

2023

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

**HUMANITARIAN STRATEGIC
SURGE CAPACITY**

DRC STANDBY ROSTER

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FOREWORD

In a world where crises seem to multiply every day, the need for swift and effective humanitarian response has never been more critical. Throughout 2023 the DRC Standby Roster again stood at the forefront of this endeavour, deploying experts to UN agencies across the globe, offering expertise and strong dedication.

“The DRC Standby Roster members demonstrated unwavering commitment to alleviating suffering and building resilience in communities worldwide.”

Whether it was responding to natural disasters, conflict zones, or protracted crises, the DRC Standby Roster members demonstrated unwavering commitment to alleviating suffering and building resilience in communities worldwide. From providing life-saving assistance in the aftermath of devastating earthquakes to implementing solutions for food security in conflict-affected areas or contributing to durable

solutions for refugees via registration and resettlement support, our experts exhibited extraordinary skill, adaptability, and courage in the most demanding conditions.

As we reflect on the events of the past year, it is with both humility and gratitude that we present the 2023 Annual Report of the DRC Standby Roster.

To our roster members and deployees, I extend my deepest appreciation for your selfless efforts and unwavering dedication to the humanitarian cause. Your tireless efforts have made a tangible difference in the lives of thousands, offering hope and comfort.

To our partners, donors, trainers and volunteers, I offer my sincere gratitude for your invaluable collaboration and steadfast commitment to the work of our roster. Together, we have demonstrated the power of collective action, proving that by working together, we can make a difference.



Susanne Brokmose

Head of the DRC Standby Roster

STANDBY ROSTER: WHAT WE DO

When a crisis hits, all humanitarian actors need to respond swiftly by having the right human resources on the ground quickly.

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) Standby Roster (SBR) works to enhance and improve the United Nations' (UN) response to humanitarian displacement, and as such enables faster and more effective support to people in need. This is achieved through both capacity-building and the deployment of high-quality experts and specialists to UN and DRC humanitarian relief operations all over the world. There are currently three active deployment schemes:



HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE ROSTER

The Humanitarian Response Roster has been operating since 1991 and is comprised of more than 600 highly qualified experts, representing more than 70 nationalities with a variety of professional profiles and experiences. The roster supports eight UN partners, and DRC operations in both emergency and protracted crises through the deployment of experts in a broad variety of competencies including protection, logistics, information management, WASH, and cluster coordination.



RESETTLEMENT ROSTER

The UNHCR-DRC Resettlement Deployment Scheme mobilises qualified and committed resettlement experts according to requests received from UNHCR. The objective is to strengthen UNHCR's resettlement processing capacity and thereby provide protection and durable solutions for the most vulnerable refugees in the world. DRC provides competent and experienced experts in response to UNHCR's requests for Resettlement, Refugee Status Determination, Best Interest Determination, Best Interests Assessment, Child Protection, and Complementary Pathways deployments to a range of UNHCR operations worldwide.



REGISTRATION ROSTER

The UNHCR-DRC Registration Roster supports UNHCR's work within registration and identity management through the deployment of highly skilled and experienced experts in this field. Deployments strengthen UNHCR's field operations' capacity to register and identify refugees, asylum seekers and other people of concern to facilitate access to basic assistance and protection. Further, to identify individuals with specific needs, prevent fraud and corruption and ensure adequate programme planning in relation to shelter, food, water, health, sanitation, and cash-based interventions.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

An overview of key initiatives that defined a successful year for the Standby Roster.

Deployment Response

The Standby Roster facilitated 184 deployments of skilled experts to 57 countries, aiding both UN and DRC operations.



Strategic Focus on Emergencies

Prioritizing onset crises, efforts to deploy in Sudan, Türkiye/Syria, and East Africa addressed urgent humanitarian needs.

Diversification of Expertise

Recruitment of 144 new members, including environment/climate change specialists, expanded the roster's skill set.



Comprehensive Training Initiatives

Online inductions and technical trainings equipped roster members for effective deployment and support.

Language and Cultural Sensitivity

With a special focus on recruiting French and Spanish speakers, SBR enhanced its ability to deploy to and operate in diverse contexts.



Capacity Building for the Future

SBR's emphasis on deploying younger professionals aimed at nurturing the next generation of humanitarian experts.

