



**EXTERNAL EVALUATION - END OF PROJECT EVALUATION RWANDA – WASH**

PROJECT CODE: WASH 2017-2021 – 2017-12-RW-DGD

DATE OF EVALUATION: JANUARY-MAY 2022

EVALUATOR(S): KEY AID CONSULTING (INFO@KEYAIDCONSULTING.COM)

EVALUATION MANAGEMENT TEAM (EMT):

- BRC-FL: PELLO MUGICA GONZALEZ (PROJECT MANAGER), DIDIER VAN AERT (HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS), YOUSRI EL ADAK (EVALUATION MANAGER)
- PAMELA RUGABIRA (COMMUNITY FIRST AID COORDINATOR), JEANNE MUKESHIMANA (HEAD OF PEDAGOGICAL, PRODUCTION OF TEACHING MATERIALS AND MARKETING UNIT (AD-INTERIM HEAD OF EMS), EMMANUEL NTAKIRUTIMANA (PMER)

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The evaluation is part of the programme 2017-2021 of the BRC-FL International Cooperation department financed by the Belgian Development Cooperation (DGD). The evaluation is focusing on the relevance, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, coherence and sustainability of the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH) program in Rwanda.

**SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT RESPONSE**

*We appreciate the recommendations of the external evaluator that have been done to improve our future WASH activities. Although, many of these recommendations were actionable we have the feeling that the Rwanda context was not much taken into account as many of the recommendations are already covered or actioned upon during the project. We found the recommendations on putting more efforts on data collection and simplifying indicators more useful. For other recommendations we explain in the rationale what we have done in our projects to overcome these type of challenges.*

## MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TABLE

Recommendation 1: Improve the quality of needs assessments.				
<b>Management response:</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Partially accepted</b>	<b>Response rationale:</b> During the proposal writing phase we did a thorough needs assessment, starting with a desk study based upon government data (Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey (EICV)). The analysis of this data is then used to start discussions with district governments who help to identify more precisely the target area, or the beneficiaries with the highest needs (for a WASH project in term of WASH activities). At the beginning of a project an Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (EVCA) is done in the targeted community to understand in-depth the community needs, so activities can be adapted to their needs. We do partially accept this recommendation as some adaptations were done during the project, but although we've done a needs assessment the situation can change in the time between the proposal writing and implementation phase. Also, during the implementation phase the context changes, which in our opinion stresses the importance of monitoring during the project implementation and setting up efficient feedback channels, so we can adopt accordingly. At Red Cross this system is in place via the big network of community volunteers who are closely involved in all phases of the project. We also partially accepted this recommendation, because we had a challenge with the design of school latrines that were rejected by the local government. If this was better discussed with the government before, during the needs assessment, this problem probably wouldn't have occurred.			
	Key action(s)	Deadline	Responsible	Tracking
			Status	Comments
1.1 During needs assessment discuss more in depth new designs with local governments	Continuous	RRCS		

Recommendation 2: Better integrate a WaSH market-based approach for latrine construction.				
<b>Management response:</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Partially accepted</b>	<b>Response rationale:</b> Throughout the project we tried different methods to stimulate building improved community latrines, but it remained a challenge to achieve continuous adoption. Although the capacity is there (or made available through the project) through volunteers or local artisans, the main issue remains the cost of the construction materials for building the improved latrines. We agree that we should look into research to find other solutions, for example new design of improved latrines that are cheaper or can be produced locally.			
	Key action(s)	Deadline	Responsible	Tracking
			Status	Comments

2.1 Look in research for new approaches or cheaper design for improved latrines	Q2 2023	RRCS		
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Recommendation 3: Better plan volunteers' inputs.				
<b>Management response:</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Accepted</b>	<b>Response rationale:</b> We agree that volunteers' inputs should be planned beforehand and good agreements should be made upfront. In the first phase of the project we had issues with the motivation of the volunteers when we paid for the activity upfront. Volunteers often returned with low-quality materials resulting in sometimes average outcomes. We then shifted to a "cash for work" methodology where the volunteer was paid after delivering outcomes. This way we saw a significant increase in motivation and quality of our WASH activities. It also helped to attract more volunteers to participate in the activities. Although we do accept the recommendation, we don't agree with the example as this resource problem didn't occur in Rwanda.			
Key action(s)	Deadline	Responsible	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
3.1 Use cash-for-work in future activities that include construction activities with volunteers	Continuous	RRCS		

