



KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

Federal Public Service

Foreign Affairs,

Foreign Trade and

Development Cooperation

Directorate-general for Development Cooperation – DGD

Service D5.1 – Humanitarian Aid

SINGLE FORM FOR THE FUNDING OF HUMANITARIAN ACTION

(Legal basis: the law of 9/01/2014 modifying the law of 19/03/2013 on Development cooperation - Royal Decree of 19/04/2014, General expenditure budget, basic allocation 14 54 52 35.60.83).

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1.1. Name of the humanitarian organisation/date of approval by the Minister for Development Cooperation (if required):** Rode Kruis-Vlaanderen Internationaal vzw (Belgische niet-gouvernementele organisatie, erkend door de Staatssecretaris voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking op 13/11/1997, onder identificatienummer: 17043/97, overeenkomstig het Koninklijk Besluit van 18/07/1997 betreffende de erkenning en subsidiëring van niet-gouvernementele ontwikkelingsorganisaties en van hun federatie)
- 1.2. Title of the action:** Strengthening vulnerable communities: Localised protection initiatives amid humanitarian crises in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Rwanda, DRC and Uganda through the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement network
- 1.3. Intervention area (country, region, locations):** Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burkina Faso
- 1.4. Action start date:** 01/12/2023
- 1.5. Duration of the action in months (cf. Art. 17, §2):** 24 months
- 1.6. Expenditure eligibility start date:** Signature date granting Ministerial Decree
- 1.7. Proposal and reports (Concerning the specific timeframes, cf. RD of 19/04/2014):**

Initial proposal	date:	31-08-2023
Revised proposal no.	date:	dd-mm-yy
Date of the granting Ministerial Decree	date:	dd-mm-yy
Unilateral Act date	date:	dd-mm-yy
Letter of acceptance date	date:	dd-mm-yy
Interim report	date:	dd-mm-yy
Final report	date:	dd-mm-yy

2. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 2.1. Assessment date(s); methodology and information sources used; organisation/person(s) responsible for the assessment**

The Great Lakes and the Sahel region in Africa have long been plagued by a combination of weak economies, corruption and natural disasters, leading to heightened poverty rates and security concerns in several countries. Looking back, the Arab Spring of 2010 brought a wave of change in Libya, Sudan, Tunisia and Egypt. In addition to political change, that wave also caused instability on the African continent. Extremist groups were driven into the Sahel region, fuelling armed uprisings in Niger, Chad and Mali. That frightening increase in violence, committed by groups linked to Islamic State and al-Qaeda, has forced hundreds of thousands of Africans to flee over the past few years, plunging the Sahel region into relentless chaos. On top of that, the growing instability has played into the hands of the military in countries with fragile regimes, leading to multiple military coups: eg. e.g., the Malian coup in 2020 and 2021, the Burkina Faso coups in January and September 2022

and the recent Niger coup in July 2023. In South Sudan, the secession from Sudan in 2011 and the subsequent struggle for power, exacerbated by competition for resources and long-standing tensions between various ethnic groups led to continued widespread violence, food insecurity and lack of basic services. These has forced people to flee their homes and across borders, many of them ending up in Uganda. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is equally plagued by political instability and the presence of many armed groups with varying motivations, including competition for control over valuable natural resources, ethnic tensions and historical grievances. Porous borders and weak governance further contribute to the continuation of the conflict and cycles of violence and instability, causing people to become displaced within and across the country borders. Burundi saw political and ethnic conflict stemming from the decision of President Pierre Nkurunziza's in 2015 to run for a third, unconstitutional term, leading to widespread protests, government crackdowns and violence, causing many people to flee the country. Due to improved political conditions and repatriation efforts, some Burundians are returning now, however they face large challenges in ensuring sustainable reintegration.

All these situations have caused people to flee their homes and to become displaced in their own countries or across country borders. **Their unstable and unpredictable situation has led to a lack of access to basic services, an increased risk on human rights violations, issues with physical safety, psychosocial problems and legal protection.**

Since all of these countries are also increasingly prone to natural disasters, such as the ongoing drought in the Sahel region or the recent Ebola outbreak in Uganda, humanitarian actors are under pressure to receive safe access to beneficiaries and to sufficiently assist the many people in need.

Due to the large amount of people affected by conflicts and disasters in both regions (see Table 1) and to particularly address the protection issues that arise due to these difficult and uprooting situations, Belgian Red Cross-Flanders (BRC-FI) has partnered with the local National Red Cross Societies (National Societies) in five of the affected countries. The five countries that are part of this program are Burundi, Burkina Faso, DRC, Rwanda and Uganda.

Table 1: Situational overview of the crisis in the DRC and in the Sahel region. Source: UNHCR 2022 situation overview of the DRC, South Sudan and Sahel situation [1, 2, 3].

Context	DRC conflict	South Sudan conflict	Sahel conflict (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger)
Number of internally displaced people	5.5 million	1.5 million	3 million (1.9 million in Burkina Faso alone)
Number of refugees and people who crossed borders to seek asylum	1.1 million	2.3 million	1.1 million

To gain in-dept insight in the protection needs in the five selected countries, BRC-FI has intensely collaborated with each National Society over the past few months. In line with the localisation agenda and with the emphasis on a protection-related response, the areas of implementation have been selected by each local National Red Cross Society with close assistance of BRC-FI and in line with their respective strategic country plans.

Through their network of the local Red Cross branches in the regions and volunteers in each community, National Societies have valuable insights on the needs on a community, provincial and national level. To ensure that this local knowledge has been properly captured in the conception of this program, BRC-FI has held intensive talks with staff and volunteers of the National Societies. In Burkina Faso and DRC, these discussions were done through field visits of BRC-FI staff. In the other three countries, the BRC-FI delegation in-country held these conversations. In addition, in Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi, a needs assessment - specifically targeted at protection issues - was held to complement the knowledge of the local National Red Cross Societies. The assessment incorporated a general cross-cutting protection analysis in each area of intervention, focusing on existing threats and needs, but also on local capacities that this program can use and can further develop to address the identified protection issues.

In the needs analysis itself, a mixed methods approach was used, with a quantitative component through the analysis of questionnaire responses, and a qualitative component with focus group discussions and key informant interviews. The methodology was set up by BRC-FI and was further adapted by the National Societies in country to their context. The questionnaires, discussions and interviews were carried out by staff and volunteers of the local Red Cross Societies in the respective countries. Participants in the needs assessment were specifically selected to have an accurate representation of the targeted population. This allowed the needs assessment to include viewpoints of both sexes, different age groups and of cultural minorities when applicable. The focus group discussions that were organized in the three countries also all included at least two discussions with only females and two with only youth, to allow all participants to capture specific

issues from these groups. The key informant interviews included important stakeholders in the targeted areas, such as refugee camp directors, government officials, other organizations present in the camps, people with specific needs, local authority figures and teachers. The sample size for the questionnaire in the different communities was calculated according to the population size, again to obtain a representative sample of feedback from the targeted communities.

To complement the information gathered via the local population and to design a pertinent response in this program, further meetings were held with important stakeholders, such as local government actors and other humanitarian organisations, present in each of the countries and in the areas of intervention. **All information collected was cross-checked with secondary sources of information and confirmed to be within the local government plans** for response in the targeted regions.

Burkina Faso

In Burkina Faso, the needs analysis was carried out through information gathered in the field in July 2023 by teams of the Burkina Faso Red Cross (CRBF), who in addition to having first-hand knowledge of the needs of the region, are also informed and coordinate with other humanitarian actors at the national and territorial levels.

Due to the security context in the country, two CRB-FL delegates were only able to travel to Ouagadougou in August 2023 to carry out the needs analysis together with CRBF teams and other Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (RCRC Movement) actors present in the country such as Croix-Rouge de Belgique-Communauté francophone (CRB-Cf). In addition, thanks to secondary information sources from reliable entities such as World Bank, Human Rights Watch, UNHCR, OCHA and the Global Protection Cluster, among others, it was possible to compare the needs in the selected region.

Burundi

This program will focus its activities in the two provinces receiving the largest number of Burundian returnees, with 34.989 repatriates in the province of Ruyigi and 37.485 repatriates in the province of Makamba (from September 2017 to 31 March 2023) [4]. The targeted communities are Butezi, Bweru and Gisuru in the province of Ruyigi and Nyanza-lac, Mabanda and Kayogoro in the province of Makamba. Additionally, the province of Ruyigi hosts two refugee camps: Bwagiriza (10.026 people) and Nyakanda (11.075 people) [5] as well as a transit centre for returnees in Nyabitare. Next, Makamba province hosts a transit centre for returnees in Mabanda commune (Gitara transit centre). During the first week of May 2023, volunteers of Croix-Rouge du Burundi (CRBu) conducted the needs assessment in the six forementioned communes.

In the questionnaire, 436 households were interviewed, 177 in Ruyigi and 259 in Makamba. The participants in the focus groups were composed separately of men, women, and youth (girls and boys), and each team of focus group facilitators held discussions with a group of between eight and twelve people, who represented the inhabitants of the targeted communities. Similarly, individual key informant interviews were held with local community leaders, vulnerable persons (in this case female heads of households with special needs), representatives of CRRB and teachers. In total, 24 focus group discussions were held and 31 key informant interviews were collected in the six communes of two provinces.

In addition, consultative meetings were held with national and regional representatives of the following governmental and non-governmental organizations: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Caritas Belgique, CRRB, CRRB-Cf, Luxemburg Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

To conclude, important documents with data and insights in the current humanitarian situation were consulted, which included the Burundi Humanitarian Response Plan (2023, UNOCHA), the Protection Monitoring in camps report (2023, UNHCR), the Protection Monitoring of returnees report (2022, UNHCR), the Stability Index Report (2023, IOM) and the Joint Refugee Return and Reintegration Plan (2021, UNDP/UNHCR).

DRC

For DRC, the needs assessment was done by two delegates of BRC-FI who went to Kinshasa, DRC, in May 2023 to hold consultative meetings with the following stakeholders: UN OCHA, DG ECHO, Belgian Embassy, Caritas-Belgique and RCRC Movement partners (IFRC, ICRC, Croix- Rouge de la République Démocratique du Congo (CRRDC), Croix-Rouge française, CRRB-Cf). During the consultation with UN OCHA, they indicated that there are significant protection issues in the affected zones of the forgotten Maï Ndombe crisis, however, that there is a lack of interest of the international humanitarian community for this crisis. Therefore, target zones for DRC were chosen based on affected areas by the forgotten Maï Ndombe crisis. The provinces Kwango and Kwilu that are receiving a significant part of the internally displaced people due to this crisis, will be targeted in this program.

The information gathered through the consultative meetings was complemented by secondary data on the Maï Ndombe crisis, such as the UN OCHA report of 12/07/2023 on the situation [6].

Rwanda

Rwanda Red Cross Society (RRCS) is active in and around four refugee camps and has decided to work together with BRC-FI in the Kiziba refugee camp in Karongi district and the Nkamira transit camp, situated on the border of Rubavu and Nyabihu, located close to the border with DRC. These refugee camps mainly host people from the DRC. In the event of a sudden influx

of refugees and these refugee camps reach their maximum capacity, an additional refugee camp is opened, Kijote refugee camp, close to Nkamira refugee camp. In this case, RRCS supports refugees in this camp and collaborates with BRC-FI in this refugee camp too. Together with CRB-Cf, RRCS works in the Mahama and Nyabiheke camp.

The needs assessment for this program was conducted in the vicinity of the Kiziba refugee camp in Karongi district and the Nkamira transit camp, between 18 and 21 May 2023. Both refugees and host communities participated in the needs assessment. A team comprised of seven staff members and ten volunteers of RRCS diligently carried out 14 key informant interviews, 12 focus group discussions, and 468 interviews with volunteers and community members. The needs assessment was initially scheduled to take place in the first week of May 2023, but had to be postponed due to severe floods and landslides that struck the target area in early May 2023. Tragically, 131 lives were lost in this disaster, with also several injured people, considerable damage to public infrastructure and 5.000 houses [7]. Specific questions to capture the protection risks of the persons affected by the floods and landslides were included in the needs assessment.

In addition to the needs assessment, a BRC-FI delegate made personal visits to both camps to witness first-hand, the prevalent humanitarian needs in the camp and the surrounding communities. Furthermore, RRCS received an advocacy summary from UNHCR's Karongi Head of Office, expressing its gratitude towards RRCS for the long-standing and valuable support toward refugees hosted in Rwanda as well as an identification of the gaps and humanitarian needs that could be addressed within the framework of this project. A copy of this letter is attached to this proposal in Annex C.

Uganda

Uganda has a long-standing reputation in the region to host refugees, leading to well-established systems to assist these refugees during their stay and to coordinate the support among humanitarian actors and donors. The needs assessment for this program was conducted in April 2023 in the refugee settlements of Kyangwali, Imvepi and Bidibidi in the districts Kikuube, Terego and Yumbe respectively, by trained enumerators and Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS) volunteers. The selection of settlements for the needs assessment was guided by a comprehensive approach, drawing insights from the Uganda Country Refugee Response Plan [8], the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, and sector-specific updates detailing requirements, funding disparities, and locations accommodating new refugees across the 14 settlements.

Both refugees and inhabitants of the host communities participated in the needs assessment. The focus group discussions consisted of 8 to 15 participants, representing the members of the targeted population. Similarly, key informant interviews engaged various stakeholders, including local community leaders, vulnerable persons (specifically, female-headed households and internally displaced people, a representative of URCS in the local branch, and a teacher of the local community. Furthermore, interviews were held with key personnel from authorities, such as the refugee camp commandant and the person in charge of the refugee camp health centre. Additionally, perspectives were sought from staff members of other organizations operating in the refugee camps, such as the World Food Programme and UNHCR. These interviews aimed to gain insights into the community dynamics and strategies to mitigate threats. Collectively, the assessment encompassed 14 key informant interviews, 12 focus group discussions, and the distribution and completion of 525 questionnaires across the three districts.

For additional insights of the needs assessment carried out, earlier assessments were also consulted. These include the Participatory Assessment conducted by the REACH Initiative and UNHCR from November 2022 to January 2023, as well as the multi-sectoral rapid needs assessment targeting newly arrived refugees in the Southwest and West Nile sub-regions of Uganda, undertaken by IMPACT between July and August 2022 [9]. Also, the Settlement Transformation Agenda II 2022-2027 of the Office of the Prime Minister on the coordinated response to the refugee influx in Uganda provided valuable input and allowed the activities proposed in this project to be streamlined with the government response.

