



TERMS OF REFERENCE

PARTNERSHIP FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EASTERN CONGO (P-DEC)

IMPACT EVALUATION TEAM LEADER

1. OVERVIEW OF SOCHA AND MSSP

SoCha is an international development company based in the United States with field offices in Kinshasa and Goma, the Democratic Republic of Congo. Our name is based on a combination of the words Social and Change. We provide a variety of professional services to multilateral and bilateral donors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and global clients that need analytical and technical services. In the last decade, we've delivered 50 contracts to 17 clients in 28 countries that address global health, economic growth, agriculture and trade, education, biodiversity and climate change, urban programs, women in development, youth, and collaborative partnerships.

SoCha is contracted to provide technical and advisory services to the United States Agency for International Development in the Democratic Republic of Congo (USAID/DRC) and the CAR on the 5-year Mission Strategic Support Program (MSSP). MSSP works to strengthen Mission strategic monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) systems; manage high quality data; provide geo-intelligence; produce rigorous analyses that inform decision making; institutionalize collaborating, learning, and adapting (CLA) practices; expand localization through targeted and deliberate capacity building; generate action-oriented data visualizations and communications; and provide Mission personnel with third-party monitoring in areas they cannot access.

2. PURPOSE AND INTENDED USERS OF THE IMPACT EVALUATION BASELINE FINDINGS

MSSP is looking for an **Impact Evaluation Team Leader** to provide technical leadership in the design and implementation of a baseline impact evaluation for the P-DEC Project in collaboration with a local firm in the DRC. The baseline will provide benchmark values for key indicators before P-DEC's interventions. MSSP anticipates issuing a future solicitation to provide an endline measurement of the same indicators after P-DEC has completed interventions. MSSP will quantify the impact of the P-DEC interventions using statistical analysis of the difference between baseline and endline measurements in matching groups that received, or did not receive interventions from P-DEC.

MSSP anticipates the baseline data will provide descriptive statistics on the population of the areas where P-DEC plans to implement programming. These data will be useful for the following key stakeholders: USAID/DRC Peace and Security Office, Mercy Corps and consortium partners, the government of the DRC, and other international donors. The findings will provide a point of reference against which the impact of P-DEC interventions will be evaluated at the endline.

3. SCOPE OF WORK AND TASKS

The **Impact Evaluation Team Leader** should have demonstrated experience in designing and implementing quantitative impact evaluations using a *quasi-experimental design based on the difference-in-difference (DID) approach*. The quantitative approach will be complemented by qualitative evaluation research implemented in collaboration with SoCha's Global Evaluation Manager. MSSP will procure the services of a qualified local firm to implement data collection.

The Impact Evaluation Team Leader is expected to work closely with the local firm to accomplish the following key tasks during the assignment:

3.1 Develop an Impact Evaluation Design: Develop an impact evaluation design which quantifies the causal impact of the interventions on key outcome indicators in consultation with Socha MSSP Team. Through consultations with the USAID/DRC Mission and the P-DEC team, MSSP has determined that there is no opportunity to randomize interventions or beneficiaries. Therefore, USAID has selected a quasi-experimental approach to counterfactual analysis for this impact evaluation. The Team Leader will consult with P-DEC to develop a suitable quasi-experimental design to be implemented over baseline and endline rounds of data collection. Consultations should take place in person to the extent possible working from MSSP's office in Goma.

MSSP envisions that the design will feature a matched difference-in-difference method. The Team Leader will deliver a preliminary quasi-experimental design, seek feedback from MSSP, and revise the design accordingly. Specifically, the Team Leader will:

- Review existing program documents and conduct an analysis of P-DEC's theory of change (that considers the causal links between inputs, activities, outcomes, and impacts) of the P-DEC program.
- Identify the unit of analysis for the evaluation based on a deep understanding of the P-DEC theory of change and intervention approach developed in consultation with the P-DEC team.
- Identify in collaboration with the local firm, community-level, household, and individual characteristics for use in matching treatment and control groups.
- Identify key indicators of impact and other variables that will be measured as part of the evaluation.
- Perform power calculations and sample size estimation to align with the indicated budget for the impact evaluation.
- Work with the SoCha Global Evaluation Manager on the qualitative research design to be implemented alongside the quasi-experimental design.
- Develop an inception report for the impact evaluation that comprehensively describes the evaluation design, including both quantitative and qualitative methods, the sampling design, survey questionnaire, and implementation plan.

