POLITICAL TRANSITION IN DRC: HOW DID KINSHASA HOUSEHOLDS FARE?

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Abstract

Officially announced on 24 April 1990, the political transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo would eventually culminate in presidential elections. By comparing the results of two household surveys, conducted in 1986 and 2004 respectively, we are able to trace the economic reflection of this process in the standard of living of the *Kinois*[1]. Although the exercise is fraught with methodological problems, it nevertheless generates some salient outcomes: First and foremost, the available evidence unanimously points to a slight increase in the general standard of living, thereby contradicting the official macro-data. Further, given an increase in inequality, it is well possible that the period of transition was experienced increasingly unequally by different population groups. Third, one of the most significant changes observed is that Kinshasa has become more closely connected with World (food) markets. Meanwhile, the level of education of the principal income earner remains one of the main predictors of the level of household consumption, even in a thoroughly informalized economy.

1.   INTRODUCTION

"Dear compatriots, we are here to witness our third encounter with history"[2]. This is how President Mobutu opened his address on 24 April 1990. Subsequent events would indeed confirm Mobutu's characterization of the speech as 'historical', though not for the reasons he had in mind. Tuesday 24 April was an encounter with history, not so much because it heralded the beginning of a "new Zaire, aware of its creative ingenuity, conscious of its position in the heart of Africa, and capable of heading off the challenges of the year 2000 with confidence and serenity, in security and dignity"[3], but rather because it marked the start of a series of events and a new dynamics that swept the country, with consequences extending far beyond the realm of politics. The announcement of regime change was not only the start of a profound political crisis and crisis of the state; it was also a sign of a country in serious economic and social trouble. But how deep exactly did the economic crisis go? Did it go right down to the level of the household basket of goods and services? And if so, then how can we measure the impact that the political transition had at this basic level? These are the central questions we try to address in the present contribution.

First, though, we must specify the empirical basis from which we draw: To begin with, we rely mainly on the recent 'Enquête 1-2-3' (henceforth 1-2-3 Survey)[4] as a source of information on household budgets in Kinshasa. Subsequently, we identify some important trends by comparing the findings of the 1-2-3 Survey with data collected in earlier surveys. We also focus on the evolution and determinants of inequality during the transition. A discussion of policy implications and suggestions for further research concludes the paper.

2.   SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE TRANSITION

The reader may be familiar with the story of the drunkard who cannot find his house key. He lost it just outside the front door, but nevertheless goes looking for it under the streetlamp further down the road, convinced that he is that it is impossible to find in the dark. In the context of our research, the lamp is the perspective provided by two representative surveys. It is appropriate for studying an evolution through time. Without this perspective, one cannot possibly find the key. Of course, there are also data from official agencies, as well as other sources that provide fragmentary information on a more or less regular basis and with varying degree of reliability. But while these can also provide clues with regard to the period of political transition, they do not compare to the perspective of an ex-post and an ex-ante survey. This being said, the 'doorstep' (i.e. the series of events and new dynamics referred to above) remains an important reference point. So the question arises: Is the 'light' provided by the two-survey perspective close enough to the doorstep of political transition?

Financed by bilateral donors and organized by the National Statistical Institute of the DRC in close cooperation with an AFRISTAT team, the 1-2-3 Survey is a precious source of information that is quite unique in terms of quality as well as quantity. The pilot phase of the survey was conducted in Kinshasa (2100 households). The concluding section on household budgets (module 3) was carried out in the city in October and November 2004. The survey was conceived in such a manner that it could serve both as a source of information for the development of a poverty-reduction strategy and as an *ex ante* reference point for measuring the impact of that strategy five years on. The involvement of AFRISTAT in the survey set-up also guarantees comparability of results with other (mostly Francophone) countries, where this type of survey is common[5].

Although the survey potentially constitutes a valuable source of information, some circumspection is called for, for various reasons:

(i)   *It is not immediately clear from the 1-2-3 Survey what changes have occurred in the volume and composition of the household basket during the period of transition.*

In order to gain insight into this matter, we would need to compare the 1-2-3 Survey with a representative and comparable budget survey of the same population and conducted just before the beginning of the transition. However, to the best of our knowledge, no survey of a similar quality has previously been conducted in Congo/Zaire/Congo. Some of the 1-2-3 Survey findings could be compared with those from smaller surveys, such as those organized by UNICEF (ENSEF in 1995, MICS2 in 2001, see time line in figure 1), but such a comparison would not cover the entire period of transition. We therefore opted instead to compare the 2004 results with those from budget surveys carried out in Kinshasa in 1969, 1975 and 1986[6]. Considering our 'doorstep', i.e. the transition period, the most appropriate point of comparison would be the 1986-survey[7]. To be sure, we must insist here on the different methodological basis of the former surveys. We may assume the methodologies applied to have been different in every phase of the survey procedure, from the sampling set-up to and the definition of 'household' to the training and follow-up of interviewers, and the specification of expenditure categories. Hence, we need to ask at every stage of the comparison whether our observations are a reflection of reality or merely a statistical artifact caused by methodological differences between the surveys.

Figure 1: Transition Period Timeline
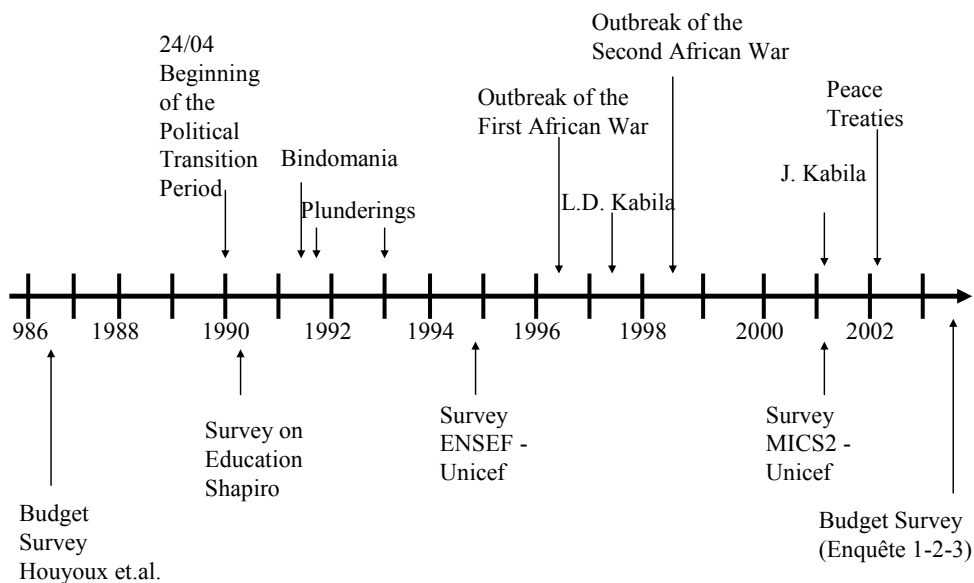
(ii)   *Kinshasa is a city with an own history of transition*

