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EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE UKRAINIAN RED CROSS LIVELIHOODS PROJECT

Final Report

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Executive Summary

The 'Livelihoods Project' is an intervention implemented by the Ukrainian Red Cross Society, with support from the International Federation of the Red Cross. The project aims to support small-scale business opportunities for conflict-affected people in the East of Ukraine. The project was first piloted in the city of Lyman in Donetsk Oblast between March and July 2017 with 48 selected households. A second phase of the project was then implemented in Lyman and Berdyansk in Zaporizhia Oblast between September and November 2017 with 118 households; The project was further expanded in 2018 to include 326 additional households in 5 oblasts (Dnipropetrovsk, Kherson, Kharkiv, Donetsk, Luhansk).

This evaluation strives to take stock of the project's achievements as of the end of 2017. It aims to uncover the contributing factors to the project's success, and to identify areas that could benefit from further improvement. It should serve to feed into future response design.

Appropriateness

Overall, it appears that the project, with its focus on support to entrepreneurship activities, was relevant to the needs of beneficiaries. The project demonstrated a good ability to adapt to beneficiaries' needs over time and learn from past phases. Nonetheless, beneficiaries often pointed out as a constraint the standardisation of the grant amount across livelihood activities and, irrespective of the business plan. Beneficiaries also noted a deterioration of their purchasing power between the time they applied and the disbursement of the second tranche, as the transfer value was not pegged to inflation.

It appears that project implementers have consulted various key stakeholders at assessment stage, including crisis-affected households, local government representatives, cluster representatives and staff from other organisations implementing similar project in the area.

Several IFRC/URCS staff members acknowledged there was a dilemma existing between the overall aim to target households that were the poorest and the most affected by the conflict and the selection process based on the quality of the business plan. As a result of this, URCS team sometimes outlined that it was not necessarily the most affected and less able to cope with the conflict that benefitted from the programme. KIIs have also demonstrated there was confusion and disagreement amongst URCS staff regarding whether vulnerability or quality of the business idea was prioritised in the selection process.

Effectiveness

The number of beneficiaries targeted was reached (and even surpassed), as 164 households benefitted from the project (compared to an initial target of 160). Nonetheless, there were no outcome indicators included in the documents reviewed by the evaluators, neither have outcomes been consistently measured throughout the project (e.g. baseline and end line). It is therefore difficult for the evaluation team to assess with certainty whether the project achieved the intended outcome.

The evaluators were able to collect anecdotal information related to the effectiveness of the project. Beneficiaries across gender and age groups, consistently reported they increased their income thanks to the activity they had been supported with. URCS staff members were also confident on the ability of the project to generate increased income amongst beneficiaries.

Interviewed beneficiaries reported overall satisfaction with the project implementation, particularly in regards to the way their voices was heard. Beneficiaries also often reported that one of strengths of URCS, compared to other humanitarian organisations, was the level of proximity of URCS staff with them, ability to listen up and knowledge of the local context.

The evaluation uncovered a number of positive effects of the project:

- Increased sense of belonging and well-being;
- Increased URCS's visibility and acceptance in the areas of implementation.

The project also determined some negative unintended effects of the project, including:

- Loss of some social benefits;
- Bank absorbs grants of beneficiaries in debt;
- Risks of tensions between IDPs and host communities.¹

Efficiency

Informants from IFRC/URCS consulted agreed on the fact that they had enough resources to meet the set revised objectives, but not necessarily to adequately monitor and report on those. One key informant outlined that the lack of market assessment and deficit in M&E could be traced to the lack of funding.

Key informants interrogated agreed on the fact that resources available were used in an efficient manner. As per one key informant, considering that more than 35 type of livelihood activities were supported through the project, it is unlikely that in-kind kits could have been that diverse. However, the efficiency gains of using cash grants were not necessarily maximised as the grant amount was pre-set. During FGDs and household visits, several beneficiaries mentioned they needed less than the amount given to them.

Although they pointed out to two procedures they deemed inefficient, IFRC/URCS key informants considered ways of working to be efficient and duplications were most often avoided. One key factor of the overall efficiency is the clear delineation of roles and responsibilities between IFRC and URCS and the strong support provided to the URCS livelihoods team.

While various actors were consulted at assessment stage and coordination mechanisms with other Red Cross bodies are strong, it appears there is a deficit of coordination with organisations external to the Red Cross movement. In particular, it appears that URCS/IFRC do not share lists of beneficiaries with non-Red Cross organisations, reportedly due to data protection issues and prohibition under the Ukrainian law.

¹ As outline in the body of the report, project implementers acted on some of the negative unintended consequences in the 2018 project.

Sustainability

Informants consistently reported a steep improvement of URCS capacity since the beginning of the Livelihood project, primarily as a result of the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) process. Nonetheless, despite the significant improvements, key informants deemed URCS needed to acquire some further skills to be able to implement livelihoods projects in a fully independent manner. Specifically, staff members highlighted that URCS still needed support from IFRC for tasks such as reporting to back donor and application for funding. Another challenge to URCS' capacity improvement is the retention of its staff.

Key informants consulted perceived that the potential increased income of the project beneficiaries was sustainable. According to project staff in local branches, 70 to 80% of the beneficiaries who received a grant were still involved in the activity they had been for. Nonetheless, as PDM have not yet been conducted, it is difficult for the evaluation to determine the sustainability of project outcome and effects.

Compliance with IFRC/RCRC regulations

The consultancy team determined that the project was mostly compliant with IFRC's 2007 Guidelines for Livelihoods Programming, especially with regards to the following aspects: involving stakeholders at key project steps, designing a comprehensive and formalised needs assessment, conducting an effective targeting and including staff considerations. Nonetheless, the evaluation identified that compliance with IFRC's Livelihoods guidelines could be improved with regards to project design (i.e. including non-cash elements to the programme) and project monitoring.

The consultancy team also determined that the project was aligned with the recommendations of the 2007 IRCRC Movement Guidelines for Conditional Cash Transfer Programming.

Recommendations

The report provides various recommendations across the project cycle, the five to implement in priority are:

Ensure monitoring is used to make programmatic decisions and that it is used to allow implementers to determine whether the response is reaching its target.

- The URCS should ensure it has a systematised way to collect and analyse data on the project's reach to the targeted vulnerable sections of society. The URCS should continue to systematically disaggregate data as per gender and status (i.e. IDP/non-IDP) and potentially also add other types of vulnerability to the conflict (i.e. age or disabilities). Analysing this kind of data can support informed decision-making and the identification of corrective measures to improve the project while it is being implemented.
- Targeted people who left the project should also be accounted for and the reason for the dropout be looked at.
- Leave room in the monitoring process to enquire about unintended positive and negative effects and risks of the project (e.g. losing some social benefits).

If PDM reveals that the provision of cash alone is insufficient to ensure starting or restarting a sustainable livelihood or productive activity, consider adding non-cash-related elements to the project.

- As per the IFRC Cash guidelines, provision of cash alone can sometimes be insufficient to ensure starting or restarting a sustainable livelihood or productive activity. Technical assistance and training are often needed to ensure that sustainable livelihoods are adopted".² As such, look at existing skills, how they can be completed with technical support, coaching, mentoring and vocational training elements. Build on the existing dynamics between beneficiaries to set up networking events with already-established entrepreneurs for the current project.
- Consider cash as just one of the intervention modality. That should also help tackle the tension between targeting individuals with existing vulnerabilities and targeting those with pre-existing skills.

Continue advertising IFRC/URCS' livelihoods activities in Ukraine and reinforce coordination with non-Red Cross organisations in order to avoid any potential risk of beneficiary overlap.

- Consistently attend livelihoods cluster meetings and coordinate closely with non Red Cross organisations. Consider the sharing of beneficiaries' data to avoid duplication of efforts.

Ensure selection criteria are clear to all relevant stakeholders (i.e. URCS staff in local branches, local authorities and applicants).

- Data collection revealed stakeholders were not always clear with regards to the selection criteria. Specifically, URCS staff in local branches did not always agree on whether vulnerability to the conflict or quality of business plan took priority in determining project participation. To avoid any confusion on the topic, project implementers are recommended to:
 - Establish a score system of all applications against a set of pre-defined criteria (both related to vulnerabilities and quality of business plan).
 - Establish a written policy that defines all admission criteria and clearly states what the rules are with regards to specific cases such as beneficiaries re-applying to the project in a subsequent year.
 - Ensure social cohesion; ensure that the status is not a barrier to enter the project. And that decisions are based on the targeting criteria only.

Continue efforts to build URCS' capacity and skills

- Continue to encourage URCS staff to reflect on their strengths, needs and the potential gaps in their capacity.
- Encourage activities such as peer to peer monitoring between URCS branches.
- Continue to train URCS staff in local branches on key skills such as finance management, reporting, business plan write-ups etc.

² International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 'IFRC Livelihoods Guidelines.Pdf'.