Monitoring Mission Insights

Monitoring missions to Bangladesh, Türkiye, and Ethiopia assessed deployee wellbeing and strengthened collaboration with UN partners.



Global Coordination and Engagement

Participation in Geneva consultations and coordination meetings bolstered partnerships and informed strategic planning for future deployments.

Deployments in 2023

Insights into the last year of deployments across the three Rosters.

OVERVIEW



GENDER BALANCE

55% FEMALE
45% MALE

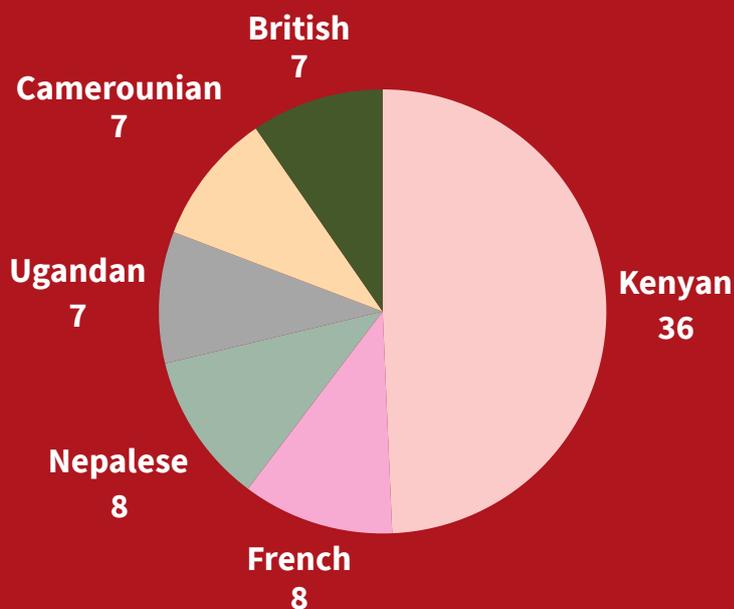


Significant shift in gender representation since 2020 where females made up 36% of deployments.



60 NATIONALITIES

TOP 6 NATIONALITIES OF DEPLOYEES



It is important that the Standby Roster has a culturally diverse pool of experts, to respond effectively and sensitively to global humanitarian needs.