Even if the *Kinois* are undergoing the same transition as all other people in Congo, they have been experiencing it in a unique and incomparable way. Surveys on mortality in the East, where the war took place, have shown how the predicament of a population can vary enormously from one place to another. The reality of four million 'missing' persons in the East has no counterpart in the Western part of the country (Roberts, 2000; Roberts et al., 2003; Coghlan et al., 2004). In figure 1, we list merely the big events in Kinshasa. First and foremost, the so-called *Bindomania* and the subsequent plundering of Kinshasa in 1991 and 1993 profoundly damaged the monetary and the real economy of the capital (De Herdt 2002). These events undoubtedly affected the capital city in a more significant way than any demonstration by the political opposition and/or students, or even than the so-called

'liberation' of Kinshasa in 1997 by Laurent Kabila's troops. In a similar way, the *Kinois* will not forget the beginning of the second war in August-September 1998 –another desperate highlight in recent history. As events, the plundering of Kinshasa in the early 1990s and the siege of the city in August 1998 were closely related to the political transition, yet they were experienced entirely differently by the *Kinois* than by other Congolese. We therefore conclude that we cannot readily extrapolate the results of our analysis of the situation in Kinshasa to the rest of the country.

(iii)   Kinshasa is a city with an own historical trajectory

During the 18 years that separate us from the third historical rendezvous with Mobutu, the *Kinois* have also experienced much more silent, but nonetheless important changes. We refer first and foremost to demographic trends, as a result of which Kinshasa is a very different city today than it was at the start of the transition. In fact, half of the present-day residents were not even born yet on 24 April 1990. This is a problem from a researcher's point of view, as statistically we are not talking about the same population.

At the moment of independence, Kinshasa had a population of barely half a million. Since then, the city has grown uninterruptedly, making it very much a site *under construction*. Recent data demonstrate that this evolution has not ended with the political transition: Between 1984 and 2004, the population of Kinshasa has multiplied by factor of 2.5. The survey of 2004 also includes the rural zones of Maluku and N'Sele, the historical stratum that has registered the highest demographical growth rate. Indeed, more and more *Kinois* are living in these areas. However, given their low population density as compared to the other city zones, and considering their modest overall demographic weight, we have excluded these two communes from our statistical definition of the city of Kinshasa. This omission also makes the comparison with the 1986 survey more reliable.

Table 1: Geographical Stratification

ZONE	COMMUNES	DESCRIPTION	POPULATION (in thousands)		DENSITY 2004 (per km²)	ANNUAL GROWTH 1986-2004 (%)
			1984	2004		
Residential communes	Gombe, Ngaliema, Limete	Exclusively white population prior to 1960	397	1,091	3,397	5.18
Older communes	Barumbu, Kinshasa, Kintambo, Linguala	Old African sites (before 1945)	242	516	39,165	3.86
Newer communes	Ndjili, Kasa-Vubu, Ngiri-Ngiri	New African sites (after 1945)	314	774	39,008	4.61
Planned communes	Bandalungwa, Lemba, Matete, Kalamu	Planned zones for white-collar workers (after 1950)	522	1,136	27,029	3.96
Southern extensions	Ngaba, Makala, Bumbu, Selembao	Extensions of existing zones (after 1959)	423	1,099	28,868	4.88
Eccentric communes	Kisenso, Mont-Ngafula, Masina, Kimbanseke	Other extensions, further from the city centre (after 1960)	681	2,078	3,042	5.73
Rural communes	Nsele, Maluku	Urbanisation after 1980	31	320	36	12.28
Total			2,614	7,017	704	5.06

Source: Based on HOUYOUX, J., *o.c.,* pp.14-18 and THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO, *Document sur Kinshasa en préparation du DSRP*, downloaded from http://www.dsrp-rdc.org, May 4th 2006.

Not only has Kinshasa grown at a rapid pace during the transition, the city has also changed profoundly in terms of its demographic structure. Whereas in 1984 some 41% of its inhabitants were born outside the city, by 2004 this proportion had dropped to barely 25%. This is a recent phenomenon: If we consider household heads only (as a rough proxy for the adult population), that percentage increases to 63%. Among the immigrants, we note a proportional increase in individuals from Bandundu (from 31% to 41%) and, to a lesser extent, from East Kasai.

Table 2: Province/country of origin of Kinshasa residents

	1984	2004	
	Population	Population*	Household heads
As a % of the migrant population			
Bas-Congo	30.8%	26.5% (.001)	30.6%
Bandundu	30.9%	40.8% (.000)	42.8%
Equateur	10.0%	7.1% (.000)	5.5%
Haut-Zaire	4.0%	3.3% (.020)	1.9%
Kivu-Maniema	2.4%	0.9% (.000)	1.6%
Shaba	3.8%	1.6% (.000)	0.7%
Kasai oriental	7.7%	8.8% (.016)	5.0%
Kasai occidental	5.6%	4.3% (.009)	6.9%
Abroad	4.9%	6.7% (.045)	4.9%
As a % of the urban population			
Migrants/Kinois	41.2%	25.3% (.000)	63.2%

*Between brackets: p-values for binomial statistics using the respective population weights of 1986 as test proportions.

Sources: NGONDO S., DE SAINT MOULIN, L. and TAMBASHE, B., *Perspectives démographiques du Zaïre 1984-1999 & population d'âge électoral en 1993 et 1994,* Kinshasa, CEPAS, 1993 and data from the 1-2-3 Survey (2004).

Finally, Kinshasa is probably also repositioning itself within the country's economic structure. Although not much is known about this economic repositioning, we may hypothesize on the basis of (rare) official data and other fragmentary information (PNUD-CONGO, 1999; Marysse, 2004; De Herdt & Tshimanga, 2005).

- If Congo's per-capita GDP was halved between 1990 and 2004, the regional GDP of Kinshasa probably declined by more, but still by far less than that of the former copper province of Katanga and the more agriculture-dependent provinces of Bandundu, Equateur and the Oriental Province.

- Combining these economic shifts with observed demographic evolutions, we may conclude that Kinshasa's contribution to the national GDP has increased from one-fifth to one-third. Hence, Kinshasa has, probably more by accident than by political will, become the economic belly of the country. Given the total implosion of the State and the formal industrial sector, and consequently everything those two entities represent in terms of mobilization of resources, this observation comes as somewhat of a surprise. We shall return to this issue below.