An overview of the findings from the needs assessments conducted specifically for the development of this program in Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda can be found in Annex G (Burundi), H (Rwanda) and I (Uganda).

2.2. Account of the problem and analysis of the stakeholders

As indicated above in section 2.1. the project targets the Great Lakes region, encompassing Burundi, DRC, Rwanda and Uganda and the Sahel region with Burkina Faso. Both regions face natural disasters and protracted and complex conflicts which are exacerbated by recent reinforced tensions, worsening the already existing protection crisis. These have driven **many people to flee their homes, which exposes them to protection-related risks such as violence, deprivation and abuse** (see Annex D [10,11]). This is especially the case for women and youth.

This **program specifically focuses on people who have been victims of conflicts in both regions and became forcibly displaced**. These can be refugees, returnees, or internally displaced people. These persons often suffer from constraints on freedom of movement and face limited or no access to vital resources and basic services, further compounding the challenges they already are dealing with. It is however crucial to **recognize that these threats affect people disparately**, with varying impacts based on factors such as gender, age, origin and available resources. In addition, this **program focuses on the communities that live in the vicinity of refugee camps, as they are also feel the impact of these refugee crises**.

This chapter provides an overview of the protection needs, threats and capacities that were identified in the needs assessment, the secondary literature and discussions with stakeholders. Where possible, a particular focus is put on the needs that were reflected in the needs assessment, as these are deemed the most specific data on the needs, when compared with the more generalized secondary literature. The assessment also provides insights into varying needs according to different age groups or genders.

In addition, BRC-FI conducted a stakeholder analysis, which helps in coordinating the activities between different stakeholders which are present in the same area. The stakeholder analysis can be found in Annex E.

Burkina Faso

In the Sahel region, Burkina Faso, grappling with a GDP per capita of 900 USD in 2023 [12] and placed 184th out of 191 countries on the UNDP Human Development Index [13], is facing a rapidly deteriorating and widespread crisis. The country is plagued by armed violence from multiple non-state armed groups that has led to significant population displacement, particularly in 2022, and is increasingly targeting civilians. Alongside this, Burkina Faso is undergoing political instability, a food crisis and a decline in access to vital services such as water [14]. With 14 out of 45 provinces under a state of emergency [15], Burkina Faso's challenges are compounded by its limited natural resources and the impact of natural hazards [16].

The dire and indiscriminate violence in Burkina Faso continued escalating in 2023, causing the displacement of over 2.06 million people, with 98% of them being internally displaced. **The situation is one of the world's fastest-growing displacement crises, with expectations of further increases.** Over 2 million internally displaced people are residing in urban areas, facing significant risks such as labour and sexual exploitation, human trafficking, and gender-based violence. Additionally, Burkina Faso hosts around 36.000 refugees and asylum-seekers, most of whom fled from Mali. The crisis is multidimensional, rooted in various causes including resource scarcity, youth unemployment, social inequalities, and tensions between herders and farmers [17].

The Global Protection Cluster's yearly analysis, published in March 2023, reveals a **complex range of humanitarian protection risks, affecting the internally displaced people profoundly.** These risks encompass attacks on civilians and crucial infrastructure, leading to critical resource shortages. Saturation of accommodations for internally displaced people and places women and children at higher risk of (gender-based) violence. Kidnappings by non-state armed groups exacerbate insecurity, while closed schools expose children to risks such as child labour and recruitment by armed entities. **The degradation of basic social services** and women's economic disempowerment further contribute to gender-based violence. Conflict-related obstacles impede access to housing, land, and property, intensifying vulnerability among affected populations [18]. According to Project 21's protection monitoring, 186 incidents were documented between March and April 2023, affecting 208 civilians. The incidents can be attributed to attacks on civilians and their property, abductions, theft, gender-based violence and child marriages [19]. The Boucle du Mouhoun and Centre-East regions have not been immune to these challenges. As reported by the UNHCR in June 2023, these regions host approximately 10% of Burkina Faso's internally displaced people [20]. Analogous to the broader context of Burkina Faso, these regions are confronted with intricate multidimensional difficulties, underscoring the imperative for comprehensive humanitarian interventions aimed at addressing the extensive ramifications of this crisis. In addition, the Conseil National de Secours d'Urgence et de Réhabilitation of Burkina Faso stated in June 2023 that the highest needs for internally displaced people are mainly shelter, food, and the distribution of cash and non-food items [21]. With all the information mentioned above, it can be confirmed that the centre-east is a region with growing needs due to the worsening situation and the arrival of new and persistently displaced persons. This situation, combined with the presence of few humanitarian actors and stability in terms of access and security, has made the selected region of intervention the Centre-East.

Burundi

Burundi is a landlocked country in East Africa and relies heavily on agriculture, employing 80% of its population in this sector. Next to the fragile status of its political system, the economy has faced challenges due to high inflation rates, a slowdown in economic growth, leading to **reduced job opportunities and limited access to basic services for the population across all sectors**, particularly the most vulnerable ones. This is confirmed by nearly every questionnaire and interview from the needs assessment, highlighting poverty as one of the most prevalent issues.

Since June 2022, the country has experienced a significant increase in food prices, resulting in reduced access to food. The results of the needs assessment show that 86% of respondents lack food and means of subsistence as the threat with the greatest impact on the community and 66% say they need support for basic necessities. Next, 79% say the quantity of food is insufficient and 10% mentions being dependent on outside assistance for food. This disproportionately affects youth, according to the World Food Programme, 52% of children under 5 are experiencing stunted growth [22].

Between 2017 and 2022, 207.561 Burundian returnees have come home to their places of origin (in 2022, 21.788 individuals were repatriated). **Returnees arrive with limited resources, putting additional strain on already vulnerable host**

communities and basic social services in the return areas. Most of them return to Makamba and Ruyigi provinces (targeted zones for this program) and Kirundo, Rutana, Muyinga and Cankuzo provinces. These provinces are also home to a high number of internally displaced people and victims of natural disasters. They face persistent food and nutritional insecurity and lack the necessary social and economic infrastructure for sustainable reintegration. The influx of returnees overwhelms schools, healthcare facilities, civil registration services, courts, and other essential services, with many also facing housing challenges. Among the respondents to the questionnaire, 44% highlighted their personal need for extra education or training, but the resources (e.g., school kits) are sorely lacking. School dropouts and the lack of leisure facilities for children were highlighted during the discussions. This is confirmed by data from the Ministry of National Education: in the 2020-2021 school year, Ruyigi Province topped the school dropout statistics with 11%. According to UNHCR, returnee children are at higher risk of not attending school. School dropouts are largely due to household poverty but also unwanted pregnancies. The lack of knowledge on sexual and reproductive health was also often mentioned as a reason behind many of the unwanted pregnancies.

During focus groups and interviews, people emphasized the threat of conflict (land disputes, family conflict). Furthermore, some returnees mentioned a certain isolation at transit sites and cases of community aggression, as well as a lack of local reintegration means, highlighting a need to strengthen social cohesion and pacific cohabitation.

Moreover, the **presence of over 87.760 refugees (of which 25% are in Ruyigi), mainly from the DRC, puts an additional strain on these areas.** The security situation in the DRC is highly volatile, which can cause a sudden mass influx, further exacerbating the situation. The possibility of additional refugees (or other displaced persons) poses another threat that was identified during the needs assessment, namely due to a lack of shelter and other basic services to accommodate these people. This is also confirmed by UNHCR monitoring data indicating a low capacity of returnees to access basic social services. Access to housing, land, and employment remains a major challenge.

Harsh living conditions persist, with only 3% of rural households connected to the central electricity grid. This exposes vulnerable individuals, particularly women and girls, to various risks, including protection risks when traveling long distances for firewood or water. Cases of gender-based violence were highlighted during the interviews, with a need to increase awareness and referrals.

The needs assessment also identified accessibility to health services as a major threat, which will disproportionately affect young girls given the aspect of menstruation, and the other most vulnerable people i.e., women, children, elderly and people with disabilities. Furthermore, 31% indicated to suffer from mental illnesses as well. The lack of blood and need for first aid training was also highlighted in interviews with representatives of health facilities and CRBu volunteers. Disparities of the impact on women and men becomes clear from the answers by women and men: 35% women versus 23% men experience a lack of access to hygiene facilities. Next, 67% women versus 54% men indicate a lack of access to basic goods.

All the threats and needs mentioned above are made **more acute in a context of high vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters.** The needs assessment substantiates this, as 62% of the respondents to the questionnaire indicated they are vulnerable to flooding and 42% to landslides. According to data from IOM's Displacement Monitoring Matrix, 89% of the country's internal displacements are caused by natural disasters. In the 2 targeted provinces, the communes of Butezi and Nyanza Lac are particularly hit hard, and these events adversely impact crops, further worsening the nutritional and food situation for vulnerable populations leading to more displacement as people search for shelter and livelihoods. In group discussions, participants highlighted the need to support disaster risk reduction activities, including the establishment of disaster risk reduction committees and risk mitigation activities.

DRC

The DRC is the largest country in sub-Saharan Africa with abundant natural resources. However, it ranks 179th out of 191 countries on the UNDP Human Development Index due to **decades of conflict, fragility, slow development, and population displacement** [13]. At the socio-economic level, despite economic growth and public policy efforts, poverty, high unemployment (especially among youth) and limited access to basic services persist among the Congolese population [23]. The DRC faces one of the most complex and prolonged humanitarian crises globally, with about two-thirds of African refugees originating from the country, primarily due to insecurity and violence in the eastern provinces (Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu) [1].

Next to the ongoing violence in the eastern provinces, the **western provinces also experience a surge in inter-ethnic violence.** This violence is known as the Mai Ndombe crisis (as the epicenter of the conflict is in Kwamouth, located in the Mai Ndombe province). What started as a dispute over land between the Yaka and Teke communities, living in the Kwamouth area, has led to violent clashes between the two communities since July 2022 and is taking a deathly toll. As a result, people become displaced and have lost everything.

Children, now orphans, have seen their houses being burned and their parents being brutally attacked. In the panic that followed attacks, family members lost track of each other, not knowing their fate. The attacked persons require medical care, however, the **already insufficient healthcare in the region is now even further stretched**, leading to people not getting

the medical attention they need [24]. Next to that, the violence, anxiety and guilt related to this crisis create lasting psychological trauma [25].

A unpublished status update of UN OCHA in April 2023 on the Maï Ndombe crisis (see annex F), which was received by UNOCHA during a meeting in Kinshasa, indicates that in total, 85 000 persons are displaced due to the conflict and most IPDs, about 22.000, are located in Kenge (in Kwango province) and about 6.000 in Kikwit (in Kwilu province). The displaced persons are being hosted by the local communities in Kwango and Kwilu and live together in the same house, creating households of up to 20 persons (this is for example the case in Kenge, Kwango). This puts **pressure on natural resources such as water and land**. Furthermore, the food reserves in host families are quickly depleted, leading to increased conflicts and negatively impacting social cohesion. During consultation with the various stakeholders (UN OCHA, DG ECHO, Caritas-Belgique, Belgian Embassy and the different RCRC Movement partners), multiple indicated that the Maï Ndombe crisis is very volatile, however, that the **conflict will not be resolved soon** and this partly due to the poor governance in the area. As a result, the inter-ethnic violence is spreading from the Kwamouth area (in the Maï Ndombe province) towards south-eastern regions, namely Kwango and Kwilu provinces as well as to Kinshasa. This puts the displaced persons again at danger as well as the host communities, putting the social cohesion at risk.

Additionally, displaced persons gather in informal settings without receiving assistance (this is for example the case in Bandundu, Kwilu) as the government of DRC does not allow for the setup of formal displacement camps. In these informal settings, **basic services are extremely limited**, if they can be accessed at all. They also offer **limited possibilities to build a sustainable food, water and income supply**.

Lastly, the DRC has faced a series of recurrent epidemics, spanning infectious diseases such as malaria, cholera, Ebola virus disease (EVD), measles, and others. Malaria specifically, remains a pervasive public health concern, with endemic transmission across the country. The DRC consistently reports high numbers of malaria cases and deaths, particularly among vulnerable populations such as children and pregnant women. In general, these epidemics have been exacerbated by factors including inadequate healthcare access, limited resources, poor sanitation, population displacement, and societal vulnerabilities.

Rwanda

Rwanda, despite being ranked 165 out of 191 countries on the UNDP Human Development Index [13], has been welcoming refugees for close to three decades. As of the end of June 2023, **133,671 refugees and asylum seekers have been registered with UNHCR, and numbers keep rising**. The majority of these refugees originate from the DRC (61.3%) and Burundi (38.1%) [26]. Particularly, the Nkamira transit camp is facing increasing humanitarian needs due to a recent influx of asylum seekers from the DRC. Since 2022, tensions between several armed groups have increased in Eastern Congo near the border with Rwanda, causing a rise in the number of new arrivals in Rwanda since April 2023. As a result, the Nkamira transit camp has reached its maximum capacity as of June 13, 2023. Consequently, new arrivals will now be accommodated at the Kijote transit centre until an alternative facility is identified [27]. This not only puts strain on the existing camps themselves but also places additional pressure on the already vulnerable host communities. During the needs assessment in and around the Kiziba and Nkamira refugee camps several threats and pressing needs were highlighted in the key interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires. **Lack of food, services for vulnerable groups, household items, hygiene materials, clean drinking water and sanitation combined with limited livelihoods** are the main identified needs in both the refugee camps as well in the host communities.

The foremost threat, reported by 78% of respondents of the questionnaires, is the insufficient availability of sustainable food and necessary goods for living. Following next is the issue of inadequate access to clean drinking water, which stands at 48% overall. Additionally, 39% of respondents highlighted the absence of essential items such as kitchen supplies, blankets, clothing and soap. In the responses, 37% of participants noted excessive idle time, attributing it to the lack of productive activities, which in turn can lead to various negative behaviours. Furthermore, 22% of respondents identified the absence of proper hygiene facilities, encompassing toilets, hand washing stations, and bathing areas as a significant concern. To overcome these threats, 91% of the respondents' answers that they have insufficient personal capacities to change this situation and lack training and education.

