



RAPID LABOR MARKET ASSESSMENT

North Kivu and Ituri, DRC

Rebecca Hole and
Elebthel Gebrehiwot



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Photo: Julie Polumbo for USAID

ACRONYMS

ADF	Allied Democratic Forces
CAP	Centre d'Apprentissage Professionnel
CRS	Centre de Rattrapage Scolaire
CBO	Community-based Organization
CFP	Centre de Formation Professionnel
DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
EDC	Education Development Center
ERMS	Economic Recovery and Market Systems
EVD	Ebola Virus Disease
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
ILO	International Labour Organization
INGO	International Non-governmental Organization
KII	Key Informant Interview
LMA	Labor Market Assessment
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OFDA	Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
RCCM	Registre du Commerce et du Credit Mobilier
SUERCE	Scaling Up Ebola Response through Community Engagement
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Scaling Up Ebola Response through Community Engagement (SUERCE) project conducted a rapid labor market assessment (LMA) in Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) affected communities in North Kivu and Ituri provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to better understand the labor market and skills needs. Funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and implemented by FHI 360, the project conducts core health sector activities and provides wraparound humanitarian services in the economic recovery and market systems (ERMS) and water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sectors. These wraparound activities not only provide much-needed assistance in EVD-affected communities but also aim to promote community engagement and acceptance of EVD response actors.

Through key informant interviews (KIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted in Butembo, Bunia, Komanda, and Mambasa, the LMA identifies skills and training needs, sectors with potential labor demand, and lays out market-driven livelihoods programming recommendations to guide humanitarian and development actors working in EVD-affected communities in DRC. Findings and recommendations from the report are intended to guide the ongoing activities of the SUERCE project and provide recommendations for a range of humanitarian actors working in EVD-affected communities.

An analysis of the **socio-economic context** found that while EVD is a serious threat to the lives and livelihoods of communities, it is one of multiple deep-rooted health and livelihoods obstacles faced by the people of North Kivu and Ituri.

- Understanding the physical, social, and economic threats these communities face and recognizing that EVD may not be the most significant threat to household livelihoods can help the EVD response better engage with communities to build trust and acceptance.



The LMA found that the overall education system is weak resulting in skills gaps in the **labor supply**.

- FGD respondents and employers cited technical skills as the greatest skills gap in the labor market. Technical skills are understood as skills specialized to a specific industry or trade, such as skills in auto mechanics, plumbing, carpentry, cooking, or agro-processing.
- Additionally, all female focus groups cited literacy and numeracy as a skills gap that negatively affected their economic opportunities.
- Youth and adult training providers were identified in EVD-affected communities. The Division of Social Affairs, which offers literacy/numeracy courses and technical training, and private technical and vocational education training (TVET) centers are the primary resources available to strengthen the labor supply in EVD-affected communities.

Moreover, the LMA identified sectors with current and future potential **for market demand** as well as **key barriers to employment and self-employment**.

- FGD and KII respondents identified agriculture, agro-processing, garment production, sales and trade, construction, transportation, and carpentry as sectors with potential for growth.
- Additionally, high taxes, physical insecurity and lack of startup supplies were the three most frequently cited constraints to employment or self-employment.
- Notably, EVD was only cited by one of eight FGDs as a barrier to economic activities.

Based on the socio-economic context and evaluation of the labor supply and demand, the rapid LMA offers the following short and long-term **programming recommendations** to both generate economic returns for beneficiaries and promote community engagement with and acceptance of EVD response actors.

- Short-term programming opportunities include functional literacy and numeracy training, the rehabilitation of training centers, specialized technical training, mapping and sharing labor market information with communities, participant-led micro-value chain assessment, and business planning training and growth capital for existing businesses.
- Long-term programming opportunities include financial literacy training, one-year TVET training and mentorship, access to financial services and savings group training, business planning training and startup capital.



INTRODUCTION

AUDIENCE

The rapid labor market assessment (LMA) report is intended to inform the design and implementation of programs supporting livelihoods of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) affected communities in North Kivu and Ituri province in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The report is designed to illuminate opportunities in the labor market for United States Government (USG) funded programs and a broad range of humanitarian and development actors including other funders, multilateral organizations, regional non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs). The analysis also seeks to help communities better understand opportunities that might exist to help them overcome challenges in finding employment or creating self-employment opportunities.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the rapid LMA is to better understand the skills demand within the labor market. The LMA identifies employment and income-generating opportunities, skills and training needs, and lays out market-driven livelihoods programming recommendations in EVD-affected communities in North Kivu and Ituri Provinces of DRC. Specifically, the LMA report:

- Provides an overview of the socioeconomic context in eastern DRC by tracing key economic, demographic and human capital trends in DRC, with a focus on how EVD has affected these trends
- Maps education, training, and workforce development opportunities available in EVD-affected communities
- Provides an understanding of labor market supply and demand in North Kivu and Ituri Provinces, including sectors of greatest economic growth and opportunity
- Provides an understanding of opportunities and constraints to formal and self-employment opportunities including micro small enterprise (MSE) and self-employment policy requirements
- Maps development and humanitarian stakeholders conducting livelihoods programming in North Kivu and Ituri Provinces
- Offers recommendations to actors interested in livelihoods programming in EVD-affected communities of DRC

BACKGROUND OF SUERCE

The Scaling Up Ebola Response through Community Engagement (SUERCE) project aims to address issues of community engagement and participation in the EVD response in DRC. Funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and implemented by FHI 360, the project works in 13 health zones in North Kivu and Ituri. In addition to core health sector activities, SUERCE provides wraparound humanitarian services in the economic recovery and market systems (ERMS) and water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sectors. These wraparound activities not only provide much-needed assistance in EVD-affected communities but also promote community engagement and acceptance of EVD response actors. As a component of the ERMS activities, FHI 360 conducted a rapid LMA in EVD-affected communities to better understand the labor market and skills needs. Findings and recommendations from the report are intended to guide the ongoing activities of the SUERCE project and provide recommendations for a range of humanitarian actors working in EVD-affected communities in DRC.

The rapid LMA approach was adapted from FHI 360's standard methodological framework for conducting labor market assessments. To reflect the urgency of the humanitarian context, the standard timeframe and geographical scope of the assessment were compressed and sections that rely heavily on trade data were excluded. The compressed timeframe led to a smaller sample size and more narrowly focused report, which differentiates this "rapid" LMA from a standard more comprehensive LMA.

METHODOLOGY

This rapid LMA utilized a mix of desk research on the economic context in eastern DRC and qualitative data collection in North Kivu and Ituri provinces. Data collection was conducted by a mixed team of international researchers and local DRC experts from the SUERCE project between November 10-23, 2019.

Twenty-two key informant interviews (KIs) were conducted with a range of government entities, technical and vocational education training (TVET) centers, business associations, employers, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), multilateral institutions, and financial institutions. Additionally, eight focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted in Butembo (2), Bunia (2), Komanda (2), and Mambasa (2) with male and female community leaders who were purposively invited to join the discussions. Each group included five to ten participants and discussion focused on income generating opportunities, barriers to employment and self-employment, skills needs, and sources of market information. All participants provided verbal consent and KIs and FGDs were audio recorded with the permission of the participants. Detailed notes were taken during the interviews and audio recordings were used to verify the notes. After primary data collection, KI and FGD notes were thematically coded and analyzed using Nvivo software. The LMA relies primarily on qualitative data because large reliable data sets on the informal economy do not exist for North Kivu and Ituri.

A list of KIs and FGDs are provided in Table 1.

TABLE 1. ASSESSMENT SAMPLE

DATA COLLECTION	KII CATEGORY	NUMBER OF KIIS		
Kilis	Government Entities	4		
	Training Centers	8		
	Business Associations/Employers	5		
	NGOs/Multilateral Institutions	3		
	Financial Institutions	2		
Total Kilis		22		

DATA COLLECTION	FGD LOCATION	NUMBER OF FGDS	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	TOTAL PARTICIPANTS
FGDs	Butembo	2	8	16
	Bunia	2	5-8	13
	Komanda	2	8-10	18
	Mambasa	2	8	16
Total FGD Participants				63

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Eastern DRC has been in a state of violent conflict for decades. The First Congo War from 1996 to 1997 followed by the Second Congo War from 1998 to 2003 led to the death of over three million and left the region vulnerable to ongoing violence.¹ More than 120 armed groups are known to be operating in eastern DRC and continue to terrorize civilians.² The Council of Foreign Relations' Kivu Security Tracker reports 2,645 violent deaths and 4,179 kidnapping/abductions by armed groups in North and South Kivu since 2017,³ and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) reported the displacement of more than 2.1 million Congolese in 2018 due to an escalation of armed conflict.⁴ While the wars left physiological and emotional scars on the population as a whole, women and young girls in particular have been subject to extraordinary physical and psychological atrocities with an estimated 40 percent of females in eastern DRC reporting cases of sexual assault.⁵ Poor governance, weak institutions, and rampant corruption within the government enables these conflicts to continue and, in some cases, further stokes ethnic tensions.⁶

¹ Council on Foreign Relations. "Violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo." Global Conflict Tracker; January 30, 2020. <https://www.cfr.org/interactive/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violence-democratic-republic-congo>

² Congo Research Group and Human Rights Watch. "Kivu Security Tracker." January 30, 2020. <https://kivusecurity.org/>

³ Ibid.

⁴ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. "DRC Humanitarian Fund Annual Report 2018." March 2018. <https://www.unocha.org/democratic-republic-congo-drc/about-drc-hf>

⁵ Rouhani, S., Scott, J., G, B., MA, O., S, H., A, G., SA, B. "A quantitative assessment of termination of sexual violence-related pregnancies in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo." 2016. Journal of Conflict and Health, 10(9). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13031-016-0073-x>

⁶ Education Development Center, Inc. "USAID/DRC Integrated Youth Development Activity (IYDA) Rapid Education Risk Assessment & Do No Harm Conflict Sensitivity Analysis (RERA/DNH)." June 2019.

The high death tolls, displacement, and persistent armed conflict have had tremendously damaging effects on human development. 3.5 million primary school age children are out of school,⁷ an estimated 70% of the population has little to no access to health care,⁸ 43% of children are stunted from chronic malnutrition,⁹ and an estimated 15.9 million people are experiencing acute food insecurity; the majority of which live in North and South Kivu.¹⁰ The severity of the conflict and its indirect effects on the education and health system has led to a near universal deterioration of living conditions.

Past and ongoing armed conflicts have also significantly increased the economic vulnerability of households. Poverty headcount data indicates 63% of the population lives below the poverty line.¹¹ Extractive industries such as mining copper, cobalt and gold make up the largest sector of the national gross domestic product (GPD). Extractive industries historically produce few jobs and tie GPD growth to fluctuations in global commodity prices.¹² For example, the country's GDP increased from 2015 to 2017 driven by a global price increase in copper. Despite GDP growth, unemployment rates remained high as the population grew at a similar rate to the GDP and extractive industries account for a small percentage of national employment.¹³ A 2015 report from the UN Economic Commission for Africa estimated the overall unemployment rate to be 73%,¹⁴ and according a 2018 report from the International Labour Organization (ILO), 88% of employment is in the informal sector.¹⁵

On top of ongoing violent conflict, dismal human development indicators, and a fragmented informal economy, a new outbreak of EVD was declared in North Kivu in August 2018. The outbreak started in Mabalako Health Zone in August 2018 and has continued to move unpredictably from Mabalako, to Beni, to Katwa and Butembo and back to Mabalako.¹⁶ Since 2018, EVD has taken the lives of 2,242 people and brought with it an additional layer of tension and conflict.¹⁷ It is in these EVD-affected health zones in North Kivu and Ituri that this rapid LMA investigates the obstacles and opportunities in the labor market. Table 2 from the World Health Organization (WHO) demonstrates how EVD traveled between and returned to health zones in North Kivu and Ituri since April 2018. Table 3 from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) highlights the geographical location of Ebola cases as of January 2020.

