

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

MID-TERM REVIEW

FINAL REPORT

UKRAINE AND IMPACTED COUNTRIES EMERGENCY APPEAL

MGR65002

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TABLE OF CONTENT

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	4
<i>Disclaimer</i>	4
<i>Acronyms</i>	5
<i>Executive Summary</i>	7
1. Introduction	19
2. Purpose Of The Mid-Term Review	20
3. Methodology	21
4. Analysis & Key Findings	23
4.1. Overarching Findings	23
4.2. Supporting and Facilitating Membership and Strategy Coordination Across the Operation ..	25
4.2.1. AGENDA FOR RENEWAL.....	25
4.2.2. MEMBERSHIP AND STRATEGIC COORDINATION.....	26
4.2.3. INTERNAL IFRC COORDINATION	32
4.3. Managing Humanitarian Diplomacy in Ukraine and Impacted Countries	33
4.3.1. IMPACTED COUNTRIES.....	33
4.3.2. UKRAINE.....	39
4.3.3. IFRC INITIATIVES.....	40
4.4. National Society and Branch Development	42
4.4.1. OVERALL NSD PROGRESS IN URCS AND HNS	43
4.4.2. BRANCH DEVELOPMENT IN UKRAINE AND IN THE IMPACTED COUNTRIES	48
4.4.3. TRANSITIONS PLANS FROM EMERGENCY TO LONGER-TERM PROGRAMMING	49
4.4.4. WHAT STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN IN THE COMING 2 YEARS TO CONSOLIDATE AND ENHANCE NSD OUTCOMES ACROSS THE NS IN IMPACTED COUNTRIES?	49
4.5. Cash and Voucher Assistance	49
4.5.1. CVA PROGRAM, A RECOGNIZED SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION	49
4.5.2. CVA IN IMPACTED COUNTRIES	50
4.5.3. CVA IN UKRAINE.....	51
4.5.4. IFRC SUPPORT IN CVA DEVELOPMENT	51
4.5.5. IMPLICATIONS FOR GLOBAL CVA AND FOR OTHER FUTURE LARGE SCALE HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS	52
4.6. Protection, Gender and Inclusion and Community Engagement and Accountability	53
4.6.1. CEA APPROACH AND OPERATIONAL DECISION-MAKING	53

4.6.2.	CEA APPROACH IN THE URCS AND HNS	53
4.6.3.	PROTECTION, GENDER AND INCLUSION.....	55
4.7.	Operational adaptation, Scale-up, and right-sizing processes.....	56
4.7.1.	GAPS IN SERVICES AND PROGRAMS.....	56
4.7.2.	FLEXIBILITY, SCALING AND RIGHT-SIZING.....	58
4.7.3.	DEGREE OF INTEGRATION AND THE SYNERGIES REACHED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CEA, PGI, CVA, MHPSS AND MIGRATION INTERVENTIONS.	59
5.	<i>Lessons Learned</i>	61
6.	<i>Best Practices</i>.....	62
7.	<i>Conclusions and Recommendations</i>.....	64
7.1.	Supporting and Facilitating Membership and Strategy Coordination Across the Operation ..	64
7.2.	Managing Humanitarian Diplomacy in Ukraine and Impacted Countries	67
7.3.	National Society and Branch Development	68
7.4.	Cash and Voucher Assistance.....	69
7.5.	Protection, Gender and Inclusion and Community Engagement and Accountability	70
7.6.	Operational adaptation, Scale-up, and right-sizing processes.....	71
8.	<i>Recommendations For Future Operations</i>.....	73
Annex	76
	Annex I: List of Literature Reviewed.....	76
	Annex II: Key Mid-Term Review Questions.....	78
	Annex III: List of Key Informant Interviews and Participants in the Focus Group Discussion	81
	Annex IV: Field Trip Agenda.....	82
	Annex V: Questionnaires Surveys	83
A.	IFRC Staff Survey	83
B.	Host National Society Survey	89
C.	Partner National Society Survey.....	95
	Annex VI: Term of Reference	104

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DISCLAIMER

The opinions expressed in this Mid-Term Review are the exclusive responsibility of the consultant team and do not necessarily reflect those of IFRC, PNS or HNS.

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ACRONYMS

Acronym	Description
Appeal	Emergency Appeal MGR65002
AfR	Agenda for Renewal
BraVo	Branch and Volunteer Development
BRC	British Red Cross
CC	Community Centers
CEA	Community Engagement and Accountability
CHF	Swiss francs (currency)
CSOs	Civil Societies Organizations
CM	Case Management
CVA	Cash and Voucher Assistance
DTT	Data Triangulation Tracking Table
DRC	Danish Red Cross
DREF	Disaster Response Emergency Fund
Appeal	Emergency Appeal MGR65002
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GRC	German Red Cross
HD	Humanitarian Diplomacy
HR	Human Resources
HNS	Host National Societies of impacted countries, not including URCS.
HR	Human Resources
HSP	Humanitarian Service Points
IC	Impacted Countries
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IFRC	The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IM	Information Management
MHPPS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NS	National Society (HNS and PNS)
NSD	National Society Development
OCAC	Organization Capacity Assessment and Certification
OIM	International Organization for Migration
PER	Preparedness for Effective Response
PFA	Psychological First Aid
PGI	Protection, Gender, and Inclusion
PMER	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Unit
PNS	Partner National Society
PRC	Polish Red Cross
PSEAH	Protection Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
ROE	Regional Office for Europe
RCRC	Red Cross and Red Crescent

Acronym	Description
RRC	Russian Red Cross
SEAH	Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
SPRM	Strategic Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Unit
SRC	Spanish Red Cross
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
URCS	Ukrainian Red Cross Society

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. BACKGROUND

As of February 2022, Ukraine has been in the midst of a profound humanitarian crisis, affecting over 27 million individuals due to ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Russia. The situation has resulted in more than 27,449 confirmed civilian casualties, with many more likely unaccounted for. Currently, 3.7 million people are displaced within Ukraine, while 6.5 million have fled to other countries. The initial intent of many to return home has diminished significantly, dropping from 77% to 65%, highlighting a deepening sense of uncertainty. Host communities, both within Ukraine and neighboring countries, are increasingly strained heightening social tensions and discrimination against refugees.

In response to this crisis, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is spearheading humanitarian initiatives alongside the Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) and 17 neighbouring Red Cross National Societies (NS). They are focused on addressing needs in critical areas such as mental health, food security, and shelter. Despite securing 60% of the CHF 800 million target through its [Emergency Appeal MGR65002](#) (Appeal), a significant funding gap persists. The IFRC is committed to enhancing coordination and operational flexibility to better support both refugees and host communities, concentrating on Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), protection measures, and community engagement to build trust and resilience in this challenging environment.

2. PURPOSE OF THE MID-TERM REVIEW

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) evaluates the progress of the Appeal's operational and strategic goals in Ukraine and Impacted Countries from February 2022 to December 2023, aiming to formulate recommendations for future emergency programming and clarify the IFRC's support role until the Appeal concludes in December 2025. It will provide tailored insights into the unique response characteristics of this multi-country response, analyzing the IFRC's impact on coordination, Humanitarian Diplomacy (HD), and National Society Development (NSD). Additionally, the MTR will assess strategic and operational approaches in key program areas such as CVA, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI), Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA), and Migration.

3. METHODOLOGY

The MTR team adopted a comprehensive evaluation process involving multiple interrelated tools to ensure validity, utilizing a Data Triangulation Tracking Table (DTTT) to analyze data through both quantitative and qualitative methods for evidence-based findings. All tools used were based on questions outlined in the Terms of Reference to maintain consistency.

Secondary Data Review: A thorough review of relevant internal and external documents provided contextual information to support the evaluation.

Key Informant Interviews: The team conducted 111 semi-structured interviews with diverse stakeholders, including IFRC, Host National Societies (HNS) and Partner National Society (PNS) staff, government representatives, and humanitarian workers.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): Four discussions with representatives from HNS and Ukraine based PNS leadership were held to gather qualitative insights.

Online Surveys: Three targeted online questionnaires were distributed to HNS, IFRC staff, and PNS, yielding responses from 14 HNS, 18 PNS, and 46 IFRC staff.

Field Visits: The MTE team conducted field visits to Hungary, Ukraine, Poland, and Slovakia based on selected criteria, including the size of the operation, access to stakeholders, and diversity of programming.

Additional Specific Assessments: To supplement field visits, interviews were held with selected current and past IFRC Heads of Country Cluster and Office Delegations as well as country specific Operations Managers. These included Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Ukraine, Russia and South and Central Europe. An additional in-depth interview was carried out with the President of the Russian Red Cross.

4. LIMITATIONS

The following selected limitations impacted the MTR exercise:

- Given the extensive scope of the MTR and the limited time available, only a representative sample of impacted countries was chosen for field visits and remote evaluations, with findings based on this sample informing conclusions and recommendations.
- Some relevant staff from the early operation stages were unavailable for interviews, creating an information gap; however, the MTR team successfully contacted most key individuals who had left their roles.

5. ANALYSIS & KEY FINDINGS

The analysis and findings as per the Term of Reference (ToR) (see [Annex V](#)) are organized around the following key elements: coordination and membership support, HD, NSD and branch development, CVA, PGI and CEA, and how the management of this large-scale operation has adapted throughout the process. The following is a summary of the main prioritized findings.

5.1. OVERARCHING FINDINGS

The Ukraine and Impacted Countries operations were, and continue to be, complex. The MTR team identified several underlying themes that increased complexity, implementation and relationship challenges despite the high level of dedication and professionalism from staff and volunteers. These themes led to slower implementation and bottlenecks that diverted time and effort from operational objectives. Key amongst these are:

Membership Coordination and Priorities

The IFRC's initial focus on relief was seen by some as detrimental to membership coordination, especially in Ukraine, where the URCS felt they had the capacity to respond to the emergency. This led to the perception that the Appeal funds were for the IFRC to implement rather than the URCS, causing tension and viewing the IFRC as another PNS. Additionally, IFRC delegations struggled to balance serving as a cooperative platform with managing fundraising and expenditure of Appeal funds, often prioritizing the latter, which strained some relationships with NS.

Trust and Relationships

In specific cases, notably in Ukraine, certain Partner National Societies (PNS), URCS, and some Host National Societies (HNS) were hesitant to fully cooperate with the IFRC in its mandated coordination role. This reluctance stemmed partly from the proactive approach the IFRC took during the initial phases of the operation, which led to perceptions that it was assuming too much leadership and decision-making authority. Consequently, there has been ongoing resistance to the IFRC's role, with some instances of efforts to marginalize it rather than engage in building trust and fostering collaboration, despite significant efforts by the IFRC to strengthen these relationships.

Financial Distribution Concerns

Concerns were raised by the URCS regarding the large amount of Appeal funds allocated for operations in the impacted countries, including funding for broader migration programs. It is important to note that, in some cases and based on the fundamental principles, funds did support other migrant populations. Importantly, it was determined early in the operation, given the focus of PNS on working directly in Ukraine, that the IFRC would provide approximately 50% of their directly managed funding (65% of the entire Appeal) to the Ukraine operation and concentrate additional efforts and funds towards impacted persons from Ukraine in impacted countries,

Human Resources, Surge Management, and Procedural Flexibility

Concerns were raised by an important number of HNS about HR management, with criticism of the IFRC's initial "controlling" tendency to assume decision-making roles often without sufficient interaction with the HNS leadership as well as the limited skills of some surge delegates. HNS often felt overwhelmed by international staff, many of whom lacked coordination and HD skills, which were important elements of the operation.

5.2. SUPPORTING AND FACILITATING MEMBERSHIP AND STRATEGY COORDINATION ACROSS THE OPERATION

GLOBAL

AfR Alignment and NS Needs: While both HNS and PNS acknowledged the IFRC's efforts to align with the AfR, they found this too often be of limited success due to insufficient respect for the strategic priorities of the HNS, most acutely felt by the URCS. This was noteworthy given that the

IFRC plans appear to be very much aligned with the URCS One Plan, recognizing that the One Plan is more a marketing document than a detailed operational one.

The centralized Appeal enabled swift financial contributions for PNS and other donors, with the IFRC coordinating fund allocation based on needs. However, questions emerged over whether IFRC's focus prioritized donor-driven agendas over HNS needs, undermining the principles of localization and, thus, the AfR. In a related issue, slow burn rates created issues for some PNS to manage donor expectations. Effective coordination requires balancing donor timelines with NS strategies.

Engagement with the domestic sides of Western European PNS improved, as did strategic planning with the ICRC when addressing sensitive HD issues.

The use of [Federation Wide databank and reporting](#)¹ (FDRS) was a powerful strategic tool and allowed the sharing of the collective efforts of the Federation. It also provided important ready-to-use data for reporting and decision-making. Recently the FWDS Data Analyst team has successfully launched a new version of the [FDRS Ukraine and Impacted Countries Emergency](#), showcasing collective achievements.

The IFRC faces significant challenges in coordination due to the prioritization of individual or sectorial objectives over collective ones. This underscores the necessity for a comprehensive internal coordination strategy that fosters a cohesive organizational culture and mitigates siloed operations between technical sectors and operational teams.

Enhanced internal IFRC communication protocols are required to prevent multiple messaging with donors that adversely can impact credibility.

IMPACTED COUNTRIES

HNS raised concerns about inadequate consultation at the start of operations, raising the issue of applying a cookie-cutter approach to the response that failed to address each country's unique needs. While the centralized decision-making in Budapest provided strong leadership, communication failures resulted in fragmented efforts and misunderstandings of roles between the IFRC and HNS, highlighting the need for clearer communication strategies and role definitions.

The majority of HNS view the IFRC's efforts to advance the localization agenda positively, highlighting the support provided for cash and voucher assistance (CVA) and training. This must be footnoted that this question in the survey comes well after the initial months where the perception was not as positive.

UKRAINE

The URCS's skepticism towards the IFRC created challenges in funding and operational alignment, leading to confusion and mistrust contributing by the URCS decision to prioritize bilateral relations over membership coordination, making movement coordination more complex than anticipated.

¹ FDRS is an IFRC platform dedicated to providing insights on the NS. The data is gathered through a yearly data collection from 191 NS.

Ongoing debates regarding the IFRC's role blurred its coordination efforts, with some viewing it as another PNS.

There were several key achievements included integration agreements and collaboration with the ICRC. However, ambiguity in roles regarding conflict preparedness persisted, necessitating clarification to avoid internal conflicts.

Stakeholders had differing views on the IFRC's effectiveness as a broker of shared leadership, with some praising its coordination and others criticizing its approach. Effective and skilled leadership was identified as crucial for successful collaboration.

INTERNAL IFRC COORDINATION

The IFRC faces internal coordination challenges due to prioritizing sectoral objectives over collective goals. This highlights the urgent need for a comprehensive internal coordination strategy and tools to foster a cohesive organizational culture and mitigate siloed operations.

While expected in an operation of such large geographical and partner scope, there existed some ambiguity regarding roles and responsibilities, especially between the cluster and country offices and the ROE. This was most prevalent during the initial phases of the operation and was addressed as the operation evolved. Clearly defining and communicating these roles is essential for enhancing accountability and operational efficiency within the organization.

5.3. MANAGING HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY IN UKRAINE AND IMPACTED COUNTRIES

IMPACTED COUNTRIES

The politicization of humanitarian aid, particularly in the context of the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, has created significant challenges for RCRC core humanitarian values. No more is this the case than how global attitudes toward Russia have negatively impacted the Russian Red Cross (RRC). Coordinated humanitarian diplomacy and communication efforts within the movement have been essential for maintaining a strong humanitarian response and influencing the necessary legal, policy, and practical changes to improve outcomes.

The inclusion of the RRC in Appeals and showcasing their work was crucial in presenting a comprehensive humanitarian narrative. However, additional effort is still required to enhance the coordination of humanitarian diplomacy across the RCRC movement, particularly in addressing the most sensitive political issues in a more balanced manner.

From the beginning of the operation, the IFRC moved quickly to establish a Movement HD support network to address emerging issues, develop and distribute HD resources across the network, coordinate external engagement, and leverage external coordinating mechanisms. While PNS engaged immediately, it took some time for HNS to participate in this work due to high operational demands and limited HNS capacity. HNS were invited into the HD support network, but there was a delayed recognition of the value of HD in emergencies among IFRC operations managers, who were trying to protect overworked HNS. This shifted as the emergency evolved and HNS are now more actively engaged in the HD agenda.

UKRAINE

The IFRC has promoted HD through country-specific, regional, and global strategies and tools which HNS and URCS have been able to use for their initiatives. As mentioned above, the politicization of the Movement's humanitarian actions has necessitated collaborative approaches for mapping actions.

Strategic collaborations with UN bodies and NGOs have reinforced URCS's auxiliary status, enhancing its capacity to lead humanitarian operations and ensuring recognition both domestically and internationally.

Close coordination with government authorities has allowed URCS to maintain operational independence while effectively supporting government initiatives, showcasing its flexibility and strength as an auxiliary organization in responding to emergencies, particularly in conflict-affected areas.

By positioning itself as a key partner to the Ukrainian government in sectors like cash and voucher assistance (CVA), rehabilitation, and home-based care, URCS has improved its relations with government ministries and opened avenues for future funding, bolstering its leadership in humanitarian response.

A key initiative in increasing the URCS's auxiliary role is its management of complex logistical operations, supported by the IFRC and ICRC, to deliver essential goods to hard-to-reach areas. These efforts have been vital in ensuring consistent humanitarian aid flows to conflict-affected regions with damaged infrastructure.

5.4. NATIONAL SOCIETY AND BRANCH DEVELOPMENT

IMPACTED COUNTRIES

- The IFRC has contributed significantly to improving the governance of HNS, particularly in the last year. However, strengthening the governance of a National Society is a long process that has not yet been completed in the HNS of the impacted countries.
- The introduction of Unified Planning is crucial for identifying NSD priorities and fostering coordinated support from IFRC and PNS.

UKRAINE

- In all countries, and especially in Ukraine, significant progress has been made in corporate services, financial sustainability, logistics, volunteering, and branch development, with the majority of funds initially directed toward immediate humanitarian needs.
- The Branch and Volunteer Development (BRaVO) program, initiated in 2018, has proven effective, as local BRaVO-supported branches were better prepared to respond to humanitarian

needs compared to those that were not. This approach facilitated the efficient use of funds without creating parallel structures for branch strengthening, ultimately enhancing the capacity of branches across Ukraine.

5.5. CASH AND VOUCHER ASSISTANCE

- The IFRC is taking appropriate steps to systematize the tools developed for this emergency and adapt them to the characteristics and content that exist in different parts of the world.
- CVA has been a significant achievement in response efforts, with success attributed to self-registration processes and partnerships with organizations like MoneyGram.
- Challenges include legal considerations and questions about HNS ownership of CVA programs, with concerns about insufficient training for HNS to lead initiatives.
- The URCS has established itself as a national reference for CVA, effectively implementing large-scale projects to support vulnerable populations.
- In impacted countries, HNS readiness to implement large-scale CVA programs varies; some express the need for continued IFRC support.

5.6. PROTECTION, GENDER AND INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN IMPACTED COUNTRIES

- Initial phases of the operation saw inadequate focus on PGI, but significant improvements have been made with support from IFRC and PNS.
- The integration of PGI has been positively received, though challenges remain in ensuring that all HNS view PGI as a priority.
- The HNS's capacity for incorporating PGI and CEA approaches has increased, but sustainability of these initiatives remains uncertain.
- The IFRC has made efforts to ensure that the CEA approach is considered in all Appeal activities; however, there is still a lack of clear mechanisms in most HNS, to incorporate community input into decision-making processes, leading to an understanding that CEA is seen as a requirement rather than an essential aspect of service delivery.

5.7. OPERATIONAL ADAPTATION, SCALE-UP, AND RIGHT-SIZING PROCESSES.

- Support for host populations alongside Ukrainian refugees is essential for promoting social cohesion, and continuous monitoring and adaptation of strategies based on emerging needs are necessary to avoid neglecting vulnerable groups.
- Recognizing cultural and political sensitivities, several underserved communities, including LGBTI+ individuals and the Roma population, require more targeted support.
- The IFRC has successfully scaled operations in response to growing needs, adapting to changes while maintaining operational effectiveness.

- The right-sizing process is complex and requires careful alignment of staffing with budget reductions. IFRC has engaged in effective planning and communication during the right-sizing process, which has minimized disruptions and allowed for necessary adjustments.
- PGI, CEA, and migration are fundamental to all programmatic areas in the operation. IFRC does not have a working system that encourages the integration of the cross-cutting and tactical areas, and as some interviewees indicated, integration depends more on the will of the delegates than on the IFRC's established structure and systems.
- The joint work between the CEA team and CVA is an example of a very well organized and implemented practice. The CVA program opened the doors to work on CEA issues, such as hotlines and Post- Distribution Monitoring.
- Clear coordination between CVA, migration and livelihoods is critical for the next stages of the operation. This will involve some rethinking as to whether CVA approaches are appropriate in protracted crises or whether they may create more dependency, undermining more sustainable livelihoods programs.
- Future plans include merging staff responsibilities for PGI, CEA and migration, which may enhance integration but also present challenges in managing larger portfolios.
- Several HNS raised concerns about the ROE's ability to maintain adequate technical support, especially as operations become more project-focused and the IFRC shifts toward providing management support for these projects amidst staff reductions.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a summary of **selected prioritized recommendations** (R). Conclusions and detailed recommendations for each thematic area are found in the body of the report.

6.1. SUPPORTING AND FACILITATING MEMBERSHIP AND STRATEGY COORDINATION ACROSS THE OPERATION

GENERAL

R. Link operational and technical objectives **so that sectoral goals depend on collective achievements.**

IMPACTED COUNTRIES

R. As part of a wider NSD program, **implement capacity-building initiatives** with select HNS to enhance their ability to engage with donors, ensuring alignment with localization principles.

UKRAINE

R. In coordination with the URCS and country based PNS, **conduct a comprehensive review of existing coordination structures** to identify gaps and areas for improvement.

R. Encourage and support staff to structure joint operational teams comprising both IFRC staff and URCS members to work collaboratively on specific projects. Monitoring operations team progress is essential.

R. Where feasible undertake comprehensive contextual analyses tailored to each country's specific needs, engaging local stakeholders to ground assessments in current realities. This can be done to varying degrees depending on the context and the HNS. It is fundamental readiness task that should be taken into consideration for all emergency operations. This has been done with URCS during the course of the operation and has proven to be beneficial for both operational as well and humanitarian diplomacy decision making.

R. Encourage partners to **develop and implement effective communication channels** to ensure that agreements made at the leadership level are clearly conveyed and understood at the operational level.

R. Have all partners **establish a monitoring mechanism to track the implementation of agreements** between IFRC, PNS, and all URCS at the operational level.

6. 2. MANAGING HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY IN UKRAINE AND IMPACTED COUNTRIES

GENERAL

R. Ensure that **thorough political context analysis** is integrated into all stages of HD planning and execution. This will help to avoid perceptions of bias and enable more strategic and balanced engagement across all parties involved.

R. The IFRC **should continue to prioritize consistent, timely messaging** to enhance public perception, stakeholder cooperation, and reinforce its credibility, along with HNS, as humanitarian actors. A unified approach, **supported by ongoing training and resources**, will strengthen communication and HD efforts across the organization.

R. It is imperative that the ROE place significant energy be placed on securing post-Appeal funding for HD in order to ensure the sustainability of progress since the beginning of the operation.

R. It would of benefit for the entire IFRC to document the success and evolution of the HD process so learnings can be shared globally.

IMPACTED COUNTRIES

R. The IFRC should **continue ongoing support and training programs** to strengthen the auxiliary role of HNS. These initiatives must focus on providing resources, including training, mentorship, and technical assistance, to ensure that NS can effectively respond to evolving challenges and maintain readiness in their response efforts

R. Continue with ongoing **HD training programs for both IFRC staff and HNS** focusing on identifying and addressing emerging humanitarian issues and understanding political dynamics. Equip teams with the necessary tools and knowledge to effectively analyze and respond to political complexities, thereby ensuring the IFRC and HNS are well-positioned to respond and seize opportunities for influence.

UKRAINE

R. During Membership Coordination meeting around the Ukraine operation, **include discussions on collective HD strategy development** aimed at alignment on humanitarian priorities and collective action.

R. Encourage and support the URCS to develop **formal coordination mechanisms with key government ministries**, including regular meetings to discuss ongoing initiatives and identify new opportunities for collaboration, ensuring URCS maintains operational independence while supporting government efforts.

R. Support the URCS to conduct **a comprehensive review of current logistical operations** within the next six months to identify areas for improvement, aiming to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of delivering humanitarian aid to hard-to-reach areas and thus **increasing their auxiliary profile**.

6.3. NATIONAL SOCIETY AND BRANCH DEVELOPMENT

GENERAL

R. The IFRC should continue supporting URCS and HNS in impacted countries through **a model of collaboration and shared leadership with PNS**. The IFRC should focus on the role of coordinating and supporting HNS in finding out which PNS have the most knowledge for support; given the context and type of HNS, the **domestic departments of PNS have fundamental knowledge and experience** to support the growth of HNS involved in this Appeal

IMPACTED COUNTRIES

R. The IFRC should continue to support **the HNS in implementing the activities defined in the Unified plans** to enable them to retain the talent they have developed.

R. The development of **resource mobilization mechanisms will be fundamental to achieving an adequate transition** and guaranteeing the sustainability of their actions.

UKRAINE

R. IFRC should continue supporting URCS in **reviewing the One Plan into a more comprehensive, actionable strategic and operational plan and ensure URCS involves the branches** in its development.