These needs are confirmed by the advocacy summary from the head of office for UNHCR in Karongi who is responsible for both Kiziba camp and Nkamira transit camp. In addition, UNHCR emphasizes the lack of uniforms, school bags and sweaters for students, which makes it **difficult for children to attend school** in a dignified manner, leading to school dropouts. The Kiziba and Nkamira transit camps are situated in areas that experience cold temperatures, particularly in the mornings and evenings. If the students do not have the appropriate clothes to keep warm, they are more likely to skip school. Besides the existing threats, BRC-FI also enquired about the impact of the May 2023 floods on the communities. According to the respondents, the most felt effect of disasters is loss of food and crops (48%), loss of shelter (36%), loss of access to clean sanitation (36%) and loss of access to clean drinking water (22%).

Uganda

Uganda is home to 45.5 million persons with a diverse range of ethnic groups and 78% of the population being under the age of 30. The country has made noteworthy progress in the last decade, for example by increasing the access to essential services and an economy that has doubled in size. However, **challenges remain with the majority of the population still being dependent on subsistence economy suffering from an increasing impact of climate change** [28]. In addition, the Ugandan Government applies a unique Self-Reliance Strategy for refugees, allowing refugees the right to work, freedom of movement within the country, access to basic services and the right to live in local communities as well as in defined settlements. This **enhances refugee rights and means that Uganda now hosts a large number of refugees compared to neighbouring countries**. Since 2017, Uganda has seen a constant increase in the number of refugees in the country, culminating to about 1.5 million refugees and asylum seekers at the end of June 2023 [29]. The increased tensions in Eastern Congo and the protracted crisis in South Sudan have further increased the number of refugees in the country. This has put pressure on the Self-Reliance Strategy, due to the **strain it increasingly puts on available resources such as farming land, basic services, water and food and the host communities**. Continued migration and population pressures was also one of the concerns identified in the needs assessment. Also, a specific focus will be needed on the issues that are encountered by women and children, since 80% of the refugee population belongs to these groups [30]. Based on the above, the program will focus on 2 refugee settlements, Bidibidi and Kyangwali, following the overall refugee response plan where priority is given to the most vulnerable refugee population. The scope of focus on these settlements is also guided by coordination among other humanitarian actors, donors and the Office of the Prime Minister to ensure services are rendered equitably across the 14 refugee settlements in Uganda.

Other threats identified are food insecurity, access to safe water, healthcare and medicine and the poor living conditions. This all negatively impacts the health status of people in need. In the needs assessment, it was also clear that these threats particularly impact children, elderly, disabled persons, single parents, girls and (young) women. Children are for example plagued by diarrheal diseases and women and girls by a lack of safe spaces with information to build their protection capacities. They are further hampered in their needs by a lack of menstrual hygiene pads, which came up as a particular comment in a focus group discussion. The thread of food insecurity is exacerbated by the fact that World Food Programme, the organization that traditionally provides people who arrive in the settlement with food through cash distributions, has only been able to supply 60% of the food needs since 2021 and has recently proposed a new approach, where organizations fear a further decrease in nutritional support and an increase in malnutrition rates. Uganda Red Cross Society has stepped in with the ECHO-funded Uganda Cash Consortium to provide multipurpose cash support for the most vulnerable new arrivals, but this program has finished in April 2023.

All the threats mentioned can become worse in case a natural disaster hits the area. In the questionnaire 69% of the respondents indicated their community is prone to animal/livestock diseases, followed by 49% of the respondents indicating epidemics and 45% conflict. Secondary data identified droughts, floods and landslides as the main natural disasters, which were also the main hazards talked about in the focus group discussions and the key informant interviews [31]. All these disasters can have an impact on the availability of food, clean water and safe and hygienic shelter. In addition, it can cause people to become internally displaced, putting a further strain on the limited resources for basic humanitarian needs.

2.3. Please summarise the results of the assessment (if necessary, append a comprehensive report) by establishing a link to the action

The **regions targeted in this program face complex and protracted crises, causing many people to become displaced and vulnerable**, as described in the comprehensive needs assessment and analysis of the context in the previous chapters. Therefore, the **main objective of this program aims to address protection, safety and dignity needs of vulnerable people and communities in the targeted regions**. The selected activities will focus on equipping them with necessary resources and coping skills to effectively address and respond to protection-related risks and thereby enhancing the resilience of vulnerable individuals.

The **program aims to achieve these objectives on three distinct levels**. The three outcomes of this program reflect this aim and build further on already existing capacities of local communities and of the local Red Cross National Society. While each level has its **unique approach in addressing the identified protection issues, the levels are interlinked and synergetic**. In addition, the activities consider the 'Minimum Protection Approach' of the ICRC, ensuring programs "do no harm" and mainstream protection concerns. This allows for a cross-cutting, institutional and flexible protection approach.

Outcome 1: Increased access to multi-sectoral humanitarian services for households most-at-risk, addressing the threats most impacting their protection and wellbeing, with focus on people with special needs, including but not limited to single mothers, (unaccompanied and separated) children, youth and persons with a disability

In this outcome, the **protection-related threats as identified in the needs analysis are directly addressed**. The Seven Fundamental Principles sum up the RCRC Movement's ethics and are at the core of its approach to helping people in need during armed conflict, natural disasters and other emergencies: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary

service, unity and universality. In line with these principles, this **program specifically focuses on the accessibility of the activities for all in need in a non-discriminatory matter and on the proportionality of the activities** in comparison with the local needs. The **security and dignity of the people receiving assistance are also key parameters** when planning the setting of an activity.

From the needs assessment conducted for this program and secondary sources, specific concerns were highlighted, such as food insecurity, limited access to basic services and healthcare, and a lack of suitable shelters and poor hygienic conditions in existing shelters. In addition, participants in the needs assessment expressed a desire for self-sustainability and resilience as an individual and community.

To address these challenges, a key activity in this program will focus on **enhancing the socio-economic conditions of vulnerable people**. This can involve distribution of multi-purpose cash and essential household items, building upon the expertise and success of several Red Cross multi-purpose cash programs. In addition, efforts will be made to strengthen sustainable livelihoods, for example through agro-pastoral solidarity chains and supporting village savings and loans associations. These initiatives aim to grant participants greater access and control over resources, empowering them to overcome their protection issues sustainably. In domains where the Red Cross is not the best-placed stakeholder to address certain issues, **referral pathways to other organizations will be mapped and strengthened** for vulnerable people. For example, in many refugee camps, World Food Programme handles food distributions. However, in cases of sudden refugee influxes, the Red Cross can step in to provide support, as demonstrated in Uganda with the ECHO-funded multi-purpose cash program complementing the World Food Programme's distributions. Furthermore, the Crisis Modifier can also be activated in the different countries to provide food support if necessary.

Another important activity of this outcome is the **protection and improvement of physical and mental wellbeing** of people. It was evident that **certain groups, such as women, youth, and those with special needs, faced even greater challenges in accessing these services**. Recognizing the specific requirements of vulnerable groups, trained local Red Cross volunteers will be deployed within and outside refugee camps to address various issues such as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), providing psycho-social first aid, reproductive health services to reduce pregnancy complications and unwanted pregnancies, hygiene promotion, and more. In each country, the Red Cross volunteers and staff will collaborate closely with other organizations to whom individuals in need of support can be referred to, e.g., Plan International for SGBV and Child protection and Save the Children International for health and nutrition. **Mobile health services will be deployed to reach vulnerable individuals who cannot access regular healthcare**, and the availability of essential medicines will be ensured. Additionally, activities will be carried out to promote voluntary blood donation, especially crucial for treating children and women with childbirth complications as they receive most blood transfusions in these regions and are deemed the most vulnerable groups in the needs assessment. Menstrual hygiene kits will also be made available to girls and women and safe rooms for girls in school will be constructed. Lastly, dedicated volunteers and staff will **offer Restoring Family Services to refugees**, striving to reunite them with their families and loved ones. Remaining in touch with family members is often amongst the very first needs expressed by people affected by humanitarian crises. The uncertainty about the fate of a loved one is a cause for great suffering and heightened vulnerability. The **RCRC Movement has a unique mandate to clarify the fact of missing and to restore contact between separated families**, based on the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977 and the Statutes of the Movement. It is the protection activity where the Red Cross truly acts as a global network.

The lack of suitable shelters and poor hygienic conditions in existing shelters were identified as another threat. **Improving access to safe and clean water** will help address this issue. Individual and communal latrines will be constructed. To further enhance living conditions, the program will involve the construction and rehabilitation of safe and dignified shelters within existing settlements. Additionally, solid waste collection activities within the settlements will reduce the risk of infectious diseases caused by unhygienic conditions. Moreover, **awareness-raising activities will be conducted to educate vulnerable communities about disease prevention**, symptoms identification, and appropriate actions in case of infection. Local health committees will be established to enhance surveillance and referrals, ensuring timely and safe care for patients.

Outcome 2: Red Cross National Societies and their local branches in the targeted areas are equipped and trained to provide appropriate and quality response for humanitarian protection needs of vulnerable displaced, refugee, returnee, and host communities, with a gender and age-appropriate approach

Outcome 2 aims to strengthen the **institutionalization of protection principles**. An important activity in this outcome is the training of staff and volunteers of the Red Cross in protection-related topics, contextualized to the existing protection issues identified in the countries. **In line with the mandate of the RCRC Movement, specific attention will be put on International Humanitarian Law**. Where possible, the knowledge acquired by the National Societies will be further disseminated to the public. This outcome also focuses on enhancing the preparedness of vulnerable communities and on the local National Societies to assist them. By identifying protection-related risks, by developing and implementing contingency plans to

respond to these hazards, the **knowledge of local communities to protect themselves will be increased**. Essential items to cover their basic needs will be procured and stored locally to safeguard a **quick and effective local response**. To make sure that the provided assistance is implemented correctly and is fully in line with the protection agenda and the RCRC Movement fundamental principles, a feedback mechanism will be added to program activities, to **allow people to critically address any issues encountered** and to leave no one behind.

Outcome 3: Protection needs of the most vulnerable people with special needs are responded to in a timely and adequate manner during acute emergency situations through the activation of the Crisis Modifier

Outcome 3 considers the **threat of the unexpected occurrence and/ or intensification of conflicts, disease outbreaks and natural hazards during the program**, which can exacerbate the already existing protection needs. Besides the investments in capacity building as discussed in Outcome 2, a Crisis Modifier will allow **timely and adequate response to new or worsened protection needs of the most vulnerable people** during an acute emergency situation. This outcome specifically addresses the humanitarian needs of the many small to medium disasters within a protracted crisis context, as they often receive little to no attention from the public and/ or media.

3. HUMANITARIAN ORGANISATION IN THE INTERVENTION AREA

3.1. Presence of the humanitarian organisation in the intervention area: brief overview of the strategy and current or recent activities in the country

The International RCRC Movement is a **global humanitarian network that operates in nearly every country worldwide**. It is composed of 191 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies) working in their respective countries, which are complemented by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the ICRC, acting at the international level. The RCRC Movement's **primary mission is to provide humanitarian assistance and support to people affected by disasters, conflicts, and other emergencies, in accordance with its Fundamental Principles** (humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality). In addition, National Societies, subject to their national legislation, support public authorities in their humanitarian tasks as auxiliary to the public authorities. Coordination and collaboration between National Societies is done according to the principles stated in the Seville Agreement 2.0, adopted at the 2022 Council of Delegates of the RCRC Movement, and in line with the IFRC Strategy 2030. These agreements and focus on the role and autonomy in humanitarian action of National Societies and places **emphasize on the importance of localising humanitarian action by empowering and supporting local actors and working closely with local communities**. In this way, the capacity of National Societies is strengthened, thus enhancing the RCRC Movement's ability to respond effectively to emergencies, while also addressing long-term development needs.

To enable efficient capacity building of National Societies within the RCRC Movement, **intense collaboration between National Societies** is needed. On the one hand, there are Operating National Societies (ONS), which are local Red Cross National Societies operating in a country where a disaster or crisis occurs. Via its network of local Red Cross employees and volunteers, they are deeply embedded in the local communities and therefore have a unique in-depth knowledge of the local context. With its volunteers, the ONS always takes the lead role in responding to the emergency and will coordinate the assistance provided. On the other hand, there are the Participating National Societies (PNS), who provide assistance to the ONS, through technical expertise, financial or material means. A schematic overview of the collaboration between National Societies, their governments and the local communities is provided in Figure 1.

Since more than one PNS can provide support in a country, IFRC has introduced, in line with their Strategy 2030 and with its role as coordinator, a Unified Planning approach, where a **complete and holistic approach to the countries humanitarian needs is outlined in a multiyear plan, led by the ONS with bilateral operational support of one or more PNSs (Participating National Societies)**. In this program, BRC-FI would act as a PNS, leveraging its technical expertise and the program's financial means to strengthen the National Societies in the different program countries, both in the short and long term. **The priorities of each National Society as well as the local needs in each country are put at the forefront** and are compared with the unique skills and trainings that BRC-FI can offer to each National Society. Examples of the technical domains where BRC-FI provides unique expertise are first aid, blood donation processes, the reception of refugees and disaster preparedness and response. BRC-FI uses its national expertise to develop trainings adapted to the African context and other modalities to share this knowledge internationally, such as the basic first aid training for refugees in this program. Where possible and relevant, it assists the ONS to closely collaborate with important stakeholders, such as universities, its students, companies, and other NGOs.

