External Evaluation - Improving the local response capacity and strengthening the resilience of Congolese refugees in Western Uganda

Final report
Prepared by Key Aid Consulting for the Belgian Red Cross-Flanders
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## Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BRC-FI</td>
<td>Belgian Red Cross-Flanders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COVID-19</td>
<td>Corona Virus Disease 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DM</td>
<td>Disaster Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGD</td>
<td>Belgian Federal Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDMC</td>
<td>District Disaster Management Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus group discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICRC</td>
<td>International Committee of the Red Cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFRC</td>
<td>International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KII</td>
<td>Key informant interview</td>
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<tr>
<td>MINEMA</td>
<td>Ministry of Emergency Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>None Food Items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NS</td>
<td>National Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPM</td>
<td>Office of the Prime Minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCATs</td>
<td>Red Cross Action Teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RRCS</td>
<td>Rwanda Red Cross Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>ToC</td>
<td>Theory of Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations Higher Commission for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URCS</td>
<td>Uganda Red Cross Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WaSH</td>
<td>Water Sanitation and Hygiene</td>
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</table>
Executive summary

Commented [HJ1]: To be done once we agree on the report content. The executive summary will be about 5 pages, capturing the main findings of the report and recommendations. It could be read as a stand alone document.
I. Introduction

I.1. Context & background

In the year 2018, the UNHCR reported on a displacement of nearly 28,634 people in the town of Djugu, who fled around the Ituri provincial capital city of Bunia in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), as well as 34,000 people who crossed to neighbouring Uganda¹ and to a lesser extent – Rwanda. The following year, another massive displacement of more than 300,000 people in north-eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was reported amid new violence. The situation in Ituri Province had deteriorated, with multiple attacks involving the Hema and Lendu groups,² but also involving the Lega, Alur and Bagerere.³ These clashes were also observed in the province of North Kivu, which has been the epicentre of war in the DRC throughout the decades.⁴

In addition to the inter-communal and inter-ethnic violence which in turn caused disruptions in the agricultural system, triggering food insecurity; at least 70 armed groups operate in eastern DRC.⁵ The intensified clashes between the Ugandan rebel group, Allied Democratic Forces and the Ugandan Peoples’ Defence Forces in Ituti province and North Kivu, led many civilians fearing attacks and abductions⁶ to seek refuge in neighbouring countries.

In Rwanda, as of December 2018, there were 75,740 registered refugees from the DRC with 74,567 living in five camps (Gihembe, Kigeme, Kiziba, Mugombwa and Nyabiheke), with a further 1173 (1.5%) residing in urban areas. In addition, there were 3742 Congolese asylum seekers residing in the camps, of which some were expected to be recognised as refugees.⁷

In 2019, refugees from the DRC numbered 76,446 people. With a projected growth of 3.2%, this number is expected to reach 78,826 by the end of 2020 and 77,200 by the end of 2021.⁸

The Government of Rwanda (GoR), through the Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA), leads the refugee response in the country with UNHCR and partners providing direct operational support, capacity development and technical advice to the local authorities.⁹

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⁹ Ibid.
Uganda has a particularly high influx of refugees from the DRC, with refugees entering the country via a perilous crossing of Lake Albert, or by road through various border crossings. The vast majority are arriving from Ituri Province by boat to multiple landing sites on the shores of Lake Albert in Hoima District, and from North Kivu by land in various points along the border in the southwest of Uganda.10

In the case of Uganda, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) on behalf of the Government of Uganda (GoU), leads the refugee response in the country with UNHCR and partners providing direct operational support, capacity development and technical advice to the local authorities.11

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Figure 2: DRC Refugee Influx to Uganda

Source: UNHCR
Refugee response in Uganda and Rwanda – External Evaluation

Uganda hosts Africa’s largest refugee population and is among the top three countries in the world with the largest number of refugee populations. As of recent, refugees from the DRC make up 29.1% (415,998) of the total refugee population in Uganda (1,425,040), making them the second largest group after South Sudanese refugees. Following the sudden and mass refugee influx from DRC’s Ituri province in late December 2017, several transit and reception centres were built or expanded in 2018. This includes construction of the Nyakabande transit centre in Kisoro district and Matanda transit centre in Kanungu district; refurbishment and repair of Bubukwanga transit centre in Bundibugyo district; as well as expansion of Kyaka II and Kyangwali reception centres located in the Kyegegwa and Hoima districts respectively. Furthermore, six new settlement areas were opened in Kyangwali (four) and Kyaka II (two) to provide land and shelter for new refugee arrivals from the DRC.

The settlement of refugees in some of the 12 refugee hosting districts of Uganda took place amidst several health concerns. The first of these was a cholera outbreak in the refugee settlements in Hoima and Kyegegwa district in 2018, which claimed numerous lives as well as an Ebola outbreak alert that was issued by the Uganda medical authorities following incidences in the provinces of Ituri and North Kivu bordering Uganda. Furthermore, as of March 2020, the COVID-19 disease was declared a global pandemic and added an extra layer of complexity to the humanitarian needs of refugees and displaced persons worldwide. Uganda reported its first COVID 19 case in March 21, 2020. Since then, restrictions on movement, suspension of transport, night-time curfews and other preventive measures had affected the delivery of support to vulnerable communities. In the case of Rwanda, the first case of COVID 19 was reported in March 14, 2020 and preventative measures that similarly followed impacted suppliers and programme activities. Consequently, the COVID-19 pandemic had preoccupied, National Societies (NS) into creating a response plan.

In this context, the Refugee Response project was initiated in December 2018 by the Belgian Red Cross – Flanders (BRC-FL) with funds from the Belgian Federal Government (DGD). The project started off by targeting the two refugee settlements of Kyangwali in Hoima district and Kyaka II in Kyegegwa district of Uganda. In addition to mitigating the refugee crisis, the

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12 Relief web. (2020). Uganda hosts Africa’s largest refugee population, but funding fails to match.
The project was also designed to strengthen the disaster preparedness and response capacities of 5 Red Cross branches in Hoima, Bundibugyo, Kasese, Kisoro and Kabarole, as well as at Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) Headquarters in Kampala.

### 1.2. The Refugee Response Project

From the 17th of March to March 27, 2018, the Belgian Red Cross-Flanders (BRC-FL) Head of Humanitarian Assistance and the BRC-FL Uganda Country Delegate together with the Disaster Management Officer of Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) undertook a monitoring and needs-assessment mission to Hoima, Bundibugyo, Kabarole and Kyegegwa districts in western Uganda. This assessment revealed that:

1) **The local and regional capacity to respond [to the refugee influx] is insufficient** with a shortage of URCS volunteers in the affected branches, weakness in the national capacity of the National society (NS) and a lack of sufficient engagement of the District Disaster Management Technical Committees (DDMC) in the local response.

2) Essential services (e.g. water, hygiene facilities) accessible to refugees are inexistent or inadequate, with particular gaps observed in the Kyangwali camp to a greater extent as compared to Kyaka II concerning: WaSH, health, protection and camp management.

And 3) **Weak resilience of refugees, reliance on in-kind assistance**, as a result of lacking seed capital and trainings that could help attain sustainable livelihoods.

Informed by the need assessment, BRC-FL and URCS co-designed a refugee response project aiming at:

1) **Improving the localized response** by investing in the response capacities of local aid workers, caregivers and communities (URCS and District Disaster Management Committee [DDMC]).

2) **Reducing the health threats to at-risk refugees** who are prone to contracting infectious bacterial diseases such as cholera and acute diarrhoea as a result of inadequate sanitation facilities and poor hygiene practices.

3) **Strengthening the resilience and self-reliance of refugees** through improved access to agriculture and livestock technologies.

The refugee response programme started in December 2018 for a twelve-month period with an original budget of € 1 152 269. A no-cost extension was subsequently granted by the DGD for six additional months until May 2020.
During the course of the programme, the BRC-FI took two major programmatic decisions:

1) In November 2019, facing some delays in implementation and a low-expenditure rate, the BRC-FI opted to re-allocate 17% of the original funds (195,682 EUR) from the URCS programme to the Rwanda Red Cross Society (RRCS) to manage a similar crisis in the Nyabiheke Camp, Gatsibo district in the Eastern Province of Rwanda.  

With a relatively short eligibility and implementation period lasting from January 1st, 2020 until May 31st, 2020, the newly funded programme aimed at improving the response preparedness and capacity of the RRCS to provide humanitarian assistance, and to improve the self-reliance and resilience of Congolese refugees and their host communities.

2) In April 2020, the COVID-19 outbreak became global and a major concern for Uganda and Rwanda. Thus, a part of the programme budget (231,775 EUR and 77,216 EUR respectively) was liberated so that National Societies could initiate their COVID-19 response plan.