R. In conjunction with PNS and as a means to support a shared leadership approach, support **URCS to scale up the Branch and Volunteer Development (BRaVO) program through dedicated funding and technical support to engage additional branches**. Set a target number of branches to implement the model at least to the end of the Appeal.

R. Adopting a shared leadership approach, support the URCS in the development and training of additional Inter-Regional Offices.

6.4. CASH AND VOUCHER ASSISTANCE

R. Given the priority of CVA, the IFRC should incorporate in the training [Strengthening CVA expertise](#), how to address legal considerations, such as data protection and taxation issues.

R. Create a **centralized repository for sharing best practices and lessons learned** from successful CVA initiatives accessible to all HNS and updated regularly to facilitate knowledge sharing and continuous improvement in CVA implementation.

R. Ensure that the **Access RC tool is easily adaptable** to different legal contexts and types of emergencies.

6.5. PROTECTION, GENDER AND INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN IMPACTED COUNTRIES

R. The IFRC should continue to **foster cooperation and share leadership** with PNS in the area of PGI and safeguarding to ensure that by the end of the Appeal, all HNS have adequate PGI and safeguarding mechanisms in place. Additionally, the IFRC should continue PGI in all operations, ensuring ongoing support from IFRC and PNS to maintain momentum.

R. The IFRC should **develop a tool that allows the CEA and operations team to track recommendations and feedback from communities** and affected populations and monitor whether or not changes have been made based on these recommendations.

R. Implement measures to **support the long-term sustainability of PGI and CEA** approaches, including capacity-building and resource allocation. This should also include developing targeted advocacy strategies to emphasize the importance of PGI among all HNS, fostering a collective commitment to prioritizing these initiatives.

6.6. OPERATIONAL ADAPTATION, SCALE-UP, AND RIGHT-SIZING PROCESSES.

R. IFRC should continue to **support HNS in collaborating closely with local authorities and community organizations** to better understand the needs of vulnerable populations while also working with partners to improve data collection and assessment processes.

R. IFRC should work with HNS to **develop and formalize partnerships with government agencies** and other stakeholders in affected countries to implement large-scale projects, particularly in areas like mental health, MHPSS and CVA.

R. Improve **coordination between the CVA, migration, and livelihoods teams** to ensure that approaches are appropriate for protracted crises and do not create dependency, thereby supporting sustainable livelihoods.

R. Continue **effective planning and communication during the right-sizing process** by engaging IFRC delegations and offices to gather input and maintain transparency. This will help align staffing

with budget reductions while minimizing disruptions, balancing staff well-being with operational requirements, and ensuring ongoing effectiveness.

R. Document the right-sizing process to ensure transparency, facilitate knowledge sharing, and provide a clear reference for future operational adjustments. This documentation should outline the rationale, steps taken, and outcomes to enhance understanding and inform best practices.

R. In light of rightsizing it is crucial that the ROE assess its capacity to **ensure that the quality of technical assistance remains high**, and that NS continue to receive the support they need.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. CONTEXT

As of February 2022, Ukraine has been at the epicentre of a major humanitarian crisis affecting approximately 27 million people both within and outside the country. Inside Ukraine, communities face increasing critical conditions such as damaged infrastructure and essential services, loss of livelihoods, longer-term impacts on mental health due to displacement and exposure to traumatic events, as well as consequences such as increased risks of violence, exploitation, and the ongoing strains on families and communities.

By December 2023, the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine had resulted in over 27,449 confirmed civilian casualties, with actual figures likely exceeding this number. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported that 3.7 million people are internally displaced, while the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) indicates that 6.5 million have fled the country in search of safety and essential services to rebuild their lives, with approximately 39% of internally displaced persons (IDPs) being forced to relocate multiple times.

While more than 14 million² individuals, including refugees, returnees, and IDPs, have fled their homes seeking safety, the trend of those returning to their homes has decreased significantly. Although a considerable number of returns occurred between May and September 2022, by the end of 2023, this momentum decreased to just 13.4%. As the number of individuals returning home continues to decline, many are confronting the harsh reality that they may not be able to return in the foreseeable future. Initially, 77% expressed intentions to return, but this figure has since fallen to 65%, reflecting a deepening sense of resignation and uncertainty about their future.³

In the context of a protracted crisis, overstretched systems, and limited resources, the needs of host communities—particularly those in vulnerable situations both within Ukraine and in countries receiving refugees—require urgent attention. Although the initial reception of displaced individuals from Ukraine was commendable, there is now a growing perception of social tensions. Reports indicate that these tensions are increasingly manifested as discrimination and verbal aggression towards refugees within host communities⁴.

1.2. IFRC AND NATIONAL SOCIETIES RESPONSE

The Secretariat of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in collaboration a wide number of Host National Societies (HNS), Partner National Societies (PNS) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are working together in Ukraine and neighbouring countries in response to the largest ongoing emergency operation in the Europe region, providing extensive support to the Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) across multiple sectors, including mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), cash and voucher assistance (CVA), shelter, food security, livelihoods, protection, gender and inclusion (PGI). In addition, 17 HNS from

² IOM Ukraine operation 2 years report.

³ IOM Internal Displacement Report— General Population Survey Round 15

⁴ UNHCR, Ukraine Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan (Jan – Dec 2024)

neighbouring regions, including the Baltics, Southeastern Europe, the Balkans, Türkiye, and the South Caucasus, are responding to the needs of refugees arising from the conflict.

The [IFRC Emergency Appeal MGR65002](#) (Appeal), serving the URCS and the National Society (NS) of all 17 countries, sought CHF 800 million to meet the needs of the affected population. Currently, the Appeal has secured 60% of its funding goal, leaving a significant gap of CHF 322 million.

In Ukraine, coordination among the Movement has strengthened, with the URCS taking a leading role. A Joint Statement by the URCS, ICRC, and IFRC underscores this cooperation, while the new [Seville Agreement 2.0](#) serves as a framework for reinforcing the central role of NS in their respective countries.

URCS, along with its regional and local branches, actively coordinates relief distribution with local authorities to address community needs. In 2023, 30% of individuals receiving relief identified the Red Cross as their sole aid provider. The IFRC has also supported URCS in establishing a sustainable supply chain ecosystem, which includes professional procurement and warehousing services, inventory management, and the acquisition of two warehouses.

In impacted countries, the IFRC collaborates closely with NS to develop responsive strategies tailored to the unique dynamics of each situation. This includes enhancing technical and human resources in partnership with PNS to expand services for both refugee and host populations, focusing on cash aid, volunteer management, and digital solutions. Globally, the IFRC, ICRC, and impacted NS align their efforts to demonstrate collective impact through data and diverse perspectives. Unified communication is crucial in a changing and polarized environment, fostering joint educational initiatives about their distinctive roles and principles while addressing risks and criticisms. This collaborative approach not only ensures safety for responders and access to affected areas but also builds community trust.

2. PURPOSE OF THE MID-TERM REVIEW

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) aims to assess progress toward the operational and strategic goals of the Appeal in Ukraine and impacted countries over the initial two-year response period (February 2022 to December 2023). It will also formulate recommendations to inform future emergency appeal programming in these countries and outline the IFRC's role in supporting NS until the Appeal concludes in December 2025.

The MTR considers the unique characteristics of the response in Ukraine and the impacted countries, providing tailored learning and recommendations for both operational approaches.

Guided by the IFRC Agenda for Renewal (AfR), the MTR intends not only to analyze the impact of the operation but also to assess the role of the IFRC within the operation, paying particular attention to membership coordination, Humanitarian Diplomacy (HD) efforts, scaling up and rightsizing, National Society Development (NSD) and the evolution of operational roles and responsibilities over the two-year period. In addition, the MTR will assess the strategic and operational approaches in key programmatic areas such as CVA, MHPSS, PGI, Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA), and Migration.

3. METHODOLOGY

The consultant team employed a Data Triangulation Tracking Table (DTTT) for comprehensive data analysis, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure evidence-based findings. This approach includes a comparative assessment based on parameters defined in the Terms of Reference (ToR) and factors such as data quality, reliability, and context. Several interrelated methods and tools were used to collect the necessary quantitative and qualitative information designed to ensure the validity of the gathered data.

Secondary Data Review (see [Annex I](#) for complete list of documents reviewed)

A wide range of internal and external documents were reviewed in order to have the necessary contextual background information, assessments and objectives in order to support the review process.

Guiding Questions.

All interviews and surveys utilized questions identified in the review Terms of Reference (see [Annex II](#)) in order to keep within the parameters of the exercise and to maintain quantitative and qualitative analytical consistency.

Key Informant Interviews. (see [Annex III](#) for the completed list of people interviewed)

To collect specialized information, the team conducted 111 in-person and online semi-structured interviews representing a diverse sample of key stakeholders, including:

- IFRC staff at the regional, Country Cluster, country, and operating branch offices, including present staff as well as delegates involved in earlier stages of the response.
- HNS senior management and technical staff.
- PNS staff at the headquarters level and Country Representatives in Ukraine.
- Members of the Government of Ukraine.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). ([Annex III](#) includes those who participated in the FGC)

The consulting team facilitated FGDs to explore relevant topics and gather qualitative insights. Four focus group discussions were held with HNS representative and there with PNS leadership in Ukraine.

Online Surveys. (see [Annex IV](#) for detailed survey questions for each constituency)

Three constituency-specific online questionnaires targeting HNS, IFRC staff, and PNS were developed in order to support the review with evidence-based quantitative data. Response numbers are as follows:

- HNS: 14 HNS responded.
- PNS: 18 responded.
- IFRC staff: 46 responded.

Field Visits.

The MTE team conducted field visits to Hungary, Ukraine, Poland, and Slovakia based on selected criteria, including the size of the operation, access to stakeholders, and diversity of programming.

Additional Specific Assessments: To supplement field visits, interviews were held with selected current and past IFRC Heads of Country Cluster and Office Delegations as well as country specific Operations Managers. These included Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Ukraine, Russia and South and Central Europe. An additional in-depth interview was carried out with the President of the Russian Red Cross.

LIMITATIONS

The following limitations impacted the MTR exercise:

- Due to the thematic areas and corresponding questions outlined in the ToR, it was not always relevant or applicable to utilize several evaluation standards as outlined in the [IFRC Evaluation Framework](#). For example, some areas were not conducive to assessing criteria related to efficiency or effectiveness.
- The scope of the MTR was extensive, given the limited number of days allocated to complete the task. Therefore, only a representative sample of impacted countries was selected for field visits and further remote evaluations, with the findings drawn from this sample used to identify conclusions and recommendations.
- Some key staff who had worked in the early stages of the operation and completed their missions were not available for interviews, creating a gap in relevant information. However, the MTR team was able to contact the majority of key individuals in significant positions who were no longer involved in the operations.
- No interviews have been conducted with the persons reached (beneficiaries) or participating communities, and therefore, no related comments are included in the report.
- Not all HNS nor IFRC staff responded to the surveys or calls for interview and are, therefore, not included in the findings of the report.

4. ANALYSIS & KEY FINDINGS

The analysis and findings, as per the ToR, are organized around the following key elements: coordination and membership support, HD, NSD and branch development, CVA, PGI and CEA, and how the management of this large-scale operation has adapted throughout the process.

4.1. OVERARCHING FINDINGS

On February 28th, 2022, the IFRC launched an initial Emergency Appeal aimed at supporting the NS of Ukraine, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Moldova, Romania, Belarus, and Russia with 100 million Swiss francs (CHF) to address the emergency and support early recovery efforts for 2 million people. The assistance focused on providing Health & Care, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Shelter and Housing, CVA, Livelihoods, PGI, CEA and Migration and Displacement services. As the crisis escalated, the requested support increased to 550 million CHF, and by May 10th, 2023, a revised Appeal for 800 million CHF was launched.

The first phase of the operation presented significant challenges. The IFRC system was unprepared to manage such a large-scale crisis, and there was a lack of clear guidelines for organizing in a conflict setting, particularly in Europe. This absence of contextual analysis created a disconnect between the IFRC and NS, especially in understanding local contexts, domestic political structures, and emergency response systems. This was most pronounced in Ukraine, where the realities differed from other countries that were transitioning out of an emergency phase more quickly.

Membership Coordination and Priorities

The initial operational approach taken by the IFRC heavily emphasized relief. Some respondents viewed this focus as detrimental to effective membership coordination—especially in Ukraine, where the URCS considered itself prepared for the emergency. Consequently, the URCS perceived the Appeal as funds directed to the IFRC rather than to itself. This perception led to tensions, with the URCS viewing the IFRC as another PNS, which fueled further controversies.

The IFRC delegations and regional offices faced challenges in balancing two competing priorities: (1) serving as a platform for cooperation and providing services to its members, and (2) fundraising programming, and managing the expenditure of Appeal funds while sustaining their own structures. Many respondents felt that the second priority often took precedence, leading to difficulties in building strong and trusting relationships with NS.

Trust and Relationships

A clear tension identified by the MTR team was the often-contentious relationships, particularly between some PNS and HNS in their interactions with the IFRC. While this issue will be explored in greater detail later in the review, the indication is that neither institutional frameworks nor some individual leadership demonstrated the capacity or willingness needed to address these challenges effectively. The lack of proactive steps to build trust and resolve issues hindered progress and prevented the development of the strong, coordinated, and efficient partnerships necessary for a successful response.

Financial Distribution Concerns

Concerns were raised by the URCS regarding the large amount of Appeal funds allocated for operations in the impacted countries, including funding for broader migration programs. It is important to note that, in some cases and based on the fundamental principles, funds did support other migrant populations. Importantly, it was determined early in the operation, given the focus of Partner National Societies (PNS) on working directly in Ukraine, that the IFRC would provide approximately 50% of their directly managed funding (65% of the entire Appeal) to the Ukraine operation and concentrate additional efforts and funds towards the impacted countries,

Two Supplemental Findings

Although the review does not directly analyze all aspects of the response, several recurring issues were consistently raised by respondents and deserve mention. Two of these issues were paramount and, while important, will not be explored in detail or accompanied by specific recommendations. Instead, they are highlighted here to provide context and should be considered in relation to the broader topics covered in this evaluation.

Human Resources and Surge Management

Concerns were raised by an important number of HNS about HR management, with criticism of the IFRC's initial "controlling" tendency to assume decision making roles often without sufficient interaction with the HNS leadership as well as the limited skills of some surge delegates. HNS often felt overwhelmed by international staff, many of whom lacked coordination and HD skills which were important elements of the operation.

The deployment of surge teams without sufficient integration into the local context—such as addressing language barriers and ensuring coordination with HNS—raised concerns about the response's overall effectiveness. The operation initially relied heavily on international delegates due to the immediate needs and availability of substantial funding. However, this reliance created challenges during the transition to local staff, leading to potential gaps in capacity. There remains a perception that the IFRC entered Ukraine without fully respecting the localization approach, leading to mistrust within NS.

Procedural Inflexibility

Another common issue raised was the IFRC's organizational inflexibility, particularly concerning adapting financial and supply chain management systems to new contexts, ensuring they are "fit for purpose." Additionally, the lack of follow-up on recommendations from previous evaluations suggests a need for stronger accountability and learning mechanisms within the organization. Procedural delays and bureaucratic hurdles further hampered the response, underscoring the importance of greater agility and flexibility in such complex operations.

4.2. SUPPORTING AND FACILITATING MEMBERSHIP AND STRATEGY COORDINATION ACROSS THE OPERATION

4.2.1. AGENDA FOR RENEWAL

While there were efforts to adhere to the principles of the AfR, the practical realities of the crisis—such as the need for centralized decision making and responding donor-driven priorities—often contradicted the goals of localization, leading to a mixed response in terms of success and alignment with the AfR intended outcomes:

AfR Alignment and NS Needs: While both HNS and PNS acknowledged the IFRC's efforts to align with the AfR, they found this too often be of limited success due to insufficient accounting for the strategic priorities of the HNS, most acutely felt by the URCS. This was noteworthy given that the IFRC plans appear to be very much aligned with the URCS One Plan recognising that the One Plan is more a marketing document than a detailed operational one. Questions also emerged over whether IFRC's focus prioritized donor-driven agendas over HNS needs, undermining the principles of localization and, thus, the AfR.

- **Challenges Applying the AfR in Conflict Zones:** Implementing the AfR in a conflict zone with multiple movement partners proved predictably challenging during the initial phases of the operation. While Sevelle 2.0 clearly identified roles and responsibilities in the direct area of conflict, mapping of who does what in the rest of the country required negotiation, given the number of stakeholders and their particular areas of focus. Some respondents noted this difficulty and the challenges in the practical application of the AfR such as ensuring that the NS is at the centre of decision-making and outlining programmatic priorities.
- **Cultural and Behavioral Change:** A significant challenge was aligning the diverse agendas of numerous NS with AfR principles. This alignment required cultural and behavioral shifts within both the IFRC and its members. The challenge also extended to the IFRC's surge teams, many of whom were not sufficiently familiar with the AfR, leading to inconsistencies in execution.
- **Operational Structure:** The operation initially experienced a shift in decision-making from delegations to more centralized IFRC structures, which, while arguably justified by the scale of the crisis, made it difficult to adhere to the AfR. However, as the operation evolved, efforts were made to move resources closer to the ground and increase membership engagement.
- **Integration and One Team Approach:** In several cases, IFRC-funded staff were embedded within HNS, which was well received. Also, several IFRC offices operated with a 'skeleton crew,' integrating support and operational functions, such as technical advisory, quality assurance, coordination, and partnership building/resource mobilization, into HNS structures. This approach fostered a 'one team' spirit and aligned with AfR principles.
- **Regional Implementation:** The IFRC's role in some countries became more prominent due to the limited capacity of certain HNS, which led to a larger operational role for the IFRC in some

instances. In most cases, IFRC staff respected and valued the agendas, views, and aspirations of the HNS.

- The survey results below highlight that **the majority of the HNS, IFRC and PNS consider that the IFRC Secretariat has been largely successful in aligning with the expectations outlined in the AfR** despite several challenges associated with a variety of complex operations.

	IFRC	PNS	HNS & URCS
Completely aligned with the expectations	17%	0%	29%
Mostly aligned with the expectations	54%	64%	65%
Moderately aligned with the expectations	26%	32%	6%
Slightly aligned with the expectations	2%	5%	0%
Not at all aligned with the expectations	0%	0%	0%

Table 1: Do you consider the role of the IFRC Secretariat in your country to be aligned with the expectations of the Agenda for Renewal, positioning IFRC as a principled and trusted network

4.2.2. MEMBERSHIP AND STRATEGIC COORDINATION

The relationship between the IFRC, PNS, HNS and URCS, particularly in Ukraine, has seen both successes and challenges with coordination, role definition, and operational alignment emerging as key themes. Below is a summary of the key issues and insights gathered from documentation and respondents.

Global Coordination

Domestic Engagement: An important achievement of the operation has been the strengthening of engagement with the domestic sides of traditional European PNS. There was also notable progress in strategic planning with the ICRC, particularly at the regional level as it addressed sensitive HD issues. Collaboration with external stakeholders has also been an important success of the operation. Specifically, the partnerships created with several EU partners such as DG Home and DG Sante provide future opportunities not only for the IFRC, but for many of the HNS. In addition, in many countries the HNS have established relationships with various UN agencies and positioned themselves domestically as a key disaster management partners with specialization in areas such as MHPSS and cash.

Consultation and Preparedness: IFRC engaged in several initiatives in preparation during the weeks prior to the escalation of the conflict. Preparedness decisions were made based on inter-agency scenarios including a DREF for preparedness was issued in Ukraine. These were important steps in light of the complexities to accurately assessing potential needs of the URCS and the HNS including capacity limitations of many. Nonetheless, a number of HNS stated that they were not always adequately consulted at the beginning of operations especially in relation to surge

deployments and overarching programmatic decisions which created some confusion and frustration. This highlights the challenges of balancing participatory decision making with the pressures of meeting immediate needs of affected populations.

It is worth noting that stronger HNS often possess greater financial, technical, and human resources, requiring a different role for supporting partners. They may have additional operational and coordination capacities, relying on partners to take on a more advisory role. Such NS may also have increased visibility and accountability to domestic donors, emphasizing the importance of reporting, measurable outcomes, and alignment with donor objectives; a value added than can be provided by partners.

Rapid Financial Contribution: The centralized Appeal for impacted countries allowed for swift financial contributions, with IFRC coordinating fund allocation based on needs taking into consideration HNS absorption capacity. The IFRC’s ability to quickly generate funding through a global Appeal enabled the URCS and other partners to respond rapidly to the escalating needs on the ground. This financial backing was essential in sustaining operations and scaling up the response.

Financial Information and Donor Relations: There were some concerns from PNS as to limited information being shared around specific pledges, leading to public relations challenges. The slow burn rate of funds, lack of visibility, and difficulty in managing donor expectations complicated stakeholder relations. Some PNS respondents perceived this as prioritizing short-term demands over strategic objectives.

Leveraging Data: The use of [Federation Wide databank and reporting](#)⁵ (FDRS) was a powerful strategic tool and allowed the sharing of the collective efforts of the Federation. It also provided important ready to use data for reporting and decision-making. Recently, the FWDS Data Analyst team has successfully launched a new version of the [FDRS Ukraine and Impacted Countries Emergency](#), showcasing collective achievements.

Membership Coordination in Impacted Countries

In order to set up the operational structure and adequately support the relief and emergency management, much of the initial strategic and operational decisions were made in the ROE. The membership affirmed that the leadership from Budapest was strong, aligning operations with the AfR. Said one PNS:

“Especially for the impacted countries, where we don't have a presence as PNS in the country, we appreciate the IFRC to continue providing regular updates of the plans as well as the response and activities of HNS, including photos and videos for our donor communication/reporting purposes”.

Another stated:

⁵ FDRS is an IFRC platform dedicated to providing insights on the NS. The data is gathered through a yearly data collection from 191 NS.

“In some of the impacted countries, regular membership coordination has been held and maintained throughout all the period, despite that have been up and downs in terms of active participation from the other RC partners.”

- Lack of clear role definition and expectations between the IFRC and HNS, especially in crisis contexts, lead to misunderstandings and inefficiencies. HNS need clarity of the responsibilities between the delegations or offices, cluster offices and the Regional Office for Europe (ROE), as they felt that the paperwork and reports requirements are duplicated and increase the bureaucracy. It would be beneficial to share with HNS IFRC communication channels and the roles of the different offices and units.
- There was positive progression as the operational approach shifted to a protracted crisis context, to a more decentralized and localized decision-making structure.
- The membership has recognized the exceptional wide range of corporate services provided by the IFRC. However, there was also a recognition that existing systems are inadequate and too rigid for large budget operations with high numbers of staff, large procurement processes and membership partners. This holds true for both the impacted countries and the operation in the Ukraine.
- There was a narrow understanding of the scope of membership coordination. For example, it was not clear to the membership that in addition to decision making and information sharing mechanisms, coordination may also include the providing the network programmatic coordination structures and models such as was the case in CVA and NSD.
- There remains ongoing debate as to whether the IFRC should focus only on coordination and leave the implementation of response and programmatic activities to other Federation partners. This remains an area that requires addressing but, at the same time, partners need to recognize that IFRC ‘operation’ initiatives often centre on identified operational or programmatic gaps as well as their mandated thematic areas such as NSD.
- Frequent changes and levels of experience amongst surge personnel during the initial stages of the operations in a variety of programmatic, corporate service and sectoral areas including leadership roles, undermined IFRC effectiveness and created frustration amongst an several HNS. While an important issue to be addressed, it must be tempered with the recognition of the huge demand for surge personnel for such a large multi-country operation.
- Several HNS expressed appreciation that membership coordination and shared leadership was often needs-driven, with the IFRC supporting by matching requests with assistance from the best Federation partner.
- Impacted countries particularly appreciated the support in the provision of CVA to beneficiaries as well as the associated training and HNS system set-up.

Localization in Impacted Countries.

Localization is a critical thematic issue that must be effectively integrated and operationalized. HNS should be actively listened to and supported in their strategic directions, decisions, leadership, and

roles within their countries based on clearly identified needs of affected populations. HNS must be at the centre of decision making. The IFRC is making sincere and continuous efforts to advance the agenda for renewal; however, this remains a collective endeavor, with the voices of HNS being essential to understanding their vision and leadership.