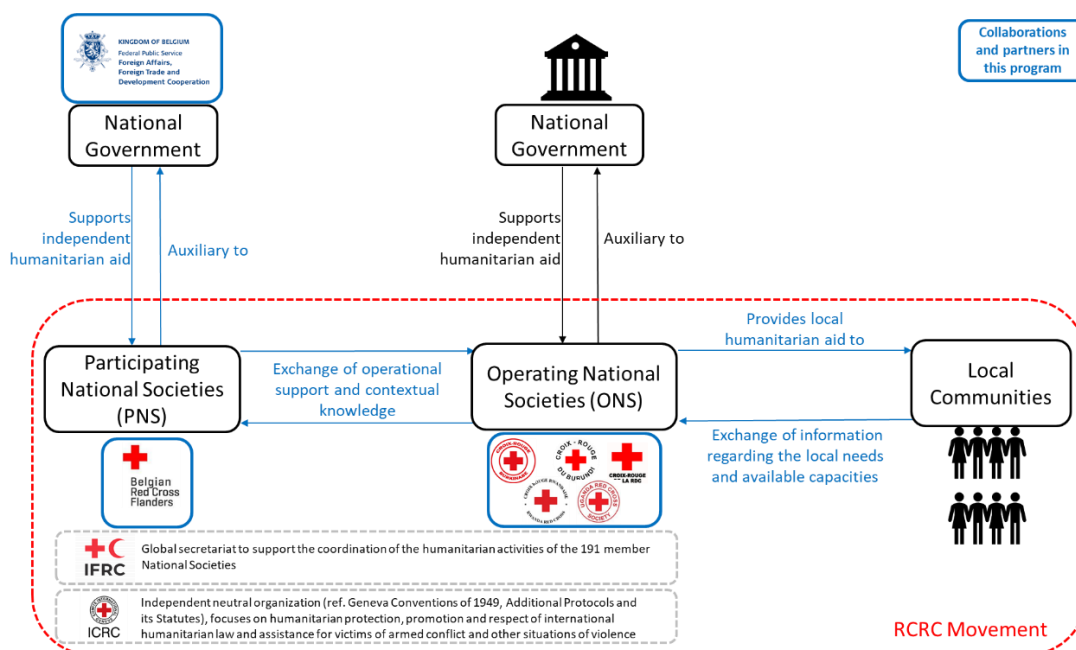


Figure 1: Schematic overview of the collaboration between National Societies of the Red Cross to respond efficiently to humanitarian needs in local communities worldwide.

Over the past decade, **BRC-FI has established a strong partnership with the National Societies** in the Great Lakes region, including CRBu, RRCS and URCS and have worked together on various humanitarian as well as development projects. These partnerships have led to mutual learning experiences and improvements and adaptations to the local context when implementing activities.

Since 2022, BRC-FI has been bilaterally supporting activities in Burkina Faso and focuses on transferring technical expertise and skills. In this specific case, BRC-FI works on upgrading and upscaling the local first aid practices and local expertise of CRBF. This program marks BRC-FI's initial project in Burkina Faso involving a delegation and will happen in close coordination with CRB-Cf. This program will also mark the first large-scale project where BRC-FI directly supports RRDC in the DRC. Both partnerships setup will mirror the existing BRC-FI localised partnership-approach, with CRBF and CRRDC in the driver seat of the conception and implementation of the program and BRC-FI aligning its technical expertise and support with the strategy of CRRDC and the locally identified humanitarian needs.

Because of the high complexity of the local context in each country included in this program, a **Project Manager of BRC-FI will be full-time based in the country of implementation to assist the local Red Cross National Society to transfer expertise maximally to the local partner** and to ensure successful completion and compliance of the program. In Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi, the collaboration and implementation of the program will build on the already existing in-country delegations of BRC-FI. In DRC and Burkina Faso, new in-country delegations will be set up by BRC-FI to further improve the efficient collaboration, close to the implementation areas of the program.

3.2. Ongoing actions and requests for funding submitted to other donors, in the same intervention area – please state how overlaps and double funding would be avoided

For the **RCRC Movement**, a localised approach is applied to all projects, with each ONS as the coordination centre in its respective country, in both conception phase and during implementation of projects. To avoid double funding, the ONS holds regular meetings with (future) PNSs, where applicable also with the ICRC and IFRC, to streamline the operational capacity building efforts and to coordinate and optimize the funding streams in-country. During these coordination meetings, complementarity between implementation areas, as well as between projects are sought and established. The efficiency of this process is further improved with the IFRC Unified Planning approach, as explained above in section 3.1.

As part of this program conception, the ONSs (Operating National Societies) performed a comprehensive needs assessment in the intended implementation areas as they have direct access to information through their local branches in the intervention areas and consulted other partners, both within and outside the RCRC Movement, **to identify gaps between the interventions and the population's needs and to avoid duplication of work**. Specifically regarding refugee response, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), together with the respective government entities for refugee response, coordinate all actions implemented and provide separate mandates (e.g. indicate a lead for a specific sector) to each actor active in the refugee setting. In addition, the targeted regions of other partners proposing a program in the same

countries were mapped, which helped during the conception of the program to focus on each organisation's strengths in addressing protection needs when the same area was targeted (Annex J). The mapping will also be used during the program to allow efficient coordination.

Regarding ongoing actions, in Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, BRC-FI is already implementing a humanitarian protection program with the local Red Cross National Societies, focusing on the protection of communities in the Great Lakes region through multi-sectoral assistance, with special attention to the most vulnerable affected by humanitarian crisis. The program is funded by the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation of the Belgian Federal Government (DGD), from Service D5.1 – Humanitarian aid and runs from the 1st of December 2021 for 24 months. **This program serves as a continuation of the existing humanitarian protection program**, where the specific activities build further on the realizations of the ongoing humanitarian protection program and are based on the needs assessment in the local communities. Besides the humanitarian protection program, BRC-FI is cooperating with the National Societies on a development program in Rwanda and Burundi as well as in Burkina Faso, focusing on a holistic approach towards increased community resilience to health hazards, running from the 1st of January 2022 until 31st of December 2026. This program is funded by the Belgian Federal Government Directorate-General for Development Cooperation, Service D3 - Development. The activities in this development program will aim to achieve sustainable improved access to health support, a need also identified in the needs assessment for this proposed program. For the implementation of the program in DRC, the action of this proposal is the first and only funding application submitted by BRC-FI at this moment.

4. OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

4.1. Precise location of the action (please include a map making it possible to locate the project)

Figure 2 provides an overview of the activities that are proposed for this program in each country. The activities are further divided in the results of the program, with a district coloured red indicating activities for result 1 will be implemented and districts coloured black having activities for result 2. For result 3 the focus is country-wide given the presence of the RCRC Movement in all corners of the country and will depend on the actual existing needs. A table with the names of the targeted districts and provinces for each country is available in Annex K.

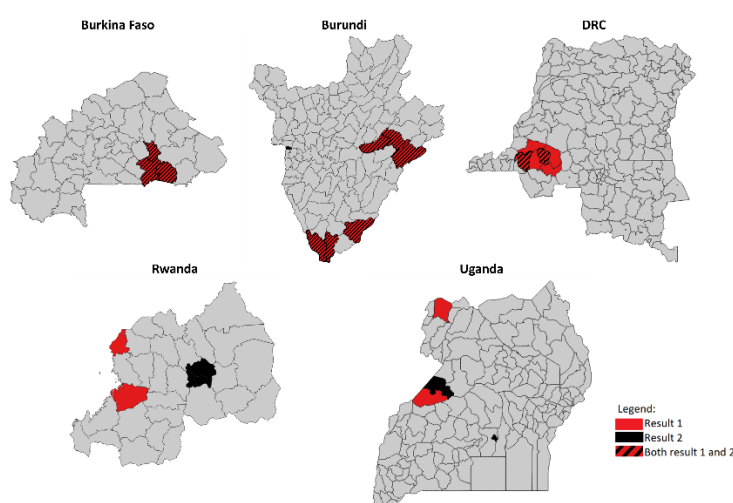


Figure 2: Map with the precise location of the program activities on district level in each of the five countries.

Burkina Faso

In Burkina Faso, the Centre-Est province was selected for the program, as this **region currently hosts many displaced people** (66.000 according to a recent UNOCHA report [32]) **and food insecurity, a lack of access to basic health services and education continue to increase progressively**. To identify and target the most vulnerable communities, the CRBF will carry out a situation analysis in the weeks prior to the start date of this proposal. In this way it is ensured that the deployment of a comprehensive intervention is according to the situation of the context at that time.

Burundi

In Burundi, for result 1, three communes are targeted in the province of Ruyigi (Butezi, Bweru and Gisuru) and 3 communes are targeted in the province of Makamba (Nyanza-lac, Mabanda and Kayogoro). All communes border with Tanzania and **these two provinces receive the largest number of Burundian returnees**, with 34.989 and 37.485 repatriates respectively (from September 2017 to 31 March 2023) [4]. Additionally, the province of Ruyigi has two refugee camps: Bwagiriza (10.026 people) and Nyakanda (11.075 people) [5] as well as a transit centre for returnees in Nyabitare. Also, in the Makamba province, a transit centre for returnees is established in the Mabanda commune (Gitara transit centre). During the first week

of May 2023, volunteers of CRBu conducted the needs assessment in the 6 forementioned communes. For result 2 the six forementioned communes are targeted, as well as CRBu's headquarters, situated in Bujumbura.

DRC

For DRC, the program focuses on the provinces of Kwilu and Kwango, and more precisely the areas **where most internally displaced persons due to the Maï Ndombe crises reside**. In Kwango, approximately 22.000 internally displaced persons live [33]. A large share lives in the Kenge Territoire, with a host population of an estimated 1.9 million inhabitants [34]. In Kwilu, approximately 36.3000 internally displaced people live. The city of Kikwit, with approximately 0,5 million inhabitants [35], is targeted amongst other areas in the region. In result 2 the branch offices of CRRDC, located in the cities of Kikwit and Kenge are targeted.

Rwanda

In Rwanda, the proposed activities for result 1 target the Karongi and Rubavu districts in the Western Province, which shares a border with DRC. These **districts are hosting the Kiziba refugee camp and Nkamira transit camp**, respectively. The Kiziba refugee camp is the oldest camp in Rwanda, and currently hosts 16.125 refugees [26]. The Nkamira transit camp has been opened by the Rwandan Ministry of Emergency Management early 2023 in **response to the increased influx of refugees from the DR Congo**, resulting from the escalation of violence in Eastern Congo. According to the latest estimates by UNHCR, it currently hosts 6.697 refugees [27]. A needs assessment has been conducted in May 2023 in these camps and their host communities by Rwanda Red Cross Society. Result two will target Rwanda Red Cross Society's headquarter, situated in Kigali.

Uganda

In Uganda, the project targets the Yumbe and Kikuube Districts, situated in the Northern and Western Region of Uganda, respectively. Yumbe district shares a border with South Sudan and is close to the border of DRC, while Kikuube borders with DRC. The Yumbe district **hosts the Bidi Bidi refugee camp**, with an estimated population of approximately 200.00 refugees [36]. In **Kikuube, the Kyangwali refugee camp will be supported**, currently hosting over 131.000 refugees, together with the surrounding host population (estimated 376.600 inhabitants). The needs assessment has been conducted by Uganda Red Cross Society in these camps, and the surrounding host communities, in May 2023. Result two will focus on strengthening URCS capacity in Hoima regional branch, covering the Kikuube district, and the URCS headquarters in Kampala.

Result three, the Crisis Modifier, can be applied across the country in all project countries.

4.2. Beneficiaries

4.2.1 Total number of direct beneficiaries

The number of beneficiaries expected to be reached in the program is in general calculated based on the amount of activities planned, multiplied by the number of beneficiaries reached by an activity. As an example, for training activities, the number of direct beneficiaries is the number of training sessions multiplied by the number of people trained per session. In distribution activities, the number of direct beneficiaries is dependent on whether the distribution entails support for whole households (e.g. kits with essential household items) or support for individuals (e.g. menstrual hygiene managements kits). In the former, the number of beneficiaries is the number of kits distributed multiplied by the average household size of the target community. As a final example, the number of beneficiaries of sensibilisation sessions on, amongst others, children's rights or sexual and gender-based violence is estimated by the number of sessions organised multiplied by the number of people expected to attend a session. The total number of direct beneficiaries per country can be found in Table 2. People reached through more than one activity (e.g. people receiving cash assistance and complementary financial literacy training) are not counted double in these estimates.

Table 2: Overview of the beneficiaries targeted in each country per result area.

Result area	Burkina Faso	Burundi	DRC	Rwanda	Uganda	Total
Result 1	24.413	146.395	35.780	33.496	92.563	332.647
Result 2	50	3.519	576	8.196	145	12.486
Total	24.463	149.914	36.356	41.692	92.708	345.133

Additional beneficiaries will be reached by activating the Crisis Modifier, but here the total amount will depend on the type of activity supported by the Crisis Modifier.

4.2.2 Specificities of the direct beneficiaries (please specify, if possible, by referring to the groups as appropriate, e.g.: unaccompanied minors, people with disabilities, children, former combatants, etc.)

Within this program, the aim is to cover **the basic needs of those most heavily affected by acute conflicts, protracted crises, and natural hazards**. In every country, the main driver when selecting beneficiaries, are the RCRC fundamental principles. Impartiality, focusing on non-discrimination and proportionality when providing aid is crucial in each assessment. Whether treating the wounded with first aid or when distributing food, members of the RCRC Movement should always safeguard that those in greatest need receive assistance first.

The overarching identified groups in each country are young children, youth, displaced people and its host communities, and girls and women. Other groups are country specific. In Burundi for example, returning Burundians that had previously fled the country are included. For them, activities are specifically foreseen to facilitate their access to schooling and to support them in their socio-professional integration.

On the other hand, **Women and girls** are targeted with activities such as the distribution of menstrual hygiene management kits, livelihood strengthening and sexual and reproductive health services that tackle the present gap of their most basic needs. On top of that, the creation of additional safe rooms for girls, the sensitization of people on sexual and gender-based violence and the setup of additional child protection services, will support these vulnerable groups to overcome their difficult and hazardous position. Hereby, specific attention will be given to children- or women-headed households, pregnant women, and single mothers.

Another identified group is **youth**, for which activities including first aid trainings for young people and the implementation of youth clubs with recreational activities are foreseen. The technical first aid expertise of BRC-FI has led to, in close cooperation with several Red Cross National Societies in sub-Saharan Africa, the development and contextualisation of first aid manuals and materials specifically targeting youth. These tools are now applied in order to maximise the learning curve and skills of young people.

Furthermore, Restoring Family Links activities, a unique activity for the Red Cross, will be offered to **people who lost family members or their supporting network**, often in combination with further access to psychosocial support. For the construction of safe and dignified shelters, an analysis will be performed by the local Red Cross branch to determine the **most vulnerable people in a community**, using a number of criteria, depending on the local and cultural context. The individuals identified as the most vulnerable will then be provided with support through this activity. Another specific target group are **children with disabilities**, for whom assistive devices will be procured in the program.

Lastly, during the use of the Crisis Modifier mechanism, a rapid needs assessment will be conducted before the activities within this result take place, to target the most vulnerable affected people with the right support during an unforeseen crisis, conflict or because of a natural hazard.