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22 Project Agreement Between Rwanda Red Cross Society and Red Cross Flanders International Non-Profit Organization. (2019). Improving the Local Response Capacity and Strengthening the Local Response Capacity and Strengthening the Resilience of Congolese Refugees in the Refugee Camp of Nyabiheke.

23 Narrative report. (2020). Improving the local response capacity and strengthening the resilience of Congolese refugees in the refugee camp of Nyabiheke.

24 Source: revised budget

25 Request related to the current COVID-19 outbreak – Project “Improving the local response capacity and strengthening the resilience of Congolese refugees in Western Uganda” – PJ/2018/27
The BRC-FI aimed to achieve four results in Uganda. The logical framework was adjusted twice to reflect budget adjustments. Accordingly, some indicators were adjusted under each result to embrace this new programme design. In Rwanda, the BRC-FI aimed to achieve three results. The first two results were designed after the first budget allocation while the third result was added in April 2020 to cope with the Covid-19 epidemic.

### Table 1: Updated results frameworks for URCS and RRCS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector of Intervention</th>
<th>Uganda</th>
<th>Rwanda</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capacity building</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 1:</td>
<td>Main actors involved in the response to refugees from DRC, being the URCS HQ, the 5 District URCS Branches and the District Disaster Management Committees, have an increased disaster response capacity and are better prepared for upcoming disasters.</td>
<td>Main actors involved in the response to refugees from the DRC, being the RRCS HQ, the branch of Gatsibo, and the host community have an increased disaster response capacity and are better prepared for upcoming disasters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH &amp; NFIs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 2:</td>
<td>Refugees fleeing violence out of DRC and Ugandan Host Communities are assisted with NFI-support and have increased adequate sanitation and have improved awareness and behaviour change through hygiene promotion campaigns.</td>
<td>Refugees fleeing violence out of DRC and Rwanda Host Communities are assisted with NFI-support and have increased their resilience through access to adequate sanitation and enhanced sanitary living conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Livelihoods</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Result 4:</td>
<td>COVID-19 Crisis modifier</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: URCS adapted logframe and RRCS Nyabiheke logframe

### Figure 5: URCS total use of budget per result

Source: URCS budget crisis modifier

### Figure 6: RRCS total use of budget per result without crisis modifier (result 3)

Source: RRCS budget Nyabiheke
As the programme closed at the end of May 2020, the BRC-FI commissioned this evaluation as an opportunity to learn, measure the level of project success and support the relevant stakeholders in designing future refugee response projects in this region.

II. Evaluation objectives and scope

II.1. Evaluation objectives

The overall objective of the evaluation is to assess the performance of the programme throughout the implementation period - from December 2018 to May 2020 and draw lessons to inform the design of future refugee response project in Uganda and Rwanda.

In alignment with the overall objective, the evaluation team identified what the three most important lessons learned are, and how the learnings took place, along with identifying the expertise that had been used.

The evaluation has been done both for learning and accountability purposes with a primary focus on learning. The methodology used reflects this focus.

The scope of the evaluation covered two different countries (Uganda and Rwanda) and a multi-layered crisis context with the COVID-19 pandemic superposed to a refugee situation.

More specifically, the key objectives of the evaluation were:

1. To determine the relevance of the programme in view of needs but also changing context;
2. To examine the extent to which the programme has achieved the intended results and indicator targets;
3. To assess the sustainability of the intervention, looking particularly at institutional capacity changes for Refugee Response/Disaster Preparedness in the different National Societies;
4. To examine the degree of community engagement and accountability deployed within the programme;
5. To discuss the integration of gender and environmental considerations in the programme;
6. To draw lessons learnt and good practices, identifying the main obstacles and enabling factors that influence quality refugee responses beyond the programme duration;
7. To support the BRC-FI with a roadmap and recommendations (strategic, technical and operational) to implement future response integrating regional specificities.
II.2. Evaluation audience

This evaluation is intended to be used by the Belgian Red Cross-Flanders (BRC-Fi), the Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS), the Rwanda Red Cross Society (RRCS) as well as the Belgian Federal Government and Red Cross Movement partners.

III. Methodology

The evaluation objectives have been met through a qualitative and participatory approach relying on a variety of primary and secondary sources. Data collection around the evaluation questions was organised around the OECD–DAC criteria for evaluation and looked at the Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coordination, Sustainability of the project and its activities through a process of desk review, key informant interviews and focus group discussions with beneficiaries.

The methodology steps are summarised below. The detailed methodology can be found in Annex VII.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: Methodology</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Inception Phase &amp; Desk Review</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Desk review</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Review of project end-line evaluation reports, project baseline report, project agreements, logical framework, activity trackers etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inception report</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Briefing with the evaluation management team of BRC-Fi, Inception report: final version 27 July 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary data collection</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>17 Remote Key Informant Interviews</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URCS team: 5 KILs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RRCS team: 4 KILs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRC–FL team: 5 KILs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINEMA Rwanda: 1 KIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR Rwanda: 1 group KIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgian Federal Government: 1 KIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In country focus group discussions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 FGDs conducted with beneficiaries in Kyangwali settlement in Uganda;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 FGDs conducted in Kyaka II settlement in Uganda;</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 FGDs conducted in Nyabiheke camp in Rwanda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total: 17 KILs, 30 FGDs &amp; 1 day preliminary findings presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Final report</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Data coding and analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First draft of the report: October 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One pager summarising key finding of the final report;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final PowerPoint presentation</td>
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III.1. Limitations

- In a slight divergence to initial plans of assigning male enumerators to male focus groups and having female enumerators for focus groups with female beneficiaries; some women’s FGDs were facilitated by male facilitators. This might have caused some of the information shared by the participants to be more censored than it would have normally been if the enumerator was of the same gender.

- One of the FGD facilitators in Rwanda had a role as a RRCS employee. Given the available resources and timeline for data collection, an exception was made to go forward. However, the evaluation team acknowledges that this might have biased the data gathered with households. The evaluation team paid particular attention to triangulate data from FGD to mitigate this limitation.
IV. Evaluation Findings

IV.1. Relevance

This section analyses the extent to which the refugee response project had taken into account the needs of communities, national society, local authorities and partner organisations, as well as whether or not the project was perceived to be in line with Red Cross standards and priorities in country.

For both URCS and RRCS, key informants and FGD participants near-unanimously indicated that the respective projects were relevant towards addressing the basic needs of refugees and host communities as well as building the capacity of the NS at the district level.

In Uganda, the participatory and collaborative monitoring and needs-assessment mission identified 3 solid areas of intervention, which were incorporated into the design of the refugee response programme. The assessment had served to fill in gaps that were observed in previous Red Cross refugee response projects operating in Uganda, informing actions such as the strengthening of NS and construction of a warehouse and WaSH activities.

Furthermore, FGD participants stated that they were consulted prior to and during the implementation of the project through home visits and community meetings, regarding how best the community can be supported to improve the livelihoods of the households and promote proper hygiene in the community.

In Rwanda, a needs assessment was conducted specifically for the shelter component by the RRCS in tandem with the UNHCR, camp leaders and beneficiaries. KIs indicated this as having enhanced the relevance of the project, with the caveat that it was done in the dry season, whereas the implementation took place during the rainy season, leading to unexpected difficulties in implementation. For the other components, the design of the project was based on discussions with the camp management (MINEMA and UNHCR), refugee committee and the host community authorities, along with lessons learned and gaps observed from a preceding project.

Based the aforementioned, the project was able to identify relevant needs pertaining to strengthening the local capabilities of the local branch & rehabilitation of a warehouse,

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26 Improving the localized response, Reducing the health threats to at-risk refugees and strengthening the resilience and self-reliance of refugees.

27 Such as that of the IFRC, Netherlands Red Cross and the German Red Cross, which were working with refugees from Burundi and South Sudan as well as the Disaster Preparedness I (DP I) project. The DPI project was funded by the DGD and implemented between February 2017 and April 3, 2019 by the BRC-FL in Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi with the aim of strengthening the response preparedness capacities of the three sister Red Cross Societies at HQ level, branch level, community level; as well as through external cooperation with other stakeholders.

28 The needs assessment was conducted to 1) identify the most vulnerable beneficiaries most in need 2) identify the materials/work necessary for coordination.

29 Mud bricks were sensitive to rainfall and construction during the rainy season caused logistical hurdles.

30 Réponse innovante et localisée aux besoins humanitaires des réfugiés et des communautés d’accueil au Rwanda led by the BRC-FC (Belgian Red Cross – French Speaking Community, Croix-Rouge de Belgique).
WaSH & distribution of NFIs, and the reconstruction of shelters. The latter was mentioned as having been implemented in host communities before but not in the camp as sufficient funding was unavailable. The inclusion of persons with special needs was also indicated as a relevant consideration as existing services by camp management were insufficient.