⁷ Ibid., 20.

⁸ USAID. "Health Fact Sheet Democratic Republic of the Congo." 2017. <https://2012-2017.usaid.gov/democratic-republic-congo/fact-sheets/usaiddrc-fact-sheet-health>

⁹ USAID. "Democratic Republic of the Congo: Nutrition Profile." 2018. <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1864/DRC-Nutrition-Profile-Mar2018-508.pdf>

¹⁰ IPC. "Democratic Republic of the Congo Acute Food Insecurity Situation." December 2019. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IPC_DRC_AFI_August_2019_English.pdf

¹¹ World Bank "Poverty Headcount Ratio Congo, Dem. Rep." 2012. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.NAHC?locations=CD>

¹² Aterido, Reyes, Gonzalez, A., Merotto, D., Petracco, C., and Sanchez-Reaza, J. "Democratic Republic of Congo: Jobs Diagnostic." World Bank, 2017. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/822881517551920780/pdf/123113WPPI6184912-2-2018-13-5-12-WBDRCDWEB.pdf>

¹³ Ibid.

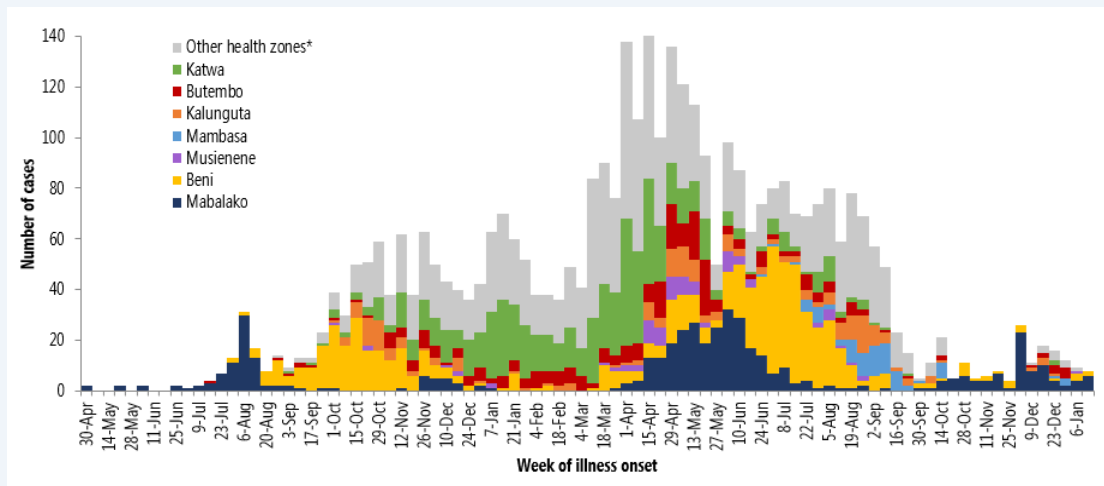
¹⁴ United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. "Conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Causes, impact and implications for the Great Lakes region." 2015.

¹⁵ International Labour Organization. "Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture." 2018. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-dgreports/-dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_626831.pdf

¹⁶ World Health Organization. "Ebola Virus Disease – Democratic Republic of the Congo: Update." January 16, 2020. <https://www.who.int/csr/don/16-january-2020-ebola-drc/en/>

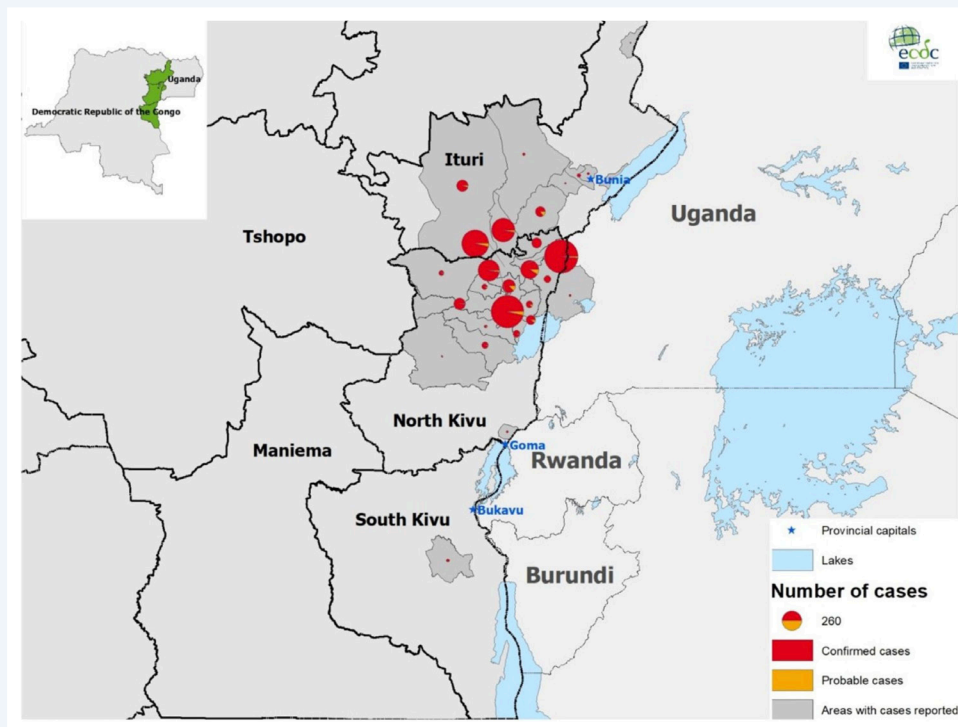
¹⁷ World Health Organization. "Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Overview." January 28, 2020. <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/ebola/drc-2019>

TABLE 2. EBOLA CASES BY HEALTH ZONE AND DATE

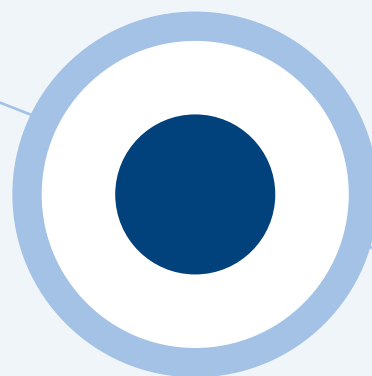


World Health Organization. "Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Overview." January 28, 2020

TABLE 3. GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF CONFIRMED AND PROBABLE CASES OF EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE AS OF 22 JANUARY 2020



ECDC. "Geographical distribution of Ebola virus disease cases, DRC and Uganda." January 22, 2020.



In 2016, the World Bank conducted an extensive analysis on the economic and fiscal effects of the 2014-2015 West African Ebola epidemic. Evidence from the analysis suggests the economic and fiscal impacts of EVD can be severe and outlast the epidemiological impact.¹⁸ In Liberia and Sierra Leone, EVD negatively impacted investment, production, and consumption and led to increased unemployment and lost income. The full damaging effect of EVD on the economy was cushioned by significant international aid spending. However, these countries experienced an additional drop in economic growth once EVD was controlled and international funders reduced their presence in the region.¹⁹ While DRC is likely to experience similar economic impacts due to the current EVD outbreak, it is important to note that DRC, and eastern DRC in particular, are starting from a lower economic baseline. For example, foreign direct investment (FDI) in Liberia fell from 15% of GDP in 2014 to 7% of GDP in 2015 during the EVD outbreak which effected household incomes and employment.²⁰ In DRC, FDI was estimated at only 1.4% of GDP in 2015 (the most recent estimate) and is likely lower in war torn regions such as North Kivu and Ituri.²¹ There is little foreign investment, few functioning value chains, and already a great deal of unpredictability in the economy due to insecurity, therefore the addition of EVD may have a less severe impact on the labor market.

While EVD is a serious threat to the lives and livelihoods in these communities, it is one of multiple deep-rooted health and livelihood obstacles faced by the people of North Kivu and Ituri. In the same period that 2,242 people have died from EVD, 2,645 people have died from violent attacks in the same region.²² Analyzing the physical, social and economic threats these communities face and recognizing that EVD may not be the most significant threat to household livelihoods may help the EVD response better engage with communities to build trust and acceptance.

¹⁸ World Bank Group. "2014-2015 West Africa Ebola Crisis: Impact Update." May 10, 2016.

<http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/297531463677588074/Ebola-Economic-Impact-and-Lessons-Paper-short-version.pdf>

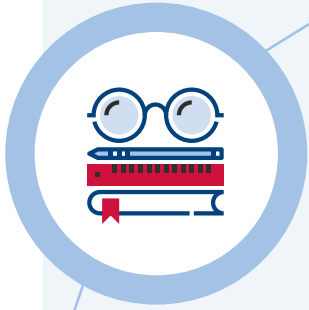
¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ World Bank. "Foreign Direct Investment, net inflows (% of GDP)." 2018.

https://tcddata360.worldbank.org/countries/LBR?indicator=IS41&countries=COD&viz=line_chart&years=1970,2018&country=LBR

²¹ Ibid.

²² Congo Research Group and Human Rights Watch. "Kivu Security Tracker."



FINDINGS

Market Supply - Education and Skills

Skilled labor supply is critical to a functioning labor market and in DRC the overall education system is weak. Understanding the labor education context and skills gaps is critical to identifying leverage points to strengthen the labor market. Accordingly, this section reviews the education system broadly and identifies skills gaps and education and training opportunities available in EVD-affected communities as part of the process to identify key workforce entry points. The analysis is based on secondary research and primary data from interviews and focus group discussions.

EDUCATION CONTEXT

As highlighted in the Socio-economic Context section, human development indicators such as educational achievement have been stunted by past and ongoing conflict. DRC's weak education system is characterized by government inefficiencies, corruption, inadequate infrastructure, few qualified teachers and a lack of basic pedagogical materials.²³ Although the 2004 DRC constitution states, "education in primary public schools is free and compulsory," this is not the reality in practice.²⁴ It is estimated families pay \$16 to \$36 per student per year in school fees; an inhibiting cost in a country where households have an average of six children.²⁵ The poor primary education system has led to a national literacy rate of 88% for males and 63% for females,²⁶ and an estimated literacy rate for both male and female adults in North Kivu of only 52.2%.²⁷

To reduce the gap in adult literacy and to support skills development, the Division of Social Affairs offers accelerated learning courses in literacy and numeracy at centers called Centres de Rattrapage Scolaire (CRS) as well as technical and vocational training courses at centers referred to as Centres d'Apprentissage Professionnel (CAP). While the government managed accelerated learning centers are intended to be accessible for vulnerable populations, additional fees are often applied making them prohibitively expensive for their intended beneficiaries.

In addition to the CRS and CAP centers managed by the Division of Social Affairs, FGD respondents in both rural and urban settings described private TVET centers as the other source of youth and adult

²³ Education Development Center, Inc. "USAID/DRC Integrated Youth Development Activity (IYDA) Rapid Education Risk Assessment & Do No Harm Conflict Sensitivity Analysis (RERA/DNH)," 21.

