. All indications suggest that society is ready for this and that only a spark would be needed to trigger and materialize this revolution. It is the responsibility of civil society elites to take advantage of this window of opportunity by developing relevant strategies for action.

9. One of these strategies consists of generating, at national and local levels, a "social movement for the change of the political class." Another calls for developing an effective electoral strategy for civil society (political organization, candidate selection, electoral campaign, financing, etc.) that would lead Congolese citizens to vote only for candidates who do not belong to the current political class. Strategies for mobilization to effectively defend the truth of the ballot must also be put in place, etc.

