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USAID/DRC Integrated Youth Development Activity (IYDA) Rapid Education Risk Assessment & Do No Harm Conflict Sensitivity Analysis (RERA / DNH)

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List of Abbreviations

ALP	Accelerated Learning Program
CAP	Centre d'Apprentissage Professionnel
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DIVAS	Division des Affaires Sociales
DIVIJEUNESSE	Division de la Jeunesse et de la Nouvelle Citoyenneté
DNH	Do No Harm
ECCN	Education in Crisis and Conflict Network
EDC	Education Development Center, Inc.
GBV	Gender-based violence
GDRC	Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IYDA	Integrated Youth Development Activity
MEPSP	Ministère de l'Education Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnelle
MJINC	Ministère de la Jeunesse et de l'Initiation à la Nouvelle Citoyenneté
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OOSY	Out of School Youth
PYD	Positive Youth Development
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based violence
SRGBV	School Related Gender-Based Violence
RERA	Rapid Education Risk Analysis
RISD	Research Initiatives for Social Development
YDA	Youth Development Alliance

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Introduction

The USAID/DRC Integrated Youth Development Activity (IYDA) is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by Education Development Center (EDC) and its consortium of partners: Family Health International 360 (FHI 360), Catholic Relief Services (CRS), and Souktel. The Goal of IYDA is to increase the resilience of youth to conflict and violence in eastern DRC. Over the course of the next three years, IYDA will provide vulnerable youth with learning pathways and inclusive economic opportunities as well as a network of services to support these pathways in the North and South Kivu regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), specifically in the cities of Goma and Bukavu and in the South Kivu districts of Kalehe, Kabare, and Walungu.

The project works with existing structures to implement these activities – education and vocational training centers, governmental officials, the private sector and local youth-serving organizations. In particular, IYDA works with accelerated learning programs/ALP (*Centres de rattrapages Scolaires – CRSs*), vocational training centers (*Centres d'apprentissage professionnel – CAPs*) and community literacy programs. Vulnerable youth receive one academic year of basic education followed by 6 months of livelihoods and employment support.

Over the course of three years, IYDA will increase the self-efficacy of 10,000 vulnerable youth; provide basic education to 12,000 youth; support 8,000 youth in gaining work experience; and strengthen the capacity of approximately 960 teachers, facilitators, school directors, and youth literacy volunteers. As a whole, IYDA supports USAID's Country Development and Cooperation Strategy ("Long-term transition to more effective and empowering development in the DRC supported") as well as USAID Education Strategy Goal 2, "improved relevance of workforce development programs," and Goal 3, "increased equitable access to education in environments affected by crisis and conflict" and by degrees Goal 1, "improved reading skills for 100 million children in primary grades by 2015."

As part of the project start-up activities, EDC in partnership with FHI 360 conducted a joint Rapid Education and Risk Analysis and Do No Harm Conflict Sensitivity Analysis (RERA/DNH). The purpose was to identify the specific contextual risks of most relevance to this activity; the "connectors" (i.e., local conflict prevention and resolution resources/local mechanisms, events/institutions that support peace in the targeted communities, norms); and the "dividers" (i.e., norms, practices, drivers of tensions and conflict); current education needs, capacity, opportunities, vulnerabilities, and access for children and youth in the targeted regions; and the entry points and strategies for IYDA to leverage local connectors and resources for peace.

The project team analyzed the results from the RERA/DNH in order to consolidate a list of recommendations and implications, which will serve to inform IYDA's integration of conflict sensitivity within IYDA's activities, based on the context-specific needs of youth and the project objectives of equitable access to education, especially in accelerated learning programs (ALPs), and building resilience to conflict. The RERA/DNH outlines key triggers and mitigating factors, which IYDA will undertake to address gaps or monitor implementation to ensure that all youth benefit equally from activities and that the project fosters equitable access and safe learning environments and does no harm.

Methodology

Developed by the USAID Education in Crisis and Conflict Network (ECCN), the Rapid Education and Risk Analysis (RERA) tool is designed to capture information about how education systems, learners, and their communities interact with a dynamic, multiple-risk environment, and how those risks in turn affects project activities and outcomes. In the framework of IYDA, the purpose of the RERA is to:

- Highlight the main barriers that hinder access, retention, and success in school or accelerated learning programs (ALPs), or technical vocational education training for youth;

- Understand the impact of the conflict on girls and boys and understand the dynamics of conflict as they relate to education programming;
- Identify the factors of resilience that positively influence access, security, and quality of education and the existing resources, capabilities, and priorities of the education system;
- Make recommendations for specific interventions to address issues, mitigate risks, and/or increase resiliency within IYDA's scope.

To meet its objectives, the USAID/DRC IYDA team expanded the RERA framework to include a Do No Harm (DNH) analysis. The DNH framework was applied in tool development and analysis to better understand community dynamics that may contribute to external risk factors on the education system. Community actors such as religious leaders, women leaders, security sector actors, and community members were therefore included as part of the sample. The DNH framework also considered issues of gender equality and social inclusion by streamlining these principles in all questions used in the instrument, ensuring that all questions had sufficient probes in order to collect nuances of how contextual, conflict dynamics as well as school and workplace risk factors may affect individuals of different genders, abilities, and socioeconomic groups.

This joint RERA/DNH includes a context review, findings from primary data collection in communities where IYDA will be implemented; as well as recommendations for program implementation.

Topics and Research Questions

The overall research question was, “What are the main barriers and risks that hinder access, retention, and success in school for youth in Eastern DRC, as well as what factors contribute to youth employment, civic engagement, and resiliency?”

In our desk review, we sought to answer this question within the context of the DRC's recent history and societal circumstances by focusing on:

- Identifying the causes, characteristics, consequences, and interactions of the main contextual risks in the country;
- Identifying connectors (i.e., local conflict prevention and resolution resources, local mechanisms, and events/institutions that support peace in the targeted communities) and dividers (i.e., norms, practices, drivers of tensions and conflict);
- Determining current education needs, capacity, opportunities, and access for children and youth
- Identifying the most vulnerable and underserved based on gender, religion, ability/disability, ethnicity, language, and exposure to natural disaster risk;
- Determining the two-way interaction between contextual risks and the education sector, particularly at the school and community levels.

The information gaps identified during the desk review informed the research questions for our primary data collection. Broadly, primary data collection sought to address the following topics:

- **Sources of conflict and division.** What are the main sources of conflict in communities that affect youth access to education, jobs, and civic engagement? Who are the most vulnerable? Are there differences in perception among different communities or respondent groups? How does access to education and livelihoods perpetuate divisions within the community?
- **Access to and retention in education programs.** What are the most common reasons why youth never enter schools or ALPs, drop out, or have intermittent access? What factors might influence their access and retention in education programs? What is the impact of risks on out-of-school (OOSC) children?
- **Education in conflict.** What kind of social or emotional learning or psychosocial support is provided to youth? How does trauma impact youth well-being and learning within the school setting? What are the ongoing tensions that are or could be exacerbated by education? Are there ways they could be reduced?

- **Youth employment.** What are the barriers to youth to transition to employment? Who are the most vulnerable?
- **Civic engagement.** To what extent do youth participate in civic life? Who is the most/least likely to participate? What are the barriers? What are the supportive factors? Are there differences in perception among different communities or respondent groups? What recommendations do respondents have to improve youth access to education, jobs, and civic engagement?
- **Mitigating factors.** What are the main resources (people, institution, or practices) that the community may count on to address or mitigate conflicts? What are the possible entry points and strategies for IYDA to leverage local connectors, resources for peace, and synergies with other development projects and public-sector partnerships?

Desk Research and Analysis

The context review was conducted over the course of several weeks in preparation for the primary data collection. The team compiled reports and documents in an online, internal database for ease of access during the review process. Once this information had been carefully analyzed, the team synthesized the key findings to determine the risks and challenges in the DRC education sector, including barriers to education access, retention, and success; history of conflict; and risk in DRC. These included sociocultural, health, economic, school-related, gender, and political factors. Once this phase of the desk review was completed, the team discussed the analysis on country context and implementing context to identify the gaps in the analysis to determine what primary needed to be collected in the field for analysis of community-level dynamics. A full list of the reports and sources referenced in the context review is included in the annex.

Primary Data Collection and Analysis

Primary data collection targeted both rural and urban sites in four communities in the North and South Kivu region of Eastern DRC representing four of the five project intervention zones. These communities comprised a mix of urban, peri-urban, and rural communities selected following desk research, a scoping trip by the field-based team, and collaboration with the provincial ministerial divisions of Social Affairs (DIVAS) and Youth and New Citizenship (DIVIJEUNESSE). Data collection began on October 6, 2018, ending on October 22, 2018.

Data Collection Tools

To capture the RERA aspects of this report, tools were developed based on the ECCN toolkit to focus on the gaps from the desk review. These include the barriers to access and retention, risks to safety within and on route to and from school, and school and community mitigation efforts, as well as the impact of conflict on student learning and well-being. The following Do No Harm aspects were incorporated in the tools for all respondent groups to triangulate responses:

- Exploration of the perception of education and vocational training in a conflict context, barriers and risks to access, retention and completion as well as the two-way interaction of education and conflict within a community
- Detection of the presence of conflicts or tensions within a community, including descriptions of incidences, frequency, involved actors, motivations, and impacts on youth
- Identification of the actions taken by the community, including conflict resolution mechanisms and conflict resolution leaders
- Discussion of reaction and endorsement of responses taken, including an exploration of perspectives held by a focus group or interviewed participants
- Exploration of the status of youth integration within communities, asking questions to gauge youth participation in civic and social activities, youth involvement in decision-making, and youth perspectives of their status in their communities

- Collection of recommendations of how this program could enter and engage the community on a youth development project

A full set of instruments is included in the annex.

Sampling Approach

We designed our sampling approach to include a range of communities based on the following criteria:

- Ensure the representation of beneficiaries in urban, peri-urban, and rural communities as well as communities that had agriculture and mining as main livelihood sources.
- Represent communities with a range of experiences in conflict from more to less recent experience of armed conflict and other forms of violence.
- Represent in-school youth, OOSC youth, teachers, administrators, education provincial leaders, business owners and entrepreneurs, civic movement leaders, government and local authorities, religious and community leaders, and program implementers in our sample,
- Represent both ALP and CAP targeted by IYDA.

With these established criteria, we used the initial list of ALP and CAP targeted for IYDA's interventions in Year 1 as the basis to select the sample communities.

Table 1. Communities selected for data collection

Territory	Village/Quartier	Urban/Rural/Peri-Urban
Bukavu	Bagira/Quartier A	Urban
Bukavu	Kadutu/Cimpunda	Peri-Urban
Goma	C.Himbi I /C.Goma	Urban
Goma	C. Karisimbi/Katindo	Urban
Kalehe	Minova	Rural *Agricultural
Walungu	Ikoma	Rural *Agricultural
Walungu	Mushinga	Rural *Mining
*Most recent experience of Conflict		

The USAID/DRC IYDA team spoke to a total of 409 individuals through focus groups and interviews across IYDA target intervention zones. In addition, Community meetings intended to provide a voice to community members who were not included in education-centered focus group discussions were held with self-selecting members of the community to provide a better understanding of community dynamics, inclusive of gender equality and social inclusion norms, community tensions, and conflict dynamics

Table 2. Total number of participants in RERA and DNH data collection activities

School Actors	Bukavu	Walungu	Kalehe	Goma	Total
Academic Inspector	3	2	2	3	10
Administrators	2	2	2	3	9
Teachers	4	4	4	6	18
Parents (FGD)	20	20	20	20	80
Students (FGD)	40	40	40	40	120
Subtotal	69	68	68	71	237
Community Actors	Bukavu	Walungu	Kalehe	Goma	Total

Out-of-school Youth	19	21	24	30	94
Community Members	10	7	10	11	38
Religious Leaders	1	2	2	2	7
Female Leaders	1	1	1	1	4
Security Sector Representatives	1	1	3	1	6
Youth Movement Leaders	1	0	1	1	3
Youth Entrepreneur	1	1	1	1	4
Business Leader	1	1	1	2	5
Local Associations	2	2	2	1	7
Subtotal	37	36	45	50	168
Thematic Experts	Bukavu	Walungu	Minova	Goma	Total
International Organizations	1	0	2	1	4
Subtotal	1	0	2	1	4

Table 3. Data collection method

Respondent Group	Data collection method
In School Youth	FGD
Out-of-school Youth (15-24 years old)	FGD
Teachers	KII
Administrators	KII
Provincial leaders	KII
Local and/or Government Authorities	KII
Religious Leaders	KII
Women Leaders	KII
Business Leaders	KII
Youth Entrepreneurs	KII
Youth Movement Leaders	KII
Int'l Program Implementers	KII

Data Collection and Protocol

In addition to EDC and FHI 360 staff, IYDA engaged 16 enumerators through a local firm (Research Initiatives for Social Development – RISD) to provide data collection support. IYDA also included ten youth as a community-based team recommended by DIVAS/DIVIJENEUSSE and recruited from the target communities. This team conducted the process of recruiting the community participants for the FGDs. For KIIs and mixed focus groups, the data collection members were grouped in teams of two including one male and one female, with one enumerator serving as the lead moderator and the other as a note taker. For gendered focus groups, the enumerators were grouped to reflect the gender of the participants. During the data collection process, the youth identified from the target research sites assisted in the recruitment of focus group participants and identified key respondents for interviews in each community.

Prior to data collection, all enumerators including the community-based team of 10 youth attended a four-day long training session and orientation. This training included an orientation on the Integrated Youth Development Activity; the research frameworks; a translation workshop; piloting of the tool; and several modules on implicit bias, ethics, conflict sensitivity, and gender-sensitive approaches. Following the four-day training session, enumerator teams conducted two weeks of data collection visiting all sampled communities, spending approximately four days in each. Following data collection day, the enumerators and community-based team met in an evening debrief of the day’s findings as part of the process of the synthesizing the notes and strategize to improve the methodology of data collection. At the completion of data collection, the enumerators returned to Bukavu for an analysis workshop to consolidate and synthesize notes taken and provide a preliminary, field-validated synthesis of findings.

Table 4. Enumerator Schedule

Date	Activity
2–5 Oct	Enumerator training, including field validation of tools
6–9 Oct	Data collection in Baguira and Kadutu (Bukavu)
10–13 Oct	Data collection in Mushinga, Ikoma (Walungu)
14–17 Oct	Data collection in Minova (Kalehe)
18–21 Oct	Data collection in Karisimbi and Goma (Goma)
22–24 Oct	Review of notes and completion of a preliminary analysis

Collection Protocol and Ethics

All data collection protocols, including the consent statements, were submitted to EDC’s and FHI 360’s internal institutional review boards (IRB) for review. The study met the criteria for exemption.¹ Oral consent was obtained from all adults, as well as from the primary caregiver of youth participants. Participants were also connected with community-based organizations and individuals that provide psychosocial support and counseling². A copy of FHI 360 and EDC’s IRB research determinations can be found in the annex to this report.

Data Analysis

The approach to data analysis began with reviewing the preliminary analyses completed in the field and reading through all notes to create a joint qualitative code book based on our research questions so that common themes could be extracted from the text. The community-based data were analyzed using NVivo

¹ The study was found to meet the criteria for Exempt Category 2: Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects’ responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects’ financial standing, employability, or reputation.

² A list of International Organizations and community-based organizations that provide psychosocial support, counseling and other SGBV related assistance was compiled by RISD and IYDA’s technical team and given to each participant including the contact details of the key researchers in the event of additional questions.

Pro 12 software, and the school-based data was analyzed using QDA Miner. Both sets were analyzed with all codes, and Excel files for each code were merged during the writing process.

Limitations

As the RERA/DNH is a “good enough” analysis to ensure it can be done fairly rapidly, deliberate trade-offs were made during the design process:

- **Purposeful, not representative, sampling.** The purposeful sample was not intended to be representative of all school communities across the country but rather was aimed at providing in-depth insights into the dynamics of risk and education at selected locations in which IYDA would be implemented in its first year.
- **Limited data collection period.** The data collection period was limited to four days per site. Although enumerators were able to divide into groups of two for the key informant and in-depth interviews, the short time in each community resulted in a potential inability to conduct all focus group discussions and interviews. As a result, the interviews and focus group discussions were prioritized in the design phase to ensure that the key respondent groups were spoken to in case not all respondents were available during the limited time in each community.

Additional limitations were encountered during the data collection in the field, including:

- **Unwillingness of some key respondents to participate in the study.** Certain key respondents were unwilling to participate in the study. In Bukavu and Goma, several targeted respondents from the Catholic Church refused or were very reluctant to meet with enumerators³, resulting in their nonparticipation in these particular communities. This impacted triangulation during analysis as the opinion of the Catholic Church was thus not considered for the locations of Bukavu and Goma for the DNH analysis. It is worth mentioning that this reluctance was very limited to two parishes / communities targeted by the study; in other communities, representatives of the Catholic Church fully participated in the study.
- **Influenced respondent recruitment process.** While the youth community-based team were trained on the data collection process and procedure, they did not always randomly recruit parent focus group participants in the rural area, but instead, they often elicited the participation of their friends and/or family members so that their acquaintances would receive the small transportation stipend provided. This approach to recruitment resulted in non-diverse community focus groups that were not always representative of the community in terms of age and sex as intended in the sampling design and protocol – which was never going to guarantee full representation of all important categories of community voices. To mitigate this, the IYDA enumerators often recruited additional individuals to participate in the focus group discussions, did secondary focus groups with self-recruited participants, or recruited alongside the youth leaders for focus group discussions the next day. We interpreted data from those focus groups in light of our understanding of the respondents’ specific profile and perspective.
- **Low support of local authorities.** There was generally low support of the political and administrative authorities in facilitating the data collection exercise at the field level. In Minova and Goma, for example, some team members were disturbed by the police, despite having all of the mission-approved orders from the local government. To mitigate this, we made an adjustment to our data collection team and had further discussions with the local government to ensure all approvals were communicated and documented. The low support of local authorities can be corroborated to the general skepticism, resentment directed to international nongovernmental and humanitarian aid organizations examined immediately below under General Political Instability and Localized Sources of Conflict of the primary data findings. This is

³ The cause of the refusal to participate is unknown

in addition to the general sensitivities with the continuing presence of armed groups in the region, which required a greater purview over activities by foreigners in the region.

Context and Background

The context and background is the product of a desk review of existing literature and data. This context review provides insights into the implementing context in the DRC, the challenges of the education sector and the risk to youth resilience. This context review allowed the DRC IYDA team to identify the information gaps for primary data collection.

Country Context: Contextual risk factors

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a deeply fragmented political space in which a wide range of actors, including state officials, armed groups, customary chiefs, church leaders, civil society members, and international organizations, compete to assume public authority over people and resources.⁴ Against high levels of anxiety provoked by chronic political instability, the fragmentation of the political space has led to weak governance structures with chronic capacity deficits, corruption, exclusion, elitism and competition over resources and power.

As the second largest country in Africa in terms of land area, the DRC had an estimated total population of 83 million in 2017, which was highly youth-based—approximately 41.7 percent of the population was comprised of youth between the ages of 0 and 14 and 21.5 percent of the population was between the ages of 15 and 24.⁵ It is estimated that 63 percent of the country lives below the poverty line—ranking it 227 out of 230 countries in the world, with the vast majority of the population having limited access to basic services.⁶ On the Gender Inequality Index (GII) which measures disparities between men and women in the areas of economic opportunities, reproductive health, and empowerment, the country is also ranked among the highest in the world.⁷ While, DRC is rich in natural resources—which represents a substantial share of the country's total domestic production—it was ranked 176 out of 188 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI) in 2018—the HDI is 'a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and have a decent standard of living'.⁸

The humanitarian needs in the DRC doubled over the last year, as the population continue to face high levels of vulnerability to fragile subsistence livelihoods with limited access to water, energy and social services and high exposure to violent conflict and natural disasters. The instability at the national level and failure to address these issues, or in some cases cynically stoking the tensions, furthers insecurity that these long-simmering conflicts could erupt without warning⁹. A recent escalation of armed conflict culminated in the displacement of more than 2.2 million Congolese in 2017, doubling the total number of displaced persons in the country. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA), more than 13.1 million people, including 7.9 million children, in the DRC are in need of humanitarian assistance, and approximately 744,000 refugees and asylum seekers

⁴ Hoffmann, K., Vlassenroot, K., & Marchais, G. (2016). Taxation, stateless and armed groups public authority and resource extraction in Eastern Congo. *Development and Change International Institute of Social Studies.*, 47(6), 1434–1456

⁵ IBID. Landis

⁶ IBID. Landis

⁷ Landis, D. (2018). Examining participation in formal education and exposure to violence among girls in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Columbia University, 1–265.

⁸ United Nations Development Programme. (2018). Human Development Reports DRC. Retrieved from <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2018-update>

⁹ Ibid. DAI/USAID. (2017).

have fled the country¹⁰. This has led to widespread humanitarian crisis and displacement throughout the country.

While the dynamic and protracted conflict in the DRC has been complicated by decades of political instability, unstable neighborhood, and socioeconomic insecurities¹¹ the country is at a political impasse to set up and conduct peaceful, free, fair, and credible elections.¹² Meanwhile, tensions at the provincial and local level are further impacted by socio-economic insecurities, ethnic tension, inequity, economic contraction, poverty, and unemployment.

General Political instability

Political uncertainty at the national level, and tensions at the provincial and local levels, have also increased as a result of the 2015 decentralization and découpage process that divided the country's 11 provinces into 26 newly created provincial units. The creation of smaller provinces and the devolution of power from the national to provincial level for sectors such as health, education, and agriculture—intended to bring government structures closer to the people—has led to confusion about the roles of newly created provincial-level positions, and disputes about who will provide which services. This confusion has also exacerbated conflicting power dynamics in the country.¹³ Specifically, the opaque rules on tax collection has led to duplication of actions and a government that is stretched thin. According to Iwerks and Toroskainen (2017), “Découpage has created many new provincial-level official posts, meaning the relatively small corps of well-equipped Congolese public servants is spread even more thinly. The change in revenue distribution could also create new political or economic risks, possibly leading to political tensions between some of the provinces or overall tax increases as officials in new provinces try to collect taxes in their borders.”¹⁴

Unstable neighborhood

The DRC shares porous borders with Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi, leading to substantial populations in the Kivus of those originating particularly from Rwanda and Burundi. Combined with changes in politics and laws over who was entitled to Congolese nationality in the early 1980s, inter-ethnic rivalries were triggered that were instrumental in the 1990s crises and are far from settled in the present day. The civil wars in Rwanda (1990–1994) and in Burundi (from 1993), and the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and consequential refugee movement into eastern DRC, added new ingredients of instability to an already explosive context in the Kivus between the indigenous groups and immigrant populations who claim Congolese citizenship.¹⁵ According to Ndahinda (2016), “With more than two million Hutus, including many militiamen responsible for the genocide, fleeing into the region, renewed violence between ethnic groups have resulted in socio-economic underdevelopment, including lack of education, limited economic activity and inadequate health care to address sexual violence, despite the region being rich in minerals and fertile soil.”¹⁶ This conflict related to social belonging is often seen through the lens

¹¹ DAI/USAID. (2017). Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) integrated governance activity (IGA) – Conflict sensitivity analysis & implementation strategy: An annex to the year 1 work plan.

¹² United Nations Security Council. (2018). Children and armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Report of the secretary-general. New York, NY: UNDC.

¹³ DAI Global, LLC. (2017). USAID/Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) integrated governance activity (IGA) – Conflict sensitivity analysis & implementation strategy: An annex to the year 1 work plan. Kinshasa – Gombe/DRC: USAID.

¹⁴ Iwerks, R., & Toroskainen, K. (2017). Subnational revenue sharing in the DRC after découpage: Four recommendations for better governance. New York, NY: National Resource Governance Institute.

¹⁵ Ndahinda, F. M. (2016). Collective Victimization and Subjectivity in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Why Do Lasting Peace and Justice Remain Elusive? *International journal on minority and group rights*. 23.137-178

¹⁶ *Ibid* Ndahinda.

of 'autochthony' or the claim of being the original, first inhabitants of an area, as opposed to foreigners or newcomers.¹⁷ This tying of ethnicity to geographic locations has inscribed itself in the discussion about 'who belongs where' in the DRC and is now a primary conflict driver in the region and nationwide.¹⁸ Thousands continue to be displaced by pockets of tension and ethnic clashes nationwide.¹⁹

Socio-economic insecurities In recent years, reports of domestic violence, rape, and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) have increased as women and children remain highly vulnerable in conflict zones. The delivery of basic services is worsening due to violent conflict and a growing population, heavily impacting vulnerable communities. Major vulnerabilities are related to access to basic services and gender-based violence. These vulnerabilities are discussed below.

Health and Food Insecurity

The country also faces a variety of humanitarian concerns, including malnutrition, food insecurity, and disease, all of which have a greater impact on the most marginalized members of society. Food security in the DRC has worsened over the years and according to a recent USAID report, "As of late 2017, nearly 7.7 million Congolese were experiencing acute food insecurity, a 30 percent increase from the 5.9 million reported in June 2016."²⁰ Food insecurity contributes to poor nutritional status of many in the country. A 2018 UN report found that one out of every five people in the DRC is not getting enough to eat, especially in several eastern provinces where armed militias are in power. In towns like Beni, the paralyzing fear of being killed by armed groups has led hundreds of farmers to refuse to go to their fields to cultivate. Many people have resorted to increasingly desperate coping mechanisms to feed themselves and their children, including driving women into prostitution and young men into voluntarily joining armed groups. In the northeastern border provinces of North Kivu and Ituri, displacements related to the conflict were cited as the main reason why people are food insecure in these regions.²¹

The DRC also faces a multitude of health crises that are further intensified by its political, economic, and social conflicts. According to a recent USAID report, "An estimated 70 percent of Congolese have little or no access to health care. In 2013, with only 8 percent of women using one form of contraceptive, the fertility rate in the DRC remains among the highest in the world at 6.6 children per mother. Nearly 39 percent of women of childbearing age are anemic and 14 percent are underweight. Rates of malnutrition have remained very high for two decades: 43 percent of children under age 5 are stunted, an indication of chronic malnutrition, and 8 percent are wasted, an indication of acute malnutrition."²² Protests, unrest, and attacks on healthcare workers in the country are making it increasingly difficult to contain and treat a recent Ebola outbreak in eastern DRC. As of December 2018, the WHO had recorded 543 confirmed cases and more than 350 deaths had been reported as a result of Ebola. Making up 62 percent of reported cases, women and children have been disproportionately affected by the outbreak. With

¹⁷Verweijen, J. (2018). Civilian resistance against the military in Eastern DR Congo: A combined social navigation and structuration approach. *Qualitative Sociology*, 41(2), 281–301.