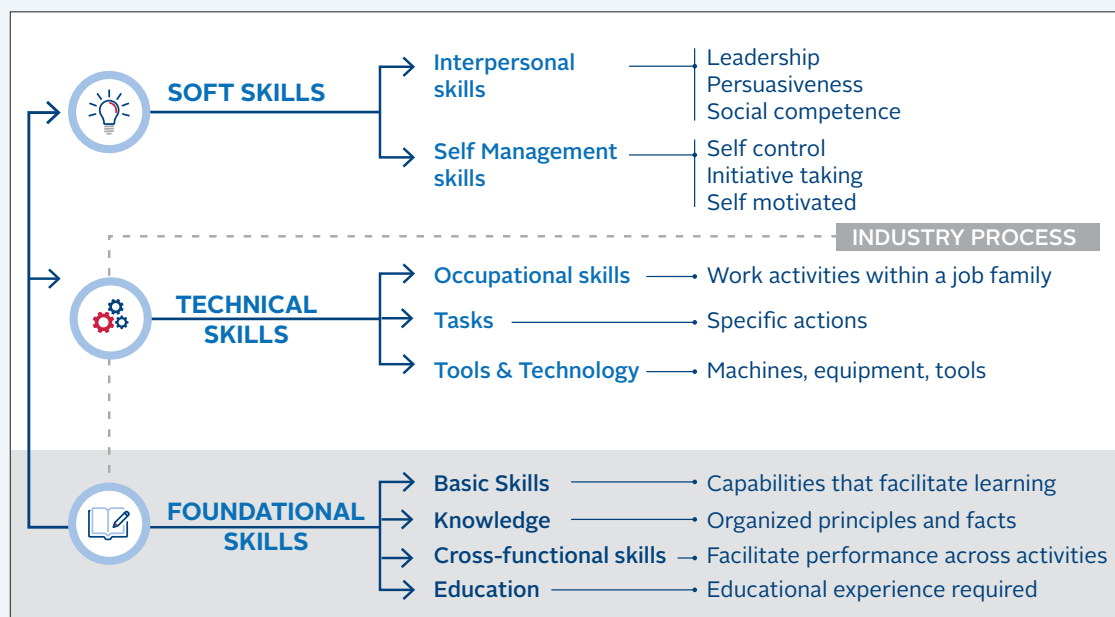
²⁴ Ibid., 20.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., 22.

²⁷ United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO). "North Kivu Factsheet." January 2015. https://monusco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/north_kivu.factsheet.eng_.pdf

FIGURE 1. SKILLS FRAMEWORK (WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS)



education in their communities. FGD respondents explained private TVET centers offer courses in an array of subjects such as sewing, carpentry, auto mechanics, cooking, plumbing or masonry.

SKILLS GAP

Focus group respondents and business owners were asked to describe the skills needed to gain employment or to start an income generating activity in their community. The perceived skills needs cited by respondents can be divided into three types; foundational, technical and soft skills, based on a skills framework developed by the USAID-funded Workforce Connections project.²⁸ Table 4 illustrates the number of focus groups which cited each skill need and examples of specific skills gaps reported. Similarly, Table 5 illustrates the number of business owners who cited each skill need and examples of specific skills gaps they reported.

Table 4 demonstrates that all focus groups, both male and female, reported a need for additional technical skills. Moreover, all four female focus groups cited literacy and numeracy as a skills gap that negatively affected their economic opportunities. Table 5 illustrates that the skills needs identified by employers aligns with skills gaps noted by FGD participants. All the employers interviewed reported that the ability of the employee to complete technical tasks was most valuable to them, and two of the five employers expressed the value of foundational skills.

²⁸ Gates, Sarah, Lippman, L., Shadowen, N., Burke, H., Diener, O., and Malkin. "Key Soft Skills for Cross-Sectoral Youth Outcomes." USAID's YouthPower: Implementation, YouthPower Action. 2016. <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1865/KeySoftSkills.pdf>

TABLE 4. PERCEIVED SKILLS GAP – FGD PARTICIPANTS

SKILL TYPE	FOUNDATIONAL	TECHNICAL	SOFT
Skill Type Definition	Core skills often built through formal education	Skills specialized to a specific industry or trade	Skills cross-cutting many industries and occupations such as leadership, persuasiveness, self-control, and self-motivation
Number of Focus Groups Who Perceived Skill Need	Male: 2 of 4 Female: 4 of 4	Male: 4 of 4 Female: 4 of 4	Male: 0 of 4 Female: 2 of 4
Example Skills Needs Reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • Numeracy • Financial Literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training to dig bore holes • Construction • Mechanic • Plumbing • Carpentry • Soap making • Cooking • Agro-processing • Livestock • Business Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service • Negotiation Skills • Leadership

TABLE 5. PERCEIVED SKILLS GAP – BUSINESS OWNERS

SKILL TYPE	FOUNDATIONAL	TECHNICAL	SOFT
Skill Type Definition	Core skills often built through formal education	Skills specialized to a specific industry or trade	Skills cross-cutting many industries and occupations such as leadership, persuasiveness, self-control, and self-motivation
Number of Business Owners Who Perceived Skill Need	2 of 5	5 of 5	0 of 5
Example Skills Needs Reported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numeracy in order to measure products • Literacy for road signs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hairdressing • Sewing • Wood shining, painting and sanding • Carpentry • Driving skills • Modern farming techniques 	

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH AND ADULT LEARNING

The Division of Social Affairs CRS and CAP courses and private TVET centers are the primary resources available to strengthen the labor supply in EVD-affected communities. The Division of Social Affairs offers literacy and numeracy courses at CRS centers and TVET courses at CAP centers throughout eastern DRC. The Ministry of Youth also offers TVET courses at centers called Centres de Formation Professionel (CFP). A representative from the Division of Social Affairs explained that TVET courses offered at CAP and CFP centers use the same curriculum. However, CAP is intended to support children and youth age 17 and under while CFP is intended to train youth and adults age 18 and above. While this distinction is made in their mandates, the representative from the Division of Social Affairs explained that, in practice, both CAP and CFP centers will accept vulnerable individuals of any age. When asked how often the CRS, CAP and CFP curriculum are updated, respondents explained they are revised every ten years, and the last revision was in 2018. Specifically, the literacy and numeracy curriculum were updated with the support of the USAID and Department for International Development (DFID) funded ACCELERE project in 2018. CAP and CFP courses range from three months to two years in duration and while the official price is \$5 per month, in practice, local centers charge additional fees. TVET courses offered include sewing, carpentry, construction, auto mechanic, and cooking; however, job placement support is not provided for program graduates and the centers have little coordination with the private sector or employers. All centers use the same TVET curriculum provided by the national level of the Division of Social Affairs, but instructors and administrators often make adjustments at the local level leading to varying quality. For example, a carpentry business owner in Butembo reported the CAP carpentry training prepared his employee with the necessary skills for the job, while a 2018 USAID report on the education context in North and South Kivu found many CAP centers lacked the equipment needed for students to practice technical skills and therefore students received insufficient training to find or create work after graduating.

Private TVET centers were also identified in North Kivu and Ituri. Most of these centers collect a small fee from participants, but also receive funding from religious or international donors to help subsidize the cost of training for participants. All of the training centers are registered with either the Division of Social Affairs, Department of Education, or Division of Youth, but do not use a standardized curriculum or certification system. Each TVET center creates a certification for graduates, which is then stamped by one of the government ministries. The lack of standardization or national qualifications framework reduces the value of government stamped certifications in the labor market. Despite the lack of standardization, most of the training centers offer similar courses in sewing, cooking, agriculture, driving, livestock, carpentry, auto-mechanic, and masonry. When asked to describe how the training center determined which courses would be offered, a majority of the TVET center owners explained that courses were selected based on the skills demanded by potential students as opposed to skills demanded by businesses. Additionally, none of the TVET centers interviewed offered job placement support to graduates. This suggests that TVET centers do not currently consider market demand when selecting training sectors or when developing TVET curriculum. The TVET courses fluctuate in duration

from six to twelve months and range in cost from \$30 to \$200 per six-month course. All of the training centers cited supplies and equipment shortages, such as sewing machines, saws, a car to demonstrate auto mechanics, and construction tools, as the number one challenge to providing quality training. Additionally, multiple centers explained that identifying qualified trainers was a serious obstacle.

When FGD respondents were asked about training centers in their communities, respondents in Butembo and Bunia knew of the centers, but some respondents explained the centers were prohibitively expensive to attend. Alternatively, respondents in Komanda and Mambasa were unaware of the training centers presence in their community. A full list of the TVET centers identified and interviewed can be found in Annex I.

While it is promising that labor supply training exists in EVD-affected communities, it is important for program implementers to conduct due diligence on the quality of training, tools available, and market demand for the trainings offered. Multiple TVET centers interviewed demonstrated potential and, with additional material support and guidance, could serve as valuable partners in livelihoods programming. The Recommendations section below further expands on opportunities for collaboration with Division of Social Affairs and private TVET centers.

“We don’t have enough equipment and machines for training. Also, there is a lack of skilled trainers. Capacity building of trainers is key. We have major challenge finding qualified trainers.”

-TVET CENTER OWNER, BUTEMBO

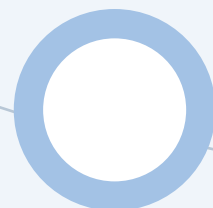
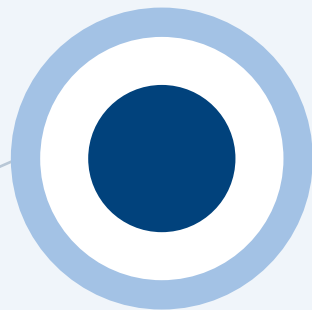
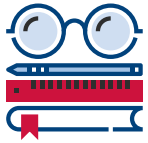




Photo: Conflict & Development at Texas A&M



FINDINGS

Market Demand - Sector Analysis

This section investigates the ability of the local economy to absorb labor supply in North Kivu and Ituri. The analysis is based on primary data collected through interviews and focus group discussions, and emphasizes income generating opportunities that have apparent potential for growth and could be accessible and viable for EVD-affected communities.

ANALYZING INFORMALITY

As described in the Socio-economic Context section, extractive industries, such as mining, make up the majority of the national GDP; however, these industries have few links with the local economy and do not offer a major source of employment.²⁹ The employment landscape in DRC is characterized by few job-producing formal firms, but a great number of small informal enterprises.³⁰ According to a 2018 report from the ILO, 88% of employment is in the informal sector.³¹ Informal economies are notoriously difficult to analyze as official data does not exist to track their growth or measure specific sectors. Despite these barriers, localized qualitative data can provide indications of the size, challenges and opportunities these business and self-employed individuals face.

Our qualitative data from North Kivu and Ituri indicates that overall employment demand is very weak in EVD-affected communities, but that productive sectors and potential opportunities for growth do exist. At the village and town level, small businesses and self-employed individuals are sustaining their livelihoods in a variety of traditional and nascent sectors. In the section below we discuss the primary sectors identified as having current and future potential for self-employment and, in a few instances, potential for employment.

SECTORS AND PRODUCTS

Respondents identified the following sectors as having current and future potential for employment or self-employment demand in EVD-affected communities.

Agriculture: Respondents from seven of the eight focus groups and a majority of the KIs cited agriculture as the sector with the greatest potential for employment and self-employment in North

²⁹ Aterido, Reyes et al. "Democratic Republic of Congo: Jobs Diagnostic," 3.