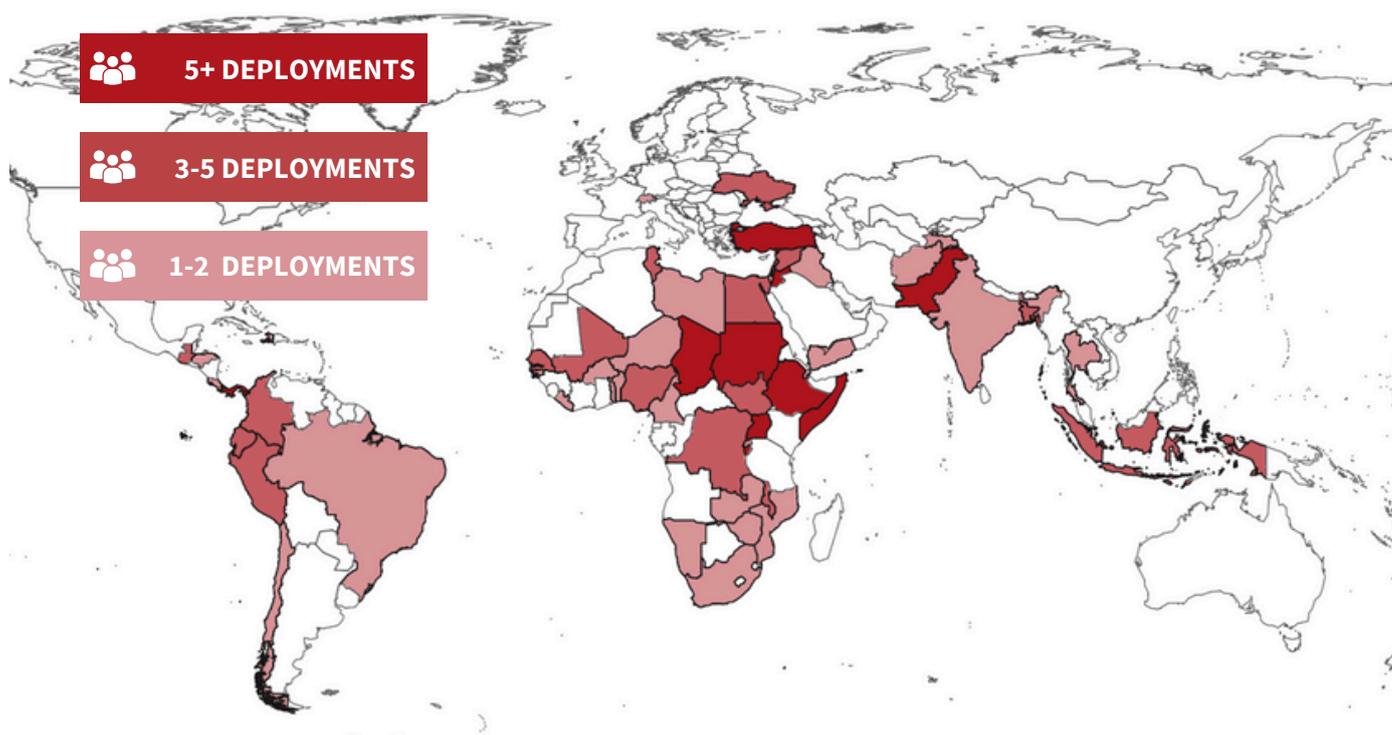
FASTEST DEPLOYMENT

14
DAYS



The fastest deployment - from date of request received to date the deployee arrived at the duty station - was 14 days. This was a deployment of an Information Manager Officer to WFP Ethiopia.

DEPLOYMENTS BY COUNTRY



TOP EXPERT PROFILES DEPLOYED

-  **90** RESETTLEMENT
-  **13** INFORMATION MANAGEMENT
-  **13** REGISTRATION
-  **8** LOGISTICS
-  **6** SUPPLY CHAIN

The three Rosters deployed over 30 different profiles during the course of 2023. The most common are listed above.

REQUESTS FOR DEPLOYMENT

 **552**
NEW REQUESTS

The Humanitarian Response Roster received 552 new requests for deployments over the year. Due to strategic priorities and funding limitations, candidates were deployed for 78 requests. The top two profiles for deployment were in Logistics (27%), and Information Management (25%).

DEPLOYMENT MONTHS BY DONOR



834
UNHCR

249
DANIDA

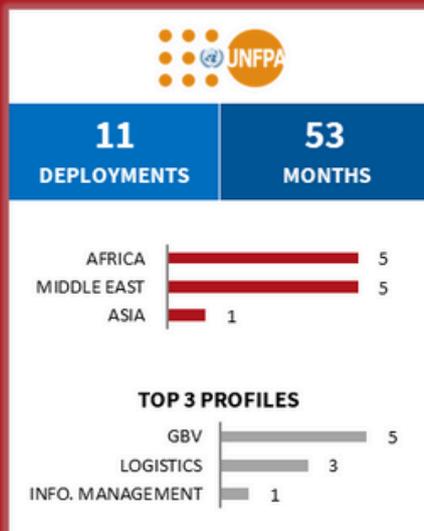
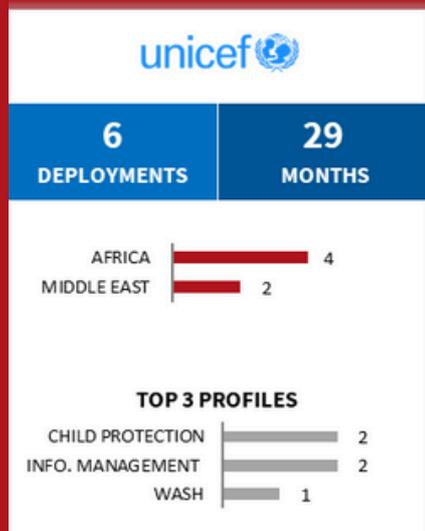
79
WFP

17
FCDO

16
UNFPA

13
IOM

DEPLOYMENTS BY AGENCY AND PROFILE



RECRUITMENT

In order to maintain a strong and relevant pool of experts, the three Rosters conducted targeted recruitment processes during the year.



In 2023, the Registration Roster recruited **24** new members, experts in Registration and Identity Management. In addition to English, **27%** are French speakers, **21%** are Arabic speakers, and **12.5%** are Spanish speakers. **83%** of new members are from countries within Africa.