¹⁸ Vogel, C. (2017). Between tags & guns: Fragmentations of public authority around eastern Congo's artisanal 3T mines. *Journal of Political Geography*, 94–103.

¹⁹ Ibid. Verweijen.

²⁰ USAID. (2018, April). Democratic Republic of the Congo: Food assistance fact sheet. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int/report/democratic-republic-congo/democratic-republic-congo-food-assistance-fact-sheet-april-13-2018>

²¹ efe-epa. (2018, October 16). Violence has doubled hunger rate in DR Congo to 15 million, NGO warns. Retrieved from <https://www.efe.com/efe/english/world/violence-has-doubled-hunger-rate-in-dr-congo-to-15-million-ngo-warns/50000262-3781974>

²² Ibid. USAID.

recent security concerns related to the elections, there is a great fear that the disease will continue to spread beyond the affected areas in North Kivu.²³

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) has been a defining feature of the ongoing conflict in the country. Specifically, with the large presence of armed groups, the war-torn country has been called the 'rape capital of the world'.²⁴ While there are cases of male victims of SGBV, women and girls are far more likely to suffer from sexual violence. Sexual violence against women and girls has been prevalent throughout two decades of conflict in eastern DRC, with an estimated 40 percent of the female population reporting lifetime experiences of sexual assault.²⁵ According to a 2018 UN Security Council report, "Women and girls, especially in the east, had been weakened by a number of violent acts: massacre, carnage, killings, permanent displacement, rape, kidnapping for ransom, trafficking, house burning, militancy, proliferation of foreign and local armed groups, natural resource looting, a lack of strategies to encourage development and education and the illegal hoarding of weapons."²⁶ A retrospective cohort of 1,021 female survivors of sexual violence who received care from a hospital in South Kivu in 2006 found that almost half (47.8 percent) identified their perpetrators as either soldiers or men in uniform. Records of survivors of sexual violence in Goma found that among child survivors, the majority (75 percent) were between the ages of 11 and 18.²⁷

The DRC has one of the highest incidences of rape in the world. According to a 2011 study in the American Journal of Public Health an average of 1,152 women and girls are raped every day – a rate equal to 48 every hour in the DRC. While the highest numbers of rapes were found conflict zones of eastern DR Congo, North Kivu specifically, the study found sexual violence was spreading outside of war zones and into DR Congo's civilian society²⁸. SGBV by civilians in recent years has become a problem in its own right in the DRC. According to a 2018 report produced by the United Kingdom government, "With the widespread impunity for such crimes, especially in the east, increasing incidents of sexual violence are perpetrated by civilians, including family members of the victim."²⁹ Among child survivors between the ages of 11-18, their perpetrators were identified as primarily civilians (81 percent), followed by members of armed forces (13 percent). Child survivors also reported that 74% of perpetrators were known individuals as compared to strangers.³⁰ These incidences of gender-related violence occurred in every space, from unregulated natural spaces, such as riverbanks and forests, to semiprivate spaces, such as communal homes or public latrines, to unregulated spaces, such as roads, to

²³ Ducharme, J. (2018). Security Concerns Are Threatening the Ebola Response in the DRC. Here's What to Know. Time.

²⁴ Ingelaere, Bert; Willen, Nina. (2017 August 31). War-torn Congo has been called the 'rape capital of the world.' Here is how fighters think about sexual violence. The Washington Post. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/08/28/what-do-rebels-think-about-sexual-violence-in-congo-we-asked-them/?utm_term=.1382d46c6020

²⁵ Rouhani, S., Scott, J., G, B., MA, O., S, H., A, G., . . . SA, B. (2016). A quantitative assessment of termination of sexual violence-related pregnancies in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. *Journal of Conflict and Health*, 10(9).

²⁶ United Nations Security Council. (2018). Children and armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Report of the secretary-general. New York, NY: UNDC.

²⁷ Ibid. Landis.

²⁸ BBC. (2011 May 12). DR Congo: 48 rapes every hour, US study finds. BBC World News <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13367277>

²⁹ UK Government. (2018 September). Country Policy and Information Note Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Gender Based Violence. Retrieved from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742590/DRC_GB_V_2018.v2_ext__003_.pdf

³⁰ Ibid. Landis.

semi-regulated and public spaces, such as market and schools.³¹ The country's rape crisis largely attributed to the longstanding conflict in the east of the country; however, the root cause runs much deeper than the conflict. In a recent BBC report, male toxic masculinity, rooted in the way men are socialized as boys; and to their inability to live up to the strict rules of traditional African masculinity was highlighted as the direct link to gender-based violence in the country. With the country's ongoing economic hardships, the inability of men to provide and support their families—a signifier of manhood—had to many of them compensating for this 'failure' at manliness in frequently toxic and violent ways against women in the home, in the community, and in other spheres of socialization³².

Unintended pregnancies are one of the many public health, political-legal, and socioeconomic consequences of sexual violence. While laws exist to protect women from sexually based violence, they are not always effectively enforced, as reported incidents are unlikely to be investigated, and specific penalties against perpetrators of SGBV are hardly ever levied. While protocols for post-assault medical care exist, many women cannot or do not seek care after sexual violence in the DRC.³³ A 2013 study found that less than half of survivors of sexual violence reported access to medical care following their abuse, and 81 percent reported no access to mental health services. While the majority of respondents expressed a preference for prosecuting their cases through the formal justice system, 61 percent reported being forced to use community mediation as an alternative.³⁴

Shame, stigma, and other negative social factors such as rejection by intimate partners and low prospect for marriage have been reported to significantly interfere with the willingness of survivors to report their cases, and detrimentally affect their recovery and rehabilitation.”³⁵ In South Kivu, for example, only four courts have the ability to judge a crime of rape. Across the DRC, courts are very poorly equipped to adjudicate sexual crimes. The Congolese authorities (police officers, magistrates, and judges) are still ridden with preconceived notions of victims, and this affects the processing of their complaints. Victims, often intimidated or threatened for having dared to file a complaint, lack a reasonable and supportive environment in which to demand justice. The lack of access to legal assistance, fear of reprisals and inducement to accept amicable settlements are other reason why victims say they do not seek justice.³⁶

The contextual risk factors and the vulnerabilities they generate continue to deteriorate despite multiple interventions both from the government and the international community through development aid and the presence of the United Nations Peacekeeping forces and agencies. Unfortunately, there no other places in DRC where these trends are further pronounced ad exacerbated than Eastern Congo, where the IYDA will be implemented.

³¹ Sommer, M., Munoz-Laboy, M., Wilkinson Salamea, E., Johanna Arp, K. L., Rudahindwa, F., & Stark, L. (2017). How narratives of fear shape girls' participation in community life in two conflict-affected populations. *Violence Against Women*, 24(5), 565–585.

³² Akinyemi, Aaron. (2019). 'No sex without fighting' - tackling toxic masculinity in DR Congo. BBC World News. Retrieved from https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-48094438?fbclid=IwAR1W_QJUQA6a0blhhJE9V60R84v3FGPG_hjLqD-Fil4My0CBGWMOg7t3pKE

³³ Ibid. Rouhani.

³⁴ Scott, J. P.-G. (2013). A mixed-methods assessment of sexual and gender-based violence in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo to inform national and international strategy implementation. *International Health Planning and Management*, e188-e216.

³⁵ Ibid. Landis.

³⁶ TRIAL International. (2017 October 12). Trial International. Retrieved from <https://trialinternational.org/latest-post/sexual-violence-in-the-drc-why-is-impunity-so-persistent/> (2018 December 1)

Implementing Context in Eastern DRC: An overview of conflict dynamics

While North and South Kivu are two of the few provinces that remained intact during decoupage, they have a long history of ethnic tension, elite interest, and conflict. Despite rich soil, lake access, and mineral deposits, conflict and insecurity have persisted over the last 20 years in the region. As stated in a DAI report for USAID, DRC has a population that is “young, unemployed, and poor; many have turned to the market of violence.”³⁷ Competition for power, land, and resources by local political elites has exacerbated tensions, and armed groups have capitalized on existing ethnic and political divisions between indigenous Congolese groups and Rwandophone, Tutsi, and Hutu groups. As a result, North Kivu and South Kivu remain two of the most resource driven conflict-affected provinces in the country, with high levels of intercommunal tension. Below we briefly discuss the conflict dynamics in both North and South Kivus, focusing on the type and structure of key mobilizers and grievances.

Key mobilizers: a multitude of armed groups

The presence of multiple armed groups, often fighting along ethnic lines, coupled with weak state presence, results in armed clashes being a constant occurrence in the Kivus. The latest report from the Council on Foreign Relations’ Kivu Security Tracker identifies more than 120 armed groups operating in North and South Kivu. Though it has decreased in size in recent years, the *Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR), mostly comprised of Hutus, remains the largest militia group at approximately 1,000 members, with other local militias and Mai-Mai groups, remaining much smaller. These smaller groups are highly fragmented and based on ethnic ties, with some having connections to wider political or business networks. The use of children as soldiers, commonly known as the Kadogo (little ones), has been ongoing since 1996 during the campaign led by the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo/Zaire (AFDL) that ousted President Mobutu. With socioeconomic constraints, the lack of livelihood opportunities, and ethnic marginalization, many youth and children in the Kivus and the DRC at-large are more likely to engage in soldiering activities.³⁸ Land and natural resource extraction sustain DRC’s armed groups financially and provide an incentive to continue participating in violent conflicts. Political turmoil surrounding the uncertainty of upcoming general elections (presidential, gubernatorial and senatorial) has accelerated the formation of coalitions for some groups, which has been compounded by the Congolese Army (FARDC) coming increasingly under strain as conflict increases in other regions. While political uncertainty and illegal exploitation of natural resources fueled the groups, ethnic loyalties, a deep sense of marginalization and lack of political opportunities provide these key mobilizers with the fulcrum for mobilization and recruitment.

Grievances: Youth lack of economic opportunities and general sense of marginalization

The grievances that drive the conflict context in Eastern Congo are multiple and complex. There result from a combination of mismanagement of natural resources, real lack of opportunities for youth and disruptive social patterns such as mistrust of and resistance to security forces. The analysis of each of these drivers go beyond the scope of this assessment; however below is a brief discussion of the few that are relevant to the project; and throughout the report, particularly during the discussion of the findings, some of the drivers will be discussed in detail.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) sees youth unemployment as one of the most challenging developmental and political problems facing the country, with unemployment at 73

³⁷ DAI Global, LLC. (2017). USAID/Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) integrated governance activity (IGA) – Conflict sensitivity analysis & implementation strategy: An annex to the year 1 work plan. Kinshasa – Gombe/DRC: USAID.

³⁸ Kiyala, J. C. (2015). Challenges of reintegrating self-demobilised child soldiers in North Kivu Province: Prospects for accountability and reconciliation via restorative justice peacemaking circles. *Human Rights Review*, 99–122.

percent overall and highest among youth aged 15-24 years.³⁹ In the 1990s, the youth unemployment situation was not only a contributing factor to the conflict but also a recruitment factor for armed groups that saw children and youth as captive cheap labor and combatants. While the DRC has undergone several demobilizations of child soldiers, youth lacking skills and tools to enable their socioeconomic reinsertion as well as insufficient measures to protect former child soldiers after their reinsertion into the community often result in recidivism.

Mistrust of security forces and resistance

Manifestations of civilian resistance and civilian opposition to the military are also a source of conflict in the region. Despite widespread compliance with army personnel's demands, Kivu civilians from all layers of the population frequently resist the military in various ways to ensure socioeconomic safety. Resistance includes bargaining, collective protest, and mob justice against FARDC soldiers and other armed groups.⁴⁰ These collective actions are often spurred by the need to resist the patronage networks that permeate the state apparatus, including the armed forces, where the lack of security and state-provided services push armed forces to extract resources and tax civilians for protection.⁴¹

The general context in DRC and in the Eastern Congo present IYDA with important risks. These risks do not only intersect to create a complex and challenging programmatic environment, but they also posed direct challenges in achieving individual result of IYDA. That is why a further analysis of the programmatic context of each component of IYDA is discussed below.

State of Education in the DRC

Over the last two decades, the DRC has experienced prolonged and acute conflicts that has forced more than 3.8 million people to flee their homes. Of the 3.5 million children of primary school age that are out of school in the DRC, an estimated 2 million children are in urgent need of education as a result of conflict.⁴² As examined in the next section, ongoing conflicts in the country play a detrimental role in the state of education. However, the DRC's education woes are further compounded by a weakened education system marked by government ineffectiveness, lack of accountability, corruption, and decentralization. While the DRC 2004 Constitution declares, "education in primary public schools is free and compulsory," this promise is unmet due to a lack of finances. In 2015, only 1.5 percent of the DRC's GDP was spent on education, which is far behind other sub-Saharan countries in financing its education system. Teachers remain insufficiently remunerated and poorly supported; school fees are unregulated; basic pedagogical materials are widely lacking, and infrastructure is broadly inadequate.⁴³ While the DRC recognizes education as the key for a prosperous country, it lags behind in increasing equitable access to education for both the formal and non-formal education sectors. In the face of the interaction of conflict and education in the DRC, ensuring inclusive and quality education for all is a Goliath challenge. It is estimated that 3.5 million children of primary school age are out of school in the DRC as a result of various reasons including ongoing conflicts, the direct, indirect and opportunity costs, as well as discrimination and gender inequity. Of those who do attend, 44 percent start school late, after the age of six. Only 67 percent of children who enter first grade complete sixth grade. Of those who

³⁹ UNECA. (2015). Conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Causes, impact and implications for the Great Lakes region. UN Economic Commission for Africa, 4–126.

⁴⁰ Ibid. Verweijen.

⁴¹ Hoffmann, K., Vlassenroot, K., & Marchais, G. (2016). Taxation, stateness and armed groups public authority and resource extraction in Eastern Congo. *Development and Change International Institute of Social Studies.*, 47(6), 1434–1456.

⁴² Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack. (2018 May 11). Education Under Attack 2018 - Democratic Republic of the Congo. Retrieved from <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5be94311a.html>

⁴³ USAID ECCN. (2016). USAID ECCN alternative education in the DRC: Final research report. Waltham, MA: Education Development Center.

reach sixth grade, only 75 percent pass the exit exam. Disaggregated by gender, out-of-school rates are higher among girls, and by region, higher in conflict-affected regions.⁴⁴

According to the 2006 constitution, education in DRC is both a central and provincial government responsibility. The central level is responsible for setting norms, school inspection, and national statistics. The provinces are responsible for the administration of the education system within those norms. There are also shared responsibilities around the creation of schools and educational statistics. However, the decentralization framework is only partially implemented. As such, local structures of the central government's Ministry of Primary, Secondary, and Professional Education (MEPSP) remain responsible for most of the day-to-day operation and management of the Congolese Primary, Secondary, and Professional Education (PSPE) system. The school system is comprised of "public" schools that include both state ("*écoles non conventionnées*") and confessional schools ("*écoles conventionnées*"). Confessional schools are run by faith-based organizations (FBOs). In practice, confessional schools account for seven out of ten primary schools. State schools account for fewer than two out of ten schools, while private schools account for the remainder.⁴⁵ The "*écoles non conventionnée*" and '*écoles conventionnées*' alike suffer from a lack of state financing leaving them dependent on funding from international NGOs and donors, as well as private actors.⁴⁶

The ineffective regulatory framework between the province and the national government impacts the quality of education in the country. A new school can already start operating without a quality check of its physical infrastructure, its organization, or the level of education of its teachers.⁴⁷ The dearth of qualified teachers to run education programs—especially accelerated learning programs (ALPs)—lack of pedagogical materials and limited access to a comprehensive syllabus at the local level that is aligned with the national formal education syllabus means the education system is extremely limited and insufficient to meet the education needs of the students.⁴⁸

The inefficiencies and lack of resources in the education sector has also led to the preponderance of school fees in the DRC. To date, there are no laws that have been passed to change the local structures of the central government's MEPSP position and prerogatives to regulate school fees nationally. The ambiguities in the legal framework result in school fees fixed in several stages, starting at the national level, moving down to school level, with each level imposing partial limits on lower levels in sometimes complicated ways. As a result, the amount of fees paid by parents is estimated to be an amount that is higher than the entire government budget for primary education for the country, thereby turning schools into de facto taxation units.⁴⁹ Primary school fees represent a significant education access issue for parents, significantly contributing to the number of OOSC children in the DRC. According to Herdt and Titeca (2016), the "average estimated fees per student per year in DRC can range from 26,300 to 59,900 CDFs (from \$16 to \$36), depending on the source. When considering that 81 percent of households earn less than 1,080,000 CDFs (\$662) per year and that Congolese women have up to seven children, school fees make the goal of universal primary education virtually unattainable in DRC."⁵⁰

In addition to school fees, some parents are further burdened by request from schools to pay 'teacher bonus fees' (*frais de motivation*) to supplement teachers' salaries. Established by the Catholic Church and

⁴⁴ USAID. (2018, June). DRC education fact sheet. Retrieved from <https://www.usaid.gov/democratic-republic-congo/education>

⁴⁵ Groleau, G. (2017). Improved Management and accountability: Conditions for better access and quality of primary education in the Democratic Republic of Congo? International Rescue Committee, 1–40.

⁴⁶ Ibid. USAID ECCN.

⁴⁷ Ibid. Herdt, T. D., & Titeca, K.

⁴⁸ Ibid. USAID ECCN.

⁴⁹ Ibid. Herdt, T. D., & Titeca, K.

⁵⁰ Ibid. Groleau.

the students' parents' association, teacher bonus fees were a mechanism to address the 1992 and 1993 'white years' (*années blanches*) or the two-year-long teacher strikes in response to the state's inability to pay teacher salaries. While established as a temporary measure, it soon became an institutionalized practice. In 2004, teacher bonuses were declared illegal by the government. In reality, however, these fees were simply renamed in many provinces and incorporated into school fees. Approximately one quarter of all school fees paid by parents is eventually pocketed as salary supplements by the 'sitting teachers' (*enseignants assis*) or people working in the school administration. Approximately 54 percent of teachers in the country are registered with the state payroll nationally, meaning that almost half of all teachers have to make ends meet solely with their bonus fees. As such, today's teacher bonus fees are a major driver of the school fees born by parents.⁵¹ Remedial learning centers (CRS – Centres de Rattrapage Scolaire) and the professional learning centers (CAP – Centre d'Apprentissage Professionnel) are fraught with the same challenges as formal schools in regards to school fees. Therefore, access to education is limited only to those who can afford the informal school fees.

Improving access to education beyond addressing the issues of school fees also requires a paradigm shift in the gendered views on access to education and improving access to inclusive education for children with disabilities, especially girls. The general outlook for people living with disabilities in the DRC is bleak. There are roughly 9.1 million people with disabilities in Congo, which represent 11 percent of the overall population. Amongst people with disabilities, 90 percent are illiterate, 93 percent are jobless, and 96 percent live in an unhealthy and inhumane environment. While article 49 of the DRC constitution give the right to people living with disabilities the right to specific protections with regards to their physical, intellectual and moral needs, the government still doesn't get involved in resolving problems faced by the disabled.⁵² Coupled with violence, abuse, and prejudice, children living with disabilities are the most vulnerable and excluded group from accessing an inclusive education in the DRC. The number of children who lack access to education is vast in the DRC, still girls are more disproportionately affected. A Demographic and Health Survey conducted in 2014 places the literacy rate at around 88 percent for males and 63 percent for females. Factors such as low family incomes, cost of education, poor school infrastructure and emphasis on boys' education, as well as the persistent danger of being targeted, raped or recruited by militias on the way to school all inhibit girls access to education⁵³.

Education in Conflict

While the state of education is fraught with institutional challenges, continuing conflicts across the DRC also greatly impedes the learning potential and opportunities for children to access education. In 2014, the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) found that between 500 and 999 attacks on education took place in the DRC between 2009 and 2013. These include everything from the military use of schools, looting, and extortion to rape and abduction of children for forced labor to torture, most of which were concentrated in the eastern provinces.⁵⁴ The follow-up report by GCPEA in 2018 indicated that 2017 saw the highest number of attacks on schools of the reporting period and in eastern DRC. Attacks on schools in 2017 occurred at similar rates as in 2013, 2014, and 2015.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Ibid. Herdt, T. D., & Titeca, K.

⁵² Bakiman, Badyon K Inter Press Service. 2012. Disabled Left to Fend for Themselves. Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int/report/democratic-republic-congo/disabled-left-fend-themselves>

⁵³ Fu, Tracy. 2018. Girls' Education in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Borgen Magazine. Retrieved from <https://www.borgenmagazine.com/girls-education-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo/>

⁵⁴ Bennoun, C., van Boetzelaer, E., Rojas, L., Richard, K., Karume, G., M, N., . . . N, B. (2017). Monitoring and reporting attacks on education in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia. *Disasters*, 1-22.

⁵⁵ Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack. (2018 May 11). Education Under Attack 2018 - Democratic Republic of the Congo. Retrieved from <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5be94311a.html>

Perpetrators included armed groups, including armed internally displaced persons (IDPs), bandits, and the FARDC.

In 2017 alone, armed groups attacked 101 schools, with schools burned down, destroyed, and pillaged in eastern DRC. Children were attacked inside their classrooms or on their way to school; schools were looted or destroyed; and teachers were abducted. The UN reported multiple cases of children associated with the militia, armed with sticks, machetes, and knives forcing students and teachers out of their schools while threatening to behead anyone who continued to study or teach rather than join the militia. The devastation of these attacks impacted not only children's access to education across the regions, but in some instances, an entire school year was lost as schools were used by armed groups for military purposes, including as barracks, sniper or defensive positions, command centers, and observation posts, often transforming them into targets of future attacks.⁵⁶ There were hundreds of reported cases of schools being disrupted or closed indefinitely due to insecurity in the village or mass population displacement.⁵⁷

The growing inter-ethnic character of violence in North and South Kivu also heavily affects children and youth resilience to conflict and violence in eastern DRC. In 2017, a total of 7,736 children (7,125 boys and 611 girls) were verified by the UN Country Task Force as having been recruited into armed groups and armed forces. Among the new cases of recruitment, 90 percent occurred in the east, mainly in North Kivu (4,609), followed by South Kivu (387). More than one third of newly recruited and used children were under the age of 15, a war crime under international law. Conflict-related violence resulted in many of these children being killed or maimed.

The barriers to access to education also mutually reinforce the risk to violence and insecurity for children in the country. With the complex political transition in the country and the presence of more than 130-armed groups in eastern DRC, an increasing number of cases of sexual violence in the east, including rape, forced marriages, and sexual slavery, often occurred in the context of violence against children.. About 30 to 40 percent of children in the armed groups are girls. Girls are often lured into joining local militias because of enticing factors like wages; however, a 2016 research study on girl's recruitment into armed groups, found that while about a third voluntarily joined an armed group, almost half of them had joined because they could no longer pay their school fees. Whether they had chosen to join voluntarily or been forcefully recruited, these girls were subsequently subjected to rape, ill-treatment and forced labor; all because their families could not afford to pay school fees.⁵⁸

These factors still affect girls once they return home, as they are often unable to attend school for the same reasons. Whilst there has been a degree of success in getting children out of armed groups and into reintegration programs, some schools continue to refuse admission to children formerly associated with armed group. For girls, especially those who experienced sexual abuse or rape by armed groups, discrimination, shame, and fear of rejection keeps many out of school and isolated in their communities. While the social aspect of being with peers may help in mitigating the effects of conflict and trauma on children, schools in the DRC are not well equipped or sufficiently sensitized to provide the required access to children. Lacking access and support, the isolation of child victims of violence is further exacerbated.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ United Nations Security Council. (2018). Children and armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Report of the secretary-general. New York, NY: UNDC.

⁵⁷ Ibid. Bennoun.

⁵⁸ Child Soldiers International. (2016 Nov 14). "If I could go to school..." Education as a tool to prevent the recruitment of girls and assist with their recovery and reintegration in Democratic Republic of Congo. Retrieved from https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/If_I_could_go_to_school____.pdf

⁵⁹ Ibid.