- Once URCS' capacity is considered sufficient, ensure that they have some projects they run with limited oversight and rely less on the Kiev Livelihoods team for day-to-day decision making.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

CCG: Conditional Cash Grant

CHF: Swiss Franc

FGD: Focus Group Discussion

FSLC: Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster

GCA: Government Controlled Areas

GRCS: German Red Cross Society

ICRC: International Committee of the Red Cross

IAVA: Inter-Agency Vulnerability Assessment

IOM: International Organisation for Migrations

IDP: Internally Displaced Person

IRCRC: International Red Cross Red Crescent

KII: Key Informant Interview

M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation

NGCA: Non-Government Controlled Areas

PDM: Post-Distribution Monitoring

RCRC: Red Cross Red Crescent Movement

SMCC: Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation

UAH: Ukrainian Hryvnia

URCS: Ukrainian Red Cross Society

I. Background

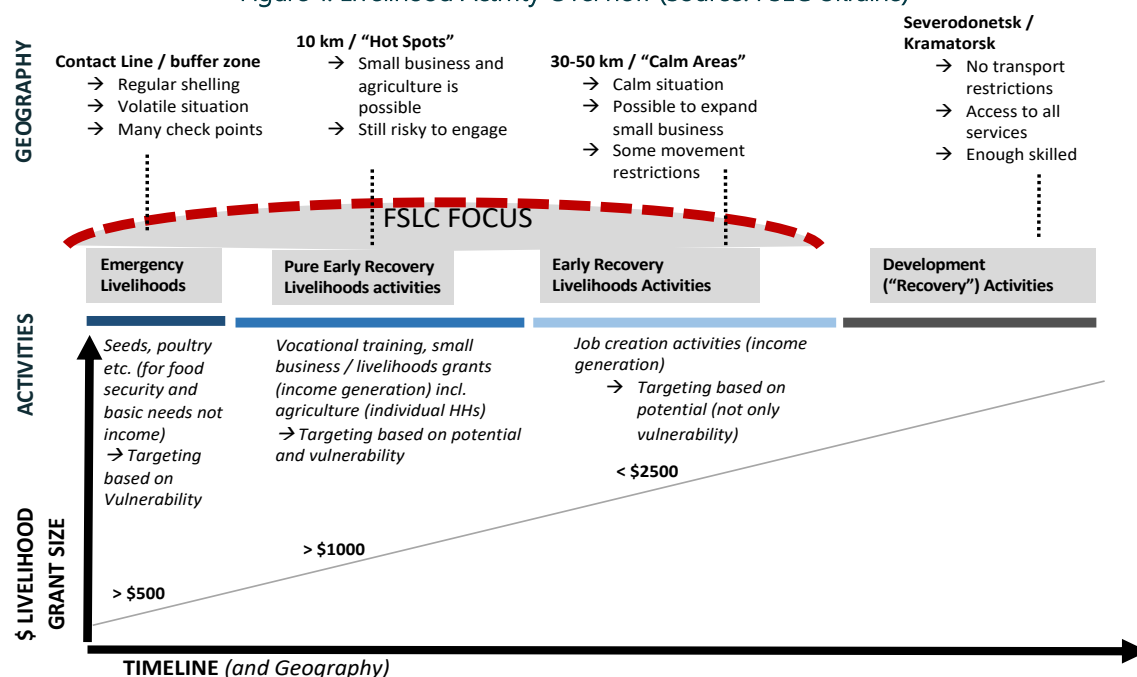
I.1. Contextual background

As the conflict in eastern Ukraine enters its fifth year, violence continues to impede Ukraine's hope of development as well as the lives and livelihoods of millions of Ukrainians.³ Despite various commitments to ceasefire, hostilities between both parties continue. As of 2017, an estimated 5.2 million people were deemed to be conflict-affected and over 1.4 million were displaced.⁴

Conflict has divided the territories of the Lugansk and Donetsk Oblasts into Government Controlled Areas (GCA) and Non-Government Controlled Areas (NGCA). This division has led to various disruptions in industry, transport and small and medium size enterprise activity and intensified pre-existing flaws (i.e. ageing infrastructures, weakness of the social welfare system) that, in turn, add to the complexity of the situation and demonstrate the need for humanitarian, recovery and development action.⁵ As per OCHA's Humanitarian Needs Overview, the unemployment rate 'has skyrocketed (up to 18 per cent) in conflict-affected oblasts in early 2017'.⁶

While the areas bordering the contact line are still considered too unstable for the implementation of recovery or development action, the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster (FSLC) now considers that the implementation of early recovery and development activities is appropriate to areas located further away from the contact line, as per the below diagram.

Figure 1: Livelihood Activity Overview (Source: FSLC Ukraine)



³ World Bank Group, 'Conflict in Ukraine - Socio-Economic Impacts of Internal Displacement on Veteran Return (Summary Report)', May 2017.

⁴ FAO, 'Socioeconomic and Impact and Needs Assessment', 2017.

⁵ OCHA, '2018 Humanitarian Needs Overview', 2017.

⁶ OCHA.

1.2. Background of URCS/IFRC's Livelihoods intervention

Following the degradation of the security situation in the East of Ukraine in 2014, the Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) supported by the Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) Movement Partners provided assistance to displaced populations and host communities in the eastern part of the country.⁷

In September 2016, the need assessment undertaken by the IFRC identified a deterioration of the socio-economic situation of the crisis-affected households due to the shortage of disposable income that followed the lack of employment opportunities and increased costs of living.⁸ In 2017, as the response, URCS with support from IFRC, have started the 'Livelihoods Project' to support small-scale business opportunities for conflict-affected people. The project was first piloted in the city of Lyman in Donetsk Oblast between March and July 2017 with 48 selected beneficiaries. A second phase of the project was then implemented in Lyman and Berdyansk in Zaporizhia Oblast between September and November 2017 with 118 beneficiaries.⁹ In 2017, 166 beneficiaries benefitted from the project in Lyman and Berdyansk. The project was further expanded in 2018 to include 326 additional households in 5 oblasts (Dnipropetrovsk, Kherson, Kharkiv, Donetsk, Luhansk).¹⁰

The 'Livelihoods Project' objective is to support conflict affected people, 'to re/start or re/establish their main livelihoods activity' to do so, it uses conditional cash grants to ensure access by beneficiaries to productive inputs and assets.¹¹ For most of the project's lifespan, the transfer value was set at 26,000 UAH (about 1,000 CHF). All grants are disbursed in two instalments (called tranches), with the payment of the second one conditional to the use of the first instalment for pre-determined livelihood-related expenses.

1.3. Presentation of project's outcome, output and activities

The outcome, output and activities planned for the 2017 Livelihoods Project were as follow:

Table 1: Outcome, outputs and activities of the 2017 'Livelihoods Project'
(Source: Adapted from Emergency Appeal 2018)

Outcome 6: Livelihoods are protected, and negative coping strategies reduced among affected populations/households	
Outputs	Activities

⁷ IFRC, 'Terms of Reference - External Evaluation URCS 'Livelihoods Project', 2018.

⁸ IFRC, 'Needs Assessment Report', September 2016.

⁹ IFRC, 'Emergency Plan of Action Final Report - Ukraine: Complex Emergency', 29 March 2018.

¹⁰ IFRC, (2018), 'Livelihoods Project' "Providing Sustainable Solutions for Internally Displaced and Demobilised Persons in the South-East of Ukraine".

¹¹ Hussain Shah, B., 'Operational Guidelines for the Use of Cash in Food Security and Livelihoods in Ukraine' (IFRC, 2017).

<p>Output 6.1:¹²</p> <p>160 working age persons will receive the support to establish small businesses or start income generation by purchasing required tools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up the team, orientation and training on the project tools and transfer modalities/mechanisms • Baseline study /Household Survey • Re-tendering and selection of financial service provider • Identification, verification and selection of 50 beneficiaries for the pilot stage of the project • Training of the selected beneficiaries and developing business plans • Conditional cash transfer to 50 selected beneficiaries for piloting the project. • Monitoring of the pilot project, lessons learnt and modification of the project based on the results • Identification, verification and selection of 150 beneficiaries for scale up of the piloted approach • Provision of conditional cash grants to 160 individuals to setup the businesses (first tranche) • Monitoring including post distribution • Transfer of conditional cash grants to 160 individuals to enhance the businesses (second tranche) • Monitoring including post distribution, evaluation and documentation of the use of cash grants
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II. Purpose, objectives of the evaluation

This evaluation strives to take stock of the project's achievements as of the end of 2017. It aims to uncover the contributing factors to the project's success, and to identify areas that could benefit from further improvement. It should serve to feed into future response design.

With dual purposes of accountability and learning, this evaluation aims to provide accountability to project stakeholders, and to consider deviations from the initial implementation plan as opportunities to better understand the mechanics of the project so as to adjust future policy and practice.