4.2.3 Mechanisms and criteria for the identification of the direct beneficiaries

In all countries, each local Red Cross National Society works in **coordination with the local government and other stakeholders**, such as UNHCR, to identify beneficiaries. Depending on the context, selection criteria are defined, adjusted where necessary and applied in order to create lists of targeted individuals or households, to **ensure that humanitarian assistance or services are provided equitably and impartially, based on their vulnerability and their needs**. Inclusion criteria use geographical location, as people have to be present in the intervention area and are also based on household composition. Exclusion criteria may also be established, notably if households have received comparable assistance from other organisations and sources. Where appropriate, **members of the community and especially local leaders will also be directly included in setting the criteria for beneficiary selection**. This effort is always well coordinated between partners to avoid duplication. In case of a sudden onset crisis in one of the program's countries of implementation, beneficiaries of activities supported by the Crisis Modifier budget line will be identified using a rapid needs assessment, targeting the most vulnerable, most affected, and those least likely to receive assistance through other initiatives.

4.2.4 Describe the scope of and the arrangements for the involvement of the direct beneficiaries in the development of the action

The participation of beneficiaries in the design and implementation of the action is based on the "Community Engagement and Accountability" approach of the RCRC Movement [37]. The aim is to **provide a framework for a strong link between communities and National Societies** throughout the project cycle. This is achieved through (1) access to safe, relevant, and reliable information on the services provided, (2) two-way communication as a mechanism for improving activities and processes, and (3) the promotion of community dialogue as a tool for conflict resolution in transit and host communities. The project uses strategies that place beneficiaries as active players in resolving their own problems, from the beginning to the end of the process. In this way, the beneficiary communities are strongly involved in the project. Local Red Cross volunteers also play a key role when implementing the project. This participatory approach by the volunteers is essential if

the projects are to be developed in a sustainable manner and are to contribute to the buy-in of the communities, since the volunteers are members of the communities. In addition, this proposal will encourage gender and diversity to be considered both in the working groups (monitoring committees and others) and in the selection criteria mentioned above.

Three specific forms of dialogue will be developed: (1) community participation visits (face-to-face discussion tables), (2) complaints-handling committees and (3) a hotline for reporting incidents.

4.2.5 Other potential beneficiaries (indirect, catchment, etc.)

The actions in this program will target the most vulnerable among populations, such as people on the move and their host communities. However, the program is expected to have **beneficial effects for many other people not directly targeted by the program's actions**. For example, people helped by volunteers trained in first aid or community-based surveillance indirectly benefit from the program's trainings. As another example, direct beneficiaries whose livelihoods are being supported by the program through, amongst others, technical and vocational training or cash and voucher assistance will become financially better-off. This will result in them being able to spend more, which is in the benefit of local merchants having more clients. Furthermore, the local economy will also be stimulated through the program's procurements, which will as much as possible be done on the local market.

The capacity building of key staff and volunteers of the local Red Cross National Societies through trainings and workshops will also result in spill-over effects. The participants will be able to use their acquired knowledge in both future programs and ongoing programs in other regions. Lastly, the disaster preparedness efforts, such as stockpiling of emergency goods and capacity building on warehouse management, will be in the benefit of quick and effective response to people struck by future disasters.

4.2.6 Direct beneficiaries by sector (refer to "ECHO's guidelines, Annex I", pages 26-29: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/about/actors/fpa_fr.htm)

The number of direct beneficiaries per country of the proposed program can be found in Table 3, per sector as defined by ECHO guidelines. In addition, an appropriate gender and age balance will be adhered to in the program. The gender and age of beneficiaries targeted by the program will be tracked with the indicators defined specifically for this program. Discrepancies in total number of beneficiaries between Table 2 and Table 3 can be explained by beneficiaries expected to be supported by activities in two different sectors, hence counted double in Table 3, which was avoided in Table 2.

Table 3: Number of direct beneficiaries by sector.

Sector	Burkina Faso	Burundi	DRC	Rwanda	Uganda	Total number of beneficiaries
Food security and livelihoods	3.570	7.500	-	1.200	-	12.270
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	-	-	-	2.506	16.925	19.431
Health	18.100	17.895	2.686	27.546	19.685	85.912
Nutrition	-	-	-	-	-	0
Shelter and settlements	1.560	2,000	-	1.750	50	5.360
Disaster Risk Reduction/ Disaster Preparedness	50	1,079	110	866	24.188	26.293
Protection	1.594	99.950	24.310	21.604	25.115	172.573
Coordination	-	-	-	-	-	0
Support to operations	-	80	20	7.200	145	7.445
Mine action	-	-	-	-	-	0
Education in emergencies	250	5.040	5.820	7.500	1.420	20.030
Multi-purpose cash transfer	4.564	16.370	3.500	1.250	5.180	30.864
Total	29.688	149.914	36.446	71.422	92.708	380.178

4.3. Objectives, outcomes and activities

4.3.1. Operational overview of the action: logical framework (3 pages maximum)

Title of the action	Strengthening vulnerable communities: Localised protection initiatives amid humanitarian crises in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Rwanda, DRC, and Uganda through the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement network			
Main objective	Contribute to the protection, safety and dignity of people and communities during protracted and acute humanitarian crises in Burkina Faso, Burundi, DRC, Rwanda, and Uganda, in compliance with the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.			
	Intervention logic	Objectively verifiable indicators	Verification sources	Risks and assumptions
Specific objective	Vulnerable households with protection needs in Burkina Faso, Burundi, DRC, Rwanda, and Uganda have acquired sufficient resources and healthy coping skills to mitigate and respond to protection risks, with a gender and age-appropriate approach.	• <u>Main indicator 1</u>: % of beneficiaries who report that humanitarian assistance is provided in a safe and accessible location and in a dignified, safe, accountable, and participatory manner, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status • <u>Main indicator 2</u>: Total number of beneficiaries reached with the action (direct + indirect) • <u>Main indicator 3</u>: % of people who agree that their capacity to mitigate and respond to protection risks has improved as a result of the assistance provided, disaggregated by age, gender, disability, and status	Surveys with beneficiaries, activity reports, distribution lists, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	Assumption 1: Economic stability in the project area. The market maintains the availability of products (including fuel) and their prices within acceptable limits and allows full coverage of the initially defined beneficiaries. There are no delays in procurement of materials needed for project implementation or delays in construction works.
Outcome 1	Increased access to multi-sectoral humanitarian services for households most-at-risk, addressing the threats most impacting their protection and wellbeing, with focus on people with special needs, including but not limited to single mothers, (unaccompanied and separated) children, youth, and persons with a disability.			Assumption 2: Socio-political stability in the project area.
Activities	1.1 Improve socio-economic conditions of households most at risk.	• <u>Indicator 1.1.1</u>: % of people who agree that their capacity to foresee in their basic needs has improved as a result of the assistance provided, disaggregated by age, gender, disability, and status • <u>Indicator 1.1.2</u>: Number of people assisted with activities aiming to improve socio-economic conditions, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	Surveys with beneficiaries, activity reports, distribution lists, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	The upcoming elections in Uganda, DRC and Rwanda will proceed peacefully. Situation in Sahel region remains more or less stable and does not end up in an armed conflict between different countries.
	1.1.1 Provide Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance to enable households most-at-risk to cover their most urgent needs in a dignified way. 1.1.2 Strengthen sustainable livelihoods for providers of households most-at-risk, with special focus on (single) mothers and youth. 1.1.3 Provision of essential household items for households most-at-risk.			Assumption 3: The security situation allows the implementing (humanitarian) partners to move around safely.
	1.2 Strengthen protection capacities and services for people with special needs.	• <u>Indicator 1.2.1</u>: % of people who agree that the service provided improved their ability to overcome protection risks • <u>Indicator 1.2.2</u>: Number of people with special needs reached with protection capacities and services strengthening activities, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	Surveys with beneficiaries, activity reports, distribution lists, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	Assumption 4: All Governments allow cash to be distributed in the intervention zone in a safe way.
	1.2.1 Strengthen child protection services with focus on vulnerable and at-risk children, youth, and their caregivers.			

1.2.2 Distribution of dignity kits for girls, and young and adult women. 1.2.3 Increase social cohesion and peaceful co-existence through the set-up and strengthening of community and youth clubs. 1.2.4 Restoring Family Links. 1.2.5 Map and strengthen referral pathways for people in need of humanitarian services provided by other entities. 1.2.6 Ensuring children can access school in a dignified manner.			Assumption 5: Absence of natural disasters in the project area. Assumption 6: The community's willingness and commitment to adapt new skills and approaches to better their lives Assumption 7: The government provides continued support and the enabling environment to provide support to refugees. Risk 1: Security risks as a consequence of political/economic instability and/or intensification of conflicts in the program areas Risk 2: Limited humanitarian access, especially for National Society Staff and volunteers Risk 3: Risks related to climatic hazards (floods, droughts) Risk 4: Risk of Sexual Exploitation and abuse (SEA) Risk 5: Corruption and fraud occurs when targeting vulnerable households Risk 6: Targeted refugee camps are closed by local government throughout the program
1.3 Protect and improve the physical and mental wellbeing of people with special needs.	• <u>Indicator 1.3.1</u>: % of people who agree that the assistance provided contributes to an improved access to healthcare services in their community, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status • <u>Indicator 1.3.2</u>: Number of people assisted by activities aiming to improve physical and mental wellbeing of people with special needs, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	Surveys with beneficiaries, activity reports, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	
1.3.1 Deployment of mobile medical/health clinic (deployment & replenishment of consumables). 1.3.2 Provide Sexual and Reproductive Health services. 1.3.3 First aid training for communities, local first responders and youth clubs. 1.3.4 Improve access to safe blood transfusions. 1.3.5 Provide psychosocial support and recreational activities. 1.3.6 Map and strengthen referral pathways for people in need of more specialized mental health and psychosocial services. 1.3.7 Provision, support, and monitoring of assistive devices for children with special needs.			
1.4 Equip communities to prepare, recognise and respond to public health threats.	• <u>Indicator 1.4.1</u>: % of people who agree that their vulnerability to public health threats is reduced because of the assistance provided, disaggregated by age, gender, disability, and status • <u>Indicator 1.4.2</u>: Number of people assisted by activities aiming to equip communities to prepare, recognize and respond to public health threats, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	Surveys with beneficiaries, activity reports, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	
1.4.1 Carry out awareness-raising activities in communities most vulnerable to epidemics and pandemics to prevent contagion, identify symptoms and steps to follow for safe treatment. 1.4.2 Set up local health committees with community leaders and volunteers for surveillance, identification of symptoms and referrals.			
1.5 Prevention of and response to survivors of SGBV, addressing causes, risks, and consequences in an integrated way.	• <u>Indicator 1.5.1</u>: % of people who agree that the assistance provided contributes to addressing the causes, risk and/or consequences of SGBV, disaggregated by age, gender, disability, and status • <u>Indicator 1.5.2</u>: Number of people assisted by activities aiming to prevent or respond to SGBV, disaggregated by age, gender, disability, and status	Surveys with beneficiaries, activity reports, distribution lists, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	
1.5.1 Design and carry out community awareness-raising activities regarding SGBV. 1.5.2 Provide safe shelter and support to survivors of SGBV. 1.5.3 Specialized health care and psychosocial support services for survivors of SGBV.			
1.6 Ensure protective and dignified living conditions in settlements for new vulnerable refugees, returnees, and internally displaced people.	• <u>Indicator 1.6.1</u>: % of people who agree that the assistance provided contributes to an improvement in protective and dignified living conditions, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status • <u>Indicator 1.6.2</u>: Number of people assisted by activities aiming to improve living conditions in settlements for new vulnerable refugees, returnees, and internally displaced people, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	Surveys with beneficiaries, activity reports, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	
1.6.1 Construction and/or rehabilitation of safe and dignified shelters within existing settlements.			

	1.6.2 Increase access to safe and clean water.			
Outcome 2	Red Cross National Societies and their local branches in the targeted areas are equipped and trained to provide appropriate and quality response for humanitarian protection needs of vulnerable displaced, refugees, returnees, and host communities, with a gender and age-appropriate approach.			
Activities	2.1 Train staff and volunteers from the National Red Cross Societies in Burkina Faso, Burundi, DRC, Rwanda and Uganda and their local branches on protection-related topics, according to a needs analysis carried out in each country, identifying capacity gaps and training needs.	- Indicator 2.1.1: % of staff and volunteers indicating a training increased the capacity of the National Society to fulfil their protection mandate - Indicator 2.1.2: Amount of staff and volunteers trained on protection-related topics	Surveys with beneficiaries, activity reports, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	
	2.1.1 Develop training plan based on the results of assessments and analyses of strengths and weaknesses of the National Red Cross Society (staff and volunteers) in each country. 2.1.2 Implement training schedule with posterior follow-up to ensure correct implementation of activities.			
	2.2 Provide the National Red Cross Societies in Burkina Faso, Burundi, DRC, Rwanda and Uganda and their local branches with adequate equipment and SOPs, to provide quality and timely multi-sectoral humanitarian services that contribute to the protection of targeted communities.	- Indicator 2.2.1: Number of SOPs developed/updated and disseminated - Indicator 2.2.2: Number of emergency goods prepositioned	Activity reports, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	
	2.2.1 Inventory and purchase necessary equipment for humanitarian services included under result 1, contributing to the protection of people and communities most at risk. 2.2.2 Review, update and disseminate SOPs on the different interventions. 2.2.3 Construct and/or renovate warehouses to ensure emergency goods are well stocked and ready to be distributed when an emergency occurs. 2.2.4 Preposition emergency goods in line with local customs and main needs.			
	2.3 Increase local preparedness and response capacity.	- Indicator 2.3.1: Number of people covered by early action/ contingency plan - Indicator 2.3.2: Number of community members involved and trained in LDRT	Activity reports, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	
	2.3.1 Carry out an Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment in the targeted areas to identify protection threats and available resources. 2.3.2 Develop and carry out local preparedness and response capacity improvement plans.			
	2.4 Strengthen knowledge on International Humanitarian Law principles to increase the protection of the most vulnerable, especially women and children.	- Indicator 2.4.1: Number of staff/volunteers trained in IHL (International Humanitarian Law) - Indicator 2.4.2: Number of IHL dissemination activities organised	Activity reports, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	
	2.5 Establish a feedback mechanism to ensure community engagement and accountability.	- Indicator 2.5.1: % of beneficiaries who address a complaint about the assistance provided - Indicator 2.5.2: % of feedback received that is responded to within 2 weeks	Activity reports	
Outcome 3	Protection needs of the most vulnerable people with special needs are responded to in a timely and adequate manner during acute emergency situations through the activation of the Crisis Modifier.	- Indicator 3.1: Time (days) between request for activation of the Crisis Modifier by the operating Red Cross National Society and the start-up of operations - Indicator 3.2: Number of people supported with Crisis Modifier funds	Beneficiary lists, field reports, disaggregated by age, gender, disability and status	

4.3.2. More detailed information per outcome

The principal outcome of the program is to **contribute to the needs related to the protection, safety and dignity of individuals and communities during protracted and acute humanitarian crises** in Burkina Faso, Burundi, DRC, Rwanda, and Uganda, in compliance with the RCRC humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.