Providing access to education is crucial in protecting children from recruitment (and re-recruitment) and helping former child soldiers rebuild their lives. However, the prospect of rebuilding civilian life through the pursuit of an education for some is also unattainable due to lack of availability of schools for all children in all affected communities. In North Kivu for example, the shortage of schools acts as one of the central reasons why children of internally displaced persons are out of school, which further increases their vulnerability to violence.⁶⁰ Further, schools in the DRC lack the resources to provide psychosocial support, and sensitization for children's reintegration. Children previously recruited, kidnapped or victimized by armed groups are visibly traumatized by their ordeals both emotionally (depression, anxiety, withdrawal) and behaviorally (aggression, engaging in self-destructive activities). As schools are not equipped with psychological counselling or therapy, the inability to cope with the experienced trauma is a culprit for many, especially boys, to dropout and reintegrate into armed groups.⁶¹

Beyond these external challenges to education, students in the DRC must also contend with the internal threats of School-related Gender-based Violence (SRGBV). Defined as "acts or threats of sexual, physical, or psychological violence occurring in and around schools, perpetrated as a result of gender norms and stereotypes, and enforced by unequal power dynamics, SRGBV is as complex as it is multifaceted."⁶² Sexual harassment and abuse of girls at school by teachers and other school staff, for example, is particularly pronounced in the DRC. While laws exist to punish such acts of sexual violence they are not always pursued. "Parents let it happen because economically, this allows them to keep their girls in school, and for girls to be awarded grades that help them get jobs they so desperately need. Schools desperately need teachers, and many school administrators — some of whom have themselves abused students — are not often going to report their own colleagues."⁶³ Article 57 of the Child Protection Code 2009 'confirms the right of the child to protection from all forms of violence and states that discipline in the home, schools and institutions should be administered with respect for the child's humanity but it does not explicitly prohibit corporal punishment'⁶⁴. While the literature on SRGBV in the DRC is scarce, existing evidence shows that despite the detrimental impacts of corporal punishment, many teachers in schools in the DRC believe that harsh discipline helps children become better students and is thus an accepted practice. Nonetheless, SRGBV leaves a lasting impact on children from the psychosocial trauma that impacts their ability to learn due to the fear, shame, or stigma that affects their retention and completion of an education.

Youth Livelihoods in the Kivus

In 2016, 62 percent of the population was under 24, with 21.5 of the total population between the ages of 15-24.⁶⁵ Despite making up a large proportion of the population, youth remain highly vulnerable and underrepresented, especially in the Kivus. Many young people in these provinces have been exposed to years of cyclical violence, instability, and economic distress. The government's inability to deliver social

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Oatway; James. 2019. Kidnapping and terror in DRC. New frame. Retrieved from <https://www.newframe.com/kidnapping-and-terror-drc>

⁶² UNESCO. 2015. School-related gender-based violence is preventing the achievement of quality education for all. Policy paper 17. Retrieved from <http://www.ungei.org/srgbv/files/232107E.pdf>

⁶³ Swift-Morgan, Jennifer. 2016. Making Schools Safe Across the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Chemonics. Retrieved from <https://www.chemonics.com/blog/making-schools-safe-across-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo/>

⁶⁴ UNICEF. 2017. Corporal punishment of children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Retrieved from <http://www.endcorporalpunishment.org/wp-content/uploads/country-reports/DRCongo.pdf>

⁶⁵ CIA World Factbook.

services has led to the displacement, armament, or death of young people who become combatants. A lack of safety and security and widespread sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) have led to youth experiencing severe trauma. Youth in eastern DRC have become an “invisible majority.” In the Kivus, both weak governance and an unstable private sector are prevalent, resulting in a lack of basic service delivery, a lack of basic economic and employment opportunities, and an environment conducive to the multiplication of armed groups.

First and foremost, destabilization within the country and region have destroyed the social infrastructure and weakened state- and civil society-run mechanisms of service provision, severely restricting the population’s already-limited access to basic services. The lack of a strong government presence in the face of immediate threats from neighboring Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi has led to the Kivus becoming the historical birthplace of a multitude of armed groups, including a growing Islamist insurgency.⁶⁶ Militias often serve as enforcers of peace and justice, as well as arbitrators of basic service delivery. Militias also represent one way to access power for a generation of youth denied access by traditional means—namely through land ownership and economic power. The militias thereby represent one of few opportunities for youth livelihoods—and capitalize on it, with many militias being comprised of youth.

In an attempt to regain control of the region, the FARDC have increased recruitment efforts in the Kivus, particularly among youth. This targeting of youth recruits falls under a new “framework of rejuvenation and reform” being implemented by military authorities.⁶⁷ But the recruitment into militias and the armed forces is a far cry from the creation of sustainable livelihoods and does not solve the underlying socioeconomic issues related to the lack of livelihoods in the region, primarily the vast macroeconomic mismanagement and lack of local governance.

In the Kivus, another main driver of the instability of livelihoods is the lack of economic and employment opportunities in the formal sector. Despite making up 51 percent of the workforce, 40 percent of people between the ages of 15 and 24 are unemployed. Unemployment rates continue to rise despite increasing GDP and labor force participation rates. As the population is growing at a similar rate to that of labor force participation, and without an increase in opportunities, the lack of opportunity for youth remains cyclical. The lack of opportunity is also indiscriminate, prevalent across all levels of educational achievement.⁶⁸

The opportunities that do exist for youth 15-24 are largely in the extractive industry, which has been widely accused of exploitative practices and a historic lack of national regulation. However, new regulations passed in March 2018 include an increase in royalties, taxes, and contractual obligations for foreign mining companies and the removal of a “ten-year stability clause” that previously protected firms that had invested in the DRC from tax increases and economic regulation.⁶⁹ In light of these changes, international companies are threatening to reduce their operations in the DRC, favoring neighboring countries with more limited resources but the promise of a less-regulated market⁷⁰. Though the reforms could make way for increased government investment in local infrastructure and eventual restoration of livelihoods, the lack of accountability and transparency in national government calls into question the potential impact of this reinvestment.

⁶⁶ Gettleman, J. (2016, April). In Congo, wars are small and chaos is endless. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/01/world/africa/in-congo-wars-are-small-and-chaos-is-endless.html>

⁶⁷ June 2016. Plus de 300 jeunes recrutés par l’armée au Nord-Kivu.

⁶⁸ Sanchez-Reaza, Javier. 2018. *Jobs diagnostic: Democratic Republic of Congo (English)*. Jobs Series; issue no. 12. Washington, D.C. : World Bank Group

⁶⁹ Shah, Sachin. June 2018. “What the New Mining Code Can Mean for the Congo.”

⁷⁰ Ibid. Shah, Sachin.

Civic Engagement

Traditionally, young people in the DRC are seen as either victims of violence and conflict or violent actors; they are not often seen as agents of positive change within communities.⁷¹ Despite recent improvements in youth civic engagement in the Kivus, young people remain largely disenfranchised and marginalized within their communities. Cultural practices, including *droit d'aînesse* (the rights of elders to make decisions), limit the decision-making power of young people, especially for women who also lack decision-making power within households due to standard familial norms.⁷² Even as government initiatives and donor-funded efforts to promote youth civic engagement emerge, young people are generally not included in the planning and implementation of policies, laws, and programs that impact their well-being.⁷³ Additionally, limited freedom of expression is a barrier to youth civic engagement and political participation.

According to a 2013 youth mapping activity, over 50 percent of young people reported that they participate in civic engagement activities and religious activities. Historically, the most active of religious actors is the Catholic Church, choosing to engage in formal national and local dialogues as well as organizing an ongoing series of non-violent demonstrations.⁷⁴ This era of activism began in 1992 when the Church planned the non-violent “March of Christians” to end a nationwide workers strike, a march that ended in a blood bath.⁷⁵ The Church has since created the Collective 16 February, a group of evangelical Christian denominations who have united under the date of the 1992 march to work in solidarity to promote the organization of national reconciliation dialogues and peaceful elections. However, the group refuses to be seen as an opposition group, choosing instead to maintain its neutrality, and in turn, affecting its appeal to youth across the nation.⁷⁶

As the Church chooses to focus primarily on advocating for issues that generally uphold, rather than demand more of the Constitution, several youth political movements have emerged—many of them in the Kivus. The most popular is *Lutte pour le Changement* (Struggle for Change, or La Lucha). Formed in 2012 in the capital of North Kivu, La Lucha is a “non-violent, non-partisan, citizen movement” spreading advocacy campaigns for good governance and service delivery, especially of water, electricity, health, education, and security.⁷⁷ Although technically an unregistered association, the movement has over 3,000 members and has opted for a non-hierarchical, decentralized leadership structure to ensure equality among all members and strategic protection of the movement. Since establishing themselves in North Kivu, they have increased their presence and operations to four other regions in the DRC.

Similar to La Lucha, Filimbi is a national movement that takes its name from the Swahili word for “whistle.” Filimbi is a pro-democracy and civil society movement that advocates against poor governance and human rights abuses. In addition to promoting freedom of expression and freedom of association, especially for youth, Filimbi members organize peaceful protests, sit-ins, debates, and other demonstrations in eastern DRC.⁷⁸ Along with other civil society groups, Filimbi conducts workshops and panels on democracy and respecting constitutional principles. Youth movements like Filimbi and La Lucha have faced push back from the government as many activists have been arrested or detained at

⁷¹ Global Partnership for Children & Youth in Peacebuilding 2015. Evaluation of Child and Youth Participation in Peacebuilding.

⁷² USAID 2013. Congolese Youth: Assets and Opportunities. YouthMap Assessment Report.

⁷³ Ibid

⁷⁴ Ligodi Patient, Feb 2018: “At least two killed in crackdown on march against Congo’s Kabila.”

⁷⁵ Institut français de relations internationales (IFRI), May 2016: La nouvelle opposition en RDC: Les mouvements citoyens de la jeunesse, 7

⁷⁶ Ibid, 19

⁷⁷ Ibid

⁷⁸ Front Line Defenders. “Filimbi.”

events hosted by these movements.⁷⁹ In addition to La Lucha and Filimbi, other youth movements include Ujana, which is a platform of young people involved in defending the achievements of the DRC, and Cojedep, a collective of young people for the defense of the homeland.

However, despite the movements that exist, youth view political participation as a civic duty and not a right, and a sense of political victimization exists among youth as a majority of young people feel manipulated or pitted against one another by politicians.⁸⁰ The dismissal of young people, lack of tools and financial resources to support youth, and exclusion from local decision-making and political processes means that young people are more likely to approve of and engage in political violence and less likely to support peace processes.⁸¹ The multiplicity of youth actors results in a lack of coordination and collaboration between them, reducing their potential impact and exacerbating existing conflict.

Information Gaps in the Literature Review

From analysis of the existing literature on the context and background, the team identified several gaps that required the collection of community-level information and data. The primary data collection allowed the team to collect information about parents', teachers', and communities' perceptions about education and the conflict dividers and connectors. The primary data collection also corroborated and expanded on the causes and norms relating to school dropout and exclusion of vulnerable groups, responses to GBV and SRGBV, mechanisms and institutions that exist for conflict resolution, patterns of youth 15-24 civic engagement, and youth access to a safe learning environment (SLE) and opportunities to gain long-term soft skills.

Primary Data Findings

This section focuses on the findings of the primary data collection, which were gleaned from focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) with in-school and OOSC youth, parents, teachers, administrators, community members, religious leaders, female leaders, security sector representatives, youth movement leaders, youth entrepreneurs, and business leaders. While the desk review uncovered a plethora of themes related to the conflict interactions with education, IYDA's guiding questions for data collection focused on a selection of themes, including equity and access to education, school-related gender-based violence, and the dividers and connectors in conflict. The qualitative data provided additional insight into the challenges and barriers that youth face in the intervention zones of the Eastern DRC. Additionally, the findings delve into attitudes and norms about school safety and security, as well as gender-based violence (GBV) in school and in the community and the mechanisms through which it is addressed.

⁷⁹ Human Rights Watch 2015. "DRC Congo: Free 'Filimbi' Activists."

⁸⁰ USAID 2013. Congolese Youth: Assets and Opportunities. YouthMap Assessment Report.

⁸¹ Search for Common Ground 2015. DRC Youth Strategy.

Primary Causes of Conflict in Targeted Communities in Eastern DRC

Localized Sources of Conflict

Issues of inheritance. Primary data collection confirmed the presence of disputes over inheritance as a conflict driver in Eastern DRC. Separate from intergenerational conflicts stemming from the stress placed on parents to support their children for an increased amount of time with limited resources, issues of inheritance are related to the Congolese tradition mandating that only the eldest male heirs receive an inheritance. In large families, inheritance creates friction between siblings, often escalating to violence. Inheritance law specifically contributes to interfamilial insecurity, in which siblings not chosen to receive an inheritance from their families resort to witchcraft, enlist the support of armed groups or gangs, or engage in physical violence or systemic sexual rape as a form of retaliation against their situation. “Fights and death quickly follow,” stated one participant. “Others resort to witchcraft to harm and poison the life of the beneficiary or heir.” These reactions were echoed in all study sites by different respondent types, with witchcraft, or *sorcellerie*, referring to the use of black magic (often by females) to perform actions that would be otherwise impossible.

Examples include the use of rare herbs to create poisons or the use of incantations or black magic to result in swelling or enlargement of body parts resulting in death.

The effects related to inheritance—the destitution of the older son, the exclusion of women and children in inheritance—can push most into mines, and still others to join gangs or armed groups to take revenge on their brothers; there is also witchcraft that intervenes in such cases, resulting in sudden and inexplicable deaths in our communities.

– Female OOSY FGD participant (Walungu)

However, the conflict over inheritance does not affect all community members in the same way. Parents are implicated, especially when a child decides to retaliate, and this source of conflict most directly affects female youth. “Conflicts arise because most people do not understand this law,” shared a police officer in Bukavu, “and the largest number of victims in conflicts of inheritance are female, who make up an estimated 80 percent of victims.” While male potential heirs are the most likely to retaliate, females receive no inheritance at all and are consistently the first victims of systemic sexual violence at the hands of gangs and armed groups enlisted by their brothers for vengeance. While this issue was reported in all study sites, there was a heightened level of intensity of the conflicts around inheritance in the rural sites in Walungu and Kalehe, contexts in which land has more mineral or agricultural value and access to weapons is much easier due to the presence of demobilized armed group members (Walungu) or the proximity to active armed groups (Kalehe.)

Often, the father provides the inheritance to a younger son instead of to an older son, who the father may have judged as irresponsible, and this creates hatred between children. Fights and death quickly follow. Others resort to witchcraft, to harm and poison the life of the beneficiary or heir.

– Male OSSY FGD participant (Goma)

In Walungu, a secondary conflict emerges from this issue of inheritance: **sexual extortion at the hands of females**. Female youth focus group participants explained a new trend emerging in which females engaged in open, consensual sexual relations with males—particularly males in line to receive an inheritance—and after some time would claim that her male partner raped her. Known as “*viol conventionel*,” the claim of rape would be investigated like any other rape would be, with many females insisting that the Church resolve the issue in hopes that the male would marry her and that she would be able to benefit from his inheritance⁸². Male focus group participants in Walungu confirmed this occurrence, and a heated conversation on this issue occupied nearly half an hour of the mixed gender focus group in Mushinga (Walungu.) Examples were cited in three communities in the Walungu region, in all communities in Goma, as well as in the one community visited in Minova. In fact, the only place where we did not hear of this issue was in Bukavu, perhaps because the chosen data collection site was in Baguira, a periurban community with fewer inheritance issues due to the [current] availability of land.

Land disputes. Whereas issues of inheritance are intrafamilial, land disputes, the second most mentioned source of conflict, are interfamilial and intercommunal. An issue in both urban and rural contexts, the conflict manifests itself between families, different villages, or landowners and tenants/prospective buyers.

As explained by security sector officials in Bukavu, Walungu, and Kalehe, land disputes between families often erupt due to unequal division of lands by the *chefferie* or due to fertile or mineral-rich lands that have historically traded hands between a set of families. In the words of one security sector representative in Minova (Kalehe), “In mining communities, these conflicts are resolved with the law of the fittest. There are a lot of problems with the areas of land to be exploited. In fact, three families can argue for ownership of a mining estate. And while they argue, we witness [related] kidnappings, even murders.” The lack of formal, legitimately perceived conflict resolution mechanisms perpetuates families’ use of violence to resolve these issues. This issue is not limited to mineral-rich areas; leaders of two different local associations in Minova explained that the same applied to fertile land for agriculture. Although informal and communal dispute resolution mechanisms exist (further explored in the LOCAL CAPACITIES FOR PEACE: SYSTEMS AND INSTITUTIONS section of this report), these mechanisms are not used as often to resolve more serious issues of inheritance and prefer to resolve smaller community disputes.

These familial land disputes are exacerbated by the Congolese law stating that while citizens may own any land above ground, all that is below the ground, including any associated wealth, belongs to the state. Ownership of mineral-rich land, therefore, becomes a matter of the family or persons’ relationship with

⁸² This was triangulated between three sources after being cited in focus group discussions with females only: in focus group discussions with males only, in key informant interviews with female leaders who were also seen as conflict resolution resources to families, and in mixed-gender youth focus groups as described at the end of this paragraph.

THE MUSIHINGA-MUKUNGWE LAND DISPUTE

The Musihinga-Mukungwe land dispute originated from the discovery of gold in Maroc. This area, administratively and legally speaking, is under the control of the head of the group of Mushinga who lives in Madaka. This person had handed over the land to a family and requested payment of land and customary taxes without knowing that the subsoil contained the minerals. When gold was found in large quantities, the *groupement* leader began to claim the land underground, in which the gold could be found, still belonged to him on the pretext that he had sold the land but not what lay below eye-level. This land dispute has led to repeated attacks with firearms and knives between the two communities in the same *groupement*.

the *chefferie*, the *chefferie*'s relationship with the *chef de groupement*, and the *chef de groupement*'s relationship with the state (focus group discussion with male youth in Walungu.) For example, in Walungu, there is a conflict between the heads of two groupements, Mushinga and Mukungwe, over land rights associated with mineral wealth (see text box above).

Meanwhile, in urban contexts, existing land disputes are equally “perpetuated by commissionaires who often allow themselves to sell the parcels, sometimes at high prices” (interview with security sector official in Bagira.) Rather than serve as a mitigating factor, landlords increase conflict between families and profit from the land by buying and reselling the land from one of the conflicting parties, creating a cycle of displacement and aggravating the already poor economic status of community members to their personal benefit.

Youth think that our country is just for a very small group of people: politicians. And this is because the wealth—both material and human—of our nation is not shared with our people.
— Leader of a youth movement in Bukavu

Chronic political instability and weak governance structures.

Although political instability and weak governance are accepted as status quo and were not mentioned as sources of conflict by most community members, youth movement leaders, youth-led associations, and security sector officials all cited weak governance structures as a source and driver of conflict in communities. “Youth are the victim of weak governance in our country,” stated the director of a youth-led organization in Bukavu, some recognized the lack of economic development, employment, and inequitable provision of quality education as a specific grievance that fuels tension and potentially conflict. Leaders of youth movements interviewed explained how the lack of strong, respected, legitimate governance hampers service delivery, such as health, education, and justice, and in turn exacerbates citizens’ mistrust of the government and existing tensions in the community over access to these services.

Poor governance is one of the contributing factors to widespread corruption and the weakening of other central structures, such as the justice and security sector. All security sector officials with whom IYDA data collectors spoke admitted, at least once during the interview, to various levels of responsibility that amounted, in some cases, to complicity in insecurity in their communities. Corruption and complicity took various forms. In some regions, police and military are unable to respond to attacks by armed groups unless authorization is received from the president (interviews with security sector officials in Walungu and Kalehe). But also in Kalehe, other respondents shared that the police or military are members of the gangs and collaborate to plan for the best time to attack (interviews with female leader and pastor.) Police are known to accept bribes to either investigate or drop cases (interviews with security sector officials in Bukavu and Kalehe, focus group discussions in Walungu), but they will keep their word on their terms. “[For example], a bribe may be paid to a police officer to investigate a robbery. We catch the thief, bring him to the police station, and one day later, the police let him free,” explains a male youth focus group participant in Walungu. The police then are able to collect bribes from both sides involved and increase impunity in communities.

It may be barbaric and inhumane, but the community sees mob justice as the most efficient [way to get justice.] The victims of mob justice serve as an example to other bandits and delinquents; the number of offenders and incidences really decreases.

– Female OOSY FGD participant (Walungu)

Because of this rampant corruption of the security sector, **parallel systems have been set up for civilian protection, law enforcement, and justice.** “Our community is fed up with the ‘justice’ delivered by police, a self-serving system requiring money to have someone even listen to you, a system where the poorest are resigned,” explained a female youth participant in a focus group discussion in Goma. The most common parallel system established is that of mob justice, a practice that involves the entire community “publicly humiliating”⁸³ an offender. This extrajudicial violence takes many forms from verbal to physical or sexual abuse and oftentimes results in the death of the offender. The system invokes the involvement of the entire community and is one of the few times where the community comes together. OOSC youth focus group discussion participants in Walungu and Goma were especially animated when discussing mob justice and its efficacy, but the practice is widespread and was mentioned by all respondent groups in all regions except Bukavu.

However, mob justice itself is a source of conflict in these communities; should a victim of mob justice be innocent, there is no path of recourse for that individual. Although respondents tended to use the term “public humiliation”, probing discussions revealed that the outcome of these processes were often/usually fatal. The families of innocent victims of mob

justice often seek revenge, creating yet another cycle of violence.

Even though not generalized across all communities, in Minova (Kalehe), Mushinga (Walungu), and Bagira (Bukavu), there was a strong sense of resentment directed to international nongovernmental and humanitarian aid organizations. In Bukavu, security sector officials and religious officials cited that international NGOs often under-deliver on their promises and do not keep the “deals” made with key community actors and opinion leaders who facilitated their entry into the community (interview with several security sector officials, Bukavu.) In Minova, this distrust escalated to confrontations between one international NGO and community members in protests and demonstrations led by the youth movement Congo Conscience (interview with youth movement leader, Kalehe.) The protests demanded that the INGO be more transparent with their activities and job postings, release more regular French-language reporting, and have a bigger impact on the community in a more timely fashion. Community members across the board felt that the amount of time allotted for activities in the community was too limited when compared to the actual length of presence of INGOs in their communities; in other words, communities wanted INGOs to extend the length of their activities in their communities (interviews and focus group discussions with youth movement leaders, community members, and OOSC youth in Minova, Kalehe.) Respondents in Minova (Kalehe) and Mushinga (Walungu) were also frustrated by some INGOS targeted recruitment of demobilized child soldiers for key field-based positions (interview with local associations in Minova and Walungu) The targeted selection of demobilized child soldiers who had caused insecurity in the communities was seen as threat to community cohesion.

Education in Conflict

The impact of conflict on education resonates at every level, affecting youth access, retention, learning outcomes, safety, and overall well-being in and away from school. For those youth unfortunate enough to have lived conflict experiences firsthand as child soldiers, rehabilitation in a school environment is fraught with challenges. While some have serious handicaps from their experiences in combat, others are traumatized by the psychological stress of these experiences resulting in different forms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) affecting youth learning and educational outcomes. Still even in the midst of such

⁸³ “Public humiliation” is the term used by focus groups and interviews in all regions.

conflict, education matters as a form of resilience and resistance by increasing youth opportunity to access better livelihood opportunities and make better choices for their overall wellbeing.

Access to Education

The DRC is a challenging landscape for youth's access to education. Yet even in light of the country's poverty, the importance of education is widely emphasized. Parents spoke of the value of education for their children to be in a better position to support themselves and the family in the future. Much like parents, teachers, administrators, and school inspectors support the belief that all youth regardless of gender or handicaps should have the opportunity to go to school and study whatever field they desire. Still, all respondents universally agreed that access to education is fraught with challenges. The first of these challenges are the direct costs associated with school fees or the "prime," uniforms, and school supplies, as well as the indirect costs that include transportation and the loss of additional income to the family.

As noted previously, inefficiencies in the education sector has led to the preponderance of school fees in the DRC. Depending on the number of kids to enroll, the total cost of an education can at times represent the total living income of a family per year. In the face of such scarcity, several parents interviewed noted that they most often have to prioritize who will go to school among their children. This decision was noted as being more prevalent within single-parent homes and polygamist families. In calculating the cost of school fees coupled with gendered notion that a girl's future largely centers on her ability to marry and start a family, parents often choose to prioritize boys' education over that of girls'. Especially given the value attached to a marriage dowry, which for some represents a transformative wealth for the family, parents have a higher incentive to marry their daughters instead of enrolling them in school. Conversely, when speaking on the importance of education for the girls the value added to their ability to marry into a better family or receive a higher dowry was also as reason that parents noted on why they choose to send girls to school. Give the societal inequalities that does not afford girls and boys the same opportunities, parent also prioritize boy's education based on their prospect for greater earned income in the future. The opportunity to access an education is widely diminished for girl in the event where they are living with relatives due to the death of both parents.

In agricultural communities, across teachers and parents of in-school youth interviewed, many noted that for families living in rural areas, or subsisting off the land such as banana farming, enrolling their youth in school often means the loss of an additional source of income for the family. Specifically, for families who are land dependent, having the extra hands in the field or in a small entrepreneurial venture is of a higher value in the face of stark poverty and increasing needs. These sentiments were also noted by out of school youth interviewed.

In line with the contextual analysis, children living with disabilities, notably those who have low mobility and are low functioning are even less likely to attend school. While some respondents saw the value of education for children with disabilities, the higher direct cost associated with their education and the lack of facilities to accommodate their needs were even greater barriers to their access to an education. Compared to their counterpart, the investment in the education of children with a disability is generally viewed as a wasted investment given their low prospect for employment or an independent future. These internalized stigmas around people living with disabilities not only means a lack of representation in school but in society overall given the lack of protection or opportunities for employment and self-sufficiency. These barriers to education and vocational training opportunities fuel ongoing resentment among parents and youth alike.

Barriers to Retention

Youth who are fortunate enough to start school, are also plagued by the same barriers to stay in school as youth who are out-of-school. Lacking financial means, parents' inability to pay the school fees often leave their children in a state of insecurity until they are expelled, are removed from the school voluntarily by their parents or guardians, or drop out. In addition to the lack of finances, youth and parents also emphasized the impact of negative influences as a barrier to youth retention. Specifically, for young boys, once they fall prey to the influences of friends and involvement with gangs, they are more prone to delinquency. For parents especially, once youths become involved in gangs, parents no longer pay for their studies, leading to the youths dropping out of school. In the face of poverty, youth are also lured from pursuing an education by factors such as the attractiveness of making an income by working in the mines. In the Bukavu region, opportunities for employment in the mines of Burega were mentioned by teachers as luring many youths, specifically boys, to the mines instead of pursuing an education.

