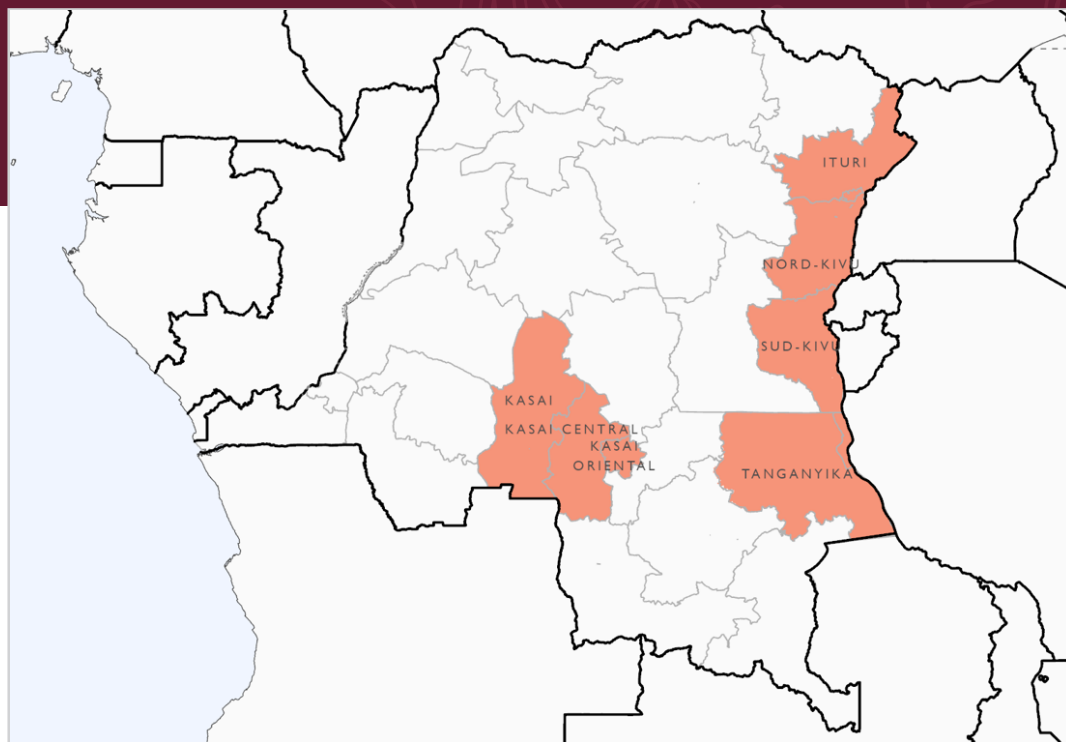
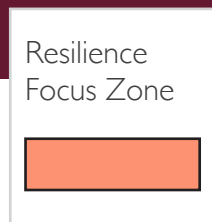




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USAID Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) Resilience Fact Sheet



Background/Risk

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has significant human capital and natural wealth: 68 percent of its population is under the age of 25 and its mineral reserves are worth an estimated \$25 trillion. The DRC's hydro and agricultural resources could power and feed most of Africa and the country recently has made modest democratic advances.

Despite these strengths, the DRC has the highest number of internally displaced persons in Africa and high rates of food insecurity—15–20 million are acutely food insecure in any given year. Fewer than half of the DRC's youth population has a primary education and most remain unemployed. Food insecurity, disease outbreaks, intergroup conflict, governance challenges, and climate change have all hindered development gains.

The DRC struggles to provide its people with adequate nutrition and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services, as well as equitable access to essential health care.

The country has faced 12 outbreaks of Ebola, and future outbreaks of infectious diseases are anticipated. More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted lifesaving health services and supply chains, increasing food insecurity and incidents of gender-based violence (GBV). Intergroup conflict is prevalent in eastern DRC, contributing to insecurity, population displacements, and increased GBV. The DRC's governance challenges are also immense, particularly in the areas of political competition, accountability, government responsiveness, and rule of law.

Climate change has exacerbated political instability, food insecurity, intergroup conflict, and high poverty rates. Models predict that the DRC will face a temperature increase of up to 2.5 C by 2050 and of 3 C by 2100, which is certain to increase the prevalence of malaria and other diseases. The DRC is also expected to experience increased frequency of intense rain and prolonged drought. Increased rainfall intensity will damage infrastructure and crops, erode fertile soil, and intensify crop diseases.