³⁰ Ibid., 5.

³¹ International Labour Organization. "Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture," 85.

Kivu and Ituri. Even respondents in urban communities, such as Butembo and Bunia, reported that agriculture was a growing sector with great potential for off-farm income generating activities. This aligns with a USAID food security report which highlights the great opportunity to produce food and cash crops in North Kivu due to its diverse agro-ecological zones, ample rainfall and fertile volcanic soil.³² Rice, cassava, maize, cinchona, cacao, legumes, palm oil trees, onions, tomatoes and soy were listed as the most common crops by FGD respondents, while potatoes and coffee were mentioned as the crops with the most potential for growth. FGD participants in Komanda explained it is most common for farmers to work on someone else's property until they can afford their own land. Interview respondents from Mercy Corp and World Food Programme (WFP) reiterated that land rights are a significant challenge which limit the income potential for vulnerable farmers. In addition to the challenge of land accessibility, agriculture production by its nature is slow to generate returns and may not be a viable option for communities in emergency. In the context of EVD-affected communities, off-farm service activities such as transport, storage, packaging, trading and agro-processing may be more viable options.

TABLE 6.

OPPORTUNITY SECTORS

Agriculture	Agro-Processing
Garment Production	Sales and Trade
Construction	Transportation
Carpentry	

Agro-Processing: Though a more nascent sector, agro-processing is also seen as an area of potential growth. A large agriculture association explained it is very interested in expanding into food storage, packaging and processing to add value and expand the shelf life of products in the future. Additionally, FGD respondents in Komanda and Mambasa noted they would like to learn how to transform peanuts into peanut butter and cassava into cassava flour because it could quickly add value to products and lead to immediate returns. Moreover, improved food packaging and storage capacity could contribute to a reduction of food insecurity in addition to generating economic opportunities.

Sales and Trade: Following agriculture, sales and trade was the next most frequently cited sector. When asked to describe the income generating opportunities in their communities all eight focus groups in both rural and urban settings referred to sales and trade as the quickest way to generate income. Additionally, a representative from the Goma Chamber of Commerce stated that trade was the most common sector of registered microbusinesses. Commonly mentioned trade products include onions, used clothes, charcoal and oils that are bought from a producer and sold to other consumers. It was emphasized by participants in Komanda and Mambasa that trade is often an initial step in economic participation. For example, women in Komanda explained “trade is the first activity that helps improve income and pay for school fees.” While the profits from sales and trade may be small, it is an easily accessible sector that has the potential to immediately improve incomes for both men and women.

³² Murphy, Emmet, Glaeser, L., Maalouf-Manasseh, Z., Collison, D., and Sethuraman, K. “USAID Office of Food for Peace Food Security Desk Review for Katanga, North Kivu, and South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo.” 2015. <https://www.fantaproject.org/sites/default/files/resources/FFP-Kivu-Katanga-Desk-Review-Nov2015.pdf>

Garment Production: Sewing was noted by all four female focus groups and most of the male focus groups as an income generating sector primarily for women. Additionally, all of the TVET training centers interviewed shared that they offered sewing courses for women. The prevalence of sewing courses suggests there could be an oversupply of seamstresses; however, further investigation revealed there appears to be a market for differentiated garment products. When probing women in Bunia about the profitability of sewing dresses, they explained that new and different designs are more marketable and can generate greater returns. They also noted they were interested in learning more designs and forms of value addition such as beading. While there is less demand for entry level seamstresses, there appears to be market opportunities in product diversification and unique craft skills.



Moto Association

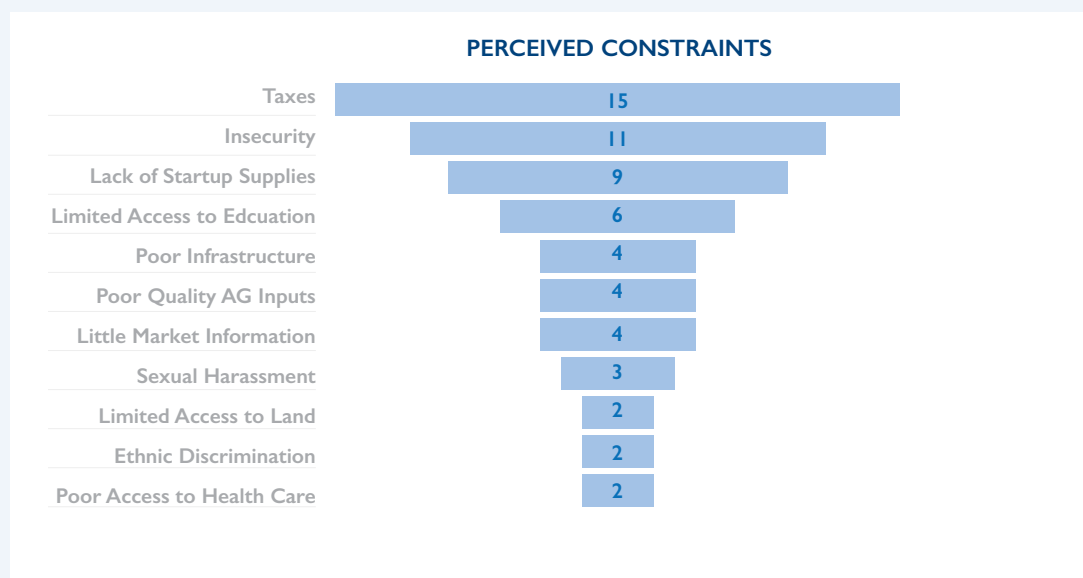
Transportation: Similarly, transportation was cited by all the male focus groups as a potential sector of growth. Moto taxis transport people and goods within communities, bring traders from villages to the market to sell, and transport goods across the border to Uganda. This activity is so popular that in some settings the market appears to be nearing saturation. For example, in Butembo, moto taxis have become so prevalent that drivers have reported the price of a ride has decreased from 500 Franc to 200 Franc. However, for rural communities, this could still offer incomes for some. In addition, the need for a greater variety of more efficient transportation options was expressed by association leaders in the agricultural and carpentry sectors. Representatives from both industries explained that additional trucks and truck drivers are needed to move both input materials and finished products or harvests to markets. They also noted that if road conditions were to improve the demand for drivers had the potential to increase.

Construction: Construction is perceived by respondents as a new and growing sector. Multiple TVET institutions noted that brick making and masonry were recently added as course offerings because of the increased demand for houses. In Bunia in particular, FGD respondents explained they saw potential employment activities at each stage of construction from the extraction of stone and sand, to brick making and masonry. Additionally, the construction of roads was seen as a promising opportunity for employment. Road construction can have a compounding positive effect on economic growth, as well as increase the potential to reach more remote communities with healthcare. However, no TVETs interviewed indicated that they offered courses for road improvement or building.

Carpentry: Respondents in all four localities mentioned carpentry as a potential income generating activity and, like sewing, carpentry courses were available at a majority of the TVET institutions interviewed. One carpentry business owner in Butembo explained there is demand for manufactured wood products in Butembo and Uganda, but the demand was specific. His customers preferred products made from red wood, as opposed to the more common white wood, finished products which were sanded then stained or painted, and new or different product designs.

In addition to the sectors listed above, livestock, hairdressing, food services, mechanic services, and mining were also mentioned by fewer respondents. A few sectors were noted in one community only. For example, in Bunia respondents saw potential for employment in the water and sanitation sector. They perceive an opportunity for employment in digging bore holes and toilets and selling water. Also, in Bunia, respondents discussed the growth potential of internet cafes, and phone charging shops. In Butembo, respondents noted the growing opportunities in selling and repairing solar panels, solid waste management, and babysitting as income generating activities. These opportunities are worth examining in more detail for future programming, as they indicate new opportunities that are not yet saturating the local market.

TABLE 7. CONSTRAINTS TO SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYMENT



“The big problem is tax. Here they create new tax morning through evening. I have to pay 30 different taxes and taxes reduce profit.”

**-CARPENTRY BUSINESS OWNER,
BUTEMBO**

CONSTRAINTS

FGD participants and business owners reported numerous constraints that micro and small enterprises face. While many of these constraints are beyond the scope of typical crisis response or development programs, they should be kept in mind when supporting livelihoods activities. Based on the FGDs and KIs conducted, it appears that barriers to developing and expanding business, as opposed to registering new business, are the greatest obstacles

facing self-employed individuals in EVD-affected communities. The business registration process will be discussed further in the Policy and Business Registration section below.

Taxes, lack of start-up capital or tools, and physical security were most commonly cited as limiting factors by FGD and KI respondents. Additional challenges and barriers reported are ordered by the number of FGDs and KIs that cited them as challenges in Table 7 on page 19.

The three most frequently cited constraints are expanded upon below:

Taxes: All focus groups in both rural and urban settings reported taxes as a serious barrier to income generation. All respondents from self-employed petty traders to medium size business owners explained that multiple “tax collectors” come to collect arbitrary taxes daily, monthly, and yearly and with so many different people collecting taxes it is difficult to prove which taxes were already paid. A 2017 study on the tax system in the DRC found that on average tax payments make up 20% of total household expenditure and 80% of all formal and informal “tax” payments collected in the DRC do not reach the government.³³ Additionally, the study found that informal “tax” payments to non-state actors are highest in Kasai Oriental and North Kivu with an estimated 40% of tax payments going to non-state actors.³⁴ Taxes impose a heavy and unpredictable financial burden on business which stifles business growth and expansion. For example, a medium size wood supplier in Butembo described the “taxes” his business paid to cut timber in Mambasa and transport it to Butembo for sale as cut lumber. The taxes include:

- Forest tax: \$50 – paid for cutting 14 trees
- National Forest Fund: \$10 – paid for cutting 14 trees
- Loading Tax: \$15 – paid for each truck that is loaded with wood
- Moving Tax: \$10 – paid for each truck that drives away with wood
- Security Tax: \$10 – paid for each truck that drives away with wood

³³ Paler, Laura, Prichard, W., Sanchez de la Sierra, R. and Samii, C. “Survey on Total Tax Burden in the DRC, Final Report” DFID, April 13, 2017. https://www.ictd.ac/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/DFID_DRC_TaxBurden_Final.pdf

³⁴ Ibid.

- Village Tax: \$10 – paid to each village the truck passes through from Mambasa to Butembo
- Road Tax: \$15-\$20 – paid for each truck that drives on the road from Mambasa to Butembo
- Unloading Tax: \$10 - paid for each truck that arrives at the shop in Butembo
- Provincial Tax: \$10 - paid for each truck that arrives at the shop in Butembo
- Street Tax: \$20 - paid for use of the street in front of the store in Butembo
- Annual Tax: \$50 - paid annually but the business owner did not know exactly what it was for

Rural self-employed traders also face burdensome taxation. Women in Komanda described how even informally selling four tomatoes on the street requires 1,000 Francs per day in taxes even if she sells nothing. Multiple respondents suggested a unified annual tax, as opposed to daily collection, would help their businesses grow.

Formal and informal “taxes” can provide a serious dampening effect for anyone looking to start or continue operating a business. While it is outside the scope of this activity to address issues of policy, it is important to understand the tax risks involved in promoting some types of livelihoods, given the seemingly arbitrary taxation environment.