Girls are considered a source of income. For example, to marry a girl, you must give the family the dowry of 14 goats and 2 cows, which is a big fortune. Boys are not able to earn this for the family. Early marriage also makes girls very vulnerable. All of these causes reduce girls' opportunities to go to school and reach the end of their studies. They do not have the same opportunities as young boys.

– Male school Administrator, CRS (Bukavu)

While many boys do find small jobs or start a small enterprise to support themselves and their family, parents noted that, many turn to drugs, alcohol, delinquency, or involvement

in gangs. Often these activities create internal family conflicts between parents and youth, leading the latter to leave the house to live on the streets voluntarily or involuntarily. In high-risk areas, young boys in the street are more susceptible to recruitment by armed groups.

In the face of the direct and indirect cost, when parents prioritize education access for boys, OOSC girls become more vulnerable to risk. For those youth who are able to finish their studies in a CRS or CAP, they often face the same barriers in continuing their education in high school. The increased cost of high school is the most prominent reason for dropping out or lack of enrollment. Some teachers in the CRS noted the transition exams from CRS and for CAPs, the lack of socio-professional kits, workshops, and equipment often dissuade youth from continuing to advance in their professional studies. These challenges are the same for boys, girls, and youth with disabilities.

All respondents on the potential results observed early pregnancy, early marriage, and high-risk behaviors for OOSC girls. In many contexts in Eastern DRC, school itself is perhaps the highest risk setting for sexual exploitation for girls, both from boys, teachers, and other adults (e.g., in exchange for passing grades, or in lieu of fees, further examined in the next section) that results in early pregnancy, early marriage and school dropout. Nonetheless, the high level of poverty and unemployment in the region and the dearth of a quality education that builds youth resilience compound their exposures to these risks outside of school. Specifically for girls, summer vacations in the dry seasons and short holiday breaks increase their susceptibility to risky behaviors. In focus group interviews with young girls and boys in Walungu, Bukavu, and Goma, youth emphasized that during the school breaks, many young girls become pregnant or engage in activities resulting in early pregnancy and or early marriage that leads to dropout. Often these are the result of a transactional relationship with boys to fulfill a financial need or the result of poor planning and lack of sexual health knowledge. As explained by a female teacher interviewed in Goma, "Early pregnancy occurs mainly during

There are students who start the year, but just when you start asking for the first month's premium, the parent is not able to pay for it. When the student is expelled from school every day, he becomes discouraged, feels ashamed, and decides to stay home.

– Female youth, CRS (Kalehe)

the dry season when young people are on vacation that corresponds to the big holidays and during exams. The young people are out of control, the girls want to go out with their friends, go to "karaoke", and braid their hair.... Due to poverty, girls are carried away by the current. They fall victim to prostitution, AIDS, early pregnancy, and all the other evils that eat away at society. Girls and children are more victims from their early pregnancies because boys or men continue their normal lives. Boys and men here (Goma) know that if they get a girl pregnant, you have to accept that you are the author and the case ends there. But it is not like in Bukavu. The people of Goma are very soft. If the men refuse, we leave him free. In Bukavu they are forced to take responsibility."

Given the stigma attached to pregnancy outside wedlock, pregnant girls often lose their ability or willingness to continue their education. As a female CAP student in Walungu explained "They are rejected and despised by society in such a way that they isolate themselves. It is atrocious when a girl is pregnant. Nobody can look at her anymore, or go to talk with her or anything". The shame attached to early pregnancy is also a cause for many girls to dropout out of shame. Young girls interviewed in Kalehe explained, that parents who feel ashamed by their daughter's pregnancy outside of marriage would stop paying their school fees forcing the latter to dropout. Many girls just dropout due to shame before the pregnancy is discovered at school, and others are automatically chased out of school once the pregnancy is discovered. Early pregnancies not only affect the girl but may also affect her siblings. As explained by focus group respondent of girls in a CRS in Goma, "In the family, if a big sister has a child early; you are forced to help her with the baby for a school year. If she finds herself pregnant again, your studies stops there."

Early marriage thus becomes a last resort for girls and parents to salvage their future but often does not salvage girls' ability to continue their education. In some communities, as explained by youth and parents interviewed in Bukavu, under threat of imprisonment, boys may be compelled by the parent to marry the girl against his will. Facing these options, the boy will often also drop out of school and run away. Facing such circumstances, as explained by CAP girls interviewed in Kalehe, the girl might secretly seek an abortion in an unsafe manner that can result in her death. While some out-of-school girls may often find small jobs at a restaurant to support themselves depending on the working environment they become more susceptible to sexual harassment and violence. They may also turn to prostitution to support themselves, which leave them more exposed to the health risk or HIV/AIDS, and gender based violence.

Student bullying is common here at the CAP since students have large age differences. Those who are adults and those who are bigger intimidate others but always in the sense of harming. Ex: The trainer asks an older learner to demonstrate a lesson and the learner is unsuccessful. When the trainer asks a young boy and the latter passes, there will be mockery from the older youth that will translate it into dispute and intimidation.

– Male School Inspector, CAP (Goma)

Safe Learning Environment

Exposure to risk within or on the way to and from school varied across respondent groups, especially when responses were disaggregated by the categories of: the general safety in school; the safety on route to school; social and emotional well-being in school; and level of vulnerability among youth. While nearly all respondents' interviewed perceived their respective school to be generally safe, youth and parents agreed that youth are not always safe at school. Overall, girls, including those with disabilities, are more likely to fall prey to school-related gender-based violence; boys are more likely to receive corporal punishment; and children with disabilities are more likely to face bullying and harassment. Perpetrators of this violence include school administrators, teachers, and students themselves, who are often the source of bullying and harassment of other students. Especially as many CAP and CRS include overage students, cases of bullying, intimidation, and harassment by older youth is common.

In regards to physical safety in school, the majority of inspectors and parents interviewed emphasized the roles of teachers and administrators in ensuring youth safety. Specifically, for youth in CRS and CAP that have enclosures, unauthorized access to the school are limited. However, youth in learning centers lacking such measures often do not feel physically secure. Youth described their experiences with street children walking into the school to cause trouble with students, including by throwing stones at them while they are in class as a form of entertainment. While all youth are exposed to these risks, girls more so than boys expressed that these fears are heightened when they stay late to study in school. Especially for girls who attend schools where courses are held in the afternoon, staying in the afternoon or evening after classes are dismissed leaves them more vulnerable to the external risk of SRGBV from strangers entering the school premise but also internal risk from older male students or adult staff from the schools.

Compared to their perception of safety in school, all respondents universally agree that youth face higher exposure to risks on route to and from school. Intimidation by other students, bullying, harassments, and sexual violence, especially for girls, road insecurity including from motorbikes and drivers, police harassment, general robbery, recruitment into gangs, and armed groups were all highlighted as risks for youth en route to and from school. At times, the very pursuit of education adds to the youth's insecurity. The ability to speak French or being able to attend school regularly can make some the target of jealousy, harassment, and violence from other youth in the community who are in the street or do not attend school.

Overall, the exposure to these risks varies by youth level of vulnerability. Already marginalized and discriminated in their community, youth with disabilities are more often the target of harassment and bullying en route to and from school from other youth. Meanwhile, girls, including those with disabilities, are more likely to face sexual harassment and other forms of gender violence compared to boys who are more at risk to banditry, gangs, and armed group recruitment.

As an outlier, a few teachers and administrators mentioned that they are also subject to the same insecurities on the way to and from school. While the sources are primarily external, sometimes they are students seeking retribution for a bad grade or a punishment in class. Nonetheless, no formal mechanism seems to exist across all of the communities sampled to mitigate these risks. An informal network of information of family members in armed groups or gangs is usually the most common means to gain early warning on potential risks from these groups' activities on routes to and from school.

The majority of school administrators and teachers interviewed shared that their school has a code of conduct for teacher and staff. While youth and parents interviewed did not always demonstrate knowledge or access to these codes, teachers and administrator mentioned their training to follow and implement these codes of conduct. However, all respondents unanimously agreed that teachers and other school staff are often the highest source of insecurities to youth's well-being while at school.

“Girls and boys are not at the same risk of violence. Boys do not have many risks like girls. We release girls early to avoid rape or embezzlement for sexual abuse, for example. The boys can return home late without too much risk.”

– Male school administrator, CAP (Goma)

We do not always feel safe here at school. Me personally, when the teacher calls me to do an activity, I do not feel comfortable. He often gives us annoying nicknames and makes fun of us just for a little error. There are teachers who insult students with harsh words, telling them they could never succeed.”

– Female Youth, CAP (Goma)

Parents and youth alike raised concerns about the abuse inflicted by teachers, administrators, and other school staff on children. The most-often mentioned forms of school-related gender based violence include emotional and verbal abuse, corporal punishment, and transactional/coercive sex. In both CAP and CRS, youth are equally vulnerable to verbal abuse, mocking, and intimidation from teachers, especially during lessons in class. Girls and children with disabilities are more often subject to denigration, insults, and verbal abuse, and often find themselves unable to endure this trauma in what they consider humiliation and shame. Hence, they are more likely to drop out of school as a result. For physical violence, boys are the most exposed to corporal punishment. A simple conjugation error in class can often mean several severe lashes. Beyond the potential physical scars, the mental trauma and fear creates a perception of an unsafe school environment for learning dissuading youth from continuing their studies.

While gender violence happens everywhere, youth and parents alike agree that it most often happens at school. With the representation of overage youth in both CRS and CAP, youth are likely to engage in sexual activities with each other either willingly, forced, or as a transaction. In terms of SRGBV by other students, it often includes the use of profane and sexually explicit language, engagement in inappropriate physical touch, solicitation of sex, and in some cases, to the rape of girls on school grounds. Several young girls in focus groups in Goma, for example, mentioned avoiding toilets or staying late at school to study in fear of becoming a victim to SRGBV by other students in their school. However, most youth interviewed noted that girls are more often the victims of SRGBV at the hands of teachers and other adults in the school. Several girls mentioned hearing of teachers or other school adults trying to coax girls into a sexual relationship. Often teachers use sexual coercion through emotional manipulations, verbal abuse, tampering with grades, and corporal punishment as a means to pressure girls to comply with their advances.

However, transactional sex as a form of SRGBV is also common. Young girls lacking the resources to support their studies or facing possible failure in school will often offer their teachers sex in exchange for money or a better grade. In situations of SRGBV involving transactional sex, the student is less likely to report this abuse to the administration or their parents. In situations of SRGBV involving rape or sexual coercion, however, students seldom report these unless they result in pregnancy due to fears of being stigmatized. Once notified, the parents will report this to the school, and at times local police, to fire, imprison, or force the perpetrator to pay the girl’s dowry price and even marry her.

“There are students who drop out of school because of physical, psychological and sexual harassment. There are teachers who harass girls sexually, who are sentimental and biased towards certain students; that is to say, that makes some students lack peace or exaggerate in the types of punishments to the students like whips until they submit to their advances.”

– Male Academic Inspector, CRS (Goma)

Still, most cases of SRGBV are never reported or are dealt with privately. Nonetheless, the trauma from these forms of violence significantly affect student's well-being. Teachers interviewed noted the psychological impact of SRGBV on student learning, with some showing indifference or psychological and emotional stress in school that prevents them from learning as well as showing lack of trust in teachers, administrators and the school system. Others drop out of school, as there are no specific provisions made by the majority of schools to support children who have experienced such cases of violence and trauma. Youth and parents alike mention a lack of knowledge of resources to support youth who have experienced such traumas in school or on route to and from school. Moreover, while school codes exist, school administrators explain they do not have counselors who can support youth through such traumas. Many teachers emphasized that for the most part youth having experienced these traumas rely on advice and encouragement from others, including teachers, parents, and friends, as forms of psychosocial support. With the lack of these holistic systems of support to nature, support and protect youth, they become more vulnerable to additional internal (in-school) and external (out of school) risks.

“One day in my old school, a trainee told my friend that he lets her touch her breasts to give him answers to a question. Even here, the teachers are flirting with us. We also heard girls who had sex with their teachers because of grades or for the teacher to pay them for schooling or if they find the teacher just cute.”

– Female youth, CRS (Goma)

Youth Employment

For youth who navigate the aforementioned challenges and finish their education, the transition from school to work presents another set of barriers that they must overcome. As observed by the school inspectors in Bukavu, youth who complete their studies at the CAP rarely find employment after graduation. Girls especially face more difficulties in finding employment due to restrictions from their families and the lack of employment in their community. While some may start their own entrepreneurial ventures, several teachers, administrators and school inspectors interviewed noted that of those who begin an entrepreneurial venture, fewer than 60% are able to make a living from these ventures. Opportunities for employment for OOSC youth who have either dropped-out or never entered school and who lack productive skills are even more marginal. Unemployment was ranked by all OOSC youth participating in focus group discussions as the single problem most affecting their daily lives; a change to their employment status would most directly impact and relieve other conflicts existing in their communities. The lack of a formal occupation presents a vector in a repetitive cycle: due to unemployment, youth 15-24 engage in destructive behaviors and occupations. Boys are more likely to engage in activities including but not limited to vandalism, and consumption of drugs, while girls are more prone to engage in prostitution. Engaging in these destructive behaviors increases boys' vulnerability to recruitment in gangs and armed groups and girls' vulnerability to early pregnancy, gender based violence as well as recruitment and voluntary enrollment in gangs and armed groups. Overall, these destructive barriers increase insecurity and obstacles to economic development for youth.

Economic contraction, poverty, and unemployment

So many of us are without a jobs or any occupation. Some youth pass their time destroying themselves morally and physically.
– OOSY FGD Participant (Goma)

There is a strong sense of indignation within the youth community.
– leader of a youth movement (Goma)

Economic contraction, poverty, and unemployment have given way to an exodus of youth in many communities. Specifically, in the agricultural communities visited, where young people are numerous, unemployed or underemployed or “landless peasants”—lacking of agricultural processing machinery, facing land conflicts, diseases or epidemics of livestock and plants—these communities are seeing an exodus of youth to larger cities (Goma, Kamituga, Misisi, Bukavu, Walungu, ...) to look for ways to earn a living. While many young people, migrate to serve in restaurants or start small businesses, which is more common for girls, or find employment in the mines, which is more common for boys, most do not know how to survive or find occupation.

While there is truth to the limited job opportunities, non-youth respondents highlighted that **youth unemployment can be a self-fulfilling prophecy as youth refuse to take available jobs** in agriculture, commerce, or the mines because youth feel those jobs are beneath their level of education (community meetings in Bukavu, Walungu; interviews with religious leaders in all sites; interview with female leader in Bukavu and Minova.) “Youth refuse to work in the field and have become accustomed to waiting for rare opportunities to work in the mines, forgetting all the work their ancestors have done. Youth do not accept to work and be paid \$1.00 a day as they are used to

smoking \$1.00 worth of cigarettes daily,” explained an agricultural business owner in Walungu. When confronted with this sentiment, only male OOSC youth focus group participants in Walungu and the leader of a youth movement in Goma admitted that there was some truth to the sentiments of elder community members. But the leader of the youth movement further explained, “There is strong indignation within the [youth] community,” which explained the reaction of the male youth in Walungu: “Those sorts of jobs are for uneducated, like our parents, not for us who have studied.”

Youth migrate with expectations of improving their condition, however observations at all data collection sites undeniably point to extreme cases of poverty in these towns. In Mukungwe (Walungu), for example—the location to which members of the region flock for employment due to the presence of the Maroc mine—the only formal structures present were those of the police station and the housing complex of the owner of the Maroc mine. In Minova (Kalehe), the only formal structures were two makeshift camps housing internally displaced persons recently relocated from neighboring villages with active armed groups to the town center. With limited prospects of finding employment in the formal sector, the informal sector represents the majority of the work in which OOSC youth 15-24 who participated in focus group discussions were engaged. Those who were employed were engaged in small commerce, hawking, or informal tailoring. OOSC youth respondents also indicated that they would go to extraordinary lengths to make ends meet. Often boys noted engaging in illicit activities, such as petty theft, or taking on dangerous employment, such as entering the mines, in hopes of income generation while girls noted prostitution. This lack of formal socioeconomic integration for youth presents a second vector in the possibility for economic development by isolating an entire generation of workers.

For those youth in-school who aspired to be entrepreneurs, they lack the financial means to purchase the machines and materials to create their own ventures. Many CAP youth interviewed confessed that they did not know where to find information, or financing to start their own business. To provide more opportunities for their children, parents interviewed, specifically those living in rural areas lacking education and employment opportunities for youth or in areas with a higher degree of risk will at times send their children to live with host families—family members or close family friends—living in a city or

town with more resources and opportunities. While host families can be a safety net for parents, they can also be a barrier to youth, specifically girls' access to new opportunities for an education or work. Among the young girls interviewed, several noted that girls living with host families are not always allowed to work and are often required to take care of the home to be 'be useful to host families'.

Across all the responses from youth, nonetheless, access to a network of resources or agents of friends or family to support their access to a job or to create their own venture was non-existent. These challenges are also impacted by the ongoing conflict. Regionalism, tribalism, and ethnicity as a premise for discrimination and or segregation in hiring practices were noted by respondents as another barrier that affects youth access to employment. In both Goma and Bukavu, in relation to access to work, respondents noted that when there is conflict between people from different tribal groups, 'young people do not get to work when the recruiting officer is from the enemy tribal group.'

The unfulfilled promise of education

While in-school youth interviewed explained the importance of education in terms of its impact on their potential to improve their lives due to the high unemployment in their communities, they also saw no value added in pursuing an education. The lack of available jobs, elevated rates of unemployment, and extreme poverty have all created deep-seated grievances held by youth, which came out in all discussions with OOSC youth. All of the youth with whom IYDA engaged through the study had some level of education; even OOSC youth had completed some level of education, usually through 5ème for females and 4ème for males (aggregate data from focus group discussions with OOSC youth.) In some OOSC youth discussions, such as those in Goma, all students had their state diplomas, and yet only 1 in 8 was employed. Despite higher levels of education attained by youth in this generation compared to their parents, access to employment is perceived as more limited. However, several non-youth actors pointed to the availability of certain types of employment. "There are jobs in the fields if our kids would take them," shared a pastor in Minova (Kalehe), "but they refuse. So you will continue to see their mothers toiling in the fields and capable youth at home." This sentiment was echoed by religious leaders in Bukavu and Walungu; a female leader in Minova (Kalehe); and business leaders and entrepreneurs in Bukavu, Minova (Kalehe), and Walungu.

Another perspective raised by two respondents, a local association and an international non-governmental organization in Bukavu, is that the education system is not responding to the job market needs: "Universities should train students according to the market needs. Otherwise, who will use the products of universities?" Adding to this frustration is that attractive employment (described by youth focus group participants as clerical or specialized work) is secured only through connections and networking and is never tied to merit. "The job openings posted by organizations are fictitious, but they still demand professional experience and a very high level of educational achievement; you need to have a B.A. to have a job," explained a youth entrepreneur in Minova who instead opted to open his own solar power and engineering firm. In the words of a community meeting participant in Walungu, "the only people who easily secure employment are the children of *chefferies* or [the children of] community leaders," which contributes to the overall grievances felt by youth and creating an oppressive sense of relative deprivation. Still, the lack of professional training or apprenticeship was nevertheless often cited as a barrier to employment.

The challenges that can prevent our children from meeting job expectations are the lack of space where they can apply what they have learned in school such as a training. The lack of means as well to access these training is also a challenge. To circumvent these challenges, we hope donors can reinforce what this school is already doing for our children and market what our kids produce here.
– Parent CAP (Goma)

For youth who complete some vocational training, teachers especially emphasized that the challenges faced in the job market is that many have only the theory and not the practice of their vocational skill. Especially in the CAPs, the lack of didactic materials (equipment) for practice leaves student graduates with trainings in specialties like sewing with insufficient practices on an actual machine. Support for tools or practice kits was expressed across in-school respondent groups as a recommendation to support the reinforcement of youth professional training. A few youth interviewed in a CAP in Walungu shared the story of how a teacher brought their own sewing machine to help with training, as students could not have their own machines. ‘We found ourselves in a situation where about 80 people were learning at the same time on one machine’. Because many technical sectors are taught in the CAPs, such as carpentry and mechanics, lack trainers and didactic materials to teach students practical work, students are insufficiently trained. To this is added a lack of space for students to practice what they have learned under the guidance and tutelage of experienced professionals through internships or apprenticeships. The compounding effects of these educational challenges are the ineptitude of both young girls and boys to face the skills demand of the labor market. In Bukavu, for example, youth interviewed noted that most who finish a professional training at the CAP rarely find a job in their trained field.

For the many youth unemployment begins once they finish their studies. Predictably, as reported by teachers and parents alike, this is the start of delinquency, high-risk behaviors, and vulnerability to the very barriers they supposedly overcame by completing their education. However, for those youth—primarily males—who complete their education in CAPs, and succeed in their learned trade either through gainful employment or in creating their own business, for the most part they are appreciated, encouraged and respected in their communities. Their success allows some to take charge of the studies of their siblings who are out of school due to lack of funds. Some parents use these youth as examples for other young people in the community. While this is a means to provide a positive role model to other youth, it often leads to jealousy, harassment, and conflict for these young people. In focus groups with OOSC young girls in Goma talking about the successful youth in their community, they noted that they are less appreciated; they are seen as prideful for their success. Nonetheless, youth success in the trades benefits the community through the value addition of these services. Even if these youth make little income, they rejoice in their ownership of their own business and the possibilities for the future.

Stressors and Vulnerabilities

As the majority of youth are unable to support themselves in the current economic context, youth remain under the responsibility and care of their parents for longer than is customary—beyond the marriageable age of the 20s—in Congolese culture. As youth are defined by their marital status, this new pattern has changed the demographics of youth in society as understood by youth activity coordinators and service providers. “Our children do not marry anymore; where will they find their dowry?” explained a pastor in Bukavu. “Next thing you know, they will start stealing cows,” laughed a female leader in Minova (Kalehe.)

A young person is any person who is capable, not yet married, and without children.

– Interview with Catholic priest in Minova

We have enrolled in school, we have our state diplomas, but we are without jobs, without occupation. We are all in the care of our parents.

– Male OOSY FGD participant (Goma)

In the eyes of parents who are forced to provide for their children longer than expected with minimal resources, the extended duration of responsibility for children is an “unexpected burden” (participant in a community meeting in Bukavu) creating new intergenerational conflicts. “The biggest problems I am asked to solve are between parents and their children,” explained a pastor in Minova (Kalehe.) Religious leaders, female leaders, and security sector officials in all regions but Walungu cited these tensions; youth focus group participants, on the other hand, only cited this source of tension in focus group discussions in Walungu and Goma.

Youths’ increasing vulnerabilities are likened to a pressure cooker ready to explode. “Young people are unemployed, and their grievances grow on a daily basis, developing into latent conflicts that may erupt at any given moment,” shared a security sector official in Walungu. This eruption can take several paths based on the actors present in the community and the youth’s grievance: manipulation by politicians, recruitment to a local gang under the premise of financial security and physical protection, or recruitment to an armed group.

Young people are unemployed, and their grievances grow on a daily basis, developing into latent conflicts that may erupt at any given moment.

– interview with security sector official (walungu)

Because of poor employment opportunities, youth often search for guides who will assist them in securing employment should a position open. These guides are prominent, respected figures within the community who are most usually politicians or others within the local or central government structure (including *chefferies* and *chefs du groupement*) perceived with power to secure youth jobs. Often times, due to “lack of knowledge and wits, these youth specifically OOSC youth become the easy prey of politicians who use the [vulnerability] of youth to their advantage and manipulate [youth’s situation] without mercy,” explained a security sector official in Kalehe. These politicians often engage youth to “commit atrocities and avenge their interests in their home territory.” Because youth are reliant on networking and connections, they fulfill these demands, often to no reward. Youth admit to taking these jobs for lack of

other means; “youth are pushed to do these tasks because we are flexible and vigorous, but do not have any financial means” (male participant in OOSC youth focus group in Goma).

So many of us are without a jobs or any occupation. Some youth pass their time destroying themselves morally and physically.

– OOSY FGD Participant (Goma)

The implicit involvement of politicians in perpetuating violence and unrest and the resulting corruption of the security sector, thereby providing impunity to those politicians and their cronies, results in the arrival of gangs and armed groups in these communities, both of which can be attractive to youth for different reasons. Depending on the region, gangs or armed groups may be more prevalent. In Bagira, Essence, and Mushinga, gangs were more prevalent. In Mukungwe, the outskirts of Minova, and Goma, armed groups were more prevalent, but

there was still a high presence of gangs and associated violence.

Understanding the key groups that are in place is important as it informs a youth’s decision to join; a youth can get “vaccinated” by a gang or armed group for protection. OOSC Youth focus group participants were unwilling to describe the vaccination process, but an enumerator explained that this vaccination process involved complicity in a smaller crime to someone close to them. Overall, respondents cited gang violence and delinquency as the more pressing threat to insecurity due to the frequency of the attacks and the targeted nature of attacks, robberies, and rapes. The violence of gangs is more frequent, and due to their knowledge of the neighborhoods and villages in which they are operating, often more lucrative.

As a result, youth are often drawn to join these smaller gangs instead of armed groups (aggregate data from male OOSC youth focus groups). Armed groups, on the other hand, were often a method of recourse by males who did not receive their inheritance and who were particularly in search of a wife or land in a nearby village. Recruitment is a more prevalent risk for males in Kalehe than elsewhere, although instances of active recruitment efforts were higher in Goma. Often, but not always, armed groups result in only the provision of basic needs – stolen food, clothing, enough to get by – that members would otherwise not have including a wife among the women within the group. Above all, getting ‘vaccinated’ offers protection from future attacks of those armed groups on your home. Because the groups are large, they do not always know who is in their network. Being vaccinated can prevent an attack on you by being able to essentially show your membership card.