As defined in the evaluation matrix (see [Annex A](#)), this study focuses on the following evaluation questions:

- Was the project's design appropriate to meet the needs of the different crisis-affected groups?
- To what extent was the project effective in achieving its set objectives?
- Could the same have been achieved for less?
- Did the project contribute to sustainable changes in the lives of the crisis-affected population?
- To what extent is the project compliant with the RCRC Fundamental principles?

¹² The original plan was to target 800 working age persons. This figure was then revised to 160 due to budgetary constraints. The initial plan also included an output 6.2 on vocational training which was not implemented for the same reason.

The evaluation covers the year 2017 in both Lyman and Berdyansk towns. As the data collection was implemented at the end of 2018, some of the lessons learned from 2017 were already integrated in the new phase of the project.

The recommendations coming out from this report take into consideration the adjustments made to the 2018 phase of the project and do not repeat the several recommendations that have already been operationalised by the URCS.

III. Methodology & potential limitations

The figure below summarises the methodology and key limitations of this evaluation. The methodology was based on an inception report validated by IFRC/URCS Evaluation Management Committee on October 24th. The evaluation was a participatory process for which 73 people were consulted.¹³ In total, the following categories of informants were consulted through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Household Visits: 37 beneficiaries, 16 IFRC/URCS staff members, 13 staff members from other organisations, 7 representatives from local authorities. A detailed methodology of the study is available in [Annex B](#).

Figure 2: Summary of the methodology

Inception phase & desk review	Inception report		Desk review
	Develop evaluation matrix and data collection tools.		Comprehensive and structured review of 46 documents (project information and relevant external documentation)
Data collection	In-country		Remote
	KIIs with project implementers and stakeholders	FGDs and Household Visits with beneficiaries and observations in the field	Phone/Skype KIIs (mainly with ex-IFRC delegate involved in the project)
	Total of 25 Key Informants consulted, 7 FGDs, 9 households visits, 1 workshop		
Final report	Data coding and analysis.		First draft: 23 rd November 2018. Final draft: 7 th December 2018.
Evaluation limits	All but one interviewees represented those who applied to be part of the project and got in.		No HH visits or FGDs were conducted with beneficiaries that were not involved anymore in the activity they received the grant for

¹³ This number does not include the URCS staff members consulted in the Livelihoods Workshop, as some participants were later on consulted in FGDs and KIIs.

IV. Findings

IV.1. Appropriateness of the project to meet needs

Overall, the project reflected the needs of beneficiaries consulted and demonstrated a good ability to learn from past phases and adapt, despite having a fixed amount for the business grant which impeded flexibility. Crisis-affected households were consulted at assessment stage and as such, they knew the vulnerability criteria used and deemed them fair.

IV.1.1. Reflecting and adapting to beneficiaries' potentially changing needs

The livelihood project relied on a comprehensive and formalised needs assessment that was implemented in September 2016 in the city of Kiev and in seven regions of Ukraine (Lugansk, Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhya, Kiev region around the capital district, Kherson adjacent to Crimea, and Odessa in the South West of the country).¹⁴ URCS informants also reported that there was a plan to conduct, as part of the situation analysis, a market assessment to inform business plans (i.e. deciding which activities were the most profitable and sustainable). Market assessment was, however, not carried out, as there were reportedly insufficient resources to do so.

As per the consulted beneficiaries¹⁵, **the project intervention was relevant to their needs**, this finding is consistent across gender and age groups. URCS staff in local branches and local authorities questioned in Berdyansk and Lyman shared the same view and agreed with the overall relevance of the project in regards to beneficiaries' needs. Specifically, a representative from the Social Protection Department in Lyman made the point that, in this area, no industrial activities existed. Hence, individual entrepreneurial activities were amongst the most relevant to the region's development. Furthermore, livelihoods needs were part of the priority needs identified in the 2016 Humanitarian Need Overview.¹⁶

Yet, the IFRC's 2016 Needs Assessment Report does not disaggregate the needs and priorities of all groups to determine how they may differ. Although participants' perception of the appropriateness of the project is consistent across gender and different groups, the lack of desegregated assessment and analysis could have led to missed opportunities to further tailor the project's design.

In particular, beneficiaries often identified the **standardisation of the grant amount** across livelihood activities as a constraint, irrespective of the business plan. Furthermore, as the **transfer value was not pegged to inflation**, beneficiaries noted a deterioration of their purchasing power between the time they applied and the disbursement of the second tranche.¹⁷ Few reported that they were not always able to purchase what they had initially forecasted. Some beneficiaries

¹⁴ IFRC, 'Needs Assessment Report'.

¹⁵ During FGDs and household visits.

¹⁶ UNOCHA, 'Humanitarian Needs Overview', 2016, p.23.

¹⁷ Inflation rate for Ukraine was 13,67% over 2017 as per the National Bank of Ukraine.

reported they had to top up the grant amount with their personal savings (whereas they had forecasted the grant would cover all expenses) or increase the amount of personal funding they had forecasted to invest in this project.

Beyond transfer value, the project demonstrated **a good ability to adapt to beneficiaries' needs over time and to learn from past phases**. Beneficiaries¹⁸ were satisfied with the project's overall ability in this regard. Several of them reported cases where they had to change the material they purchased either because they made a mistake in their forecast or due to external circumstances. In such cases, they all reported that the URCS always accepted that they had changed their purchases. This was also confirmed by URCS staff¹⁹: as long as the purchases were related to the initial business they were supported for, the URCS always accepted changes to the initial business plan. One URCS key informant from a local branch even reported a case in which a beneficiary changed the type of activity in her plan and was supported to do so.

Furthermore, the project demonstrated **a good ability to integrate lessons learnt from the pilot project into the future project**. Thanks to initiatives such as the '2017 Lessons Learnt session' organised in November 2017²⁰, the URCS/IFRC listed various areas of the 2017 project where an improvement was possible in 2018. Consultation with beneficiaries and project staff demonstrated that positive change occurred in several of these areas in the 2018 project. For instance, the training aimed to teach potential beneficiaries how to write a business plan was simplified and shortened to ensure it did not divert people from their activity for too long a period of time.²¹ Similarly, the URCS team in Lyman took the initiative in 2018 to organise individual consultations with applicants that struggled to write their business plan after the training. The application questionnaires were also simplified between 2017 and 2018 to make the application process more efficient and simpler.²² The IFRC/URCS also changed Financial Service Providers (FSP) after experiences where the bank had refused to let beneficiaries, whose accounts were in debit, cash out their grants.

IV.1.2. Crisis-affected households' participation

Crisis-affected households were consulted at assessment stage²³ to assess socio-economic status and consequences of the conflict as well as to determine vulnerability criteria to use for targeting. FGDs were conducted with IDPs at assessment stage, with male and female participants both employed and unemployed. The involvement of the host communities in the process was not specified in the 2016 needs assessment. One IFRC key informant also revealed that **potential beneficiaries were consulted on their preferred modality of assistance** (i.e. cash or in-kind). However, this has not been formalised. Furthermore, the URCS presented the targeting criteria to the Social Protection Department and Government Employment Services to gather their opinions and inputs. Because the interviewed implementers were not there at assessment

¹⁸ During FGDs and household visits

¹⁹ Both in Kiev and local branches

²⁰ IFRC/URCS, 'Report on Dnipro Lessons Learnt Workshop', 13 November 2017.

²¹ IFRC, 'Beneficiary Profiling (Livelihoods)', 2018

²² KILs with IFRC/URCS staff members

²³ IFRC Need assessment, 2016

stage, it was not possible to determine their perception of the level of community participation at that stage.

As evident from KIs, **beneficiaries and local government representatives are all aware of the vulnerability criteria required to be selected for this project.** When asked about why they were selected, beneficiaries in all locations visited mentioned both the vulnerability criteria and the quality of business plan as requirements for project participation.²⁴ The evaluation was not able to determine whether non-beneficiaries were aware of the vulnerability criteria required for project participation as they were not evaluated during the data collection process. Despite this, project implementers, local authorities and beneficiaries all agreed on the fact that non-beneficiaries (both IDP and from the local communities) must have been aware of the project's existence and targeting criteria as a result of the wide advertising campaigns implemented by the URCS. **Furthermore, beneficiaries and URCS staff in local branches deemed the existing vulnerability criteria to be fair.** Both parties, however, suggested the inclusion of third group disabilities;²⁵ undocumented single mothers (i.e. mothers who are *de facto* single mothers, though are officially still married) and those with chronic illnesses.

Beyond crisis-affected households, humanitarian and governmental stakeholders have also been involved throughout the project as examined in [Section IV.3.3](#).