Insecurity: Both rural and urban respondents emphasized how insecurity limits economic opportunities. Traders, moto drivers and farmers noted the roads between different cities and markets were unsafe due to the presence of armed group such as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), which restricted their ability to transport goods and conduct business. Additionally, theft and robbery were noted as challenges by the majority of the focus groups. A focus group participant in Mambasa explained, “many young people are thieves due to joblessness, and safety is poor in our communities; once you start a business, they vandalize you and block your way to success.”

Lack of Startup Supplies: FGD and KII respondents reported the inability to purchase tools, materials and equipment greatly limited business creation and growth. In Komanda, men and women noted that agricultural production was restricted by their financial inability to purchase farm equipment. Similarly, respondents in Butembo explained they receive orders for dresses, but are unable to purchase the materials up front to produce the order. Moreover, FGD respondents in Bunia described that some participants in the group had received training to be electricians and mechanics, but that they did not have the tools needed to work independently, and that shops that have the needed tools would not hire them as employees.

It is interesting to note that the perceived constraints to economic activity in EVD-affected communities are deep-rooted structural issues as opposed to EVD or EVD response related challenges. When asked what challenges they face in self-employment or employment, only one FGD and none of the KIIs mentioned EVD as a challenge. Additionally, it was only when probed specifically about the effects of EVD on economic activities, that additional respondents shared insights on how EVD has affected their communities, which will be expanded upon in the following section.

“Young people who have been hired by the NGOs as outbreak coordinators have higher income with less education. Salary changed from \$10 a month to \$10 a day, which is not sustainable at all.”

-FGD PARTICIPANT, BUTEMBO

CONSTRAINTS DRIVEN BY EVD

The EVD outbreaks in Liberia and Sierra Leone demonstrated that EVD can have devastating direct and indirect effects on the economy. When KII and FGD respondents in North Kivu and Ituri were asked about the challenges they face when participating in economic activities and then specifically about the effects of EVD on those activities, it was expected that respondents would report similar economic challenges to those faced by households in Liberia and Sierra Leone. For example, less trade, reduced transportation of agricultural products, and higher unemployment due to businesses closing and

workers fear of leaving their homes. However, as noted previously, only one focus group in Komanda expressed these concerns. Male FGD participants in Komanda explained that EVD had a serious impact on the moto taxi drivers in their community. Moto taxi drivers were asked by community members to transport sick people to the hospital, risking their own health. Additionally, if a passenger demonstrated a symptom of EVD, such as a fever, both the driver and passenger would be held in quarantine for a day, causing the driver to lose income. Finally, sometimes customers didn't want to stop at the checkpoints to wash their hands, which caused conflict with drivers, the customer, and health care workers. In addition to the challenges that taxi drivers faced, participants also noted they had heard cassava production was stopped for a few weeks in some EVD-affected villages.

When asked the same question about the effects of EVD on economic activities, all other focus groups in Butembo, Mambasa, and Bunia described how EVD in fact brought jobs to their communities. FGD respondents explained that EVD response activities provided jobs such as drivers, hygienists, and community coordinators, that pay up to \$10 a day to individuals who had previously earned \$10 a month.

In addition to describing the increase in employment, respondents from rural and urban communities described the social tensions that the economic surge brought with it. For example, respondents expressed frustration with perceived hiring processes. From the perspective of FGD participants in Butembo, EVD response organizations hire based on prior relationships as opposed to skills and overpay those they hire. The perception that the hiring processes are biased has contributed to palpable frustration toward the EVD response particularly in Butembo and Bunia.

While crisis response and development activities cannot necessarily reduce the economic challenges presented by checkpoints or reduced agricultural production in EVD hot zones, opportunities exist for programs to support households that have been directly affected, increase transparency in hiring processes, and prepare communities for the eventual departure of the EVD response.

POLICY AND BUSINESS REGISTRATION

As mentioned in the Constraints section, it is barriers to expanding business as opposed to starting and registering business that limits micro and small enterprises. While DRC's overall rank on the 2019 World Bank Doing Business report is 183 out of 190 countries, DRC ranks number 54 out of 190 countries in the 'starting a business' indicator.³⁵ The report found that the time and money needed to register a small to medium enterprise in the DRC was significantly less than in other countries in the region.³⁶ This aligns with the registration processes described during FGDs and KIs. According to an interview with the Chamber of Commerce, medium and small businesses must be registered with Registration of Trade and Credit Mobilization or 'Registre du Commerce et du Credit Mobilier' (RCCM) and 'entrepreneurs' must declare their activity to the government. The government differentiates between medium and small businesses that register for RCCM versus 'entrepreneurs' based on whether the business has a physical space and whether it meets a certain threshold of income. In order to declare an 'entrepreneurial' activity, small traders must go to a one-stop center to submit a form, a government ID, and pay a fee of \$10 - \$30. Once the activity is declared, individuals receive a 'patent card' as proof of declaration. Based on KIs with business associations, traders that declare themselves as 'entrepreneurs' do not get a tax number, but they do pay a \$10 fee once a year. All microbusinesses must have a 'patent card' to conduct commerce. FGD respondents in Butembo explained that even to sell a few onions, a 'patent card' was required and tax collectors fine traders without the 'patent card'.

When asked about government policies or initiatives that support MSEs in addition to the registration process, all four government entities interviewed explained that policies exist, but they are not executed. For example, the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises representative in Butembo explained that he could not even provide a list of small enterprises registered because, "we don't have computers, printers or electricity. People are not working effectively because they don't have basic needs to do the job." Beyond the distribution of 'patent forms' and the registration of medium enterprises it appears there are no other policies in practice supporting MSEs. This tension between the ease of registering a business, and the greater difficulties of running one once it is registered, offer opportunities for programming responses that could provide more immediate solutions for existing businesses. Examples will be further detailed in the Recommendations section.

³⁵ World Bank, "Doing Business 2019 Economy Profile Congo, Dem. Rep." 2019. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/498991541069119764/pdf/131620-WP-DB2019-PUBLIC-Congo-Dem-Rep.pdf>

³⁶ Ibid.

GENDER IN THE LABOR MARKET

This section analyzes the labor market, sector opportunities, and constraints specific to women in EVD-affected communities.

Economic opportunities are not equally available to women and men in the DRC. The Gender Inequality Index (GII), which measures male/female disparity in labor force participation and secondary education, maternal mortality, adolescent birth rate, and female seats in parliament, put DRC at 186 out of 187 countries in 2018,³⁷ meaning the DRC has the second highest level of gender inequality in the world. Women in the DRC are significantly less likely to hold wage employment or be employers than men.³⁸ Moreover, customary law requires married women to obtain their husbands permission to work, start a business, open bank accounts, sign contracts, or obtain credit.³⁹ This severe inequality has material consequences for women's ability to participate in income generating activities.

Women from focus groups in both rural and urban communities stated that fewer sectors were assessable for women compared to men. Female respondents explained, for example, that women work in sewing, hairdressing, petty trade, and cooking but not in transportation, construction or carpentry. Additionally, respondents explained that women do work in agriculture, but sometimes they are limited due to safety concerns.

“We need to know how to write and read and then we can find work.”

-FEMALE FGD RESPONDENT

The female focus group in Bunia was the only group which discussed changes in the perceived labor opportunities for women. The Bunia female focus group explained that women in their community are beginning to work in nontraditional fields such as auto mechanics and carpentry. A female respondent in Bunia described that “In the past, it was seen as a

sin, but now it's acceptable for a woman to work in a non-traditional field.” While opportunities may be expanding for women in Bunia, the majority of the focus group respondents and key informant interviewees reported that fewer sectors are available to women.

Women in EVD-affected communities also reported numerous constraints to economic participation. The female focus group in Butembo noted that women are expected to perform all household work and this unpaid labor reduces their availability to do paid work. In Komanda women participants explained their primary constraint was literacy, “we need to know how to write and read and then we can find work.” Additionally, the group in Butembo explained they are limited by male perceptions of their capacity. For example, a female participant in Butembo stated, “our challenge is that women are not considered. The men in the community say women cannot progress.” Similarly, women in Mambasa noted that husbands sometimes think their wives will be coveted by the men they are working with and do not let them go to work. Finally, women in both rural and urban settings emphasized sexual harassment as a barrier to female economic participation. In Butembo, a participant explained, “you

³⁷ United Nations Development Programme. “Gender Inequality Index.” 2018. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index>

³⁸ Aterido, Reyes et al. “Democratic Republic of Congo: Jobs Diagnostic,” 7.

³⁹ Ibid.

can be successful and pass the interview, but most of the time the head of the office wants to have sex with you, and we cannot accept that.” Similarly, in Mambasa participants noted that, “women are sexually harassed by men who are supposed to help them get official documents to start their business and some potential customers can do the same.”

Given the extensive challenges faced by women in EVD-affected communities, programming to support women’s livelihood activities should be structured differently than male livelihoods activities. Programming considerations for livelihoods activities that are inclusive of women will be detailed in the Recommendations section below.

STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

The following section provides a brief overview of organizations working in livelihood activities in eastern DRC, particularly in North Kivu and Ituri. While not all the organizations included below are working in EVD-affected communities, it is important to consider other livelihoods programming in the region and how it may be affecting the local economy.

TABLE 8. PERCEIVED SKILLS GAP – FGD PARTICIPANTS

IMPLEMENTER	PROVINCE/ DISTRICT	TYPE OF ACTIVITIES	TARGET POPULATION
Education Development Center (EDC), FHI 360 and Catholic Relief Service	North and South Kivu	USAID/DRC Integrated Youth Development Activity (IYDA): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides vulnerable youth with one academic year of basic education followed by six months of livelihoods and employment support⁴⁰ 	Target 12,000 youth and 790 teachers, facilitators and administrators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports over 100 accelerated learning programs and 50 vocational training centers
Mercy Corps	Beni, Butembo, Katwa, Komanda, Mandima, Musinene and Lubero	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides emergency assistance, including cash aid to vulnerable families Access to clean and safe water; improved sanitation practices and hygiene information Financial education and access to small loans to women and young people Increase farmers income through education, training and crop diversification⁴¹ 	Target Vulnerable families including women and youth

⁴⁰ Education Development Center, Inc. “USAID/DRC Integrated Youth Development Activity (IYDA) Rapid Education Risk Assessment & Do No Harm Conflict Sensitivity Analysis (RERA/DNH).”

⁴¹ Mercy Corps. “DR Congo.” <https://www.mercycorps.org/countries/dr-congo>

IMPLEMENTER	PROVINCE/ DISTRICT	TYPE OF ACTIVITIES	TARGET POPULATION
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	North Kivu, South Kivu and Tanganyika	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase agriculture production and productivity • Cash for work activities and conditional cash transfers • Provides training in seed multiplication and small livestock • Supports coordination and dissemination of food security information • Facilitates social cohesion⁴² 	Target Vulnerable families
WFP	North Kivu and South Kivu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a school feeding program in EVD-affected communities • Provides nutritious food to children under five and pregnant women • Provides logistics and emergency telecommunications⁴³ 	Target Vulnerable families
In Partnership: WFP, FAO, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	North Kivu, South Kivu and Tanganyika	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports smallholder farmers improve production and trading capacities • Provides trainings on agricultural techniques • Provides literacy training to promote women's empowerment • Provides construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure⁴⁴ 	Target Smallholder farmers
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	North Kivu, South Kivu and Ituri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides sexual and gender-based violence prevention and recovery activities • Provides vocational training and small entrepreneurship activities 	Target Vulnerable women and men
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	North Kivu and Ituri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement • Provides hand washing stations and supplies • Psychological support⁴⁵ 	Target EVD-affected communities
World Vision	North Kivu and Ituri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports community engagement, risk communication, food provision, water, sanitation and hygiene⁴⁶ 	Target EVD-affected communities
Oxfam	Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu, Tanganyika, Kasai/ Tshikapa, Equateur, Kinshasa provinces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports food security, livelihoods, and WASH • Supports community engagement in EVD-affected communities • Supports protection, gender justice, governance, and rights in crisis⁴⁷ 	Target Vulnerable families

⁴² Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. "Democratic Republic of the Congo Situation Report." October 2019. <http://www.fao.org/3/ca7640en/ca7640en.pdf>

⁴³ World Food Programme. "What WFP is doing in the Democratic Republic of the Congo." <https://www.wfp.org/countries/democratic-republic-congo>

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ KII with DRC UNDP representative

⁴⁶ World Vision. "Children Brave School as Their Town, and Country Battle Ebola." December 13, 2019. <https://www.wvi.org/stories/fighting-ebola/children-brave-school-their-town-and-country-battle-ebola>

⁴⁷ Information provided through outreach to Oxfam DRC representative



Photo: Julie Polumbo for USAID



RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysis of Programming Opportunities

Based on the KIs, FGDs, and secondary sources, this section provides an overview of potential programming opportunities that will assist in development and support of livelihoods and income generating opportunities for EVD-affected communities.