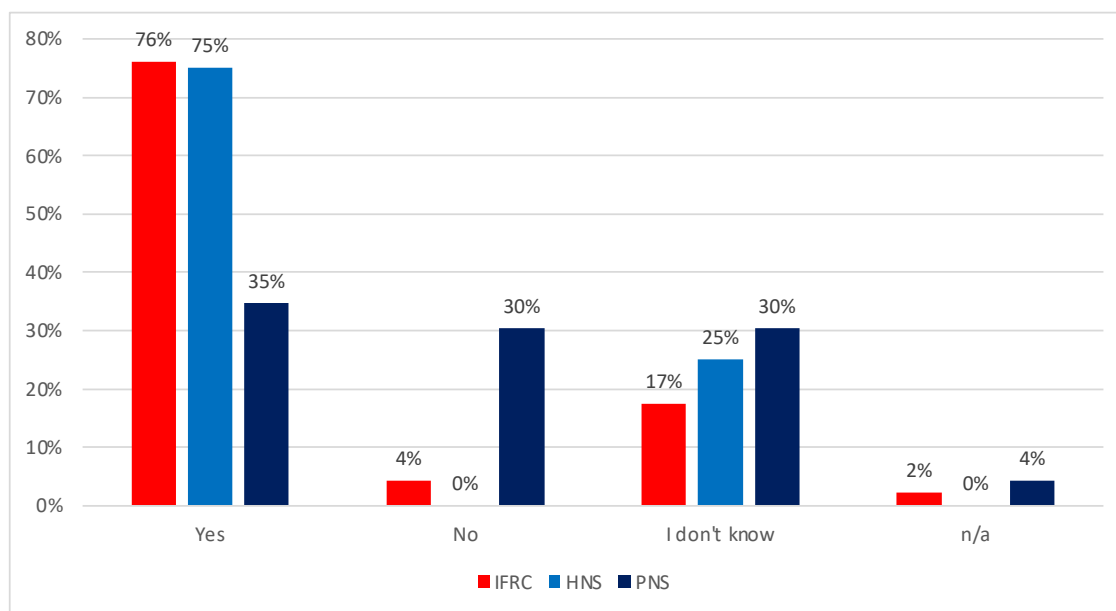
	IFRC	PNS	HNS
Excellent	15%	0%	19%
Very good	28%	9%	56%
Good	30%	35%	25%
Fair	20%	39%	0%
Poor	2%	9%	0%
I don't know	4%	9%	0%

Table 2: Please rate the IFRC's work in enabling NS to advance the so-called "localization agenda" in their respective contexts

- The majority of HNS, as indicated by the survey results above, view the IFRC's efforts as consistent in advancing the localization agenda within their respective contexts. In contrast, 39% of PNS assessed the work as fair, while an additional 9% categorized it as poor; Note that those that reported as poor tended to work bilaterally. This disparity is noteworthy; however, the MTR team believes the perspective of HNS is particularly relevant, as they are the primary beneficiaries of a robust localization agenda.
- **Donor Pressures and Visibility:** Effective coordination requires balancing donor timelines and internal priorities without compromising NS' strategies. The presence of PNS was overwhelming for some HNS, some with multilateral and others bilateral approaches; the coordination between them was difficult. Some PNS and donors felt their contributions were not efficiently used, raising concerns about being left at the bottom of the pile 'because they had provided unarmarked support as is requested by the IFRC when funding EA. Other PNS, under pressure to increase visibility for its contributions, found the need to establish bilateral relations with the URCS and, in some cases, send delegates to increase their presence. There is a need for a more unified and consistent strategy to coordinate donor funds and manage expectations. A stronger focus on aligning donor funds with actual needs and mandates was necessary to avoid suboptimal use of resources.

Shared Leadership.

When asked as to whether the IFRC Secretariat is a fair and strategic broker facilitating shared leadership among the membership, reactions were mixed as shown below in graph 1. PNS reactions varied, mostly dependent on where they were working, but HNS felt that the IFRC did an admirable job in sharing leadership according to who in the membership was best placed (e.g. PSS with leadership from the Danish RC).



Graphic 1: Was the IFRC Secretariat, in the Ukraine response operation, a fair and strategic broker that facilitates shared leadership among the membership?

Membership Coordination in Ukraine

Coordination and Skepticism: The URCS skepticism toward the IFRC led to challenges in funding and operational alignment. There were issues with integrating PNS agendas into a cohesive strategy which led to confusion, inefficiency, and mistrust.

Complex Coordination Dynamics: Membership coordination proved more complex than anticipated, leading to tensions around the IFRC’s role. URCS did not prioritize membership coordination meetings, instead focusing on bilateral relations, which added to the challenges. There was also a lack of centralized communication and a disconnect between URCS and IFRC. PNS teams and the tensions between bilateral and multilateral actions further complicated coordination.

Role of IFRC: As referred to earlier in the report, there remains ongoing debate around whether the IFRC should focus on coordination or operational roles, as its role as a coordinator became blurred, with some perceiving the IFRC as another PNS. This caused resistance to IFRC coordination efforts. Some of this was based on a resistance to recognize the added value in coordinating large programmatic areas such as cash through the provision of established models and structures. As stated by one PNS in the survey

“IFRC needs Heads of Delegations and Operation Managers who understand the needs of HNS and PNS as well as demonstrate an effort to accommodate these. IFRC needs to shake up the image of a self-serving Secretariat and become a true ‘serving leader’”.

Impact of PNS and Funding: The influence of PNS with significant funding led to coordination challenges. Further complicating this was how the URCS perceived the Appeal as funding given to IFRC and not directly to their operational priorities.

Complex Power Dynamics: Power dynamics between the IFRC, URCS, and other partners created tensions over who should lead operations. Over time, this improved, but competitive management approaches initially hindered collaboration.

Late Membership Coordination Positions: Membership coordination positions in Ukraine and at the regional level arrived late. These positions were critical for ensuring efficiency and in support of the ongoing coordination work led by the HoD/ops managers. Many meetings lacked clarity, follow-up, and a cooperative spirit, with technical experts not always understanding their roles in relation to the NS.

Finding Value in Coordination Mechanisms:

There were limitations as to the way partners, especially the URCS, saw value in the coordination structures. Many of those interviewed perceived an overemphasis on processes over tangible outcomes left many questioning the value of coordination. While the Movement tripartite coordination was valued, the URCS saw little value in other levels, including technical levels, to the point when they no longer attended except in the case of NSD and informally among some technical areas (health). Reasons cited included:

- Membership meetings often turned into operational updates.
- There were too many working groups (24).
- Some respondents claimed they did not understand why they were in the meeting.
- Low spirit of cooperation.
- Not always the right people attended.
- Seemed like a ‘make work’ project.

One PNS suggested

“More structure. Coordination needs to be separated from operational implementation for IFRC to get any credibility. As long as PNS can see IFRC as competitor, coordination role is very hard to fulfill.”

Staffing Challenges: The URCS’s initial resistance to the idea of IFRC-appointed embedded staff created barriers for the IFRC in executing its strategies and maintaining a coordinated response. Reactions were mixed. For some IFRC staff the decision taken to embed delegates of IFRC meant working as team members of URCS, helping the URCS to both deliver and develop their services and capacities are important examples of collaborative efforts to support the NS which supported coordination; others felt the role of embedded delegates could have been more effective.

“Their role should be to setup units and recruit staff, train and mentor them for longevity instead of taking on specific staff roles in the NS.”

Some PNS (those that had not themselves imbedded staff) thought that embedding staff slowed the process of handing over power to URCS, as one PNS stated:

“Embedding its own delegates into the HNS has contributed to the disorganization of the HNS and the loss of local staff due to personality clashes and increased internal tension.”

Successes and Improvements: Despite challenges there were early success in coordination especially around the establishment of technical working groups. Communication and understanding of the Ukrainian context improved, particularly in health and winterization efforts in 2023-24. The "One Movement, URCS-owned [URCS One Plan](#)" is a success, uniting all movement components under one plan for future operations.

- Another important success for which PNS respondents voice much appreciation were the efforts required to quickly put into place integration agreements although there were some tensions between decisions made that impacted those not having these agreements around salaries and benefits of local staff.
- Collaboration with the ICRC can also be seen as a success. While the establishment of the ICRC as the co-convenor in relation to the conflict in the eastern part of the country was done quickly, there was ambiguity over roles and responsibilities in the rest of the country. Fortunately, through negotiation, these issues were resolved. There remains, however, the need to clarify who is responsible for conflict preparedness, noting that the IFRC and the ICRC have different views on the role of NS in conflict situations. This ambiguity led to internal conflicts over jurisdiction and responsibilities.
- **Leadership Engagement:** Through periodic focused face to face meetings and ongoing exchanges, membership wide strategies were discussed and agreed to with HNS and PNS global leadership. At the centre of decision making. The "One Movement, URCS-owned URCS One Plan" was an example of this, uniting all movement components under one plan for future operations. The challenge, however, is that the agreements at the leadership level were not always effectively communicated and/or applied in their respective Ukraine offices.

Shared Leadership.

For the URCS, IFRC's role as a fair and strategic broker differs depending on who is asked. Some feel that they were not effective enough and pursuing a shared leadership agenda, while several technical staff claimed the IFRC was effective. There were also mixed reviews on the part of PNS (see graph 1 above). Perhaps best stated by one PNS respondent when referring to the work done in health and the winterization efforts in 2023-24:

"We observed that shared leadership and coordination went well in sectors when a competent IFRC coordinator was deployed and also there was a PNS which could support the leadership in that sector."

4.2.3. INTERNAL IFRC COORDINATION

The following points highlight key operational challenges and successes related to coordination, decision-making, and resource management within the IFRC:

Unified Internal Coordination Strategy: The IFRC faces significant challenges in coordination due to the prioritization of individual or sectorial objectives over collective ones. This underscores the necessity for a comprehensive internal coordination strategy that fosters a cohesive organizational culture and mitigates siloed operations between technical sectors and operational teams.

Clarification of Roles and Responsibilities: Prevalent at the beginning of the operation was a certain amount of ambiguity surrounding roles and responsibilities, particularly between some cluster and country offices and the ROE, as well as for those countries that did not have an HoD resulted in some confusion principally around issues of staffing, budgets and programming. Again, as noted elsewhere in the report, clarifying roles in a major operation takes time, especially in a region that has not had operations with such a large scope. While most of these issues were addressed as the operation evolved, some still exist as the ROE works through the right sizing process.

Enhanced Communication Protocols: The absence of clear communication lines has contributed to internal coordination challenges, with various IFRC staff from different offices or units independently engaging with the same donors. Establishing standardized communication protocols is critical to streamline interactions and prevent mixed messaging, thereby enhancing the IFRC's credibility with stakeholders.

Need for Country and Cluster Specific Plans: The initial lack, in some cases, of country specific plans that focused on localized institutional development needs limited the effectiveness of the IFRC's response efforts. However, IFRC dedicated time and energy into developing country specific plans (sixteen as of 2023) demonstrating a commitment to tailoring plans to local contexts and involving NS in the planning process to better address unique challenges and opportunities.

Absence of a Culture of Collaboration: A prevailing silo mentality within the IFRC indicates a lack of collaboration across departments, which undermines overall operational effectiveness. Fostering a culture of collaboration is essential for aligning efforts toward common goals and enhancing the organization's humanitarian impact.

4.3. MANAGING HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY IN UKRAINE AND IMPACTED COUNTRIES

The following overview highlights the key challenges and developments in the IFRC's HD efforts. It addresses the importance of understanding political contexts, and the necessity of effective coordination and communication as well as the role of networking, staff training, and the strategic positioning of NS to enhance their impact.

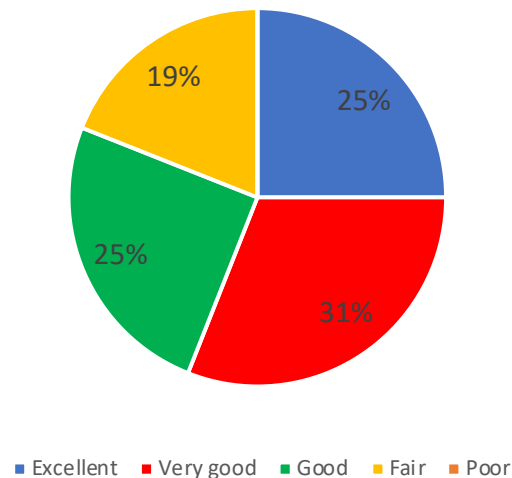
4.3.1. IMPACTED COUNTRIES

Highlighting the Role of the Russian Red Cross (RRC).

The global attitude toward Russia negatively impacted the Russian Red Cross (RRC), complicating international fundraising and creating internal tensions in the relationships between National Societies as well as with their own governments. Strong media campaigns directed against the RRC challenged not only the RRC integrity but also that of the Movement. Inclusion of the RRC in Appeals and showcasing their work were crucial in presenting a comprehensive humanitarian narrative by highlighting the entire humanitarian story and demonstrating a clear commitment to the Fundamental Principles.

HD Preparedness: From the beginning of the operation, the IFRC moved quickly to establish a Movement HD support network to address emerging issues, develop and distribute HD resources

across the network, coordinate external engagement, and leverage external coordinating mechanisms. While PNS engaged immediately, it took some time for HNS to participate in this work due to high operational demands and limited HNS capacity. HNS were invited into the HD support network, but there was a delayed recognition of the value of HD in emergencies among IFRC operations managers, who were trying to protect overworked HNS. This shifted as the emergency evolved and HNS are now more actively engaged in the HD agenda.



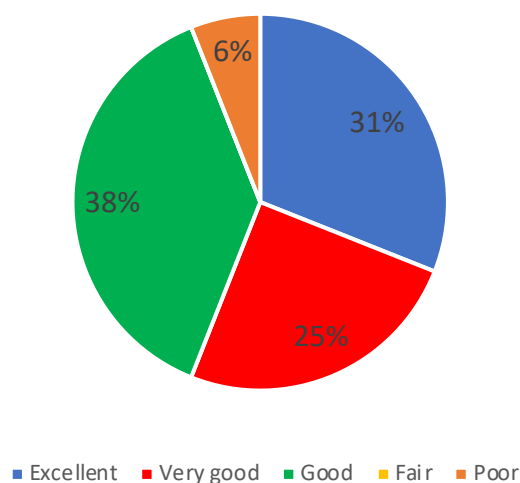
Graphic 2: Please evaluate the support provided by IFRC to your NS in carrying out effective HD

While not providing specific context in the survey results, the following HNS comment represents the perception by some HNS that the support was fair:

“I would recommend more joining forces between IFRC representatives / delegates to our NS and/or IFRC Secretariat and the NS in practically engaging in humanitarian diplomacy in the country”.

Leading role in using the HD agenda with the authorities and donors

Notwithstanding the above comment urging for ongoing improvement, HNS overwhelmingly stated their appreciation for the support provided by the IFRC through its provision of strategies, information and clear messaging, which enabled them to engage in HD with their respective authorities and domestic donors.



Graphic 3: How well has IFRC supported your leading role in using the HD agenda with the authorities and donors?

As one HNS indicated:

“Vis-a-vis authorities, the support is Very Good, but has a potential of being excellent, provided IFRC representatives / delegates to our NS and/or IFRC Secretariat join forces with the NS in practically engaging in HD in its country”.

Another respondent indicated

“With the donors, yes, they help us a lot.”

Political Context and Universality:

The size and scope of the operation, the number of HNS involved in the Appeal, and limited IFRC human resources have led to slower-than-optimal analysis and understanding of the complexities within each country's political context. The flow of information, which is crucial for effective HD decision-making and strategy development, has not always been efficient, particularly in communication coming from Host National Societies HNS feedings into the work of the ROE. Additionally, as previously mentioned, the limited HD capacity and skills of some HNS, coupled with weaker than optimal relationships with authorities, have affected the quality of engagement.

As stated, political polarization, geopolitical dynamics and government pressure have resulted in unfair treatment and engagement especially in relation to the RRC. This inconsistency puts into question the principle of Universality and highlights the need for a more equitable approach to support and collaboration among all NSs. Improved engagement with authorities, including ministries, is essential to address these disparities.

Coordination and Support: There have been some difficulties in coordinating and supporting HNS, especially in politically sensitive environments. As mentioned, the initial focus on operational needs was not conducive to adopting a strong HD program, certainly in part due to the of size, scope and complexity of the operation. However, internal IFRC communication and decision-making mechanisms need improvement to enhance efficiency.

Networking and Stakeholder Engagement: Improved networking with external organizations has been beneficial. European NS have played a significant role in defining the HD agenda. An important success is that for the first time, IFRC had a staff embedded in the EU civil protection Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) for information exchange and coordination. In addition, the HD support network facilitated Movement engagement in policy capitals including Brussels and New York. These advancements demonstrate the importance for the IFRC to ensure that all NS feel included and supported in these efforts.

The use of data and analysis.

Initially, there was limited IFRC specific data being provided by HNS and IM that could support HD initiatives. HNS were slow to provide updated information to the IFRC data management system and the IM team was focused predominantly on situational analysis rather than political dynamics.

This improved as the operation evolved. IFRC stayed connected with and were updated by the through the HD support network which included information from the country level as well as from Brussels, New York, Geneva and Budapest offices and counterparts at ICRC. A key initiative was the contracting of an expert in humanitarian analysis and the resulting launching of the “impact forecast” pilot in conjunction with the Country Cluster for Poland which produced quarterly impact forecasts. These, coupled with the inclusion of data provided by Federation wide reports fed into timely HD decision making positively impacted quality and efficiency. In addition, HNS data collection capacity improved although the task of collecting and providing data from the branch to NHQ and then on to the IFRC, either through Federation wide reporting or other mechanisms, can be time consuming and slow. All these initiatives have been applauded by partners.

One issues highlighted by the regional HD teams was that while data was generated through the different mechanisms mentioned above, the challenge arose in trying to bring together a broad spectrum of stakeholders to engage in a collective analysis of that date with the intention of determining how to apply this to updated strategies.

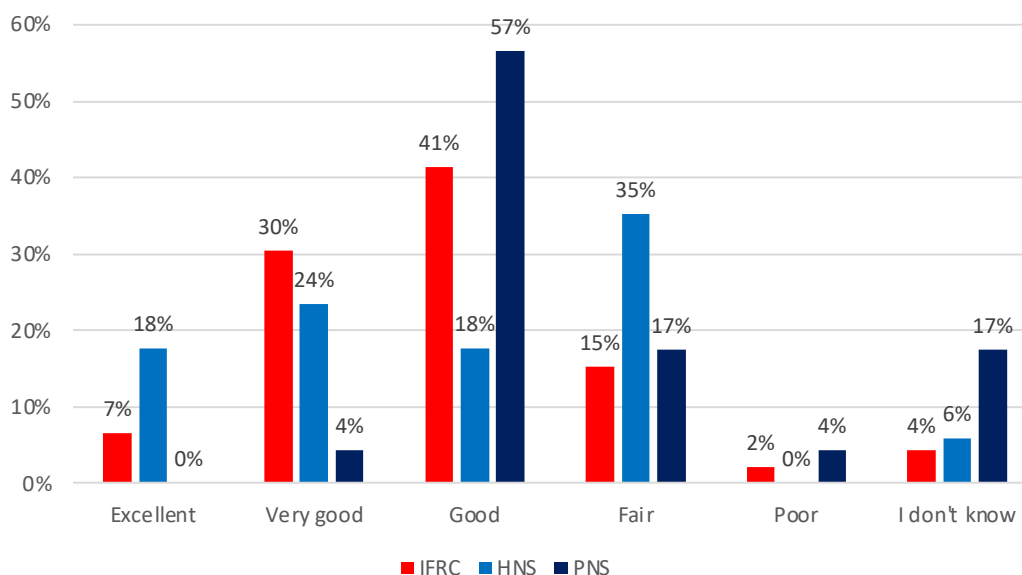
Reinforcing the auxiliary role in Ukraine and impacted countries

Increased Understanding: Through the development and distribution of guides and tools developed by the IFRC HD team along with ongoing training, participation in decision-making, and a higher priority on HD by IFRC staff, there has been a significant increase in the understanding and actions taken around the auxiliary role of NS, particularly noted in the case of the impacted countries.

The IFRC has taken several key steps to enhance understanding of the auxiliary role of NS in Ukraine and impacted countries focusing on working closely with governments while maintaining their neutrality and independence. Some of the main efforts include:

- **Advocacy and Training:** The IFRC has prioritized capacity building with the HNS to develop strategies and gain skills to increase their effectiveness of their work with local authorities to emphasize their auxiliary role including clarifying their mandate and securing their role in national disaster and humanitarian responses.

- Legal and Policy Frameworks:** IFRC has provided technical support and advocacy for Ukraine and other countries to embed the role of HNS in national policies, ensuring they have clear and increasingly strategic mandates during emergencies. The role that HNS have played in CVA is an example of how solid programming and advocacy can result in many being the partner of choice for CVA initiatives as is the case in Poland and Slovakia. Other initiatives include:
 - The Auxiliary Mapping Project examines laws and agreements in Poland, Romania, Russian and Ukraine with the aim of focusing advocacy efforts. Note that the results have yet to be shared with the NS participants.
 - The development of resources for NS on their auxiliary role in relation to IHL such as templates for briefing papers to be used during emergencies. Of equal importance is that these tools were the result of a collaborative effort of a team of experts from various NSs the IFRC and in consultation with ICRC.
- Humanitarian Diplomacy:** HNS, with support from the IFRC and ICRC, have taken a leading role in collaborative diplomacy efforts to ensure their contributions are recognized and supported by governments and international actors. These initiatives have included public campaigns and ongoing dialogue to clarify how HNS can assist government operations while maintaining their independence. In this context, the Australian Red Cross shared its “Guide for Parliamentarians to the International RCRC Movement,” which was positively received by several HNS. This resource has further strengthened the understanding and visibility of HNS within the broader humanitarian landscape.
- In Ukraine, the IFRC, ICRC, British RC and Danish RC supported the URCS senior management to assess their auxiliary role in order to determine future HD priorities and strategies.



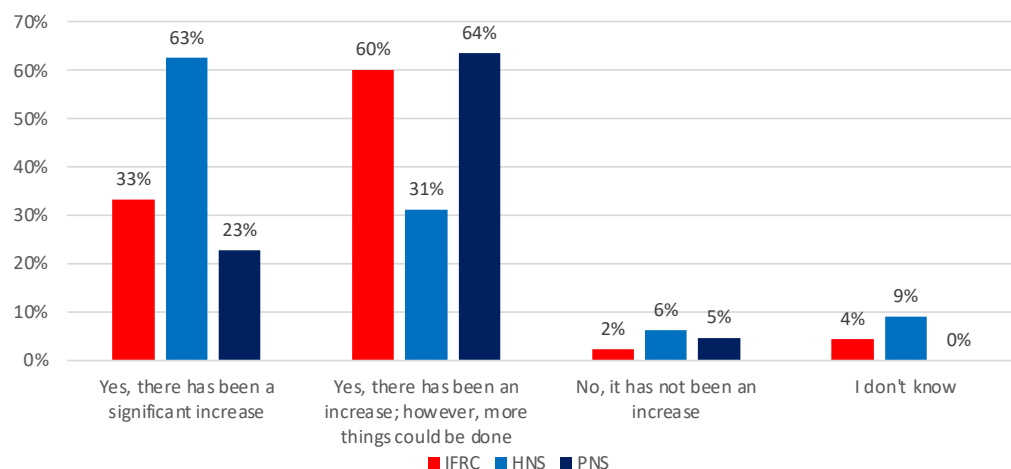
Graphic 4: Please rate IFRC's contribution to reinforcing the auxiliary role of HNS in Ukraine and the impacted countries

However, while the IFRC has significantly contributed to reinforcing the auxiliary role of HNS, there is the risk that, if there is a lack of ongoing consistent funding, long-term capacity-building efforts will not be sustained. This lack of ongoing support hinders NS ability to effectively exercise and strengthen their auxiliary role.

Recognition of Quality Work.

Perhaps the most important factor for increasing the profile of the HNS has been the positive impact of the operations for those fleeing from Ukraine. The professional and quick response by HNS has helped elevate their overall profile and in many cases in specific technical areas such as MHPSS and CVA, with recognition as a key player in the field. Example the approval of the MHPSS policy by the Slovak government indicating progress and recognition of the importance of these efforts.

As is evident in the survey results below, respondents, and in particular HNS, overwhelmingly agree that the operation has contributed to increasing the investment and the respect for the role of the HNS.



Graphic 5: Has this operation contributed to increasing the investment and respect for the role of implementing NS?

Enhancing Staff Knowledge on Humanitarian Principles: One of the weaker areas was the limited understanding among both HNS and IFRC staff, regarding armed conflicts, protective emblems, International Humanitarian Law (IHL), and the Geneva Conventions. Developing orientation packages and training programs is essential for staff working in conflict operations. This is of key importance to ensure that NS do not and are not perceived to be acting as arm of government authorities and taking actions that may be contrary to the fundamental principles.

4.3.2. UKRAINE

In addition to the strategic approach IFRC has adopted for HD regionally and, specifically, across this operation, it has also worked bilaterally with NSs to understand and support NS influencing priorities, domestic and international.

The politicisation of humanitarian aid in the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, has created significant challenges for our core humanitarian values and complicated the delivery of assistance. Coordinated humanitarian diplomacy and communication efforts within the movement have been essential for maintaining a strong humanitarian response and influencing the necessary legal, policy, and practical changes to improve outcomes.

A preliminary meeting with the URCS, IFRC and several PNS was held to identify collective approaches and to map the way forward. As mentioned previously a detailed analysis of the URCS auxiliary role was carried out which was key to identifying HD priorities. In December 2022 a workshop was held aimed our drafting a URCS HD strategy at which time an advocacy working group, co-chaired by the URCS and the British RC was established designed to support the URCS in both its international and domestic HD work.

The URCS has had many successes in its relations within the country:

- **Capacity Building through Partnerships:** The URCS has developed strategic partnerships with UN bodies and NGOs, further reinforcing its auxiliary status and demonstrating its capacity to lead in humanitarian operations. These collaborations ensure that the auxiliary role is recognized and respected both domestically and internationally.
- **Operational Engagement:** Close coordination between URCS and government authorities has allowed URCS to maintain operational independence while supporting government initiatives. This successful cooperation demonstrates the flexibility and strength of the auxiliary role, allowing URCS to respond efficiently to emergencies, particularly in areas where access is limited due to the ongoing conflict.
- **Increased Profile:** URCS has positioned itself as a key partner to the Ukrainian government in various sectors such as CVA, rehabilitation, and home-based care. This has strengthened its profile, improved relations with government ministries, and opened doors to potential future funding opportunities, reinforcing its leadership humanitarian response.
- **Logistics and Supply Chain Management:** Another successful initiative helping to increase the URCS auxiliary profile is the how the URCS, with the support of the IFRC and ICRC, has managed complex logistical operations to deliver essential goods to hard-to-reach areas. These logistics operations have been vital in maintaining consistent humanitarian aid flows to areas impacted by active conflict, especially where infrastructure has been damaged.