IV.1.3. Selecting beneficiaries

Several IFRC/URCS staff members acknowledged the **dilemma between the overall aim of targeting the poorest households as well as those most affected by the conflict²⁶ and a selection process based on the quality of the business plan.** As per one key informant's words: "the aim is to target the most vulnerable but at the same time, they are not likely to make it to our project because (even if there are no formal pre-requisites) they need a minimum level of literacy and some other skills (i.e. basic business skills). Hence, many of them are potentially automatically excluded (...) or are not confident enough to apply." As a result, the URCS' team in one of the branches visited perceived that about 1 out of 5 of the beneficiaries entering the project were not those who had been the most affected and less able to cope with the consequences of the conflict.

As per [Figure 1](#), beneficiary targeting in the areas of implementation should include both vulnerability and potential. Nonetheless, KIs have shown that there was some **confusion/disagreement amongst URCS staff about whether vulnerability or quality of the business idea was prioritised in the selection process.** While staff in one of the branches was under the impression that "Kiev made the decision based on the business plan only, not on the vulnerability", staff in another branch thought that the vulnerability was valued over the quality of the business idea. As such, several IFRC/URCS key informants felt they lacked a concrete set

²⁴ KIs, FGDs and household visits.

²⁵ Third group disabilities refer to a classification provided by the Ukrainian government. Although third group disability is awarded on a case-by-case basis, it usually groups people that have slightly or moderately expressed disorders of body functions.

²⁶ IFRC, 'Emergency Plan of Action Final Report - Ukraine: Complex Emergency'; Hussain Shah, B., 'Operational Guidelines for the Use of Cash in Food Security and Livelihoods in Ukraine'.

of pre-determined objective criteria against which all applications could be scored. In particular, this proved to be critical when they were asked to explain decisions to non-selected applicants.

This tension is quite common within livelihoods projects that promote entrepreneurship. First, they tend to exclude those who are not already entrepreneurs and are not willing to become entrepreneurs; then there is a need to acknowledge that such projects may target those who lack financial capital but nevertheless possess a certain amount of human and social capital to ensure the viability of the business set up.²⁷ As such, they can be perceived as not targeting “the most vulnerable”.

IV.2. Effectiveness of the project in achieving its set objectives

All planned activities have been implemented and the targeted number of beneficiaries was surpassed. Interviewed beneficiaries consistently report an increase in income as a result of the activities supported by the project. This activity was, for a minority of them, their primary source of income. Interviewed beneficiaries expressed satisfaction with the overall project quality.

IV.2.1. Ability of the project to contribute to the creation of livelihoods opportunities

Output

As per the monitoring data shared with the evaluators, all activities planned as part of the 'Livelihoods Project' were implemented. The **number of beneficiaries targeted was reached (and even surpassed) as 164 participants received assistance to support their household** (compared to the initial target of 160). PDM conducted after the distribution of the tranche demonstrated that 164 out of 166 beneficiaries selected used the first tranche for the project's intended purpose. However, although some beneficiaries were visited in Lyman in 2017, no large scale PDM was conducted after the disbursement of the second tranche due to time²⁸ and financial constraints.²⁹ IFRC/URCS staff have mentioned that PDM will take place in the months following this evaluation to gather more systematic evidence of the project's effects. The evaluation has therefore provided some recommendations in [section VI](#) regarding which indicators may be relevant based on the baseline data already collected in the application questionnaires.

Outcome

There were no outcome indicators included in the documents reviewed by the evaluators, nor have outcomes been consistently measured throughout the project (e.g. baseline and end line). It is therefore difficult for the evaluation team to assess with certainty whether the IFRC/URCS 'Livelihoods Project' achieved the intended outcome.

²⁷ International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, 'Guidelines for Cash Transfer Programming', 2007, p.74

²⁸ IFRC, 'Emergency Plan of Action Final Report - Ukraine: Complex Emergency'.

²⁹ KIs with project implementers

The evaluator in charge of data collection was able to **collect anecdotal information³⁰ on the effects of the grants on beneficiaries' livelihoods opportunities**. Out of the 37 beneficiaries consulted, almost all, across gender and age groups, reported that they increased their income thanks to the activity they had been supported with.³¹ Consistently, **URCS staff members were confident in the ability of the project to generate increased income amongst beneficiaries**. Specifically, URCS staff in local branches, who highlighted they were often in contact with the majority of beneficiaries, mentioned that they regularly received feedback from past beneficiaries who had increased their income thanks to the grant they received.

About 15% of those interviewed reported that they were able to cover their household's basic needs³² solely through the activity they had been supported with. The rest of the interviewed beneficiaries were able to cover between 20% and 60% of their household's basic needs through the income generated by the activity they had been supported with. They, in addition, relied on other sources of income such as social benefits, help from relatives, other professional activity as well as other humanitarian aid. Six beneficiaries consulted reported that they were able to pay the additional fees required as the result of registering as private entrepreneurs. About half of the beneficiaries also reported that, if there had not been inflation, the share of basic needs that would have been covered today would be significantly greater.

IV.2.2. Overall beneficiary satisfaction

Interviewed beneficiaries reported they were satisfied with the overall project quality. They felt, as mentioned above, that their livelihoods were improved and that the project was relevant to their needs. As beneficiaries were free to choose the type of livelihoods they opted for and because there is a high community acceptance of cash-based interventions, local actors and beneficiaries' deemed the project to be culturally appropriate.

Beneficiaries have also reported they were **satisfied with the way their voices were heard throughout the course of project implementation**. FGDs and household visits demonstrated that beneficiaries were aware of how to provide feedback on the project, and FGDs' participants were unanimous in their satisfaction with how the Red Cross handled the process. Across all FGDs, the main method beneficiaries cited for providing feedback was by directly contacting local Red Cross staff either on the phone or in-person. Beneficiaries' most-appraised aspects were the level of proximity they shared with URCS staff, the ability to listen and be open to solutions when issues arose, as well as their knowledge of the local context. These strengths were often cited as one of the added values of the URCS compared to other organisations beneficiaries were in contact with.

Interviewed beneficiaries were also satisfied with the timeliness of the intervention. There have been minor delays in implementation compared to the original plans (a delay of 1-2 months

³⁰ The information in this paragraph can only be considered as anecdotal considering a) only a limited number of beneficiaries from the 2017 project were met and b) all the beneficiaries evaluated were considered as successful' (i.e. they were still involved in the activity they had been supported for a year later).

³¹ FGDs with beneficiaries and household visits.

³² During all FGDs and HH visits, basic needs were defined as including: food, accommodation costs, children education costs, and WaSH related purchases.

before the implementation of the Lyman pilot due to negotiations with national authorities regarding tax-exemption status for humanitarian activities³³ and a delay of 1-2 weeks in the distribution of the second tranche).³⁴ These, however, did not disrupt the roll out of beneficiaries' business plans.³⁵ It took ten weeks between the start of the project and the first disbursement, which was deemed by implementers and local actors as an effective set-up time.

IV.2.3. Unintended consequences of the project

The evaluation uncovered a number of unintended positive and negative effects of the project, which are detailed below.

- **Increased sense of belonging and well-being.** One of the aspects of the project appraised by several beneficiaries has been the increased social cohesion amongst beneficiaries. Data collection revealed that, when they were aware of who else was part of the project, beneficiaries tended to try and help one another. For instance, one beneficiary reported that she stopped going to her regular hair salon to go to that of another beneficiary. Beneficiaries were however not always aware of who else within the same area benefitted from the project. It is therefore difficult to capture the breadth of this solidarity network. Furthermore, project implementers³⁶ reported they oftentimes got the sense that this project had a positive impact on beneficiaries' psychosocial well being as it gave them a means to provide for themselves and a meaningful occupation, which was much needed in regions where employment opportunities are rare.
- **Increased URCS visibility and acceptance in the areas of implementation.** Staff from local branches reported an increased visibility of URCS action in the areas of implementation. As the URCS now has more exposure, staff from local branches also reported an increasing number of community members who have requested to work as volunteers. All IFRC/URCS key informants in local branches reported that their relationship with local authorities greatly improved as a result of this project. This was also confirmed by local authorities consulted during data collection.

The evaluation also determined some unintended negative effects of the project.

- **Loss of some social benefits.** Some beneficiaries reported that, because they had received financial help from the URCS, they stopped receiving some of their social benefits. During data collection, URCS staff from local branches mentioned that in some cases this proved to be an issue to beneficiaries who started to spend the grant amount for their activity without being aware that they would not receive their benefits. However, in order to mitigate against this risk, the IFRC/URCS now warn potential applicants of these risks before they apply.
- **Bank withhold grants of beneficiaries in debt.** Some cases were reported where beneficiaries would not be able to cash out their grant, because they were in debt with

³³ IFRC, 'Emergency Plan of Action Final Report - Ukraine: Complex Emergency'.

³⁴ FGDs with staff in local branches and beneficiaries.

³⁵ FGD with beneficiaries

³⁶ This finding emerged at the end of the fieldwork and it was not possible to triangulate the information with other sources.

the bank in charge of disbursing the transfer. Nonetheless, as already outlined previously in this report, the IFRC/URCS changed FSPs and now use Ukrainian Postal Services (*UkrPoshta*).