To conclude, there is indeed potentially a mismatch between the historical perspective provided by a comparison of different household surveys in Kinshasa and the process of transition we wish to examine. There are, after all, potential problems of internal and external validity. On the one hand, the measured evolution to an extent reflects methodological differences between the surveys rather than 'real' variation over time. On the other, given the unique way in which Kinshasa has experienced the period of transition, and considering its own political, demographic and economic repositioning over time, we must refrain from

generalizing the outcome of our analysis to the rest of the country. Despite these caveats, however, we still have at our disposal a unique window on the history of transition. In what follows, we compare the two datasets, adding measures of statistical significance whenever possible. We also add more specific methodological comments when appropriate.

3. THE EVOLUTION OF HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURES IN KINSHASA BETWEEN 1969 – 2004 : FACT OR FICTION?

As we have previously mentioned, the 1-2-3 Survey was preceded by three other budget surveys in Kinshasa. These three other surveys are methodologically comparable among each other, but much less with the 1-2-3 Survey. We must keep this in mind when we analyze the evolution in time of actual expenditures.

The bottom row in table 3 represents the evolution in monthly household expenditures per capita. For the purpose of comparability, all amounts have been expressed in currency values of November 2004. According to the table, mean household expenditures had grown by 33%. Taking into account the supposed decline in household members over the period concerned, expenditures *per capita* appear to have increased by approximately 75% between 1986 and 2004. This result does not correspond to many observers' intuition. Official per-capita GDP in any case declined over that period to a third of its original level (De Herdt & Tshimanga, 2004). Moreover, as we have already indicated above, the regional GDP of Kinshasa supposedly declined *even more* than the national average. On the other hand, the official figures tell only part of the story: One needs to take into account that, over the same period, the economy of Congo as a whole and the urban economy in particular, were informalized to an unprecedented degree. However, the discrepancy between a decrease to one-third and an increase by 75% can hardly be attributed to informalization alone.

Table 3:
Evolution of monthly real expenditures per capita,
Kinshasa 1969 – 2004

	1969	1975	1986	2004
Food	67.4%	59.6%	62.1%	56.2%
Housing	14.9%	15.9%	15.8%	15.3%
Clothing	7.3%	9.3%	4.7%	7.0%
Transport	4.4%	7.4%	9.4%	7.6%
Health	2.0%	2.4%	3.0%	3.4%
Leisure	1.1%	1.1%	0.7%	1.3%
Education	1.0%	0.8%	0.6%	4.8%
Divers	1.9%	3.5%	3.7%	4.4%
Total expenditures	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Monthly expenditures per capita° (in constant FC)°°	9 035	9 538	7 184	12 544

°In this and the following tables, we use monthly expenditures including net transfers and autoconsumption in order to facilitate comparison with data from previous surveys.
°° Adjusted to November 2004, using the price index of IRES Markets.
Source: Own calculations based on HOUYOUX, J. et al., *o.c.*, p.10 and data from the 1-2-3 Survey (2004).

This being said, we believe that the figure of 75% conflates real variation and statistical artifice, caused by multiple methodological differences. Admittedly, we are not prepared to go along with the generally pessimistic view on the situation (De Herdt & Marysse, 1997; De

Herdt, 2001; De Herdt & Tshimanga, 2005). However, if our barometer indicates a general increase in well-being by 75%, then surely we need the question the barometer itself.

If it is, on the whole, impossible to separate fact from fiction here, we can in any case triangulate result with other observations. One potential problem is that the list of items in the 1-2-3 Survey is much more elaborate than that in the previous surveys. Consequently, the 1-2-3 Survey may seriously overestimate total expenditures. However, this problem can be overcome by looking at percentages rather than at absolute figures. Thus, we observe that, between 1986-2004, the weight of food items in the total basket of expenditures decreased from 62% to 56%. Applying Engel's well-known law, which states that the income elasticity for food outlays is less than 1, we must again conclude that total expenditures increased. However, this reasoning is rather too simplistic, as at least part of the decrease in the weight of food items is attributable to the fact that the 1986-2004 period coincided with an almost total evaporation of the State budget for education. While back in 1986 the State was still financing education, schools were not only de facto privatized during the 1990s, but education also became sources of taxation to finance the Ministry of Education. This evolution shows up as a sudden rise in household expenditures on education from 0.6% to 4.8%.

On the other hand, we cannot explain the increase in the category 'clothing' (from 4.7% to 7%) which, according to Engel, ought to have *decreased* in weight supposing that the mean total household budget also decreased. Moreover, assuming that the 2004 budget for education already consumed a considerable proportion of what might otherwise have been spent on clothing, one could well argue that, circumstances permitting, the weight of clothing could have increased even more. Admittedly the 1-2-3 Survey covers 87 clothing items, whereas the 1986 survey lists just 37, but similar discrepancies apply to other categories as well: in the case of food, the 1986 survey includes 93 items, compared to 211 in 2004. However, as we compare proportional rather than absolute expenditures, we may assume such methodological differences to be largely neutralized.

Additional evidence can be found *within* the details of the category of food items. We already know from the previous table that the *relative* weight of food declined between 1986 and 2004. Additionally – and entirely in keeping with the hypothesis of an increase in income – we find that this expenditure category also increased in *absolute* terms, namely from 4461 to 6965 constant Congolese Francs (FC), or 56%. However, in order to be able to conclude on the basis of these findings that the mean income of the *Kinois* increased, we must neutralize two potential methodological problems. First, as with total mean expenditure, there is a comparability issue to address (the aforementioned difference in number of food items). Furthermore, there may be a problem with regard to the price index, which does not necessarily reflect the price level of a particular type of product at a given moment. Ideally, one would want to compare products in terms of quantity and, more interestingly still, in respect of quality. This is of course not possible for all the products covered in the survey, which are after all expressed in prices in order to allow aggregation. Still, we conducted the exercise for a limited basket of 10 food products, taking their energetic value as an indicator of quality. Together, these products represent almost half of all food expenditures.

Table 4 presents the evolution of different components in the food basket of Kinshasa households, alongside items for which we have made a more detailed analysis. It is this kind of detail we believe is necessary for a correct interpretation of the survey data. The basket of 10 items has been selected from those products for which the dataset also provided price information. The products included are consumed by the large majority of households. For 1986, we calculate the purchased quantity of each food item by dividing real expenditures by the price per kilogram of the product in question. Subsequently, we apply the same coefficients for converting the quantities into energetic values. For our small basket of 10 products, we thus arrive at an increase in energetic value from 1044 to 1809 kcal. Once again,

these results seem to confirm that an increase in well-being took place between 1986 and 2004.