3.2 Finalize the sampling design and survey implementation plan: MSSP envisions that the evaluation will involve representative sampling of the population in P-DEC intervention areas. The sample design may also include geographies that are outside of the intervention areas if this approach is expedient for counterfactual analysis. The Impact Evaluation Team Leader will work with P-DEC and the local firm to define the sample size, target population, geography, and sampling units for the baseline survey as well as the approach for selecting respondents. This will include:

- The key indicator(s) that are used to determine the sample size(s)
- The minimum impacts that the study should be designed to measure
- The estimated number of communities in the treatment and comparison groups
- The number of households and individuals sampled in each community
- Definition of the sample inclusion criteria
- Completion of the sampling methodology and detailed fieldwork plan for implementing the sampling design in collaboration with the local firm

3.3 Organized a training on impact evaluation design: The Impact Evaluation Team Leader will organize a training on the design of impact evaluation in order to strength the capacity of the local firm. This training will take place after the finalization of the impact evaluation design.

3.4 Develop the survey questionnaire and interviewer training manual: The Team Leader shall collaborate with the local survey firm to develop quantitative and qualitative data collection tools for the evaluation. The Team Leader will be responsible for leading the development and final delivery of the survey questionnaire and the semi-structured interview guide. The questionnaire will make extensive use of survey instruments previously developed by USAID for measuring resilience. These tools are available at the following URL: <https://www.resiliencelinks.org/home>. Specifically, the Team Leader will:

- Develop the survey questionnaire in collaboration with the local survey firm ensuring key indicators and outcomes are appropriately measured.
- Develop the semi-structured interview guide for key informant interviews with the SoCha Global Evaluation Manager.
- Lead questionnaire and key informant interview pre-testing in collaboration with the local firm.
- Finalize questionnaire and interview guides based on feedback from pilots and project team.

3.5 Finalize the Evaluation Protocol: The Impact Evaluation Team Leader will collaborate with the local firm to identify all requirements for ethical clearance of the impact evaluation activities. In addition, the Impact Evaluation specialist will lead development of the evaluation protocol, which will include:

- Overview of methodology, sampling strategy for households, adjustment for survey non-response, data collection and analysis plan
- Overview of measures taken for the protection of human subjects, including informed consent and respondent confidentiality
- Assessment of respondent risks and benefits

3.6 Oversee Impact Evaluation Preparation and Implementation Activities: The Impact Evaluation Team leader will oversee all activities related to the preparation and implementation of the impact evaluation, including:

- Developing the field work plan in collaboration with the local survey firm
- Oversee interviewer recruitment and training.
- Oversee pilot-testing with field team(s)
- Review of survey firm progress reports
- Review of any required secondary data

3.7 Data Analysis: The Impact Evaluation specialist in collaboration with the survey firm will be responsible for analysis of the baseline data to validate the evaluation design and verify the quality of data produced.

3.8 Drafting of the baseline report: The Team Leader will provide technical leadership in the developing of the impact evaluation report- including the methodology, theory of change, validation results and recommendations/conclusions. The report should describe the methodology of the impact evaluation and summarize the key findings of the baseline impact evaluation.

3.9 Final baseline impact evaluation report in English

The Team Leader will consider inputs and comments provided by SoCha and USAID to the draft and develop a final report in English. The final report must conform to USAID standards and branding and including graphics.

3.10 Present the findings of the impact evaluation

The Team Leader will prepare a PowerPoint presentation to present the findings of the impact evaluation to an audience determined by USAID (possibly during the USAID/DRC Mission Strategy Review).

4. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

The expected deliverables for this assignment and submission dates are summarized below:

Deliverables	Delivery date
Inception Report (including the impact evaluation design, treatment and comparison communities, sampling approach, sample size, outcome measures, data collection, data analysis, quality assurance, workplan) etc.	March 17, 2023
Final data collection tools (household questionnaires and interview guide)	March 17, 2023
Impact Evaluation Implementation plan	March 24, 2023
Training report	March 24, 2023
Draft baseline impact evaluation report in English	May 12, 2023
Final baseline impact evaluation report in English	May 31, 2023
Power point presentation (in English) summarizing the findings of the baseline impact evaluation	O/A June 2023

5. BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW OF THE P-DEC ACTIVITY

The eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is a region with one of the most complex humanitarian/security situations in the world. It is home to more than 100 armed groups, that are responsible for mass executions, kidnappings, looting of property, illegal taxation, and other abuses against civilian populations.¹ Many of the armed groups operating in the region do so with impunity. They attract members, often not for ideological reasons, but for basic security and livelihoods in an area with minimal economic development and access to resources. These armed groups further fuel encroachment and illicit trade of natural resources (animal poaching, charcoal, minerals, and fishing) within the national parks in the region.²