It is important to mention that the URCS evaluated the support provided by IFRC to them in carrying out effective HD and supported its leading role in using the humanitarian diplomacy agenda with the authorities and donors as 'Good'.

There remain, however, important challenges ahead. As previously stated, it is imperative that ongoing strategic adjustments are made as the conflict evolves and the nature of the international HD needs change. This entail clarification of roles and responsibilities as well as strengthening messaging. Efforts must also be placed on aligning HD priorities with operational activities at all levels of the URCS.

4.3.3. IFRC INITIATIVES

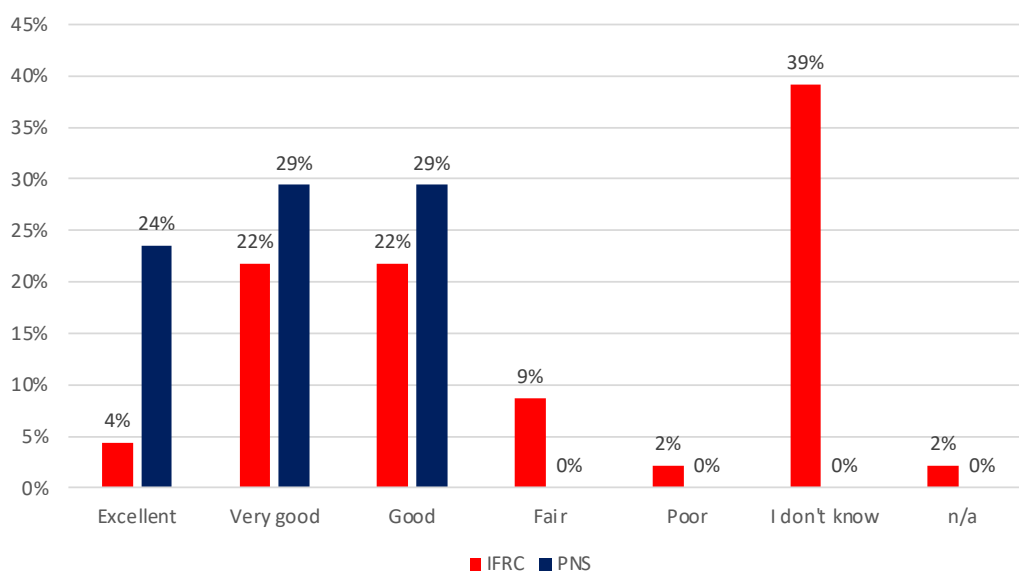
In addition to support HNS through training and networking, the IFRC, along with a strong relationship with PNS and the ICRC, has played a crucial role in humanitarian diplomacy during the Ukraine conflict principally through advocating for access to affected populations and coordinating with both local authorities and international actors. Through its diplomatic efforts, the IFRC has worked to ensure the protection of humanitarian principles, secure critical funding, and highlight the auxiliary role of both the URCS and all the HNS. These efforts have enabled the membership to maintain neutrality and independence, even in the event of fierce criticism, while responding to urgent needs. Key successes include:

- **Designated HD Role:** The appointment of a designated surge HD and HD staff as part of the core team of country delegations have been critical to the response efforts.
- **Governing Board Oversight Group:** Different from the IFRC Governing Board Oversight Group established to address allegations concerning the integrity of the RRC and the Federation, a separate working group composed of NS leaders conducted two field missions to provide analysis, insights, and recommendations on response and programmatic strategies for follow-up by the operation's team. This initiative was crucial in keeping board members informed about significant developments in the operation.
- **Solutions Group:** The creation of the IFRC internal Solutions Group was an initiative which brought key people together to address emerging and politically sensitive issues and share potential solutions and ask for input from the membership.
- **Coordination in Communication and Timely Messaging:** Effective and timely messaging is crucial for managing public perception and diplomatic relations, and there has been unanimous recognition of good messaging practices by the IFRC that facilitated cooperation with governments, embassies and other stakeholders. This improved from the beginning when the IFRC's sometime cautious approach to public messaging in sensitive situations, led to delays in communication in part because of the need to protect the Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) reputation. This cautious approach and late responding allowed, in some cases, for the proliferation of misinformation causing a loss of public trust. Some PNS complained that not much contextual analysis was done by the IFRC team, leaving the perception that the IFRC was slow in messaging compared to ICRC, who was quicker and provided good quality analysis. Messaging principally centred on the following topics: One PNS respondent offered the following reflection:

“The HD technical working groups have been among the most effective and reliable. The research and data gathering around impact forecasting has been interesting. I'd like to see more white papers and analysis on the humanitarian

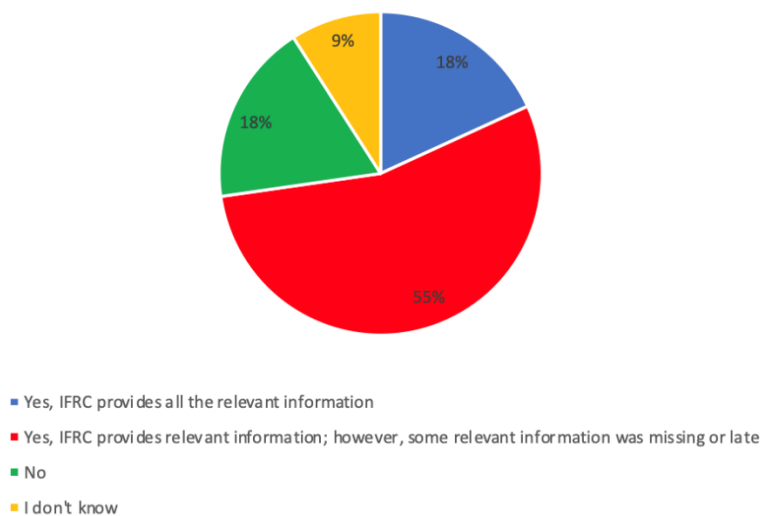
implications of political and funding decisions, including the recovery financing dialogues.”

1. **Principled humanitarian action:** Advocating for unimpeded access, building and instilling trust, seeking humanitarian exemptions in sanctions regimes, and generally trying to protect the humanitarian space amid strong political agendas and the proliferation of misinformation, disinformation and hate speech. This is a highly politicised context in which risks of instrumentalization of the Movement and its work remain high.
2. **Application of IHL:** The development of critical supporting resources, including a full product suite on emblem protection and guidance on the NS role during IAC under IHL, has been very well received and utilised by NSs.
3. **Protection for Displaced People:** Highlighting the role of RCRC Humanitarian Service Points, advocating for non-discriminatory access to services and longer-term social inclusion and integration (including under the EU Temporary Protection Directive), and addressing protection concerns.
4. **Promotion of the Auxiliary Role:** Reinforcing the auxiliary role of the NSs in all countries involved.
5. **Locally led humanitarian action.** Through strong collaboration and participation from RCRC members, the IFRC proactively addressing these issues has been essential in managing public perception by ensuring consistency and coherence in messaging across various channels as noted in the notion of **one message, many messengers**. As illustrated in the graphic below, the overall perception of HD work by the IFRC Staff and PNS has been very positive.



Graphic 6: Please rate the support provided by IFRC to the URCS and its members in undertaking effective HD in Ukraine.

As noted in the graph below most PNS believe that the IFRC has provided the necessary information and analysis to help them advocate with their governments. The bringing together of Federation members, the provision of solid information and analysis and the development and distribution of relevant tools highlights the key HD leadership role of the IFRC.



Graphic 7: Has IFRC provided the relevant information and analysis to advocate to your own Governments?

However, there is always room for improvement. Below are selection of relevant comments from the PNS that IFRC should take into consideration:

“Data collection and analysis had always logical flaws and made the overall picture blurry. Especially on financial contributions or outcomes”.

“There was a slight time lag of 2 to 3 months compared with the real-time situation.”

“In general, a very good and genuine effort from the IFRC to provide timely analysis and information.”

Integrating HD in Emergency Response: Ongoing support, assistance and clear leadership from Geneva has been a key element in humanitarian diplomacy. An important step in recognizing the crucial role HD plays in emergencies, has been its inclusion into the revised Emergency Response Framework. The next step is to ensure that what is written is actually implemented in real time operations across all levels of the IFRC and with HNS.

4.4. NATIONAL SOCIETY AND BRANCH DEVELOPMENT

NSD is a key strategic priority for IFRC, which serves to enhance the operation’s efficacy while ensuring a smooth transition to the National Societies. The following are among the services that IFRC provides to NS, as per the IFRC Constitution:

- a) act as the permanent body of liaison, coordination and study among the NS and give them assistance;
- b) encourage and promote in every country the establishment and development of an independent, sustainable and duly recognized NS with a strong local capacity to address vulnerability;
- c) assist the HNS in risk reduction, in disaster preparedness, in the organization of their relief actions and in relief operations themselves.

4.4.1. OVERALL NSD PROGRESS IN URCS AND HNS

The IFRC's support of Ukraine and its impacted countries is reflected in the NSD operational strategy. NSD support started during the second year of the operation. During the first phase of the operation, most of the capacity-building actions were directly linked to improving the HNS's abilities to better implement relief activities, strengthening areas as logistics and creating capacities in new areas for the HNS as CVA. Most funds went towards immediate humanitarian needs (like cash distribution), and a smaller portion focused on long-term capacity building had significant benefits, particularly in modernizing financial policies, resource mobilization and branch development strategies and actions. It is important to note the challenge to define how much the operation has changed the NS, as there was no initial benchmark. The responders indicated that the areas that had the most progress were:

	IFRC	PNS	HNS & URCS
Logistics	20	8	11
Volunteering	20	8	9
Branches	25	17	11
Finance	8	9	11
Governance	10	5	4

Table 3: Main areas in which the HNS made the most progress, according to the survey respondents (the respondents could answer in more than one area, but only the areas with the most votes are shown).

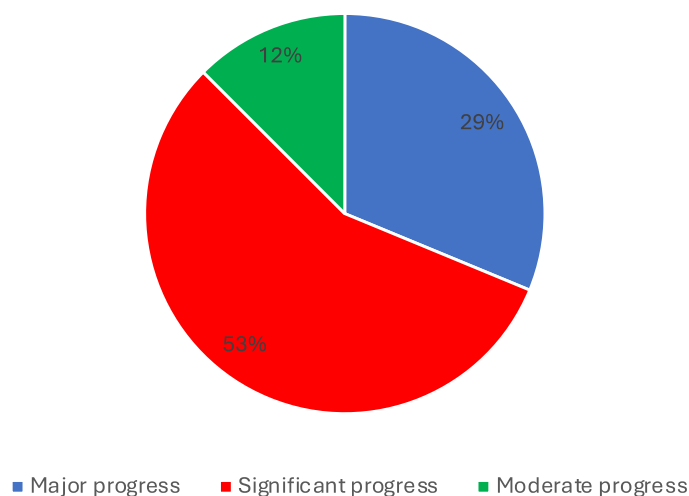
NSD IN THE IMPACTED COUNTRIES

For the other HNS in the impacted countries, there is a need to tailor NSD according to their specific needs. It is still important to demonstrate as to whether the support provided has progressed adequately. Several core NSD aspects, such as strategic planning and governance development, were notably underprioritized in the progress areas at the beginning of the operation. Instead, progress has been shown recently in statutes revision, communications development, partner coordination, branch relationships, establishing technical working groups on digitalization, logistics development, disaster management development, and volunteering, amongst many others. A major argument highlighted by respondents was the delay in adopting and implementing NSD strategies. A solid understanding of the HNS and their context would have speed up planning; however, it is important to mention that this lack of knowledge was because before this operation, the capacities

and funds available in the ROE were limited, and in many of the countries, there was no representation of IRFC.

One of the challenges of the Appeal is that the level of development of the HNS in the impacted countries was very different; therefore, IFRC had to consider the capacities and needs of each HNS when deciding on the amount of budget to allocated. These circumstances did not allow the IFRC to provide a specific budget and budget holder for each HNS, and the budget was managed at the regional level.

Most of the HNS of the impacted countries consider that they have made major or significant progress over the course of the Appeal:



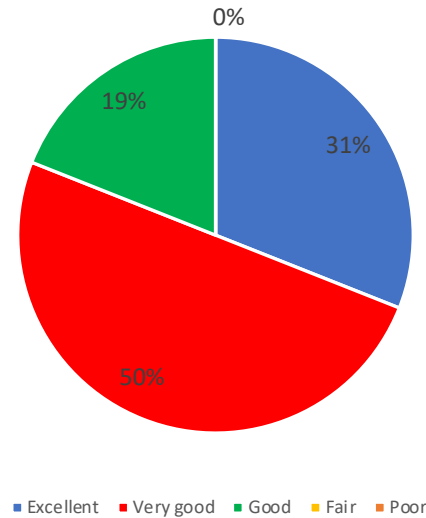
Graphic 8: How much progress has your HNS in NSD over the course of the Appeal?

One HNS stated that:

“The effect of the involvement in the Appeal has been momentous for our NS. It involved our NS effectively in the day-to-day and strategic work of IFRC and provided us invaluable resources - material, financial and know-how, with the latter being highly transferrable for the future when identifying and responding to emerging needs”.

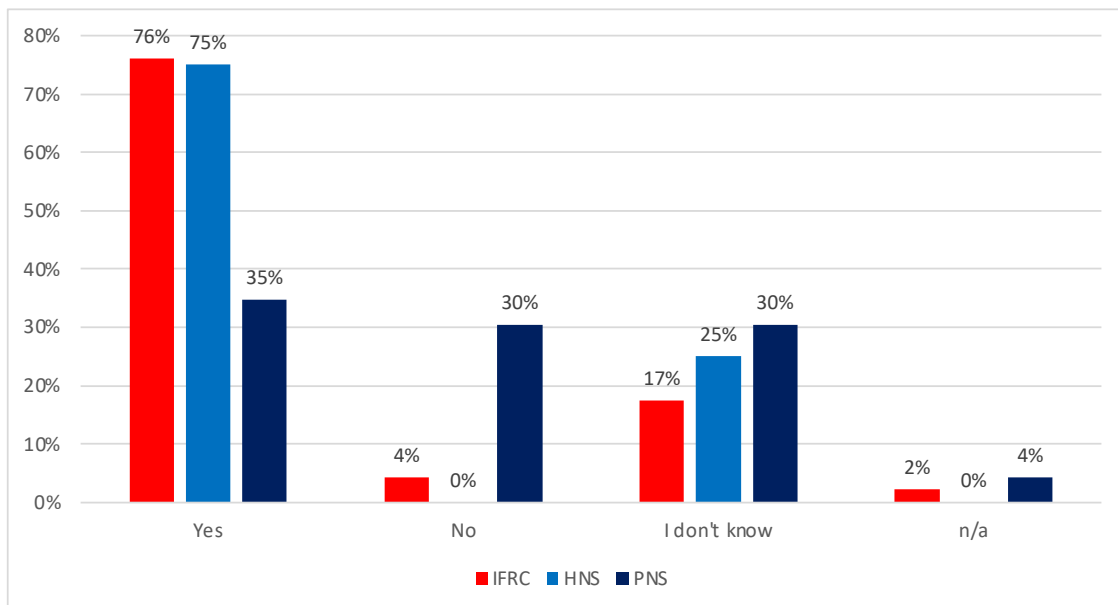
It is interesting to see how a fundamental area such as governance and strategy planning, which perhaps should have been considered at the beginning of the operation, did not have significant progress until the second year of the Appeal, according to the responders. IFRC, PNS and HNS consider governance an area that needs to be strengthened in the remainder of the Appeal, as shown in table 4.

All HNS consider that support of IFRC has been very relevant. As is evident in the survey most consider the support has been good, very good or excellent.



Graphic 9: How well does IFRC support your NS in designing and implementing your own NSD priorities and activities?

The introduction Unified Planning is an important strategy to ensure that the NSD priorities are identified by the HNS and allow IFRC and PNS to support them in a coordinated and efficient manner. While most respondents indicated that this did not happen initially, steps are now being taken for HNS to indicate which priority areas need strengthening. Thus, for the HNS it is noteworthy that the IFRC is currently sharing leadership with other PNS to strengthen areas where they have expertise. IFRC staff and HNS responded that the IFRC has facilitated shared leadership among the members.



Graphic 10: Was the IFRC Secretariat, in the Ukraine response operation, a fair and strategic broker that facilitates shared leadership among the membership?

An example of a good practice is the agreement with the Spanish Red Cross (SRC) to support a select number of HNS in the area of volunteering, an area in which the SRC has strong knowledge and

experience. In general, the involvement of the domestic departments of several PNS is considered a very noteworthy success in and of itself but more so in the support provided in developing HNS capabilities.

Areas requiring additional efforts

HNS and IFRC staff (except staff in Ukraine) consider that the HNS should continue to receive support in:

	IFRC	HNS
Logistics	15	5
Volunteering	13	11
Branches	23	9
Finance	19	7
Governance	25	7

Table 5: Main areas in which the HNS needs additional support according to the survey conducted (the respondents could answer in more than one area, but only the areas with the most votes are shown).

URCS NSD STRATEGY: ONE PLAN 2023-2025

The URCS had its expectations view of NSD that did not completely align with the IFRC approach in the first phase of the operation, leading to confusion and hindering the effectiveness of NSD efforts. The importance of having these conversations early on and standing alongside NS throughout the process was emphasized. The IFRC's support to URCS is aligned with the [One Plan for Ukraine 2023-2025](#); the strategic structure of the plan is sustained in 3 pillars: humanitarian action, resilience and recovery; sustainable and qualified RC services; and URCS auxiliary role and HD. One of the main weaknesses of the Plan is that URCS has not involved its branches in its development. Also, according to most people interviewed, this document is more of a declaration of intent or a marketing document than a strategic or operational plan of action and requires further development.

URCS did not want to use the name Unified Plan used by the IFRC, which shows that the URCS wants to distance itself from the tools used by the IFRC at the global level. URCS is clear about its priorities and does not need IFRC support to design its priorities in NSD, which the staff interviewed confirmed. Irrespective that IFRC's NSD strategy is solid and ensures that the URCS emerges stronger from the crisis, with increased capacity and improved organizational development.

Main areas of progress in URCS

URCS has made significant progress in its capacity to respond and position itself in its auxiliary role. Some relevant comments from the PNS about the increase of the capacities of URCS are:

“URCS has increased its operation capacities significantly in terms of outreach and professionalism”.

“The strengthening is not only due to the Appeal but also to the direction set by the NS and all partners working to achieve it using the National Society approach”.

All respondents stated that URCS has also increased its capacity for reporting, proposal writing, and project management.

URCS considers that thanks to the Appeal, significant progress has been made in logistics and volunteering.

In logistics, the support provided by the Appeal has been focused on the following areas:

- *Procurement*: Progressive goals are set for regional branches to conduct independent procurement, aiming for 100% compliance by the end of the Appeal.
- *Fleet Management*: Efforts are underway to establish a strategy for sustainable management of fleet assets and resources, focusing on technical skill enhancement and cost recovery.
- *Warehousing: Training and Equipment*: URCS is on track to train 100% of warehouse employees and ensure warehouses in Lviv and Zakarpattia are rehabilitated and well-equipped with necessary resources by the final year of the Appeal.

While significant effort was made to enhance logistics capacity, the URCS still considers this an area that needs further strengthening. They stated the importance of the IFRC team continuing to support them, but the IFRC's staff have to have adequate capacities to strengthen them; if not, they prefer to look for support at the local level. They stated delegates should have knowledge that cannot be obtained in the country; here again, we see the importance of having the appropriate staff.

In Volunteering and branch development, the support has been done through the Branch and Volunteer Development (BRaVO) program, launched in 2018. In this case, the IFRC, in coordination with the HNS and PNS, has been in charge of supporting several branches, and they have been properly coordinated so as not to duplicate efforts and be able to develop as many branches as possible. When the conflict began, it became clear that local BRaVO-supported branches were better prepared and able to respond more effectively to changing humanitarian needs across Ukraine than branches that were not. IFRC's strategy of supporting branches through the BRaVO program and not creating parallel structures for branch strengthening was appropriate and a way to use funds efficiently. Moreover, in this case, sharing the leadership with the Danish Red Cross (DRC) has been considered very positive for all the actors.

Surveys show that PNS, URCS and IFRC staff working in Ukraine stated that the branches are now much better prepared to respond. However, the BRaVO project will end in 2025, and it is not clear to respondents that all branches will be fully prepared by then.

IFRC supported branches to establish 15 Humanitarian Service Points (HSP) and 6 Community Centres (CC) as well as implementing Organization Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC) and Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) Assessments. A Preparedness Concept Note and Work Plan were also established, which will guide further preparedness efforts. MHPSS and Psychological First Aid (PFA) activities are being successfully implemented in CCs, social and integration services and information provision at HSP.

Areas will require additional efforts

For the URCS, the main area in which they continue to request support is logistics. However, it is important to highlight that PNS and IFRC staff stationed in the country who responded to either the survey or through interviews, identified additional areas of support that should be considered:

	IFRC	PNS
Logistics	4	5
Volunteering	2	9
Branches	3	12
Finance	3	10
Governance	5	9

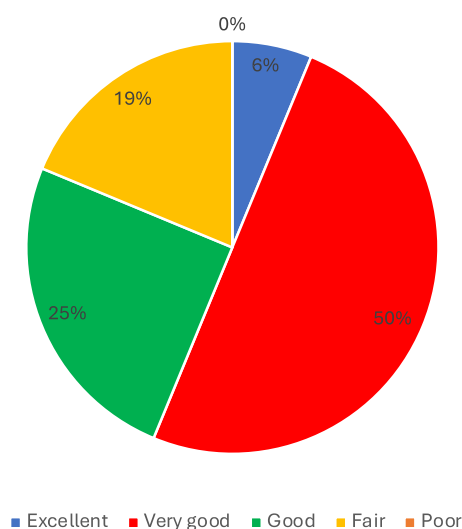
Table 6: Main areas in which the URCS needs additional support according to the survey conducted (the respondents could answer in more than one area, but only the areas with the most votes are shown).

Sustainability

The Appeal outlines a plan to ensure these developments are sustainable and aligned with the broader emergency response efforts in Ukraine. The initiative from the British Red Cross (BRC), supported by IFRC, to set up the URCS Endowment fund has been praised as a good mechanism to ensure sustainable funding for URCS in the future. However, there is some concern about the sustainability of current operations, especially regarding the retention of key staff and the ability to continue effective programming when Appeal funds begin to reduce. This concern is heightened as fundraising efforts are not yet fully developed.

4.4.2. BRANCH DEVELOPMENT IN UKRAINE AND IN THE IMPACTED COUNTRIES

The following graph shows that most HNS considered the IFRC's support for preparing the branches to respond to emergencies to be good, very good or excellent.



Graphic 12: Please rate the IFRC's contribution to preparing the branches of your NS to respond to emergencies.

It is difficult to determine whether the support has been effective without analyzing how the HNS respond to emergencies. What is of concern is that the regional preparedness team is not mentioned in the Appeal budget, and their participation in Appeal activities has been negligible. The Appeal focused more on readiness and the NSD with the Head of the Country teams tasked with carrying out related actions. Coordination and collaboration between the Preparedness unit, the NSD unit and the Operations unit in preparing branches to respond to emergencies is an area for improvement.

4.4.3. TRANSITIONS PLANS FROM EMERGENCY TO LONGER-TERM PROGRAMMING

The IFRC has supported HNS in developing Unified Plans in all impacted countries, except for the Hungarian Red Cross, which is part of the Regional Unified Plan. These Unified Plans will guide the transition from emergency to long-term programming. IFRC has put in place a number of actions to minimise the risks of this transition, such as:

- Significant allocations of funding for NSD were made
- Launching a "programmatic investments" initiative to enable HNS to get "seed funding" to support resource mobilization efforts and increase its financial sustainability.
- The development of an Integration and Inclusion Strategy to frame and support HNS efforts to continue working in Migration. This has been coupled in 2024 with an allocation of funding to support targeted initiatives.
- Allocation of funds for NS Preparedness initiatives to support activities aimed at enhancing their capacity to respond to new emergencies

4.4.4. WHAT STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN IN THE COMING 2 YEARS TO CONSOLIDATE AND ENHANCE NSD OUTCOMES ACROSS THE NS IN IMPACTED COUNTRIES?

As previously explained, the Unified Plan has been considered an effective tool by all actors, enabling HNS to identify their main needs regarding NSD, as confirmed by respondents. Moving forward, it is recommended that the HNS-led plans be implemented. The role of the IFRC should focus on supporting certain areas while seeking assistance from other PNS areas that possess greater experience and expertise in specific domains.

4.5. CASH AND VOUCHER ASSISTANCE

4.5.1. CVA PROGRAM, A RECOGNIZED SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION

CVA has played a significant role in the IFRC network's response to the humanitarian crisis and has been considered a significant achievement during the first 18 months of the operation. CVA activities have been implemented in different forms: multipurpose cash and tailored cash intervention in areas like shelter, protection, education, health, etc. The success of CVA has been unanimously recognized; all the actors interviewed indicate that the key elements that made possible the massive use of CVA programming were:

- **The self-registration process.** This mechanism proved successful and allowed many people to register. As several interviewees indicated, this process allowed refugees and

migrants to register from anywhere and anytime, with almost no time or effort required to apply for assistance.

- **Delivery via MoneyGram.** Being able to use the MoneyGram network also gave people significant freedom to go to the offices and times that were most convenient for them.

Challenges

However, several challenges have been detected that IFRC has to consider for future CVA massive programs and projects.