With regard to the extent to which international humanitarian and Red Cross and Red Crescent standards were applied, URCS and RRCS KIs unanimously indicated adherence to these standards throughout the entire project.

Projects for both the URCS and RRCS began with a signed code of conduct along with the project agreement. This document outlined the relevant fundamental principles of the IFRC and provided an ethical guideline.

**IV.1.1. Red Cross Society capacity building**

In Uganda, KIs were in agreement of the relevance of the capacity building activities. One KI articulated the relevance of the capacity building of the district branches stating that it was ‘spot on’ in identifying needs and that training was tailored and feasible in its design.

The capacity building component of the project also aligns with the URCS strategic plan 2017 – 2020, as it falls under its fourth strategic option (SOP 4). This component of the project also draws on the DP1 and DP2 projects, which among others entailed the training of Red Cross Action Teams (RCATs).

In Rwanda, the capacity building component for RRCS focused on:
- reducing the exposure of the host community to natural hazards through the organization of Disaster Risk Reduction Activities.
- strengthening the local branches of RRCS to ensure the sustainability of the response.

This component is in line with the first strategic direction of the RRCS 2017-2021 strategic plan, which concerns RRCS capacity development, more specifically, the strengthening of internal RRCS capacity.

The development of this component benefited from experience gained through the DP I and DP II projects where the capacity building of NS was part of the targeted outcomes.

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31 Capacity building of the URCS HQ, RRCS HQ, the 5 district branches and District Disaster Management Committees in Uganda, the branch of Gatsibo and host community in Rwanda.
32 Strategic option 4 of the RRCS relates to responsive programming and interventions to save lives, protect livelihoods and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises, which entails strengthening community resilience & institutional capacity to predict, respond and reduce impact of disasters through a comprehensive disaster risk management system.
33 This project which did not include Uganda, was funded by the DGD and implemented by the BRC-FL in Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi, with the aim of Capacity building for Response Preparedness, implemented in Tanzania and Capacity building for enhanced response preparedness using multi-purpose cash transfers within the three countries.
34 Rwanda Red Cross Strategic Plan 2017 – 2021.
IV.1.2. WaSH & NFI

In Uganda, the relevance of WaSH interventions in the face of health risks caused by water borne diseases and lack of hygiene is aligned with the URCS strategic plan 2017 – 2020, fourth strategic option (SOP 4). The WaSH component was also indicated to be in line with what the Ministry of Health and the OPM are specifying as in country priority areas.

KIs equally mentioned that the WaSH component was a major need that this project addressed, especially in light of the cholera outbreaks in the camps. The point was also affirmed in the FGDs. Participants stated that there was poor sanitation in their area and that they were in need of latrines, as there was too much open defecation. In addition to the construction of the latrines, the sanitation and hygiene related messages were also mentioned by participants as having been lacking elements for their community.

FGD participants mentioned that they found the provision of NFI to be useful. However, some mentioned that they would benefit from additional provision of kits such as ‘tippy taps’ and soap for handwashing as well as mosquito nets, digging kits and household materials.

This validates the relevance of the multipronged approach that was initially set up by the programme towards addressing the WaSH challenges in the settlements.

In Rwanda, KIs mentioned the WaSH component to be one of the priority areas of intervention as it is directly associated with resiliency of refugees along with shelter. FGD participants indicated that they were informed on how to promote hygiene into their villages, how to keep their latrines clean and how to use tippy taps. This along with advice given on how to prevent unwanted pregnancies and provision of NFI such as basins, soap and sanitary pads were credited for a decrease in infections. The younger girls previously used to use cloths instead of sanitary pads, which they mentioned their parents were not able to afford. FGD participants also pointed out that they would have liked to share their ideas prior to the distribution of NFI as they believed the volume of distribution should have been relative to the size of the household.

The method of using cash for work as a transfer modality to construct the latrines as well as the shelters was relevant as it created temporary jobs opportunities and served to build social cohesion between host communities and refugees.

Overall, KIs and FGD participants stated the WaSH activities and NFI to be relevant interventions in line with their needs. However, it was mentioned in one of the FGDs that

35 Strategic option 4 of the RRCS relates to responsive programming and interventions to save lives, protect livelihoods and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises, which entails improving health & social status of vulnerable communities and response to health emergencies.
37 The tippy tap is a hands-free way to wash your hands that is especially appropriate for rural areas where there is no running water. It is operated by a foot lever and thus reduces the chance for bacteria transmission as the user touches only the soap.
38 The multipronged hygiene and sanitation approach entailed: 1) Sensitisation on good hygiene practices supported through communication materials such as print-outs as well as the formation of “sanitation committees” in the form of participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation (PHAST) groups. 2) Provision of basic tools and digging kits for latrines and construction of handwashing facilities and set up of “tippy taps”.

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the Red cross should consider the accessibility of toilets by disabled people as the current ones are not handicap accessible.

**IV.1.3. Shelter**

In Rwanda, the Nyabiheke camp was established in 2005 with the expectation that refugees would be returning home in less than 10 years. Fifteen years later, the shelters had become old and in need of rehabilitation. Beyond UNHCR, no other partners were engaged in shelter activities, reinforcing the relevance of RRCS activities.

**FDG participants confirmed the relevance of the shelter interventions.** They also further highlighted need for electricity, concrete floors, kitchens and metallic doors. Certain FGD participants noted that, as a result of limited space, they are living with livestock\(^{39}\), which is not hygienic.

Finally, KIs mentioned that shelter needs are likely to remain in part uncovered going forward as a result of the large number of refugees in the area.

**IV.1.4. Food security and livelihoods (FSL)**

In Uganda, the FSL component of the project is in line with the Refugee Act of 2006 and 2010 refugee regulations\(^{40}\) of the Refugee Policy. KIs and FGDs mentioned that there was an increasing food security gap as food rations provided by partners were scaled down, requiring the refugees to find new food sources. The FSL component was therefore implemented at a relevant time to provide alternatives food sources going forward.

The design of the FSL component was informed by several livelihood and market assessments\(^{41}\) as well as lessons learned from previous RC projects\(^{42}\) implemented in country. That further contributed to the relevance of the livelihood activities.

FDG participants further mentioned the programme was relevant towards addressing the knowledge and skills gaps as well as inputs that were necessary for generating income.

**IV.2. Effectiveness**

This section analyses the extent to which programme results and indicator targets were achieved in reaching the specific target populations and developing local capacities with regard to refugee response. It then discusses the timeliness and quality of programme

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\(^{39}\) FGD highlighted that they bought livestock through saving the cash earned from the construction of the latrines and shelters.

\(^{40}\) The Refugee Act of 2006 and 2010 refugee regulations outlined the freedom of refugees in movement, work, education, healthcare in addition to allowing them to benefit from the services provided by local authorities as well as host communities to benefit from services for refugees funded by humanitarian aid. These regulations incorporated the 1999 Self-Reliance Strategy (SRS), which stated that following the provision of NFIs, food rations and a plot of land as well as seeds, refugees were expected to be self-reliant and no longer relying on food assistance.


\(^{42}\) Implemented for example by IFRC, Netherlands RC, German RC
Refugee response in Uganda and Rwanda – External Evaluation

implementation as well as the major successes and short comings related to effectiveness in implementation.

IV.2.1. Achieving results

IV.2.1.1. Capacity building

In Uganda, most KIs indicated that the capacity building component had helped to increase the disaster response capability of the NS by way of the RCATs that were trained and the additional equipment that was provided to branches.

As seen in Table 3 below, the URCS programme partially achieved its targets set out for the capacity building component with indicators in Result 1.1 having been fully achieved with 150 RCATs trained and equipped, while the indicator for Result 1.2 was not met with 0 out of the 21 hazard specific contingency plans being adopted by local authorities and the 7 target districts of the project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention level</th>
<th>Summary of objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Target before budget adjustments</th>
<th>Actual outputs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Result 1</td>
<td>Main actors involved in the response to refugees from DRC, being the URCS HQ, the 3 District URCS Branches and the District Disaster Management Committees, have an increased disaster response capacity and are better prepared for upcoming disasters.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 1.1</td>
<td>URCS HQ and Branches in Hoima, Kabarole, Bundibugyo, Kisoro and Kasese districts have enhanced ability to effectively respond to disasters, and in particular the logistical, health and sanitation needs of refugees from DR Congo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of successfully trained URCS RCAT volunteers</td>
<td>150 RCATs trained</td>
<td>150 RCATs trained</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of equipment procured and ready to be distributed to Red Cross Action teams</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 1.2</td>
<td>Local communities &amp; authorities in Hoima, Kabarole, Bundibugyo, Kisoro and Kasese districts have enhanced ability to effectively respond to disasters, and in particular the health and sanitation needs of refugees from DR Congo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of hazard-specific contingency plans adopted by local authorities in the 7 target districts of the project</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Result 1.2 was mentioned not to have been implemented as a result of delayed implementation. A proposal was made by the URCS to implement the component towards the end of the project, however, that was deemed to be unfeasible by the BRC-FL and hence forgone. KIs indicated that the first budget adjustment made by BRC-FL, which had removed 17% of the funding, limited the capability of NS from implementing the activity. A NS KI attributed this problem to the funding transfer modality, which required the accounting of activities for the next round of funds to be released. Since there were delays in accounting on the side of the URCS, the funds were not transferred in time for Result 1.2 to be implemented as planned.