This principal objective was developed through the localised approach, using the RCRC Movement network of National Societies, which allowed a cross-cutting protection analysis of the context in the intervention areas. This resulted in the development of a program with three levels, which work together in a synergetic way to improve the protection issues caused by the protracted and complex crises that impact the targeted regions as identified in the contextualized protection analysis.

The three levels of the program are reflected in **three outcomes, each focusing on a distinct aspect to tackle the identified protection issues**. The first outcome works to directly address the identified protection threats, considering that different people are impacted differently. The second outcome works to institutionalize mainstreaming protection in the activities of the local National Society. The last outcome considers that sudden disasters or (escalating) conflicts can exacerbate and/or change the protection needs and allows for a fast and flexible response to these changing contexts.

To measure the effectiveness of the program, multiple indicators have been developed. Two indicators measure the main objective of the program: one assesses whether the activities have been conducted by mainstreaming protection, the other indicator measures the total number of people that have been supported with this program. All indicators will receive a challenging but reasonable target. The indicators for each outcome and activity and the indicators on the main and specific objective can be found in the logical framework (section 4.3.1).

For the specific objective of the program, an indicator was developed to measure if the activities were, not only implemented by mainstreaming protection, but also had an impact on addressing protection needs of the targeted population. Separate indicators have been developed for the activities of the 3 outcomes that feed into this overarching indicator.

Outcome 1: Increased access to multi-sectoral humanitarian services for households most-at-risk, addressing the threats most impacting their protection and wellbeing, with focus on people with special need, including but not limited to single mothers, (unaccompanied and separated) children, youth, and persons with a disability

This outcome is realised through various activities, which target protection needs and capacities of diverse groups, as identified in the protection analysis, as described in section 2. In addition, the activities build upon the expertise of BRC-FI and the local partner National Society and their knowledge of other local stakeholders to build efficient referral pathways for people in protection need. The following activities were specifically identified: improving livelihoods, health, essential household items and access to basic services, which were identified as important protection issues in the targeted communities.

Outcome 2: Red Cross National Societies and their local branches in the targeted areas are equipped and trained to provide appropriate and quality response for humanitarian protection needs of vulnerable displaced, refugees, returnees, and host communities, with a gender and age-appropriate approach

This outcome focuses on building the capacity of the local Red Cross National Society to implement their activities by taking protection into account, not only in this program, but throughout all their programs. A special focus is laid on strengthening the knowledge of International Humanitarian Law and implementing its principles, which are closely linked with addressing protection issues of vulnerable people and the internationally recognised mandate of the RCRC movement. Trained local staff will also be activated in regional expertise trainings, to allow for a further dissemination of the content. A feedback mechanism is also introduced in the activities in this program, to draw lessons learned for future activities within or outside of this program.

Outcome 3: Protection needs of the most vulnerable people with special needs are responded to in a timely and adequate manner during acute emergency situations through the activation of the Crisis Modifier

Outcome 3 has the goal of providing the program with the flexibility to address suddenly changing and increasing protection risks caused by unexpected occurrence and/ or intensification of conflicts, disease outbreaks and natural hazards. As the program is implemented in regions that are impacted by complex and protracted crises, it should be considered that protection risks can increase or change drastically in the event of a disaster. To this means, the Crisis Modifier was designed to provide immediate funding for lifesaving actions, but can also support early-recovery needs or support the set-up of a larger emergency operation. It is a crucial resource for addressing diverse situations, such as natural hazards, large population displacements due to conflicts, handling disease outbreaks or other disasters. The versatile funding mechanism covers various critical aspects, including initial assessments, response implementation, monitoring, and communication.

The Crisis Modifier can be initiated country-wide upon request of the local Red Cross National Society in case response to a sudden crisis requires more extensive support than can be provided by their own means. More details on the decision phase of implementing the Crisis Modifier can be found in the BRC-FI policy on the usage of the Crisis Modifier (see Annex L).

Furthermore, triggers will be defined in-country, in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders and authorities for the purpose of harmonization and complementarity, whenever possible.

When a crisis occurs, rapid action is essential. Within 72 hours of a disaster, an assessment team is deployed to determine the target population, intervention locations, required actions, and budgetary needs. Implementation commences within two weeks after approval of the activation of the Crisis Modifier to ensure swift aid delivery. To further speed up the start of the actual response activities, the local Red Cross National Societies are encouraged to sign framework agreements with relevant partners on beforehand to avoid delaying tendering procedures on the moment of response.

The Crisis Modifier's activation involves close cooperation and collaboration between the local Red Cross National Society and BRC-FI to make it an efficient and effective operation. In Belgium, the BRC-FI will promptly inform DGD after the activation and in-country, the local embassy will be informed. Past experiences in Burundi, Uganda, and Rwanda demonstrate the Crisis Modifier's effectiveness in tackling humanitarian challenges. Most prominently, it has proven its power in silent and forgotten small and medium-scale crises. The National Societies of Burkina Faso and DRC, that have not yet implemented a Crisis Modifier under the above-described modalities, will receive a comprehensive training on utilizing it efficiently.

Together with the local Red Cross National Societies, BRC-FI is committed to optimizing the received resources to meet emerging needs. Should the Crisis Modifier funds remain unutilized within six months before the program's conclusion, these resources will be redirected to strengthen other protection activities of the local Red Cross National Society in case needed, otherwise, the resources will be transferred to other existing activities in the program, upon approval by DGD where necessary. This strategic move will bolster the preparedness of the local Red Cross National Societies to respond swiftly to future crises.

4.4. Work plan (e.g. annexed Gantt diagram)

See Annex M.

4.5. Monitoring, assessment, auditing and other analyses

4.5.1. Monitoring of the activities (explain how, by whom)

In each country, a feedback mechanism will be installed through which the targeted persons that receive services or goods through the program, will be able to provide feedback towards the National Society of their country. This will ensure the **involvement of the targeted persons and ensures continuous improvement of the delivered services and goods**. In addition, the feedback mechanism should enable the program to timely identify potential issues.

Next, the National Societies in the countries of operations are in the lead for the implementation of its respective part of this program. As contract holder, **BRC-FI will monitor all activities and potential synergies in this program**, to safeguard the quality of the program and to implement the grant according the administrative and legal obligations.

The activities and the aspired output of this program will be monitored jointly by the ONSs and BRC-FI. For each country where the action is implemented, the following structure of monitoring applies: a project manager of the ONS is responsible for the overall coordination, implementation, and monitoring of the program at country level. Often, this project manager will be supported by an accountant, PMER officer and in certain cases a field-based officer (e.g. in refugee camps). The ONS project manager shares regular project status updates with the project manager of BRC-FI who is based in the country of implementation. This BRC-FI project manager assists the project manager of the ONS in managerial tasks (financial reporting, indicator reporting ...) and ensures that the implementation of this action is carried out according to the intent of this proposal and taking into account the desired level of quality.

On a bi-weekly basis, the project manager of BRC-FI reports on the status of the program (activity implementation, financial status ...) towards the program manager of BRC-FI. The program manager ensures coordination and cohesion between the various countries where the program is being implemented and reports on his turn on a bi-weekly basis about the program towards BRC-FI HQ in Belgium. Additionally financial, narrative and indicator reporting on the program needs to be done for all countries on a quarterly basis via the BRC-FI monitoring dashboard in which tracking of the progress is done.

Furthermore, the expertise-dedicated team of BRC-FI monitors and guards the quality of the implemented activities by providing expertise assistance, both from a distance as well as by physically being present during activities. This allows BRC-FI to learn from the different ONSs and identify the best practises on how to deliver the most qualitative expertise activities towards the targeted persons of the program. The best practises are shared among all involved implementing actors to increase quality within the complete program. Through this cross-learning aspect, a localised approach to the implementation of standardised expertise-documents is ensured.

Lastly, the Business Controller and Grant Coordinator of BRC-FI ensure proper follow-up of the donor and other regulations.

4.5.2. Tick the boxes corresponding to the analyses that may be undertaken:

- ☒ External assessment during the action
- ☒ External assessment after the action
- ☒ External auditing during the action
- ☒ External auditing after the action
- ☒ Internal assessment or internal auditing relating to the action

4.5.3. Other analyses: ☒ Please provide information:

Together with CRB-Cf, BRC-FI will invite an external consultant that will be responsible for guiding BRC-FI, CRB-Cf and its partners through a continuous monitoring and evaluation process throughout the duration of the program. The objective is to install a peer-to-peer evaluation process, with members from different National Societies participating in evaluations in other program countries, while being guided and supervised by the experienced external consultant. The consultant will also be tasked with assisting in the adaptation of a more relevant monitoring and evaluation system for the program, with partner engagement and humanitarian protection as guiding principles.

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

5.1. Please describe the expected level of sustainability and/or of connectedness.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, BRC-FI works according to the global RCRC coordination mechanisms as defined in the recently renewed Seville 2.0 agreement, with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, the Statutes of the Movement and the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, as profound foundation.

In the collective response of the Movement, it is without prejudice to the local Red Cross National Society to implement its own domestic strategy and activities in accordance with its mandate. In particular, the local Red Cross National Society is responsible for and leads its own development, notably to ensure the sustainability of its humanitarian response capacity and its service provision before, during and after situations triggering a collective response of the Movement. In the task division between the Movement components, National Society and National Society Development are put at the centre through consistent investment and coordinated support. Based on the priorities and request of the local National Society, it may request support in its development by other actors according to context, needs and capacities. As such, long term sustainability and connectedness with local communities is guaranteed, as the RCRC's humanitarian action starts from its local Red Cross volunteers and employees. As the local Red Cross National Societies have the mandate as auxiliary to their respective local government, each **local Red Cross National Society will continue their humanitarian activities, regardless of the absence or presence of international RCRC Movement components**. In addition, needs assessments performed in the targeted communities are performed by local Red Cross volunteers, ensuring a full bottom-up approach, thereby safeguarding the support of the local communities.

As PNS, BRC-FI has shown its relevance within the RCRC Movement with its worldwide renowned technical expertise in first aid, blood banking, disaster preparedness and response. By blending in scientific research and a focus on data, it goes full throttle to maximise the impact of its humanitarian action and support. BRC-FI's aim in these partnerships is to **share this expertise, to enlarge the local capacity of the National Societies in the long term, so that they become more self-sustainable, to address the root causes of crises and to empower communities directly**.

This is shown in the fact that BRC-FI is perceived as a relevant partner to the ONS in Rwanda, Burundi in Uganda. By offering a contextualised mix of specialised expertise and general support in humanitarian action, BRC-FI has been assisting each ONS to grow its humanitarian action in the country and will continue to do so in the upcoming two years via this program. Due to the worsening humanitarian context and needs in the DRC and Burkina Faso, BRC-FI will now also enhance its efforts to assist the local Red Cross National Society in the upcoming two years, with a similar approach as stated above.

5.2. Continuity strategy (links between emergency aid, rehabilitation, and development)

National Societies are supported by BRC-FI in both their emergency aid, rehabilitation, and development actions. The main objective of the collaboration between Red Cross National Societies is to strengthen the existing capacities of each National Society to contribute to their autonomy and sustainability in the future and to provide surge capacity with funding, staff and materials when needed. Regarding the long term capacity building, there are two major components.

A first priority is to enhance the **capacities for effective and acute crisis response**. Given that humanitarian emergencies can always arise and disrupt communities, economies and infrastructures, BRC-FI aims to provide rapid and flexible support in the event of an emergency. The Crisis Modifier Mechanism is a crucial tool in this regard, but also the partnership with National Societies, the in-country presence and the global Red Cross network allow for a rapid response to sudden humanitarian needs. In addition, BRC-FI supports National Societies to have the means to provide immediate life-saving

assistance in the aftermath of a disaster, such as the distribution of cash and essential household items.

The second component aims at **strengthening capacities for the implementation of humanitarian action and development outside crisis periods**. Moreover, an effective response to emergencies needs to build on existing capacities. In addition to ensuring that National Societies have the means to save lives, BRC-FI focuses its activities on a transfer of expertise in the humanitarian field, through training courses and workshops with local National Society staff and volunteers in multiple expertise areas. Through a system of master trainers, trainers and trainees within the National Society, this knowledge is each time further disseminated within the National Society until BRC-FI's assistance is no longer necessary. In specific cases, external stakeholders such as national blood banks, are also involved in these exchanges of expertise. A strong measure to increase the protection of vulnerable people, is for example the provision of safe blood, as it helps to cure children with blood poverty due to malaria or malnutrition and it also protects mothers during acute blood loss when giving birth. As such, the **worldwide recognised expertise** that BRC-FI has built at national level throughout the years, is also highly relevant in Africa, both during acute disasters as well as outside of crisis periods.

5.3. Integration (e.g. reduction of disaster risks, children, human rights, gender equality, environmental impact, others to be specified)

Following the definition of equity, **the same situation or context, can have a different impact on people, households, and communities** and can result in differences in support. In conflicts for example, men are more likely to be pressured to join fights, while women and children on the run tend to be more exposed to violence and abuse. Therefore, during the needs assessment, focus group discussions were held with youth and women only, to capture needs and capacities that would otherwise be missed if only mixed focus group discussions were held. This resulted in the design of activities tailored towards youth, women, and girls.

In addition, all **Red Cross National Societies mainstream the fundamental humanitarian principles** (Humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality) in their activities. These principles **align closely with the core principles of human rights**, thereby emphasizing the inherent value of every individual and the importance to assist and protect without discrimination. All activities of Red Cross National Societies, regardless of the various contexts in which they operate, are guided by these principles.