In the Resettlement Roster, **84 new members** were welcomed. **65%** of new recruitments are from the Global South, and **61%** are female. In 2023, there was targeted recruitment for Spanish-speaking resettlement experts willing to deploy within Latin America.



In the Humanitarian Response Roster, **36** new members were welcomed of **25** different nationalities, experts within the areas of environment/climate change, cluster coordination, and protection. Due to high demand, the recruitment had a special focus on finding French speaking experts.



TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

To maintain a relevant and diverse pool of skilled professionals, it is essential to welcome roster members, prepare them for deployment, build and strengthen their capacities, and focus on their wellbeing both during and after their assignments.



Induction Trainings HR, RST/REG Rosters

Four induction trainings for members of both the Resettlement and Registration Rosters and the Humanitarian Response Roster were held and attended by a total of 83 members. The trainings included presentations on deployment procedures and networking opportunities to connect with fellow roster members.



UN Trainings

Six trainings hosted by various UN agencies were offered to members of the Humanitarian Response Roster. Two members completed trainings on information management and humanitarian civil-military coordination, respectively. Both were financially supported by the Standby Roster.



Introduction to Resettlement and UNHCR procedures

The technical training was the first of its kind, targeted towards roster members with limited Resettlement casework experience. The training was attended by 15 members and facilitated by a DRC staff member and former Resettlement Expert.



Wellbeing during deployment

The training aimed to provide the tools and skills needed for deployment outside the home country, and in potentially hardship duty stations. The training was facilitated by an external consultant, and attended by 15 Roster members.



TOPIC OF THE YEAR: RESPONSIVENESS

Responsiveness lies at the core of the Standby Roster's mission, serving as a fundamental principle guiding its operations.

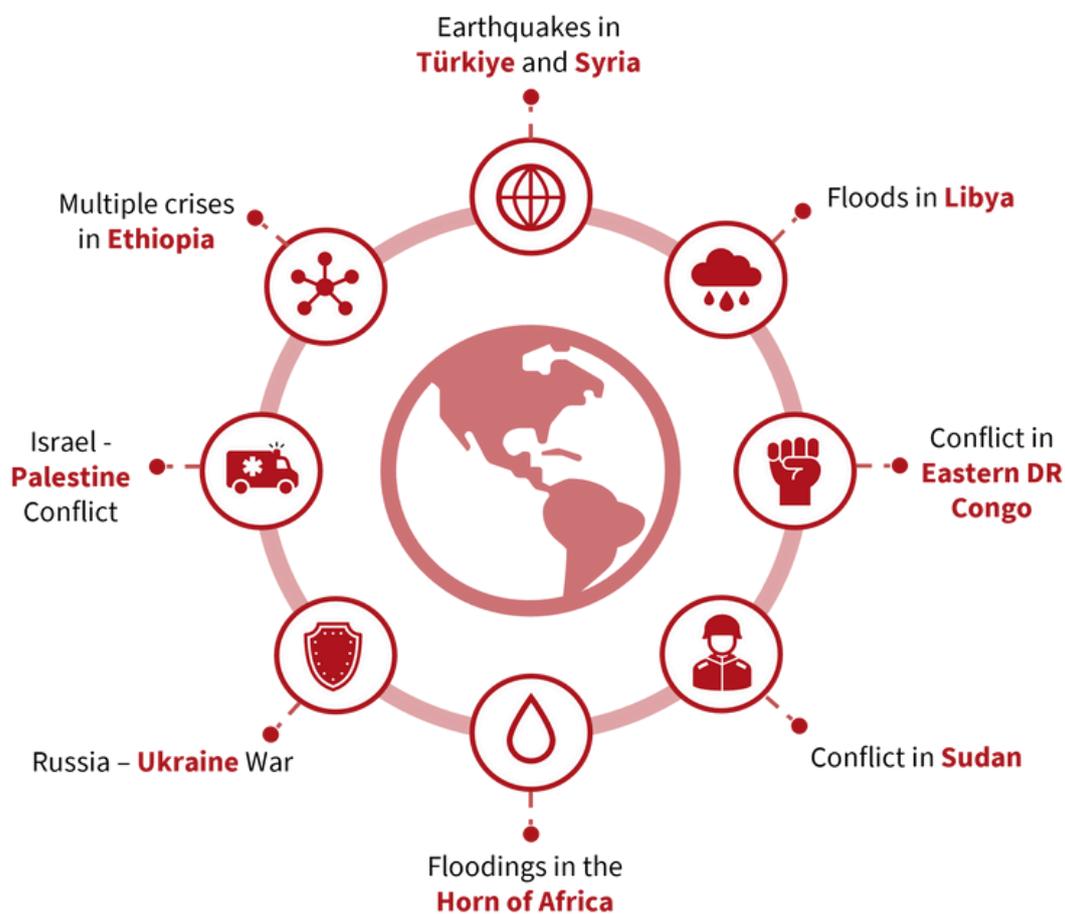
In 2023, the humanitarian landscape was marked by a combination of ongoing challenges and emerging crises, necessitating innovative and collaborative responses from the international community.