Findings in this section relating to the logical framework of the two programmes are based on data from monitoring and evaluation reports (URCS. (2020). Endline evaluation Report. Improving the Local Response Capacity and Strengthening the Resilience of Congolese Refugees in Western Uganda) as well as the logical frameworks of the respective programmes themselves and complemented by inputs from KIs and FGDs.
Refugee response in Uganda and Rwanda – External Evaluation

In Rwanda, as shown in table 4 below, the capacity development component of the RRCS was partially achieved, with materials for the completion of warehouse rehabilitation as part of Result 1.1 having been delivered and awaiting on a building permit/authorisation. It was stated that the COVID-19 pandemic made it hard to get a construction permit to set-up a fence around the warehouse. As a solution KIs mentioned that the RRCS in partnership with the BRC-FC (Belgian Red Cross – French Speaking Community) have vowed to avail the funds to rehabilitate the warehouse. With regards to Result 1.2, all intended 200 households were reached and with DRR activities and awareness raising sessions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention level</th>
<th>Summary of objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Target before budget adjustments</th>
<th>Actual outputs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Result 1</td>
<td>Main actors involved in the response to refugees from the DRC, being the RRCS HQ, the branch of Gatsibo, and the host community have an increased disaster response capacity and are better prepared for upcoming disasters.</td>
<td>No of rehabilitated warehouse in the district Gatsibo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16: materials delivered but fence installation to be approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 1.1</td>
<td>RRCS HQ and Branches in Gatsibo have enhanced ability to effectively respond to disasters, and in particular the logistical, health and sanitation needs of refugees from DR Congo</td>
<td>No of households that have participated in DRR activities and awareness raising sessions to reduce the vulnerability of the community to environmental disasters</td>
<td>200 households</td>
<td>200 households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 1.2</td>
<td>Local communities in Gatsibo have enhanced ability to effectively respond to disasters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was stated by KIs that as a result of flexibility in budget, freedom was given to communities in Result 1.2 to identify what is more urgent to them. Furthermore, the cash for work modality was said to have been useful both for beneficiaries as well as NS staff, as the former were able to gain a source of income, while NS staff gained experience on the application of the modality in a refugee context. Accordingly, KIs stated that the learning through practice had served to reinforce individual capacities in integrated disaster response.

This component additionally aimed to improve the capacity and responsiveness of the Nyabiheke camp through the procurement of a motorcycle along with provisions of fuel for 4 months. Visibility items were also procured for volunteers.

IV.2.1.2. WASH & NFI

In Uganda, as shown in table 5 below, the WaSH & NFI component was effective in achieving indicator targets with NFI assistance for Result 2.1 and provision of latrine construction equipment for Result 2.2 having been met. Beneficiaries also indicated that the programme had met their NFI & WaSH needs.
Refugee response in Uganda and Rwanda – External Evaluation

Table 5: URCS WaSH & NFIs logframe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention level</th>
<th>Summary of objectives</th>
<th>Target before budget adjustments</th>
<th>Actual outputs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Result 2</td>
<td>Refugees feeling violence out of RDC and Uganda Host Communities are assisted with NFI-support and have increased adequate sanitation and have improved awareness and behaviour change through hygiene promotion campaigns.</td>
<td>1000 households</td>
<td>750 Latrine constructive materials, 150 Sanitation kits, 4500 Community hygiene kits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 2.1</td>
<td>An emergency stock of 1000 NFIs earmarked for the DRC refugee influx operation is prepositioned and emergency warehousing is set-up</td>
<td>No. of DRC refugees and host community households who receive NFI assistance by URCS in the target area of this project</td>
<td>2500 households</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 2.2</td>
<td>Refugees and Host Communities have increased access to adequate sanitation and have improved awareness and behaviour change through hygiene promotion campaigns</td>
<td>Equipment provided for DRC refugees and host community households to construct a dignified, safe, clean and functional latrine in the target area of this project by the support of URCS</td>
<td>No. of DRC refugees and host community members reached with hygiene promotion messages by URCS in the target area of this project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The set targets in the case of the first and second indicators for Result 2.2 were modified following the first budget adjustment in November 2019. Accordingly, the originally intended provision of equipment for refugee and host community households to construct a dignified safe, clean and functional latrine in the target area were reduced from 2,500 households to 1,500 households. The number of households to be reached by health promotion messages was reduced from 15,000 households to 9,000. This evaluation was not able to verify achievement of the latter since it was not mentioned in the end line report.

KIs and FGDs indicated that the WaSH & NFI component of the programme had boosted latrine coverage. The constructions of the targeted numbers of latrines had been accomplished along with the creation of the participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation (PHAST) groups. FGD participants further mentioned that as a result of the construction of the latrines, open defecation, which previously contaminated water sources had stopped, leading to a decrease in infectious diseases such as diarrhoea and cholera, which had been major concerns. The accessibility of the latrines was also mentioned to have removed the shame and lack of privacy of the previous communal latrines. Moreover, positive changes in self-esteem were reported as a result of having the freedom to maintain one’s cleanliness.

KIs indicated that this component has increased the capacity of the NS to meet future disasters as it elevated the ability to meet the logistical and sanitation needs of refugees. The NFI stock prepositioned during the implementation of the project had helped to respond to different events, especially towards floods that have been happening within the months following the project. However, those NFIs have now been used up with no strategy planned for replenishment.

In Rwanda, as shown in table 6 below, the WaSH & NFI component along with the imbedded shelter component was effective in meeting and even exceeding targets. The doubling in the number of households from 400 to 800 for Result 2.1 occurred as a result of a consultation between the RRCS and the UNHCR where the originally planned distribution of 2 mattresses per household was reduced to 1 per household in the essence of fairness.
As for result 2,2, the initially set target of reaching 150 households with shelter assistance was said to have been surpassed as a result of the needs-based assistance that was informed by the shelter assessments. Hence, the level of support provided to each household was different and resulted in flexibility in budget to reach more households.

 Targets for Result 2,3 i.e. the construction of latrines as well as the distribution of hygiene kits were also effectively attained.

 The use of cash for work helped in overcoming challenges in contracting external workers inside the camp, as it allowed the beneficiaries themselves to conduct the constructions on top of serving as a source of income. Beneficiaries were provided with materials and support for construction and the role of NS staff was coordination, supervision, mentorship and coaching, which helped to foster ownership of the construction by the beneficiaries. The digging of latrines which was initially thought to be a simple activity required specific skills and hence was outsourced.

 KIs stated that as a result of this component, the experience of staff to respond to future disasters has been strengthened both in terms of planning (i.e. choosing the dry season instead of the rainy season) and procurement and finance.

 FGDs indicated an observable decrease in diseases borne out of poor hygiene. Participants also reported that they now have a more cohesive relationship with their host community neighbours. It was reported that there is no more “bush use” and the previous bad odour [as a result of open defecation] has gone away. Married FGD participants reported of having the intimacy restored to their relationships as a result of a more spacious shelter. Young female FGD participants as well as those who have young daughters expressed the freedom and dignity that has been restored to them as a result of the hygiene kit distribution. Participants also reported of positive changes in hygiene behaviours and practices among themselves and their community.
IV.2.1.3. Food Security and Livelihood

KIs and FGD participants alike agreed that the livelihoods and food security component was effective in reaching the number of beneficiaries targeted. However, due to a delay in the provision of business capital to village savings and loan associations (VSLAs), which up until the time of this evaluation had not been completed yet; this component had been partially effective in its implementation.

The same sentiment was reflected in the FDGs, where participants mentioned that although they had received assistance through the provision of digging kits as well as trainings on farming practices and soil and water conservation; they were yet to receive the capital transfer which was supposed to have been provided to them after the completion of the business skills trainings and development of business plans. Although, not observed during the period of the evaluation, it was mentioned by KIs that 5 million Ugandan shillings were in the works to be paid out for the VSLAs.

