



DRC Political Economic Analysis Work Assignment

Purpose

USAID/BHA proposes two Political Economy Analyses (PEA) to inform the design of a potential Resilience Food Security Activity (RFSA) solicitation that will focus on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The first PEA will focus on the provinces of Tanganyika and South Kivu and the second will focus on Kasai, Kasai Central, and Kasai Oriental. The PEAs will provide context-specific information and serve as a publicly available resource for implementing partners developing applications.

Budget

This work assignment will be funded with Title II non-emergency funding. The anticipated budget ceiling for this assignment is \$224,751.

Background

The DRC ranks as one of the world's most fragile states. Outside of urban areas, the state is barely present – a situation that leaves at least two thirds of the Congolese population without access to public services and beyond the purview of the central Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (GDRC). Where it exists, the state is weakly institutionalized, informal, and personalistic. Although laws exist, they do not necessarily constrain the conduct of office holders. Relations between office holders and citizens are often influenced by coercion or personal ties that are sustained through the exchange of patronage. Corruption is a feature of everyday life. Property rights are insecure, contracts are difficult to enforce, and transaction costs tend to be high. These conditions, which are present throughout the country, contribute to erratic and arbitrary policymaking, economic and political instability and sustained macro-economic decline.

In the eastern provinces, conditions are oftentimes much worse. The region is the scene of widespread and persistent violence that takes various forms: armed incursions by neighboring states; operations by armed non-state actors that rentseek, loot and fight for control of resources; and communal violence. In addition to crop failure and health shocks, civilian populations are vulnerable to asset seizure, property destruction, forced displacement and trauma. These circumstances impact poor people's wellbeing, limit their choices and affect their behavior.

Objectives

The goal of BHA RFSA is to improve and sustain the food and nutrition security of vulnerable populations. Any potential RFSA solicitation in the DRC will be aligned with the [USAID/DRC](#)

[2020-2025 Country Development Cooperation Strategy \(CDCS\)](#), which focuses on “strengthening resilience to recurrent crises”.

With this broad purpose in mind, BHA seeks a context-specific overview that will help the design team focus on the following objectives: (1) the sociopolitical context in which they are situated; and (2) the political-economic dynamics in the eastern DRC and how they influence patterns of vulnerability and chronic food and nutrition insecurity. All lines of inquiry should consider differences between male and female citizens as well as differences among youth (13-35 years) and adult (35+ years) class, caste, clan, ethnic identity, or religion.

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 the dynamics of actors and institutions in the target geography. The specific objective of the stakeholder analysis is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the relationships among citizens, traditional leaders, public officials, other key actors and interest groups working in the geographic area and to identify existing relationships and drivers of conflict and resilience. The PEA should build on and deepen this analysis. In doing so, the PEA must:

- Consider the living situations, interests, grievances, health, and behavior of the rural poor.
- Consider the power, authority, and motivations of traditional leaders, public officials and other key actors and interest groups whose actions may impact the lives of the local population.
- Consider contextual factors (including norms, rules, economic circumstances, and the political environment including upcoming elections), that influence the choices and behaviors of key actors.

Potential lines of inquiry

1. How are local communities internally divided by class, caste, clan, ethnic identity, or religion?
2. Who are the poorest, most marginalized, and vulnerable? To what degree is extreme poverty and vulnerability associated with caste, clan ethnic identity or religion?
3. To what degree is traditional authority rooted in clan, ethnic identity, or religion?
4. Are traditional authorities responsive to the needs of all community members?
5. How do local structures of authority such as traditional leaders, religious and social norms affect political and economic dynamics?

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. To what degree are local populations at risk of violence, including upcoming elections either from armed group/military activity or from local and national elections? And how does this vary by social groups such as class, caste, clan, ethnic identity, age, sex, or religion?
2. What are the principal patterns of instability and conflict in the target area? For example:
 - a. Who are the principal participants?
 - b. What are the conflicts about?
 - c. Who are the instigators? Under what circumstances?
 - d. Who are the key players who facilitate stability and social cohesion in local communities? Under what circumstances?
 - e. To what degree are conflicts between clans?
 - f. To what extent is communal violence religiously or ethnically charged?
 - g. What are the triggers?
 - h. Under what conditions is conflict likely to worsen? What trends and social processes are likely to contribute to or mitigate conflict?
3. How do residents cope with the risk of violence? And how do these coping mechanisms vary by sex, class, caste, clan, ethnic identity, sex, age, or religion?
4. What factors promote/inhibit social cohesion among community members?
5. To what extent and under what circumstances do bonding, bridging, and linking social capital mitigate or contribute to conflict?
6. To what extent are traditional rivalries being exploited by outside actors? What are the causes and effects of this dynamic?
7. 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. To what extent is social exclusion the reason sub-populations may be prevented from participation in community activities and accessing community assistance in times of need?
2. To what extent is the local population subject to rent seeking by traditional authorities, government officials or armed forces?
3. What are the consequences of rent seeking on the well-being of citizens? How does rent seeking impact their ability to engage in commerce and access to services?
4. 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?