Mitigating Factors and Connectors in Targeted Communities

Local Capacities for Peace: Systems and Institutions

There are limited formal pathways to conflict resolution in all regions. Formal routes include involving the police or military to assist in conflict resolution; however, due to the perceived corruption of the security sector, respondents across all sites suggested alternate pathways to conflict resolution through local associations run by women or the Church. As explained by OOSC youth participants in all sites, local associations usually handled issues of sexual violence and conventional rape, malnutrition, or employability; the Church was called to handle issues regarding land conflict, inheritance, and marriage. Local associations run by women were cited by all actors as the most effective way to mitigate conflicts except for the Church. These associations run by “*mamans*” were seen as the most impartial, inclusive, and helpful to youth and families, relying on people-to-people conflict resolution tactics but knowing when to escalate the resolution to other sources, such as the police force. Though several non-youth respondents mentioned the Church as a supportive actor, all youth rejected the Church for conflict resolution citing the Catholic Church’s corruption, issues of excommunication, and collusion with security and government actors. The security sector was not seen as a first resort by either the community or members of the security sector themselves. Security sector officials in each region shared their implication in the perpetuation of impunity—directly and indirectly.

Values and Interests

While the Catholic Church as an institution may not be trusted by all respondents, there is an undeniable reverence for religion and a strong sense of spirituality among all communities visited. However, due to the high rate of excommunication of nearly a quarter of youth from Catholic churches, spirituality is often practiced in more informal channels (interviews with a pastor in Bukavu, a priest in Minova).

A common interest found across sites was an unbridled passion for soccer. A pastor in Minova laughed as he retold a story of how he had to resolve a heated conflict between a local farmer and his two neighbors whose boys would sneak onto the farmer’s field to play soccer in the evenings. Although soccer was cited as an interest and passion by all male OOSC youth respondents, formal opportunities to play or participate in tournaments are limited; in all communities, participation is linked to enrollment in school. In Bagira, there was an informal soccer pick-up culture established by males because they wanted to have their friends play on their teams. “[My friend] is just better than the boys in my class and I want to win,” the son of a female leader in Bagira explained in an informal interview. Only in Minova did the Catholic Church sponsor “official” soccer tournaments for the community.

Shared Experiences

Participation in economic activities, whether meeting at the market or selling bananas or fish with others alongside the road, were cited most often as ways in which the community was brought together.

Youth Civic Engagement

All sites cited the existence of community volunteer projects, or *les travaux communautaires*, in which youth worked together to improve their communities. Financed through crowdsourcing, community projects provide “one of the only opportunities for youth to hold visible leadership positions” (interview with a female leader in Bukavu.) The projects range from roadwork to construction of homes and group harvesting. These activities are intergenerational and are one of the few opportunities outside of the Church in which schooled and OOSC youth are able to work side by side (focus group discussions with female OOSC youth in Bukavu.) However, in certain locations, community work also helps bring up some deep-seated grievances. A male OOSC youth focus group participant in Minova asks, “Why to pave and clear a road so that the one person who owns a car can drive down the road today and steal from you while hidden by the night?”

Symbols and Occasions

Female leaders were the only respondent group to reference special events and occasions when asked about opportunities for social cohesion in their community. Due to the rampant insecurity and heightened poverty, female leaders explained that large weddings were increasingly rare and that there were fewer special occasions and events around which people gathered. “And deaths? Deaths have become too frequent,” shared a female leader in Walungu.

Recommendations/Implementation Strategy

In light of the dividers and connectors, the implementation of the following recommendations will strengthen and help IYDA leverage local capacities for peace and other connectors to mitigate potential sources of conflict and risks as a result of project activities.

Promote Access and Retention—While the direct and indirect cost of education cannot be completely eliminated, IYDA will also provide training to teachers on PYD to help teachers understand the importance of encouraging youth in a positive way rather than punishing or making fun of them for mistakes. By making the home and school context a more positive and supporting environment, youth will have an improved chance of staying in school and being successful. IYDA should conduct social mobilization campaigns to emphasize the benefits of education and the benefit of educating girls and children with disabilities.

In addition to IYDA’s planned peer-to-peer information campaigns, through which the project will encourage youth to reach out to ten of their friends about the importance of education, these same messages can be provided to parents through the Positive Youth Development (PYD) parent discussion groups the project will support. In addition, IYDA’s Youth Literacy Volunteers will work with teachers to identify youth that are struggling in school or who are at risk of dropping out to provide additional tutoring and retention support to them within their community as positive role models and mentors.

Improve Safety in learning environments—The study shows the importance of ensuring that learning standards promote a youth-friendly, learner-centered environment that meets safety standards, especially for adolescent girls and youth with disability. Therefore, through the planned trainings with teachers, literacy volunteers and administrators, IYDA will include gender awareness and inclusive pedagogy to promote equity, safety, and inclusion in the classroom. IYDA will work with the regional representatives of the MoE, teachers, and parent teacher associations to review, adapt and enforce the school Code of Conduct to improve safety and reduce SRGBV, including raising awareness about the contents of the Code of Conduct among youth, parents and other community members. IYDA will also facilitate discussions between youth, parents, learning center representatives and community leaders about methods for ensuring youth safety during the school commute.

Strengthen capacities for peace – Women-led associations have been recognized as a resource for peace and social cohesion at the local level. While not initially targeted by the project, IYDA can involve them in community-led activities, strengthen their conflict resolution skills, and consult them, especially during the Whole System in the Room (WSR) activity. IYDA will also engage men and boys in SRGBV prevention and response; challenge harmful definitions of masculinity by identifying male "gender champions" in schools, communities, and within education administration. In addition, more conflict resolution and self-management elements can be integrated into the Work Ready Now curriculum, as has been done in other countries.

Conduct stakeholders mapping to identify resources for youth – Soccer clearly has a mobilizing effect among youth, both in and out of school. Soccer tournaments are organized by a variety of stakeholders—coaches, league managers, churches and players to name a few. Through the planned community youth mapping (CYM) activity, youth mappers should seek to identify key individuals that could or do serve as coaches and referees: individuals that youth trust and who are not necessarily in a position of authority. IYDA can engage these individuals to coach, mentor, and work with youth during youth-led community activities or community service learning activities that are inclusive of girls.

Additionally, the mapping exercise should also identify local organizations providing GBV services and share data or reports with target schools, parent and teacher organizations, and student organizations. IYDA can also engage these organizations in the development of the referral system in cases of violence to be able to manage GBV incidents and provide psycho-social support to youth.

Leverage and build on community volunteer projects – The study showed youth enthusiasm across regions for community volunteer projects. Therefore, IYDA should look to these community volunteer projects as a way to mobilize and encourage youth—both in and out of school—to contribute in their communities. The community service learning activities IYDA will support will provide youth the opportunity to identify, plan and participate in community volunteer activities, including providing leadership roles as part of these activities. As part of this, the project will encourage youth to look at community activities that can provide opportunities to bring community members, particularly various categories of youth, together. The Youth Citizen Reporters activity will ensure youth report on these types of community activities and provide youth implementing them the opportunity to reflect and discuss on their impact on strengthening their communities.

Create space for intergenerational dialogues – Through field agents (trained by IYDA in facilitating community dialogue), IYDA should create safe spaces where youth and adults in the community can come together to discuss difficult issues linked to local norms and practices that could drive conflict, including, but not limited to, traditional rules for inheritance, sexual extortion, and expectations for success. The Youth Development Alliances should be designed and implemented to ensure these forms of intergenerational dialogues take place, highlighting the aforementioned issues and others identified through the community youth mapping.

Distinguish “youth civic engagement” from “youth political mobilization” – There has been a fine line between youth civic engagement and mobilization of youth for political activities. This has led to a general suspicion of youth civic engagement. It is important to communicate clearly with various stakeholders about the importance and relevance of youth civic engagement in their communities and help them understand that youth can be engaged civically without getting involved in specifically political activities. In addition, IYDA should include additional training modules for Youth Citizen Reporters and community youth mappers on what constitutes youth civic engagement and the variety of activities and skills needed for civic engagement. This approach will help build community buy-in of IYDA and open new avenues for youth civic engagement and contribution in their communities.

Youth Development Alliances (YDA)—In promoting youth civic engagement, IYDA is well poised to encourage the interactions between youth and community leaders through the inclusion of youth voices

in YDAs, as well as the promotion of youth involvement in civic and economic activities. IYDA can work through YDAs to identify public and private sector “champions” who can serve as mentors and role models for youth within their communities.

Second, in addition to opportunities for youth identified through YDAs, the project will create a network of private sector champions and potential employers who will assist with identifying opportunities for IYDA youth to gain work experience and offer products, services and skills to local economies.

Facilitate employment opportunities—It was found that if youth have employment or economic activities, in most instances they will not turn to gangs, armed groups or criminality. Lack of economic opportunities comes from various sources – including lack of trust in youth by employers, lack of youth knowledge of where to find viable economic opportunities, a labor market reliant on networks for recruitment and lack of appropriate skills among youth. IYDA will provide employability skills to youth, as well as entrepreneurship skills to those who choose that path, to help improve their chances of attaining improved employment. The project will work with a network of private sector employers to ensure linkage of youth to Work-Based Learning opportunities and direct employment. In addition, we will work with these employers to become more comfortable targeting and hiring youth that do not necessarily come through their own relationship networks. As part of this, IYDA will survey private sector partners to identify existing gaps between the education youth receive through CRS and CAP and the skills needs of the private sector, and work to bridge this gap, to the extent possible, through additional training.

Include sexual reproductive health modules in life skills trainings – The study has shown there is a lack of available, reliable resources and support for youth regarding sexual reproductive health, specifically in regards to early pregnancy. Abstinence is the most common, if not only, method discussed by youth, but is not practiced in communities, resulting in the opportunity for sexual relations to be used by both males and females for advancement, such as through the claims of conventional rape by females. IYDA has included training in sexual and reproductive health as a part of its Work Ready Now curriculum. This material will help youth better understand their rights and the consequences related to sexual relations and thus to their reproductive health, and that early pregnancy is a reason girls and boys (when led to early marriage) may drop out of school. The project will create linkages to health projects that can further support capacity building of teachers to effectively and appropriately discuss these issues with students. In addition, IYDA will collaborate with health and SGBV projects in the Kivus to help raise awareness of teachers and other stakeholders of the health and psycho-social services available to youth.

Support linkage to psycho-social support – Youth throughout the intervention zones suffer from trauma stemming from a variety of sources. IYDA should train teachers to be able to identify signs of trauma in their students and should provide them with lists of local resources and contacts they can refer students to for youth-friendly and appropriate health and psycho-social services.

Best practices throughout the LOP—In addition to the interventions addressed above, IYDA should train all project staff on the principles of gender, disability and other vulnerability awareness and integration best practices. This includes training in the culture of resilience and psychosocial support. Implement a knowledge sharing approach to ensure the two-way feedback loop between beneficiaries and IYDA including through workshops with engaging community leaders, parents, teachers, administrators, and youth. Maintaining open communication channels will ensure that IYDA maintains a positive community influence in the goal to build youth resilience to conflict.

IYDA will also facilitate access to all reports, resources, and tools for all staff; and conduct on-going assessment of gender specific and gender disaggregated indicators and include updates in annual and quarterly reports on progress and performance of interventions described above to assess whether all youth are equally benefiting from project activities. Over the next three years, IYDA will incorporate the findings of this and subsequent reports into the operational research agenda and monitoring and evaluation activities to track progress and target specific aspects of vulnerability towards building youth resilience.

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Annex II. IBR Determination



HUMAN PROTECTIONS PROGRAM

Education Development Center, Inc., 43 Foundry Avenue, Waltham, Massachusetts 02453-8313
Telephone 617-969-7100 x2971 ♦ Fax 617-969-3401 ♦ E-Mail humanprotections@edc.org

Principal Investigator: Laura Dillon-Binkley (Education Development Center)

Project Title USAID/DRC Integrated Youth Development Activity (IYDA)
(Track# / Project #): (P2017-0394 / 12265)
Protocol (Number): DRC IYDA- RERA and CSA (1861)

A. Type of Submission and Review

New Protocol

Administrative Review

B. Determination

It has been determined that the activities do not involve human subjects and/or research as defined by the federal Protection of Human Subjects regulations, 45CFR46:

§46.102(d) *Research* means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge.

§46.102(f) *Human subject* means a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains: (1) Data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or (2) Identifiable private information.

C. Reviewer Comments

The goal of the activity is to increase the resilience of youth to conflict and violence. The activity is designed to serve the populations providing information to guide program implementation. The goal is not generalizable research.

D. Responsibilities

Project staff conducting work that has been determined not to meet the regulatory definition of human subjects research are nevertheless responsible for:

- safeguarding privacy and confidentiality;
- when applicable, ensuring that participation is informed and voluntary;
- complying with all applicable laws and regulations, including applicable institutional policies;
- obtaining approvals and permissions from collaborating institutions when required; and
- requesting IRB review and approval of any proposed change that might invalidate the current determination.

E. IRB Chair Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan Stockdale". The signature is written in a cursive style.

September 20, 2018

Alan Stockdale, Ph.D.

Annex III. Consent and Data Collection tools

I. Consent Forms

Research with Adults (18+): Statement of Informed Consent

Project Title: Rapid Education and Risk Analysis –Democratic Republic of Congo

Lead Field Researcher Names: Lisa Hartenberger-Toby and Meriam Sassi

Hello, my name is _____, and we are conducting a study for USAID/DRC Integrated Youth Development Activity (IYDA) a project that will work to increase the resilience of youth to conflict and violence in eastern DRC. The purpose of the study is to help us understand how to better support youth to gain skills to improve their educational and employment outcomes as well as positively engage in their community. This information will allow us to better understand how we might help.

We would like to invite you to participate in an INTERVIEW/FOCUS GROUP. It will take approximately 90 minutes. During the interview you will be asked to provide your opinions on the conflict in the region, how it affects youth access to education, economic livelihood, the types of challenges faced by the community, more specifically young people, as well as a topic around school safety and gender-based violence in school. There are some potential emotional risks for those who have witnessed or experienced gender-based violence. If you feel uncomfortable discussing this topic, you can choose not to participate.

Your participation is completely voluntary. You have the right to refuse to participate in the study if you wish. If you become uncomfortable or no longer wish to participate in the study, you can stop me at any time. It's okay. There is no penalty. It is also okay to skip questions that you do not wish to answer.

We will be recording this conversation and taking notes. If you agree to participate, the information you provide us will remain confidential. We will keep your participation secret, and your name will not be used anywhere in the research. The audio recording and notes will be destroyed after the research is finished.

We do not have any money or gifts to give you for your participation, but we know that your participation may provide information that can help improve programs for your community.

If we hear allegations of child abuse or mistreatment, we are under obligation to report it to Lead Researcher, who will decide what to do about the issue.

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact **INSERT NAME & INFO**.

Do you have any questions? If yes, please answer any questions. If none, then ask:

Would you be interested in participating? Yes No

If no, politely thank the person and move to the next person.

CONSENT

I voluntarily agree to participate in the activities under the conditions described above.

Signature or Thumb Print _____ Date _____

Name _____ Date _____

Name of Person Obtaining Consent _____ Date _____

Research with Youth (under 18 years old): Consent language for Primary Caregivers

Project Title: Rapid Education and Risk Analysis (RERA) - Democratic Republic of Congo

Lead Field Researcher Names: Lisa Hartenberger-Toby and Meriam Sassi

Hello, my name is _____. We are conducting a study for USAID/DRC Integrated Youth Development Activity (IYDA), a project that will work to increase the resilience of youth to conflict and violence in eastern DRC. The purpose of the study is to help us understand how to better support youth to gain skills to improve their educational and employment outcomes as well as positively engage in their community. This information will allow us to better understand how we might help.

Your child is invited to take part in a 90 minutes discussion with a group of 10 other students at their school of the same gender including the moderator. During the discussion, we will ask about their perception of the risks and conflicts in the region, how they affect youth experiences in school and out of schools as well as how they support themselves and engage with their community. We are asking the self-identified primary caregiver for the child for permission for them to participate in the discussion. We will ask you to verify your relationship to the youth and to verify that you have the authority to give permission. We will also ask the youth if they agree to participate.

Your consent and your child's participation in this study are voluntary. Your child can withdraw from the study at any time without consequences of any kind, and you can withdraw your consent at any time without consequences of any kind. We will intervene if any of the rules on privacy is violated or if we see that child exhibits discomfort or appear to be reluctant to participate. We do not have any money or gifts to give you or your child for their participation, but we know that their participation may provide information that can help improve programs for your community.

Although the focus group will be tape recorded, their answers will be confidential, unidentifiable, and secured. All recordings will be destroyed after they are written out. The report produced from these discussions will not include your name or that of your child or any other individual information by which you could be identified. If we hear allegations of child abuse or mistreatment, we do need to report it to the Lead researcher, who will decide what to do about the issue. If you have any questions about the study, you can speak with INSERT NAME & INFO. They have our contact information and can get ahold of us.

Do you have any questions?

Would your child like to participate in the group discussion? Yes No *If no, politely thank the caregiver and move to the next caregiver.*

CONSENT

I voluntarily agree to allow my child _____ to participate in the activities under the conditions described above.

Signature or Thumb Print _____ Date _____

Name _____ Date _____

Name of Person Obtaining Consent _____ Date _____

Research with Youth (under 18 years old): Statement of Assent

Project Title: Rapid Education and Risk Analysis (RERA) - Democratic Republic of Congo

Lead Field Researcher Names: Lisa Hartenberger-Toby and Meriam Sassi

Hello, my name is _____. We work for an American organization that provides assistance to schools in the DRC. We want to speak with you to learn more about youth experiences, in schools and in your community with the risks and conflicts in the region. This information will allow us to better understand how we might help.

We would like to speak with you and ask you a few questions in a group talk with a group of 10 other youth in your school for 90 minutes. We want to ask you about the conflict in the region, how it affects youth experiences in school and out of schools, how they support themselves, and the way they engage with their community. Your perspective will help us learn about your community and its particular needs.

Your participation is voluntary; you can choose not to participate. If you decide to help us or if you decide to say “no,” your choice will not affect you in any way. There are no right or wrong answers. You can stop at any time or choose not to respond to any questions. Remember, it is your choice to participate in the group talk. No one will be upset if you do not want to be in the group talk or if you decide to stop after we begin, that is okay, too.

What you tell us will remain a secret. We will not tell your parents or teachers. Although we will tape the group talk, we will destroy the tapes once the answers are written. We will not use your name in any of the research or notes that we take.

If we hear allegations of child abuse or mistreatment, we do need to report it to the Lead researcher, who will decide what to do about the issue. If you have any questions about the study, you can speak with INSERT NAME & INFO. They have our contact information and can get ahold of us.

Would you like to participate in the group talk? Yes No *If no, politely thank the youth and move to the next youth.*

WRITTEN ASSENT

I agree to participate in the study.

Youth Signature _____ Date _____

OR VERBAL ASSENT

I asked the youth if he/she wishes to participate. I received youth’s permission to participate in study.

Youth Name _____ Date _____

Name of Person Obtaining Consent _____ Date _____

II. Focus Group Discussion Tools

Youth Focus group Discussion CRS

Male and female CRS Youth (15-19 Years old) | ninety minutes

Begin by thanking participants for joining the focus group discussion, and briefly re-introduce yourself. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview (introductions, questions about the community, conflict dynamics, dividers in the community, connectors in the community, and the future – both as individuals and for the young people as a collective.) Pass out the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participants in the room to briefly introduce themselves, making sure they include their age and year of study

Conflict Dynamics (15 -10 minutes)

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view. We will have a chance to talk more about the main issues in detail, but for now, I'd like to know:

1. In your opinion what are the most important challenges or risks to education and the school community as a result of the conflict in the region?
 - a. In your opinion, what is driving these risks and conflict in your region?
 - b. How did they develop? Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
 - c. How are people being drawn into conflicts? Are there differences between how adults and youth are drawn into conflicts?
2. Are there certain places or times of the day or year that these conflicts are more significant or less significant?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change from day to day over the course of the year?
 - b. Is there any way that community members may know about the risks in their area on a regular basis?

Community Dividers (5-10 minutes)

1. Are there norms and practices that lead to certain groups being excluded in your community?
 - a. How does this exclusion impact the well-being of members of the excluded groups?
 - b. How does that contribute to the conflict? If recruitment by armed groups is mentioned, ask the following questions:
 - c. Do you know anyone that has been recruited by armed groups? If so, in what ways?
 - d. Are there any factors that make certain people more vulnerable to recruitment than others? Is it the same for males and females? People of certain ethnicities? IDPs? People with disabilities?
 - e. What do you do to stay safe from armed groups?

Community Connectors (5 -10 minutes)

1. What brings people together in your community?
 - a. Where do young people meet? What do young people do together?
 - b. Have these changed because of conflict? Why or why not?
 - c. Are you, as young people, encouraged to participate in these activities? If no, what changes would allow youth to actively participate in these activities?

- d. Are there other ways in which young people come together that are specific to only young people
- 2. Are youth voices represented in the leadership of your community?
 - a. If yes, in what ways? If, no why not?
 - b. Is having a voice in the community important to you? Why or why not? If yes, ask the following questions:
 - c. How do you hope to use your voice in the community?

Education and Conflict Interaction (10-20 minutes)

- 1. In your community, is educating youth equally important for boys and girls? Why? Why not? What about kids with disabilities?
- 2. Are there many youths who have dropped out of school in your community?
 - a. What are some of the reasons why youth might never start school? Is it the same for males and females?
 - b. What are some of the reasons why youth might start school, and then leave? Is it the same for males and females?
- 3. How do you feel about the teaching quality and learning process in your CRS compared to regular schools?
 - a. Do you have any concern about safety in your CRS as compared to regular school?
- 4. Do you hope to transition from your CRS to a regular school? What are some of the challenges a youth might face in order to move from your school to a regular school?
 - a. What are some of these challenges? Why do they exist?
 - b. Are these different for boys and girls? What about children with disabilities?
 - c. What support would make this process more possible for you?

Now I am going to ask a few questions about forms of violence and physical risks that students might face within schools.). If you do not feel comfortable, you can choose not to respond. You MUST NOT under any circumstances use people's names or share any information about other people that might be identifiable.

- 1. Have you heard of many instances of youth being bullied by other students in your school? In what ways?
 - a. What about teachers abusing or bullying students (emotional, physical, sexual)?
- 2. How often do you hear about the existence of youth doing man/woman business (sex) with a teacher, other adults or older youth in school so they can receive benefits at school? Is it more common for girls compared to boys? Why or why not?
 - a. Whose idea is it when a youth does man/woman business (sex) so they can receive benefits at school?
 - b. Are there different benefits that come from it? [Prompt: Probe to understand what benefits they perceive or receive, cash, sex for grades, etc.]
 - c. Are these different for girls and boys?
- 3. What are the main responses when violence occurs between a young person and a teacher or other adults? What about older youth in school? [Prompt: Community response, Parent response, School response]
 - a. Are the responses different for boys compared to girls?
 - b. In these cases, how does it affect the student after the violence?
 - c. What happens to the perpetrator/person causing the violence?

Aspirations and the Future (10 minutes)

- 1. What are some of your goals and dreams for the future?
 - a. What support do you feel you have to realize those goals? Who is most supportive? Least supportive? Why?

2. What happens to young people who succeed in terms of career, salary, and resources such as land? Probing: How are they received by the community? What are the benefits they receive from the community? What are the challenges they face? Are there any risks?

Future Programming (5-10 minutes)

1. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support young people in your community? You may prompt the participants by asking them to think about past experiences if there is an instance of past international development work in this community; this prompt will be informed by the key informant and in-depth interviews. Probing: What about an education program? A training program about work readiness?
2. How can these organizations work with people like you to help make you reach your goals and aspirations

Thank participants for joining the discussion. You may choose to end the discussion with the last question, or by asking participants to each share the part of this discussion that either challenged them the most or that inspired them the most.

Youth Focus group Discussion CAP

Male and female CAP Youth (15-24 Years Old) | ninety minutes

Begin by thanking participants for joining the focus group discussion, and briefly re-introduce yourself. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview (introductions, questions about the community, conflict dynamics, dividers in the community, connectors in the community, and the future – both as individuals and for the young people as a collective.) Pass out the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participants in the room to briefly introduce themselves, making sure they include their age, year of study and vocation study

Conflict Dynamics (15 -10 minutes)

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view. We will have a chance to talk more about the main issues in detail, but for now, I'd like to know:

1. In your opinion what are the most important challenges or risks to education and the school community as a result of the conflict in the region?
 - a. In your opinion, what is driving these risks and conflict in your region?
 - b. How did they develop? Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
 - c. How are people being drawn into conflicts? Are there differences between how adults and youth are drawn into conflicts?
2. Are there certain places or times of the day or year that these conflicts are more significant or less significant?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change from day to day over the course of the year?
 - b. Is there any way that community members may know about the risks in their area on a regular basis?

Community Dividers (5-10 minutes)

1. Are there norms and practices that lead to certain groups being excluded in your community?
 - a. How does this exclusion impact the well-being of members of the excluded groups?
 - b. How does that contribute to the conflict? If recruitment by armed groups is mentioned, ask the following questions:
 - c. Do you know anyone that has been recruited by armed groups? If so, in what ways?
 - d. Are there any factors that make certain people more vulnerable to recruitment than others? Is it the same for males and females? People of certain ethnicities? IDPs? People with disabilities?
 - e. What do you do to stay safe from armed groups?

Community Connectors (5 -10 minutes)

1. What brings people together in your community?
 - a. Where do young people meet? What do young people do together?
 - b. Have these changed because of conflict? Why or why not?
 - c. Are you, as young people, encouraged to participate in these activities? If no, what changes would allow youth to actively participate in these activities?
 - d. Are there other ways in which young people come together that are specific to only young people
2. Are youth voices represented in the leadership of your community?

- d. If yes, in what ways? If, no why not?
- e. Is having a voice in the community important to you? Why or why not? If yes, ask the following questions:
- f. How do you hope to use your voice in the community?