Table 7: URCS Food security and livelihoods logframe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention level</th>
<th>Summary of objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Target before budget adjustments</th>
<th>Actual outputs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Result 1</td>
<td>Sustainable Livelihoods Support: Self-reliance and livelihoods of DRC refugees improved towards gradual socio-economic integration.</td>
<td>No. Of DRC refugees and host community reached by URCS with resources to protect and start rebuilding livelihood assets in the target area of this project</td>
<td>900 beneficiaries</td>
<td>900 digging kits for individuals and 30 for groups; 900 reached for result 3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 3.2</td>
<td>Opportunities for refugee households’ self-employment/Small &amp; Medium Enterprises (SMEs) created</td>
<td>900 beneficiaries</td>
<td>900 digging kits for individuals and 30 for groups; 900 reached for result 3.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Result 3.2</td>
<td>Access to improved agricultural and livestock technologies as well as vocational skills enabled</td>
<td>900 beneficiaries</td>
<td>900 digging kits for individuals and 30 for groups; 900 reached for result 3.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall however, information gained from the end line report as well as KIIs confirmed that at least 900 beneficiaries have been reached with this component.

KIs mentioned that this component had brought a lot of value to the URCS as the capacities gained and the lessons learned regarding the design were found to be unique, compared to previous projects which had focused on providing NFI. This project had strengthened the capacity of the refugees to grow food on their own instead of depending on food distributions, which feeds into addressing the challenge in self-reliance raised in the needs assessment. The project had externalised the trainings related to business activities and the role of the NS was more of a facilitator role in this regard. The training materials will be further used in future trainings.

IV.2.2. Timeliness of the activities

Both in Rwanda and Uganda key informants consistently reported delays in the implementation of the activities.

In Uganda, all projects components got quite massively delayed. The financial discussion at the start of the project, costed the program 7 months of programme implementation time as the budget had to be approved by all parties before being handed over to the donor (DGD). Furthermore, a project manager was not available, and the role was not filled until the very end of the programme, which also contributed to delays. This in turn triggered the...
aforementioned budget re-allocation to the RRCS, which itself caused further delays as the new budget was, at first, not signed-off-on by the URCS.

It was suggested by KIs that time would have been better managed if both the URCS and BRC-FL had a clear understanding of roles and expectations from the beginning.

The harmonisation of procurement and reporting processes was also cited as an area for further alignment. The procurement for latrines for example took longer than planned and was implemented at the end of the programme. The lack of prepositioned supplies near the community as originally envisioned could have also contributed to reducing delays.

Similarly for the FSL component, implementation was delayed with regard to the business capital provisions for VSLAs as well as seed provisions. Seed provisions were supposed to take place at the beginning of the project, whereas they were actually provided in the middle of the project, which resulted in missing the first of the two planting seasons. This delay was attributed by RRCS interviewees to budget cuts.

In Rwanda, activities were also delayed but in different proportion than in Uganda. KI noted the tight 4-month implementation period as well as the COVID-19 pandemic in stating that the project was not timely in accordance to the originally set schedule. The postponement of the end of the project twice and delay in getting a construction permit from the government were justified along these lines.

Shelter activities were slightly delayed as a result of regulations that had to be followed for shelter rehabilitations as well as difficulties in the procurement of mud for construction. Some FGD participants and KIs also stated that the rainy season had caused a delay in the timeliness of the programme.

IV.2.3. Quality of the activities

URCS, RRCS and beneficiaries consistently reported the quality of the activities implemented across sectors.

A large majority of interviewed beneficiaries indicated, in both countries that they found the project to be of high quality in its delivery.

In Uganda, the RCAT trainings were in line with the national training curriculum and that qualified national trainers were deployed. Moreover, simulation exercises were conducted to match theory with practice.
The technical qualifications of the WaSH specialists in charge of the WaSH components were praised in both context. Similarly for shelter in Rwanda. As a result, the constructions met quality standards, a quality that was also double checked by UNHCR. Quality construction materials were procured at a lower price than initially planned and more households reached through cash for work and shelter rehabilitation. Several key informants in Uganda, however highlighted issues with open latrine pits left uncovered, posing security risks for children to fall into it. This risk fortunately did not materialise.

Looking at the FSL component in Uganda, the quality of implementation was equally reported to be good. This was attributed to having had the support of district agricultural officers, the UNHCR, a livelihoods officer from the OPM and coordination between the different partners. Demonstration gardens were also felt as being especially helpful. Following the budget cuts however, activities were scrapped or lumped together which was thought to have a negative impact on quality.

Finally, the quality of a few projects related equipment (e.g. RC jackets with mismatched logos) could have reportedly been improved if purchased locally in close collaboration between URCS and BRC-FL.

IV.3. Efficiency

This section analyses the extent to which programme inputs of the different disaster preparedness support approaches were utilised appropriately in relation to the expected outputs and results. It then discusses the alignment of the geographical coverage of the programme with available human resources and project duration to cover and implement all project activities.

UGANDA

With regards to whether or not the technical and material inputs were sufficient towards achieving the intended outcomes, KIs stated that material inputs were sufficient, aside from NFIs which are always needed in humanitarian settings.

Procurement of materials by the BRC-FL was said to have been done in a manner that maximises good value for money. However, it was pointed out by one KI that the costs had increased for certain items such as the procurement of t-shirts and IT materials, which were not sourced locally from the surrounding area.

In terms of technical expertise, it was mentioned that the technical capabilities of people involved in the programme was able to service the outcomes despite the delays. Although, the financial, HR and ad hoc support provided by the BRC-FL, were deemed strong, the technical assistance in the livelihood component was an area that fell beyond the traditional technical expertise of the BRC-FL as well as the URCS.

As for sufficiency of finances, due to the budget adjustment, it was mentioned that inputs from the BRC-FL were not sufficient as they did not come through as originally planned, leading to planned activities not being implemented. Project documents show that the budget adjustment was the result of a lack of expenditure and timely implementation on activities on the side of the URCS. A signed no cost extension and budget modification
approval document also shows that more time to conduct activities that had not been accomplished was granted by the donor.\footnote{Aanvraag tot projectverlenging en budgetherzening – programma “Refugee Response – Improving the Local Response Capacity and Strengthening the Resilience of Congolese Refugees in Western Uganda” PJ/2018/27}

As a cost saving mechanism, certain activities were lumped into one, while others were scrapped. Examples for these were the scrapping of the animal husbandry and vocational trainings such as carpentry and bricklaying from the livelihoods component among others. This was justified by KIs who expressed that at certain points they were squeezed for time and had to implement multiple activities into one. This led to some saving but to the reported detriment of the effectiveness of the approach.

As for the sufficiency of staff relative to the geographic areas where the programme was implemented, KIs unanimously stated that staff were sufficient and further specified that 20 volunteers were available as well as a van, which made transport easy. Furthermore, it was mentioned that two staff had been specifically recruited to guide volunteers on the ground in the two settlements. The only gap in staffing was mentioned to be at the national level where there was no one supporting livelihood activities at the time of the project.

RWANDA

The technical know-how that went into the programming came from previous RRCS experiences such as the DP II programme. The same was true for the use of CFW which was expressed as “a well-designed aspect which brought extra money to the beneficiaries to put towards their livelihoods.”

As for material inputs, the provision of WaSH facilitates as well as masks were sufficiently provided in relation to targets. These targets however were deemed small compared to the people in need in the camp.

The needs-based assistance was seen as a best practice towards efficiency as tailoring the envelope distributed to the specific needs of each HH allowed some efficiency gains that had been reinvested in reaching more HH

The cash for work modality was also mentioned as having contributed to saving costs as well as generating income for beneficiaries. This led to efficiency gains as contracting external support to conduct the construction activities would have been more costly and would have taken away from the creation of ownership by beneficiaries. Similarly, the use of a mobile cash distribution was raised by KIs. It was stated that cash could be transferred even from HQ, cutting costs which would otherwise be incurred in the case of physical distribution.

Working with the local community and only externally sourcing items that cannot be bought within the community was also mentioned to have contributed to efficiency, as it saves transportation costs and also has the added benefit of being cheaper.
IV.4. Coordination

UGANDA

KIs mentioned that there were multiple layers through which the coordination process between stakeholders was managed. For internal coordination, inception meetings were organised at the beginning both at the national and settlement levels to communicate about the programme and how it links with other projects. There were also meetings between the delegates of HQ level RC partners every month in order to update each other on respective projects. The project policies such as the financial and volunteer policies were mentioned to have been efficient ways of clarifying the guidelines. These policies aligned with the standardised project agreement which is tailored to partners and can be amended.

