



Political Economic Analysis Work Assignment Guidance

Purpose

BHA proposes a Political Economy Analysis (PEA) to inform the BHA design of a potential solicitation and to serve as a publicly available resource for implementing partners for applications responding to a potential BHA funding opportunity solicitation. The Purpose of the PEA is to develop context-specific situational awareness.

Objectives

With this broad purpose in mind, BHA seeks a synthesis of existing information regarding:

- The interests and behavior of key actors and institutions.
- The patterns and causes of the conflict.
- How governance, political instability and conflict impact the resilience of local populations.

Below the reader will find a list of suggested questions for each Knowledge Goal. These questions are of concern to BHA/W, BHA/[Country] and potential partners working to address resilience for the most vulnerable in the focus geographies. To the extent possible, researchers should use these guiding questions to inform their approach. USAID/BHA understands that information sources and time may be limiting factors in seeking to address all of the factors highlighted below.

Country Context

Individual country contexts will be provided separately in the Work Assignment. However it is reasonable to expect that the following contextual characteristics will apply to each of the identified countries, including:

- Ongoing conflict that significantly influences the feasibility, effectiveness, and outcomes of food and nutrition security interventions
- Political, economic and environmental challenges dating back many decades
- Violent and disputed land redistribution, collapse of the commercial agricultural sector, decline in smallholder productivity, politically motivated violence and conflict, and economic collapse
- Local currency devaluation
- Unsound monetary policies that contribute to the flourishing of currency black market and collapse of formal businesses replaced by informal sector.
- Rural economies are predominantly agrarian. Rainfed agriculture, pastoralism, agropastoralism, petty commerce and informal employment in both agricultural and non-agricultural activities are the principal economic activities in rural areas. Transfers in the form of gifts from friends and

family, charity and remittances are also important sources of income. Both seasonal and long-term migration are common in some contexts.

- Complete dependence on rainfed agriculture in arid, drought-prone lands is risky. The rural poor in these areas seek to diversify their livelihood strategies. Although access to local markets varies, in many contexts, the rural poor purchase a significant amount of the food that they consume.
- Climate change and depletion of natural resources with accompanying shocks and stresses to the natural environment are and will continue to be severe.

Knowledge Goals

Knowledge Goal 1: Understanding key actors and institutions.

A stakeholder mapping exercise, to be carried out in the initial Desk Review, will identify and describe key institutions and actors in the target geography. The PEA should build on and deepen this analysis. In doing so, the PEA must:

- Consider both traditional systems of authority within communities and public institutions in the target area.
- Consider the preferences and motivations of citizens, traditional leaders, public officials and other key actors and interest groups.
- Consider contextual factors (including norms, rules, economic circumstances and the political environment) that influence the choices and behaviors of key actors.

Potential lines of inquiry regarding communities and traditional authority

1. Are local communities economically stratified?
2. Are they culturally diverse? Are they internally divided by class, caste, clan, ethnic identity or religion?
3. To what degree is extreme poverty and vulnerability associated with caste, clan ethnic identity or religion? In other words, who are the poorest, most marginalized and vulnerable?
4. Is there evidence of discrimination, exclusion, or exploitation between clans, ethnic groups, age groups, etc.?
5. Are there cultural barriers to participation in social activities, entitlements or economic activities?
6. To what degree is traditional authority rooted in clan, ethnic identity or religion?
7. To whom are traditional authorities accountable?
8. Are traditional authorities responsive to the needs of all community members?
9. Are they seen as legitimate by all members of communities?
10. How are disputes resolved? Is dispute resolution perceived as fair?