Recommendation 4: Involve the local authorities early in the programme design.				
<b>Management response:</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Partially accepted</b>	<b>Response rationale:</b> We have acknowledged the importance of including the local authorities early in the program design in the recommendations above. We have also stated there that local authorities are always a main stakeholder in our projects and they are involved in the project from program design, during implementation (e.g. construction of roads, monitoring, ...) until closure (handover ceremonies). Senior management of our implementing partner have regular contact (coordination meetings) with the authorities to discuss needs and challenges. Joint visits are planned during program kick-off to discuss roles & responsibilities with them, Red Cross volunteers and the community. One aspect of the local authorities was not discussed in-depth during the program design (school latrines) which caused some delays to the program, this will be prevented in the future projects. Finally, it's worth mentioning that local authorities are often very busy and over-asked. Even though they try their best to be involved, they do not always have the availability to go through everything with the same focus.			
Key action(s)	Deadline	Responsible	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
4.1 Continue to involve the local authorities early in the program design	Continuous	RRCS		

Recommendation 5: Better monitor the quality of slabs constructed by volunteers.					
<b>Management response:</b>		<b>Response rationale:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Partially accepted</b>		We do acknowledge the importance of monitoring the quality of slabs that are being constructed by volunteers. In Rwanda we involve local community members from the very beginning of the ideation and production phases so they can do the construction of it themselves. Different organs are installed in the community (e.g. water committees) to monitor on a regular basis and even local authorities (umudugudu – the smallest administrative unit in Rwanda) is involved in the monitoring of quality. Next to that, Red Cross technicians are based in the field and support to the sites where extra support is identified by those monitoring mechanism mentioned before. Also the district government plays a crucial role, as even the monitoring process of community improved latrines gets handed over to the district government after activity closure.			
Key action(s)		Deadline	Responsible	Tracking	
				Status	Comments
5.1 Involve and train Red Cross volunteers and local authorities in the monitoring of the quality of construction activities		Continuous	RRCS		

Recommendation 6: Collect more data on the service delivery of water points.					
<b>Management response:</b>		<b>Response rationale:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Accepted</b>		We welcome the idea of collecting more data on the service delivery of water points. In Rwanda, different feedback mechanisms are in place for the volunteers and community members to share feedback of any activity. For example, there is a hotline that is available to report any feedback. Also for water points specifically, we have trained water committees who are community members around those water points who function as feedback channel towards our project team. Also regular coordination meetings with community members (volunteers) and authorities are planned to give qualitative feedback.			
Key action(s)		Deadline	Responsible	Tracking	
				Status	Comments
6.1 Add integrity budget in future projects		Continuous	BRC-FI		

Recommendation 7: Simplify some monitoring indicators and internalize the analysis within HNS to make them actionable.	
<b>Management response:</b>	<b>Response rationale:</b>

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Accepted</b>	We agree that the setup of indicators was complex for this project. Although it required advanced data analytic skills, it allowed us to understand causalities and identify challenges during the project implementation that then could be coped with before the end of the project resulting in good outcomes. Our implementing partner has communicated interest in learning advanced data analytical skills, but as the PMER position is very busy and important no time was found to give this type of training. Also, this way of sharing work together between Red Cross partners, helps us to focus each on what we're best. It is important to mention that several data collection/analysis training have taken place in the beginning of the project, for example KOBO data collection and Excel training.			
Key action(s)	Deadline	Responsible	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
7.1 Give training to implementing partner on advanced data analytics (or make budget available for training)	Continuous	BRC-FI		
7.2 Agree upon roles & responsibilities for indicator analysis	Continuous	RRCS + BRC-FI		

Recommendation 8: Improve communications with beneficiaries on the expected material to be delivered for latrine construction.				
<b>Management response:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Partially accepted</b>	<b>Response rationale:</b> We partially reject this recommendation as we in Rwanda have good and direct communication with beneficiaries and no confusion existed on the expected materials to be delivered for latrine construction. At the beginning of an activity, together with the volunteers and community members the roles, expectations & responsibilities are agreed upon. Beneficiaries know clearly what to do and where to find materials as it's been assessed before starting the activity. For the construction of latrines, we also worked in phases to prevent chaos in organization. Monitoring teams (local authorities, technicians and volunteers) are installed to monitor the phasing and identify the needs of materials. Also, a local responsible volunteer is selected that is the point of contact for the beneficiaries to address questions or doubts to. This responsible is also in contact with branch staff or technicians. As addressed in other recommendations above, we had challenges with the quality of materials in the beginning of the project but by changing of methodology (cash 4 work) this issue was solved effectively.			
Key action(s)	Deadline	Responsible	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
8.1 Keep the communication channels & monitoring mechanisms in place in future latrines construction activities	Continuous	RRCS		

Recommendation 9: Provide a more comprehensive training to WUC.	
<b>Management response:</b>	<b>Response rationale:</b>