- **Risks of tensions between IDPs and host communities.** In the implementation area, there is, irrespective of a given project, a sense within the host community that most humanitarian assistance primarily targets IDPs.³⁷ In Berdyansk,³⁸ the project targeted IDPs only and no member of the host communities. Considering the limited size of this project, beneficiaries reported that it did not create further tensions than already existing ones, but that this is be a risk to be wary of if the project was to be further expanded.

IV.3. Efficiency of the project in achieving its set objectives

Overall, project implementers agreed on the fact that the same could not have been achieved with less resources.

IV.3.1. Availability and use of resources

Several informants from the IFRC/URCS that were consulted agreed on the fact that they **had enough resources to meet the set revised objectives but not necessarily to adequately monitor and report on them**. According to one key informant from the IFRC, the absence of a market assessment before the beginning of the project and deficit in M&E can be traced back to the lack of funding. Another informant agreed on this analysis and mentioned that funding for miscellaneous expenses such as heating and internet in the local branches was often missing and that this sometimes had an impact on the quality of technical delivery (i.e. ability to do monitoring, selection of beneficiaries etc.).

Overall, key informants that were consulted agreed on the fact that **resources available were used in an efficient manner**. Similarly, the modality was deemed, both by IFRC informants as well as other organisations, the most efficient in this context. Considering that more than 35 types of livelihoods activities were supported throughout the project, it is indeed unlikely that in-kind kits could have been that diverse. However, the efficiency gains of using cash grants were not necessarily maximised as the grant amount was pre-set and not tailored to the specific activities the beneficiaries were to engage in. During FGDs and households visits, several beneficiaries mentioned they needed less than the amount given to them in order to get their activities going. However, several informants felt that the URCS would not have had the capacity to operationalise varied transfer values. This due to financial management capacities, business skills and knowledge needed to determine varied budgets across different activities and the risks of creating tensions between beneficiaries.

IFRC/URCS key informants considered **ways of working to be efficient and that, overall, duplications and inefficient procedures were avoided**. Two issues were, however, brought up

³⁷ FGDs with project beneficiaries

³⁸ Out of the five oblasts where the project was implemented, Berdyansk was the only project location where host communities were not included in both 2017 and 2018.

during the data collection. First, there seems to have been a duplication of efforts as the IFRC/URCS asked beneficiaries to sign the same grant acknowledgement of receipt (the first time upon grant reception and the second time at URCS' branch offices) twice to verify that the right beneficiaries received the grant. This has already been acknowledged by the IFRC/URCS who are considering modifying or simplifying this procedure in future programming. Second, URCS staff in local branches reported they had to scan all pages of all applicant files to Kiev so that they could make a decision on the applicants to include in the project. However, IFRC/URCS staff in the headquarters mentioned that this procedure was necessary in order to keep track of all applications and ensure that an electronic version was also available.

As per interviews with IFRC and URCS stakeholders, it is clear that the delineation of roles and responsibilities between the IFRC and the URCS is clear. The IFRC has a clear role of providing technical support, mobilising international resources, monitoring and coaching. This support from the IFRC is deemed by URCS staff to be adequate. As per one key informant's words from Lyman, "(The IFRC delegate) was here every two weeks. We could call him any time and had very good communications with the Federation".

The fact that, in Kiev, the URCS Livelihoods team is based in an IFRC office has reportedly been one of the main facilitating factors that ensured smooth collaboration. As a result, none of the key informants reported inefficient methods of working between the URCS and the IFRC. As pointed out by one URCS key informant, "this is really a joint project, working as a roundtable".

Finally, the IFRC regularly provided trainings to URCS staff during the project on varied topics such as livelihoods or gender.³⁹ One informant from Berdyansk reported that she did not "think the IFRC could have done anything more. They provided technical support and helped us develop our skills".

IV.3.2. Coordination with external actors

Humanitarian organisations were consulted before the project started. Specifically, one IFRC key informant⁴⁰ reported that IFRC/URCS staff met with representatives from the ICRC, the Livelihoods Working Group (though not fully operational at the time) and IOM to gather their past experiences and inform the transfer value. As a result of this consultation, the decision was taken to limit the grant amount to 1000 CHF, because other organisations were already distributing grants of 1,000 to 3,000 CHF in the same areas.

Local authorities were often consulted. Project implementers presented the categories of vulnerability to the Social Protection Department and Government Employment Services to gather their opinion and input. Local authorities were also consulted during implementation, more specifically because local authorities' insights were used as a means to triangulate the self-reported socio-economic situation of beneficiaries.

³⁹ Direct observation from consultant's fieldwork. During his time in country, URCS staff members received training on livelihoods programming and gender mainstreaming. KIs with URCS staff members both in the Kiev and local branches revealed they had attended various other training sessions since the beginning of the 'Livelihoods project'.

⁴⁰ With IFRC/URCS staff

Based on FSLC information,⁴¹ it appears that IFRC/URCS members regularly attended Livelihoods Cluster meetings and were also part of the cluster mailing list. IFRC/URCS Livelihoods teams did not attend Cash Working Group meetings as the group primarily focus on the use of unconditional cash grants.

As evident from KIIs, **IFRC/URCS's coordination mechanisms with other Red Cross bodies are strong**, falling under the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) umbrella. The URCS shares activities updates with others such as the German Red Cross Society and the ICRC. Targeting is also coordinated within the Movement. For example, one key informant from Lyman's URCS staff mentioned that in 2017, they coordinated with ICRC as they received applications from beneficiaries located in areas under the ICRC's mandate. Another key informant from URCS staff in Svyatahorsk (one of the areas covered by the Lyman team) mentioned that the URCS cross-checked locations with the ICRC to ensure there was no overlap between the organisations.

However, it appears that **coordination is less strong with organisations external to the Red Cross movement**. None of the non-Red Cross organisations interviewed were aware of IFRC/URCS' activities in the area. Interviewees from URCS acknowledged external coordination as a point for amelioration. Exactly who received assistance was not shared outside of the Red Cross movement, reportedly due to data protection issues and prohibition under Ukrainian law⁴². This resulted in the duplication of efforts with URCS beneficiaries also receiving support from other, non-Red Cross, organisations.

IV.4. Sustainability of the project-induced changes

IV.4.1. Improvement of the URCS' capacity to manage and implement livelihoods projects

URCS' future plans include livelihoods programming for the coming 2-3 years⁴³ when the political and security situations allow. In case violence significantly escalates and the contact line moves, the URCS will need to review its programming and possibly return to relief activities. Participants of the 'Livelihoods Workshop' (26th October) also indicated escalation of conflict as one of the most important threats to the project's sustainability (see [Annex D](#) for more information about the findings from this workshop).

Beyond external factors independent of URCS control, informants consistently reported a steep improvement of URCS capacity since the beginning of the 'Livelihood Project', primarily as a result of the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) process. Informants from within and without the URCS reported strengthening of both individual and organisational capacities to design, implement and monitor livelihoods projects. URCS staff self-reported an improvement in skills and concomitant changes in practices with regards to appropriate communication with community members as well as budget and data base

⁴¹ KII with two representatives of the FSLC, who presented the evaluator attendance lists.

⁴² This information could not be triangulated, as some other informants deemed the sharing of beneficiaries' tax number as a good practice to avoid duplication.

⁴³ KII with URCS staff

management. Looking at the strengthening of organisational capacities, the decentralisation of the project's day to day management from Kiev to the field office for the 2018 'Livelihoods Project' was an indication that the skills acquired in 2017 yielded sustainable improvements in programming. In addition, some URCS branches involved in the project are now coaching/helping other branches. One URCS branch head who implemented the 'Livelihoods Project' in 2017 visited other branches that were starting up livelihoods activities in 2018 to introduce them to the challenges they may face and provide them with tips.⁴⁴ As per the words of one key informant, "I've seen improvement in every corner of this society, ranging from finance management, to coordination, to the conducting of assessments".

However, despite the significant improvements made, key informants⁴⁵ deemed that the URCS needed to acquire some further skills to be able to implement livelihoods projects in a fully independent manner. Specifically, staff members highlighted that the URCS still needed support from the IFRC for tasks such as reporting to back donors and applications for funding. Another challenge to the URCS' capacity improvement is the retention of its staff. Several key informants have reported that many URCS staff members were trained and gained some experience at URCS before moving to other organisations. However, one URCS key informant mentioned that this challenge was already taken very seriously and that the organisation was currently reviewing its salary grid.

IV.4.2. Sustainability of outcome and effects

URCS/IFRC key informants were confident that the potential increased income of the project beneficiaries was sustainable. One URCS informant raised the point that the project was providing beneficiaries with the means to help themselves and was, by nature, sustainable. Similarly, URCS staff in local branches, who reported the financial situation of project beneficiaries as being much improved, were confident that they could sustain their increased revenue for a long period of time.