To be sure, these results need to be qualified to an extent. We have temporarily discarded the other 201 food items from the list of the 2004 survey (or the other half of the food expenses). Consequently, the results should be read with caution, as there is a margin of imprecision to take into account. However, even with this qualification, some real trends can be discerned. So let us establish on the basis of these 10 selected food items what kind of changes occurred in the nutritional pattern between 1986 and 2004.

Table 4: Evolution of food expenditures per capita

	Mean expenditures		Price/kg (constant FC)		Price/100 kcal (constant FC)		Calories/day (kcal)	
	1986	2004	1986	2004	1986	2004	1986	2004
Wheat	14%	26%						
of which Maize°	*1%*	*8%*	223	199	6.30	5.23	33	361
Rice	*4%*	*8%*	226	229	6.22	6.31	52	301
Bread	*8%*	*6%*	222	372	8.50	14.25	132	112
Root crops	15%	11%						
of which Cassava°	*13%*	*10%*	132	226	3.79	7.00	499	375
Meat & fish	30%	22%						
of which Beef	*6%*	*1%*	872	1247	71.48	102.21	11	1
Intestines	*1%*	*1%*	633	817	48.30	62.37	3	4
Chicken	*5%*	*3%*	633	1115	43.37	55.96	18	10
Dairy products	4%	4%						
Oils and fats	5%	6%						
of which palm oil	*4%*	*4%*	233	173	2.59	1.92	237	504
Vegetables	16%	16%						
of which spinach	*0.5%*	*0.2%*	190	198	72.91	76.15	1	1
Sugar	4%	3%						
of which refined sugar	*4%*	*3%*	370	260	9.24	6.50	57	140
Other	2%	2%						
Non-alcoh. drinks	2%	3%						
Alcoholic drinks	7%	2%						
Prepared meals	1%	5%						
Total°°	100% 46%	100% 43%			10.09	8.32	1044	1809

°weighted mean of flour and tubers.
°°for the price/100 kcal : mean price of the 10 items weighted by their respective weight (in kg) within that group of 10 items.
Source: Own calculations based on HOUYOUX, J. et al., *o.c.*, and data from the 1-2-3 Survey (2004).

First, we observe that the price the *Kinois* pay for 100 kcal decreased between 1986 and 2004 from 10.1 to 8.3 constant FC. We refer here to the mean price of these 10 food items, weighted on the basis of the share of each product within the basket of each year. In part, this reduction is due to a dietary change: Indeed, had the *Kinois* maintained the same basket as in 1986, the price for 100 kcal would actually have increased to 13.9 (adjusted) FC. Thus, they seem to have altered their diet towards products with a more advantageous price per calorie ratio. For one thing, they were eating smaller quantities of low-calorie products which have increased substantially in price. Meat is a case in point: It had already been very expensive in 1986 but became even more so by 2004. This confirms earlier observations that people have habituated to eating chicken only on special occasions, like Easter and Christmas (De Herdt, 2004). However, the most spectacular change is the switch from cassava to substitutes: The price of cassava almost doubled (+71%), so that one would expect people increasingly to

avoid it. In general, the weight of root crops in total food expenditures decreased from 15% to 11%. Instead, people were eating more rice (a 570% increase in terms of calories) and especially maize (a 1100% increase). These two products are not only more nutritional, they also exhibited a more economic price/calorie ratio in 2004, despite the small price increase of rice. Additionally, the *Kinois* were also consuming more oil and sugar, which had dropped in price.

These price changes also reveal some recent processes which resulted downstream in a different food basket of the household as described above. Upstream, the substitution of cassava by maize tells us about the agricultural transition that took place in the interior, an evolution we have described elsewhere (De Herdt & Tshimanga, 2005). In the present context, we are essentially concerned with a transition which we believe is due to a combination of a failing traffic network and some fluvial traffic innovations (De Herdt, 2001; Tollens, 2004; De Herdt & Tshimanga, 2005). On the other hand, we also observe a more hidden integration of the *Kinois* within the globalization process: In 2004, most meat and chicken arriving in Kinshasa consisted in deep-frozen imports from India, Brazil and Europe[8]. Vegetable oil, once one of the most important agricultural export products[9], was now also imported from Asia and Europe. All of the refined sugar consumed in Kinshasa in 1986 was produced in the province of Bas-Congo. However, that market has since been taken over by Brazilian producers: according to Tollens and Biloso (2006), who accessed data from the National Customs Service OFIDA, approximately 60,000 tons of sugar were imported in 2004 and 2005 – roughly the same quantity as that produced by the National sugar company in Kwilu-Ngongo (Tollens & Biloso, 2006:41). As far as the latter products are concerned, opening up to the rest of the world has resulted in lower prices. This is of course beneficial to the *Kinois*, but it also complicates the situation of many Congolese farmers. Whereas in 1986, almost all calories consumed were produced locally (except for bread), by 2004 almost the exact opposite was true (apart from maize[10]). This is indicative of an entirely different transition, namely to a more dependent position of Kinshasa in the world economy.

To conclude this section, we repeat that there is sufficient evidence pointing at a significant increase in average household budgets between 1986 and 2004. Although we have reasons to believe that a rise of 75% is certainly an overestimation, there are a number of indicators – including the declining weight of food items and the growing weight of clothing within total expenditures, alongside the increase in calorie consumption – that suggest the increase in total expenditures is in any case a *real* phenomenon. However surprising this finding may be to many knowledgeable observers, confirmation is found in scarce data on some specific achievements in Congo. Table 5, for example, regroups data we were able to compile on the evolution of infant malnutrition and the schooling of children.

Table 5:
Evolution of the gross enrolment rate of children between 6-19 years and of the degree of malnourishment among children between 0.5-5 years, Kinshasa 1990-2004

	Gross enrolment rate (%)						Malnourishment (%)		
	6-9 years		10-14 years		15-19 years		wasting	underweight	stunting
	M	F	M	F	M	F			
1990°	80	81	95	91	81	68	6	22.4	26.8
2004*	93 (.000)	92 (.000)	91 (.000)	89 (.025)	78 (.019)	74 (.000)	8.1	19.9	22.4

°for data on malnourishment : November 1991.
*Between brackets: p-values for binomial statistics using the respective population weights of 1990 as test proportions.
Source: Own calculations based on SHAPIRO, D. and TAMBASHE, B.O., "Gender, poverty, family structure, and investments in children's education in Kinshasa, Congo", *Economics of Education Review*, 20 (2001) pp.359–375, data from the 1-2-3 Survey (2004) and based on PRONANUT/CEPLANUT, *Enquête Nutritionnelle dans la Ville-Province de Kinshasa*, Kinshasa, Ministère de la Santé, 2004/1991.