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Accepted</b>	<p>We acknowledge that a more comprehensive training to WUCs are essential, also in Rwanda. We have done a more basic training of WUCs after the delivery of the water system, but during monitoring of the system it became clear that the WUCs were not motivated enough after this training. Therefore, we conducted a second and more comprehensive training to the WUCs resulting in very motivated teams and ownership of the water system by the community. For example, the introduction of a community driven water-tax and "opening hours" for the water taps (closed with key outside of these hours) were concepts that were introduced by the WUCs themselves after this training. We will take their effective ideas with us in future projects.</p>			
Key action(s)	Deadline	Responsible	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
9.1 Conduct the more comprehensive training to WUCs as conducted in the end of this project	Continuous	RRCS		
9.2 Include the idea of community-driven water tax in the WUC training	Continuous	RRCS		
9.3 Include the idea of "opening hours" of the water taps in the WUC training	Continuous	RRCS		

Recommendation 10: Test water quality more systematically.				
<b>Management response:</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Partially accepted</b>	<b>Response rationale:</b> <p>We agree that testing water quality more systematically can be beneficial. During this project we have tested before starting and after finalizing the water adduction system. Unfortunately, testing water quality in Rwanda is very expensive as the suppliers are very limited (there are currently only 5 laboratories that can do it, and they are based in Kigali only). Because of the logistics (the lab consultant has to travel to the site, which is a long travel to mountain areas as we worked) it is often difficult to have their availability. In Rwanda, we therefore promoted, advocated and invested in our project more into prevention of pollution. We did this by conducting sensibilisation campaigns towards the community and worked together with local authorities to monitor that the sources wouldn't be polluted. Also, we have installed in all water adduction system chlorination chambers so that local authorities can easily purify the water in a safe way. We suggested to the local authorities to make these chlorine tablets available in the regions on a regular basis so that the quality of the water can be guaranteed.</p>			
Key action(s)	Deadline	Responsible	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
10.1 Foresee more water testing budget in future projects	Continuous	RRCS		

10.2 Construct chlorine tablet chambers in future water system constructions	Continuous	RRCS		
10.3 Advocate towards local authorities to make chlorine available on the local markets	Continuous	RRCS		
10.4 Include sensitization activities for the importance of source protection in future projects	Continuous	RRCS		

Recommendation 11: Work on a sustainability framework.				
<b>Management response:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Partially accepted</b>	<b>Response rationale:</b> For Rwanda, post-project sustainability was developed during the project: the training of water committees (community) and the handover to local authorities, lobby with private operators and government are crucial for the long term maintenance of the system. Furthermore, the water system also creates economic activity in the region which enables the water committees to maintain the system. There is also a financial sustainability plan at HNS level that keeps activities going in the region (for example they've built a hotel at the branch to generate income). We agree that additional similar ad hoc solutions should be thought out, planned, and implemented in the future, and that these should be part of a larger, structured, framework approach.			
Key action(s)	Deadline	Responsible	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
11.1 Identify more potential ad hoc solutions for sustainability, and compile them into a framework approach to be implemented in all future projects	Continuous	RRCS & BRC-FI		

Recommendation 12: Map responses and actions that need to take place when (not if) a water point stops working.				
<b>Management response:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Partially accepted</b>	<b>Response rationale:</b> In Rwanda, water committees are trained in the flow chart of the water system and because of local labor is used for the construction, many technical knowledge about the system is available in the community. Clear roles & responsibilities are agreed upon between the community, local authorities and Red Cross. We still appreciate this recommendation to further work on mapping responses and actions that need to take place when a water point stops working.			
Key action(s)	Deadline	Responsible	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
12.1 Map responses and actions and distribute between all stakeholders (in a formal way)	Continuous	RRCS & BRC-FI		

**Recommendation 13: Offer a clear commitment to support operation and maintenance of WASH services, post construction for at least 3-5 years.**

<p><b>Management response:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Partially accepted</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Response rationale:</b></p> <p>In Rwanda, the first two WASH constructions were built early in the project that allowed us to support operation and maintenance (and capture &amp; process learning) 3 years after the constructions. It was crucial indeed for the sustainability of the activity. It helped us to understand the challenges, do deeper studies to understand these challenges and eventually co-develop solutions with the different stakeholders. For the third water adduction system that was rehabilitated in the second part of the project, we have actively searched for other funding (OneWASH project from OFID) to have longer coverage for this exact reason. The work is done alongside the local authorities that are mandated to support rural WASH activities.</p>
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Key action(s)	Deadline	Responsible	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
13.1 Build WASH constructions early in project so enough time (at least 3 years) is available to commit for support	Continuous	RRCS & BRC-FI		
13.2 Involve local authorities in the project from beginning to end, and remind them of its future role and responsibility after project's end	Continuous	RRCS & BRC-FI		