However, as PDM has not yet been conducted, it is **difficult for the evaluation team to determine the sustainability of project outcome and effects**. According to teams in local branches, 70% to 80% of the beneficiaries who received a grant were still involved in the activity they had been supported for. About half of beneficiaries questioned reported that they would be able to sustain their activity without external assistance. Some of the beneficiaries from the other half have however applied to receive a second grant as part of the 2018 project.⁴⁶ That tends to demonstrate that not all beneficiaries were able to sustain themselves at the end of the 2017 'Livelihoods Project'.

Local authorities consulted (i.e. Social Protection Department, Local Employment Centre) reported that they were going to pursue efforts to increase the livelihoods opportunities in their regions. However, they also mentioned that, in the current situation, they would **not be able to fill the gap the URCS would leave if the organisation were to stop its activities**. Specifically, representatives of the Social Protection Department from Berdyansk and Lyman mentioned that

⁴⁴ KII with URCS staff member

⁴⁵ From IFRC, ICRC and URCS

⁴⁶ KIIs with project staff, FGDs and Household visits with beneficiaries.

the social welfare system was too strained by the conflict to be able to start projects similar those of the URCS.

IV.5. Compliance with IFRC/RCRC livelihood and cash guidelines

IV.5.1. Compliance with the IFRC's Guidelines for Livelihoods Programming

IFRC and URCS staff members highlighted that the project was designed based on the IFRC's 2007 guidelines, tailored to the Ukrainian context. As a result, the examined project **is mostly compliant with the IFRC's 2007 Guidelines for Livelihoods Programming**.⁴⁷ In particular, the project is aligned with the below guideline recommendations:

- **To involve key stakeholders** (beneficiaries, other humanitarian organisations, local authorities) at key steps of the project cycle (i.e. assessment, planning and implementation).
- **To design a comprehensive and formalised needs assessment** that identified the severity of the situation on the capacities of different livelihoods groups.
- **To conduct effective targeting** that is mindful of the needs of various categories of vulnerability to the conflict.
- **To include staff considerations** and compose a team that contains a wide set of complementary skills (i.e. communication skills, written reporting skills, local context knowledge; assessment skills, financial skills and gender awareness).

Nonetheless, the evaluation identified two central areas where compliance with IFRC guidelines for Livelihoods programming could be further improved. First, as per the document's recommendations, livelihoods programmes are often more effective when activities such as cash grants occur alongside "other activities that strengthen livelihoods, such as (vocational) training,"⁴⁸ which is not currently the case in URCS' 'Livelihoods Project'.⁴⁹ There was originally a second output on vocational training which was not implemented due to budgetary constraints.

Second, project monitoring as it is currently implemented is not fully aligned with the guidelines. Project implementers only monitor a few of the many factors that could potentially influence the project and key factors such as market dynamics (i.e. wage rates, prices), successful/failing coping strategies or participation and satisfaction were not monitored. In addition, as per the IFRC guidelines, the project should have defined output and outcome indicators where as it only defined output indicators.

⁴⁷ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 'IFRC Livelihoods Guidelines.Pdf', 2010, http://www.livelihoodscentre.org/documents/20720/100145/IFRC+Livelihoods+Guidelines_EN.PDF/9d230644-9b02-4249-8252-0d37e79ad346.

⁴⁸ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies., p.64

⁴⁹ As of the time of the evaluation, IFRC/URCS provide beneficiaries with training on how to write a business plan. Nonetheless, training to acquire skills such as functional literacy, basic accounting was not provided.

A table with a detailed comparison between guidelines’ recommendations and the IFRC/URCS’ ‘Livelihoods Project’ can be found in [Annex F](#).

IV.5.2. Compliance with ‘International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement Guidelines for Cash Transfer Programming’⁵⁰

Overall, the ‘Livelihoods Project’ is aligned with the recommendations of the 2007 IRCRC Movement Guidelines for Conditional Cash Transfer Programming.⁵¹ Based on the guidelines, IFRC/URCS staff in charge of project design have included the following characteristics:

- Payments are made in several instalments;
- Some flexibility is allowed in the use of the transfer and beneficiaries are allowed to use a portion of the grant for various purposes (i.e. services, labour training, down payments);
- Application procedures were adapted to be understood by all beneficiaries;
- It is clearly stated in the beneficiary agreement on cooperation⁵² what misconducts may lead to (i.e. a recipient being denied the next instalment or their grant);
- The communication strategy includes all information recommended by the guidance (i.e. selection criteria, deadline for application, etc.);
- The IFRC/URCS conducted the targeting according to recommendations (i.e. elements such as business skills, existing skills of beneficiaries were taken into account; the distribution is limited to one person per household; men and women were given equal opportunities).

A table with a detailed comparison between guideline’s recommendations and IFRC/URCS’ ‘Livelihoods Project’ can be found [Annex G](#).

V. Conclusions

The project appears to have achieved progress towards helping targeted beneficiaries recover their livelihoods. Local authorities and beneficiaries generally agreed on the fact that the project reflected beneficiaries’ needs and should allow them to increase their income. The evaluation also uncovered several unintended positive effects of the project such as the improvement of URCS’ in-country image or an increased social cohesion amongst beneficiaries.

Nonetheless, considering the limited monitoring data existing for this project, it is difficult for the evaluators to assess with certainty whether the IFRC/URCS ‘Livelihoods Project’ achieved the intended outcome and, hence, whether potential improvements in beneficiaries’ livelihoods are sustainable.

⁵⁰ International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, ‘Guidelines for Cash Transfer Programming’.

⁵¹ The recommendations analysed are on pages 73-74 of the IRCRC Movement (2007) Guidelines for Cash Transfer Programming.

⁵² IFRC/URCS, ‘Livelihoods Programme - Agreement on Cooperation with Beneficiaries’, 2018.

The strong IFRC/URCS partnership appears to have been a contributing factor to the project's achievements. In particular, the partnership appears to have directly contributed to efficiency and effectiveness gains. In the evaluators' opinion, it is unlikely that the 'Livelihoods Project' could have achieved the same with less IFRC support; especially considering livelihoods programming was new to most of the URCS' staff members.

Going forward, it is of prime importance that project implementers systematise monitoring practices, in order to feed into future activities design.

VI. Recommendations

The below recommendations target future IFRC/URCS livelihoods programming. As mentioned previously, the recommendations take into consideration the adjustments made to the 2018 phase of the project and do not repeat the several lessons learned and recommendations that had already been operationalised by the URCS.⁵³

Recommendations are organised as per the steps of project cycle for easy of reference, the five priority ones are underlined for the ease of reference.

VI.1. Situation analysis

Recommendation: If the project is further scaled up, ensure a timely and comprehensive desegregated situation analysis that will systematically feed into response design.

- Not only consult the different groups but also capture their needs in a desegregated manner so that it can inform tailored activities.

Recommendation: In line with RCRC strategy for 2019 to adopt more market-informed livelihoods interventions, ensure sufficient budget is dedicated to having a good picture of the labour market in the area and of the demand for different types of services. This will help determine the types of activities and services for which there is the highest demand and therefore the type of livelihoods activities that are the more likely to be sustainable and profitable.

VI.2. Project design

Recommendation: Consider creating a flexible grant amount that mirrors business plans' amount rather than setting a fix amount.

- Ensure you are as transparent as possible in the selection process to avoid potential tensions and jealousy between beneficiaries.

⁵³ For more information about the lessons learned/recommendations made at the end of the 2017 Programme, please refer to the IFRC/URCS 'Report on Dnipro Lessons Learnt Workshop' (13-14 November, 2017).

- Ensure you are monitoring market dynamics and price trends and adapt the grant amount accordingly. Rely as much as possible on existing secondary data to do so (e.g. inflation rate monitored by the National Bank, Cost of Living)

Recommendation: If PDM reveals that the provision of cash alone is insufficient to ensure starting or restarting a sustainable livelihood or productive activity, consider adding non-cash-related elements to the project.

- As per the IFRC Cash guidelines, provision of cash alone can sometimes be insufficient to ensure starting or restarting a sustainable livelihood or productive activity. Technical assistance and training are often needed to ensure that sustainable livelihoods are adopted".⁵⁴ As such, look at existing skills, how they can be completed with technical support, coaching, mentoring and vocational training elements. Build on the existing dynamics between beneficiaries to set up networking events with already-established entrepreneurs for the current project.
- Consider cash as just one of the intervention modality. That should also help tackle the tension between targeting individuals with existing vulnerabilities and targeting those with pre-existing skills.

Recommendation: Ensure that potential collaboration between the 'Livelihoods Project' and URCS activities are capitalised upon.

- KIs with IFRC staff members have suggested that opportunities for collaboration between the 'Livelihoods Project' and other projects implemented by the IFRC/URCS could be capitalised upon in future programming. For instance, both 'Livelihoods' and 'PSS' projects provide assistance to demobilised soldiers in the same areas of implementation. One IFRC informant therefore suggested encouraging them to apply for the cash grants so that they could restart their livelihoods activities as well as improve their psycho-social status.