With regard to the schooling data, the table combines data from the 2004 survey with those of a representative survey carried out by Shapiro and Tambashe (2001) in Kinshasa in 1990 (N= 2450 households). Firstly, we note that the gross enrolment rate in the three age groups defined had improved, or at least stabilized. Gross enrolment in the age group of '10-14 years' probably decreased slightly simply because parents were now more able to send their children to school earlier – as is reflected in an increase in gross enrolment in the 6-9 years age category. As regards the data on infant malnutrition (N=1862 in 1991 ; N=1773 in 2004), they also suggest a slight but statistically significant improvement of the situation during the transition, at least judged by the data on stunting and underweight (the increase in wasting is not significant and in any case wasting does not as accurately reflect more general trends) (De Herdt & Tshimanga, 2004).

4.   EVOLUTION OF INEQUALITY

In their report on the 1986 budget survey, Houyoux et al. use mean household expenditure as a criterion for dividing the survey sample into 6-quantiles in order to gain insight into the degree of income inequality (Houyoux et al. 1986:17-18). For the sake of comparability, we have applied the same methodology for decomposing the sample of the 1-2-3 Survey into 6-quantiles. The results of this exercise are presented in table 6.

Table 6:
6-quantiles of monthly expenditures per household (in constant FC)

	6-quantiles						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	6/1
1986	19,017	28,474	35,830	43,675	61,529	128,080	674%
2004	21,223	35,963	47,317	62,219	86,805	183,793	866%
% 86-04*	11.6% (.000)	26.3% (.000)	32.1% (.000)	42.5% (.000)	41.1% (.000)	43.5% (.000)	

*Between brackets: p-values for one sample t-statistics using the respective means of 1986 as test values.
Source: Based on HOUYOUX, J. et al., *o.c.*, p.17 and data from the 1-2-3 Survey (2004).

The data show that overall inequality increased considerably between 1986 and 2004, from 1 over 7 to 1 over 9.

The question arises whether this evolution is attributable to any one variable. In trying to resolve this issue, we concentrate on two elements which may be very significant in establishing a (well-oriented) poverty alleviation policy, i.e. geographical location and educational level of the household head (Houyoux, 1973:29-33).

Table 7 presents the available data on inequality by socio-historical stratum (see table 1). In general, we observe that the socio-historical stratum informs us only to a limited extent about the general level of expenditures. However, whereas in 1986 the residential communes still defied any comparison, this is far less the case in 2004: the gap between mean expenditures of the eccentric communes and those of the residential zones had by now decreased from 1 to 2.4 in 1986 to 1 to 1.7 in 2004. Moreover, we note a relative increase in mean expenditures especially among the older popular communes, the planned communes and the eccentric communes. We have previously studied the location of poverty and wealth in greater detail (De Herdt et al. 2006). However, the quasi-disappearance of the exceptional position of the residential communes and the rise in wealth in the older sites (i.e. the popular commercial centre) and the planned sites (with a better-schooled population and more

adequate infrastructure) are probably the result of the expanding informalized economy, which is gradually substituting for the 'established' modern companies that disappeared following the plundering of Kinshasa and/or the period of hyperinflation in the early 1990s.

Table 7:
Monthly household expenditures by socio-historical stratum (in constant FC)

Geographical stratum		Residential communes	Older sites	Newer sites	Planned sites	Southern extensions	Eccentric communes
'86	Demographical weight	5%	12%	14%	16%	23%	30%
	Mean expenditures	84,472	48,336	60,494	69,252	53,812	35,860
'04	Demographical weight	14%	6%	12%	14%	17%	36%
	Mean expenditures	91,512	100,392	75,084	101,714	63,323	53,566
% change in demographical weight*		9% (.000)	-6% (.000)	-2% (.001)	-2% (.495)	-6% (.004)	6% (.001)
% change in expenditures**		8% (.418)	108% (.000)	24% (.001)	47% (.000)	18% (.002)	49% (.000)

*Between brackets: p-values for binomial statistics using the respective population weights of 1986 as test proportions.
**Between brackets: p-values for one sample t-statistics using the respective means of 1986 as test values.
Source: Demographical data based on table 1; data on expenditures based on HOUYOUX, J. et al., *o.c.*, p.32 and data from the 1-2-3 Survey (2004).

Table 8:
Monthly household expenditures by level of education of the household head
(in constant FC)

Education		Without education	Primary incompl.	Primary compl.	Secondary 1-2 years	Secondary 3-6 years	Higher education
'86	Demographical weight	9%	20%	11%	10%	31%	20%
	Mean expenditures	33,147	41,195	41,997	44,760	59,508	73,264
'04	Demographical weight	7%	12%	7%	23%	29%	23%
	Mean expenditures	52,059	51,107	48,387	57,970	67,028	120,944
% change in demographical weight*		-2% (.025)	-8% (.000)	-4% (.000)	13% (.000)	-2% (.226)	3% (.059)
% change in expenditures**		57% (.002)	24% (.000)	15% (.109)	30% (.000)	13% (.021)	65% (.000)

*Between brackets: p-values for binomial statistics using the respective population weights of 1986 as test proportions.
**Between brackets: p-values for one sample t-statistics using the respective means of 1986 as test values.
Source : Based on HOUYOUX, J. and NIWEMBO, K., *o.c.*, p.30 and data from the 1-2-3 Survey (2004).

With regard to the data on the level of education, it is important that we should consider the changes in the demographic weight of each category. Indeed, we observe a net reduction (from 40% to 26%) for the categories where the household head has completed primary school at most, while we see an increase among those categories where the household head has received at least some years of secondary and higher education. These data are not indicative of a decline in schooling among the *Kinois*. Quite the contrary in fact. More in particular, we note an increase in income among households where the head has either received higher education or no education at all. We believe this observation to be due first and foremost to the fact that the notion of 'household head' refers more to a sociological

category than to the status of principal income earner; these are, in principle at least, two different concepts. We shall return to this issue below. For the moment, suffice it to say that the increase in expenditures among households with a higher-educated head deserves to be contrasted with the prevailing image of an informalized economy, which is perhaps best summarized by the notion of a cab driver with a college degree: maybe this cab driver exists, but the general picture is that one's educational achievement remains a good predictor of income. This is all the more surprising as there is sufficient evidence of a decrease in the quality of education: during the 1990s, several schools indeed experienced quite a few 'blank years'[11] and most were also affected by rampant corruption. So what, then, is the value added of a degree from higher education? One possible answer is that higher education allows one to build a network of social contacts that extends beyond the commune where one lives[12]. This network may be activated subsequently to explore opportunities for gaining a more substantial income, e.g. through a formal job or by establishing one's own business.