Education and Conflict Interaction (10-20 minutes)

1. In your community, is educating youth equally important for boys and girls? Why? Why not? What about kids with disabilities?
2. Are there many youths who have dropped out of school in your community?
 - a. What are some of the reasons why youth might never start school? Is it the same for males and females?
 - b. What are some of the reasons why youth might start school, and then leave? Is it the same for males and females?
3. Why did you choose to attend a CAP compared to a regular school?
 - a. In your opinion, is there a difference in the teaching quality and learning process in your CAP compared to regular schools? If yes, how so?
 - b. Do you have any concern about safety in your CRS as compared to regular school?
 - c. Do young girls and boys have the same opportunities to learn any vocation in your school? Prompt: If no, why not? Why is there a difference between girls and boys?

Now I am going to ask a few questions about forms of violence and physical risks that students might face within schools). If you do not feel comfortable, you can choose not to respond. You **MUST NOT** under any circumstances use people's names or share any information about other people that might be identifiable.

1. Have you heard of many instances of youth being bullied by other students in your school? In what ways?
 - b. What about teachers abusing or bullying students (emotional, physical, sexual)?
2. How often do you hear about the existence of youth doing man/woman business (sex) with a teacher, other adults or older youth in school so they can receive benefits at school? Is it more common for girls compared to boys? Why or why not?
 - d. Whose idea is it when a youth does man/woman business (sex) so they can receive benefits at school?
 - e. Are there different benefits that come from it? [Prompt: Probe to understand what benefits they perceive or receive, cash, sex for grades, etc.]
 - f. Are these different for girls and boys?
3. What are the main responses when violence occurs between a young person and a teacher or other adults? What about older youth in school? [Prompt: *Community response, Parent response, School response*]
 - d. Are the responses different for boys compared to girls?
 - e. In these cases, how does it affect the student after the violence?
 - f. What happens to the perpetrator/person causing the violence?

Aspirations and the Future (10 minutes)

1. What are some of your goals and dreams for the future?
 - a. What support do you feel you have to realize those goals? Who is most supportive? Least supportive? Why?
2. What happens to young people who succeed in terms of career, salary, and resources such as land? Probing: how does the community receive them? What are the benefits they receive from the community? What are the challenges they face? Are there any risks?

4. What are your hopes for earning a living?
 - a. Do you think there are any challenges to this? If so, what are the challenges?
 - b. Do you think it is harder or easier for certain people? For example, are the challenges the same for men and women? All groups?
 - c. Do you think it is harder to find a job in certain professions? Why or why not?
 - d. Are there certain people who make these challenges easier? Harder?
 - e. Do you think schooling has or will help you achieve those goals?

Future Programming (5-10 minutes)

1. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support young people in your community? You may prompt the participants by asking them to think about past experiences if there is an instance of past international development work in this community; this prompt will be informed by the key informant and in-depth interviews. Probing: What about an education program? A training program about work readiness?
3. How can these organizations work with people like you to help make you reach your goals and aspirations? *If **grants/money** are mentioned, ask the following questions:*
 - a. How do we choose who receives money?
 - b. How should we monitor that money is being used?

Thank participants for joining the discussion. You may choose to end the discussion with the last question, or by asking participants to each share the part of this discussion that either challenged them the most or that inspired them the most.

Mixed Gender Out of School Youth Focus Group Discussion Questions

male and female youth (15-24 years old) | ninety minutes | 4 flipcharts, 10 markers

Begin by thanking participants for joining the focus group discussion, and briefly re-introduce yourself. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview (introductions, questions about the community, conflict dynamics, dividers in the community, connectors in the community, and the future – both as individuals and for the young people as a collective.) Pass out the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participants in the room to briefly introduce themselves, making sure they include their age and what they are currently doing (i.e.: enrolled in school or not, working or not.)

Introduction (10 minutes)

We are going to be talking about our community a lot today, so as an introduction, we should begin by understanding what we as a group think of as “our community.”

1. How do you define your community? Who is in it? Who is not? Where does it start and end?

Conflict Dynamics (15 -20 minutes)

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view.

Feel free to define “conflict” and provide examples of different types of conflict when presenting this section. Conflict may include interpersonal conflicts, such as between returnees and occupiers, or between neighbors; violent conflicts, such as between different armed groups; etc.

1. How would you describe the tension(s) and conflict(s) in your community? A facilitator may choose to draw a map and star and label locations of conflict as participants speak or invite participants to the map to show where the conflicts occurred.
2. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict? Which of these are most responsible for the conflicts continuing?
3. How are people being drawn into conflicts? Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict? If **recruitment by armed groups** is mentioned, ask the following questions:
 - a. Do you know anyone that has been recruited by armed groups? If so, in what ways?
 - b. Are there any factors that make certain people more vulnerable to recruitment than others? Is it the same for males and females? People of certain ethnicities? IDPs? People with disabilities?
 - c. What do you do to stay safe from armed groups?

A facilitator may choose to refer back to the map and add in stick figures for the different actors participating in different kinds of conflict.

4. Are there certain places or times of the day or year that these conflicts are more significant or less significant?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change from day to day?
 - b. Is there any way that community members may know about the risks in their area on a regular basis?

5. How are you young people affected by these conflicts? Which aspects of the conflicts affect you as young people the most? Place a new sheet of the flipchart paper next to the map and map the responses to this question.
 - a. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way? Males/females? People of certain ethnicities? IDPs? People with disabilities?
 - b. How do the conflicts affect education? The opportunity to find work?
6. How is the community responding to these local conflicts? What methods are in place for conflict resolution?

Community Dividers (10-20 minutes)

The following questions are about things, practices, events, places that divide people and create tensions in the community.

1. What are the things people fight over in this community? Probing: Do people fight over resources? Ideas? Traditional practices? Write down participant responses on a flip chart.
 - a. How are resources divided in your community? Do some people get more of the resources than others? Who makes these decisions? How and who controls the use of these resources? Allow participants to expand in an unstructured manner. How do people react?
2. Are people affected by these things that divide the community the same way?
 - a. Is there a difference in the way men, women, boys and girls react to these things? People of different ethnicities? People with disabilities?
3. Do you think that these reactions occur across the country, outside of your community? How are they similar or different? Refer to the flipchart during this question and identify which activities participants feel are most similar in other parts of the country (such as by starring or circling the idea.)

Community Connectors (10 -20 minutes)

The following questions are about how you and your community come together despite the conflicts you described.

1. What brings people together in these communities? Probing: Where do people meet? What do people do together? Have these changed because of conflict? Why or why not? Write down each of the responses on the flipchart, and refer to these activities in the next question, asking how young people relate to each activity they have mentioned.
 2. Are you, as young people, encouraged to participate in these activities? Are there other ways in which young people come together that are specific to only young people?
 - a. Are you currently involved in any organization in your community? If yes, ask: Which one(s)? What is your role in these organizations? If no, ask: Why not?
 3. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How is it similar or different?

Provide participants with the opportunity for a short, ten-minute break. Participants should be encouraged to move around. If participants do not wish to take a break, continue with the discussion.

Aspirations and the Future (10-20 minutes)

As we discuss the bigger picture of the DRC, we would like to look to the future of your lives. We will be asking a few questions about your goals, aspirations, dreams, and hopes for yourself in the future. We would like you to take a moment and reflect on the first question we ask.

1. What are some of your goals and dreams for the future? Provide participants with two minutes to reflect on the question before asking participants to share. Allow participants to write or draw their answers on paper before sharing. Write all answers on a flipchart to promote a level playing field for all respondents and anonymize the answers. Be sure to also share your response to build trust.
 - a. What support do you feel you have to realize those goals? Who is most supportive? Least supportive? Why?
 - b. What happens to young people who succeed in terms of career, salary, and resources such as land? Probing: How are they received by the community? What are the benefits they receive from the community? What are the challenges they face? Are there any risks?
2. What are your expectations regarding education? Probing: Do you think education is important to members of the community? For both males and females?
3. What are your hopes for earning a living?
 - f. Do you think there are any challenges to this? If so, what are the challenges?
 - g. Do you think it is harder or easier for certain people? For example, are the challenges the same for men and women? All groups?
 - h. Do you think it is harder to find a job in certain professions? Why or why not?
 - i. Are there certain people who make these challenges easier? Harder?
 - j. Do you think schooling has or will help you achieve those goals?
4. Is having a voice in the community important to you? Why or why not? If yes, ask the following questions:
 - a. How do you hope to use your voice in the community?
 - b. What are the ways in which you can already, if at all? How would you like to increase those opportunities in the future?
 - c. What about on a more national scale?

Future Programming (10-20 minutes)

As you already know, we work for an organization that hopes to be working in this community with young people like you. I would like to ask you a few questions about other organizations who may have worked here in the past, and hear what you think would be best for youth in this community.

1. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support young people in your community? You may prompt the participants by asking them to think about past experiences if there is an instance of past international development work in this community; this prompt will be informed by key informant and in-depth interviews. Probing: What about an education program? A training program about work readiness?
 - a. How can we find young people who would want to participate in these programs?
 - b. How can we make such programs interesting to young people?
2. How can these organizations work with people like you to help make you reach your goals and aspirations? If **grants** are mentioned, ask the following questions:
 - a. How do we choose who receives money?
 - b. How should we monitor that money is being used?

Thank participants for joining the discussion. You may choose to end the discussion with the last question, or by asking participants to each share the part of this discussion that either challenged them the most or that inspired them the most.

Female Youth Focus Group Discussion Questions

female youth (15-24 years old) | ninety minutes | 4 flipcharts, 10 markers

Begin by thanking participants for joining the focus group discussion, and briefly re-introduce yourself. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview (introductions, questions about the community, conflict dynamics, dividers in the community, connectors in the community, and the future – both as individuals and for the young people as a collective.) Pass out the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participants in the room to briefly introduce themselves, making sure they include their age and what they are currently doing (i.e.: enrolled in school or not, working or not.)

Introduction (10 minutes)

We are going to be talking about our community a lot today, so as an introduction, we should begin by understanding what we as a group think of as “our community.”

1. How do you define your community? Who is in it? Who is not? Where does it start and end?

Conflict Dynamics (15 -20 minutes)

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view. Feel free to define “conflict” and provide examples of different types of conflict when presenting this section. Conflict may include interpersonal conflicts, such as between returnees and occupiers, or between neighbors; violent conflicts, such as between different armed groups; etc.

1. How would you describe the tension(s) and conflict(s) in your community? A facilitator may choose to draw a map and star and label locations of conflict as participants speak, or invite participants to the map to show where the conflicts occurred.
2. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict? Which of these are most responsible for the conflicts continuing?
3. How are people being drawn into conflicts? Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?? If **recruitment by armed groups** is mentioned, ask the following questions:
 - a. Do you know anyone that has been recruited by armed groups? If so, in what ways?
 - b. Are there any factors that make certain people more vulnerable to recruitment than others? Is it the same for males and females? People of certain ethnicities? IDPs? People with disabilities?
 - c. What do you do to stay safe from armed groups?

A facilitator may choose to refer back to the map and add in stick figures for the different actors participating in different kinds of conflict.

4. Are there certain places or times of the day or year that these conflicts are more significant or less significant?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change from day to day?
 - b. Is there any way that community members may know about the risks in their area on a regular basis?

5. How are you as young people affected by these conflicts? Which aspects of the conflicts affect you as young people the most? Place a new sheet of the flipchart paper next to the map and map responses to this question.
 - a. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way? Males/females? People of certain ethnicities? IDPs? People with disabilities?
6. How do the conflicts affect education? The opportunity to find work?
7. How is the community responding to these local conflicts? What methods are in place for conflict resolution?

Community Dividers (10-20 minutes)

The following questions are about things, practices, events, places that divide people and create tensions in the community.

1. What are the things people fight over in this community? Probing: Do people fight over resources? Ideas? Traditional practices? Write down participant responses on a flip chart.
2. Are people affected by these things that divide the community the same way?
 - a. Is there a difference in the way men, women, boys and girls react to these things? People of different ethnicities? People with disabilities?
3. Do you think that these reactions occur across the country, outside of your community? How are they similar or different? Refer to the flipchart during this question and identify which activities participants feel are most similar in other parts of the country (such as by starring or circling the idea.)

Community Connectors (10 -20 minutes)

The following questions are about how you and your community come together despite the conflicts you described.

1. What brings people together in these communities? Probing: Where do people meet? What do people do together? Have these changed because of conflict? Why or why not? Write down each of the responses on the flipchart, and refer to these activities in the next question, asking how young people relate to each activity they have mentioned.
2. Are you, as young people, encouraged to participate in these activities? Are there other ways in which young people come together that are specific to only young people?
 - a. Are you currently involved in any organization in your community? If yes, ask: Which one(s)? What is your role in these organizations? If no, ask: Why not?
3. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How is it similar or different?

Provide participants with the opportunity for a short, ten-minute break. Participants should be encouraged to move around. If participants do not wish to take a break, continue with the discussion.

Aspirations and the Future (10-20 minutes)

As we discuss the bigger picture of the DRC, we would like to look to the future of your lives. We will be asking a few questions about your goals, aspirations, dreams, and hopes for yourself in the future. We would like you to take a moment and reflect on the first question we ask.

1. What are some of your goals and dreams for the future? Provide participants with two minutes to reflect on the question before asking participants to share. Allow participants to write or draw their answers on paper before sharing. Write all answers on a flipchart to promote a level playing field for all respondents and anonymize the answers. Be sure to also share your response to build trust.
 - a. What support do you feel you have to realize those goals? Who is most supportive? Least supportive? Why?
 - b. What happens to young people who succeed in terms of career, salary, and resources such as land? Probing: How are they received by the community? What are the benefits they receive from the community? What are the challenges they face? Are there any risks?
2. What are your expectations regarding education? Probing: Do you think education is important to other members of the community? For both males and females?
3. What are your hopes for earning a living?
 - a. Do you think there are any challenges to this? If so, what are the challenges?
 - b. Do you think it is harder or easier for certain people? For example, are the challenges the same for men and women? All groups?
 - c. Do you think it is harder to find a job in certain professions? Why or why not?
 - d. Are there certain people who make these challenges easier? Harder?
 - e. Do you think schooling has or will help you achieve those goals?
4. Is having a voice in the community important to you? Why or why not? If yes, ask the following questions:
 - a. How do you hope to use your voice in the community?
 - b. What are the ways in which you can already, if at all? How would you like to increase those opportunities in the future?
 - c. What about on a more national scale?

Future Programming (10-20 minutes)

As you already know, we work for an organization that hopes to be working in this community with young people like you. I would like to ask you a few questions about other organizations who may have worked here in the past, and hear what you think would be best for youth in this community.

1. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support young people in your community? You may prompt the participants by asking them to think about past experiences if there is an instance of past international development work in this community; this prompt will be informed by key informant and in-depth interviews.
2. How can these organizations work with people like you to help make you reach your goals and aspirations?

Thank participants for joining the discussion. You may choose to end the discussion with the last question, or by asking participants to each share the part of this discussion that either challenged them the most or that inspired them the most.

Male Youth Focus Group Discussion Questions

male youth (15-24 years old) | ninety minutes | 4 flipcharts, 10 markers

Begin by thanking participants for joining the focus group discussion, and briefly re-introduce yourself. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview (introductions, questions about the community, conflict dynamics, dividers in the community, connectors in the community, and the future – both as individuals and for the young people as a collective.) Pass out the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participants in the room to briefly introduce themselves, making sure they include their age and what they are currently doing (i.e.: enrolled in school or not, working or not.)

Introduction (10 minutes)

We are going to be talking about our community a lot today, so as an introduction, we should begin by understanding what we as a group think of as “our community.”

1. How do you define your community? Who is in it? Who is not? Where does it start and end?

Conflict Dynamics (15 -20 minutes)

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view. Feel free to define “conflict” and provide examples of different types of conflict when presenting this section. Conflict may include interpersonal conflicts, such as between returnees and occupiers, or between neighbors; violent conflicts, such as between different armed groups; etc.

1. How would you describe the tension(s) and conflict(s) in your community? A facilitator may choose to draw a map and star and label locations of conflict as participants speak, or invite participants to the map to show where the conflicts occurred.
2. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict? Which of these are most responsible for the conflicts continuing?
3. How are people being drawn into conflicts? Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict? If **recruitment by armed groups** is mentioned, ask the following questions:
 - a. Do you know anyone that has been recruited by armed groups? If so, in what ways?
 - b. Are there any factors that make certain people more vulnerable to recruitment than others? Is it the same for males and females? People of certain ethnicities? IDPs? People with disabilities?
 - c. What do you do to stay safe from armed groups?

A facilitator may choose to refer back to the map and add in stick figures for the different actors participating in different kinds of conflict.

4. Are there certain places or times of the day or year that these conflicts are more significant or less significant?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change from day to day?
 - b. Is there any way that community members may know about the risks in their area on a regular basis?

5. How are you as young people affected by these conflicts? Which aspects of the conflicts affect you as young people the most? Place a new sheet of the flipchart paper next to the map and map responses to this question.
 - a. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way? Males/females? People of certain ethnicities? IDPs? People with disabilities?
 - b. How does the conflicts affect education? The opportunity to find work?
6. How is the community responding to these local conflicts? What methods are in place for conflict resolution?

Community Dividers (10-20 minutes)

The following questions are about things, practices, events, places that divide people and create tensions in the community.

1. What are the things people fight over in this community? Probing: Do people fight over resources? Ideas? Traditional practices? Write down participant responses on a flip chart.
2. Are people affected by these things that divide the community the same way?
 - a. Is there a difference in the way men, women, boys and girls react to these things? People of different ethnicities? People with disabilities?
3. Do you think that these reactions occur across the country, outside of your community? How are they similar or different? Refer to the flipchart during this question and identify which activities participants feel are most similar in other parts of the country (such as by starring or circling the idea.)

Community Connectors (10 -20 minutes)

The following questions are about how you and your community come together despite the conflicts you described.

1. What brings people together in these communities? Probing: Where do people meet? What do people do together? Have these changed because of conflict? Why or why not? Write down each of the responses on the flipchart, and refer to these activities in the next question, asking how young people relate to each activity they have mentioned.
2. Are you, as young people, encouraged to participate in these activities? Are there other ways in which young people come together that are specific to only young people?
 - a. Are you currently involved in any organization in your community? If yes, ask: Which one(s)? What is your role in these organizations? If no, ask: Why not?
3. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How is it similar or different?

Provide participants with the opportunity for a short, ten-minute break. Participants should be encouraged to move around. If participants do not wish to take a break, continue with the discussion.

Aspirations and the Future (10-20 minutes)

As we discuss the bigger picture of the DRC, we would like to look to the future of your lives. We will be asking a few questions about your goals, aspirations, dreams, and hopes for yourself in the future. We would like you to take a moment and reflect on the first question we ask.

1. What are some of your goals and dreams for the future? Provide participants with two minutes to reflect on the question before asking participants to share. Allow participants to write or draw their answers on paper before sharing. Write all answers on a flipchart to promote a level playing field for all respondents and anonymize the answers. Be sure to also share your response to build trust.
 - a. What support do you feel you have to realize those goals? Who is most supportive? Least supportive? Why?
 - b. What happens to young people who succeed in terms of career, salary, and resources such as land? Probing: How are they received by the community? What are the benefits they receive from the community? What are the challenges they face? Are there any risks?
2. What are your expectations regarding education? Probing: Do you think education is important to other members of the community? For both males and females?
3. What are your hopes for earning a living?
 - a. Do you think there are any challenges to this? If so, what are the challenges?
 - b. Do you think it is harder or easier for certain people? For example, are the challenges the same for men and women? All groups?
 - c. Do you think it is harder to find a job in certain professions? Why or why not?
 - d. Are there certain people who make these challenges easier? Harder?
 - e. Do you think schooling has or will help you achieve those goals?
4. Is having a voice in the community important to you? Why or why not? If yes, ask the following questions:
 - a. How do you hope to use your voice in the community?
 - b. What are the ways in which you can already, if at all? How would you like to increase those opportunities in the future?
 - c. What about on a more national scale?

Future Programming (10-20 minutes)

As you already know, we work for an organization that hopes to be working in this community with young people like you. I would like to ask you a few questions about other organizations who may have worked here in the past, and hear what you think would be best for youth in this community.

1. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support young people in your community? You may prompt the participants by asking them to think about past experiences if there is an instance of past international development work in this community; this prompt will be informed by key informant and in-depth interviews.
2. How can these organizations work with people like you to help make you reach your goals and aspirations?

Thank participants for joining the discussion. You may choose to end the discussion with the last question, or by asking participants to each share the part of this discussion that either challenged them the most or that inspired them the most.

CRS Parents Focus Group Discussion Questions

Mixed gender | ninety minutes |

Begin by thanking participants for joining the focus group discussion, and briefly re-introduce yourself. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview (introductions, questions about the community, conflict dynamics, dividers in the community, connectors in the community, and the future – and what that means for the program and for youth.) Ask participants in the room to briefly introduce themselves.

Conflict Dynamics (10-15 minutes)

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view.

1. How would you describe the conflicts(s) in your region?
 - a. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict?
 - b. Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
 - c. How are people being drawn into conflicts? NOTE: If recruitment by armed groups is mentioned, ask the following questions:
 - d. Do you know anyone that has been recruited by armed groups? If so, in what ways?
 - e. Are there any factors that make certain people more vulnerable to recruitment than others? Is it the same for males and females? People of certain ethnicities? IDPs?
2. Are there certain places or times of the day or year that these conflicts are more significant or less significant?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change from day to day?
 - b. Is there any way that community members may know about the risks in their area on a regular basis?
3. How are young people affected by these conflicts? What is the role of young people in the conflicts? Which aspects of the conflicts affect young people the most?
 - a. How is this different than how others in the community are affected? Youth? Adults? Children?
 - b. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way? Males/females? People of certain ethnicities?
4. How is the community responding to these local conflicts? What methods are in place for conflict resolution? Are youth part of these community methods?

Community Dividers (10 minutes)

1. What are the main demographic and identity groups in this community?
 - a. In what ways are, groups treated unequal (including women, displaced and disabled people)?
 - b. Are there norms and practices that lead to the exclusion of a certain group?
 - c. How does this exclusion impact the well-being of people in the excluded groups? How does that contribute to the conflict?
 - d. Are there ongoing tensions between identity groups that could be exacerbated by policies, systems or programs to promote youth livelihoods?

Community Connectors (10-15 minutes)

The following questions are about how you and your community come together despite the conflicts you described.

1. What brings people together in your communities? Probing: Where do people meet? What do people do together?
2. Are young people encouraged to participate in these activities? Are there other ways in which young people come together that are specific to only young people?
3. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How is it similar or different?

Education and conflict Interaction (20-30 minutes)

1. In your community, is educating youth equally important for boys and girls? Why? Why not? What about kids with disabilities?
 - a. What factors are considered in deciding to send boys to school compared to girls? What about Children with disabilities?
 - b. What are some of the reasons why a youth might never start school?
 - c. Are these different for boys compared to girls? Youth with disabilities?
2. What are some of the reasons why youth might start school, and then leave?
 - a. Are these different for boys compared to girls? What about youth with disabilities?
3. How do you feel about the teaching quality of CRS compared to regular schools?
 - a. What factors are considered in deciding whether to send your child to a CRS compare to a regular school?
4. What are some challenges a youth might face in trying to move from a CRS to a regular school? Prompt; Are these different for girls than boys ? What about youth with disabilities?
5. Do you have any concern about safety in a CRS as compared to regular school? Prompt: Are the different for girls and boys? Children with disabilities?

Transition: Now I am going to ask a few questions about forms of violence and physical risks that students might face within schools.). If you do not feel comfortable to answering, you can choose not to respond. You MUST NOT under any circumstances use people's names or share any information about other people that might be identifiable.

1. Do you think that students are always safe when they are at school?
 - a. If not, what are the reasons why students sometimes do not feel safe at school?
 - b. What or who causes students sometimes to not be safe at school?
 - c. Where does it happen?
 - d. Are there any factors that make girls more vulnerable compared to boys? Children with disabilities?
2. What are the main responses when violence occurs between a student and a teacher, other adults or older youth in school? [Prompt: Community response, Parent response, School response]
 - a. Are the responses different for boys compared to girls? Youth with disabilities?
 - b. In these cases, how does it affect the student?
 - c. What happens to the perpetrator/person causing the violence?
3. What are the main factors that enable people to respond to or prevent violent incidents in schools?
 - a. Do survivors/youth who survived violence look for help or report the incident when they experience violence? If so, why or why not? Is this different for boys and girls?
 - b. What would make people more comfortable to report these incidents especially when they occur in school?

4. Are you aware of the existence of support networks or services that address cases of violence in your community?
 - a. If yes, are these services mostly responsive (after the incident) or are they preventative?
 - b. Are these services accessible to youth in the community? If so, how?
5. What are the main factors that enable people to respond to or prevent violent incidents in schools?
 - a. Do survivors/youth who survived violence look for help or report the incident when they experience violence in or around schools? If so, why or why not? Is this different for boys and girls?
 - b. What would make people more comfortable to report these incidents especially when they occur in school?
6. What types of emotional and psychological problems are students experiencing, in your opinion?
 - a. How does emotional and psychological problems impact student well-being and learning within the school setting?
 - b. What, if anything, is being done to try to help students dealing with emotional and psychological problems as a result of this?

Future Programming (15 minutes)

1. Have there been programs that give participants goods like kits the region? What about payments like stipends or cash?
 - a. What types of risks or tensions has this/ could this create? How could they be prevented?
 - b. What types of risks or tensions has this/ could this create is participants are selected randomly? What about based on education? What about based on community where they come from? How could they be prevented?
2. In your opinion, what are the most important things school communities are doing to improve safety and keep children and youth in school?
 - a. How are school and community leaders supporting students to stay safe and learn?
 - b. How are parents supporting students to stay safe and learn?

What support are needed from Ministries? What support is needed from major donors, in particular, USAID

Thank participants for joining the discussion. You may choose to end the discussion with the last question, or by asking participants to each share the part of this discussion that either challenged them the most or that inspired them the most.