- **Legal considerations.** Several responders indicate that the HNS were not clear about the legal considerations relating to taxation and data protection. There was a lack of a country-specific study and good coordination with the legal department of each HNS to ensure that there were no legal risks for the HNS and the people receiving CVA support. As we see below, several HNS indicate that they faced challenges in adapting CVA programs to the authorities' initiatives and legislation.
- **HNS ownership of the CVA program is in question.** Several HNS and PNS have indicated that the project belonged to IFRC, with HNS only providing support. According to several IFRC staff members, the need for quick implementation left no time to train the HNS to lead the project.
- **Volunteer participation and involvement were very limited.** According to HNS staff, volunteers were hardly involved in the program once it was all done online.

Several HNS have faced challenges adapting CVA programs to the authorities' initiatives and legislation. The challenges were mainly related to data protection and the Government's understanding of the implications of CVA programs. Some HNS indicate:

“There was a need to adapt data protection regulations”

“At an early stage we had to "wait" for kind of "approving the date and rate of the CVA programme from the government”

“The first is to bring alignment with legislation into discussion. There is only one way - from RCRC to the legislation, not also the way around. There is no duplication with the state social protection”

4.5.2. CVA IN IMPACTED COUNTRIES

The HNS's level of development has differed based on how the HNS assessed the relevance of the CVA program. However, a common observation from all interviews is that the IFRC executed the projects in their respective countries and collaborated at varying levels. Consequently, HNS with greater engagement already have established mechanisms, while those less involved, are now developing their own CVA mechanism.

When asked whether they consider themselves capable of implementing large-scale programs, HNS responses were interesting:

- Only the Hellenic Red Cross considers itself capable of implementing large-scale programs without the support of the IFRC or PNS.
- The Romanian and Croatian Red Cross consider that they lack the capacity and knowledge to implement large-scale CVA programs.
- The remaining HNS consider that they have the capacities but still need support from the IFRC or PNS.

This shows the importance of the IFRC's support to HNS in developing their own mechanisms. It was a missed opportunity not to have devoted more effort and funds in the early stages of the operation to capacity building in all HNS. As several people indicated, it was difficult to convince the HNS leaders of the importance of CVA. As the [CVA Preparedness Roadmap](#) indicates, the first step is to secure the leadership's commitment, which, as we point out, not all HNS leaders had, and insufficient effort may not have been made by the IFRC to convince them otherwise. However, it is important to note that management engagement focused on response and other issues in the early stages, as is normal in an emergency response of this scale. Also, the CVA Preparedness Road map indicates that the process for NS to be able to implement large-scale programs is a 3 to 4-year process.

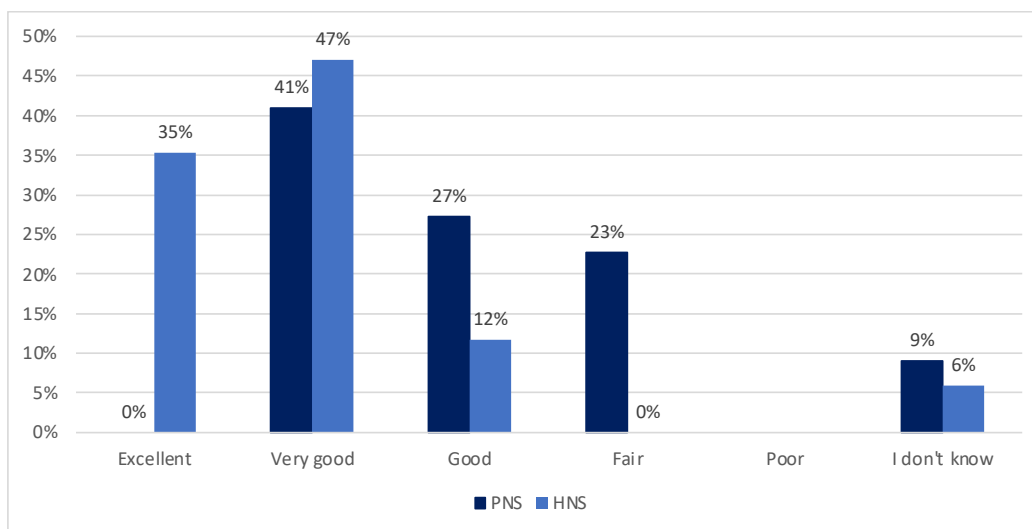
4.5.3. CVA IN UKRAINE

The dimension of the intervention has positioned URCS as a reference at the national level. Over the past two years, the URCS has implemented three nationwide, large-scale cash projects in partnership with several ministries, as well as CVA, with a preference for vouchers provided locally through the URCS branch network. URCS has, therefore, increased its capacities substantially and has a well-established CVA mechanism. Through its CVA projects, the URCS has provided support to IDPs, older people, veterans living with disabilities, and others in vulnerable situations, helping them meet their most pressing needs. All responders indicated that the URCS has the capacity and knowledge to implement its CVA programs smoothly. It should be noted that in addition to the support provided by the IFRC, the BRC has been a very supportive actor in implementing its CVA program. While the URCS has demonstrated the capacity to implement large-scale programs, several interviewees noted that support from the IFRC or other PNS would be beneficial for further improvement.

4.5.4. IFRC SUPPORT IN CVA DEVELOPMENT

Most HNS and URCS consider that the IFRC has supported them very well or excellent in developing their capacities. However, as one HNS indicated:

“Turnover and staffing problems at the beginning of the operation have left their current capacity lower than desired”.



Graphic 13: How well does IFRC support HNS in developing CVA capacities and knowledge?

However, the information provided by the PNS in the focus groups, interviews, and surveys is more critical, indicating that the IFRC focused more on implementation rather than taking the time to listen to requests to support and build HNS capacity to implement their own CVA initiatives. It is important to mention that IFRC was having a lot of pressure from donor and affected population to respond quickly as fast as possible. Their opinion is important, and in spite of being somewhat critical, they consider that the IFRC has done well or very well. Many HNS noted that the IFRC focus on quality support has improved recently,

CVA coordination has always occurred through the humanitarian cluster system, and most of the HNS and URCS indicate that they have been involved in these coordination meetings. However, the main issue identified is that not all HNS have sufficient staff to participate in these groups, leading to active involvement by some HNS while others are not able. The issue is not a matter of the exclusion by the clusters but rather the HNS does not prioritize the cluster participation and dedicate staff resources and time to participate.

4.5.5. IMPLICATIONS FOR GLOBAL CVA AND FOR OTHER FUTURE LARGE SCALE HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS

The IFRC is in a leadership position due to the CVA advancements that were made during this Appeal, as it was the only organization with a digital-first self-registration platform. Thus, systematization of processes is currently underway, and partnerships are also being sought with other UN agencies and NGOs to ensure that mechanisms are in place to ensure that aid is not duplicated. Thus, several agreements have been made, such as the one signed with UNHCR for de-duplication and several studies have been carried out to help improve the sector, such as the following:

- [Investigating Safe Data Sharing and Systems Interoperability in the Humanitarian Cash Assistance](#)
- [Deduplication of people, families or households](#)

Relying heavily on lessons learned and utilizing staff who were actively involved in this operation, the IFRC Global CVA team is currently focusing on developing the AccessRC Tool in order to ensure that there will be no need to develop new ones for future emergencies. Through meetings and lessons learned workshops the IFRC, with the support of PNS and HNS, has conducted a thorough analysis of the operation to ensure proper systematization of the tools. The MTR team consider that the necessary steps are being taken to ensure the systematization and institutionalization of the CVA learnings, systems and tools developed in this response. Testing the AccessRC tool in a different continents and contexts, such as in Colombia, is clear evidence that proper steps are being taken to systematize and enhance the mechanisms and tools resulting from this Appeal.

4.6. PROTECTION, GENDER AND INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

4.6.1. CEA APPROACH AND OPERATIONAL DECISION-MAKING

CEA is an approach that places communities at the centre of RCRC activities, providing opportunities for individuals and communities to empowering themselves to influence decisions affecting them and to ensure that there is trust the RCRC aims to serve their best interests. The IFRC Network achieves this by integrating meaningful community participation, open and honest communication, and mechanisms to listen to and act on feedback on programs, services and operations.

Efforts have been made in this Appeal to put mechanisms in place to ensure that the CEA approach has been considered in all the Appeal activities. Through different mechanisms, the voice of the communities has been brought to the IFRC, although this has been mainly focused and closely associated with the CVA activities; as indicated in some of the interviews, the CVA program was the gateway to implementing CEA activities in the HNS.

IFRC does not have a clear mechanism to ensure that community input is considered for decision-making. IFRC operational managers did not regularly attend CEA meetings to analyze data, and the operations team did not report to the CEA team on how the information received for the community was considered in the decision-making. As commented in several interviews, the elements and importance of a CEA approach nor still not well understood by many IFRC staff. It is still seen as something that ‘has’ to be done rather than an important aspect of providing services and programs that community want and need and implemented in an appropriate manner.

4.6.2. CEA APPROACH IN THE URCS AND HNS

While the MTE does not include an analysis CEA in the URCS, several respondents highlighted key initiatives in Ukraine that are worth noting. The IFRC played a crucial role in creating and maintaining the Information Center, which was vital for the affected population and improving relations between the URCS and communities. The center ensured accountability and provided services such as PSS, RFL, and general support for migrants.

The IFRC also helped URCS establish a Case Management (CM) system, incorporating an adapted coding framework and web-based communication alongside traditional phone calls. URCS has integrated feedback from multiple channels into the CM system, generating reports for ongoing

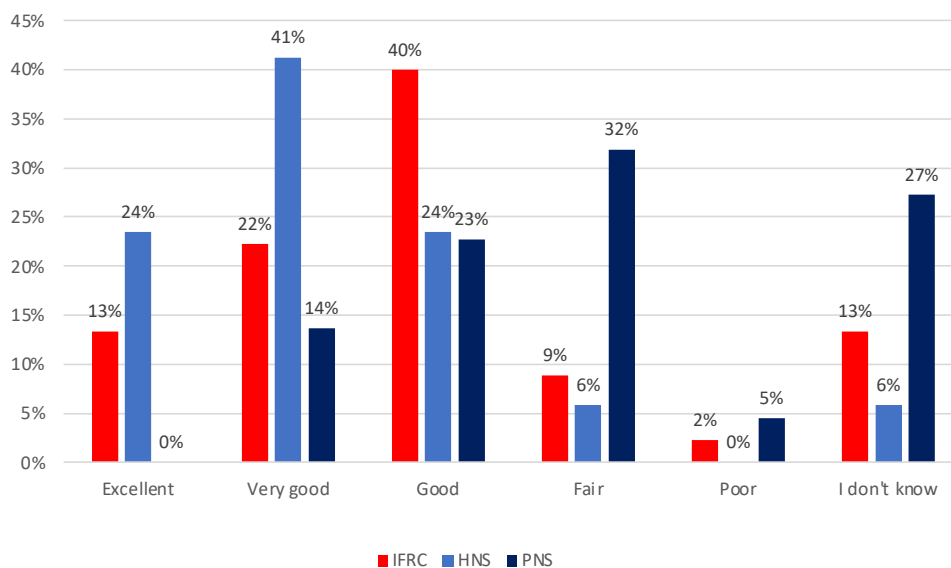
monitoring. From January to March, over 18,000 feedback and complaints were collected through the URCS Information Center Hotline, emails, letters, webforms, and QR codes, with 5% being sensitive, showing trust in the system. However, it is notable that no complaints regarding Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, or Harassment (SEAH) were received.

Although URCS has integrated CEA into most programs, it remains unclear how community feedback informs program adaptation or decision-making. While URCS believes its capabilities have improved, it acknowledges the need for further strengthening with IFRC and PNS support.

Only 3 HNS (Red Cross Society of Georgia, Hellenic Red Cross and Red Cross of The Republic of North Macedonia) state that they incorporate CEA approaches into their ongoing programming. Most of the HNS indicate that they only incorporate it in some projects, showing that it is not an approach systematically implemented in all actions. It is relevant that no HNS indicated that they do not use the CEA approach. As one responder indicates, there have been HNS that have been doing well; for example, the Slovak Red Cross is now part of the CEA Ambassador Program.

This shows us that this Appeal has had impact in the adoption of CEA; before the beginning of the Appeal, most of the HNS did not use the CEA approach in their activities. However, there are risks in terms of the sustainability of this system, as the CEA structures were created due to pressure from the IFRC, using exclusively Appeal funds. As responders indicated, it is not clear that the HNS leadership considers this area a priority and have the capacity to lead and maintain the CEA systems.

HNS rate the support received by the IFRC CEA team as very positively, with 94% stating that the support has been good, very good, or excellent. On the other hand, the evaluation of the PNS is more critical, with only 40% considering it to be good or very good, although still maintaining a positive rating. IFRC staff rate the support provided to the HNS very positively, as 76% consider that the support has been excellent, very good, or good.



Graphic 14: How well does IFRC support your NS in incorporating CEA in your day-to-day activities and programs?

4.6.3. PROTECTION, GENDER AND INCLUSION

During the first phases of the operation, PGI was not considered a priority and the support provided by IFRC was inadequate. Integrating new areas such as PGI and Safeguarding in the early months of the response was difficult, as all teams were focused on implementing response related activities. The lack of pre-emergency work in support of HNS implementation of the PGI was a weakness, which did not allow for the rapid implementation of PGI activities.

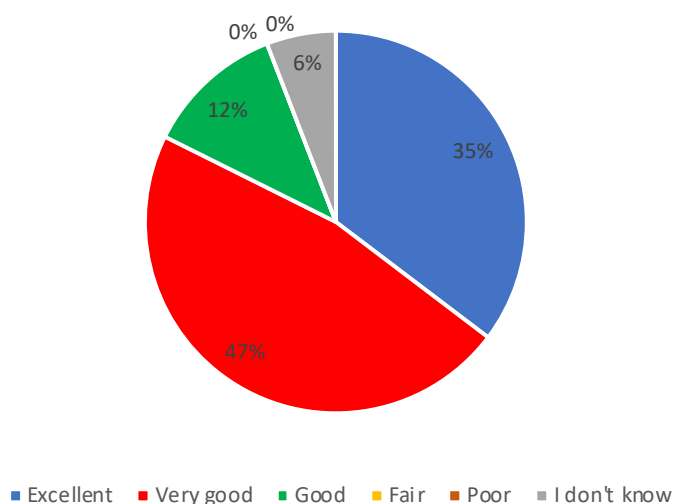
As the operation evolved there have been significant improvements in relation to the integration of PGI in part to the considerable support from some PNS. A positive example of cooperation between the ROE, Geneva and the PNS has been in PGI and safeguarding, where IFRC has shared leadership with the BRC (Safeguarding) and the Swedish Red Cross, Australia Red Cross and Canadian Red Cross (PGI); this has been highly valued by everyone interviewed and in the surveys. For example, one IFRC staff indicate

“Through the appeal, the Canadian Red Cross has provided earmarked funding to support BRC to mainstream PGI and safeguarding through all its activities and programming. This funding has already supported the implementation of awareness training for staff and volunteers, and is currently being used to support the revision and development of key policies and guidelines for BRC to adopt (child protection, safeguarding, providing access to referral pathways etc.)”

Still, other members of the IFRC network think that the operation might be losing the PGI focus of supporting those in the most vulnerable situations. As one responder indicated:

“When one reads our reports, the impression given is that we are effective at supporting the majority—such as single mothers and families with 3+ children—but there is very little mention of our support for people living with disabilities, older individuals, etc.”

In the rest of the HNS, the focus has been on ensuring that they have policies in place and are starting to take appropriate action to ensure the protection of the most vulnerable; for example, in Russia, child-friendly spaces have been set up. HNS consider that there has been significant progress and that the support given by the IFRC for the incorporation of PGI in its actions has been very positive with 94 % of the HNS considering the support to be excellent, very good or good.



Graphic 15: How well does IFRC support your NS in incorporating PGI in HNS day-to-day activities and programs?

However, discussions with respondents indicate that although there has been a great improvement in the HNS and URCS, PGI and CEA are still not priority areas for the leadership of the HNS who view PGI, Safeguarding, and CEA as IFRC requirements. They are unclear as to the benefits they bring to improving community support. It is, therefore, important to continue training and raising awareness among HNS leadership about their importance. For example, not all HNS have clear mechanisms for Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PESAH) and not all IFRC and HNS staff are clear on how the inclusion approach should be considered in the development programs and projects.

4.7. OPERATIONAL ADAPTATION, SCALE-UP, AND RIGHT-SIZING PROCESSES.

4.7.1. GAPS IN SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

The ongoing humanitarian response to the Ukraine crisis faces several challenges requiring reflection and possible adjustments to planned activities. As the situation evolves, both host communities and vulnerable groups continue to struggle. Gaps in data and assessment processes make it difficult to fully understand the needs of various populations, while efforts to provide emotional and psychological support have been inconsistent. In some areas, assistance has focused more on short-term solutions, raising concerns about long-term sustainability. To improve the effectiveness of these efforts, a more coordinated approach is needed, with an emphasis on inclusive support and continuous evaluation of emerging needs.

Support for Host Populations

- The host population requires support alongside those who have fled Ukraine, a challenge that NS must address in future programming. This is further complicated by inadequate funding to meet the full scope of the issue and corresponding needs.

- HNS will legitimately be challenged to provide support to vulnerable local populations as they are impacted by the arrival and settlement of Ukrainian refugees. Addressing their needs is essential for promoting social cohesion, which is key to successful integration.
- It must be remembered that HNS had ongoing programs and services prior to the crisis, which need to be maintained to avoid losing their position and the risk of being perceived as neglecting their domestic population.
- Another gap highlighted in the information provided by key stakeholders is that while support is directed toward Ukrainian refugees, there may be gaps in providing services to other groups who also fled the conflict (e.g. People from Belarus who fled to Lithuania; foreign students or workers who were studying in Ukraine) and are not eligible for government support in the receiving country.

Neglected and Underserved Communities

- While difficult to quantify, several NS highlighted a growing tendency of diminishing support for Ukrainian refugees from both authorities and humanitarian organizations.
- It was noted that the auxiliary role of the HNS can sometimes hinder them from prioritizing, reporting on, or assisting LGBTI+ community members from Ukraine who may require specific support, such as access to hormonal treatments, HIV testing, and HIV-suppressing medications.
- Several respondents cited the Roma population as an underserved group while recognizing access and acceptance challenges as well as political factors which hinder interventions.
- Other migrants and undocumented individuals unrelated to Ukraine, have been affected by the shift in focus of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Civil Societies Organizations (CSOs), and possibly the RCRC towards people from Ukraine.
- Children refugees from Ukraine are not subject to compulsory schooling in all impacted countries, which leaves them at risk of exclusion and hinders their integration.
- The situation in Ukraine differs from other armed conflicts in that Ukrainians often return home frequently. However, they are not always prepared for what they face especially given the tendency for those who remained to harbor resentment. Support for helping them understand and cope with these challenges, prior to their returning to Ukraine, has not been adequately addressed.
- Respondents noted that distributions and CVA initiatives were often geared towards attracting large numbers of beneficiaries to showcase the NS reach and strengthen its position with local authorities. While providing long-term support for those unable to restore their livelihoods should remain a priority, it may have been, and still remains, equally or more beneficial for IFRC to prioritize restoring livelihoods over short-term needs met by one-off cash transfers. In some cases, IFRC (and PNS) interventions may have prioritized quantity over sustainability.

Gaps in Data, Analysis, and the Need for Continuous Monitoring and Adapting

- There is insufficient analysis assessment and impact forecasting capacity to determine the general emerging needs of potential underserved populations. The example of insufficient data on Ukrainian men avoiding military conscription was mentioned by respondents. This will have impact on the providing an increasing need for mental health for MHPSS.
- Conducting thorough needs assessments and developing a solid plan of action before starting activities helped prevent some groups from being neglected.
- Reports often emphasize support for vulnerable groups like single mothers and large families, but there is little mention of assistance to other less visible vulnerable groups.

4.7.2. FLEXIBILITY, SCALING AND RIGHT-SIZING

The growth of the IFRC in Europe resulting from the Ukraine operation was unprecedented. The volume of funding and the need for skilled staff increased significantly, necessitating structural changes within the ROE, as well as the opening and expansion of several offices. Coordinating the complexities of an 18-country emergency response, with varying capacities of HNS and the influx of PNS, posed a considerable challenge. The following are key findings:

Adaptability and Scaling Operations:

IFRC successfully scaled operations to meet growing conflict needs, with staff taking on multiple roles to support the mission. The initial apparent disorganization has evolved into successfully scaled-up operations adapted to the growing needs of the conflict, with staff taking on multiple roles to fill gaps and supporting the mission. This is reflective of good leadership from the ROE office, as acknowledged by the membership. The fact that the Appeal integrated not only the Ukraine and neighbouring countries but also those countries receiving Ukrainian citizens, has been received very positively. A key supporting PNS stated “Coordination in impacted countries allowed for a participatory design and implementation of projects. It allowed timely sharing of NS needs as the context changed.” This operation has contributed to increasing the investment and the respect for the role of the HNS. Previous to the Appeal, many HNS had relatively low levels of very traditional activities, but this has changed dramatically. Examples include the Bulgaria Red Cross, which is now being seen as the main provider of MHPSS and CVA, the Polish Red Cross has partnered with its government to implement a project of 9 million euros in shelter and CVA, Slovakia Red Cross now has a formal MHPSS program in place that since 2022 has considerably grown and CVA has proven a new area for the Hungarian Red Cross.

- Emergency operations are inherently finite, and it is essential that all staff—both IFRC and NS—are aware of this from the outset.
- One of the most challenging internal structural issues has been rightsizing and scaling down as the emergency operation slows, particularly in impacted countries where exit plans need to be developed. The key challenges include aligning staffing with reduced budgets and determining how the IFRC can continue supporting HNS in expanding their programming and organizational development.

- A review of documentation, supported by feedback from the majority of survey respondents, confirms that the IFRC has shown substantial flexibility and responsiveness to the changing context. While there were periods of disorganization and there are areas for improvement, the IFRC developed agile mechanisms that allowed it to adapt resource allocation to shifting needs, such as refugee movements across different countries.
- The right-sizing process has been complex, time-consuming, and challenging, but has been conducted transparently, balancing staff well-being, budget constraints, and operational requirements.
- The process, initiated in November 2022, involved significant input from participating IFRC delegations, offices and technical units. The Appeal Committee, responsible for providing quality input to decision-makers, has been involved throughout, and the process has been implemented in phases, giving staff advance notice of their status.
- Phased implementation helped to minimize disruptions to programming and allowed ample time to make necessary adjustments.
- A small number of respondents expressed concerns that the right-sizing process and delays in scaling down staff suggest the IFRC remained overstaffed after peak demand, raising questions about resource management.
- While some delays occurred in determining the best course of action and communicating the impact on staff, the evidence suggests that this resulted from the ROE taking the necessary time for thorough analysis and planning.

4.7.3. DEGREE OF INTEGRATION AND THE SYNERGIES REACHED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CEA, PGI, CVA, MHPSS AND MIGRATION INTERVENTIONS.

- In the first phases of the Appeal, the level of integration was limited, with most work done in silos. This, couple with staff coming in for such short periods of time did not help in programmatic integration.
- PGI, CEA, and migration are fundamental to all programmatic areas in the operation. IFRC does not have a working system that encourages the integration of the cross-cutting and tactical areas, and as some interviewees indicated, integration depends more on the will of the delegates than on the IFRC's established structure and systems.
- The joint work between the CEA team and CVA is an example of a very well organized and implemented practice. The CVA program opened the doors to work on CEA issues, such as hotlines and Post- Distribution Monitoring. This work allowed the NS to see the benefits of the CEA programs as a mean for more impactful actions, although, as mentioned above, there remain areas that need improvement.
- PGI and CEA have always worked in close coordination, seeking synergies as they are fundamentally closely related. Future plans involve these two areas to be merged under the responsibility of one regional staff person which, on the one hand is positive as it facilitates

integration between the two actions but may be too large a portfolio given the scope of the work that needs to be done. It is likely that the merging of these two areas will be replicated in most HNS. However, it is also important that in addition to merging the positions, the same is done with the associated tools and methodologies.

- Clear coordination between CVA, migration and livelihoods is critical for the next stages of the operation. This will involve some rethinking as to whether CVA approaches are appropriate in protracted crises or whether they may create more dependency, undermining more sustainable livelihoods programs.

5. LESSONS LEARNED

The following represent a selection of key lessons identified from those involved in the operation and drawn from the interviews.

Stronger Together: Building Trust and Partnerships for Impactful Operations: Effective operations in complex environments depend on building trust, clear role definitions, and open communication from the start. Transparent, participatory planning and early alignment of priorities across stakeholders prevent relationship strains and enhance the overall impact. Institutional capacity-building, leadership development, and procedural flexibility ensure operations remain agile and effective in the face of challenges.

Proactive Diplomacy: The Key to Credibility and Strategic Influence in Humanitarian Action: A reactive approach to HD and slow political context analysis can lead to missed opportunities and perceptions of bias. Timely, well-informed strategies are essential to maintaining credibility and influence, particularly in sensitive geopolitical situations.

Beyond the Crisis: Balancing Operational Focus with Long-Term Institutional Strengthening: From the early stages of emergency operations, the IFRC and HNS should make a clear NSD strategy and prioritize long-term institutional strengthening (Governance and strategic planning).

Building for the Future: Ensuring Lasting Impact through Continuous Capacity Building: While capacity-building initiatives have been impactful, there is a need for more sustained and long-term support. Continuous training, mentorship, and technical assistance are necessary to ensure that National Societies can adapt to evolving challenges and maintain their readiness to respond.