On the basis of our comparison of 1986 and 2004 budget survey data for Kinshasa households, we draw the following conclusions. First, inequality increased considerably between the two measurement years. At the same time, downward leveling occurred in respect of the geographical location of welfare in Kinshasa: The residential strata existed only in name in 2004, as there was barely any difference with other strata in terms of mean expenditures. Moreover, although we observe a slight increase in inequality insofar as level of education is concerned, the difference between the richest and the poorest category is too small to explain the general inequality in expenditures. So the question remains: What are the socioeconomic structures that have generated and further deepened inequality during the period of transition? The data presented above suggest that the significance of geography and education as explanatory factors for inequality has declined. However, this conclusion needs to be qualified, as we shall explain below.

5.   ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE ON INEQUALITY IN 2004

In the present section, we shall shed yet another light on inequality in contemporary Kinshasa. As we have previously emphasized, the 2004 data must be presented in such a way as to allow comparison with data from the 1986 survey. Still, we believe it is also useful to question the manner in which those data have been presented thus far, not only in order to demonstrate the impact of subtle changes in the definition of variables on outcomes, but also with a view to translating our analysis into policy conclusions. In this context, the following questions arise:

1.   What is the criterion used for measuring a person's well-being?
Restricting ourselves to monetary indicators of well-being only, two important aspects come to the fore. On the one hand, the 1986 survey used expenditures as a proxy for income, whereas the 2004 survey focuses rather on consumption itself. This means that the 2004 survey (i) does not take into account savings, investments, financial gifts (as, in the literal sense, these are not consumed), and (ii) increases effective consumption with imputed rent in the case of homeowners (who in fact do not 'spend' anything on their accommodation). On the other hand, Houyoux et al. (1986) presented 1986 expenditures per household, whereas it is now customary to correct expenditures for variation in the total number of household members, taking into account household-level economies of scale as well as variations in household composition (children consume less than adults). If one ignores household size and composition when calculating per-capita expenditures, one risks underestimating the level of well-being of the more populated households and/or those with relatively more children[13]. All these elements have already been taken into account in the 1-2-3 Survey and the actual exercise allows us to reintroduce them here[14].

The data in table 9 provide insight into the effect of this reintroduction if we decompose the sample into 6-quantiles.

Table 9: Association between the 6-quantiles based on household expenditures and consumption expenditures per equivalent adult

	(%)	Poor	2	3	4	5	rich	Total	Index of mean expenditures
			6-quantiles based on household expenditures according to Houyoux°						Index of mean expenditures
6-quantiles based on the expenditures according to the 1-2-3 Survey°°	Poor	10	5	1	1	0	0	17	**100**
	2	3	4	5	3	1	0	17	**163**
	3	2	3	4	5	3	0	17	**216**
	4	1	2	3	4	5	2	17	**283**
	5	1	1	2	3	5	5	17	**386**
	Rich	1	1	1	2	3	9	17	**887**
	Total	17	17	17	17	17	17	100	
Index of mean expenditures		**100**	**169**	**223**	**293**	**409**	**866**		Wilcoxon T p = .271

°Indexes based on mean household expenditures (including financial gifts and gifts in kind, autoconsumption and housing investments, but excluding imputed rents).
°°Indexes based on mean consumption expenditures (including gifts in kind, autoconsumption and imputed rents, but excluding housing investments and financial gifts) and corrected for household size and composition.
Source: Based on HOUYOUX, J. et al. (1986:17) and data from the 1-2-3 Survey (2004).

In fact, with these modifications, inequality appears to increase slightly. The range of mean expenditures per 6-quantile increases from 100 to 866 to 100 to 887. More importantly, though, the two methods only classify 36% of the households in the same 6-quantile (i.e. the sum of the elements on the diagonal of the table). We discuss the effects on our analysis of the determinants of inequality below.

2. *How can one decompose inequality into socioeconomic groups?*

In previous analyses, one tended simply to compare the means between categories in order to 'explain' inequality by a particular kind of categorization. Today, other approaches are usually taken. More specifically, one now tends to (i) place less emphasis on examining the population as a whole (i.e. the mean), and to focus more – exclusively even – on the fate of the *poor*, so that subsequently one is able to (ii) decompose poverty by calculating the 'contribution' of each socioeconomic category to it ; in this manner, one obtains a particular group's *poverty profile* (Ravallion, 1992). In respect of (i), the «Maximin» principle (John Rawls) certainly has its merits: The argument that one needs to judge a society on the basis of its impact on the poorest is an important one, even though it should not distract our attention away from other considerations. One should, after all, not lose touch with the structures of inequality, which are without a doubt partially responsible for the creation of poverty itself. This line of thought leads us to the following adjustments:

- We calculate not only the *poverty* profile, but also that of *affluence*.
- At the same time, we adopt a *relative definition* of poverty and affluence: anyone in the first 6-quantile is considered to be poor; anyone in the sixth 6-quantile is considered to be rich[15].
- For each socioeconomic category, we calculate (i) the respective percentages of poor and rich people, and (ii) the contribution of each category to poverty and affluence.

Table 10 presents the results of the poverty and affluence profiles where groups represent different strata. While we had provisionally concluded above that there was no correlation between the socio-historical stratum where a household lives and the level of its expenditures, the data below suggest how that there is actually quite a strong correlation. Despite the fact that the percentage of poor people (as defined above) in the residential strata

is comparable to the percentage living in the southern extensions –and thus in a sense these residential areas have experienced a downward leveling– in absolute terms more than three-quarters of the poor live in the city's periphery (southern extensions and eccentric communes). Moreover, we observe that the percentages of wealthy people in the southern extensions and in the eccentric communes remain very modest in comparison with those in the other geographic zones. As a consequence, geographic location remains an important factor, implying that funds can be targeted in poverty alleviation efforts, notwithstanding the declining difference between the mean expenditures per stratum. Having said that, we also need to take into consideration the fact that, even in the eccentric communes, almost 10% of residents fall within the richest 6-quantile of Kinshasa. In other words, our argument in favor of geographic targeting does not imply that existing internal inequalities within each geographic zone should be ignored.