The RCRC Movement network has the localisation agenda close to the heart, as it is worldwide deeply embedded in the local communities via the local branches and volunteers of each National Society, allowing it in each country to quickly grasp the local context and impact of humanitarian crises. This understanding of the local context is essential in **adopting a 'do no harm' approach when implementing humanitarian activities**. When activities are conceived and carried out, practitioners will always critically assess and mitigate potential adverse consequences. This includes prioritizing the safety, dignity and the rights of people who require humanitarian protection, striving to ensure that interventions do not further exacerbate existing vulnerabilities. Instead, self-reliance, community participation and sustainable solutions are heavily promoted and root causes are tackled where possible.

The 'do no harm' approach also involves evaluating the **environmental impact** of humanitarian action. By close collaboration with the local communities and critical evaluation of activities, risks of natural disasters, such as landslides or floods are not worsened. Where possible, climate-friendly solutions are taken in activities. Emphasis is for example put on the reduction of plastic waste during the supply chain cycle and solar panels for energy production are promoted and installed where possible. Given that BRC-FI staff is present in the countries where activities are implemented, flight travel to follow-up on activities is also limited.

6. SECURITY AND EMERGENCY MEASURES

6.1. Emergency measures (plan B/ mitigation measures to be taken if the risks and assumptions set out in the logical framework materialise)

When designing this program, a comprehensive analysis of potential risks was made and a multi-faceted approach that combines both proactive and reactive measures was identified to ensure the successful implementation of the activities. In general working with the National Red Cross Society ensures the ongoing presence and operation continuity in the program area under all circumstances. However, potentially, with a reduced capacity. The identified risks are listed below with proactive and reactive measures for each of them.

Risk 1: Security risks because of political/economic instability and/or intensification of conflicts in the program areas

Proactive:

- **Enhanced security assessment and continuous monitoring** and this in close coordination between national RCRC societies and the IFRC/ ICRC.
- **Trained staff & volunteers:** Staff and volunteers are trained in security management and risk mitigation plans. Additionally they receive regular updates on the changing environment.
- **Community acceptance:** Raising awareness of the RC's neutral and humanitarian mandate.
- **Contingency plans are in place**, ensuring an organized response with efficient use of resources. The plans are regularly updated based on changing circumstances.
- **Social cohesion promotion** enhancing unity and collaboration among diverse populations.
- **Stakeholder coordination** enhances a synergetic approach to addressing humanitarian challenges.

Reactive:

- **Adaptation of targeting criteria:** maintain flexibility in project planning and implementation to respond effectively to evolving security situations (priority to newly displaced, assistance to the most vulnerable based on HEA criteria and other additional vulnerability factors, degressive assistance (revision of the frequency and/or value of the amount to be distributed)).
- **Effective decision-making:** Sharing of information and quick decision making on project adaptations with DGD.

Risk 2: Limited humanitarian access, especially for National Society Staff and volunteers

Proactive:

- **Engagement of community Volunteers:** Red Cross volunteers are not just advocates, but active participants who play a key role in supporting the action and ensuring access to those in need.
- **Intensified coordination** with partners in the area and local authorities.
- **Partner-led implementation:** Implementation by our partners who are well accepted locally and have well established networks.
- **Community acceptance:** Raising awareness of the RC's neutral and humanitarian mandate.
- **Transparent communication** at all stages of the program and with all stakeholders via regular follow-up meetings, pre-established field visits and other mechanisms.
- **Dissemination of humanitarian principles** in collaboration with ICRC.

Reactive:

- **Adaptive Approach with ongoing dialogue:** activities will be adapted or reorientated when required by the circumstances. BRC-FI will maintain hereby a regular dialogue with DGD.

Risk 3: Risks related to climatic hazards (floods, droughts)

Proactive:

- **Support for the establishment of contingency stocks**
- **Promote the establishment of contingency plans:** Ensure the local Red Cross and/ or local communities have contingency plans in place that enable them to react appropriately to climate related hazards.
- **Foresee a budget for climate-friendly initiatives:** In all our programs and projects, BRC-FI includes a budget for climate-friendly initiatives.

Reactive:

- **Support for the implementation of RCRC contingency plans**
- **Activation of the Crisis Modifier**
- **Adaptive Approach with ongoing dialogue:** activities will be adapted or reorientated when required by the circumstances. BRC-FI will maintain hereby a regular dialogue with the DGD.
- **Humanitarian coordination and information sharing** between relevant stakeholders in the area to enhance a synergetic approach to addressing humanitarian challenges.

Risk 4: Risk of Sexual Exploitation and abuse (SEA)

Proactive:

- **Active Beneficiary Consultation through Information Feedback Mechanisms**
- **Empowering Beneficiaries, including Youth:** Beneficiaries, including children, adolescents and young adults know the information and protection mechanisms available to them.
- **Trained Staff & volunteers:** Staff and volunteers are trained in Protection against SEA and a policy is in place to identify and report cases.
- **Mitigating Risks in Distributions:** Particular attention will be paid to the risks involved in cash, Voucher and NFI (Non Food Items) distributions.

Reactive:

- **Policy-based reaction framework:** a policy is in place to identify, report and investigate cases to ensure a structured and consistent approach (appropriate actions in a timely manner).

Risk 5: Corruption and fraud occurs when targeting vulnerable households.

Proactive:

- **Strengthening of the community targeting system** to ensure that the resources are directed towards those with the highest protection need and vulnerability.
- **Thorough verification of beneficiary lists with resource persons** from the villages of origin of the displaced and with other actors who have similar interventions.
- **Feedback and accountability system:** Beneficiaries are empowered to voice their concerns, provide input, and actively participate in the shaping of interventions.
- **Trained staff in Anti-Corruption** to empower project staff to recognize, prevent and address any instances of corruption.
- **Stringent Financial controls:** strict control in terms of time and methodology over project financial controls, including independent and external review of the project financials.

Reactive:

- **Further tightening the financial procedures:** In case of identified anomalies, the financial procedures could be tightened and even more strict financial procedures implemented.

Risk 6: Targeted refugee camps are closed by local government throughout the program.

Proactive:

- **Discussion with local authorities:** Discussions are held with local authorities about their plans with the targeted refugee camps on beforehand to ensure activities can continue as planned.

Reactive:

- **Adaptive Approach with ongoing dialogue:** activities will be adapted or reorientated when required by the circumstances. BRC-FI will maintain hereby a regular dialogue with DGD.

To summarize, the mitigation approach as foreseen has a high focus on proactive measures. This roots from the principle that proactivity and anticipatory action is more effective than only reacting to crises after they have occurred. It also contributes to the long-term sustainability of the program. Nevertheless, some reactive measures are often necessary and ensure a balanced risk management approach.

6.2. Security-related aspects

6.2.1. Situation in the field. Please provide a brief description

Burkina Faso

For Burkina Faso, IFRC indicates the security situation as high-risk. The nation experienced a progressive deterioration in its security situation since 2014, with non-state armed groups claiming jihadist ideologies shifting their focus to the country, targeting security forces, state institutions, as well as civilians. The year 2022 in Burkina Faso was marked by intense socio-political tension, leading to two military coups because of the army's inability to effectively address the systematic advancements of the non-state armed groups.

Today, almost 45% of Burkina Faso's territory is outside the control of state authorities, posing significant challenges for context analysis and access for humanitarian actors, including the RCRC Movement. Blockades, threats to infrastructure,

harassment, seizure of humanitarian goods, violence against schools and health centres, and the risk of collateral casualties further complicate the situation. Administrative constraints, restrictions on movement, checkpoints and extortion also impede the delivery of aid, while targeting and restrictions based on sectarian or ethnic affiliations hinder program implementation.

Although it is not specifically targeted, the Red Cross has not been immune to the impact of armed groups. In 2018 and 2019, Red Cross-personnel was kidnapped. Unfortunately, one Red Cross member has remained in captivity for over two years. Several individuals from different organizations and structures were also abducted in the same areas, with some still being held by armed groups. These incidents highlight the risks and challenges faced by the CRBF, emphasizing the importance of security management and the need to navigate complex dynamics within the conflict-affected areas.

On top of the already complex situation in-country, the recent developments in Niger might also negatively impact the security situation in Burkina Faso as the threat of having a regional armed conflict between different states is currently elevated.

In view of the complex situation in Burkina Faso, all RCRC Movement partners are supported by ICRC who are expert in working in complex security environments. Thanks to their support and most importantly thanks to the fact that CRBF has a wide base of local volunteers across the country, the RCRC Movement expects to remain active in the country and to continue its activities.

Burundi

For Burundi, IFRC indicates the security situation as a situation of heightened tension. In general, Burundi's security situation is calm, allowing for movement of people throughout the country. Despite improvements in the political and security context since the May 2020 elections, instances of violence and suppression of opposing political views still occur and require continuous monitoring. The economic situation and political tensions could trigger a new security crisis. Tensions with Rwanda are gradually normalizing, evidenced by the reopening of land borders and a visit from the Rwandan President in February 2023. However, the situation remains fragile, especially regarding the crisis in the DRC where Burundi has sent troops to North Kivu as part of the East African Community Regional Force, since August 2022 [38, 39]. The volatile security situation in neighbouring DRC could lead to a sudden influx of refugees and asylum seekers.

As a result, provincial authorities may occasionally refuse to permit the presence of expatriates or the implementation of activities in their communities, however the CRBu has the necessary capacity and mandate to collaborate with the central government to find solutions, based on experience with ongoing projects. Specific partnership agreements with different ministries, such as the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Interior, have been signed to facilitate implementation and ensure safety of Red Cross staff and volunteers.

DRC

For the DRC, IFRC indicates the security situation as concerning. The security situation in DRC is characterized by a complex and multifaceted landscape of challenges, encompassing the entire country, and often varying significantly from one region to another. It has been marred by decades of conflict, political instability, and social tensions.

The security situation in the country, particularly in its western region, has been marked by intercommunal violence, clashes over land and resources, and the presence of various armed groups and militias. These groups often exploit local grievances and power vacuums to exert control over territory, leading to cycles of violence and displacement. Militia continue to operate, leading to sporadic violence and disruption of civilian lives. Humanitarian organizations face difficulties accessing affected populations due to insecurity (as has been the case for road N1 from Kinshasa towards Kenge in May 2023), hindering the delivery of vital assistance. Heavy rains compound the situation and make roads often impassable for humanitarian organizations but also make it difficult for civilians to find safety. The presence of these militia also complicates efforts to address other challenges such as disease outbreaks and food insecurity.

Given the country's history of political volatility and conflicts related to the electoral process, the upcoming general elections in December 2023 may significantly impact the security situation. In the period just before the elections, there can be pre-electoral unrest, marked by increased political tensions, demonstrations, and protests.

To overcome these hurdles the Red Cross of DRC uses its country-wide volunteer network to get access to affected regions. Additionally they are in close contact with local authorities to assess the local security situation to facilitate access to the different crises areas throughout the country.

Rwanda

For Rwanda, IFRC indicates the security situation as an emergency situation near the borders with Burundi and DRC, and a heightened security situation in the rest of the country. Rwanda has a stable security situation with visible police and army presence throughout the country, especially at the borders where security incidents involving neighbouring countries such as the DRC and Burundi can occur. The eastern region of the DRC continues to experience instability, leading to cross-border security challenges in the northern areas. Also, incidents of violent clashes and armed incursions into the southwest of Rwanda have occurred in recent years. Land border crossings between Rwanda and the DRC are open but may have varying

hours of operation, and those crossing regularly face immigration difficulties [40]. Since November 2022, 8,147 asylum seekers sought safety in Rwanda due to escalating violence in eastern DRC and they are currently being accommodated in refugee camps [27].

The security situation in the refugee camps of Kiziba and Nkamira (which are part of the targeted zones of this action) is sufficiently safe, and no negative impact on planned activities is expected. However, the capacity and function of Nkamira camp may vary depending on the evolution of the DRC crisis. To enter the camps, the approval of the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management is required. In view of this RRCS entered into several agreements with this Ministry to ensure access to the camps.

Uganda

For Uganda, IFRC indicates the security situation as a situation of heightened tension. While the country is currently stable, certain regions still pose security concerns, particularly those bordering the DRC, South Sudan, and Kenya. Clashes between rebel groups and the DRC's army close to the Ugandan-DRC border are common and have resulted in influxes of refugees to Uganda. On the other hand, persons affiliated to these rebel groups enter Uganda in small groups to hide or rest, avoiding contacts with the Ugandan military and civilians. There have also been incidents of terrorism in the north-eastern region, as well as occasional outbreaks of violence in other parts of the country, often related to political tensions or tribal conflicts.

The tensions at the border with DRC, South Sudan and Kenya can have implications on the delivery of humanitarian aid, mostly in the refugee context. Close coordination with the government and all other organisations involved is in place, with the ICRC and United Nations providing regular updates to ensure the safety of the operations.

6.2.2. Has a specific security protocol been drawn up for this action?

yes ☒

no ☐

Standard procedures

If yes, provide information:

For all countries, the standard procedures are applicable. **BRC-FI has a safety management system for International Cooperation missions, based on the implementation of the safety culture promoted by the International RCRC Movement**, which aims to provide a strategic and operational basis that meets needs, both at headquarters and in the field: <https://ifrcstaysafe.org/>.

Nevertheless as the security situation differs from country to country, **specific country security plans are in place and are updated on a regular basis**. Depending on the security assessment in a country, specific security measures can be implemented or taken, including the usage of third parties to ensure security in a certain region. These third parties can be other RCRC Movement partners and/ or external organizations. For Burkina Faso and DRC specifically, a separate security agreement with a third party will be signed to ensure the safety of BRC-FI staff and volunteers while being present in-country.

6.2.3. Have the staff in the field and the expatriates received information and training concerning these procedures?

yes ☒

no

☐

All BRC-FI staff deployed in the field attend **briefing sessions prior to their departure** for the country of destination, during which they are presented with the reality of the country context, the projects and activities to be developed, the possible risks and associated threats, the corrective and at-mitigation measures to reduce the risk, and the Security Manual for each country. In addition, **specialised safety trainings** ("Stay Safe - personal safety course" and "Stay Safe - safety management course" of IFRC) are obligatory to pass pre-deployment. Moreover once arrived in the field, the country's National Society gives another safety briefing, as does the IFRC and/ or ICRC. Finally the in-country BRC-FI delegation, has contingency and evacuation plans available.