Regarding the rate of response and programme adjustment by the BRC-FL towards the demands and inputs from NS, the responses from KIs were mixed. Some KIs mentioned the cuts to the budget that took place without the consultation of the URCS to be a major issue. It was stated that the project agreement outlines that if something changes in the programme, both signatories must sign a new project agreement, which did not happen, as the second agreement was not signed by the URCS. Another URCS KI stated that while the changes to the budget were indeed a source for difficulty, it was communicated and that the funding agreement clearly stated that if a certain amount was not spent, that the budget would be cut and that is what had been done.

BRC-FL KIs stated that relative to the limits that were imposed by the back donor, efforts were made to adapt and be as flexible as possible to have a successful project in the end.

For external coordination, there were obligatory field level coordination meetings organised by camp management (OPM and UNHCR) for all actors based on the sectors of intervention. These meetings are conducted in order for partners operating in the camps to organise among themselves and to avoid duplication of activities.

KIs stated that the regular working group meetings coordinated by representatives from the OPM, were easy to understand and regularly implemented.

In terms of relationships with government and partner agencies, KIs mentioned that SOPs that were already in place to follow camp management (OPM and UNHCR) as well as partners through the various meetings and platforms fostered good relationships on both ends.

All along the project, both the DGD and BRC-FL reported good and trust-based relationship. DGD demonstrated flexibility in adjusting timelines and budget and accommodating requests (e.g. expanding the geographical scope). The DGD also expressed satisfaction with the level of communication received on the project. Finally, the implementation of the refugee response programme aligned with the funding criteria of the DGD, which requires the project to demonstrate its relevance and coherence with other actions.

RWANDA

For internal coordination at HQ level there were regular meetings between BRC-FL delegates and the programme management at RRCS HQ. There is a specific project coordinator at HQ level tasked with coordinating the work and mobilizing resources and
appointing field staff. There is also a program manager at HQ level making follow up or activities and procurement as well as mobilizing finances. Since COVID-19, there have been weekly skype meeting with RRCS and BRC-FL to discuss the ongoing situations and projects and if there were challenges to provide recommendations. During the process of implementation of the activities there was constant communication of documents as well as face to face meetings. KIs stated that the processes towards implementing partnerships were good, and that there were no disruptions along the way. This was supported but the project agreement which was signed agreed upon and communications were made each time there were changes.

For external coordination, since no activities could be implemented without the agreement of the UNHCR and MINEMA at field level, there was a regular and daily coordination during identification of the beneficiaries.

In the refugee camps there were different refugee coordination meetings, where plans of actions were presented. There were also sector meetings where different partners implementing activities in the camp shared their experience. Monthly coordination meetings were also organised by the UNHCR, where implementation challenges and any other issues were discussed.

KIs with camp management mentioned that they had a direct link with project staff which facilitated regular communication.

Relationships with partners and government agencies was described to have been good by KIs. Factors for this were mentioned to be the frequent coordination meetings and discussions that were organised as well as the extent of engagement outside refugee response, which also involved disaster preparedness and development contexts. KIs with camp management stated that there were no missed opportunities in collaboration, whereas the UNHCR stated that while they still appreciated the work done, they would have liked to see more livelihood activities in the camp and had the budget been available, better agreement on fuel allocation for the ambulance that was used.

When discussing the extent to which they had linked up with other stakeholders, KIs mentioned that they had worked with Humanity and Inclusion (HI) to select beneficiaries for NFIs because, they are working with people with disabilities whom the RRCS involved given that they are the most vulnerable in the context of a refugee settlement. This consideration was appreciated by the UNHCR KIs, who stated that the services that were available before were not sufficient and as a result of this project some of the beneficiaries can be referred to specialised hospitals in Uganda.

IV.5. Sustainability

UGANDA

In terms of actions taken to ensure the sustainability of actions, KIs raised the VSLA groups, participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation (PHST) groups, demonstration gardens and the involvement of the communities in the programming, to be among the most important considerations. These aspects were also frequently highlighted by FGD participants. The training of RCATs was also deemed to have sustainable impacts as the
guidelines and curriculum that were used to train the branch disaster response teams is being used as a standard curriculum to train all other branches.

As a demonstration to this point, it was stated that the RCATs conducted rapid assessment for floods that recently occurred in Kyangwali, where they demonstrated that they are now able to report accurately. In addition, another KI mentioned that the trained RCATs were mobilising blood donations in order to fill the gap that has been created by COVID-19.

The design of the livelihoods component was intended to be sustainable, as cash grants and NFIs were complemented with trainings on how to responsibly use the money. The design of the VSLA groups was linked to other systems of assistance, which ensures that other partners are also able to provide support. It was stated that the VSLA groups would do well, if the necessary funding is transferred to them as initially intended.

For WaSH, the participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation (PHST) groups – entailed that for every 100 households 25 were trained in comprehensive hygiene and sanitation, afterwards each person is given a target of 3 people to train. It was mentioned that this could potentially have long lasting effects. Additionally, materials chosen for the latrine construction were procured and chosen with the advice of experts and checked by WaSH focal points to see if sustainable materials were chosen.

Overall regarding the activities, it was stated that the designs and initial interventions would have ensured sustainability but the lumping of activities at the end of the project may have disrupted this.

NS KIs mentioned that since there are pending activities such as the transfer of funds for VSLAs, they are in a position to continue some of the project activities. Furthermore, it was stated that if recommendations from this project and preceding ones are taken up by DP III, the NS would be in a position to ensure continuity of activities.

RWANDA

KIs believed that the CFW modality and the improvement in the quality of construction materials would continue to have lasting effects. KIs with camp management also highlighted the shelter component as having long lasting effect.

The CFW modality is mentioned as having allowed beneficiaries to conduct livelihood activities inside the camps by way of livestock purchase in addition to having created ownership. In the same vein, camp management KIs stated that they have observed beneficiaries taking good care of their rehabilitated shelters and that there is community ownership to take care of them.

With regard to WaSH, changing from wood to concrete for constructing the latrines was also mentioned to contribute to the sustainability of the structures as well.

KIs expressed that they believed the project was well designed with the aim of contributing ownership, and that they were fairly positive about the project.

It was stated that since this was a short-term project that activities of the programme such as the shelter rehabilitation and WaSH latrine construction activities will not continue unless otherwise picked up by another funding. However, it was stated that the COVID–19 mobilisation and awareness creation will continue.
V. Conclusion

The refugee response aimed to improve the response preparedness and capacity of the NS to provide humanitarian assistance, and to improve the self-reliance and resilience of Congolese refugees and their host communities. This dual objective was very ambitious to achieve over a short time span. Yet, the refugee response definitely contributed to both developing NS capacity and building on the strengths of refugees.

The quality and the relevance of the activities implemented have been highlighted by all interviewed groups. The project also demonstrated flexibility in adjusting to a challenging context where a global pandemic superposed a refugee crisis.

The effectiveness of the project could have been further boosted by closer co-creation and co-implementation, especially in Uganda. The BRC-FL and URCS relation was a challenge to solidify in the absence of a project manager. Now the project manager is here, his role will with no doubt help smoothen communication and joint decision making.

DP III project which is just starting will be able to build on the refugee response project capacity development activities to create momentum and put more emphasis on disaster preparedness. This, in turn, can create positive spill over effects on the quality of future projects.

VI. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the evaluation team elaborated the following recommendations presented as per the different steps of the project cycle for the ease of operationalisation.

Recommendation 1: Allocate continuous resources to need assessment. Comprehensive need assessments greatly contribute to the relevance of a subsequent project as was the case here for the refugee response. However, these are not always easy to fund. BRC-FL should continue to provide financial support to the NS for them to be in a position to lead need assessment.

Recommendation 2: Ensure continuous participation of beneficiaries, both during the design and the implementation

Following up the FGD feedback that NFI packages would have been more relevant if tailored to the family size, make sure that beneficiaries preferences, needs and strengths shape future projects. Beneficiaries consultation is render easier in a camp context, there are therefore opportunities to explore for very regular consultations and involvement of refugee committees in decision making.

Recommendation 3: Building on the successful experience in Uganda, consider further integration of FSL into multi sectoral approaches

Food security and livelihood is not necessarily one of BRC-FL area of expertise. However the Uganda experience tends to demonstrate, that, when part of a multi sectoral approach, it could bring value to the overall project. This successful experience should can be used to further consider FSL activities in the future, when part of multi sectoral projects.
Recommendation 4: Project proposals should be co-designed between BRC-FL and the NS

To avoid delay, especially at the start of the project, it is key that not only the needs assessments are done jointly but also the project design. This should include both the result chain as well as the financial and logistical aspects, to be able to pull from the respective strengths of BRC-FL, URCS and RRCS.