Recommendation: Ensure that beneficiaries who got approved for grants get the chance to meet each other early on in the process so that they are able to make connections and potentially support one another during the course of the project.

- Beneficiaries who know about other beneficiaries' activities are often keen to help one another. Nonetheless, some of the beneficiaries mentioned they did not always know who was part of the project. By ensuring all of them get to meet early on in the process (through job fairs or social events organised at community centres or branches), the sense of community and solidarity amongst them may improve further.

Recommendation: If the project is further scaled up, consider putting more formalised feedback mechanisms in place.

- Consider linking mechanism feedbacks to those of other URCS projects (i.e. PSS) in cities/areas where the URCS is already present.

Recommendation: Ensure selection criteria are clear to all relevant stakeholders (i.e. URCS staff in local branches, local authorities and applicants).

⁵⁴ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 'IFRC Livelihoods Guidelines.Pdf'.

- Data collection revealed stakeholders were not always clear with regards to the selection criteria. Specifically, URCS staff in local branches did not always agree on whether vulnerability to the conflict or quality of business plan took priority in determining project participation. To avoid any confusion on the topic, project implementers are recommended to:
 - Establish a score system of all applications against a set of pre-defined criteria (both related to vulnerabilities and quality of business plan).
 - Establish a written policy that defines all admission criteria and clearly states what the rules are with regards to specific cases such as beneficiaries re-applying to the project in a subsequent year.
 - Ensure social cohesion; ensure that the status (either IDP or host community) is not a barrier to enter the project. And that decisions are based on the targeting criteria only.

Recommendation: If feasible, consider including additional vulnerability criteria such as people living with third type disability, undocumented single mothers and patients suffering from serious illness.

VI.3. Implementation

Recommendation: Ensure continuous communication with beneficiaries over their legal obligations as entrepreneurs.

- Project implementers should continue to ensure beneficiaries are aware of the fact that they will potentially lose state social benefits by registering with the ‘Livelihood Project’.⁵⁵
- The IFRC/URCS should ensure beneficiaries are clear on whether they are legally obliged to register as private entrepreneurs and/or pay any taxes as the result of their activity. Liability of not complying with these obligations should also be clearly determined between the URCS and the beneficiaries of the project.
- The IFRC/URCS should ensure they contact adequate stakeholders to obtain all necessary legal information and/or connect beneficiaries with entrepreneurs who already went through the necessary legal procedures.

Recommendation: Ensure that all URCS staff are aware of IFRC child protection policies and that those policies are presented to beneficiaries before the start of the project.

- At global level, evidence exists⁵⁶ to suggest that livelihoods projects using cash grants can have negative unforeseen effects by increasing children’s participation in economic activities, despite children attending school on a daily basis. Although there is no evidence of such activities in the URCS’ ‘Livelihoods Project’, such unforeseen effects should be anticipated before they appear.

Recommendation: Continue efforts to build the URCS’ capacity and skills

⁵⁵ This recommendation was already applied in 2018 project.

⁵⁶ See for example: de Hoop, J. and Furio, H. ‘Cash Transfers and Child Labor’. Oxford University Press on behalf of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2014

- Continue to encourage URCS staff to reflect on their strengths, needs and the potential gaps in their capacity.
- Encourage activities such as peer to peer monitoring between URCS branches.
- Continue to train URCS staff in local branches on key skills such as finance management, reporting, business plan write-ups etc.
- Once URCS’ capacity is considered sufficient, ensure that they have some projects they run with limited oversight and rely less on the Kiev Livelihoods team for day-to-day decision making.

VI.4. Monitoring

Recommendation: Set outcome indicators and targets.

- Having targets and outcome indicators will help the PMER team quantitatively determine whether outcomes are being achieved or not. Determining the percentage of households that improved in an area, without having a comparison point of what the project wanted to achieve, makes it difficult to determine whether improvements are sufficient. Indicators from the livelihoods centre may be referred to in that regard.⁵⁷ Those indicators can be structured around a M&E framework as described in the IFRC Monitoring Project/programme monitoring and evaluation (M&E) guide.⁵⁸

Recommendation: Ensure monitoring is used to make programmatic decisions and that it is used to allow implementers to determine whether the response is reaching its target.

- The URCS should ensure it has a systematised way to collect and analyse data on the project’s reach to the targeted vulnerable sections of society. The URCS should continue to systematically disaggregate data as per gender and status (i.e. IDP/non-IDP) and potentially also add other types of vulnerability to the conflict (i.e. age or disabilities). Analysing this kind of data can support informed decision-making and the identification of corrective measures to improve the project while it is being implemented.
- Targeted people who left the project should also be accounted for and the reason for the dropout be looked at.
- Leave room in the monitoring process to enquire about unintended positive and negative effects and risks of the project (e.g. losing some social benefits).

Recommendation: Conduct end-line and/or follow-up monitoring.

- Multiple KIIs requested more follow-up monitoring in order to be able to determine project achievements as well as the types of activities that are likely to be successful per area. Specifically, some key informants mentioned that some data had already been gathered and should be analysed. In that regard, information already gathered in the beneficiary-profiling questionnaire such as average income per month and average spending per month can be used as a baseline to compare.

⁵⁷ <http://www.livelihoodscentre.org/indi>

⁵⁸ <http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/monitoring/IFRC-ME-Guide-8-2011.pdf>

Recommendation: Ensure guidance developed during this project is documented to help foster institutional memory

- Ensure that guidance for all activities implemented is properly documented and shared with URCS departments. In particular, lessons about tailoring activities (i.e. business training, selection of beneficiaries, targeting etc.) to the context and managing risks considerations should always be documented and kept.

VI.5. Coordination

Recommendation: Continue advertising IFRC/URCS' livelihoods activities in the Ukraine and reinforce coordination with non-Red Cross organisations in order to avoid any potential risk of beneficiary overlap.

- Consistently attend livelihoods cluster meetings and coordinate closely with non Red Cross organisations. Consider the sharing of beneficiaries' data to avoid duplication of efforts.

Recommendation: Continue efforts to coordinate with Regional level and Geneva in order to further develop capacity and adopt approaches coherent with global strategies and obtain support for resource mobilisation.

VII. Annexes

VII.1. Annex A: Evaluation matrix

Was the project's design appropriate to meet the needs of the different crisis affected groups?	To what extent did the project reflect and adapt to the potentially changing needs of the different target groups?	<p>Documented evidence that a comprehensive and formalised needs assessment was conducted before project start, representative of different crisis-affected groups (i.e. gender, age, single-headed households, people living with disabilities).</p> <p>Project implementers' perceptions that changes to project design and activities were made on the basis of changing needs and/or unintended negative consequences of the project.</p> <p>Documented examples of such ability to adapt.</p> <p>Beneficiaries' perceptions that the project successfully adapted to their needs throughout the implementation period.</p>	<p>Secondary data review;</p> <p>KIIs with relevant stakeholders;</p> <p>FGDs and household visits with beneficiaries.</p>
	Did the project ensure appropriate participation of beneficiaries and other actors involved in the project?	<p>Beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries' awareness of selection criteria;</p> <p>Beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries perceptions that selection criteria were fair/unfair</p> <p>Beneficiaries perceptions that the assistance they received was appropriate.</p>	<p>Secondary data review;</p> <p>KIIs with relevant stakeholders;</p> <p>FGDs and household visits with beneficiaries.</p>

		<p>Self-reported involvement of local actors, and external actors across the project life span;</p> <p>Documented evidence of their involvement;</p> <p>Project implementers' perceptions that the level of community participation was sufficient;</p> <p>Local actors'⁵⁹ awareness of selection criteria & participation in their definition;</p> <p>Local actors' perception that the selection criteria were fair.</p>	
To what extent was the project effective in achieving its set objectives?	What were the effects of the project in contributing to creating livelihoods opportunities?	<p>Beneficiaries report increased livelihoods opportunities thanks to the project;</p> <p>Project implementers, local actors and external actors' perceptions that the project successfully increased livelihoods opportunities of different groups i.e. women, youth, older people, people living with disabilities.</p>	<p>Secondary data review;</p> <p>KIIs with relevant stakeholders;</p> <p>FGDs and household visits with beneficiaries.</p>
	Do recipients deem the quality of key project activities sufficient? Are there any unintended	<p>Overall beneficiary satisfaction with the project quality (feeling that livelihoods were improved, timeliness of assistance, beneficiaries' perception that their voice was being heard);</p>	<p>KIIs with relevant stakeholders;</p> <p>FGDs and household visits with beneficiaries.</p>

⁵⁹ Local actors include district & region-level stakeholders (District Administrative office, District Coordination Committee, etc.) and Village Development Committee stakeholders (Ward representatives, Local Disaster Risk Management Committee).