5. To what extent do social barriers prevent flight from violence?
6. To what extent does instability and uncertainty, including the upcoming national, provincial, and local elections, impede citizens ability to accumulate assets, plan and invest in the future?
7. To what extent do insecure property rights, limited contract enforcement, and high transaction costs affect economic activity?

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:

- **Desk Review:** The researcher(s) will review existing documents related to the DRC. The review will be based on information available in the published and gray 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/DRC 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, GDRC, 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 PEA methodology in order to better understand the source of challenges associated with achievement of food and nutritional security in focus regions in DRC. The PEA report should provide an evidence base for *thinking and working politically*. Of particular importance in the DRC will be analysis of the lack of formal GDRC institutional structures in focus areas; how informal, alternative, and community-level 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 the food and nutrition security context and analysis in the DRC (DRC expertise preferred)
- a background in analyzing socio-ecological systems understanding of regional food systems
- experience and competence with the following research methods:
 - Analytical desk reviews
 - Key informant interviews

- Focus group discussions
- Political economy analysis methods
- 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 DRC 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 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 DRC 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 or 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 guide 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 food security 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

Deliverable	Due	Description
Kick Off Meeting		The first meeting with the PEA team and BHA representatives to confirm deliverables, timelines, and scope of work.

Deliverable	Due	Description
Deliverable 1: Work Plan	2 weeks after Kick Off Meeting	The work plan will describe the planned strategies, methodologies, activities, timelines, and resources associated with completing 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.
Deliverable 2: Report Outline, Briefing Outline, Mapping Plan	2 weeks after Work Plan submitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PEA Report Outline - The PEA report outline will be drafted by the awardee team and reviewed by the USAID/BHA design and markets 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 include an Executive Summary (maximum of 3 pages, including a table that summarizes key findings in 1 page), a brief report that summarizes the report findings (no more than 60 pages), and a series of annexes that provide detailed information related to the points covered in the brief report. • USAID Briefing Outline - The USAID Briefing Outline will be drafted by the awardee team and reviewed by the USAID/BHA design and markets 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 USAID Briefing will be no greater than 2 hours in duration. • Mapping Deliverable Plan – A description of the mapping products that provide critical information regarding resilience, food security, and nutrition statistics and/or stakeholders. It is anticipated that products will be Tableau dashboards or ArcGIS produced maps, or accessible and compatible with Tableau or ArcGIS. This will also include an actor map highlighting relationships among stakeholders in the region. The plan should also outline the proposed timing, structure, content, and requirements associated with the Mapping Product Presentation.
Deliverable 3: Annotated Bibliography	1 week after Report Outline (deliverable 2) is submitted	The annotated bibliography will provide the secondary sources that the awardee reviewed and considered for the development of the PEA. Each entry should follow the APA style, include specific web-based links, and provide a summary that is relevant to the context of the PEA.
Deliverable 4: Draft PEA Report	4 weeks after Annotated Bibliography is submitted	The narrative report must be provided in a Microsoft Word format and based on the approved Report Outline in Deliverable 2 and should be no longer than 60 pages. Annexes may be provided in Microsoft Word or Excel, as

Deliverable	Due	Description
		appropriate. USAID will provide feedback within two weeks of receipt of the first draft of the PEA Report.
Deliverable 5: Result Briefing for USAID	1 week after Draft report submission	The briefing will occur at a mutually agreeable time and location, however, if feasible, it is preferred to occur at the USAID/Mission in person and with a teleconference option for USAID personnel in DC, 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.
Deliverable 6: Final PEA Report	2 weeks after USAID provides feedback on draft 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).

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:

- a. [USAID/BHA Strategic Framework](#);
- b. USAID Mission and Country Strategies and frameworks (e.g., [CDCS](#));
- c. Other USAID Resilience programming in the region;
- d. 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;
- e. Previous resilience and food and nutrition security assessments;
- f. [Existing RFSA project documents, results, and evaluation reports](#);
- g. Program documents from other related projects and initiatives, including [USAID/DRC Feed the Future](#) programming and the [DRC Global Food Security Strategy \(GFSS\)](#);
- h. Data and reports from the UN, World Bank, and other donor reports and strategies on food and nutrition security;
- i. Literature on the regional conflict and security dynamics' impact on resilience and food and nutrition security;
- j. Additional relevant published and gray literature for DRC;
- k. [The Democratic Republic of Congo Systematic Country Diagnostic: Policy Priorities for Poverty Reduction and Shared Prosperity in a Post-Conflict Country and Fragile State](#)
- l. [UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys](#);
- m. Other international and national data sources as available.
- n. [FY2015 DRC Request for Applications and Country Specific Information](#)
- o. Conflict Analyses (Publicly available)

To Be Provided by USAID/BHA:

- Conflict Analysis for DRC
- DRC Complex Emergency Factsheet