Recommendation 5: Procurements plan are to be jointly discussed and agreed upon for increased efficiency

Depending on the service or the commodities some may be best sources locally or globally. This decision should be the result of a discussion between BRC-FL, URCS and RRCS so that procurement plans rely on both the local and global supply chains.

Recommendation 6: Link with other on-going initiative in the region

The DP III is about to start in East Africa. It would be important to liaise with the DPIII project team to boost sustainability of the activities of the refugees response, especially in terms of NS capacity building. The finalisation of the refugee response activities (e.g. the VSLA grants) could also be handed over to the DP III project.

Recommendation 7: Document and share lessons learned on preparedness

The RCRC Movement is quite unique within the humanitarian sector when it comes to the proportion of resources allocated to preparedness. It is therefore especially relevant to regularly capture and disseminate lessons learned internally and externally.

Recommendation 8: Promote horizontal learning

When a given project is implemented across multiple countries, consider how horizontal learning can be promoted. This can be done through learning events, peer support groups or even by having peer evaluation team.
VII. Annexes

VII.1. Evaluation matrix

While following the OCDE/DAC evaluation criteria, we have rearranged some of the evaluation questions, and made minor modifications to the wordings in order to best structure the upcoming evaluation report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Question</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
<th>Source of information</th>
<th>Data analysis methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Criteria: Relevance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1. How relevant were the interventions to the community needs, and the organization (URCS/RRCS) and partners (national, district, regional involved in disaster management) priorities? | - Number of comprehensive and formalized need assessments conducted before and during the project;  
- Proportion of BRC-FI, URCS and RRCS representatives who deem the project activities contextually appropriate and in line with their organization priorities;  
- Proportion of beneficiaries who deem the project activities contextually appropriate and in line with their needs;  
- Number of documented examples of project decisions based on lessons learnt from previous grants and assessments; | - Need assessments;  
- Programme proposals and reports;  
- Programme Theory of Change & LFA;  
- Post Distribution Monitoring;  
- Data from key informant interviews;  
- Data from Mini FGDs. | - Narrative/thematic analysis of secondary data;  
- Analysis of qualitative data;  
- Disaggregation of data by locations, organizations & functions. |
### Criteria 2: Effectiveness

#### 2. To what extent were relevant international humanitarian and Red Cross and Red Crescent standards applied in the entire project?
- Degree of alignment between the activities and international humanitarian and Red Cross and Red Crescent standards.
- Proportion of BRC-FI, URCS and RRCS representatives who deem the project activities aligned with International humanitarian & RCRC standards.

#### 3. To what extent were the programme results and indicator targets achieved in reaching the specific target population?
- Comparison of achievements against the logical framework.
  - Proportion of NS staff who attribute having an increased disaster response capacity to the project.
  - Proportion of beneficiaries who report their NF and WASH needs improved as a result of the project.
  - Proportion of beneficiaries who report improved shelter conditions as a result of the project (Rwanda).
  - Proportion of beneficiaries who report having strengthened livelihood opportunities as a result of the project.
- Review of the project’s LFAs and M&E reports;
- Mini FGDs with project beneficiaries.
- Narrative/thematic analysis of secondary data;
- Analysis of qualitative data;
- Comparison of proposed and final reported figures of achieved outputs;
- Disaggregation of data by locations, organizations & functions;

#### 4. How well did the project help to develop local capacities with regard to refugee response?
- Number of trainings and activities provided and number of NS staff and volunteers who attended.
  - Proportion of NS staff who perceive increased organisational disaster response capability as a result of the training delivered by the project.
  - Number of hazard-specific contingency plans adopted by local authorities.
- KIIs with UCRS and RRCS staff and volunteers;
- Review of project activity tracker;
- KIIs with UCRS, RRCS staff and volunteers;
- Review of the project’s LFA and M&E reports;

#### 5. To what extent was the programme implementation timely and of quality?
- Number of measures put in place to ensure timeliness and quality implementation;
  - Comparison between the planned timeline and the actual timeline at the end of the project;
- Review of the project’s LFAs and M&E reports;
- KIIs with UCRS and RRCS staff and volunteers;
## Refugees in Uganda and Rwanda – External Evaluation

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**Criteria 3: Efficiency**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What were the major successes and shortcomings related to effectiveness in implementation? How were the successes attained and how were the shortcomings resolved?</th>
<th>Proportion of staff who deem activities to be timely;</th>
<th>Proportion of beneficiaries who deem project activities to be timely;</th>
<th>Proportion of beneficiaries who deem project activities to be of quality.</th>
<th>Proportion of outcome targets that have been met or exceeded;</th>
<th>Proportion of BRC-FL, URCS and RRCS staff and volunteers who agree-on and identify successes and challenges;</th>
<th>Documented description of success and challenges throughout implementation.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review of project activity tracker; Mini FGDs with beneficiaries.</td>
<td>Review of project LFA and M&amp;E reports; KIIs with BRC-FL, URCS and RRCS staff and volunteers.</td>
<td>Narrative/thematic analysis of secondary data</td>
<td>Analysis of qualitative data</td>
<td>Quantitative analysis of budget allocation</td>
<td>Disaggregation of data by locations, organizations &amp; functions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Criteria 4: Coordination**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Was the geographical coverage aligned with available human resources?</th>
<th>Proportion of BRC-FL, URCS and RRCS staff who deem the staffing adequate to cover the selected geographical area;</th>
<th>Number of volunteers and staff per geographical area.</th>
<th>KIIs with BRC-FL, URCS and RRCS staff and volunteers; M&amp;E reports; Programme proposals;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of BRC-FL and NS staff and volunteers who report the provision of sufficient technical and material inputs in relation to the objectives;</td>
<td>Comparison of forecasted resource needs and actual allocation;</td>
<td>Documents of justifications for budget adjustments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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## Results

### Proportion of Staff who Deem Activities to be Timely

- 75%

### Proportion of Staff who Deem Project Activities to be of Quality

- 90%

### Proportion of Beneficiaries who Deem Project Activities to be Timely

- 85%

### Proportion of Beneficiaries who Deem Project Activities to be of Quality

- 80%

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## Conclusion

The evaluation highlights the strength and challenges in the project implementation. Further improvements are recommended to enhance the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the project.
| 9. In which way was the coordination between the national society and local authorities and/or local partners ensured? | Proportion of BRC-FL and NS staff who report that the processes and policies in place to implement partnership collaboration and networking are easy to understand and put in practice; | Review of official project documents: project agreements, contracts etc.; | Narrative/thematic analysis of secondary data; |
| | Number of factors perceived to favour coordination as per BRC-FL and NS staff, volunteers and external stakeholders. | KIIs with BRC-FL, NS and external stakeholders; | Analysis of qualitative data; |
| | Number of BRC-FL staff who found the programme agile enough to adjust to change in demands from NS; | M&E reports. | Disaggregation of data by locations, organizations & functions. |
| | Proportion of external stakeholders who can attest to having clear channels of communication with the Red Cross and lack of overlapping activities. | Review of official project documents: project agreements, contracts etc.; | Narrative/thematic analysis of secondary data; |
| | Number of activities that have been jointly undertaken with partners; | KIIs with BRC-FL, NS and external stakeholders; | Analysis of qualitative data; |
| | Number of existing platforms to exchange best practices; | Proportion of BRC-FL, NS and external stakeholders who report relationship to be strong; | Disaggregation of data by locations, organizations & functions. |
| | Number of meetings conducted with external stakeholders; | Number of meetings conducted with external stakeholders; | Mini FGDs with beneficiaries. |

10. How strong are the relationships with the government and other agencies and can they be improved (in terms of partnership, collaboration, networking and donor relations)?

| | Number of activities that have been jointly undertaken with partners; | Number of existing platforms to exchange best practices; | Number of community groups formed to propagate hygiene and sanitation messages (Uganda); |
| | Number of existing platforms to exchange best practices; | Proportion of BRC-FL, NS and external stakeholders who report relationship to be strong; | Number of community groups formed to sustain livelihood outcomes (Uganda); |
| | Number of meetings conducted with external stakeholders; | Number of meetings conducted with external stakeholders; | Desk review of project documentation, KIIs with BRC-FL and NS staff; |
| | Proportion of BRC-FL, NS and external stakeholders who report relationship to be strong; | Number of meetings conducted with external stakeholders; | Mini FGDs with beneficiaries. |

11. Have there been any collaborations and networking with different stakeholders?

| | External stakeholders confirm the implementation of the project in coordination with other initiatives; | Number of community groups formed to sustain livelihood outcomes (Uganda); | Narrative/thematic analysis of secondary data; |
| | Number of existing platforms to exchange best practices; | Number of community groups formed to sustain livelihood outcomes (Uganda); | Analysis of qualitative data; |
| | Documentation of stakeholders after the project had commenced. | Documented addition of stakeholders after the project had commenced. | Disaggregation of data by locations, organizations & functions. |