Potential lines of inquiry regarding public institutions

1. To what degree are public institutions bureaucratic vs. personalistic?

2. Is the selection of office holders based on merit or connections?
3. To whom are public officials accountable? In what ways are they accountable?
4. Special attention should be given to patterns of behavior within weakly institutionalized (personalistic) institutions where authority is based on patron-client relationships rather than rule of law.
5. Is the mission of office holders the provision of public goods and services to all residents?
6. To what degree are public institutions characterized by patron-client relations, factionalism, rent seeking and corruption?
7. How stable are public institutions?
8. How do local structures of authority such as traditional leaders, religious and social norms affect political and economic dynamics?
9. What is the 'contested space' between them and non-governmental institutions, such as religious leaders and/or traditional organizations?
10. How do interactions between local and traditional authorities affect governance and access to public goods and services?
11. How has the conflict shaped the relationship between local and traditional authority?

Knowledge Goal 2: Understanding the patterns and causes of the conflict

The PEA should identify patterns and causes of conflict in the target area. Special attention should be given to local conflicts including clan or ethnically charged communal violence, banditry, etc. Broader conflicts involving national parties and factions, social movements, armed forces or non-state actors (including national and trans-national insurgencies) should also be considered if they are likely to significantly impact the stability of the target area and the resilience of its population.

Potential lines of inquiry regarding local communities and traditional authority

1. What are the principal patterns of instability and conflict in the target area? In answering this question, refer to the intensity, frequency and duration of conflicts.
2. Who are the principal participants?
3. What are the conflicts about?
4. To what degree are conflicts between clans?
5. To what extent is communal violence religiously or ethnically charged?
6. What are the triggers?
7. Who are the instigators? Mitigators?
8. Under what conditions is conflict likely to worsen? What trends and social processes are likely to contribute to conflict?
9. What factors promote/inhibit social cohesion among community members?
10. To what extent and under what circumstances do bonding, bridging and linking social capital mitigate or contribute to conflict?

11. To what extent are traditional rivalries being exploited by outside actors? What are the causes and effects of this dynamic?
12. To what extent are armies and/or non-state armed forces present in the target geography?
13. What are the interactions between local actors and armed groups? How do these interactions affect the motivations and behavior of local actors, social relations amongst them and local patterns of conflict?

Knowledge Goal 3: Understanding how governance, political instability and conflict impact the resilience of local populations

Potential lines of inquiry

1. What are the main social, political and economic barriers and opportunities for resilience interventions in the focus geographies?
2. To what extent are there sub-populations that are excluded from participation in community activities and access to community assistance in times of need due to social exclusion?
3. To what extent does social exclusion result in reduced access to public goods and services?
4. To what extent is the local population subject to rent seeking by traditional authorities, government officials or armed forces?
5. How does rent seeking impact citizens' access to public goods and services (including safety and justice)?
6. How does it impact their ability to engage in commercially viable activities? In short, how does it impact resilience?
7. To what degree are local populations at risk of violence?
8. How do local patterns of conflict affect resilience in the target geography? More specifically, to what extent is violence likely to result in property loss, forced displacement, loss of freedom of movement or loss of control of one's labor?
9. Do social barriers and the risk of violence inhibit economic mobility?
10. To what extent do social barriers prevent flight from violence?
11. To what extent does instability and uncertainty impede citizens ability to accumulate assets, plan and invest in the future?

General Research Methods

Applicants should propose a research methodology. Research methods for the deliverables may differ slightly based on the research questions, but the general set of methods are expected to be qualitative and will include:

- Literature Review: The researcher(s) will review existing documents related to [Country] The review will be based on information available in the published and grey literature and will identify any information gaps and may be augmented through selected key informant interviews.

USAID/BHA has indicated that it will work with USAID/[Country] to gather internal documents of relevance and make them available to the awardee if possible.

- **Key Informant Interviews:** Based on the literature review, researchers should consult with key informants, such as: USAID staff, USAID implementing partners, Host Government institutions, civil society stakeholders, private sector actors, targeted beneficiaries (food insecure individuals), and other relevant donors. These may be conducted remotely or in-country.
- **Focus Group Discussions:** Group discussions with key stakeholders and important sources of information, such as: beneficiary (food insecure) groups, civil society associations, conflict-affected groups, donor groups, private sector associations. These may be conducted remotely or in-country.