¹ Mercy Corps/DRC 2021 Annual Work Plan-Partnership for the Development of Eastern Congo (P-DEC) Program

² United Nations (2022). Combating Illicit Trade in Natural Resources That Fuels Conflict in the DRC. Available at: <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc15078.doc.htm>

The crisis in the eastern DRC is rooted in conflicts around power, governance, illicit trade in resources such as minerals, fish and charcoal, and a general absence of economic opportunities and essential services for the population.³ Over the past decades, the U.S. Government, through USAID, has been assisting the Government of the DRC (GDRC) to address the causes of conflicts in the eastern DRC.⁴ USAID/DRC has been supporting community-led efforts to manage, mitigate, and prevent conflict. USAID's activities empower local communities and civil society organizations to engage with their elected officials and other leaders to reduce violence. USAID has also supported communities conduct conflict analyses and use the results to influence decision-makers.⁵

The Partnership for the Development of Eastern Congo (P-DEC) program is a five-year USAID-funded project that implements an integrated set of cross-sectoral interventions to address the development needs of communities in the eastern DRC. The project seeks to build community trust, strengthen the resilience of individuals and communities, fortify existing governance structures, and create opportunities for long-term development and the self-reliance of local communities.⁶ P-DEC adopts bottom-up peacebuilding approaches to reduce conflict and bridge social divisions. Through a cohesive and holistic approach, the P-DEC program aims to amplify the impact of USAID investments and complement other planned interventions by the GDRC and external actors in the public and private sectors. USAID recognizes that there are no proven solutions for the security and development challenges in the eastern DRC. Therefore, innovation, exploration, and experimentation are important aspects of the P-DEC's program.^{5,6}

P-DEC is aligned with the GDRC's national strategy for the implementation of the Demobilization, Disarmament, Community Recovery and Stabilization Program (P-DDRCS) for ex-combatants which is the government's strategy to promote peace and security in the eastern part of the country.⁷ As a result, P-DEC's strategy is integrated, agile, multi-faceted, socially inclusive and conflict sensitive, to address the root causes of conflict and crisis and ensure resilient, economically and environmentally sustainable outcomes through long-term systemic approaches.

P-DEC is implemented by a consortium of 12 international and national organizations. These include: Mercy Corps (prime implementing partner and leader of the consortium), International Alert, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Alliance for Responsible Mining (ARM), International Peace Information Service (IPIS), HIVE, Association for the Promotion of Hygiene and the Integral Development of the Vulnerable (APROHDIV), Justice Plus, Women's Solidarity for Peace and Development (SOFEPADI), North Kivu Community Radio and TV Collective (CORACON), Fair Congo Foundation and Pole Institute. The program is

³ IPIS 2021. Program for the Development of Eastern Congo (P-DEC). Available at : <https://ipisresearch.be/project/program-for-the-development-of-eastern-congo-p-dec/>

⁴ Duke University (2020). Partnership for the Development of Eastern Congo <https://researchfunding.duke.edu/partnership-development-eastern-congo>

⁵ USAID 2016. Peace and Security. Available at : <https://2017-2020.usaid.gov/democratic-republic-congo/fact-sheets/peace-and-security>

⁶ USAID/DRC. Request for Information No. 7206602ORFI00005. Partnership for the Development of Eastern Congo (P-DEC) Program. Available at: <https://cd.usembassy.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/160/Request-for-Information-No.-7206602ORFI00005-P-DEC.pdf>

⁷ United Nations (2022). DRC: MONUSCO Supports the New Demobilization Program for Ex-combatants. Available at: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/drc-monusco-supports-new-demobilization-program-ex-combatants>

implemented across several communities in the territories of Beni (North Kivu province) and Mambassa (Ituri province).⁸