Strengthening HNS Leadership for Effective CVA Program Implementation in Emergencies: While the IFRC directly implemented CVA programs due to the urgency of the situation, it is essential for the IFRC to invest in preparing HNS in advance of emergencies, ensuring they are ready to lead CVA programs when crises arise.

The Power of CEA in decision-making: Significant efforts have been made to implement CEA mechanisms, but it's equally important to ensure that IFRC and HNS teams fully understand how CEA data can support well-informed and effective decision-making.

Ensuring Long-Term Safeguarding: Strengthening PGI and PSEAH Mechanisms: Strengthening PGI and the mechanisms for reporting and addressing issues like SEAH and ensuring HNS leadership prioritizes PGI beyond the duration of Appeal funding is critical for long-term success and safeguarding efforts.

Proactive Collaboration and Capacity Building for Sustainable Response: Collaborating closely with local authorities, government agencies, and community organizations is essential for addressing the needs of vulnerable populations effectively. To ensure long-term success, IFRC and HNS must prioritize forming strong partnerships and improving data collection processes. Equipping staff through targeted leadership training in crisis management and multi-role coordination is equally vital for adapting to evolving emergencies and operational gaps.

Cross-Cutting Integration for Comprehensive Humanitarian Impact: PGI, CEA, and migration are critical, cross-cutting areas in humanitarian operations. However, the IFRC's current systems lack an established structure to encourage integration, often relying on individual initiative rather than institutional frameworks. To enhance operational efficiency and impact, there must be a formal system to ensure that these areas are seamlessly incorporated across all programmatic activities.

6. BEST PRACTICES

Collaborative Coordination: Strengthening Mechanisms for Aligned Stakeholder Priorities: Actively involving individual HNS and PNS through coordination mechanisms **in all impacted countries**, in reviewing and refining coordination mechanisms has improved alignment with stakeholder needs and priorities. Regular consultations, structured feedback, and clear resource allocation criteria have strengthened relationships, fostered equitable support, and enhanced operational outcomes.

Joint Operational Teams: Enhancing Communication and Collaboration Through Integrated Project Teams: Although not applied consistently, joint operational teams of IFRC staff and NS members have successfully improved communication, aligned objectives, and shared knowledge. In **Ukraine** the use of imbedded staff ensures regular meetings and collaborative planning have strengthened relationships and enhanced alignment between operational and strategic goals. Monitoring these collaborations ensures continuous improvement and adaptability in project implementation.

Inclusive Appeals and Proactive Messaging: Strengthening Humanitarian Principles and Diplomatic Relations: Inclusion of all relevant actors, such as the Russian Red Cross in this case, in appeals demonstrates a commitment to humanitarian principles. Several PNS stated that proactive and timely messaging, supported by strong information management, enhances public perception, fosters diplomatic relations, and mitigates misinformation in complex environments.

Unified Plans: Early Implementation for Greater Operational Impact: The IFRC's strategy of developing Unified plans (One Plan in Ukraine) in all **impacted countries** has produced good results in the operation and is considered positive by all the actors. However, it is essential to carry this out from the early stages of the emergency and make it more operational.

Ukraine Endowment Fund: A Model for Sustainable Funding in Emergencies": The **British Red Cross** initiative, supported by the IFRC, to create the Ukraine Endowment Fund has been an excellent mechanism for ensuring sustainable funding for the URCS in the future, and it would be appropriate to implement it systematically in all major emergencies.

Shared Leadership: Leveraging Expertise for Stronger Humanitarian Outcomes: The IFRC's practice of sharing leadership with other PNS that have greater experience and expertise in specialized development areas has been highly effective and should be continued in future operations to enhance impact and capacity-building efforts. An example of this is the collaboration with the Australian and Canadian Red Cross in driving a PGI agenda with HNS. The Slovak Red Cross

noted that shared leadership in logistics and CVA programming was an area where shared leadership has helped to ensure success.

Efficient Cash Delivery: Simplifying Self-Registration for Large-Scale Impact: The self-registration and cash delivery mechanisms have proven highly effective in streamlining processes, ensuring that large populations receive funds in the simplest and most efficient manner. An example would be the scaled up cash assistance programme implemented by the Hungarian Red Cross.

Global Learning: Systematizing CVA Mechanisms Through Cross-Context Testing: The steps taken to systematize the CVA program, including collaboration with multiple NS, analyzing lessons learned, and testing tools across various regions and contexts, represent a valuable practice for refining and expanding cash assistance delivery on a global scale.

Collaborative Leadership: Strengthening PGI Capacity and Safeguarding Mechanisms in HNS: The IFRC's collaborative approach, working with PNS to support and strengthen PGI integration, has been instrumental in increasing a number of HNS's capacity to prioritize and implement PGI initiatives. Continuing to share leadership with PNS and fostering cooperation ensures that PGI and safeguarding mechanisms are firmly established and sustainable within HNS by the end of the Appeal.

Strengthening HNS Capacity: Building CEA Expertise Through Collaborative Training: The integration of CEA in all Appeal activities has been a strong initiative, particularly in increasing HNS capacity. However, a standout practice has been the collaboration between the IFRC and PNS to build awareness and train HNS teams in CEA approaches, ensuring that community engagement is recognized as critical to enhancing the effectiveness and responsiveness of humanitarian efforts.

Strategic Right-Sizing and Transparent Operational Adjustments: The IFRC's approach to the right-sizing process has been well-managed, with effective communication and planning that minimized disruption. By documenting the process comprehensively, including its rationale and outcomes, IFRC ensured transparency and created a knowledge-sharing framework that will guide future operational adjustments and staff well-being.

Strengthening Coordination Between CVA and CEA for Effective Community Engagement: The joint collaboration between the CVA program and CEA has proven highly successful, with CVA facilitating the integration of CEA tools such as hotlines and Post-Distribution Monitoring. This model of combining programmatic areas creates a strong framework for community engagement and accountability, ensuring that the needs and feedback of affected populations are considered in real-time. The CVA cluster, which includes multiple NS, has incorporated CEA tools like hotlines and Post-Distribution Monitoring, mentioned as good practice in real-time feedback and accountability

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following list presents prioritized conclusions and associated recommendations from the MTR, highlighting key issues identified by the evaluation team. Many recommendations address multiple stakeholders (URCS, NS, PNS, IFRC) and appear across different themes, emphasizing their cross-cutting nature. Although conclusions and recommendations are categorized by Ukraine or Impacted Countries (IC) when appropriate, many apply to all countries involved in the Appeal. To clarify which stakeholder each recommendation pertains to, relevant names or “all” will be indicated in parentheses, along with whether the recommendation applies to Ukraine, IC, or both. We encourage readers to review all recommendations and make connections between related themes. General recommendations for future operations are provided at the end of this section.

7.1. SUPPORTING AND FACILITATING MEMBERSHIP AND STRATEGY COORDINATION ACROSS THE OPERATION

AGENDA FOR RENEWAL

Conclusion: While there were efforts to adhere to the principles of the AfR, the practical realities of the crisis—such as the need for centralization and donor-driven priorities—often contradicted the goals of localization, leading to a mixed response in terms of success and alignment with the AfR intended outcomes:

Recommendation: As part of the wider NSD program, **implement capacity-building initiatives** with relevant HNS to enhance their ability to engage with donors, ensuring alignment with localization principles. Additionally, establish a robust monitoring and evaluation system to assess the effectiveness of IFRC operations in relation to HNS priorities, enabling timely adjustments to strategies and strengthening partnerships for better operational outcomes **(IC; HNS)**

Conclusion: **Implementing AfR principles in conflict zones is complicated** given differing role interpretations. Addressing these challenges requires adaptable strategies that align theoretical frameworks with operational realities.

Recommendation: **Utilising context analysis research and preparedness planning**, implement adaptable strategies that consider local political, cultural, and social dynamics while regularly assessing the operational environment. Additionally, invest in training and capacity-building initiatives for local teams and HNS to ensure they can effectively apply AfR principles within their contexts. **(IFRC in collaboration with all stakeholders)**

Conclusion: Achieving the goals of the AfR **necessitates a significant cultural and behavioral shift within both the IFRC and NS**. This transformation is essential for harmonizing diverse agendas and enhancing the understanding and execution of AfR principles, particularly among surge teams. Fostering a collaborative "one team" environment, where IFRC staff are fully integrated within HNS structures, can strengthen operational effectiveness and align efforts with localization objectives. **(all)**

Recommendation: **Encourage and support staff to place additional emphasis on establishing joint operational teams** comprising both IFRC staff and NS members to work collaboratively on

specific projects. These teams should hold regular meetings and planning sessions to enhance communication and align objectives, fostering relationships and facilitating knowledge sharing. Monitoring is essential. **(IC, Ukraine; IFRC)**

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATION

Conclusion: **Additional contextual analysis and local preparedness** is needed to ensure operational effectiveness. This highlights the necessity for better situational awareness and responsiveness to the unique challenges faced in the operation, which is essential for fostering trust and effective collaboration. **(IC and Ukraine; all)**

Recommendation: **Develop targeted training** focused on improving local preparedness among HNS, ensuring they are equipped to respond effectively to emerging challenges through collaborative means with all partners. This should prioritize the development of localized response strategies that are adaptable to the evolving situation with tailored support from partners as determined through solid membership coordination. **(IC; IFRC, HNS)**

Ukraine Specific

Recommendation: **Continue to engage in ongoing contextual analyses** tailored to Ukraine's specific needs, engaging local stakeholders to ground assessments in current realities. **(Ukraine; URCS, IFRC, PNS)**

Conclusion: Ongoing skepticism from the URCS and some PNS towards the IFRC, coupled with unclear roles and complex power dynamics, has created barriers to collaboration, impacting operational strategies. Many NS perceive limited value in existing coordination structures, highlighting the need for improved communication and a reassessment of coordination mechanisms. Clearly defined responsibilities are essential to enhance cooperation and effective operational alignment between the IFRC and URCS.

Recommendation: Conduct a comprehensive review of existing coordination structures to identify gaps. Engage URCS and PNS, ensuring that revised mechanisms align with stakeholder needs. This includes implementing effective communication strategies, such as regular meetings with set agendas to clarify roles, share updates, actively listen to concerns, and collaboratively address ongoing issues. Additionally, clearly define and communicate the roles and responsibilities of the IFRC, URCS, and PNS to mitigate skepticism and enhance collaboration. While this task may be challenging, it is essential for effective coordination and building trust among all stakeholders. **(Ukraine; IFRC, URCS, PNS)**

Recommendation: Invest in identifying a suitable person to support the IFRC Ukraine office in improving collaboration with URCS and PNS delegation leadership. This individual will need to have the skills to navigate complex power dynamics and mend relationships by emphasizing the IFRC's coordination role. **(Ukraine; IFRC)**

Conclusion: The **timing of spending donor funds and the associated visibility have created public relations challenges and strained relationships with some stakeholders**, highlighting the

need for improved alignment between funding allocation and actual needs, which is crucial for maintaining trust among donors and partners.

Recommendation: While the operation has already spent a substantial proportion of funding, it is still recommended the **IFRC improve the strategy for coordinating donor funds that prioritizes transparency and effective communication**. This strategy should include regular updates to stakeholders on fund allocation and usage, ensuring that donor expectations are managed effectively. By aligning funding decisions with the actual needs of the organization and its partners, the IFRC can enhance trust and strengthen relationships with donors and other stakeholders. **(IC and Ukraine: IFRC)**

Conclusion: Increased engagement between **IFRC, PNS, and URCS leadership has been a notable success, facilitating the development of shared strategies**. However, there are **concerns about the effective communication and implementation of these agreements at the operational level**, which must be addressed to ensure alignment in practice.

Recommendation: Encourage partners to **develop and implement effective communication channels** to ensure that agreements made at the leadership level are clearly conveyed and understood at the operational level. **(Ukraine; PNS)**

Recommendation: Have all partners **establish a monitoring framework to track the implementation of agreements** between IFRC, PNS, and URCS at the operational level. Regular assessments and feedback sessions will help identify challenges and ensure that strategies are effectively aligned with on-the-ground practices. **(Ukraine; IFRC in collaboration with all stakeholders)**

Conclusion: While engagement with PNS and ICRC has improved, **ambiguity in roles regarding conflict preparedness** has led to inefficiencies. A unified approach is essential for enhancing operational effectiveness.

Recommendation: In collaboration with partners, define and communicate **clear roles and responsibilities for the IFRC, PNS, and ICRC regarding conflict preparedness**. This clarity will help mitigate ambiguity and enhance strategic coordination, ensuring that both short-term demands and long-term objectives are effectively addressed. **(Ukraine; all including ICRC)**

IFRC COORDINATION

Conclusion: The IFRC has not adequately implemented a comprehensive internal coordination and planning strategy to prioritize collective objectives and foster a cohesive organizational culture, which has contributed to ongoing challenges caused by siloed operations.

Recommendation: Link operational and technical objectives so that sectoral goals depend on collective achievements. This approach will enhance coordination, communication, and interaction across sectors, promoting a more integrated systemic process. To support this, establish and ensure the use of regular communication channels and joint initiatives between IFRC offices and ROE technical units. This should include cross-departmental meetings and collaborative project development to promote expertise sharing and strategy alignment. By eliminating silos and

recognizing cooperation as a shared success, this strategy will enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness in achieving the organization's goals. **(IC and Ukraine: IFRC)**

Conclusion: Given the extensive scope of the operation, gaps in coordinated communication has resulted in various independently engaging with the same donors, highlighting the need for standardized communication protocols to streamline interactions and prevent mixed messaging.

Recommendation: Under the leadership of the Strategic Partnerships and Resource Mobilization (SPRM) unit, implement and ensure understanding of standardized communication protocols across all departments and including country and cluster offices, to streamline interactions with donors and prevent mixed messaging. This will support a cohesive approach to donor engagement, enhancing overall effectiveness and clarity in communications. **(IC and Ukraine; IFRC)**

7.2. MANAGING HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY IN UKRAINE AND IMPACTED COUNTRIES

General/Impacted Countries

Conclusion: The IFRC's quick initiatives established key mechanisms and fora for establishing collective HD approaches facilitating effective responses to sensitive issues impacting the Movements integrity and better positioning NS to engage governments and other external stakeholders.

Recommendation: The IFRC should continue to focus on developing strategic engagement plans that anticipate potential challenges and opportunities for timely intervention, alongside implementing a robust political context analysis process for countries involved in Appeals. Establishing dedicated teams or resources to monitor political developments and provide real-time insights has proven successful and ensured that HD efforts are well-informed and responsive. **(IC and Ukraine; IFRC)**

Recommendation: IFRC should utilize operation funds to document the evolution of the HD programme so that lessons learned can be adapted to future large scale disasters.

Conclusion: While the IFRC has reinforced the auxiliary role of HNS, there is a risk of losing the significant gains made without **sustained capacity-building efforts and funding**.

Recommendation: The IFRC should continue with ongoing support and training programs aimed at strengthening the auxiliary role of NS and enhancing early engagement with key stakeholders. These initiatives must utilize the diverse range of HD tools developed during the operation to provide continuous capacity-building resources, including training, mentorship, and technical assistance for both NS and IFRC staff. Focus areas should include improving understanding of Fundamental Principles, IHL, the use of emblems, and emerging humanitarian issues and political dynamics. Equipping teams with the necessary tools and knowledge will ensure that NS can effectively respond to evolving challenges and maintain readiness in their response efforts. Sustained investment is essential to fully capitalize on initial capacity-building efforts made and uphold the auxiliary role and HD gains achieved by NS throughout the operation. **(IC and Ukraine; IFRC in collaboration with all stakeholders)**

Recommendation: It is imperative that the ROE place significant energy on securing post Appeal funding for HD in order to ensure the sustainability of progress since the beginning of the operation.

Conclusion: The IFRC's commitment to **effective and timely messaging has significantly improved public perception** and facilitated cooperation with various stakeholders, including governments and embassies. The emphasis on consistent communication across the membership has fostered a cohesive narrative, enhancing the overall impact of HD efforts. This unified approach has been crucial in addressing key humanitarian principles and has strengthened the recognition of the IFRC and NS as highly credible humanitarian actors.

Recommendation: The IFRC **should continue to prioritize consistent, timely messaging** to enhance public perception, stakeholder cooperation, and reinforce its credibility, along with HNS, as humanitarian actors. A unified approach, **supported by ongoing training and resources**, will strengthen communication and HD efforts across the organization. **(IC and Ukraine; IFRC in collaboration with all stakeholders)**

Ukraine Specific

Recommendation: During regular scheduled IFRC facilitated global membership coordination meeting with NS leadership around the Ukraine operation, include **discussions on collective HD strategy** development aimed at alignment on humanitarian priorities and collective action. **(Ukraine; IFRC)**

Recommendation: Encourage and support the URCS to **develop a formal coordination agenda with key government ministries**, including regular meetings to discuss ongoing initiatives and identify new opportunities for collaboration, ensuring URCS maintains operational independence while supporting government efforts. **(Ukraine; IFRC, URCS)**

Recommendation: Support the URCS to conduct a **comprehensive review of current logistical operations** within the next six months to identify areas for improvement, aiming to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of delivering humanitarian aid to hard-to-reach areas and thus increasing their auxiliary profile. **(Ukraine; IFRC, URCS)**

7.3. NATIONAL SOCIETY AND BRANCH DEVELOPMENT

Ukraine-specific

Conclusion: The One Plan for Ukraine is a document that has helped the Movement understand the intentions or expectations of the URCS; however, it is more of a declaration of intent and a marketing document, and the branches did not participate in its development.

Recommendation: IFRC should continue supporting URCS in **reviewing the One Plan into a more comprehensive, actionable operational plan and ensure URCS involves the branches** in its development. **(Ukraine; IFRC, URCS, PNS)**

Conclusion: **All the HNS and URCS have developed significantly thanks to the Appeal.** All of them have highly appreciated the support provided by the IFRC and PNS in capacity building in logistics, branch development, volunteering, and preparing the branches to respond to

emergencies. However, they all indicated they still need support from the IFRC or (other) PNS. In addition, it has been very positive that the **IFRC has shared leadership with (other) PNS** with more experience and knowledge in some areas of development.

Recommendation: In conjunction with PNS and as a means to support a shared leadership approach, support URCS to **scale up the Branch and Volunteer Development (BRaVO) program** through dedicated funding and technical support to engage additional branches. Set a target number of branches to implement the model at least to the end of the Appeal. **(Ukraine; IFRC, URCS, PNS)**

Recommendation: Adopting a shared leadership approach, support the URCS in the development and training of additional Inter-Regional Offices. **(Ukraine; IFRC, URCS)**

General/Impacted Countries

Conclusion: The great development in capacity of the URCS and HNS is evident; however, **there is a risk that many of these advances will be lost once funding is reduced**. Since the URCS and HNS have no clear strategies for the retention of key staff and no mechanisms in place for internal fundraising to allow for adequate sustainability of the URCS and HNS, there is a risk that many of these advances will be lost once funding diminishes.

Recommendation: The IFRC should continue to **support the HNS in implementing the activities defined in the Unified plans** to enable them to retain the talent they have developed. **(IC; IFRC, HNS)**

Recommendation: Further development of **resource mobilization mechanisms will be fundamental to achieving an adequate transition** and guaranteeing the sustainability of HNS actions. **(IC; IFRC, HNS)**

Recommendation: The IFRC should continue supporting URCS and HNS in impacted countries through **a model of collaboration and shared leadership with PNS**. The IFRC should focus on the role of coordinating and supporting HNS in finding out which PNS have the most knowledge for support; given the context and type of HNS, the **domestic departments of PNS have fundamental knowledge and experience** to support the growth of HNS involved in this Appeal. **(IC and Ukraine; IFRC in collaboration with all stakeholders)**

7.4. CASH AND VOUCHER ASSISTANCE

Conclusion: **The success of CVA has been unanimously recognized**. The main key elements that made the massive use of CVA programming possible were self-registration and the use of MoneyGram to distribute cash. At the same time, there have been significant challenges in issues such as legal considerations, HNS's ownership of the CVA program, and volunteers' participation and involvement.

Recommendation: Given the priority of CVA, the IFRC should incorporate in the training [Strengthening CVA expertise](#), how to address legal considerations, such as data protection and taxation issues. **(IC; IFRC)**

Conclusion: The **IFRC is taking appropriate steps to systematize the tools** developed for this emergency and adapt them to the characteristics and content that exist in different parts of the world.

Recommendation: Ensure that **Access RC tool is easily adaptable** to different legal contexts and types of emergencies. **(IC; IFRC)**

Recommendation: Create a centralized repository for sharing best practices and lessons learned from successful CVA initiatives accessible to all HNS and updated regularly to facilitate knowledge sharing and continuous improvement in CVA implementation. **(IC; IFRC)**

Conclusion: **IFRC has provided very good to excellent support to HNS** in developing CVA capacities. However, at the beginning of the operation, IFRC focused on implementation, and the HNS had more of a supporting role. The Appeal did not develop in all HNS-specific mechanisms yet, because the preparation for CVA is a 3-4 year journey and the Appeal continues supporting the HNS in developing these mechanisms.

Recommendation: **HNS of impacted countries should continue developing their own tools with the support of the IFRC** and based on the AccessRC tool. **(IC; IFRC, HNS)**

7.5. PROTECTION, GENDER AND INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Conclusion: The IFRC has made great efforts in this Appeal to establish mechanisms to ensure that the **CEA approach is considered in all Appeal activities**; however, the IFRC does not have a clear mechanism to ensure that CEA inputs are considered in decision-making.

Recommendation: The IFRC should develop a tool that allows the CEA and operations team to track recommendations and feedback from communities and affected populations and monitor whether or not changes have been made based on these recommendations. **(IC; IFRC, HNS)**

Conclusion: The lack of complaints regarding SEAH in most HNS and URCS leads us to conclude that the existing mechanisms are not adequate and should be strengthened.

Recommendation: **Support HNS in developing complaint mechanisms** that ensure all sensitive complaints regarding SEAH are reported and appropriately investigated, **and the mechanisms are known and accessible by the affected population, volunteers, and HNS staff.** **(IC; IFRC, HNS)**

Conclusion: The **HNS highly value the IFRC's support in CEA and PGI**. However, there are doubts that HNS leadership considers this area a priority, and once the Appeal funds are finalized, HNS will allocate its own resources to these areas.

Recommendation: Implement measures to **support the long-term sustainability of PGI and CEA** approaches, including capacity-building and resource allocation. This should also include developing targeted advocacy strategies to emphasize the importance of CEA and PGI among all HNS, fostering a collective commitment to prioritizing these initiatives. **(IC; IFRC, HNS)**

Conclusion: **Cooperation between the IFRC's Geneva and regional offices and PNS has been very positive in the areas of PGI and safeguarding**, where IFRC has shared leadership with the British

Red Cross (safeguarding) and the Swedish Red Cross, Australian Red Cross and Canadian Red Cross (PGI).

Recommendation: The IFRC should continue to **foster cooperation and share leadership with other PNS in the area of PGI and safeguarding** to ensure that by the end of the Appeal, all HNS have adequate PGI and safeguarding mechanisms in place. **(IC; IFRC, HNS, PNS)**

7.6. OPERATIONAL ADAPTATION, SCALE-UP, AND RIGHT-SIZING PROCESSES.

Gaps In Services and Programs

Conclusion: HNS must ensure that support extends to host populations alongside Ukrainian refugees. Inadequate funding complicates efforts, and the integration of vulnerable local populations is vital for promoting social cohesion and successful integration.

Recommendation: The IFRC should support HNS in collaborating closely with local authorities, community organizations, and government agencies to better understand the needs of vulnerable populations. By formalizing partnerships and working together, they can develop and implement targeted, large-scale initiatives in areas such as mental health, MHPSS, and CVA, fostering integration and support for all impacted communities. **(IC; IFRC, HNS)**

Recommendation: As part of the ongoing support IFRC should work with NS to further develop inclusive support programs that specifically address the needs of both host populations and Ukrainian refugees. This includes identifying funding sources and partnerships to ensure adequate resources are allocated to promote social cohesion and facilitate successful integration. **(IC; IFRC, HNS)**

Conclusion: The ongoing humanitarian response to the Ukraine crisis faces significant challenges, including gaps in data and assessment processes that hinder understanding of the diverse needs of affected populations. Additionally, there is growing concern over diminishing support for underserved groups, such as LGBTI+ individuals and the Roma population, as the focus lay with Ukrainian refugees. A more coordinated approach is essential to effectively address the needs of all affected populations.

Recommendation: IFRC should collaborate with partners to improve data collection and assessment processes to better understand the diverse needs of affected populations. This includes investing in tools and training that enable more comprehensive and timely data analysis to inform humanitarian responses. **(IC; IFRC)**

Recommendation: IFRC should work with HNS to establish more coordinated collaborative approaches with other humanitarian actors and stakeholders to address identified service gaps and ensure that the needs of all those populations that the HNS has prioritised for programming are met. This is, of course, dependent on available resources. **(IC; IFRC, HNS)**

Conclusion: Insufficient data analysis and impact forecasting limit the ability to identify emerging needs among underserved populations. Conducting thorough needs assessments is crucial for ensuring that all vulnerable groups receive appropriate support.

Recommendation: The IFRC should strengthen data analysis and impact forecasting by conducting thorough needs assessments to identify emerging needs among underserved populations, ensuring that selected vulnerable groups, based on HNS programming, receive appropriate support. **(IC; IFRC, HNS)**

Flexibility, Scaling and Right Sizing

Conclusion: The IFRC's adaptability and leadership have been pivotal in successfully scaling operations to address the evolving needs of the conflict. By integrating efforts across impacted countries and enhancing the roles of HNS, the operation has fostered significant investment and respect for the HNS. The transformation from traditional activities to impactful initiatives—such as MHPSS and CVA programs—demonstrates a marked improvement in capacity and responsiveness, highlighting the effective collaboration between the IFRC and its partners in addressing urgent humanitarian needs.