Program Strategies

The DRC's complexity requires a flexible, evidence-based strategy, including the use of crisis modifiers. USAID has emphasized context monitoring, contingency planning, emergency preparedness, and disaster risk reduction. Over the past 15 years, \$2 billion of humanitarian aid—half of which was donated by the United States—served the country's urgent needs. USAID activities in eastern DRC combine programming in education, food and water security, environment, and health with strategic partnerships to facilitate market investment, promote peace and recovery, and support transparent mining.

USAID/DRC activities aim to address poverty compounded by lack of governance, infrastructure, access to education and health care, as well as tenuous land ownership and agricultural income insecurity. The Mission is currently developing its resilience portfolio, focusing resources in the Resilience Focus Zone (RFZ) in a pivot brought about by the Ebola emergency. At least 60,000 households will benefit from this activity.

Activities and Strategic Partnerships

Integrated programming is layered in the RFZ and include the following activities:

USAID's Feed the Future Strengthening Value Chains Activity works to develop resilient markets through capacity-building, credit facilitation, gender empowerment, conflict mitigation, and advocacy.

The Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance's Resilience Food Security Activities (RFSAs) and the Integrated Health Program were designed to reduce poverty, improve nutrition, and build resilience by expanding agricultural production and enhancing market participation. The RFSAs provide a link to other health activities, including those funded by USAID, in the Tanganyika and South Kivu provinces.

The Feed the Future Strengthening Livelihoods and Resilience (SLR) activity supports inclusive agricultural growth, improvements to the nutritional status of women and children, and strengthened resilience in communities in the Ituri province. SLR partners with other projects to facilitate joint humanitarian assistance to strengthen long-term resilience.

USAID's Integrated Youth Development Activity will provide vulnerable youth with economic opportunities to strengthen resilience to conflict and violence. It funds a network of services, including psychosocial support, work-based learning, and job placement. The Foundational Literacy for Improved Educational Resilience activity will support improved learning outcomes to ensure that children ages 6–9 in Ituri, South Kivu, Équateur Province, and Kinshasa gain foundational skills.

The DRC's Governance Activity will improve citizen oversight of public service delivery and improve public financial management by educating citizens on participatory budget processes and public service delivery. The activity will also improve community-level public financial management of tax revenue to increase local revenues spent on financing local development.

Finally, the Tanganyika Conflict Mitigation and Reconciliation (TCMR) project is seeking a three-year extension to continue its integrated agriculture and conflict mitigation efforts. The TCMR activity has offered support to inclusive peace structures and trauma healing, promoted agricultural and market systems-led economic growth, improved food security, built resilience to environmental shocks through community-based natural resource management, and embedded service infrastructure in target communities.

Evaluation and Learning

The Mission's 2020–2025 strategic approach has three main elements: partnerships, including those with anchor institutions, private businesses, government, and civil society; integration; and adaptation, including risk mitigation. USAID aims to inculcate monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) across sites at the outcome level and in comparable sectors. The Mission is using its current MEL contract (and, eventually, its planned successor award) as the principal platform for advancing its MEL efforts.

Specifically, these examine whether and how integrated programming contributes to greater development outcomes, particularly in regard to the transition from humanitarian to development programming. Through its monitoring and evaluation and collaborating, learning, and adapting investments, USAID ensures that its programming and management are effective and results-driven.

Contact John Meyer, Senior Strategy and Impact Advisor, Center for Resilience at johnmeyer@usaid.gov to learn more.

Data: Data come from the World Bank's 2019 Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS) Surveys in Malawi and Uganda and 11 rounds of phone interviews conducted by the World Bank in 2020/21. The phone survey samples drew from households interviewed during the 2019 data collection.

This publication was prepared by the Feed the Future Knowledge, Data, Learning, and Training (KDLT) Activity, contract number GS00F439GA, Delivery Order 7200AA19M00001, implemented by Bixal Solutions Inc, with subcontractors QED, TRG, and MarketShare Associates. The opinions expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the U.S. Government.