Climate-related disasters surged in frequency and intensity, while armed conflicts and political instability continued to drive humanitarian crises worldwide, leading to extensive displacement, loss of life, and human rights violations. The protracted nature of many conflicts posed significant challenges to delivering aid and achieving lasting solutions for affected populations. Responsive action was imperative, not only in addressing immediate emergencies but also in transitioning towards durable solutions.

The Standby Roster's work embodies responsiveness through swiftly mobilising experts and resources to address evolving humanitarian needs, but further, through its capacity to adapt support based on shifting contexts and priorities. This underscores a commitment to agile and effective humanitarian action.

Emergency Response:

In 2023, the Standby Roster fielded numerous requests for support in regions facing new crises such as Sudan, Türkiye/Syria, and Palestine/Gaza, as well as ongoing challenges such as extreme weather in East Africa and protracted crises in Ukraine, Haiti, Afghanistan, and DR Congo. The Rosters deployed experts to respond to multiple crises globally, including the key events below.



The Humanitarian Response Roster deployed experts to 26 countries, with Somalia, Sudan and Türkiye receiving the highest number of experts, highlighting the focus on new onset emergencies. In addition, the Roster prioritised allocating funding to continue the support to the protracted humanitarian crisis in the countries where our UN partners were in need. While the Humanitarian Response Roster deployed a wide range of different technical profiles during 2023. Funding for the cluster/coordination roles was still prioritised (like in 2022) as these roles are important in an emergency response.

In addition, deployees from the Registration Roster participated in a range of activities related to emergency response and registration management. This included organising and prepositioning for the registration of new arrivals, resolving adjudication cases through Biometric Identity Management System enrollment, overseeing registration activities conducted by government counterparts, and supporting the deployment of UNHCR tools. They also engaged in data management, training sessions, and administrative tasks to ensure efficient registration processes and data integrity.

Durable Solutions

Beyond emergency response, the ability to pivot programming as contexts evolve is crucial. This adaptability is exemplified in UNHCR's resettlement

efforts, providing refugees with durable solutions when their protection needs cannot be met in the countries they sought asylum.

The DRC-UNHCR Resettlement Roster deployees facilitated resettlement cases primarily to the USA, Canada, Australia, and Germany, with Syria, DR Congo, Venezuela, Guatemala, and Sudan being the top countries of origin for resettlement cases (as depicted in the map below). In 2023, the cases of **21,111** persons were assessed or reviewed by DRC deployees for resettlement. In addition **1,087** persons were referred for complementary pathways. Such initiatives underscore the importance of responsiveness not only in addressing immediate crises but also in transitioning towards durable solutions for displaced populations.

Looking ahead

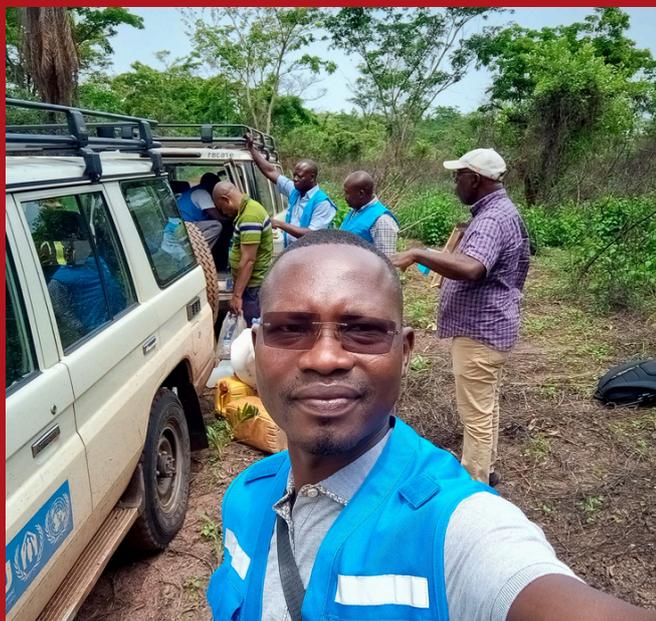
Responsiveness remains at the core of the Standby Roster's mission, serving as a fundamental principle guiding its operations. By maintaining a state of readiness and swiftly deploying experts and resources to regions facing crises, the Standby Roster ensures the timely and relevant support needed to address urgent humanitarian needs. Through its ability to adapt to evolving contexts and prioritise the most pressing challenges, the Standby Roster plays a critical role in facilitating effective and impactful humanitarian action.