CAP Parents Focus Group Discussion Questions

Mixed gender | ninety minutes |

Begin by thanking participants for joining the focus group discussion, and briefly re-introduce yourself. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview (introductions, questions about the community, conflict dynamics, dividers in the community, connectors in the community, and the future – and what that means for the program and for youth.) Ask participants in the room to briefly introduce themselves.

Conflict Dynamics (10-15 minutes)

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view.

1. How would you describe the conflicts(s) in your region?
 - a. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict?
 - b. Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
 - c. How are people being drawn into conflicts? NOTE: If recruitment by armed groups is mentioned, ask the following questions:
 - d. Do you know anyone that has been recruited by armed groups? If so, in what ways?
 - e. Are there any factors that make certain people more vulnerable to recruitment than others? Is it the same for males and females? People of certain ethnicities? IDPs?
2. Are there certain places or times of the day or year that these conflicts are more significant or less significant?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change from day to day?
 - b. Is there any way that community members may know about the risks in their area on a regular basis?
3. How are young people affected by these conflicts? What is the role of young people in the conflicts? Which aspects of the conflicts affect young people the most?
 - a. How is this different than how others in the community are affected? Youth? Adults? Children?
 - b. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way? Males/females? People of certain ethnicities?
4. How is the community responding to these local conflicts? What methods are in place for conflict resolution? Are youth part of these community methods?

Community Dividers (10 minutes)

7. What are the main demographic and identity groups in this community?
 - a. In what ways are, groups treated unequal (including women, displaced and disabled people)?
 - b. Are there norms and practices that lead to the exclusion of a certain group?
 - c. How does this exclusion impact the well-being of people in the excluded groups? How does that contribute to the conflict?
 - d. Are there ongoing tensions between identity groups that could be exacerbated by policies, systems or programs to promote youth livelihoods?

Community Connectors (10-15 minutes)

The following questions are about how you and your community come together despite the conflicts you described.

4. What brings people together in your community? Probing: Where do people meet? What do people do together?
5. Are young people encouraged to participate in these activities? Are there other ways in which young people come together that are specific to only young people?
6. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How is it similar or different?

Education and conflict Interaction (20-30 minutes)

1. In your community, is educating youth equally important for boys and girls? Why? Why not? What about kids with disabilities?
 - a. What factors are considered in deciding to send boys to school compared to girls? What about Children with disabilities?
 - b. What are some of the reasons why a youth might never start school?
 - c. Are these different for boys compared to girls? Youth with disabilities?
2. What are some of the reasons why youth might start school, and then leave?
 - a. Are these different for boys compared to girls? What about youth with disabilities?
3. How do you feel about the teaching quality of CAP compared to regular schools?
 - a. What factors are considered in deciding whether to send your child to a CAP compare to a regular school?
4. What are some challenges a youth might face in trying to move from a CAP to a regular school? Prompt: Are these different for girls than boys? What about youth with disabilities?
5. Do you have any concern about safety in a CAP as compared to regular school? Prompt: Are the different for girls and boys? Children with disabilities?

Transition: Now I am going to ask a few questions about forms of violence and physical risks that students might face within schools.). If you do not feel comfortable to answering, you can choose not to respond. You MUST NOT under any circumstances use people's names or share any information about other people that might be identifiable.

8. Do you think that students are always safe when they are at school?
 - c. If not, what are the reasons why students sometimes do not feel safe at school?
 - d. What or who causes students sometimes to not be safe at school?
 - e. Where does it happen?
 - f. Are there any factors that make girls more vulnerable compared to boys? Children with disabilities?
9. What are the main responses when violence occurs between a student and a teacher, other adults or older youth in school? [Prompt: Community response, Parent response, School response]
 - g. Are the responses different for boys compared to girls? Youth with disabilities?
 - h. In these cases, how does it affect the student?
 - i. What happens to the perpetrator/person causing the violence?
10. What are the main factors that enable people to respond to or prevent violent incidents in schools?
 - j. Do survivors/youth who survived violence look for help or report the incident when they experience violence? If so, why or why not? Is this different for boys and girls?
 - k. What would make people more comfortable to report these incidents especially when they occur in school?

11. Are you aware of the existence of support networks or services that address cases of violence in your community?
 - l. If yes, are these services mostly responsive (after the incident) or are they preventative?
 - m. Are these services accessible to youth in the community? If so, how?
12. What are the main factors that enable people to respond to or prevent violent incidents in schools?
 - a. Do survivors/youth who survived violence look for help or report the incident when they experience violence in or around schools? If so, why or why not? Is this different for boys and girls?
 - b. What would make people more comfortable to report these incidents especially when they occur in school?
13. What types of emotional and psychological problems are students experiencing, in your opinion?
 - a. How does emotional and psychological problems impact student well-being and learning within the school setting?
 - b. What, if anything, is being done to try to help students dealing with emotional and psychological problems as a result of this?

Future Programming (15 minutes)

3. Have there been programs that give participants goods like kits the region? What about payments like stipends or cash?
 - c. What types of risks or tensions has this/ could this create? How could they be prevented?
 - d. What types of risks or tensions has this/ could this create is participants are selected randomly? What about based on education? What about based on community where they come from? How could they be prevented?
4. In your opinion, what are the most important things school communities are doing to improve safety and keep children and youth in school?
 - c. How are school and community leaders supporting students to stay safe and learn?
 - d. How are parents supporting students to stay safe and learn?

What support are needed from Ministries? What support is needed from major donors, in particular, USAID?

Thank participants for joining the discussion. You may choose to end the discussion with the last question, or by asking participants to each share the part of this discussion that either challenged them the most or that inspired them the most.

III. Key Informant Interview Tools

Key Informant Interview of CRS Teachers

Mixed Gender | ninety minutes |

Begin by thanking participant for agreeing to an interview, and briefly re-introduce yourself and the program. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview. Give a copy of the consent form with the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participant to introduce themselves as the first questions.

Conflict Dynamics (10-15 minutes)

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view.

1. How would you describe the conflicts(s) in your region?
 - a. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict?
 - b. Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
 - c. How are people being drawn into conflicts? NOTE: If recruitment by armed groups is mentioned, ask the following questions:
 - d. Do you know youth who has been recruited by armed groups? If so, in what ways?
 - e. Are there any factors that make certain people more vulnerable to recruitment than others? Is it the same for males and females? People of certain ethnicities? IDPs?
2. Are there certain places or times of the day or year that these conflicts are more significant or less significant?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change from day to day?
 - b. Is there any way that community members may know about the risks in their area on a regular basis?

Transition: “great, thanks for that input. I’m going to shift now to the topic of health risks that might affect schools in the area.....”

3. With the risk of a health emergency or Ebola epidemic, does the school have any safeguards for protecting against or identifying the risk of epidemics before they occur? Please give an example.
 - a. Have these safeguards ever been used? Did they work?
 - b. What kind of preparedness plan or protocol does the school have for responding to the risk of a health epidemic?
 - c. Has the school ever implemented this protocol? Was it successful?
 - d. What more would need to be done to make it more effective?
 - e. In the case of temporary school closure, as a result of conflict or health emergencies how could classes continue?
 - f. What impact could the conflict have on the a potential health epidemic in the region?

Community Dividers (10 minutes)

1. How are young people affected by these conflicts? What is the role of young people in the conflicts? Which aspects of the conflicts affect young people the most?

- a. How is this different than how others in the community are affected? Youth? Adults? Children?
 - b. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way? Males/females? People of certain ethnicities?
2. How is the community responding to these local conflicts? What methods are in place for conflict resolution? Are youth part of these community methods?

Education and Conflict Interaction (30-40 minutes)

1. In your community, is educating youth equally important for boys and girls? Why? Why not? What about kids with disabilities?
 - a. What factors do parents consider then choosing to enroll their child in a CRS compared to a regular school?
 - b. Are there any challenges for youth to transition from a CRS to a regular school?
2. What impact has the crisis had on teachers, students (boys/girls), and the education system in general?
 - a. Have students (boys/girls) from your school had to leave to attend school elsewhere? Prompt: Have you received students (boys/girls) displaced by the crisis from other districts?
 - b. Are there children and youth who have dropped out of school?
 - c. Are certain groups more affected than others? (Girls/boys, youth with disabilities, certain ethnic groups, IDPs, refugees, rural or other geographic factors)
 - d. What are some of the ways that students can be helped to stay in school or be better served?
3. Are there certain places (ie. on way to school, in school), times of day or year that the risks are more significant or less significant for students/teachers?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change over the course of the year?
 - b. Is there any way that students and teachers can inform themselves about the risks in their area on a regular basis?
 - c. Have any of your students been recruited by armed groups?
4. How does the conflict or violence in the region impact student well-being and learning within the school setting? *Prompt: Do students experience emotional and psychological problems.*
 - a. What, if anything, is being done to try to help students dealing with emotional and psychological problems because of this conflict?

Transition: Now I am going to ask a few questions about forms of violence and physical risks that students might face within schools.

1. Has your school incorporated schools in the region adopted the “Code de Bonne conduite pour la prévention et la lutte contre la violence basée sur le genre en milieu scolaire” ? if not, why ?
 - a. Have all teachers and facilitators receive training in following the code? If no, why?
 - b. Are there any areas of the code that you find difficult to implement? If yes, why?
 - i. Have there been any changes to the code or other regulations that restrict the use of certain forms of punishment? If so, which?
 - c. Of the following, which occur at this school regularly?
 - i. Bullying among students?
 - ii. A student sexually abusing another student?
 - iii. Teachers abusing students or vice versa (emotional, physical, sexual)?

2. What are the main responses when violence occurs between students and a teacher, other adults or older youth in school? [Prompt: Community response, Parent response, School response]
 - a. Are the responses different for boys compared to girls?
 - b. What happens to the perpetrator/person causing the violence?

3. What are the main factors that enable people to respond to to or prevent violent incidents in schools?
 - a. Do youth who survived violence look for help or report the incident when they experience violence in or around schools? If so, why or why not? Is this different for boys and girls?
 - b. What would make people more comfortable to report these incidents especially when they occur in school?
 - c. What, if anything, is being done to try to help students dealing with emotional and psychological problems as a result of this violence?

Community connectors (10-15 minutes)

1. What brings people together in your communities? Probing: Where do people meet? What do people do together?
 - a. Are young people encouraged to participate in these activities? Probing: If no, how can youth be empowered to become involved in making a difference in their community?
2. Are there other ways in which young people come together that are specific to only young people?
3. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How is it similar or different?

Future Programming (15 minutes)

1. Are there specific Congolese policies, systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on improve safety and keep children and youth in school? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view. which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
2. Are there specific Congolese policies or systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on youth civic engagement? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view. which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
3. How are additional supports from literacy coaches perceived in the school? Prompt: Are there any possibility of conflict as a result of posting a literacy coach to this school?
4. What support is needed from the Ministries to support youth access to education and safer learning environments? What support in particular are need for teachers and students?
 - a. What support is needed from major donors, in particular, USAID? Key Informant Interview of Provincial Leaders

Key Informant Interview of CAP Teachers

Mixed Gender | Literacy, | Vocational teacher | ninety minutes |

Begin by thanking participant for agreeing to an interview, and briefly re-introduce yourself and the program. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview. Give a copy of the consent form with the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participant to introduce themselves as the first questions.

Conflict Dynamics (10-15 minutes)

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view.

1. How would you describe the conflicts(s) in your region?
 - a. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict?
 - b. Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
 - c. How are people being drawn into conflicts? NOTE: If recruitment by armed groups is mentioned, ask the following questions:
 - d. Do you know anyone that has been recruited by armed groups? If so, in what ways?
 - e. Are there any factors that make certain people more vulnerable to recruitment than others? Is it the same for males and females? People of certain ethnicities? IDPs?
2. Are there certain places or times of the day or year that these conflicts are more significant or less significant?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change from day to day?
 - b. Is there any way that community members may know about the risks in their area on a regular basis?

Transition: “great, thanks for that input. I’m going to shift now to the topic of health risks that might affect schools in the area.....”

3. With the risk of a health emergency or Ebola epidemic, does the school have any safeguards for protecting against or identifying the risk of epidemics before they occur? Please give an example.
 - a. Have these safeguards ever been used? Did they work?
 - b. What kind of preparedness plan or protocol does the school have for responding to the risk of a health epidemic?
 - c. Has the school ever implemented this protocol? Was it successful?
 - d. What more would need to be done to make it more effective?
 - e. In the case of temporary school closure, as a result of conflict or health emergencies how could classes continue?
 - f. What impact could the conflict have on the a potential health epidemic in the region?

Community Dividers (10 minutes)

1. How are young people affected by these conflicts? What is the role of young people in the conflicts? Which aspects of the conflicts affect young people the most?

- a. How is this different than how others in the community are affected? Youth? Adults? Children?
- b. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way? Males/females? People of certain ethnicities?
2. How is the community responding to these local conflicts? What methods are in place for conflict resolution? Are youth part of these community methods?

Education and Conflict Interaction (20-40 minutes)

1. In your community, is educating youth equally important for boys and girls? Why? Why not? What about kids with disabilities?
 - a. What factors do parents consider then choosing to enroll their child in a CAP compared to a regular school?
 - b. Are there any challenges for youth to transition from a CAP to a regular school?
2. What impact has the crisis had on teachers, students (boys/girls), and the education system in general?
 - a. Have students (boys/girls) from your school had to leave to attend school elsewhere? Prompt: Have you received students (boys/girls) displaced by the crisis from other districts?
 - b. Are there children and youth who have dropped out of school?
 - c. Are certain groups more affected than others? (Girls/boys, youth with disabilities, certain ethnic groups, IDPs, refugees, rural or other geographic factors)
 - d. What are some of the ways that students can be helped to stay in school or be better served?
3. Are there certain places (ie. on way to school, in school), times of day or year that the risks are more significant or less significant for students/teachers?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change over the course of the year?
 - b. Is there any way that students and teachers can inform themselves about the risks in their area on a regular basis?
 - c. Have any of your students been recruited by armed groups?
4. How does the conflict or violence in the region impact student well-being and learning within the school setting? *Prompt: Do students experience emotional and psychological problems.*
 - a. What, if anything, is being done to try to help students dealing with emotional and psychological problems because of this conflict?

Transition: Now I am going to ask a few questions about forms of violence and physical risks that students might face within schools.

4. Has your school incorporated schools in the region adopted the “Code de Bonne conduite pour la prévention et la lutte contre la violence basée sur le genre en milieu scolaire” ? if not, why ?
 - a. Have all teachers and facilitators receive training in following the code? If no, why?
 - b. Are there are areas of the code that you find difficult to implement? If yes, why?
 - i. Have there been any changes to the code or other regulations that restrict the use of certain forms of punishment? If so, which?
 - c. Of the following, which occur at this school regularly?
 - i. Bullying among students?

- ii. A student sexually abusing another student?
 - iii. Teachers abusing students or vice versa (emotional, physical, sexual)?
- 5. What are the main responses when violence occurs between students and a teacher, other adults or older youth in school? [Prompt: Community response, Parent response, School response]
 - a. Are the responses different for boys compared to girls?
 - b. What happens to the perpetrator/person causing the violence?
- 6. What are the main factors that enable people to respond to or prevent violent incidents in schools?
 - a. Do youth who survived violence look for help or report the incident when they experience violence in or around schools? If so, why or why not? Is this different for boys and girls?
 - b. What would make people more comfortable to report these incidents especially when they occur in school?
 - c. What, if anything, is being done to try to help students dealing with emotional and psychological problems as a result of this violence?

Community connectors (10-15 minutes)

- 1. What brings people together in your communities? Probing: Where do people meet? What do people do together?
 - b. Are young people encouraged to participate in these activities? Probing: If no, how can youth be empowered to become involved in making a difference in their community?
- 2. Are there other ways in which young people come together that are specific to only young people?
- 3. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How is it similar or different?

Future Programming (15 minutes)

- 1. Are there specific Congolese policies, systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on improve safety and keep children and youth in school? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view. which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
- 2. Are there specific Congolese policies, systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on economic livelihoods for young people? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view. which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
- 3. Are there specific Congolese policies or systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on youth civic engagement? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view. which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
- 4. What support is needed from the Ministries to support youth access to education and safer learning environments? What support in particular are need for teachers and students?

- a. What support is needed from major donors, in particular, USAID?

Key Informant Interview with CRS School Administrators

Mixed Gender | ninety minutes |

Begin by thanking participant for agreeing to an interview, and briefly re-introduce yourself and the program. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview. Give a copy of the consent form with the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participant to introduce themselves as the first questions.

Conflict Dynamics (10-15 minutes)

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view.

1. How would you describe the conflicts(s) in your region?
 - a. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict?
 - b. Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
 - c. How are people being drawn into conflicts? NOTE: If recruitment by armed groups is mentioned, ask the following questions:
 - d. Do you know youth who has been recruited by armed groups? If so, in what ways?
 - e. Are there any factors that make certain people more vulnerable to recruitment than others? Is it the same for males and females? People of certain ethnicities? IDPs?
2. Are there certain places or times of the day or year that these conflicts are more significant or less significant?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change from day to day?
 - b. Is there any way that community members may know about the risks in their area on a regular basis?

Transition: “great, thanks for that input. I’m going to shift now to the topic of health risks that might affect schools in the area.....”

3. With the risk of a health emergency or Ebola epidemic, does the school have any safeguards for protecting against or identifying the risk of epidemics before they occur? Please give an example.
 - a. Have these safeguards ever been used? Did they work?
 - b. What kind of preparedness plan or protocol does the school have for responding to the risk of a health epidemic?
 - c. Has the school ever implemented this protocol? Was it successful?
 - d. What more would need to be done to make it more effective?
 - e. In the case of temporary school closure, as a result of conflict or health emergencies how could classes continue?
 - f. What impact could the conflict have on the a potential health epidemic in the region?

Community Dividers (10 minutes)

1. How are young people affected by these conflicts? What is the role of young people in the conflicts? Which aspects of the conflicts affect young people the most?
 - a. How is this different than how others in the community are affected? Youth? Adults? Children?
 - b. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way? Males/females? People of certain ethnicities?
2. How is the community responding to these local conflicts? What methods are in place for conflict resolution? Are youth part of these community methods?

Transition: “great, thanks for that input. I’m going to shift now to the topic of health risks that might affect schools in the area.....”

4. With the risk of a health emergency or Ebola epidemic, does the school have any safeguards for protecting against or identifying the risk of epidemics before they occur? Please give an example.
 - g. Have these safeguards ever been used? Did they work?
 - h. What kind of preparedness plan or protocol does the school have for responding to the risk of a health epidemic?
 - i. Has the school ever implemented this protocol? Was it successful?
 - j. What more would need to be done to make it more effective?
 - k. In the case of temporary school closure, as a result of conflict or health emergencies how could classes continue?
 - l. What impact could the conflict have on the a potential health epidemic in the region?

Education and Conflict Interaction (30-40 minutes)

1. In your community, is educating youth equally important for boys and girls? Why? Why not? What about kids with disabilities?
 - a. What factors do parent consider then choosing to enroll their child in a CRS compared to a regular school?
 - b. Are there any challenges for youth to transition from a CRS to a regular school?
2. What impact has the crisis had on teachers, students (boys/girls), and the education system in general?
 - a. Have students (boys/girls) from your school had to leave to attend school elsewhere?
 - i. Have you received students (boys/girls) displaced by the crisis from other districts?
 - b. Are there children and youth who have dropped out of school?
 - i. Are certain groups more affected than others? (Girls/boys, youth with disabilities, certain ethnic groups, IDPs, refugees, rural or other geographic factors)
3. Are there certain places (ie. on way to school, in school), times of day or year that the risks are more significant or less significant for students/teachers?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change over the course of the year?
 - b. Is there any way that students and teachers can inform themselves about the risks in their area on a regular basis?
 - c. Have any of your students been recruited by armed groups?

Key Informant Interview with CAP School Administrators

Mixed Gender | ninety minutes |

Begin by thanking participant for agreeing to an interview, and briefly re-introduce yourself and the program. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview. Give a copy of the consent form with the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participant to introduce themselves as the first questions.

Conflict Dynamics (10-15 minutes)

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view.

1. How would you describe the conflicts(s) in your region?
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 - b. Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
 - c. How are people being drawn into conflicts? NOTE: If recruitment by armed groups is mentioned, ask the following questions:
 - d. Do you know youth who has been recruited by armed groups? If so, in what ways?
 - e. Are there any factors that make certain people more vulnerable to recruitment than others? Is it the same for males and females? People of certain ethnicities? IDPs?
2. Are there certain places or times of the day or year that these conflicts are more significant or less significant?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change from day to day?
 - b. Is there any way that community members may know about the risks in their area on a regular basis?

Transition: “great, thanks for that input. I’m going to shift now to the topic of health risks that might affect schools in the area.....”

3. With the risk of a health emergency or Ebola epidemic, does the school have any safeguards for protecting against or identifying the risk of epidemics before they occur? Please give an example.
 - g. Have these safeguards ever been used? Did they work?
 - h. What kind of preparedness plan or protocol does the school have for responding to the risk of a health epidemic?
 - i. Has the school ever implemented this protocol? Was it successful?
 - j. What more would need to be done to make it more effective?
 - k. In the case of temporary school closure, as a result of conflict or health emergencies how could classes continue?
 - l. What impact could the conflict have on the a potential health epidemic in the region?

Community Dividers (10 minutes)

1. How are young people affected by these conflicts? What is the role of young people in the conflicts? Which aspects of the conflicts affect young people the most?
 - a. How is this different than how others in the community are affected? Youth? Adults? Children?
 - b. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way? Males/females? People of certain ethnicities?
2. How is the community responding to these local conflicts? What methods are in place for conflict resolution? Are youth part of these community methods?

Education and Conflict Interaction (30-40 minutes)

1. In your community, is educating youth equally important for boys and girls? Why? Why not? What about kids with disabilities?
 - a. What factors do parents consider when choosing to enroll their child in a CRS compared to a regular school?
 - b. Are there any challenges for youth to transition from a CRS to a regular school?
2. What impact has the crisis had on teachers, students (boys/girls), and the education system in general?
 - a. Have students (boys/girls) from your school had to leave to attend school elsewhere?
 - i. Have you received students (boys/girls) displaced by the crisis from other districts?
 - b. Are there children and youth who have dropped out of school?
 - i. Are certain groups more affected than others? (Girls/boys, youth with disabilities, certain ethnic groups, IDPs, refugees, rural or other geographic factors)
3. Are there certain places (ie. on way to school, in school), times of day or year that the risks are more significant or less significant for students/teachers?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change over the course of the year?
 - b. Is there any way that students and teachers can inform themselves about the risks in their area on a regular basis?
 - c. Have any of your students been recruited by armed groups?
4. Are there specific Congolese policies, systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on improve safety and keep children and youth in school? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view, which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
5. Are there specific Congolese policies, systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on economic livelihoods for young people? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view, which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
6. Are there specific Congolese policies or systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on youth civic engagement? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view, which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
7. What support is needed from the Ministries to support youth access to education and safer learning environments? What support in particular are needed for teachers and students?

- a. What support is needed from major donors, in particular, USAID?

Key Informant Interview with Education Provincial Leaders

Ministry inspector, DIVAs and DIVJEUNESSE | ninety minutes |

Begin by thanking participant for agreeing to an interview, and briefly re-introduce yourself and the program. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview. Give a copy of the consent form with the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participant to introduce themselves as the first questions.

Conflict Dynamics

1. Please tell me a bit about the main challenges faced by this Region in terms of access to education and safer learning environments. We will have a chance to talk more about the main issues in detail, but for now, I'd like to know: In your opinion what are the most important challenges or risks to education and the school community as a result of the conflict in the region?
 - a. In your opinion, what is driving division and conflict in your region?
 - b. How did they develop?
 - c. What caused them?
 - d. Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
 - e. How it changed the dynamics within the region?
 - f. Are there differences between how adults and youth are drawn into conflicts?"
2. What are the main demographic and identity groups in the region?
 - a. In what ways are, groups treated unequal (including women, displaced and disabled people)?
 - b. What are some of the inequality-related issues among these groups (including women and displaced people)?
 - c. Has conflict in the region lead to further discrimination against certain groups or exacerbate inequity issues? If so, how?
3. What have been governmental, institutional, and international responses to these local conflicts?
 - a. How have their responses been perceived?

Transition: "great, thanks for that input. I'm going to shift now to the topic of health risks that might affect schools in the area....."

4. With the risk of a health emergency or Ebola epidemic, does the ministry have any safeguards for protecting against or identifying the risk of epidemics before they occur? Please give an example.
 - m. Have these safeguards ever been used? Did they work?
 - n. What kind of preparedness plan or protocol does the school have for responding to the risk of a health epidemic?
 - o. Has the schools in this region ever implemented this protocol? Was it successful?
 - p. What more would need to be done to make it more effective?
 - q. In the case of temporary school closure, as a result of conflict or health emergencies how could classes continue?
 - r. What impact could the conflict have on the potential health epidemic in the region?

Community Dividers (10 minutes)

3. How are young people affected by the conflicts in the region? What is the role of young people in the conflicts? Which aspects of the conflicts affect young people the most?
 - a. How is this different than how others in the community are affected? Youth? Adults? Children?
 - b. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way? Males/females? People of certain ethnicities?