Researchers should consider conflict-sensitivity, particularly when engaging directly with key informants and focus groups.

Political Economy Analysis Methods

Researchers may wish to adapt USAID's Applied Political Economy Analysis methodology in order to better understand the source of challenges associated with achievement of food and nutritional security in focus regions in [Country].¹ The PEA report should provide an evidence base for *thinking and working politically*. Of particular importance in [Country] will be analysis of the lack of formal Host Government institutional structures in focus areas, how informal and alternative governance bodies have filled this vacuum, and how this has affected the availability, access, utilization, and stability of safe and nutritious food.

Desired Team Competencies and Composition

The awardee should demonstrate the following qualifications and competencies:

- a strong background in political economy
- experience analyzing the impact of socio-political phenomena on local populations and regional food systems
- familiarity with the REGION ([Country] expertise preferred)
- experience and competence with the following research methods:
 - analytical desk reviews
 - key informant interviews
 - Focus Group Discussions
 - Geographic Information Systems analysis and mapping

Deliverables

The awardee should plan for an initial overview presentation to USAID and draft document submission for comment, followed by final documentation and out briefing according to the timeline below. The presentation should provide a brief overview to USAID/BHA of the secondary data and literature related to salient changes to the [Country] food and nutrition security context, stakeholder mapping, and initial PEA findings based on an initial review. Given that USAID plans to release these reports publicly as part

¹ <https://usaidlearninglab.org/library/applied-political-economy-analysis-pea-reference-materials>

of guidance to potential applicants, any sensitive political or conflict related issues should be flagged for the awardee to the extent possible. USAID will also review context for sensitive issues before release.

Guidelines for the [Country] PEA Report (25-30 pages):

1. Executive Summary: Summarizes the full report and highlights key findings and recommendations (1-2 pages)
2. Introduction: Summarizes the assessment purpose, audience, and core and supporting PEA questions
3. Methodology: Describes the PEA research process and limitations to inform the reader of the boundaries of the research and some of the obstacles encountered during the study period
4. Findings: The findings should address the PEA knowledge goals and supporting lines of inquiry. To the extent possible, the findings should consider the PEA Framework’s pillars: foundational factors, rules and of the game, and the here and now. Other related information discovered during the research process can be included if it demonstrates that the PEA knowledge goals should be modified to more accurately investigate the sector/issue under review.
5. Recommendations: This section considers the dynamics at play and the implications for USG investment strategy. Based on these implications, recommendations are provided to inform USG investment via USAID programming, Embassy and other USG agencies that have an interest in shared outcomes of an investment.
6. Annexes: At a minimum, the annex should include: the desk study or literature review (if significantly different than the LASER desk review); interview schedule and key informants (note: due to the sensitivity of many PEAs, the names of individuals interviewed can be omitted and replaced with the organization and date of interview—even this can be omitted if considered potentially very sensitive). Any other supporting information that would make the report too long (> 30 pages) should also be placed in an annex.

Research Timeline and Deliverable Table (Illustrative)

Activities and Timeline	Dates / Deadlines
Deliverable 1: Work Plan	Within four weeks of the approval of the work assignment proposal
Deliverable 2: Report Outline	Within six weeks of the approval of the work assignment proposal
Deliverable 3: Draft PEA Report	Within 12 weeks of the approval of the work assignment proposal
Deliverable 4: Final Presentation/Outbrief	Within 2 weeks of the approval of the PEA Report Deliverable.

Deliverable 5: Ad hoc Briefings, Consultations, and Presentations	As requested by the AOR or BHA Activity Manager.
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Deliverables:

Work Plan

- The workplan will describe the planned strategies, methodologies, activities, timelines, and resources associated with completing the developing the deliverables, including but not limited to sub-contracting or staffing (if applicable), data collection, analysis, and report writing. USAID/BHA will provide any feedback within two weeks of submission.