Top countries for cases assessed and reviewed by DRC deployees



STORIES FROM THE FIELD

In this Annual Report we would also like to give the word to two of our deployees who have contributed to making the DRC Standby Roster successful.



Succes Djerandouba

Deployed as Associate Operational Data Management Specialist to UNHCR DR Congo, stationed in Kinshasa.

This was not my first time to be deployed by the operation but this time it was more than what I was expecting! DR Congo is a very big country with very many challenges. The operation is managing more than 500,000 refugees and asylum seekers and more than six million internally displaced people, so it is a lot of work. There are many activities to deliver, but operation is under resourced, the team is small, and there are budgetary issues.

The objective of my deployment was to support the operation in registration and resettlement. Due to budget issues, UNHCR was looking to transfer competency to the government so they could help with registration in real time. It was my responsibility to train the government partner, the National Commission for Refugees, to give them the tools and competency to perform registration tasks when UNHCR does not have the capacity. Previously this work was performed offline, but now everything is deployed to the cloud, so I also supported them in this transition.

Additionally, I supported in producing the monthly statistics report on the number of refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons for the DR Congo operation. This report was shared with the government, implementing partners, and other UN agencies. I was responsible for ensuring the quality of the data and worked closely with the team in the field to verify the accuracy of the statistics.

I also assisted the Resettlement Unit as the designated focal point for registration. The resettlement process relies on data quality. It is a very sensitive and critical issue. During my time in country, the US had requested to resettle more than 500 refugees, but there were more than 500,000 refugees and asylum seekers in DR Congo, with many kinds of problems and protection needs. The unit had to find the correct profile of people for resettlement, and I was responsible for data quality and reliability, and updating documentation to ensure that the right people were chosen for the resettlement process.

In the August of my deployment, there was a meeting with the Goma sub-delegation about an influx of 8,000 Burundians to Uvira and Sange, requesting an emergency response. Management asked me to follow up and coordinate this situation and support the deployment of the registration team. Several meetings were organised with the team from Baraka, Uvira and Bukavu to identify solutions and responses to this influx. I facilitated numerous coordination meetings and provided technical support to the team on mission. I briefed them on the standard procedures of registration by UNHCR, provided them with the biometric system and tools, and set up the connectivity to ensure this process could be done online.

The National Commission for Refugees was deployed and successfully registered 2,190 people. This was a big achievement, as one of the objectives of registration was the transfer of competence to the government partner.

I have now spent 13 years working in humanitarian organisations, I really like this work, I feel comfortable working in these contexts. I care about this cause, people leave everything and come to another country seeking security and protection through no fault of their own. When you are working for this kind of reason, it really feels like you are adding value.



A workshop with the Registration and Identity Management team to transfer capacity to the government



Doris Knoechel

Deployed as Humanitarian Affairs Officer to OCHA Haiti, stationed in Gonaives.

The situation in Haiti is dire on multiple fronts. Foremost among the issues, is the insecurity inflicted by gangs which is particularly acute in the capital and its surrounding metropolitan areas and impacts our humanitarian efforts to reach the people in need. The lack of adequate funding is another critical challenge, which is a struggle for those who desperately need aid and for those who are committed to assisting them, as aid workers are forced to curtail their operations and make decisions on how to prioritise. The psychological burden of determining who will receive assistance affects everyone involved.

My deployment was based in Gonaives, the capital of Artibonite. Here, the population suffers accelerated economic downgrading because of gang activities like roadblocks, hostage taking, and harassment of farmers. The hostilities force people to flee and seek refuge in less affected communities.