Recommendation: IFRC should work with HNS to develop and formalize partnerships with government agencies and other stakeholders in impacted countries to implement large-scale projects, particularly in areas like mental health, MHPSS and CVA. This can enhance resource mobilization, increase funding opportunities, and strengthen the capacity of HNS to respond to humanitarian needs. **(IC; IFRC, HNS)**

Conclusion: The IFRC has demonstrated substantial flexibility and responsiveness to the evolving context of the Ukraine operation, developing agile mechanisms to adapt resource allocation to shifting needs, such as refugee movements. Despite some disorganization, this adaptability has been critical in managing the operation effectively.

Recommendation: Continue to refine and strengthen agile mechanisms for resource allocation, ensuring the IFRC can swiftly respond to evolving needs, such as refugee movements, while effectively managing the operation. **(IC; IFRC)**

Recommendation: Implement structured communication channels to improve coordination and reduce disorganization, ensuring all teams remain aligned and informed during operational adjustments. **(IC; IFRC)**

Conclusion: The rightsizing and scaling down of operations as the emergency response slows present significant challenges in aligning staffing with reduced budgets while maintaining support for NS. The phased implementation of the right-sizing process has been conducted transparently, with substantial input from IFRC delegations and offices, which has minimized disruptions to programming and allowed staff adequate notice of their status. Although some delays in decision-making occurred, they were essential for thorough analysis and planning, leading to more informed outcomes that balance staff well-being, budget constraints, and operational requirements.

Recommendation: Continue to engage IFRC delegations and offices throughout the right-sizing process to gather input and maintain transparency, ensuring that staff well-being and operational requirements are balanced effectively. **((IC; IFRC)**

Recommendation: In light of rightsizing, it is crucial that the ROE assess its capacity to **ensure that the quality of technical assistance remains high**, and that NS continue to receive the support they need.

Recommendation: Document the right-sizing process comprehensively to ensure transparency, facilitate knowledge sharing, and provide a clear reference for future operational adjustments. This documentation should outline the rationale, steps taken, and outcomes to enhance understanding and inform best practices. **(IC; IFRC)**

Degree Of Integration and The Synergies Reached in The Implementation of CEA, PGI, CVA, MHPSS and Migration Interventions.

Conclusion: The IFRC lacks a working system that promotes the integration of cross-cutting areas such as PGI, CEA, and migration. Current integration efforts rely heavily on the initiative of individual delegates rather than on established structures and systems.

Recommendation: The IFRC should create a clear system to promote the integration of cross-cutting areas like PGI, CEA, and migration. This system should provide guidelines and resources to support teamwork and ensure consistent collaboration among staff, rather than relying on individual initiative. **(IC; IFRC)**

Conclusion: The collaboration between the CEA team and the CVA program illustrates effective integration practices that enable the exploration of CEA issues. However, the planned merger of PGI and CEA responsibilities under one regional staff person, while potentially enhancing integration, may become overwhelming due to the scope of work involved. It is also crucial to align tools and methodologies alongside this structural change to ensure successful implementation.

Recommendation: To enhance integration and ensure successful implementation, the IFRC should clearly define the roles and responsibilities associated with the merger of PGI and CEA under one regional staff person. Additionally, it is essential to provide adequate support, including aligning tools and methodologies, to prevent the workload from becoming overwhelming and jeopardizing impact. **(IC; IFRC)**

8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE OPERATIONS

Not all recommendations arising from the MTR can be implemented, given the remaining timeframe of the operation. Notwithstanding, the following suggestions are important for future reflection as they address fundamental issues, some of which are linked to several of the challenges identified in the report.

Recommendation: A prevailing silo mentality within the IFRC indicates a lack of collaboration across departments, which undermines overall operational effectiveness. Fostering **a culture of collaboration** is essential for aligning efforts toward common goals and enhancing the organization's humanitarian impact.

Recommendation: From the onset of any operation, **establish regular communication mechanisms** and feedback loops between the IFRC and NS to enhance situational awareness and promote timely responses, strengthening trust and collaboration.

Recommendation: Building on existing documents produced early on in the operation, ensure there **are clear definitions and communication regarding the roles and responsibilities of the cluster office and ROE technical units**. This should involve creating a comprehensive roles and responsibilities document that outlines specific functions, reporting lines, and expectations for each unit. By clarifying these roles, the IFRC can enhance accountability and operational efficiency, reducing confusion and inefficiencies within the organization.

Recommendation: As much as is feasible, the IFRC should consider **implementing a systematic framework for conducting thorough needs assessments** and data analysis to enhance the identification of emerging needs among underserved populations. This framework should prioritize regular data collection, impact forecasting, and stakeholder engagement to ensure that all vulnerable groups receive appropriate and timely support.

Recommendation: The IFRC should implement a **structured onboarding** and training program for all staff involved in appeals, both short-term and long-term, that emphasizes clarity on individual roles in fostering collaboration and integration across teams. This will ensure effective operations within a cohesive framework.

Recommendation: **Develop and deliver targeted training programs** aimed at facilitating a cultural and behavioural shift through focus on enhancing understanding of AfR principles and promoting best practices for collaboration among surge teams.

Recommendation: Provide targeted **training programs for leaders** within the IFRC and NS to further develop skills in crisis management, adaptability, and multi-role coordination. This will ensure that staff are equipped to effectively respond to evolving emergency situations and fill operational gaps swiftly.

Recommendation: Ensure the planning process, as early as possible from the onset of an operation, prioritizes both immediate needs but with **additional focus on long-term goals, in the case of countries** that are addressing fewer emergency related needs. This approach should involve regular assessments of operational effectiveness, as well as ongoing collaborative planning sessions with all partners to ensure alignment and improve overall coordination.

Recommendation: From the early stages of operations, IFRC should develop a strategy in coordination with the NS **that includes strengthening the governance and strategic planning**.

Recommendation: During the first phases of an operation, the **IFRC should focus not only on strengthening operational areas, but also strategic strengthening**, such as strategic planning and governance.

Recommendation: IFRC should encourage the **commitment of NS leaders** to ensure ownership of CVA programs by utilizing the Roadmap for CVA preparedness as an effective methodology.

Recommendation: IFRC, in coordination and collaboration with the legal department of the NS, should **prepare legal reports on data protection and taxation before the activities start**. This report should be shared and discussed with the NS to ensure that all actions comply **with each country's legal requirements**.

Recommendation: Before the CVA operations start, **the NS and its volunteers should discuss and agree upon their role in the operation**; a clear role should be found for them, as volunteering should be one of the central pillars of all NS actions.

Recommendation: The IFRC should conduct a comprehensive review of CVA approaches in protracted crises to evaluate their impact on dependency versus sustainable livelihoods. This review should inform adjustments to CVA strategies, ensuring that they promote long-term self-sufficiency and do not inadvertently undermine livelihoods for affected populations.

ANNEX

ANNEX I: LIST OF LITERATURE REVIEWED

MGR65002 Documents:

- Preliminary appeal
- Emergency Appeal
- Revised appeal
- Operation Update 1-09
- Two years report (Operation Update n°10)
- Operation Strategy, March 2022
- Revised Operation Strategy, May 2022
- Revised Operational Strategy, June 2022

End of Mission Reports

- Violaine Des Rosiers, IFRC Operations Manager, Ukraine May 2022-May 2024
- Slovakia Ops Manager (April 2024)

NS response plans

- Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Georgina, Greece. Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia and Türkiye.
- Ukraine One plan 2023-2025
- Ukraine Winterization Strategy 2023-2024

Movement Documents

- Sevilla Agreement 2.0

Context analysis

- Humanitarian gap, IFRC, Moldova office and Moldova RC, post-distribution monitoring, May 2023
- IOM Ukraine operation 2 years report.
- IOM Internal Displacement Report— General Population Survey Round 15
- UNHCR, Ukraine Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan (Jan – Dec 2024)

Operational documents:

- HD approach and resourcing in Ukraine and impacted countries, Feb 2022- Oct 2023
- CVA, Lessons learned workshop report, Budapest 2024
- Road map to CVA preparedness, IFRC and ICRC
- CEA department report 2024

- IFRC Framework for Evaluations
- IFRC Desk Review Report, January 2024
- Investigating Safe Data Sharing and Systems Interoperability in the Humanitarian Cash Assistance
- Deduplication of people, families or households

Ukraine

- BraVo 2024-2025 recovery and sustainability
- BraVoiE evaluation report, URCS commissioned by Danish RC, April 2024
- Information and recommendations for using the Integrity Line of URCS
- URCS report on feedback from conflict affected people and communities, January-March 2024, CEA Unit, URCS

ANNEX II: KEY MID-TERM REVIEW QUESTIONS

Assess how well is IFRC Secretariat supporting and facilitating membership and strategic coordination across the operation.

- Both for Ukraine and Impacted Countries, is the role of the IFRC Secretariat aligned with the expectations of the Agenda for Renewal positioning IFRC as a principled and trusted network which is owned and supported by its membership? Should this role evolve going forward?
- In the case of the Impacted Countries, what were the key elements of Membership Coordination particularly in a context of developed countries? What worked well? What needs to be strengthened within the next 2 years?
- Has IFRC enabled NS to advance the so-called “localization agenda” in their respective contexts?
- Has this operation contributed to increasing the investment and the respect for the role of implementing NS?
- Was the IFRC Secretariat a fair and strategic broker facilitating shared leadership among the membership? Was it able to build a collective intelligence around this operation, humanitarian needs and a strategic collective direction?
- Was there a clear and discernible ‘value add’ of the IFRC Secretariat to URCS and other Movement partners in the collective response?
- In both Ukraine and Impacted Countries, the contexts were volatile and constantly changing, particularly at the outset. How well did the IFRC Secretariat navigate these fast-moving conditions? Did it demonstrate agility, flexibility and consistency?

Assess how well IFRC and its member National Societies have managed to pursue humanitarian diplomacy in Ukraine and Impacted Countries

- Has the IFRC supported URCS and its members to undertake, effective humanitarian diplomacy in Ukraine?
- Has IFRC supported HNS leading role in using their HD agenda with their authorities and donors?
- Has IFRC contributed appropriately to reinforcing the auxiliary role of National Societies in Ukraine and the impacted countries? Has this reinforcement of the auxiliary role been guided by their commitment to the Fundamental Principles?
- Has IFRC made appropriate use of data and analysis in its humanitarian diplomacy? Has it provided its membership with the relevant information and analysis to be able to advocate to their governments?

- How well has IFRC and its member NS managed to work together to have “one message, many messengers...” within the Ukraine appeal? Were internal and external messages properly developed, timely distributed and widely used by the network?

Assess the IFRC role in National Society and branch Development (including organizational development and capacity building).

- How much progress have the HNS made in their NSD over the course of the appeal? What were the areas (Logistics, Volunteering, Branches, Finance, Governance, etc.) where progress was stronger? Which areas will require additional efforts?
- Are National Societies’ branches in Ukraine and the impacted countries better prepared today, than they were 2 years ago, to respond to a future crisis?
- How effectively did the IFRC contribute to this progress?
- Did IFRC support the leadership of the HNS in designing and implementing their own NSD priorities and activities? Did it effectively support the concept of shared leadership to NSD support?
- What steps should be taken in the coming 2 years to consolidate and enhance NSD outcomes across the NS in impacted countries?

Assess how IFRC and its membership are transforming the Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) tools and systems developed to respond in this operation into global systems and tools that will be adopted in other future large scale humanitarian operations.

- Cash programming at scale has been one of the key successes of this operation, enabling us to provide support to hundreds of thousands. What were the key elements that made possible the massive use of CVA programming? What role did the IFRC Secretariat play? What were the challenges faced?
- Has the IFRC appropriately contributed to the strength of the HNS in CVA programming? Are they now better prepared to be leaders in their contexts? Can HNS utilize and integrate the systems and tools developed for their domestic programs and operations?
- Are the necessary steps being taken, by IFRC and its membership, to systematize and institutionalize the CVA learnings, systems and tools developed in this response?
- The CVA Internal Review found that IFRC systems remained a key blocker to rapid and scalable CVA delivery. Is the IFRC Secretariat taking the steps to address these obstacles so that IFRC can become a true leader in CVA in the future?
- What were the difficulties faced by IFRC and its NS to align our CVA programs to the authorities’ initiatives and legislation, particularly in impacted countries, and what would be the key recommendations to be adopted by IFRC to mitigate these challenges in the future?

- Was IFRC and NS engagement in the humanitarian cluster system good enough to ensure proper coordination and alignment between our CVA programs and those of other actors? To what extent the cluster system has excluded NS from key authorities' decisions on CVA programming?

Assess the effectiveness and impact of IFRC interventions in Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) and Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) in impacted countries.

- Are our community engagement activities (CEA) making sure that the people we want to serve opinions are actually heard and used to design and guide our work? Are we truly acting based on their feedback and needs? Have HNS incorporated CEA approaches into their day-to-day activities thanks to the support of the IFRC?
- Are CEA efforts process oriented (meeting certain requirements) or results oriented (defining our interventions)? What could be the recommendations to improve in the remaining years of the appeal?
- Was IFRC's shared leadership approach to supporting HNS development in Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) and Safeguarding in Ukraine and impacted countries appropriate and effective?

Assess the IFRC and National Societies operational adaptation to the evolving context and needs and how well the scale up and right-sizing processes have been managed in impacted countries

- Bearing in mind the mandate and capacity of the NS in each country, are we neglecting any key sector or group of people among the affected populations? Given the limited available resources, are there cost efficient ways to address those neglected needs?
- How effective was the IFRC scaling up its longer-term capacities and presence in impacted countries? How well is currently being managed the process to adapt IFRC capacities in the impacted countries to the evolving demands of the NS? What are the lessons learned from these two processes?
- Assess the degree of integration and the synergies reached in the implementation of CEA, PGI, CVA, MHPSS and Migration interventions and provide recommendations for the remaining 2 years of implementation?

ANNEX III: LIST OF KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS AND PARTICIPANTS IN THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Personal names have been removed for publication purposes.

ANNEX IV: FIELD TRIP AGENDA

Date	Field Visit	Consultants
28/08 to 30/08	Europe Regional Office	Jan Gelfand and Jorge Menendez
28/08	Hungarian Red Cross	Jan Gelfand and Jorge Menendez
2/09 – 4/09	Ukraine Country Office PNS in URCS Ukrainian Red Cross	Jan Gelfand and Jorge Menendez
5/09 -6/09	Ukraine Country Office Ukrainian Red Cross	Jan Gelfand
5/09 -6/09	Poland Cluster Office Polish Red Cross	Jorge Menendez
7/09	URCS - Lviv branch	Jan Gelfand
9/09	Slovak Red Cross	Jan Gelfand

ANNEX V: QUESTIONARIES SURVEYS

A. IFRC Staff Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

This survey is part of an external review of Ukraine and Impacted Countries emergency appeal. The information gathered in this survey will only be seen by the independent consultants and will not be directly shared with IFRC.

This survey is to be answered by staff from IFRC who have been involved in the Ukraine and impacted countries' Emergency Appeal.

Responses will be collated, and only summary findings will be included in the report. The survey will close on September 14. Please complete your response before this time.

By completing this survey, you agree that the information you provide can be used for the evaluation. If you have any questions about the review or the survey, or you wish to provide additional information, please email the consultant Jorge Menéndez, at jmenendez@oneginconsulting.com.

This survey has 23 questions. If you choose to answer only some questions, please click 'next' until you reach the last page. You can go back and change answers at any time during the survey.

We thank you in advance, and we apologize that the survey is available only in English. Because of the numerous languages spoken in the countries involved in the Appeal, it has not been possible to provide translations.

1 What is your role in the Appeal?

Assistant

Cash & Voucher Assistance (CVA)

Communications

Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA)

Coordinator

Delegate

Embedded in the NS

Finance & Administration

Global Humanitarian Services and Supply Chain Management

Head of Country Cluster Delegation

Head of Delegation

Head of Office

Human Resources

Humanitarian Diplomacy

Information Management & Information Technology

Manager

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

Migrations

Movement or Membership Coordination

National Society Development

Operations

Operations Manager
Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
Programme Coordinator
Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI)
Regional Head
Risk Management
Security
Senior Management Team
Strategic Partnerships and Resource Mobilization
Other

2 Which office do you work for?

IFRC Secretariat, Geneva
Europe Regional Office
Balkans
Baltics
Bulgaria
Georgia
Hungary
Kyrgyzstan
Moldova
Romania
Russia
Slovakia
Türkiye
Ukraine
Other

3 Do you consider the IFRC's role in your country aligned with the expectations of the Agenda for Renewal, positioning the IFRC as a principled and trusted network owned and supported by its membership?

Completely aligned with the expectations
Mostly aligned with the expectations
Moderately aligned with the expectations
Slightly aligned with the expectations
Not at all aligned with the expectations
Comments: _____

4 Please rate the IFRC's work in enabling NS to advance the so-called "localization agenda" in their respective contexts.

Excellent
Very good
Good

Fair
Poor
I don't know
Comments: _____

5 Has this operation contributed to increasing the investment and respect for the role of implementing NS?

Yes, there has been a significant increase
Yes, there has been an increase; however, more things could be done
No, it has not been an increase
I don't know
Comments: _____

6 Was the IFRC Secretariat, in the Ukraine response operation, a fair and strategic broker that facilitates shared leadership among the membership?

Yes
No
I don't know
Comments: _____

7 Please rate the IFRC Secretariat's 'value add' to Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) and other Movement partners in the collective response

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know
Please detail the areas in which IFRC provides the most value added

8 How well did the IFRC adapt its response to this volatile and changing context?

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know
Comments: _____

9 Please rate the IFRC's agility, flexibility, and consistency in this emergency

Excellent
Very good

Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know
Comments: _____

10 Please rate the support provided by IFRC to the URCS and its members in undertaking effective humanitarian diplomacy in Ukraine

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know

Areas to improve or lessons learned

11 Please rate IFRC's contribution to reinforcing the auxiliary role of National Societies in Ukraine and the impacted countries

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know

Areas to improve or lessons learned

12 Has IFRC provided the relevant information and analysis to advocate to the Governments?

Yes, IFRC provides all the relevant information
Yes, IFRC provides relevant information; however, some relevant information was missing or late
No
I don't know

Areas to improve or lessons learned

13 Please rate the work of IFRC and its member NS to work together to have "one message, many messengers..." within the Ukraine appeal

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know

Comments: _____

14 How much progress has the Host National Society (HNS) made in their National Society Development (NSD) over the course of the appeal?

Major progress
Significant progress
Moderate progress
Minimal progress
No progress
Comments: _____

15 From a National Society Development (NSD) point of view, in which areas have the Host National Society (HNS) made the most progress?

Logistics
Volunteering
Branches
Finance
Governance
Other

16 From a National Society Development (NSD) point of view, in what areas do Host National Society (HNS) need additional support?

Logistics
Volunteering
Branches
Finance
Governance
Other

17 Are the HNS Branches better prepared now than before the crisis started?

Yes, the branches are prepared to respond to any crisis
Yes, the branches are better prepared than before the crisis started; however, the branches need support
No, the branches are not better prepared
I don't know
Areas to improve or lessons learned

18 Please rate the IFRC's contribution to preparing the branches of HNS to respond to emergencies

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know
Areas to improve or lessons learned

19 How well does IFRC support the leadership of the HNS in designing and implementing their own NSD priorities and activities?

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Areas to improve or lessons learned

20 How well does IFRC support HNS in incorporating Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) into HNS day-to-day activities and programmes?

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Any recommendation to improve the incorporation of CEA in the HNS

21 How well does IFRC support the Host National Society (HNS) in incorporating Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) and safeguarding into HNS day-to-day activities and programmes?

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Any recommendation to improve the incorporation of PGI in the HNS

22 Do you consider that any key sectors or groups of people among the affected population are being neglected?

Yes

No

I don't know

Comment

23 Do you have any recommendations on how to improve IFRC activities?

B. Host National Society Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

This survey is part of an external review of Ukraine and Impacted Countries emergency appeal. The information gathered in this survey will only be seen by the independent consultants and will not be directly shared with IFRC.

This survey is to be answered by staff from Host National Societies (HNS) that have received support from Ukraine and impacted countries' Emergency Appeal.

Responses will be collated, and only summary findings will be included in the report. The survey will close on August 15. Please complete your response before this time.

By completing this survey, you agree that the information you provide can be used for the evaluation. If you have any questions about the review or the survey, or you wish to provide additional information, please email the consultant Jorge Menéndez, at jmenendez@oneginconsulting.com.

This survey has 28 questions. If you choose to answer only some questions, please click 'next' until you reach the last page. You can go back and change answers at any time during the survey.

We thank you in advance, and we apologize that the survey is available only in English. Because of the numerous languages spoken in the countries involved in the Appeal, it has not been possible to provide translations.

Please feel free to share this survey amongst relevant staff from your National Society staff who have participated in the operation.

1 Which National Society do you work for?

2 What is your position?

3 Do you consider the role of the IFRC Secretariat in your country to be aligned with the expectations of the Agenda for Renewal, positioning IFRC as a principled and trusted network owned and supported by its membership?

Completely aligned with the expectations

Mostly aligned with the expectations

Moderately aligned with the expectations

Slightly aligned with the expectations

Not at all aligned with the expectations

Comments

4 Please rate the IFRC's work in enabling NS to advance the so-called "localization agenda" in their respective contexts

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Comments

5 Has this operation contributed to increasing investment and respect for your role of implementing NS?

Yes, there has been a significant increase

Yes, there has been an increase; however, more things could be done

No, it has not been an increase

I don't know

Comments

6 Was the IFRC Secretariat a fair and strategic broker that facilitates shared leadership among the membership in the Ukraine response operation?

Yes

No

I don't know

Comments

7 Please rate the IFRC Secretariat's 'value add' to the Ukraine Red Cross Society (URCS) and other Movement partners in the collective response

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Please detail the areas in which IFRC provides the most value added

8 How well did the IFRC adapt its response to this volatile and changing context?

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Comments

9 Please rate the IFRC's agility, flexibility, and consistency in this emergency

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Comments

10 Please evaluate the support provided by IFRC to your NS in carrying out effective humanitarian diplomacy

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know
Areas to improve or lessons learned

11 How well has IFRC supported your leading role in using the humanitarian diplomacy agenda with the authorities and donors?

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know
Areas to improve or lessons learned

12 Please rate IFRC's contribution to reinforcing the auxiliary role of your National Society in your country

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know
Areas to improve or lessons learned

13 Has IFRC provided your National Society with the relevant information and analysis to effectively advocate to your government?

Yes, IFRC provides all the relevant information
Yes, IFRC provides relevant information; however, some relevant information was missing or late
No
I don't know
Areas to improve or lessons learned

14 Please rate the work of IFRC and its member NS managed to work together to have "one message, many messengers..." within the Ukraine appeal

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor

I don't know

Comments

15 How much progress have your HNS made in National Society Development (NSD) over the course of the appeal?

Major progress

Significant progress

Moderate progress

Minimal progress

No progress

Comments

16 From a National Society Development (NSD) point of view, in which areas have your National Society made the most progress?

Logistics

Volunteering

Branches

Finance

Governance

Other

17 From a National Society Development (NSD) point of view, what areas of your National Society need additional support?

Logistics

Volunteering

Branches

Finance

Governance

Other

18 Please rate the IFRC's contribution to preparing the branches of your National Society to respond to emergencies

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Areas to improve or lessons learned

19 How well does IFRC support your NS in designing and implementing your own National Society Development (NSD) priorities and activities?

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Areas to improve or lessons learned

20 How well does IFRC support your National Society in incorporating Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) into your day-to-day activities and programmes?

Yes, we have the capacity to implement a large-scale CVA programme without the support of IFRC or other PNS

Yes, we have the capacity to implement a large-scale CVA programme; however, we still need some support from IFRC or other PNS

No, we do not have the capacity and knowledge to implement large-scale CVA programmes

I don't know

21 How well does IFRC support your NS in developing CVA capacities and knowledge in your NS?

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Any recommendation to improve the incorporation of CVA in the HNS

22 Have the IFRC and your NS faced difficulties in adapting CVA programs to the authorities' initiatives and legislation?

Yes

No

I don't know

23 Has your National Society been involved in the CVA cluster?

Yes

No

I don't know

24 Does your NS incorporate Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) in your NS day-to-day activities?

Yes, the NS uses the CEA Approaches in a systematic manner in all the projects and programs

Yes, the NS uses the CEA Approaches in some programs and projects - however, not in all of them

No, NS does not use the CEA Approaches in the programs and projects.

I don't know

25 How well does IFRC support your National Society in incorporating Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) in your day-to-day activities and programmes?

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Any recommendation to improve the incorporation of CEA in the HNS

26 How well does IFRC support your National Society in incorporating Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) in your day-to-day activities and programmes?

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Any recommendation to improve the incorporation of PGI in the HNS

27 Do you consider that any key sectors or groups of people among the affected population are being neglected?

Yes

No

I don't know

Comment

28 Do you have any recommendations on how to improve IFRC activities?

C. Partner National Society Survey

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

This survey is part of an external review of Ukraine and Impacted Countries emergency appeal. The information gathered in this survey will only be seen by the independent consultants and will not be directly shared with IFRC.

This survey is being completed by Partner National Societies (PNS) that have participated in or are currently participating in Ukraine and impacted countries' Emergency Appeal or are supporting the Host National Societies (HNS) bilaterally.