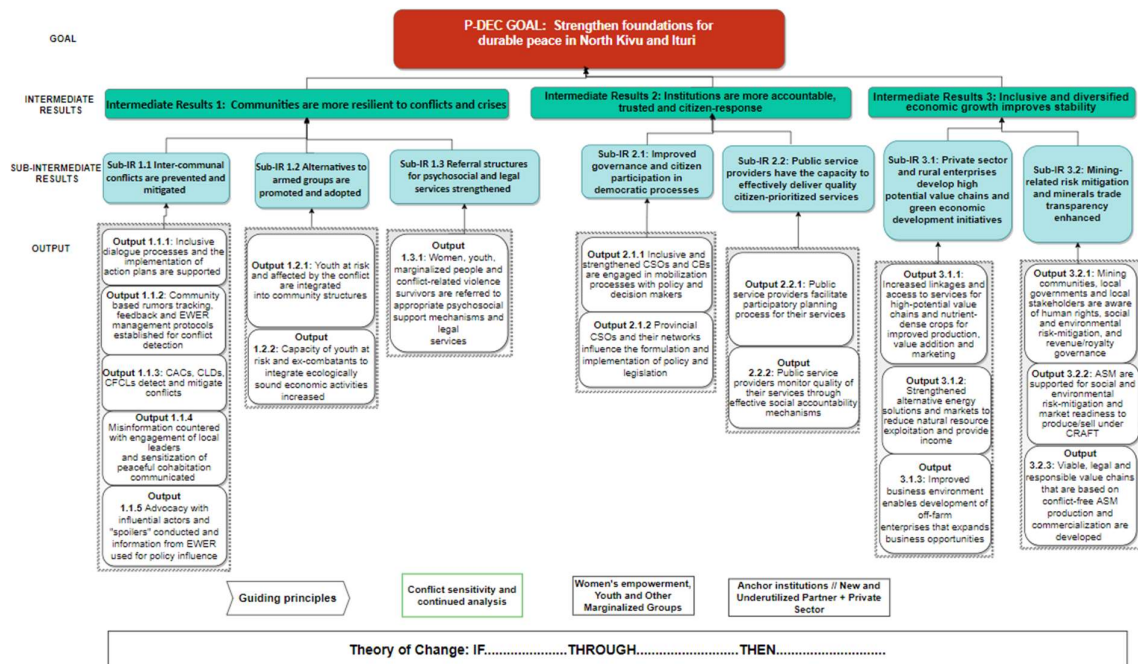
Throughout the life of the P-DEC program, various groups in these project communities will be engaged and consulted to propose and develop robust mechanisms to promote meaningful social inclusion, ensuring that the voice of marginalized individuals and groups are involved in all peace building and conflict resolution efforts.⁶ P-DEC will prioritize youth, engaging them in civic economic and social activities to steer them away from armed groups and associated illicit activities.

Three intermediate results will contribute to P-DEC’s overall goal to strengthen the foundations for durable peace in North Kivu and Ituri:

- IR1: Communities are resilient to conflicts and crises;
- IR2: Institutions are more accountable, trusted, and citizen-responsive;
- IR3: Inclusive and diversified economic growth improves stability

P-DEC’s Theory of Change (Figure 1) posits that “If communities mobilize to prevent and resolve conflicts peacefully; citizens and government institutions improve accountability and effectiveness of service delivery; and economic growth promotes inclusion and reduces drivers of conflict and support for armed groups; and if these efforts leverage the unique capabilities of PA anchor institutions; then the foundations for durable peace will be strengthened in eastern Congo”.

Figure 1 - P-DEC’s Theory of Change



⁸ ARM Partnership for the Development of Eastern Congo – Tujenge. Available at : <https://www.responsiblemines.org/en/project/partnership-for-the-development-of-eastern-congo-tujenge/#:~:text=The%20Eastern%20Congo%20Development%20Partnership.on%20areas%20bordering%20the%20Okapi>

6. REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

The Impact Evaluation Team Leader must have proven experience and expertise in designing mixed-methods impact evaluations using quasi-experimental designs. The Impact Evaluation Team Leader should at a minimum have the following qualifications and competencies:

Impact Evaluation Specialist (Team Leader): required skills and experience

- Advanced degree (Masters/PhD) in Public Policy, Econometrics, Development Studies, Comparative Research or any other relevant university degree
- Minimum 7 years' experience designing impact evaluations in the international development sector using quasi-experimental methods (e.g., double-difference techniques, regression discontinuity design, propensity score matching etc.)
- At least 5 years' experience leading household surveys and expertise in statistical analyses (familiarity with data analysis software, R, SPSS and STATA highly desirable);
- Excellent report writing skills
- Fluent in English and French

7. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

To demonstrate their ability to conduct this assignment, all interested candidates are expected to submit their application by the deadline.

Documents to be submitted:

- Cover Letter
- Detailed CV with contact details of three references
- Sample copy of an impact evaluation report led by the candidate