7. COORDINATION IN THE FIELD

7.1. Coordination in the field (please state the humanitarian organisation's participation in the coordination mechanisms with other stakeholders, such as "clusters", NGOs, the United Nations agencies, others (to be specified), as well as the links to the consolidated appeal procedure, if necessary)

For effective coordination of activities at the country level, the various actors within the RCRC Movement ensure both internal alignment among RCRC Movement partners and external collaboration with governmental bodies, United Nations agencies, and other non-governmental organizations. This strategic approach ensures the optimal utilization of resources, prevents duplication, and maximizes local impact.

In **each of the countries a structured coordination mechanism is in place**. The National Societies convene regular meetings with the Participating National Societies (BRC-FI and other RCRC Movement partners, including CRB-Cf in Rwanda, Burundi and DRC with funding of DGD). These gatherings serve to align projects, resources, and objectives, enhancing efficiency and effectiveness. This coordinated effort is guided by the overarching strategies of the ONSs, where local Red Cross National

Societies take on implementation roles, and BRC-FI, CRB-Cf, and other PNSs play facilitating roles. The coordination mechanism is governed by established partnership modalities, including the Seville Agreement 2.0 and the Good Partnership Policy, along with project-specific cooperation agreements. These modalities ensure a localised approach to partnerships and provide the basis for coordination, supervision, and control. As BRC-FI will provide support to CRRDC in the same region as CRB-Cf in DRC, a joint agreement has been made between all partners involved to only work with one project manager in Kenge that will manage the activities, as this leads to the most efficient use of the program's funds in this region.

In addition, the National Societies in the five countries are also **involved in the UN cluster system and other coordination mechanisms, including alignment with governmental priorities**, an approach that will be further encouraged by BRC-FI during the program. In Burundi, CRBu is part of the protection cluster led by UNHCR, the SGBV sub-cluster by UNFPA (United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency) and the child protection sub-cluster of UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund). Through these clusters CRBu plays a pivotal role in implementing SGBV prevention and response actions. In the same way, CRRDC is a member of several clusters in a range of subjects. Regular meetings are scheduled to align programs, resources and objectives between different stakeholder, but also to present achievements. RRCS in Rwanda actively engages in refugee protection through a collaboration with the Rwandan government and UNHCR. This partnership is well aligned with the government's Vision 2050 program and was used in the conception of the actions for this program. Additionally, RRCS participates in various coordinating bodies at the district and sector levels, including joint action development forums and steering meetings whereby partners (public, private and civil society) and refugee communities gather to discuss ongoing and planned actions. In Uganda, refugee affairs coordination operates through the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, led by the Office of the Prime Minister and facilitated by UNHCR. The implementation of the framework relies on a diverse range of stakeholders, including URCS as auxiliary to the public authorities. Coordination mechanisms can also be found in Burkina Faso, where CRBF is an active member of Conseil National de Secours d'Urgence et de Réhabilitation of Burkina Faso and the Rapid Response Operational Coordination Group. This last group plans and coordinates responses among all actors that are present in an intervention zone. Additionally, CRBF actively participates in various UN sectoral clusters such as 'Water, Sanitation and Hygiene', Shelter, Health and Food security, efficiently coordinating protection initiatives and migrant's assistance efforts.

7.2. National and local authorities (relationships established, authorisations, coordination)

The program is implemented by **local Red Cross National Societies, functioning as auxiliary bodies to their respective public authorities**. Their unique status, mandate and recognition enable them to **maintain close ties with both central and local government agencies** to ensure alignment with the national government strategies. The ONSs are structured similarly to administrative authorities at various levels, including central, regional or provincial, departmental, and district levels, promoting robust collaboration between Red Cross committees and local authorities at all levels. This well-established relationship, combined with their extensive knowledge of the local context, provides an invaluable advantage in effectively executing the program.

As mentioned in 7.1, through coordinated efforts with local authorities as well as with UN and other coordination mechanisms in the targeted regions, interventions and structures implemented or supported by the program will have enhanced long-term sustainability. Furthermore, by aligning with existing initiatives and multiyear government strategies, the interventions of this program will continue to have a positive impact beyond the timeframe of the program.

7.3. Potential coordination with the Belgian diplomatic representation

To ensure the success of its programs and as auxiliary to its government, BRC-FI recognizes the importance of establishing strong partnerships with the Belgian government and DGD. To this end, each BRC-FI delegation will maintain **regular communication with the Belgian diplomatic representation in its country** to share progress updates, arrange field visits (if feasible, based on the security situation), and to invite Belgian diplomatic representatives in learning events to strengthen existing relationships and synergies. Furthermore, the BRC-FI delegations will involve them in monitoring the program through follow-up meetings and contextual, security, and humanitarian situation analyses. Discussing possibilities or needs to reorient the program according to the changing situation is also critical.

Moreover, BRC-FI recognizes the significance of **regular contact with EU delegations to keep them informed of humanitarian and development changes** across the country. This proactive approach of the BRC-FI delegations will ensure that partners are informed and involved in the program's progress, promoting collaborative efforts to achieve common goals.

By providing these regular updates to the Belgian diplomatic representation, BRC-FI is convinced that synergies with other stakeholders can be more easily identified.

8. IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

8.1. Name and address of the implementation partner(s)

Burkina Faso: Croix-Rouge Burkinabè, Zone du Bois, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Burundi: Croix-Rouge du Burundi, Av. Des États-Unis, n.18, Rohero I, Bujumbura, Burundi

Democratic Republic of Congo: Croix-Rouge de la République Démocratique du Congo, 41 Avenue de la justice, C/Gombe, Kinshasa, République Démocratique du Congo

Rwanda: Rwanda Red Cross Society, KG 15 Ave, Kigali, Rwanda

Uganda: Uganda Red Cross Society, Plot 551/555 Rubaga Road, P.O. Box 494, Kampala, Uganda

8.2. Status of the implementation partners (e.g.: NGOs, local authorities, etc.) and the role played by them

All partners involved in this program are part of the global RCRC Movement with presence in 191 countries and active in areas such as Disaster Response, Emergency Relief, Recovery and Development. Each country counts on a national Red Cross Society in the capacity as **auxiliary to the public authorities**. The operations of the National Societies are implemented in close coordination and in line with the national government's programmes.

The status of being "auxiliary to the public authorities" is outlined in the Geneva Conventions, specifically in the Additional Protocols I and II, which provide legal frameworks for the protection of victims of armed conflicts. Under this status, national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies have certain privileges and responsibilities, including:

- **Humanitarian Action:** They are tasked with providing humanitarian assistance and support to the civilian population and military personnel affected by armed conflicts, in accordance with the principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence.
- **Access and Communication:** Being auxiliary to the public authorities allows Red Cross Societies to have better access to affected populations and detainees, facilitating their work in delivering aid and conducting protection activities.
- **Emblem and Identity:** Red Cross Societies use the distinctive red cross/red crescent emblem as a protective symbol. The emblem's usage is regulated under the Geneva Conventions to ensure it is respected and protected, signifying the organization's humanitarian mission.
- **Cooperation with Authorities:** National Red Cross Societies work closely with their respective governments to coordinate humanitarian efforts, facilitate access to affected areas, and ensure the provision of necessary aid and services.
- **Respect for Neutrality:** As auxiliary organizations, they must maintain a neutral stance in conflicts, ensuring that they are seen as impartial and independent humanitarian actors.
- **Training and Education:** National Societies often work to educate and train the public, armed forces, and other relevant actors on the principles of international humanitarian law, the Geneva Conventions, and humanitarian values.

8.3. Type of relationship with the implementation partner(s) and the reports expected from the implementation partner

The partnership between the ONSs and BRC-FI is rooted in a **long-term institutional collaboration, based on localised action, institutional development and building organisational capacity**. Overall, these partnerships represent a powerful example of how collaboration between international and local organizations can drive sustainable change and improve the lives of people in the region.

Given the emphasis of the RCRC Movement on a localised response, the aim is to have the **local Red Cross National Societies in the driver's seat and to follow their procedures and guidelines** (as long as they are within the donor's regulations), all in line with the RCRC Movement's Seville 2.0 regulations.

The National Societies will provide BRC-FI with **transparent reports** (monthly, quarterly, annual) on the financial and operational status of the program. Interim and final reports to the donor will be prepared jointly in each country and compiled by the Program Manager. Monitoring and planning meetings will be held in-country with the participation of technical and support staff to ensure the quality of the implementation of program activities.

On their turn, the BRC-FI in-country delegation, as the accountable partner, support the local Red Cross National Societies by **providing project-management expertise, technical support in the qualitative and timely implementation of activities, as well as monitoring of compliance with donor regulations**, including regular field visits to witness the implementation first hand.

9. COMMUNICATION, VISIBILITY AND INFORMATION ACTIVITIES

9.1. Planned communication activities

Within this program, a specific budget is allocated to **ensuring the visibility of the involved stakeholders in the activities**, including local partners and international donors. Examples of the use of this budget are the addition the logos of stakeholders to procured items – however with special attention to the impact on the dignity of individuals - or with banners to indicate the stakeholders involved in the activity. The visibility that is generated during the activity in the field in this manner, is further enlarged by using social and traditional media channels.

In Belgium, BRC-FI will disseminate information regarding the program to the interested Belgian public, acknowledging the Belgian government as the primary donor and partner. The aim is to inform the Belgian public about the program, its achievements, as well as the encountered challenges. To accomplish this, details of the program's activities and the origin of its funding will be published in press releases, website content, human interest blogs, audio-visual material, updates disseminated through traditional media outreach, social media, and the internal communication channels of BRC-FI.

In the countries of implementation, BRC-FI will communicate in partnership with the local National Society, whereby both will mention the Belgian government as donor. **The communication service of the local National Society will be responsible for media coverage of the program and will periodically publish updates** on the program in their newsletters, websites, and social media platforms, as well as highlighting the partnership in the coordination meetings in which they are involved. The local National Society will ensure that the Belgian government's funding and partnership is recognized in all communications concerning this program.

In addition, this action shall endeavour to acknowledge the donor during regional exchanges and media outreach initiatives. To enhance program visibility, panels shall be installed at strategic locations within the program sites.

9.2. Outreach on durable equipment, the main supplies and on the project location

The donor's logo shall be displayed on all relief goods procured under the program, subject to security considerations and approval by the National Society. When procuring items, particular care is given to the procurement of items without an expiry date and to the procurement of items at local or regional level whenever possible. This improves the sustainability of the items procured and the overall impact of the program. During procurement, quality and durability of the equipment is a major factor considered. In case the quality of items procured locally cannot be guaranteed, a high-quality equivalent will be procured internationally. In addition, there is a specific budget allocated to climate-friendly investments in this project, further improving the durability and sustainability of the items and activities of this program. At the end of the program, unused goods are officially transferred to the local National Society. They are then able to use these goods in an efficient way in future programs of BRC-FI or whenever they are deemed necessary.

9.3. Publication activities planned

As in previous programs, BRC-FI and the local partners always look for opportunities to display the activities. The Marketing and Communication department of BRC-FI is in close contact with the department implementing the program. This allows for **publication activities whenever the opportunity arises**. Both BRC-FI and the local Red Cross National Societies are committed to showcase and publish the implementation of activities through the **dedicated visibility budget** of the program. National Societies have long-standing collaborations with local media that will be used to promote the activities in this program.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES

10.1. Please state the overall figures by function and by status

The planning of the Human Resources (HR) on the program is an important exercise that should be done thoroughly as a good HR planning ensures a qualitative implementation of the program. As can be observed in the budget (annex O), a total of **26,2% of the program budget is allocated to HR**, of which the majority is contributed to salaries of local staff from the ONS.

As backbone of this program, the budget foreseen for **local staff of the ONS**, has been based on the input and discussions held with the ONS and reflects what they assess as required staff to successfully implement the proposed program. As can be noticed, the total amount of local staff accounted for differs from country to country. This output is a result of several influencing factors, such as the total project volume allocated, the complexity of the program in a specific country, the capacity of the ONS and the cost of living of the country as this directly impacts the height of the local salaries.

Next to local salaries, also salaries for **BRC-FI expat and HQ staff** are accounted for in the program. Regarding expat staff, one dedicated BRC-FI project manager is present per country, to assist the ONS in-country and to safeguard the overall quality of implementation and financial compliance. The decision which HQ functions are included in the program budget and according to which extent, is based upon relevant experience and data from past projects, with adjustments to the assessed complexity and the required expertise of this program.

Following the **localisation approach** of BRC-FI, the total relative share of expat staff has decreased in BRC-FI's international activities, while the share for BRC-FI's HQ staff has increased. With the overall aim to put the ONS at the forefront of humanitarian action in-country, BRC-FI nowadays evaluates thoroughly in what setup it can best assist the ONS. Parameters such as security, the local needs, the requested level of expertise and the capacity of the ONS are hereby key influencing factors.

A more detailed overview of the different functions accounted for on the project can be found in annex N.

11. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

11.1. Name and title of the legal representative signing the agreement

Prof. Dr. Philippe Vandekerckhove

Executive Director of Belgian Red Cross-Flanders/ VZW Rode Kruis-Vlaanderen Internationaal

11.2. Name, telephone number, e-mail address and titles of the person(s) responsible for the management of the dossier

Grant Coordinator	Manager International Cooperation	Head of International Operations	Head of Expertise and Program Design
Bianca Hanskens Bianca.Hanskens@rodekruis.be +32 468 10 50 18	Sofie De Jaeger Sofie.DeJaeger@rodekruis.be +32 498 18 68 42	Didier Van Aert Didier.VanAert@rodekruis.be +32 496 31 59 86	Bert Avau Bert.Avau@rodekruis.be +32 472 64 56 99

11.3. Name, telephone and fax number and e-mail address of the representative in the intervention area

Burkina Faso	Burundi	DRC	Rwanda
Will be communicated when the representative is installed	Alizée Bersan Alizee.Bersan@rodekruis.be +257 69 811 433	Will be communicated when the representative is installed	Joost Sommen Joost.Sommen@rodekruis.be +250 791 054 861
Uganda			
Peter Kibor Keitany Peterkibor.keitany@rodekruis.be +256 788 904 938			

11.4. Bank account

Name of the bank: KBC

Address of the bank agency: Grote Markt 27, 2800 Mechelen

Precise designation of the account holder: Rode Kruis-Vlaanderen Internationaal v.z.w.

Complete account number (including bank code(s)): BE97 4338 1955 5449

IBAN code: BE97 4338 1955 5449

SWIFT code: KREDBEBB

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