Increasing incomes in North Kivu and Ituri is not a simple matter of aligning labor supply to labor demand. Instead, the economy overall faces large structural barriers to growth that inhibit labor demand and the advancement of small businesses. Barriers include stifling and ambiguous taxation, physical insecurity, and little to no access to savings and credit, in addition to fragmented value chains. While tackling these deep-rooted obstacles is often beyond the scope of humanitarian or development programs, opportunities exist to build skills, link market actors, and strategically inject financial support to help individuals take advantage of economic opportunities that exist in their communities.

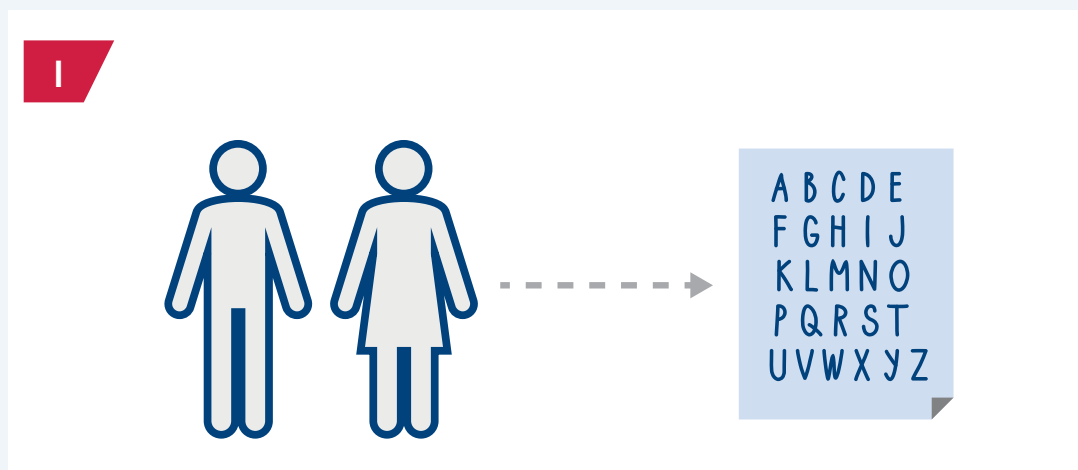
The recommendations below are not envisioned as a robust technical intervention that will impact local markets, but instead are intended to address core challenges that have the potential to generate quick economic returns for beneficiaries and promote community engagement with, and acceptance of, EVD response actors.

Recommendations were selected based on the demonstrated and stated needs of EVD-affected communities. The recommendations address skills gaps and obstacles in the enabling environment that are not directly related to EVD because the assessment found EVD is not the greatest barrier to the target population's economic development.

Additionally, it is recommended that these activities are implemented in both active, previously active, and potentially active EVD communities as the virus continues to move and return to communities. Having established activities in communities where EVD was active in the past will lay the foundation for community engagement if the virus returns.

Programming recommendations are divided between short-term and long-term activities. Due to the urgency of the humanitarian context, short-term recommendations are considered to be approximately six months in duration and long-term recommendations are considered to be 12 to 18 months in duration.

FIGURE 2. FUNCTIONAL LITERACY AND NUMERACY TRAINING



SHORT-TERM PROGRAMMATIC OPPORTUNITIES

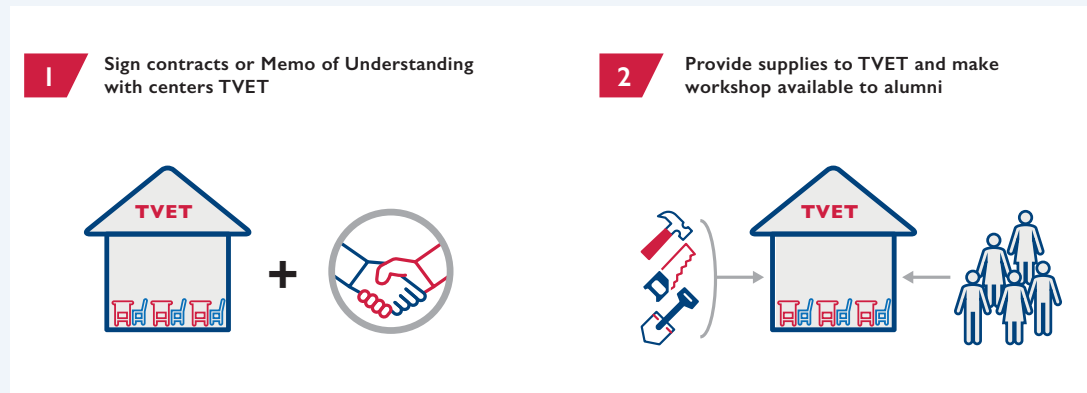
I. Functional literacy and numeracy training

Rationale: Literacy and numeracy were cited as a critical skills gap by both male and female FGDs in rural and urban communities. Respondents saw poor literacy and numeracy as a barrier to improving their income. Female FGD participants in Komanda noted that better numeracy could help improve the profitability of their petty trade activities, and that better literacy would help them read posted job applications and apply. Similarly, male FGD respondents noted that improved literacy and numeracy would improve their businesses by helping them keep better records and track the taxes they were paying. In addition to the specific examples presented by respondents, evidence demonstrates functional literacy and numeracy has potential to improve productivity, profitability and future employability of participants.⁴⁸

Opportunity: Humanitarian and development actors working in EVD-affected communities can provide six-month literacy and numeracy training for communities. This training is applicable to both men and women in urban and rural settings. Functional literacy and numeracy curricula were recently updated by the USAID and DFID funded ACCELERE project for use in North Kivu by the Division of Social Affairs. Actors could support participants through a travel stipend to attend courses led by the Division of Social Affairs or support the implementation of additional literacy and numeracy courses in training centers or community centers.

⁴⁸ Education Development Center, Inc. "EQUIP3 Lessons learned: Experiences in livelihoods, literacy, and leadership in youth programs in 26 countries." USAID. April 2012. http://idd.edc.org/sites/idd.edc.org/files/EQUIP3%20Lessons%20Learned%20-%20Book_0.pdf

FIGURE 3. REHABILITATION OF TRAINING CENTERS

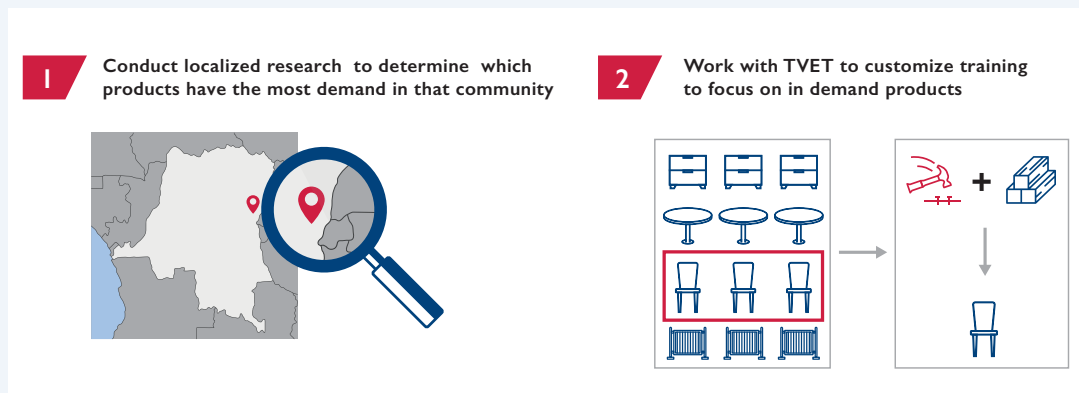


2. Rehabilitation of the training centers

Rationale: Seven of the eight TVET training centers interviewed stated that supplies, particularly machines, were a significant challenge. For example, most of the TVET centers only had four or five sewing machines per textile class, and one electric saw or wood sander for each carpentry class. A training center owner in Butembo explained that a properly equipped workshop could be used for both trainees and alumni of the training center. During the training, the workshop would help students learn more practical skills, as opposed to theoretical. Then, after graduating the training, alumni would be allowed to use the workshop to start producing their own products independently. The shared workshop format is recommended because it offers alumni the tools needed to begin generating incomes after training while also improving the quality of training offered at the TVET centers.

Opportunity: Humanitarian and development actors can sign contracts or memorandums of understanding with local training centers to provide supplies to a training workshop under the condition it would be used to train the target population and made available to alumni of the program for a certain portion of each day. The workshops could be established in both rural and urban communities and tailored toward both traditionally male and female sectors.

FIGURE 4. SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL TRAINING



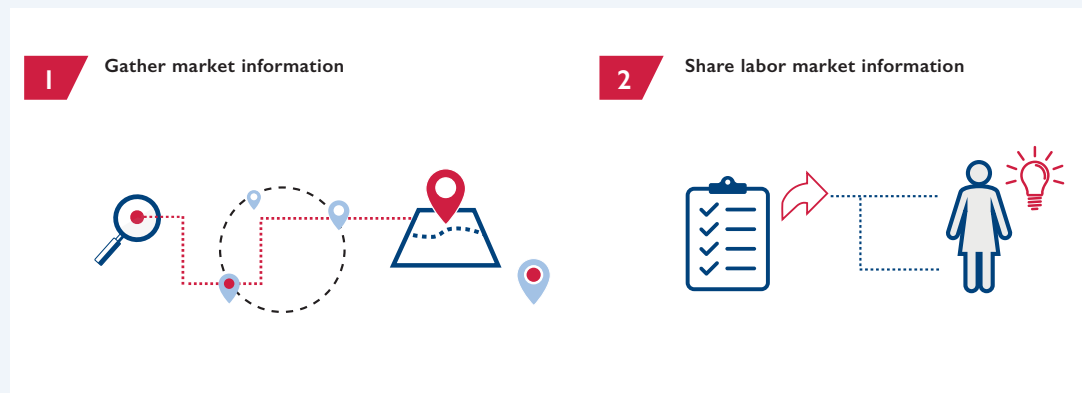
3. Specialized technical training

Rationale: Many of the TVET training centers interviewed and FGD respondents noted that six months is too little time for students to build broad skill sets in their sector of interest. However, evidence from other livelihoods projects demonstrates that six months is enough time to improve participants knowledge of a specialized in-demand skill.⁴⁹ By focusing training on the mastery of one in-demand skill, students are more likely to gain employment or self-employment directly after training than if given a broad introductory training on the sector. Due to the urgency of the humanitarian context, a six-month specialized training in a growing sector (see Market Demand section for details) is recommended to improve participants likelihood of productive self-employment immediately following a six-month training.