Table 10: Inequality profile by socio-historical strata

Stratum	% within the population	% poor*	% contribution to poverty**	% rich*	% contribution to richness**
Residential	14	13 (.318)	11 (.190)	23 (.117)	19 (.137)
Older sites	6	4 (.012)	2 (.007)	34 (.007)	13 (.016)
Newer sites	12	4 (.000)	3 (.000)	20 (.222)	15 (.400)
Planned sites	14	7 (.001)	6 (.004)	32 (.000)	26 (.000)
Southern extns.	17	15 (.451)	16 (.424)	9 (.000)	10 (.005)
Eccentric zones	36	29 (.000)	62 (.000)	8 (.000)	17 (.000)

*Between brackets: p-values for binomial statistics using 16.7% as the test proportion, i.e. the weight of one 6-quantile.
**Between brackets: p-values for binomial statistics using the respective population weights as test proportions.
Source: Based on the data from the 1-2-3 Survey (2004).

3. Who is the reference person for characterizing the socioeconomic profile of a household?

As mentioned before, the use of socioeconomic variables can be problematic for the design of the inequality profile, in the sense that these variables are based on the profile of the household *head*, which is, in fact, an *emic[16]* concept: the head is defined by the members of a household and consequently the precise reasons underlying this choice may vary. Nor does the category of 'head' necessarily correspond to a modicum of power over other household members. Thus, the title of household head may simply be honorary. The modern image of the male-breadwinner household has always been a stereotype that hides a much more complex reality. However, this image makes even less sense when the male loses his job and it is rather his wife who generates most of the household resources. This hypothesis can be deduced from several publications about the informalization of the urban economy in Kinshasa (and in Sub-Saharan Africa in general) (Mvondo Pashi, 2003).

Although we were unable to fully test this hypothesis here, we did consider whether or not the head was also the principal income earner of the household. As it turned out, in 2004 only 62% of the household heads were also the principal breadwinner of their family[17].

Table 11:
Poverty and richness profiles by status of principal earner of the household

Head=Principal earner ?	% within the population	% poor*	% contribution to poverty**	% rich*	% contribution to richness**
Yes	62	14 (.234)	47 (.001)	19 (.490)	78 (.008)
No	38	27 (.000)	53 (.001)	9 (.001)	22 (.008)

*Between brackets: p-values for binomial statistics using 16.7% as the test proportion, i.e. the weight of one 6-quantile.
**Between brackets: p-values for binomial statistics using the respective population weights as test proportions.
Source: Based on the data from the 1-2-3 Survey (2004).

We also note that the percentage varies with the socioeconomic status of the household: Over half of the heads of households belonging to the first 6-quantile are not the principal income earner, while in the sixth 6-quantile, almost 8 in of 10 household heads are the main breadwinner. Moreover, the category of household where the head is not the principal income earner has almost twice as many poor as the category where the household head is also main breadwinner. The latter category also includes three times as many poor as rich households. It would appear, then, that the economic base of the household head varies strongly with the socioeconomic status of the household in question.

In order to deepen our analysis of this phenomenon, we have detailed some individual characteristics of the household head and the principal income earner, by comparing the 'poor' and the 'rich' of our sample.

Table 12:
Individual profile of the head and the principal earner (P.E.) of the household within the first and sixth 6-quantile

	POOR**			RICH**			KINSHASA		
	P.E.= Head	P.E. ≠ Head		P.E.= Head	P.E. ≠ Head		P.E.= Head	P.E. ≠ Head	
		P.E.	Head		P.E.	Head		P.E.*	Head*
% male	75% (.117)	25% (.281)	79% (.388)	89% (.152)	55% (.010)	85% (.347)	83%	29% (.000)	81% (.325)
Mean age (years)	47 (.186)	29 (.002)	51 (.810)	46 (.514)	28 (.010)	42 (.012)	45	33 (.000)	51 (.000)
% max. prim. school	43% (.001)	59% (.057)	50% (.020)	11% (.058)	16% (.018)	3% (.001)	20%	38% (.000)	35% (.000)
% sec. or higher	57%	40%	49%	90%	84%	96%	80%	62%	65%
% top management	2% (.001)	0% (.176)	0% (.098)	38% (.001)	5% (.404)	11% (.147)	18%	3% (.000)	4% (.000)
% self-employed	47% (.100)	86% (.034)	27% (.522)	31% (.137)	26% (.000)	17% (.286)	39%	75% (.000)	27% (.000)
% employed	50% (.287)	14% (.068)	16% (.272)	31% (.059)	69% (.000)	42% (.038)	44%	23% (.000)	20% (.000)
% unemployed	0% (-)	0% (-)	57% (.113)	0% (-)	0% (-)	30% (.084)	0%	0% (-)	49% (.000)

*Between brackets: p-values for binomial statistics (and for a one-sample t-statistic for 'age') using the respective weights (and means) of the category 'KINSHASA–P.E. =Head' as test proportions (value).
** Between brackets: p-values for binomial statistics (and for a one-sample t-statistic for 'age') using the respective weights (and means) of the category 'KINSHASA' as test proportions (value).
Source: Based on the data from the 1-2-3 Survey (2004).

Table 12 shows that the image of the male household head is correct in approximately 4 out of 5 cases, but that proportion varies between 89% in the richest 6-quantile to 75% in the poorest. Moreover, among 'poor' households where the title of the head is merely honorary, 3 out of 4 principal income earners are female in the poorest 6-quantile (and 71% in the total population of Kinshasa). In this sense, the hypothesis formulated above is confirmed: In most households with an honorary head the principal income earner is a woman. Moreover, the information on age reveals that these principal income earners, if they are not heads, tend to belong to a younger generation than the household head (on average 33 years versus 51 years for household heads in Kinshasa). Thus, it is not only the household head's wife who steps in; his children also contribute to the family income. To an extent, we also see the reflection here of 'hidden households', managed by young mothers who are still living with their parents (Moser 1998; De Herdt 2004).

As regards level of education, we observe that this is higher among households where the head is also the principal income earner, an effect that plays more against the poorer 6-quantiles due to the lower relative weight of this category. At the same time, in households where the principal income earner is not the household head, it is the head who is more educated. This phenomenon is undoubtedly a reflection of the lower level of education of women in comparison to men. Finally, with regard to socio-professional category, we find that the principal income earners, if different from the head, tend to be self-employed. Only in the sixth 6-quantile are they more likely to be employees than self-employed.