In May, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) declared an escalation to a more significant emergency level in Haiti than previously assessed. Consequently, all our offices had to increase their scale of operations. Headquarters supported us with additional funding and positions to enhance our presence.

One of the tasks was to decentralize our operations, which were previously centralized in the capital area. As the need expanded across all regions in the country, it was important to establish at least two operational hubs. One of these hubs was then initiated in Artibonite, the largest and most populated department beyond the capital area. An OCHA Suboffice was set up here with a DRC Standby Roster member until a permanent OCHA staff member could be assigned.

“We have accomplished something noteworthy starting from scratch here.”

The office began engaging with existing UN entities operating in the area, primarily the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Program (WFP). Our challenge was to bring more sectors like health, child protection, Gender Based Violence response, and Internally Displaced People (Isolutions to Artibonite to forge a coordinated, multisectoral response to the mutli-faceted urgent needs of the affected population. I can say that all the sectors that are present in the capital area are now also operational in Artibonite. The access working group of Artibonite complements the OCHA National access group focusing mainly on the constraints in the capital area.

There are many challenges in this line of work, the main one I have encountered is the silo-effect. We, as humanitarian operators, are organised into sectors which can operate independently without much interaction with others. Therefore, the main goal is to capitalise on synergies generated through collaboration. If we fail to function cohesively, we miss out on potential benefits.

Another challenge that I have observed in Haiti, is the brain drain phenomenon, which has been eye-opening. The migration of skilled people has left gaps in the workforce and many humanitarian organisations have struggled to extend operations due to a shortage of qualified local individuals. It was challenging to find a successor for my position here,

and the crucial position of decentralization requires stability. Without someone to unify and coordinate, operations will fall back into siloes. I am happy to say that I am quite satisfied with our achievements, however one is never entirely content. To have a smoothly functioning, highly efficient humanitarian operation requires further efforts, not least high financial contributions. Nonetheless, the groundwork has been laid, and I feel that we have accomplished something noteworthy starting from scratch here.

Since 2014, I have now been on six deployments with the DRC Standby Roster. For me, it's a way of life, it's dedicating your capacity to something that has a small effect but a positive impact for some.



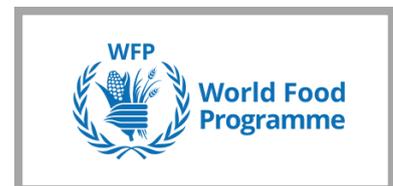
Photos taken and shared by Doris during her deployment to Haiti.

THANK YOU

A special thanks to our Members, Donors and Partners.

Over the past 30 years, the DRC Standby Roster has deployed thousands of experts and specialists to UN's humanitarian relief operations all over the world. However, this would not have been possible without our excellent, loyal and committed members. Currently, the DRC Standby Roster has over 1,000 members across three rosters with a broad variety of professional profiles and core competencies who make a difference for persons in need every single day.

We could not support this vital work without our committed donors, of which a special thank goes to the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Danida, who has supported the DRC Standby Roster since the beginning in 1991. Lastly a warm felt appreciation to the UN agencies, DRC country operations, and the range of partners who have all contributed and played a key role in the work and achievements of the DRC Standby Roster in 2023.



DRC STANDBY ROSTER TEAM

Please meet the DRC Standby Roster staff who worked in the team during 2023.



Susanne Brokmose,
Head of the DRC Standby Roster



Maria Dyhr Zangenberg,
Programme and Operations Coordinator,
Humanitarian Response Roster



Malaika Bueno,
Programme and Operations Coordinator,
Humanitarian Response Roster



Pia Terslev Johansen,
Programme and Operations Coordinator,
Resettlement and Registration Rosters



Rachel Hesketh,
Programme and Operations Coordinator,
Resettlement and Registration Rosters



Jenna Magee,
Programme and Operations Coordinator,
Resettlement and Registration Rosters



Rasmus Walther Jensen,
Programme and Operations Coordinator,
Humanitarian Response and Resettlement Rosters



Hanne Heidinger,
Programme and Operations Coordinator,
Resettlement Roster



Johanna Margoline,
Programme and Operations Coordinator,
Resettlement Roster



Mads Piper,
Student Assistant



Celine Manriquez Nordheim,
Intern



Elisa Bianchini,
Intern