Opportunity: Humanitarian and development actors can conduct rapid localized research to determine which products in each sector have the most demand in that community. For example, the research team asked carpentry businesses in Butembo which products sell the most. They explained there is currently a demand for wooden doorframes and doors. Based on this information, stakeholders can work with a local TVET center to customize the training to focus only on the skills needed to produce quality doorframes from start to finish, arriving at a complete product. The specialization of training could be conducted for any course in any of the growing sectors in the Market Demand section.

49 Moret, Whitney, Galloway, T. and Hole, R. "Where DREAMS Meet the Market: ASPIRES Siyakha Girls Pilot Assessment." USAID. September 2019. https://www.marketlinks.org/sites/marketlinks.org/files/resources/aspires_siyakha_girls_pilot_assessment_report12sept2019_bmc_review-aspires_responses_v2.pdf

FIGURE 5. MAP AND SHARE LABOR MARKET INFORMATION WITH COMMUNITIES

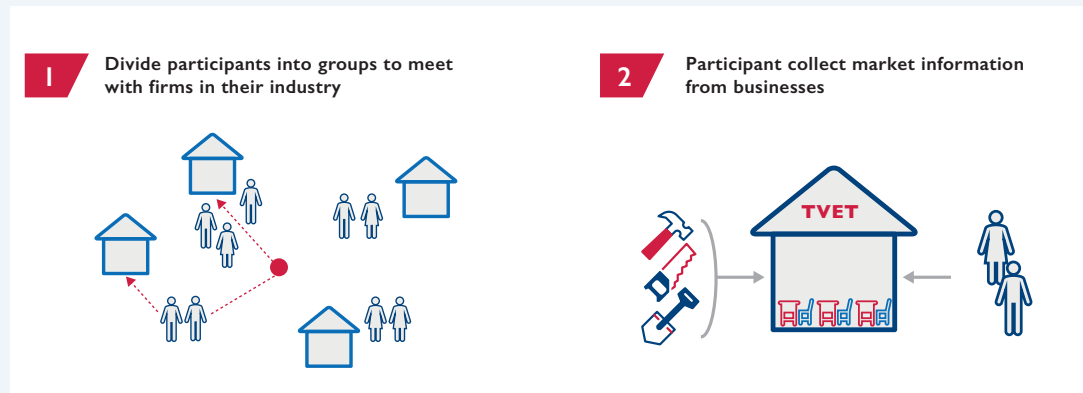


4. Map and share labor market information with communities

Rationale: Based on both FGDs and KIs, EVD-affected communities lack adequate market information about opportunities and resources available in their community. This can include job postings and services available in communities, as well as basic agricultural information that could help start a backyard garden. When asked how they learn about job opportunities, a majority of FGD respondents said word of mouth or the radio. Respondents commonly requested more information about work opportunities and basic market information about common sectors in their communities. Though conceptually simple, information sharing is critical to livelihoods activities and can greatly improve a community's ability to identify income generating opportunities.

Opportunity: Humanitarian and development actors can use local networks to gather market information about EVD-affected communities. Information could be consolidated and shared in a public community space, such as a community resource center or school. Additionally, actors could leverage existing communication platforms that are used to share health information. Stakeholders can create graphic posters to illustrate the information or record the information on an audio recorder that remains in the community space to enable illiterate community members access to the information. Information requested by respondents in Butembo, Bunia, Komanda and Mambasa included: job postings (these are often posted on the door of NGOs and businesses and difficult to find), linkages to other services, basic information on what plants can be planted at each time of year, ideas for agro-processing, ideas for new garment designs, and information on where to purchase quality seeds.

FIGURE 6. PARTICIPANT-LED LABOR MARKET ASSESSMENT

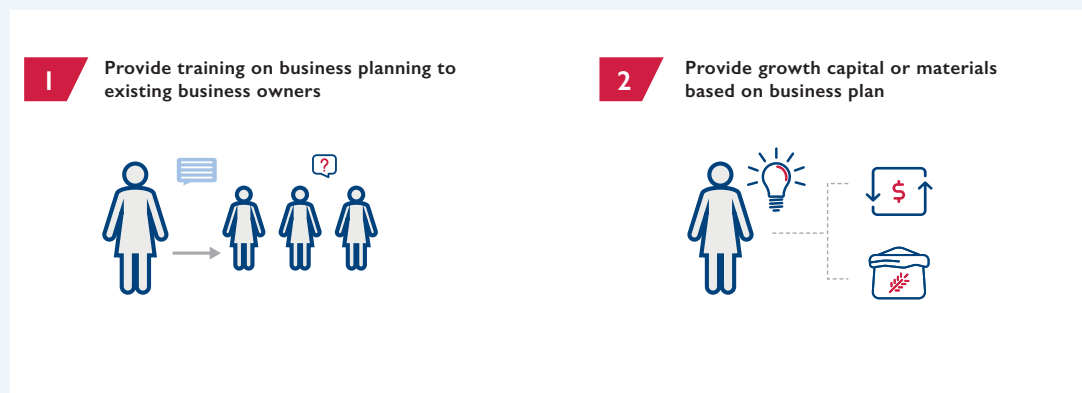


5. Participant-led micro-value chain assessment

Rationale: One of the principal challenges of self-employment is identifying new business opportunities in the market. In a context where most individuals work in informal self-employment, the ability to understand a micro-value chain and identify opportunities to make the value chain more efficient is highly valuable. Leading participants through a simple micro-value chain assessment activity can help them understand the skills needed for certain jobs and learn about new income generating activities across the value chain that they did not previously know about. A participant-led assessment activity is recommended because it teaches participants about micro-value chains and encourages them to think creatively about new market opportunities.

Opportunity: Stakeholders can facilitate a participant-led mapping activity to support participant engagement in identifying market opportunities. For example, the implementer can identify local companies in selected industries, then divide participants into small groups to meet with firms in their industry. Implementers can transport participants to a central area where they could walk to the identified firms. Participants would then use a tool with three to four questions about the opportunities, skills, and needs of the company. The company representative would sign off on the tool to confirm the participants asked the questions and a debrief could be held after participants returned.

FIGURE 7. BUSINESS PLANNING TRAINING AND EXISTING BUSINESS GROWTH CAPITAL



6. Business Planning Training and Existing Business Growth Capital

Rationale: As noted in the Challenges for Self-Employment section, FGD and KII respondents cited lack of capital to purchase the necessary supplies as one of the primary obstacles to self-employment. Additionally, evidence from other programs demonstrates that grants coupled with business planning training and follow-up are more likely to lead to profitable income generating activities than grants alone.⁵⁰ The desire for more than unconditional cash transfers was also explicitly requested by multiple focus groups. A male participant in Butembo noted, “we want projects that are sustainable, not payment”. Similarly, the female focus group in Komanda explained they were interested in activities that would continue when the response was gone. The preferences shared by the focus groups and evidence that business training contributes to greater income for participants led to the recommendation that livelihoods programs provide business planning training paired with business growth grants for existing business owners.

Opportunity: Humanitarian and development actors can provide a brief training on business planning to existing business owners. Participants would then submit a request for growth capital or materials based on their business plan at the end of the training. The training can guide business owners to think through financial planning and business growth strategies. Multiple business planning curriculums for low income countries have been developed, but each would need to be adapted to the local context. The short six-month training is recommended for existing business owners as opposed to new business owners who may need more than six months of support and coaching.

“We want projects that are sustainable, not payment.”

—FGD PARTICIPANT, BUTEMBO

⁵⁰ Goldin, Nicole, Hobson, M., Glick, P., Lundberg, M., and Puerto, S. “Toward Solutions for Youth Employment: A Baseline for 2015.” S4YE. 2015. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_413826.pdf

FIGURE 8. LONG-TERM FINANCIAL LITERACY TRAINING



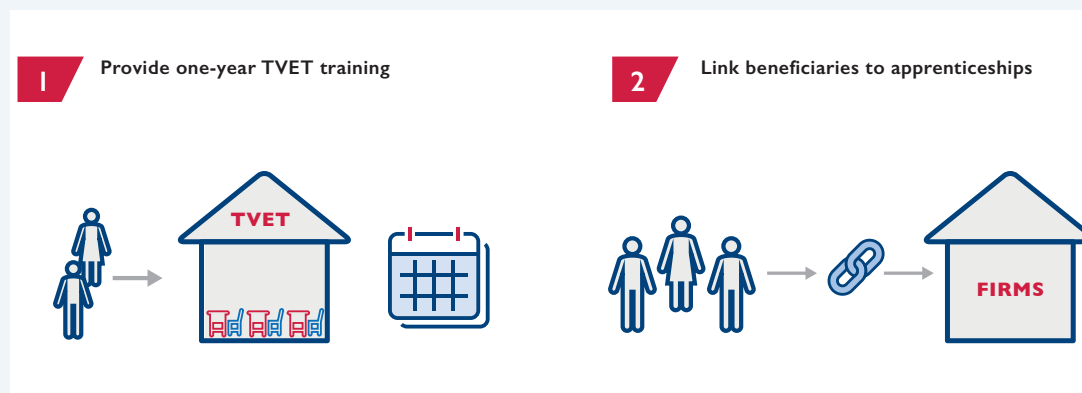
LONG-TERM PROGRAMMATIC OPPORTUNITIES

1. Financial literacy training

Rationale: In addition to respondents noting financial literacy as a skills gap, financial literacy training can equip men and women with the financial skills needed to be thoughtful money managers throughout their lives. The ability to set financial goals, budget and save are crucial to livelihoods development particularly in contexts that are prone to emergencies and crisis.

Opportunity: Stakeholders can provide financial literacy training to both male and female community members in rural and urban settings. Training can include financial management, setting financial goals, budgeting, saving and identifying business opportunities. Time and practice are needed to change financial behavior; therefore 12 months is recommended to give the training and provide follow up coaching to participants. Multiple financial literacy curricula are in use in low income countries. Any curriculum that is selected would need to be adapted to the local context.

FIGURE 9. LONG-TERM ONE-YEAR TVET TRAINING AND MENTORSHIP

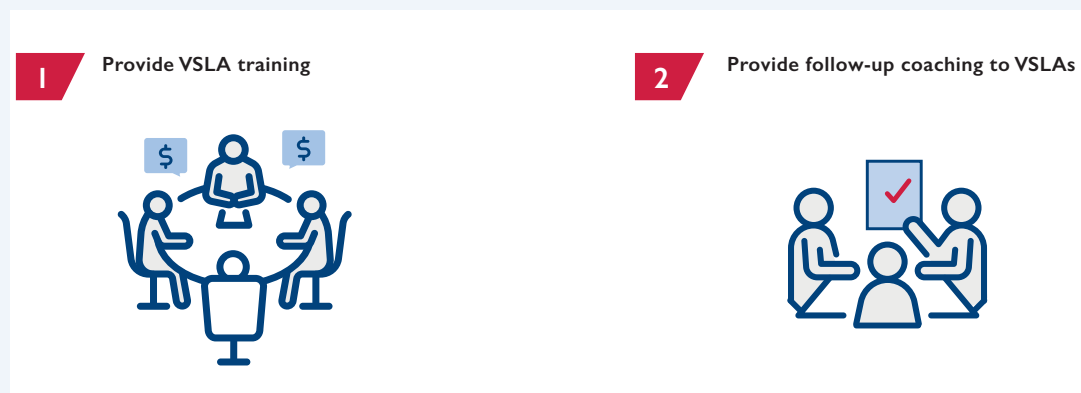


2. One-Year TVET Training and Mentorship

Rationale: An advanced technical training in a growing sector that incorporates both theoretical and practical skills is recommended to prepare participants for private sector employment and long-term self-employment in a particular sector. A 12-month training combined with a three to six-month apprenticeship can provide trainees with enough knowledge and experience to become broad experts. Advanced technical training is recommended to give participants more flexibility to produce a variety of products as demand shifts within their sector of interest. Additionally, by participating in an apprenticeship participant have a greater exposure to wage employment opportunities and market actors within the sector.