Responses will be collated, and only summary findings will be included in the report. The survey will close on September 8. Please complete your response before this time.

By completing this survey, you agree that the information you provide can be used for the evaluation. If you have any questions about the review or the survey, or you wish to provide additional information, please email the consultant Jorge Menéndez, at jmenendez@oneginconsulting.com.

This survey has 25 questions. If you choose to answer only some questions, please click 'next' until you reach the last page. You can go back and change answers at any time during the survey. Please feel free to share this survey amongst relevant staff of your National Society staff who have participated in the operation.

We thank you in advance.

1 Which National Society do you work for?

2 What is your position?

3 What kind of support are you providing?

Bilateral support to the Host National Society (HNS)

Multilateral support through the IFRC Appeal

Other (please explain)

4 Do you consider the role of the IFRC Secretariat in Ukraine and the impacted countries to be aligned with the expectations outlined in the Agenda for Renewal, positioning IFRC as a principled and trusted network owned and supported by its membership?

Completely aligned with the expectations

Mostly aligned with the expectations

Moderately aligned with the expectations

Slightly aligned with the expectations

Not at all aligned with the expectations

Comments

5 In your opinion, what has worked well so far in the Ukraine Appeal for membership coordination, particularly in the Impacted Countries?

6 Please rate the IFRC's work in enabling NS to advance the so-called "localization agenda" in their respective contexts.

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know
Comments

7 Has this operation contributed to increasing the investment and respect for the role of implementing NS?

Yes, there has been a significant increase
Yes, there has been an increase; however, more things could be done
No, it has not been an increase
I don't know
Comments

8 Was the IFRC Secretariat, in the Ukraine response operation, a fair and strategic broker that facilitates shared leadership among the membership?

Yes
No
I don't know
Comments

9 Please rate the IFRC Secretariat's 'value add' to Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) and other Movement partners in the collective response.

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know
Comments

10 How well did the IFRC adapt its response to this volatile and changing context?

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know
Comments

11 Please rate the IFRC's agility, flexibility, and consistency in this emergency.

Excellent
Very good
Good

Fair
Poor
I don't know
Comments

12 Please rate the support provided by IFRC to the URCS and its members in undertaking effective humanitarian diplomacy in Ukraine.

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know
Comments

13 Please rate IFRC's contribution to reinforcing the auxiliary role of Nacional Societies in Ukraine and the impacted countries.

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know
Comments

14 Has IFRC provided the relevant information and analysis to advocate to your own Governments?

Yes, IFRC provides all the relevant information
Yes, IFRC provides relevant information; however, some relevant information was missing or late
No
I don't know
Comments

15 Please rate the work of IFRC and its member NS to work together to have "one message, many messengers..." within the Ukraine appeal.

Excellent
Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
I don't know
Comments

16 How much progress have the Host National Society (HNS) made in their National Society Development (NSD) over the course of the appeal?

Major progress

Significant progress

Moderate progress

Minimal progress

No progress

Comments

17 From a National Society Development (NSD) point of view, in which areas have the Host National Society (HNS) made the most progress?

Logistics

Volunteering

Branches

Finance

Governance

Other

18 From a National Society Development (NSD) point of view, in what areas do Host National Society (HNS) need additional support?

Logistics

Volunteering

Branches

Finance

Governance

Other

19 Please rate the IFRC's contribution to preparing the branches of HNS to respond to emergencies.

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Comments

20 How well does IFRC support the leadership of the HNS in designing and implementing their own NSD priorities and activities?

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Comments

21 How well does IFRC support HNS in incorporating Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) into HNS day-to-day activities and programmes?

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Any recommendation to improve the incorporation of CEA in the HNS

22 How well does IFRC support Host National Society (HNS) in strengthening HNS' s Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) capacities?

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Any recommendation to improve the incorporation of CVA in the HNS

23 How well does IFRC support the Host National Society (HNS) in incorporating Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) and safeguarding into HNS day-to-day activities and programmes?

Excellent

Very good

Good

Fair

Poor

I don't know

Any recommendation to improve the incorporation of PGI in the HNS

24 Do you consider that any key sectors or groups of people among the affected population are being neglected?

Yes

No

I don't know

Comment

25 Do you have any recommendations on how to improve IFRC activities?

Terms of Reference

Mid-Term Evaluation for Ukraine and Impacted Countries Emergency Appeal

1. Summary

1.1. Purpose:

The purpose of this Mid-Term Review is to assess the progress made towards operational and strategic goals of the [IFRC Emergency Appeal \(MGR65002\)](#) in Ukraine and the impacted countries during the initial 2 years of response (February 2022 to December 2023). The Review will also formulate practical recommendations to inform the future evolution of the EA programming in those countries and the specific role of the IFRC Secretariat in supporting the impacted National Societies during the coming two years (2024-2025) until the Appeal ends in December 2025.

Target Audience: IFRC Secretariat and IFRC member National Societies

Commissioners: Regional Director, IFRC Europe Regional Office

Vice-President, International Cooperation & Programs, Canadian Red Cross

Duration: Up to 70 working days

Estimated Timeframe: June 2024/ early July 2024

Location: The review will take place in Ukraine and impacted countries

2. Background

2.1 The conflict in Ukraine

The ongoing international armed conflict in Ukraine is causing widespread humanitarian crises, affecting approximately 27 million people both within and outside the country. Communities face dire conditions like damaged infrastructure, lack of necessities such as water and food, and severe mental health repercussions due to displacement and exposure to traumatic events. Beyond immediate suffering, the conflict disrupts essential services, leading to long-term consequences like damage to infrastructure, displacement, increased risks of violence and exploitation, and strains on global communities hosting refugees.

The ongoing international conflict in Ukraine has had devastating consequences for its people, leading to widespread civilian casualties, critical damage to infrastructure, and displacement from frontline areas. By December 2023, over 27,449 civilian casualties have been confirmed, but the actual number might be much higher. Millions have fled across borders or within the country, seeking safety and essential services to rebuild their lives¹.

2.2. The IFRC Secretariat response

The IFRC provided support across various sectors including mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), shelter, food security and livelihoods, protection, gender inclusion, and other sectors through multiple National Societies in Ukraine and the affected countries. Currently, this Emergency Appeal², seeking CHF 800 million, has reached 60% of its funding goal, leaving a significant gap of CHF

¹ Ukraine Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023, UNOCHA

² [Revised Emergency Appeal, Ukraine](#)

322 million.

Additionally, the IFRC extended support to an additional 18 National Societies³ in other affected countries that have requested international assistance in response to the ongoing crisis. The response is being coordinated with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other 17 partner National Societies present in those countries.

In Ukraine, the Movement strengthened coordination, with URCS as the focal point. A Joint Statement by URCS, ICRC, and IFRC continues to serve as the basis for this cooperation. Deployment of a Movement Coordination Officer helped build coordination across strategic, operational and technical levels. This includes strategic meetings among URCS, IFRC, and ICRC, operational coordination through MEOPs with Partner National Societies, Membership Coordination meetings and Technical Working Groups. These coordination mechanisms have been vital for implementation of One URCS Plan⁴ 2023-2025.

In the impacted countries, IFRC collaborates closely with National Societies to craft responsive strategies tailored to each dynamic situation. This involves partnering with Host and Partner National Societies to enhance technical and human resources, expanding services for both refugee and host populations. Key focuses include bolstering cash aid, managing volunteers, and implementing digital solutions. Globally, IFRC, ICRC, and impacted National Societies align efforts to showcase collective impact through data and diverse perspectives. Unified communication becomes paramount in a changing and polarized environment, prompting joint efforts by IFRC, ICRC, and National Societies to educate the public on their distinctive roles and principles while addressing risks and criticisms. This collaborative approach ensures safety for responders, access in affected areas, and fosters community trust⁵.

2.3. Evaluation approach for the Emergency Appeal

The **Mid-Term Review (2024)** aims at assessing the progress made towards operational and strategic goals of the IFRC Emergency Appeal in Ukraine and the impacted countries during the initial 2 years (February 2022 to December 2023) and to formulate practical recommendations to inform the future evolution of the EA in those countries and the specific role of the IFRC in supporting the impacted National Societies during the coming two years (2024-2025).

This mid-term review will consist of two phases, with the first phase involving a comprehensive review of the existing data and measurements collected in Ukraine and the impacted countries. The second phase of the evaluation is the review exercise proposed in these Terms of Reference.

The first phase was conducted in late 2023 to support IFRC in examining the available secondary data and reports related to IFRC interventions in Ukraine and impacted countries. The outcome of this first exercise will be shared with the selected evaluator to support the inception phase.

Federation-wide impact of our operations will be the focus of a **Final Evaluation** to be carried out in late 2025 (or early 2026) in coordination with all our member National Societies.

3. Evaluation Purpose & Scope

The purpose of this Mid-Term Review is assess the progress made towards operational and strategic goals of the IFRC Emergency Appeal (MGR65002) in Ukraine and the impacted countries during the initial 2 years of response (February 2022 to December 2023) and to formulate practical

³ <https://go.ifrc.org/emergencies/5854/reports#reports>

⁴ URCS One Plan

⁵ [The Movement Picture, Coordination Report](#)

recommendations to inform the future evolution of the EA programming in those countries and the specific role of the IFRC in supporting the impacted National Societies during the coming two years (2024-2025) until the Appeal ends in December 2025.

The mid-term review will take into consideration the distinctive features of the response in Ukraine and in the impacted countries, therefore it will provide **tailored learning and recommendations for each of these two contexts** separately:

- The situation in **Ukraine** is still one of an acute armed conflict where humanitarian needs remain, particularly along the lines of conflict (south and east) but also throughout the rest of the country (west and center) where air strikes are also frequent, the economy is gravely impacted and many IDPs and returnees have found refuge from the war. Even as emergency needs continue, the expectations and opportunities for early recovery are also high. URCS has grown substantially since the escalation of the conflict in 2022, in terms of personnel, local branches and reach of its services. The Movement response is also shaped in part by the large presence and co-convenor role of ICRC and the numerous partner NS providing bilateral support to URCS.
- The situation in **impacted countries** (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Belarus, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Moldova, Georgia, Türkiye, Greece, Montenegro, Croatia, North Macedonia) is more stable as the influx of Ukrainian refugees have diminished and the National Societies response focus transitions into longer term support to the integration and inclusion of the Ukrainian populations in those countries.

The Mid-Term Review will be guided by the **IFRC Agenda for Renewal**⁶ which articulates how the IFRC Secretariat sees its role in implementation of [Strategy 2030](#). Therefore, the Mid-Term Review will analyse to what extent IFRC Secretariat delivered on its vision (as stated in the Agenda for Renewal) to coordinate and support the work of the member National Societies, driving the transformations that are essential for the IFRC network to fulfill its potential as a global humanitarian actor - engaged, accountable and trusted - and deliver on an agreed agenda.

The main **Objectives**, as well as the guiding questions, to inform the Mid-Term Review are:

3.1. Assess how well is IFRC Secretariat supporting and facilitating membership and strategic coordination across the operation.

- Both for Ukraine and Impacted Countries, is the role of the IFRC Secretariat aligned with the expectations of the **Agenda for Renewal** positioning IFRC as a principled and trusted network which is owned and supported by its membership? Should this role evolve going forward?
- In the case of the Impacted Countries, what were the key elements of Membership Coordination particularly in a context of developed countries? What worked well? What needs to be strengthened within the next 2 years?
- Has IFRC enabled NS to advance the so-called "localization agenda" in their respective contexts?
- Has this operation contributed to increasing the investment and the respect for the role of implementing NS?
- Was the IFRC Secretariat a fair and strategic broker facilitating shared leadership among the membership? Was it able to build a collective intelligence around this operation, humanitarian

⁶ The Agenda for Renewal is an internal IFRC documents that aims at better positioning the IFRC Secretariat for more effective global coordination and leadership to ensure that the IFRC network addresses the areas for transformation reflected in the Strategy 2030 working as an organisation.

needs and a strategic collective direction?

- Was there a clear and discernible 'value add' of the IFRC Secretariat to URCS and other Movement partners in the collective response?
- In both Ukraine and Impacted Countries, the contexts were volatile and constantly changing, particularly at the outset. How well did the IFRC Secretariat navigate these fast-moving conditions? Did it demonstrate agility, flexibility and consistency?

3.2. Assess how well IFRC and its member NS managed to pursue humanitarian diplomacy in Ukraine and Impacted Countries

- Has the IFRC supported URCS and its members to undertake, effective humanitarian diplomacy in Ukraine?
- Has IFRC supported HNS leading role in using their HD agenda with their authorities and donors?
- Has IFRC contributed appropriately to reinforcing the auxiliary role of National Societies in Ukraine and the impacted countries? Has this reinforcement of the auxiliary role been guided by their commitment to the Fundamental Principles?
- Has IFRC made appropriate use of data and analysis in its humanitarian diplomacy? Has it provided its membership with the relevant information and analysis to be able to advocate to their governments?
- How well has IFRC and its member NS managed to work together to have "one message, many messengers..." within the Ukraine appeal? Were internal and external messages properly developed, timely distributed and widely used by the network?

3.3. Assess the IFRC role in National Society and branch Development (including organizational development and capacity building).

- How much progress have the HNS made in their NSD over the course of the appeal? What were the areas (Logistics, Volunteering, Branches, Finance, Governance, etc) where progress was stronger? Which areas will require additional efforts?
- Are National Societies' branches in Ukraine and the impacted countries better prepared today, than they were 2 years ago, to respond to a future crisis?
- How effectively did the IFRC contribute to this progress?
- Did IFRC support the leadership of the HNS in designing and implementing their own NSD priorities and activities? Did it effectively support the concept of shared leadership to NSD support?
- What steps should be taken in the coming 2 years to consolidate and enhance NSD outcomes across the NS in impacted countries?

3.4. Assess how IFRC and its membership are transforming the Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) tools and systems developed to respond in this operation into global systems and tools that will be adopted in other future large scale humanitarian operations.

- Cash programming at scale has been one of the key successes of this operation, enabling us to provide support to hundreds of thousands. What were the key elements that made possible the massive use of CVA programming? What role did the IFRC Secretariat play? What were the challenges faced?
- Has the IFRC appropriately contributed to the strength of the HNS in CVA programming? Are

they now better prepared to be leaders in their contexts? Can HNS utilize and integrate the systems and tools developed for their domestic programs and operations?

- Are the necessary steps being taken, by IFRC and its membership, to systematize and institutionalise the CVA learnings, systems and tools developed in this response?
- The CVA Internal Review found that IFRC systems remained a key blocker to rapid and scalable CVA delivery. Is the IFRC Secretariat taking the steps to address these obstacles so that IFRC can become a true leader in CVA in the future?
- What were the difficulties faced by IFRC and its NS to align our CVA programs to the authorities' initiatives and legislation, particularly in impacted countries, and what would be the key recommendations to be adopted by IFRC to mitigate these challenges in the future?
- Was IFRC and NS engagement in the humanitarian cluster system good enough to ensure proper coordination and alignment between our CVA programs and those of other actors? To what extent the cluster system has excluded NS from key authorities' decisions on CVA programming?

3.5. Assess the effectiveness and impact of IFRC interventions in Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) and Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) in impacted countries.

- Are our community engagement activities (CEA) making sure that the people we want to serve opinions are actually heard and used to design and guide our work? Are we truly acting based on their feedback and needs? Have HNS incorporated CEA approaches into their day-to-day activities thanks to the support of the IFRC?
- Are CEA efforts process oriented (meeting certain requirements) or results oriented (defining our interventions)? What could be the recommendations to improve in the remaining years of the appeal?
- Was IFRC's shared leadership approach to supporting HNS development in Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) and Safeguarding in Ukraine and impacted countries appropriate and effective?
- How many NS have enhanced their Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) and Safeguarding work as a consequence of Emergency Appeal? Have these improvements in PGI been extended to other programs beyond the IFRC EA? What needs to be done to consolidate these gains?

3.6. Assess the IFRC and National Societies operational adaptation to the evolving context and needs and how well the scale up and right-sizing processes have been managed in impacted countries.

- Bearing in mind the mandate and capacity of the NS in each country, are we neglecting any key sector or group of people among the affected populations? Given the limited available resources, are there cost efficient ways to address those neglected needs?
- How effective was the IFRC scaling up its longer-term capacities and presence in impacted countries? How well is currently being managed the process to adapt IFRC capacities in the impacted countries to the evolving demands of the NS? What are the lessons learned from these two processes?
- Assess the degree of integration and the synergies reached in the implementation of CEA, PGI, CVA, MHPSS and Migration interventions and provide recommendations for the remaining 2 years of implementation?

The Mid-Term Review will cover activities for the period between February 2022, when the emergency appeal was launched, and December 2023.

Programmatic and sectoral coverage: all the sectors and sub-sectors mentioned in the above objectives and guiding questions.

4. Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation methodology should be aligned with the [IFRC Framework for Evaluation](#), specifically focusing on the procedures that maintain the quality of planning, execution, and application of evaluations. The IFRC Evaluation Management Team (EMT) will oversee the evaluation alongside the company.

5. Evaluation Deliverables & Timeline

The company will be responsible for crafting the subsequent deliverables in collaboration with the Evaluation Management Team (EMT) throughout the assignment period. Language of deliverables is English.

WEEK 1 AND 2 (estimated start date late April 2024/ early May 2024)

ACTIVITIES

1. Document Review: Review intervention documentation and related primary/secondary resources for the evaluation, including the desk review report produced for the mid-term evaluation.
2. Initial briefings.
3. Development of inception report or data collection/ analysis plan and schedule, draft methodology and data collection tools.

Deliverable 1 - inception report with analytical framework, data collection/analysis plan and schedule, draft methodology, data collection tools, quality assurance process, timeline of each stage, locations, and the list of consultees.

A comprehensive inception report is required to demonstrate a clear understanding and realistic plan for the evaluation, The inception includes the Evaluation Matrix/table, the proposed methodologies, a data collection and reporting plan with identified deliverables, draft data collection tools such as interview guides, the allocation of roles and responsibilities within the evaluation team, and travel and logistical arrangements for the evaluation. This inception report is slated for submission subsequent to the desk review phase but before the commencement of the evaluation's field mission.

WEEK 3, 4 AND 5

ACTIVITIES

1. Data collection and analysis in target locations according to data collection schedule.
2. Findings Workshop presenting initial findings, conclusions, and recommendations before draft report.

Deliverable 2 - weekly updates to be sent to EMT.

Deliverable 3 - Findings Workshop (The participants and the date to be determined after the consultation with EMT).

The company will plan formal sessions where evaluators will present updates on the evaluation's progress and findings to the Evaluation Management Team. This practice ensures data accuracy, verifies findings, and gathers additional insights to incorporate into the final evaluation. Additionally, it ensures stakeholders are kept informed, reinforcing transparency and nurturing a sense of ownership.

WEEK 6 AND 7

ACTIVITIES

1. Draft report.
2. Management comments and revision.

Following the completion of data collection and analysis, the company is expected to submit the initial draft of the report to be reviewed by the EMT. The evaluator will address any comments and will incorporate revisions as needed. The deadline for finalizing the evaluation report will be determined through prior discussions before submission.

The report will have a maximum length (excluding annexes) of 50 pages and must include:

- two executive summaries (internal and external),
- intervention background,
- details of evaluation methods and constraints,
- findings, conclusions, lessons learned, recommendations,
- relevant appendices such as the Terms of Reference (TOR), data collection tools, and complete citations for all referenced resources.

The report's structure will be finalized through discussions between the consultant and the EMT at the inception phase.

The final report will include an Internal Executive Summary of max. 10 pages providing all the key findings and recommendations for IFRC and its member NS.

A shorter (5 pages max.) summary which will exclude potential sensitive issues and will provide a simplified version of the executive summary for external audiences focusing on learnings and recommendations that are relevant for a wider audience outside the IFRC. The external Executive Summary of the Mid-Term Review will be published in the IFRC database of evaluations⁷.

Deliverable 4 - the first draft of the evaluation report for review, feedback, and comments.

WEEK 8

ACTIVITIES

1. Final report submission.
2. Formal acceptance of the report by IFRC.

Deliverable 5 - final clean version of the Mid-Term Evaluation Report.

WEEK 9

ACTIVITIES

1. Key findings presentation.

The company will:

- *Develop a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the key evaluation findings based on the internal executive summary.*
- *Deliver this presentation to the IFRC management team in Budapest to initiate the process to develop the management response to the findings and recommendations of the Mid-Term Review.*
- *Deliver this presentation on-line to all key stakeholders, including the IFRC and National Societies, in a 2-hour webinar where key feedback will be gathered to support the development of the IFRC management response to the findings and recommendations of the Mid-Term Review.*

The IFRC Regional Office, in coordination with relevant stakeholders in IFRC and NS, will prepare a

⁷ <https://www.ifrc.org/evaluations>

<i>management response to address the findings and recommendations of the Mid-Term Review.</i>
Deliverable 6 - webinar to present the evaluation key findings to IFRC senior management.
WEEK 10 (estimated end date June 2024/ early July 2024)
ACTIVITIES
1. Key findings presentation (IFRC, National Societies, ICRC).
Deliverable 7 - webinar to present the evaluation key findings to IFRC, National Societies, ICRC and other stakeholders. <i>The company will:</i> - Develop a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the key evaluation findings based on the internal executive summary. - Deliver this presentation on-line to all key stakeholders, including the IFRC and National Societies, in a 2-hour webinar where key feedback will be gathered to support the development of the IFRC management response to the findings and recommendations of the Mid-Term Review. <i>The external Executive Summary of the Mid-Term Review will be published in the IFRC database of evaluations.</i> <i>The Federation will possess all outcomes resulting from this evaluation. Evaluators are prohibited from presenting the analytical results as their own work or using the evaluation findings for private publications without prior written authorization.</i>

6. Evaluation Quality and Ethical Standards

The evaluators should take all reasonable steps to ensure that the evaluation is designed and conducted to respect and protect the rights and welfare of people and the communities of which they are members, and to ensure that the evaluation is technically accurate, reliable, and legitimate, conducted in a transparent and impartial manner, and contributes to organizational learning and accountability. Therefore, the evaluation team should adhere to the evaluation standards and specific, applicable process outlined in the [IFRC Framework for Evaluation](#).

It is also expected that the evaluation will respect the seven [Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent](#): 1) humanity, 2) impartiality, 3) neutrality, 4) independence, 5) voluntary service, 6) unity, and 7) universality.

7. Evaluator/s Profiles Needed

The evaluation team proposed should have the following skills, experience and qualifications to be selected for this evaluation.

- *University degrees at the post-graduate level in relevant field of study.*
- *Demonstrated experience planning and implementing evaluations required.*
- *Minimum of 9 to 10 years of monitoring and evaluation experience required in large scale and complex humanitarian operations.*
- *Demonstrated experience in the assessment and evaluation of humanitarian systems and processes such as Cash Assistance, Capacity building and Organisational Development, and Community Engagement.*
- *Knowledge and experience working with the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement preferred.*
- *Proven track record of conducting qualitative and quantitative research including the development of interview schedules and qualitative and quantitative data analysis required.*
- *Experience in qualitative data collection and data analysis techniques (especially in the design of*

coding schemes).

- Excellent analytical, writing and presentation skills.
- Strong computer skills in spreadsheet, word processing, database management (MS Access) and statistical analysis software familiarity.
- IM and Data visualization expertise to be able to analyze large amounts of data and present it in an engaging and meaning way to the audience.
- Strong interpersonal and organizational skills required.
- Working knowledge of English language strongly preferred.
- Experience working in the Ukraine and Impacted Countries strongly preferred.
- Experience working with representatives of the Governments strongly preferred.
- Familiarity with trends and developments in international contexts (i.e. shelter CVA, CEA, MHPSS, Migration, and disaster Management) support preferred.
- Demonstrated capacity to work both independently and as part of a team.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills.

Applicants are expected to provide a detailed description of the evaluation team members, their expertise and capacities and the role that they will play within the evaluation team.

When providing the budget, applicants are also expected to indicate the number of days/hours of dedication per team member and the remuneration applicable to calculate the total cost.

8. Structure of the proposal

Interested companies should submit their application material by 15 April 2024 to the following email: PMER.Europe@ifrc.org with the title **Mid-term Evaluation Ukraine Emergency Appeal**. Application material is non-returnable, and we thank you in advance for understanding that only short-listed consultants will be contacted for the next step in the application process.

Below is a suggested outline which we strongly encourage to use in preparing your proposal.

P1	Company background	1 page	Capacity and strength of your company.
P2	Summary of your proposal	2.5 pages	Summary of your experience, total costs and proposed strategy for the evaluation.
P3	Team composition	0.5 pages	The team members and their role in this project.
P4	Implementation	7 pages	Description of an understanding and interpretation of the TOR, the proposed methodology, and a time and activity schedule.
P5	Budget		Please itemize estimated costs for services rendered (team members, consultancy days, daily consultancy fees), accommodation and living costs, transport costs, stationery costs, and any other related supplies or services required for the evaluation
P6	Timeline		Please draft a schedule for development,

			in line with the evaluation deliverables.
P7	Annexes		<p>Include CV of the core team members and at least one example of a previous evaluation report similar to the one described in this ToR.</p> <p>Additional contents can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bibliography of documents (secondary sources) to be reviewed. • Maps of project & intervention location(s). • List of persons/organizations to be interviewed. • Suggested report outline.
P8	Other considerations	1 page	Acknowledgement of requirements. Restrictions.

9. Payment

Twenty percent of the total payment will be disbursed to the evaluation company upon the receipt of deliverable 1, with the remaining 80% to be paid after all deliverables have been received by the IFRC.