PEA Report Outline

- The PEA report outline will be drafted by the awardee team and reviewed by the USAID/BHA design team, and finalized based on mutual agreement/feedback received, or later upon mutual agreement of the awardee team and USAID. The exact report outline will reflect the USAID design team's core research questions for a given work assignment. It is anticipated that the PEA report outlines will align with and contextual the Guidelines for the PEA Report provided above.

PEA Report

- The narrative report must be provided in a Microsoft Word format and based on the approved PEA Report Outline. Annexes may be provided in Microsoft Word or Excel, as appropriate. USAID will provide feedback within three weeks of receipt of the first draft of the PEA Report. Upon approval of the final reports and products for public consumption, the awardee team will process them for accessibility (508 compliance) and submit them to USAID and other platforms as suggested by USAID (LASER website, DEC).

Final Presentation / Outbrief

- The briefing will occur at a mutually agreeable time and location, however, if feasible, it is preferred to occur at the USAID/Mission, prior to the departure of staff from the country (if applicable). The briefing must include a slide deck presentation that includes the areas agreed upon in the USAID Briefing Outline.

Ad Hoc Briefings and Presentations

- USAID may request up to three ad hoc briefings or presentations on content directly related to DRMS content. The purpose of the briefings or presentations may be to orient staff or explore available research and information on specific content or topical areas relevant to the DRMS. All meetings will provide two weeks' notice, along with a briefing or presentation outline and description of the content requested and slide deck requirements (if applicable). The timing and agenda of the briefing will be mutually agreed upon. It is anticipated that the briefings will be no greater than 2 hours in duration, and use Zoom, Webex, Google Hangouts, or Adobe Connect as platforms.
- Any informal discussion or consultation regarding the development of the PEA can be requested by the awardee or USAID, as needed.

All Deliverables

- USAID will provide feedback within two weeks of receipt of each deliverable, unless otherwise specified. USAID reserves the right to request a teleconference to review the draft or provide additional context. The revision process for plans, outlines, reports, and materials will continue until approval is provided.
- All reports/deliverables must follow USAID approved branding and marking guidelines.

Preliminary Required Background Documents for Consultation

Most of the literature will be available publicly or through access to online journal articles. Literature to review includes, but is not limited to:

- USAID/BHA Vision
- USAID Mission and Country Strategies and frameworks (e.g., CDCS);
- Other USAID Resilience programming in the REGION;
- Lessons learned on the ability of layered programming to deliver on resilience and food and nutrition security goals and achievement of the anticipated multiplier effect through coordinated program implementation-- identifying successes and failures of coordination;
- Previous resilience and food and nutrition security assessments;
- Existing RFSA project documents, results, and evaluation reports;
- Program documents from other related projects and initiatives, including USAID/[Country] Feed the Future programming and the [Country] GFSS strategy;
- Data and reports from the UN, World Bank, and other donor reports and strategies on food and nutrition security;
- Literature on the regional conflict and security dynamics' impact on resilience and food and nutrition security;
- Additional relevant published and grey literature for [Country];
- [Country] Demographic Health Survey (DHS);²
- Living Standards and Measurement Survey (LSMS);³
- UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys;
- Other international and national data sources as available.

Available Publically:

- [Country] Demographic Health Survey (DHS), The most recent DHS was completed in 2018 and preliminary report is available online:
<https://dhsprogram.com/what-we-do/survey/survey-display-517.cfm>
- GFSS Country Strategy for [Country]
<https://www.usaid.gov/documents/1867/global-food-security-strategy-gfss-mali-country-plan>
- FY2015 [Country] Request for Applications and Country Specific Information
- Conflict Analyses (Publicly available)

² The most recent DHS was completed in 2018 and preliminary report is available online:
<https://dhsprogram.com/what-we-do/survey/survey-display-517.cfm>

³ LSMS 2018 data is available:
<http://surveys.worldbank.org/lsm/programs/integrated-surveys-agriculture-ISA/mali>

To Be Provided by USAID/BHA:

- Conflict Analysis for [Country]