Opportunity: Humanitarian and development actors can work with local TVET training centers to review and update advanced training curricula for growing sectors. For vulnerable participants, a transportation stipend may be required to enable their participation. Additionally, program implementers can help identify businesses to host apprentices. This activity is applicable to men and women; however, programs should consider risk mitigation strategies particularly for female participants. Sensitization and sexual harassment training may be needed for both female and male participants and the business where they are placed as apprentices.

FIGURE 10. LONG-TERM ACCESS TO FINANCIAL SERVICES SAVINGS GROUP TRAINING



3. Access to financial services – Savings group training

Rationale: Focus group respondents in Butembo, Bunia and Mambasa explained they have few opportunities to save and little to no access to credit. Most respondents knew of village savings and loan associations (VSLAs) in their community but were not participating themselves. Alternatively, in Komanda, both male and female respondents were active in VSLAs and satisfied with their access to savings and small loans. Expanding VSLAs in Butembo, Bunia and Mambasa is recommended due to respondents' interest in increasing their access to savings and evidence that savings groups can help households prepare for financial shocks.⁵¹ In addition to improving financial management and providing access to credit, access to the emergency fund that is maintained by most savings groups can increase a vulnerable household's financial ability to seek treatment and care when a family member is ill.

Opportunity: Stakeholders can provide VSLA training to both male and female community members in rural and urban settings. Training may include writing the group constitution, managing the logbooks, electing leaders, and managing loans. Up to 12 months of follow up coaching is recommended to provide guidance to the group and ensure more vulnerable members are participating equitably. Multiple VSLA curricula are in use in low income countries and many have been used in the DRC. Any curriculum that is selected would need to be adapted to the local context.

⁵¹ Brunie, Aurélie, Fumagalli, L., Martin, T., Field, S., Rutherford, D. "Can village savings and loan groups be a potential tool in the malnutrition fight? Mixed method findings from Mozambique." *Children and Youth Services Review* 47, Part 2 (December 2014): 113-120. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2014.07.010>

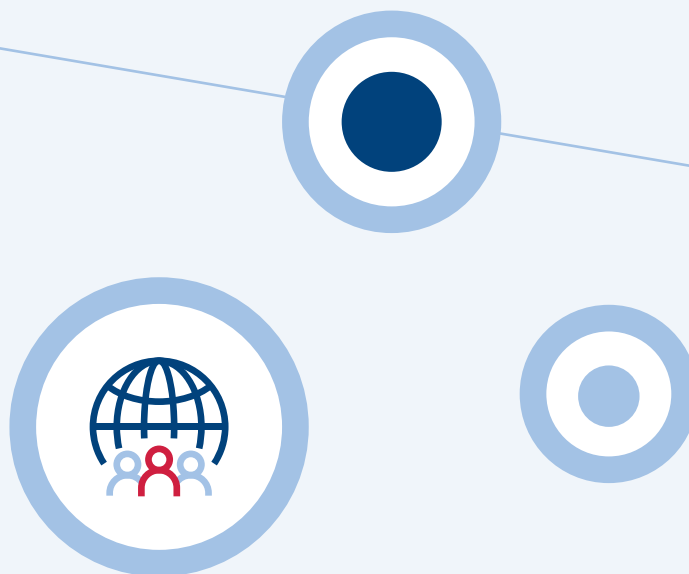
FIGURE 11. LONG-TERM BUSINESS PLANNING TRAINING AND STARTUP CAPITAL



4. Business Planning Training and Startup Capital

Rationale: As noted in the Short-Term Recommendations section, grants coupled with business planning training and follow-up are more likely to lead to profitable income generating activities than grants alone. For new business owners, a 12 to 18-month training on how to identify needs, define a value proposition and develop an overall business model is recommended.

Opportunity: Humanitarian and development actors can provide an expanded training on developing a business idea and business model. Participants would then submit a request for startup capital or materials based on their business plan at the end of the training. The 12 to 18-month training could facilitate an iterative process of business model development and provide follow-up coaching to new businesses.



PROGRAMMING CONSIDERATIONS FOR GENDER INCLUSION

Given the severe inequality faced by women in North Kivu and Ituri, livelihoods programs should be tailored to safely incentivize and encourage female participation. Brief programming considerations for women in EVD-affected communities are below:

- Programs need to create **appropriate incentives and enabling environments** to support female participation. As noted in the Gender in the Labor Market section, women in North Kivu and Ituri are often expected to perform all household work. This unpaid labor reduces their availability to do paid work. Planning program activity times based on when women are available can help women balance new activities with other responsibilities and may enable more women to participate. Similarly, transportation stipends can help women save time traveling to training, reduce security concerns, and incentivize participation.
- Skills-building interventions should **address missing skills that disproportionately affect women**. For example, literacy and numeracy are skills gaps identified by a majority of female focus groups.
- In a context where women are largely limited to traditional sectors, a broad **social behavior change communication** campaign reaching communities, families, and local government representatives could help increase community acceptance of women working outside of the home and in new sectors.
- Programs helping women access income generating activities outside the home have a particularly **strong protection responsibility**, given the increased risk of sexual harassment. Risk mitigation and sensitization strategies should be established and monitored.



CONCLUSIONS

North Kivu and Ituri provinces face many deep-rooted structural barriers to economic growth. Physical insecurity, government instability, little access to health care, and food insecurity were all serious constraints to economic growth in eastern DRC before the outbreak of EVD in 2017. Understanding that EVD is only one of the challenges threatening life and livelihoods is crucial to productively engaging with communities and developing livelihoods activities that respond to their needs.

Despite the many obstacles EVD-affected communities face, the rapid LMA found opportunities do exist to strengthen labor supply, leverage growing sectors to increase labor demand, and facilitate market linkages. By developing market-driven livelihoods activities that respond to the requests and concerns of EVD-affected communities, humanitarian and development actors have the opportunity to both sustainably improve beneficiary incomes while strengthening community engagement and acceptance of the EVD response.

ANNEX I

LIST OF KII RESPONDENTS

Government Entities

Bunia Federation of Business

Butembo Federation of Business

Butembo Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises

Goma Chamber of Commerce

Training Centers

Bunia Centre D'Encadrement De Jeunes de L'ituri

Bunia AJEDEC

Butembo KIKEYO

Goma Division of Social Affairs

Goma INNP

Goma Tumaini Training Center

Komanda Centre de Formation d'Apprentissage et Professionnel de Komanda

Mambasa Centre Mission Catholique de Mambasa

Business Associations and Employers

Butembo Business Hair Dressing and Sewing

Butembo Business Wood Supplier

Butembo Business Carpentry

Butembo Moto Association

Butembo SYDIP Agriculture Association

Multilateral Institutions

Goma FAO

Goma Mercy Corp

Goma UNDP

Financial Institutions

Goma MFI Tujenge Pamoja

Butembo Cooperative CODEFI



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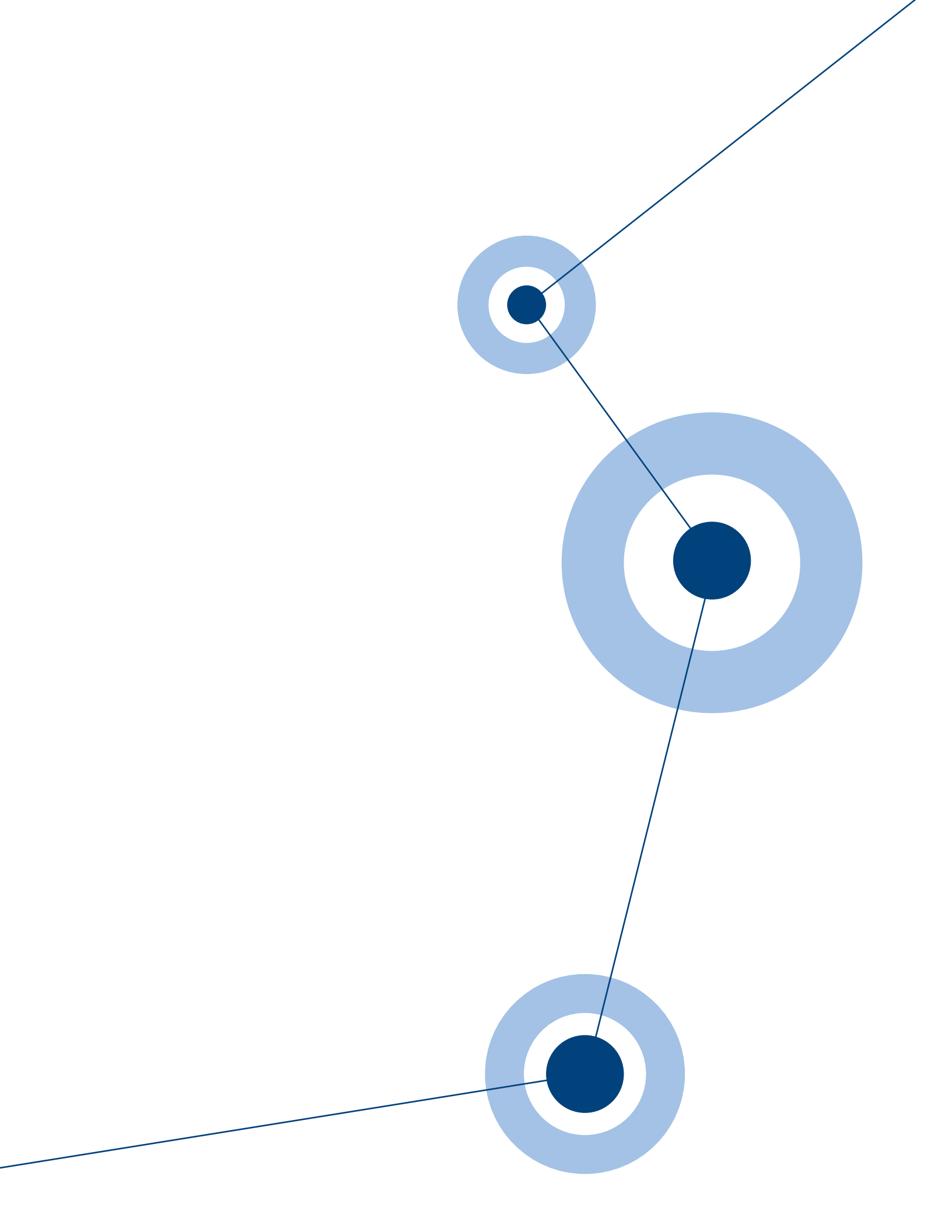
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