Education and Conflict interaction (20 minutes)

1. What impact has the crisis had on teachers, students (boys/girls), and the education system in general in the region?
 - a. Are there certain places (ie. on way to school, in school), times of day or year that the risks are more significant or less significant for students/teachers?
 - b. What is the reason that safety risks might change over the course of the year?
 - c. Is there any way that students and teachers can inform themselves about the risks in their area on a regular basis?
2. Do armed groups influence the environment inside the schools in the region? If so how?
 - a. Are students susceptible to recruitment by armed groups in the schools in your region?
 - b. Are the conditions where students will voluntarily join armed groups in the region?
4. Have all schools in the region incorporated the “Code de Bonne conduite pour la prévention et la lutte contre la violence basée sur le genre en milieu scolaire” ?
 - a. Have all teachers and facilitators receive training in following the code? If no, why?
 - b. Have there been any changes to the code or other regulations that restrict the use of certain forms of punishment?
 - c. Are there any areas of the code that you find difficult to implement? If yes, why?
5. In your opinion, what are the most important things school communities are doing to improve safety and keep children and youth in school?
 - a. How are school and community leaders supporting students to stay safe and learn?
 - b. What more could be done to improve safety and keep children and youth in school?
6. Are there venues or opportunities for actors from different sectors (government, civil society and private sector) to work together to improve safety and keep children and youth in school?

Future Programming (20- 30 minutes)

1. Are there specific policies, systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on economic livelihoods for young people? If yes, ask the following questions:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs? Are there any traditional, informal apprenticeships?
 - b. Which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective from the authorities' point of view?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?

2. Are there specific policies, systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on youth civic engagement? If yes, ask the following questions:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. Which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective from the authorities' point of view?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
3. Have there been programs that give participants goods like kits, or payments like stipends or cash in the region?
 - a. What types of risks or tensions has this/ could this create? How could they be mitigated?
4. What types of risks or tensions could be exacerbated by different methods of selection of program beneficiaries (i.e. randomized, purposeful, merit-based selection of individuals, communities, organizations, etc.)? How could they be mitigated? Are there ongoing tensions between identity groups that could be exacerbated by policies, systems or programs to promote youth livelihoods?
5. What support is needed from the Ministries to support youth access to education and safer learning environments? What support is needed from major donors, in particular, USAID?
6. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support young people in your community/city/province?

Key Informant Interview with Local and/or Government Authorities

member of the government or recognized local authority | forty-five minutes

Begin by thanking participant for agreeing to an interview, and briefly re-introduce yourself and the program. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview. Give a copy of the consent form with the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participant to introduce themselves as the first questions.

Introduction (2 minutes)

We are going to be talking about our community a lot today, so as an introduction, we should begin by understanding what we as a group think of as “our community.”

1. As an official with influence and responsibility in this community or administrative unit, how would you define the community or unit, in terms of who is in it? Who is outside? Where does it start and end?

Conflict Dynamics (10 minutes)

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view. These questions are meant to only ask for your opinion, and are not meant to be a representation of your employer’s opinion or official stance.

1. How would you describe the conflicts in your community as part of the administrative unit?
2. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict? Which of these are most responsible for the conflicts continuing?
3. How are people being drawn into conflicts? Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
4. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way?
5. How is the community responding to these local conflicts? What methods are in place for conflict resolution?
6. What have been governmental, institutional, and international responses to these local conflicts?
 - a. What has been the most effective response from the authorities’ point of view?
 - b. How are communities responding to these actions?

Community Dividers (10 minutes)

The following questions are about things, practices, events, places that divide people and create tensions in the community.

1. What are the things people fight over in this community/city/province? Probing: Do people fight over resources? Ideas? Traditional practices?
2. Are people affected by these things that divide the community the same way? Probing: Is there a difference in the way men, women, boys and girls react to these things? People of different ethnicities? People with disabilities?
3. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How are they similar or different?

Community Connectors (10 minutes)

The following questions are about how you and your community come together despite the conflicts you described.

1. What brings people together in these communities? Probing: Where do people meet? What do people do together?
2. Are young people encouraged to participate in these activities? Are there other ways in which young people come together that are specific to only young people?
3. Are there venues or opportunities for actors from different sectors (government, civil society and private sector) to work together?

Future Programming (15 minutes)

As you already know, we work for an organization that hopes to be working in this community/city/province with young people. I would like to ask you a few questions about livelihoods and civic engagement activities in these communities, and hear what you think would be best for youth in this community.

1. Are there specific policies, systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on economic livelihoods for young people? If yes, ask the following questions:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs? Are there any traditional, informal apprenticeships?
 - b. Which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective from the authorities' point of view?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
2. Are there specific policies, systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on youth civic engagement? If yes, ask the following questions:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. Which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective from the authorities' point of view?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
3. How have the local authorities interacted with NGO or government programs implemented in this community in the last two years?
4. What did people think about the activities? What did you think? Did they see any change? Any benefits? What kind of benefits? For whom?
5. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support young people in your community/city/province?
6. How can these organizations work with young people to help them be strong and successful?

Key Informant Interview with Religious Leaders

religious leader, likely of the catholic church | sixty to ninety minutes

Begin by thanking participant for agreeing to an interview, and briefly re-introduce yourself and the program. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview. Give a copy of the consent form with the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participant to introduce themselves as the first questions.

Introduction

We are going to be talking about our community a lot today, so as an introduction, we should begin by understanding what we as a group think of as “our community.”

1. How do you define your community?

Conflict Dynamics

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view.

1. How would you describe the conflicts in your community?
2. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict? Which of these are most responsible for the conflicts continuing?
3. How are people being drawn into conflicts? Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
4. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way?
5. What are current supports to peace and stability?
6. What methods are in place for conflict resolution?
7. When a young person has a problem in this community, what do they do? To whom do they turn? Do they use the same conflict resolution mechanisms you just shared?

Community Dividers

The following questions are about things, practices, events, places that divide people and create tensions in the community.

1. What are the things people fight over in this community/city/province? Probing: Do people fight over resources? Ideas? Traditional practices?
2. Are people affected by these things that divide the community the same way? Probing: Is there a difference in the way men, women, boys and girls react to these things? People of different ethnicities? People with disabilities?
3. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How are they similar or different?

Community Connectors

The following questions are about how you and your community come together despite the conflicts you described.

1. What brings people together in these communities? Where do people meet? What do people do together?

2. Are young people well-represented in these activities and events? Do young people engage differently with one another?
3. What are the decision-making structures at the community level? How are youth involved, and in what circumstances?
4. What other opportunities are there for young people to share their opinions in your community?
 - a. Probing: Do young people express their opinions about their community? Their country? How?
5. Are there venues or opportunities for actors from different sectors (government, civil society and private sector) to work together? In your opinion, how well do they work together?

Future Programming

As you already know, we work for an organization that hopes to be working in this community with young people. I would like to ask you a few questions about livelihoods and civic engagement activities in these communities, and hear what you think would be best for youth in this community.

1. Are there specific Congolese policies, systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on economic livelihoods for young people? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view, which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
2. Are there specific Congolese policies or systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on youth civic engagement? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view, which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
3. What about international or NGO-led programming? What do people think about these activities? What do you think? Have you seen any changes in the community? Any benefits? What kind of benefits? For whom?
4. Are there ongoing tensions between any groups that could be exacerbated by policies, systems or programs?
5. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support young people in your community?
6. How does can a program engage and work with religious institutions to support these different programming goals?
7. How can these organizations work with young people to help them be strong and successful?

Key Informant Interview with Women Leaders

partner-identified female leader | sixty to ninety minutes

Begin by thanking participant for agreeing to an interview, and briefly re-introduce yourself and the program. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview. Give a copy of the consent form with the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participant to introduce themselves as the first questions.

Introduction

We are going to be talking about our community a lot today, so as an introduction, we should begin by understanding what we as a group think of as “our community.”

1. How do you define your community?

Conflict Dynamics

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view.

1. How would you describe the conflicts in your community?
2. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict? Which of these are most responsible for the conflicts continuing?
3. How are people being drawn into conflicts? Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
4. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way? Males? Females? Youth? People of a certain ethnicity? IDPs?
5. What are current supports to peace and stability?
6. What methods are in place for conflict resolution?
7. When a young person has a problem in this community, what do they do? To whom do they turn? Do they use the same conflict resolution mechanisms you just shared?

Community Dividers

The following questions are about things, practices, events, places that divide people and create tensions in the community.

1. What are the things people fight over in this community/city/province? Probing: Do people fight over resources? Ideas? Traditional practices?
2. Are people affected by these things that divide the community the same way? Probing: Is there a difference in the way men, women, boys and girls react to these things? People of different ethnicities? People with disabilities?
3. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How are they similar or different?

Community Connectors

The following questions are about how you and your community come together despite the conflicts you described.

1. What brings people together in these communities? Where do people meet? What do people do together?
2. Are young people well-represented in these activities and events? Do young people engage differently with one another? Is this the same for males and females?
3. What are the decision-making structures at the community level? How are youth involved, and in what circumstances? Is this the same for males and females?
4. What other opportunities are there for young people to share their opinions in your community?
 - a. Do young people express their opinions about their community? Their country? How? Is this the same for males and females? People of different ethnicities?
5. Are there venues or opportunities for actors from different sectors (government, civil society and private sector) to work together? In your opinion, how well do they work together?

Future Programming

As you already know, we work for an organization that hopes to be working in this community with young people. I would like to ask you a few questions about livelihoods and civic engagement activities in these communities, and hear what you think would be best for youth in this community.

1. Are there specific Congolese policies, systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on economic livelihoods for young people? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view, which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
2. Are there specific Congolese policies or systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on youth civic engagement? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view, which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
3. What about international or NGO-led programming? What do people think about these activities? What do you think? Have you seen any changes in the community? Any benefits? What kind of benefits? For whom?
4. Are there ongoing tensions between any groups that could be exacerbated by policies, systems or programs?
5. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support young people in your community?
6. How to best engage women leaders to support the goals of our program?
7. How can these organizations work with young people to help them be strong and successful?

Key Informant Interview with Business Leaders

partner-identified business leader | sixty minutes

Begin by thanking participant for agreeing to an interview, and briefly re-introduce yourself and the program. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview. Give a copy of the consent form with the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participant to introduce themselves as the first questions.

Conflict Dynamics

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view.

1. How would you describe the types of conflict in your community?
2. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict? Which of these are most responsible for the conflicts continuing?
3. How are people being drawn into conflicts? Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
4. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way?
5. How does the conflicts specifically affect the workforce?
6. What are current support mechanisms to counter those effects?

Community Dividers

The following questions are about things, practices, events, places that divide people and create tensions in the community.

1. What are the things people fight over in this community/city/province? Probing: Do people fight over resources? Ideas? Traditional practices?
2. Are people affected by these things that divide the community the same way? Probing: Is there a difference in the way men, women, boys and girls react to these things? People of different ethnicities? People with disabilities?
3. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How are they similar or different?

Community Connectors

The following questions are about how you and your community come together despite the conflicts you described.

1. What brings people together in these communities? Where do people meet? What do people do together?
2. How about at the workplace? How do people come together at work? Are young people included?

Economic Livelihoods

Speaking of the workplace, I would like to ask you a few questions about the workplace to better understand opportunities for work in this community.

1. Can you describe to me someone in your company who is a successful, hard-worker? What do you think sets them apart from their peers?
2. How do you seek to recruit similar workers to your company/organization? Are there challenges you face in finding similar candidates?
3. What is your opinion about young people as workers?
4. Does your provide any support to young people in their jobs?
5. What do you think are the main barriers to finding work or starting a business? Are these the same for males/females? All groups?
6. What are the risks or safety issues that exist in the workplace? Are these the same for males/females? All groups?
7. What is the relationship, if any, between other employers and business owners in your community? Is there competition? Collaboration?

Future Programming

As you already know, I work for an organization that hopes to be working in this community with young people specifically on livelihoods. We would like to ask you a few questions about livelihoods activities in these communities, and hear what you think would be best for youth in this community.

1. Are there specific Congolese policies, systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on economic livelihoods for young people? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view, which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
2. What about international or NGO-led programming? What do people think about these activities? What do you think? Have you seen any changes in the community? Any benefits? What kind of benefits? For whom?
3. Are there ongoing tensions between any groups that could be exacerbated by policies, systems or programs?
4. How can we as a program implementer best engage with business leaders and the private sector to meet the goals of our youth development program?
5. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support young people in your community?

Key Informant Interview with Youth Entrepreneurs

partner-identified youth entrepreneur leader | sixty minutes

Begin by thanking participant for agreeing to an interview, and briefly re-introduce yourself and the program. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview. Give a copy of the consent form with the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participant to introduce themselves as the first questions.

Conflict Dynamics

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view.

1. How would you describe the conflicts in your community?
2. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict? Which of these are most responsible for the conflicts continuing?
3. How are people being drawn into conflicts? Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
4. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way?
5. How does the conflicts specifically affect the workforce?
6. What are current support mechanisms to counter those effects?

Community Dividers

The following questions are about things, practices, events, places that divide people and create tensions in the community.

1. What are the things people fight over in this community/city/province? Probing: Do people fight over resources? Ideas? Traditional practices?
2. Are people affected by these things that divide the community the same way? Probing: Is there a difference in the way men, women, boys and girls react to these things? People of different ethnicities? People with disabilities?
3. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How are they similar or different?

Community Connectors

The following questions are about how you and your community come together despite the conflicts you described.

1. What brings people together in these communities? Where do people meet? What do people do together?
2. How about at the workplace? How do people come together at work? Are young people included?

Economic Livelihoods

Speaking of the workplace, I would like to ask you a few questions about the workplace to better understand opportunities for work in this community.

1. Can you tell me a bit about yourself, and your journey to starting your successful business?
2. Were there any challenges you had to starting your business? Was anything easier than you expected? Do you think these challenges and opportunities are the same for males/females? All groups?
3. Can you describe to me someone in your company who you see as a successful, hard-worker? What do you think sets them apart from their peers?
4. How do you seek to recruit similar workers to your company/organization? Are there challenges you face in finding similar candidates?
5. Are there any risks or safety issues that exist in the workplace? Are these the same for males/females? All groups?
6. What is the relationship, if any, between other employers and business owners in your community? Is there competition? Collaboration?

Future Programming

As you already know, I work for an organization that hopes to be working in this community with young people specifically on livelihoods. We would like to ask you a few questions about livelihoods activities in these communities, and hear what you think would be best for youth in this community.

1. Are there specific Congolese policies, systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on economic livelihoods for young people? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view, which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
2. What about international or NGO-led programming? What do people think about these activities? What do you think? Have you seen any changes in the community? Any benefits? What kind of benefits? For whom?
3. Are there ongoing tensions between any groups that could be exacerbated by policies, systems or programs?
4. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support young people in your community?
5. How can these organizations work with young people to help them be strong and successful?

Key Informant Interview with Youth Leaders

regional leader of a youth movement | sixty to ninety minutes

Begin by thanking participant for agreeing to an interview, and briefly re-introduce yourself and the program. Then, read the consent form, which also serves as an introduction to the discussion. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview. Give a copy of the consent form with the contact information at the bottom of the form. Ask participant to introduce themselves as the first questions.

Introduction

We are going to be talking about our community a lot today, so as an introduction, we should begin by understanding what we as a group think of as “our community.”

1. How do you define your community?

Conflict Dynamics

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view.

1. How would you describe the conflicts in your community?
2. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict? Which of these are most responsible for the conflicts continuing?
3. How are people being drawn into conflicts? Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict?
4. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way?
5. What are current supports to peace and stability?
6. What methods are in place for conflict resolution?
7. When a young person has a problem in this community, what do they do? To whom do they turn? Do they use the same conflict resolution mechanisms you just shared?

Community Dividers

The following questions are about things, practices, events, places that divide people and create tensions in the community.

1. What are the things people fight over in this community/city/province? Probing: Do people fight over resources? Ideas? Traditional practices?
2. Are people affected by these things that divide the community the same way? Probing: Is there a difference in the way men, women, boys and girls react to these things? People of different ethnicities? People with disabilities?
3. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How are they similar or different?

Community Connectors

The following questions are about how you and your community come together despite the conflicts you described.

1. What brings people together in these communities? Where do people meet? What do people do together?

2. Are young people well-represented in these activities and events? Do young people engage differently with one another?
3. What are the decision-making structures at the community level? How are youth involved, and in what circumstances?
4. What other opportunities are there for young people to share their opinions in your community?
 - a. Do young people express their opinions about their community? Their country? How? Are there certain young people that do so more than others? Who?
5. Are there venues or opportunities for actors from different sectors (government, civil society and private sector) to work together? In your opinion, how well do they work together?

Future Programming

As you already know, we work for an organization that hopes to be working in this community with young people. I would like to ask you a few questions about livelihoods and civic engagement activities in these communities, and hear what you think would be best for youth in this community.

1. Are there specific Congolese policies, systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on economic livelihoods for young people? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view, which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
2. Are there specific Congolese policies or systems, or programs in place in this community focusing on youth civic engagement? If yes:
 - a. Can you briefly describe these policies, systems, or programs?
 - b. From your point of view, which of these policies, systems, or programs has been the most effective?
 - c. How has the community responded to these policies? Systems? Programs?
3. What about international or NGO-led programming? What do people think about these activities? What do you think? Have you seen any changes in the community? Any benefits? What kind of benefits? For whom?
4. Are there ongoing tensions between any groups that could be exacerbated by policies, systems or programs?
5. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support young people in your community?
6. How can these organizations work with young people to help them be strong and successful?

IV. In-Depth Interviews

In Depth Interview with International Development Program Implementers

international development program implementers – MONUSCO | forty-five minutes

Overview of International Development Programming

1. What would you describe as the primary objectives of programs being implemented by government and international organizations in the Kivus? Is there a specific concentration in any sector?
2. More specifically, do you know of any organizations implementing programs in [LOCATIONS]? If so, please describe them. (Which organizations were implementing programs? When? For how long? What did they do? Did many people participate?)
3. Are you able to speak to how these programs recruited participants? If so:
 - a. What have you seen as the primary method for recruiting participants across programs? What about for your program(s)?
 - b. What types of risks or tensions could be exacerbated by different methods of selection of program beneficiaries (i.e. randomized, purposeful, merit-based selection of individuals, communities, organizations, etc.)?
 - c. Have there been programs that gave participants in-kind kits, or payments like stipends or cash? If so:
 - a. How have these kits been received?
 - b. Were any tensions created?
 - c. How were any tensions mitigated?
 - d. Did you feel that program participants were representative of the community's population? Why or why not? For example, were there male and female participants? Representation of all ethnicities? IDPs?
4. How are international programs generally received by the communities?
5. Would you be able to briefly share results of these programs? Would you be willing to share impact reports should you have access to them?

Contextualization of Programming

1. Do you think local conflict dynamics have been influenced by international donor or development agencies programs? If so, how?
2. What do you think are the possibilities and limitations of development programs in shaping conflict dynamics, especially as related to combatting stereotypes and minimizing divisions within and between communities?
3. What are some effective approaches used by international development programs in the region to avoid exacerbating conflicts or contribute to resolving specific conflict?

Recommendations

- I. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support youth in communities in North and South Kivu?

In Depth Interview with International and Local Program Implementers

program implementers from international and local ngos | forty-five minutes

Overview of International Development Programming

1. What would you describe as the primary objectives of your programs being implemented by government and international organizations in the Kivus? Is there a specific concentration in any sector?
2. More specifically, is your organization implementing programs in [LOCATIONS]? If so, please describe them. (When? For how long? What did they do? Did many people participate?)
3. Are you able to speak to how your programs recruited participants? If so:
 - a. What have you used as the primary method for recruiting participants across programs? What have you observed for other programs operating in the same communities?
 - b. What types of risks or tensions could be exacerbated by different methods of selection of program beneficiaries (i.e. randomized, purposeful, merit-based selection of individuals, communities, organizations, etc.)?
 - c. Did your program give participants in-kind kits, or payments like stipends or cash? If so:
 - a. How have these kits been received?
 - b. Were any tensions created?
 - c. How were tensions mitigated?
 - d. Did you feel that program participants were representative of the community's population? Why or why not? For example, were there male and female participants? Representation of all ethnicities? IDPs?
4. How was your program received by the community? Is this similar to how other international programs have been received?
5. Have any evaluations of your program(s) taken place? Would you be able to briefly share results of your program(s)? Would you be willing to share impact reports?

Contextualization of Programming

1. Do you think local conflict dynamics have been influenced by international donor or development agencies programs? If so, how?
2. What do you think are the possibilities and limitations of development programs in shaping conflict dynamics, especially as related to combatting stereotypes and minimizing divisions within communities?
3. What are some effective approaches that your organization has used to avoid exacerbating conflicts or contribute to resolving specific conflict? Do you see others taking the same approach?

Recommendations

1. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support youth in communities in North and South Kivu?

V. Community Meeting Discussion

Community Meeting Discussion Questions

open to public | ninety minutes | 4 flipcharts, 10 markers

Begin by thanking participants for joining the focus group discussion, and briefly re-introduce yourself. Make sure to give an overview of the different sections of the interview (introductions, questions about the community, conflict dynamics, dividers in the community, connectors in the community, and the future – and what that means for the program and for youth.) Ask participants in the room to briefly introduce themselves.

Introduction (10-20 minutes)

We are going to be talking about our community a lot today, so as an introduction, we should begin by understanding what we as a group think of as “our community.”

1. How do you define your community? Who is in it? Who is not? Where does the community start and end?

Conflict Dynamics (20-25 minutes)

Many people feel that there is a conflict going on in your communities, and the region. The next few questions are about these conflicts so that we may better understand these conflicts from your point of view. . Feel free to define “conflict” and provide examples of different types of conflict when presenting this section. Conflict may include interpersonal conflicts, such as between returnees and occupiers, or between neighbors; violent conflicts, such as between different armed groups; etc.

5. How would you describe the conflicts(s) in your community? A facilitator may choose to draw a map and star and label locations of conflict as participants speak, or invite participants to the map to show where the conflicts occurred.
6. What do you think are the key drivers of conflict? Which of these are most responsible for the conflicts continuing?
7. How are people being drawn into conflicts? Who are the people involved in the conflict. Why and how are they involved in the conflict? A facilitator may choose to refer back to the map and add in stick figures for the different actors participating in different kinds of conflict.
8. Are there certain places or times of the day or year that these conflicts are more significant or less significant?
 - a. What is the reason that safety risks might change from day to day?
 - b. Is there any way that community members may know about the risks in their area on a regular basis?
9. How are young people affected by these conflicts? What is the role of young people in the conflicts? Which aspects of the conflicts affect young people the most? Place a new sheet of the flipchart paper next to the map and map responses to this question.
 - a. How is this different than how others in the community are affected? Youth? Adults? Children?
 - b. Do certain members of the community experience the conflicts in a different way? Males/females? People of certain ethnicities?
10. How is the community responding to these local conflicts? What methods are in place for conflict resolution? Are youth part of these community methods?

Community Dividers (20 minutes)

The following questions are about things, practices, events, places that divide people and create tensions in the community.

1. What are the things people fight over in this community? Probing: Do people fight over resources? Ideas? Traditional practices? Write down participant responses on a flip chart.
2. Are people affected by these things that divide the community the same way?
 - a. Is there a difference in the way men, women, boys and girls react to these things? People of different ethnicities? People with disabilities?
3. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How are they similar or different? Refer to the flipchart during this question and identify which activities participants feel are most similar to other parts of the country (such as by starring or circling the idea.)

Community Connectors (20 minutes)

The following questions are about how you and your community come together despite the conflicts you described.

7. What brings people together in these communities? Probing: Where do people meet? What do people do together?

Write down each of the responses on the flipchart, and refer to these activities in the next question, asking how young people relate to each activity they have mentioned.

8. Are young people encouraged to participate in these activities? Are there other ways in which young people come together that are specific to only young people?
9. Do you think that these activities occur across the country, outside of your community? How is it similar or different?

Provide participants with the opportunity for a short, ten-minute break. Participants should be encouraged to move around. If participants do not wish to take a break, continue with the discussion.

Future Programming (15 minutes)

As you already know, we work for an organization that hopes to be working in this community with young people. We would like to ask you a few questions about other organizations who may have worked here in the past, and hear what you think would be best for youth in this community.

1. What do you think young people want for themselves in the future? What are their dreams and dreams?
2. What would you recommend to organizations that are working to support young people in your community?

How can these organizations work with young people to help them be strong and successful?

VI. Focus Group and Interview Discussion Protocol

Each Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Key Informant Interview (KII) will have two data collectors of the same sex. The first data collector, the Facilitator, will lead the FGD/KII while the second data collector takes notes. The facilitator is responsible for conducting the FGD/KII. The Facilitator must keep the group “focused” to generate a lively and productive discussion following the FGD/KII protocol. The note taker will do utmost to capture the exact wording of the participants and audio record the discussion. These FGDs/KII will focus on assessing Parents’, teachers’ and youth’ perceptions of the conflict in the communities in the eastern region of the DRC, how it affects youth access to education, economic livelihood, and civic engagement.

Description of the FGDs/KII:

Each FGD will have a minimum of 6 or a maximum of 10 participants per group and each KII will be conducted individually. For the adult participants, we estimate 120 minutes for FGDs and KIIs (30 minutes for background information/consent; 90 FGD/KII facilitation). For the youth, 120 minutes (30 minutes for background information/consent; 90 FGD facilitation).

Consent:

Prior to conducting any FGD/KII, meet with each participant individually on the list in a space that is quiet and free from distraction and provide them with the consent form to read or verbally read the consent letter to the participants. The consent will state the purpose of the discussion, risk, and benefits. If participants agree, then the Facilitator will make a note of/collect their consent form and direct the participant to the appropriate location for the interview.

- After agreeing to participate in the FGD, each participant will provide the note-taker with the following to be captured on the template provided.:
 - Name
 - Age
 - Sex
 - For youth:
 - Education status (in or out of school)
 - Type of education (Formal, CRS, CAP, Other)
 - Last grade completed
 - Employment status

Discussion Facilitation

The lead facilitator will lead the participants through a series of main questions. Each question is meant to prompt discussion among the participants. The facilitator will ask appropriate follow-up questions to each major question to elicit more specific responses.

The second facilitator will act as a note taker. Using the template provided, s/he should record the responses. As each participant arrives, the facilitator/note taker should do the following procedure: introduce themselves and purpose of the interview, and ask them if they consent to participate in the interview or focus group.