Criteria 5: Sustainability

| 12. Are there sustainability plans, measures, structures and skills in place to ensure there is sustainability of project benefits? Are these adequate? | Number of community groups formed to propagate hygiene and sanitation messages (Uganda); | Number of community groups formed to sustain livelihood outcomes (Uganda); | Number of community groups formed to sustain livelihood outcomes (Uganda); |
| | Number of community groups formed to propagate hygiene and sanitation messages (Uganda); | Number of community groups formed to sustain livelihood outcomes (Uganda); | Number of community groups formed to sustain livelihood outcomes (Uganda); |
| | Number of community groups formed to sustain livelihood outcomes (Uganda); | Number of community groups formed to sustain livelihood outcomes (Uganda); | Number of community groups formed to sustain livelihood outcomes (Uganda); |

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13. To what extent has the Refugee Response&lt;br&gt;been institutionalized within the Red Cross-National Society? To what extent has the project enabled URCS staff and volunteers to be better able to mitigate future disasters related to refugee influx? How did the project contribute to institutional capacity changes in the different NS?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Number of project-gained elements beneficiaries believe will further their self-reliance.  
- Number of Congolese Red Cross volunteers who have been mobilized into the URCS and RRCS response among the displaced;  
- Number of activities and plans thought to foster sustainability by BRC-FL and NS staff;  
- Proportion of BRC-FL and NS staff who deem project actions directed at sustainability to be adequate. |
| functions. |
| - Proportion of BRC-FL and external stakeholders who perceive that NS have the capacity to sustain project outcomes;  
- Proportion of NS programme implementers who can attest to their capacity to sustain programme activities;  
- Proportion of staff and volunteers who can attest to the overall ability of NS to continue raising awareness, to continue capacity building activities and mobilising resources after the end of the project. |
| - KIIs with BRC-FL and external stakeholders;  
- KIIs with project staff;  
- KIIs with NS representatives;  
- M&E report. |
VII.2. Detailed methodology

The evaluation objectives were met through a participatory and utilisation-focused approach. Taking into account the travel restrictions due to COVID-19, the evaluation relied on a variety of secondary (both qualitative and quantitative) and primary sources. Findings were triangulated to ensure their validity.

The methodology followed the following steps:

VII.2.1. Inception phase

In-depth briefing & Desk review

In-depth briefing: The evaluation started with an in-depth briefing with the Evaluation Management Team on the date of June 3, 2020. Beyond fostering a broad and general understanding of the project background and of the evaluation’s ToR, the briefing was used to refine the list of documents available and create a method through which an initial list of Key Informant Interviews was defined.

Desk review: Following the briefing, the consultants began the process of conducting a desk review of the available documentation of the project received from BRC-FL and any other supporting and related materials including but not limited to:

- Programme documents
- Monitoring reports from national societies
- National refugee response documents etc.

The desk review took into consideration both qualitative and existing quantitative data. Through the iterative desk review primary data collection tools were sometimes adjusted, when new information arose.

Inception report

Following the initial desk review process, the evaluation team produced an inception report, which included a refined methodology, detailed evaluation questions, a developed evaluation matrix, methods to engage the communities, data collection tools, a list of stakeholders to be consulted, a finalised timeframe for the evaluation and designated roles and responsibilities.

The report was submitted to the Evaluation Management Team for comments and feedback before the commencement of primary data collection work and validated.
VII.2.2. Primary data collection

Primary data collection aimed at filling in gaps from the desk review and expanding on emerging trends by delving into further detail. The evaluation team made the decision to forego the initially proposed online survey as a means to collect perceptions on the programme achievements and quality, as end-line reporting which includes the same information was made available.

Primary data collection was done through remote key informant interviews as well as in person, during FGDs facilitated by national Red Cross volunteers.

VII.2.2.1. Key informant interviews

The consultants had collected a list of key informants to be contacted, following suggestions from the evaluation management team which were gathered through an excel form distributed post the briefing session.

The selection of key informants was done purposefully, targeting people thought to be best able to contribute to the evaluation process. From an initially suggested list of 21 KIs 17 were conducted successfully. Key informants were representative of the key stakeholders involved in the project, including:

Figure 7 Key informants

- National Societies
  - Project team members of URCS and RRCS
- BRC-FI
  - Country representatives
    - Project manager
    - DRR delegate etc.
- Community actors & Partners
  - Ministry of Emergency Management
    - (MINEMA) Rwanda
    - UNHCR Rwanda
- Donor
  - Belgian federal government (DGD)

Grouped interviews were conducted remotely at one point with 3 UNHCR staff at the same time. In this situation information was collected from several people at the same time who represented the target audience (camp management in Nyabiheke). The interview provided insights from professionals within the different sectors in the camp, and the grouping allowed the interviewees to complement each other’s points and make for richer information exchange.
VII.2.2.2. Focus Group discussions

Mini focus group discussions with beneficiaries of the project in both Uganda and Rwanda were conducted in order to gain community insight and engagement.

The format of mini FGDs usually favours the opinions of participants to be heard more equally. However, in order to further ensure that the opinions of both men and women were heard, the mini FGDs were conducted separately with men and women and segregated by age where relevant. Focus Group Discussion participants were selected using convenience sampling.

These FGDs were conducted in accordance with humanitarian standards to ensure the safety and security of participants. In light of the COVID-19 situation at the moment; sanitary precaution measures such as the use of a masks and hydroalcoholic gel by facilitators and the participants as well as social distancing were considered as minimum requirements for the FGDs. The number of participants was also kept at the lowest requirement for mini FGDs and limited to 4-5 participants per focus group.

A total of 30 mini FGDs were conducted with 6 mini FGDs conducted in each of the settlements in Uganda (i.e. Kyangwali in Hoima district and Kyaka II in Kyegegwa district) and 18 FGDs conducted in Nyabihike in Gatsibo district in Rwanda. The number of FGDs conducted in Nyabiheke was above the originally intended number of 6 FGDs as a result of the facilitators having been able to cover more ground in the time that was allotted for data collection.

The mini FGDs were conducted by in-country volunteers in both countries, who each received a remote 2,5-hour training on how to facilitate mini FGDs, prior to the start of data collection by Key Aid Consulting. The trainings were conducted separately for each NS and the FGD facilitation for RRCS volunteers took place on August 14, whereas the training for URCS volunteers was conducted on September 25. The practices shared during the training was applicable for all three locations.

For the URCS, NS staff assigned four (4) Red Cross volunteers to be FGD facilitators (2 for each settlement) and RRCS assigned three (3) Red cross volunteers for the Nyabihike camp. The consultants had originally intended for the volunteers to have not had any prior interaction with the project so as to create a neutral data collection environment, along with having a gender balanced team. This however was not achieved as most of the volunteers had previously interacted with the project – with one volunteer being an active employee of the RRCS. The intention of having a gender balanced team was also not achieved and certain FGDs with women were conducted by men, which the consultants acknowledge might have an impact on the data provided.

Facilitators provided FGD outputs in the form of transcripts which were uploaded on a secure link that was shared following the trainings. Beyond the facilitation training and in order to provide any clarification or help that might be required to the FGD facilitators, NS project staff in both countries were available to facilitate the process of data collection, regarding logistics.
## VII.2.3. Debriefing session

**Preliminary findings remote presentation:** At the end of the data collection phase, the team led a remote presentation of the key preliminary findings. This served to ensure nothing had been left out and that there were no major discrepancies in between findings. This presentation also served to collectively draw conclusion and recommendations going forward.

## VII.3. Data analysis and writing

Throughout the whole evaluation, primary and secondary qualitative and quantitative data were recorded and coded in an excel table to analyse emerging trends. This was done using a **coding matrix organised per evaluation indicators**. The analysis was done iteratively during the data collection to adjust the data collection tools and explore some of the trends more in-depth.

After the preliminary finding presentation, the consultants amassed their outputs to triangulate against the primary and secondary data collection and produced the first draft of the final report, which was in turn finalized following comments from URCS, RRCS and BRC-FL.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enumerator pairs</th>
<th>Number of FGDs per day</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kyangwali settlement</td>
<td>Team A</td>
<td>Day 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyaka II settlement</td>
<td>Team B</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyabiheke Camp</td>
<td>Team C</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of FGDs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 8 FGD schedule**
VII.4. Bibliography


Belgian Red Cross - Flanders. (2020). Terms of Reference, Improving the Local Response Capacity and Strengthening the Resilience of Congolese Refugees in Western Uganda.

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