Table 13:
Inequality profile by level of education of the principal income earner

Instruction	% within the population	% poor*	% contribution to poverty**	% rich*	% contribution to richness**
Without education	18	19 (.528)	18 (.410)	10 (.081)	12 (.125)
Primary incomplete	25	31 (.000)	41 (.000)	7 (.001)	12 (.003)
Primary complete	3	19 (.626)	3 (.582)	4 (.284)	1 (.342)
Secondary 1-2 years	24	14 (.149)	17 (.061)	12 (.080)	20 (.100)
Secondary 3-6 years	19	20 (.268)	20 (.265)	18 (.293)	23 (.122)
Higher education	11	2 (.000)	1 (.000)	45 (.000)	32 (.000)

*Between brackets: p-values for binomial statistics using 19.3% as the test proportion for the poor and 15.0% for the rich, i.e. the overall relative weights of poor and rich within the reduced dataset of principal income earners (which is due to an unequal non-response).
**Between brackets: p-values for binomial statistics using the respective population weights as test proportions.
Source: Based on the data from the 1-2-3 Survey (2004).

Table 13, finally, presents the poverty and affluence profiles of different groups defined in terms of the level of education of the principal income earner. The table shows how poverty as well as affluence are unmistakably structured along this variable: As the level of education rises from 'incomplete primary' to 'higher education', so too does the proportion of affluent household, while the proportion of poor households declines. The only exception is the group of those 'without education': It includes fewer poor than other groups in the first 6-quantile, and more affluent individuals than other groups in the sixth. This observation undoubtedly reflects an older generation that did not enjoy the same educational opportunities as younger ones, but nevertheless succeeded in acquiring a decent standard of living. Be that as it may, investment in education remains one of the most important levers in the fight against poverty.

6. CONCLUSIONS

With hindsight, 24 April 1990 was the start of a sequence of unique events and complex dynamics which we may, without hesitation, describe as historical and the effects of which are tangible throughout society, down to the level and composition of the daily basket of goods and services consumed by households in Kinshasa. At the same time, however, one cannot but be impressed by the resilience and stability displayed in the midst of such a *maelstrom* of change.

The conclusions of our analysis have been formulated in between a discussion of methodological problems and ensuing concerns regarding a too mechanical reading of the comparison of survey results. However, one can see how the transition period, in some important ways the beginning of the implosion of the Congolese economy, has not kept people from *maintaining* or even *slightly increasing* their level of expenditures. However deficient the indicators, the *Kinois* are today better dressed and better nourished than they were in 1986. A more refined analysis of food outlays suggests that the latter phenomenon

can be traced to both cheaper prices and changes in dietary habits. The reduction in prices is attributable in part to a silent integration of Kinshasa into the global economy, much to the detriment of the national agro-industry. It also reflects a nutritional shift from cassava to maize, implying that the city can now be fed by more distant provinces as well.

A second remarkable fact is that, although we observe a slight improvement in the situation *in general*, this evolution has not been experienced in the same way by all. Again, this is a robust observation, even if we are unable to explain it unequivocally. However, a more detailed analysis of the 2004 data reveals that expenditures vary with such classic factors as geographic location and level of education of the principal income earner. The latter aspect in particular is surprising. The *Kinois* often use the expression that French cannot be eaten, which obviously reflects the devaluation of intellectual functions in the wake of the collapse of the formal economy. However, evidence from the 1-2-3 Survey suggests that even if these intellectual functions have disappeared, educational degrees have retained their value. Among principal income earners who attended primary school, 56% belong to the first 6-quantile and just 4% to the sixth. And among principal breadwinners with higher education, none are classified as 'poor', while 37% are classified as 'rich'. So while it may be true that French cannot be eaten, it however seems to provide access to other social networks and allow one to advance more (rapidly) in society. This is certainly a phenomenon that merits further research.

Third, at household level, we are struck by how the informalization of the economy has affected the role of the household head. Indeed, one-third of the households, and over half of the poor ones, survive primarily on resources generated by others than the household head, the majority of whom are female. This phenomenon, too, deserves further scrutiny, especially in relation to intra-household resource allocation, gender issues and demographic trends.

Finally, we must emphasize once again that our analysis was restricted to Kinshasa. Although we now have a clearer picture of how the capital city of the DRC experienced the period of political transition, we must keep in mind the relatively unique position of Kinshasa as an international gateway within Congo's economy. Migration data suggest that the Congolese capital continues to attract immigrants from the interior, especially from the province of Bandundu. This is attributable at least in part to its role at the interface between the local and the global. At the same time, it serves as a reminder that our findings cannot be generalized to the country as a whole.

ENDNOTES

[1] *Kinois* is the name given to the inhabitants of Congo's capital, Kinshasa.

[2] The full version of Mobutu's address on 24 April 1990 was downloaded on 9 May 2006 from http://www.congonline.com/Histoire/disMobutu%2024%20avril%201990.htm.

[3] Ibid.

[4] 'Enquête 1-2-3' is a specific survey methodology used mainly in Francophone African countries; the numbers refer to each of the three phases of the survey, which focus consecutively on: employment, informal sector and household consumption.

[5] For the international debate on the survey and an overview of preliminary results, see for example the special edition of STATECO (Brilleau et al. 2006).

[6] Houyoux 1973, Houyoux et al. 1986. For those interested exclusively in demographic research, other entry points are available : the 1975 surveys in western Zaire, the demographic census of 1984, the 1990 demographic survey by Shapiro, and two surveys organized within the UNICEF framework (Ensef in 1995 and MICS2 in 2001). An important drawback with the 1986 survey by the INS (published in INS 1989) is that we do not know how to trace back the exact monetary numéraire of the month in which the results were published.

[7] Except in relation to education, where we rely on data provided by Shapiro.

[8] In part this was buffalo meat (Tollens & Biloso 2006:41).

[9] Up until 1958, Congo was the world's biggest exporter of palm oil (Tollens & Biloso 2006:41).

[10] For an explanation of this exception, see De Herdt & Tshimanga (2005).

[11] Years during which the school or university was closed.

[12] In this sense, the 'blank years', perhaps even more so than normal years, are important in an individual's economic trajectory.

[13] The parameters used in order to correct for economies of scale within the household and for the presence of children are respectively 0.85 and 0.7.

[14] The difference lies in the way we have calculated the adult equivalents and taken into account economies of scale within households (De Herdt 2004).

[15] One of the reasons to opt for such a relative definition of poverty is linked to the problem of applying the contemporary standard definition of one dollar PPP per capita per day: for Congo, the conversion of current dollars into dollars PPP is problematic (De Herdt 2004:16-18). Moreover, we must adapt to the previous analysis by Houyoux et al. (1986), which was based on 6-quantiles.

[16] Emic, as opposed to etic, refers to the cultural specificity of behaviour and/or belief.

[17] The principal income earner was not always detectable for lack of data on individual earnings. For this reason, we do not include here households with an unknown principal breadwinner.

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