	consequences (positive or negative for beneficiaries)?	<p>Implementers' perceptions that the project led to unintended consequences positive or negative.</p> <p>Implementers', external actors and local actors' perceptions that the project was implemented in a timely fashion;</p> <p>Documented evidence that the project was implemented in a timely fashion (e.g. time between the start of the project and the first disbursement).</p> <p>Local actors and beneficiaries' perceptions that the project was culturally appropriate;</p>	
Could the same outcomes have been achieved for less?	When available, to what extent were the financial, human, physical and information resources utilised in an efficient manner?	<p>IFRC/URCS' perceptions that enough resources were available to meet the set objectives</p> <p>Documented examples of cost savings;</p> <p>IFRC/URCS' perceptions that cash assistance was an efficient modality to achieve the set outcomes;</p> <p>External actors' perceptions that cash assistance is an efficient modality in the Ukrainian context.</p>	<p>Secondary data review;</p> <p>KIIs with relevant stakeholders.</p>
	Has IFRC provided adequate technical, management and financial support to the project?	<p>IFRC and URCS' staff perceptions that a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities exists;</p> <p>IFRC and URCS' staff perceptions that ways of working were efficient;</p>	<p>Secondary data review;</p> <p>KIIs with relevant stakeholders.</p>

		Documented examples of adequate and efficient support provided by IFRC to URCS.	
	To what extent was coordination with local and external actor ⁶⁰ efficient? To what extent is the project coherent and complementary to other projects implemented by URCS?	Evidence of active participation of URCS in the Livelihoods cluster; External and local actors' satisfaction on their level of information and efforts to coordinate with them; Project implementers, local actors and external actors' perceptions on the clear channels of communication with Red Cross and lack of overlapping activities.	Cluster meetings attendance list; KIIs with relevant stakeholders.
Did the project contribute to sustainable changes in the lives of the crisis-affected population?	To what extent has this project strengthened the capacity of URCS in terms of Livelihoods programming and cash-based interventions?	URCS' future programmatic plan; Documented evidence of URCS' participation in cash coordination in Ukraine; Project implementers and external actors' perceptions' that URCS has the capacity to sustain project outcomes.	Secondary data review Cash Working Group meeting minutes KIIs with relevant stakeholders.

⁶⁰ External actors include other Red Cross societies (i.e. German Red Cross Society, French Red Cross Society etc.), the ICRC, Livelihoods cluster, Ukraine Cash Working Group, as well as any other in-country non-government organisations actively involved in Livelihoods or cash-based programming.

	<p>To what extent are the outcomes and effects of the project likely to continue after the end of the project? Should these outcomes be non-sustainable, what sort of support may be required to achieve this?</p>	<p>Project implementers, local actors, external actors', and beneficiaries' perceptions that the increased income can continue without external assistance;</p> <p>Number of targeted beneficiaries who still pursue the activity they have been supported for by URCS at the time of data collection⁶¹;</p> <p>Local actors' perceptions that they have the capacity to sustain positive changes;</p> <p>Local actors' plan to pursue efforts to increase livelihoods opportunities in their community.</p>	<p>Secondary data review;</p> <p>KIIs with in-country URCS/IFRC staff, local level actors;</p> <p>FGDs and household visits with beneficiaries.</p>
<p>To what extent is the project compliant with the RCRC Fundamental Principles?</p>	<p>Is the project aligned with guiding documents such as the 'IFRC Guidelines for Livelihoods Programming' and the 'IRCRC Movement Guidelines for Cash Transfer Programming'?</p> <p>If not aligned, what factors inhibited alignment and what actions are needed to enable it?</p>	<p>Comparison between standards put forward in IFRC guidelines and 'Livelihoods Project' monitoring documentation;</p> <p>Project implementers and member organisations' staff perceptions that project is aligned with IFRC and RCRC guidelines.</p>	<p>Secondary data review;</p> <p>KIIs with relevant stakeholders.</p>

⁶¹ Judgement will be formed on this indicator only if URCS/IFRC is able to provide necessary secondary data.

VII.2. Annex B: Detailed evaluation methodology

The evaluation followed a three-stepped approach presented in the figure below:

Figure 3: Methodological steps of the evaluation



VII.2.1. Phase 1: Inception & desk review

Following two remote briefings with the evaluation team on September 24th and October 17th 2018 (via Skype), the consultants undertook the desk review of all available project documentation, monitoring data and other available relevant literature including IFRC's 'Guidelines for Livelihoods Programming' and 'Guidelines for Cash Transfer Programming'. The list of the document reviewed is available in [Annex E](#). The consultants began with a structured document review during the inception phase to inform the refinement of the evaluation matrix and design of the data collection tools (specifically the questionnaire for key informant interviews, focus group discussions and household visits).

The consultants added and reviewed additional documents during the primary data collection phase as various key informants shared secondary data. All documents were coded and reviewed in an iterative manner.

The consultants then developed the evaluation matrix and refined the evaluation questions suggested in the ToR, a revised methodology, focus and scope, data collection tools and a finalised timeframe for the evaluation. All tools were presented in an inception report that was finalised on October 24th.

VII.2.2. Phase 2: Data collection

Primary data collection aimed at filling in any gaps from the desk review and expanding on emerging trends by delving into further details. Primary data collection occurred during a field mission to Ukraine. The consultant first stayed in Kyiv, hosted in IFRC's office, before traveling to the following oblasts: Zaporizhia, Donetsk and Lugansk. KIs and FGDs were conducted in Ukrainian/Russian with the help of Illya Klestovskyy (PMER Officer at IFRC).

Data collection methods included:

VII.2.2.1. Workshop facilitation.

Upon arrival in country, the consultant facilitated a session at the 'Livelihoods – Learning and planning workshop' on October 24th 2018. During this session, the consultant conducted a SWOT analysis with URCS staff involved in the 2017 and 2018 'Livelihoods Project' to determine staff's perceptions on the overall quality of the project. The results of this session can be found in [Annex D](#).

VII.2.2.2. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

Semi-structured interviews were conducted in-person during the field visit (or remotely by Skype or phone as needed) from October 22nd to November 7th 2018. The key informants' selection was done purposefully by the project team and the consultants, targeting people thought to be best able to contribute to the evaluation process, and complemented through snowball sampling, i.e. asking key informants whom we should interview next. These key informants are representative of the key stakeholders, including:

- HQ URCS/IFRC staff;
- Local actors, including district & region-level stakeholders (City Council, Social protection department etc.);
- External actors involved in Livelihoods or Cash based assistance in the country, including representatives from other Red Cross societies, the ICRC, the Livelihoods Cluster.

The breakdown of interviewees is detailed in the table below:

Figure 4: Breakdown of interviewees per type

Organisation/Type of actor	Number of interviewees
IFRC Kyiv	3
URCS Kyiv	3
ICRC	4
German Red Cross	1
ACTED	1
NRC	2
DRC	1
PIN	1
FSL cluster	2
CSO Representative (Berdyansk)	1
Employment centre (Berdyansk)	1
Social Protection Department (Berdyansk)	1
Social Protection Department (Lyman)	4
Total	25

As mentioned previously, during the data collection phase, the consultants also added to the desk review any additional documents shared by the key informants. Those documents were analysed in an iterative manner and contributed to the body of evidence alongside the documents reviewed during the inception phase.

VII.2.2.3. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

The consultant also conducted Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) during his fieldtrip. In total 7 FGDs were conducted with various stakeholders. FGDs were conducted with beneficiaries as well as Red Cross staff, as detailed in the tables below:

Table 2: Breakdown of FGDs per location (Beneficiaries)

Stakeholder category	Number of FGD	Number of participants
Beneficiaries (2017 'Livelihoods Project', Berdyansk)	1	9
Beneficiaries (2017 'Livelihoods Project', Lyman)	1	4
Beneficiaries (2018 'Livelihoods Project', Svytahorsk)	1	8
Beneficiaries (2018 'Livelihoods Project', Severodonestk)	1	7
Total	4	28

Table 3: Breakdown of FGDs per location (Red Cross team)

Stakeholder category	Number of FGD	Number of participants
Red Cross team (Berdyansk)	1	3
Red Cross team (Severodonestk)	1	4
Red Cross team (Lyman)	1	3
Total	3	10

FGDs were used to gather feedback directly from project implementers and beneficiaries on the project's appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and collect suggestions for recommendations. All were conducted in Ukrainian/Russian thanks to the translation of IFRC's PMER officer (Illya Kletskovsky). The questionnaires for FGDs can be found in [Annex C](#).

VII.2.2.4. Household visits

Household visits were conducted in areas where was difficult and beneficiaries were unlikely to reach meeting point. The questionnaire developed for household visits was similar to that

for FGDs (see [Annex C.](#)). Household visits enabled the consultant to obtain a clearer impression of the type of business activities enabled thanks to IFRC/URCS' micro-grants. Household visits were conducted in the following locations:

Table 4: Household visit per location

Household visit location	Number
Berdyansk	5
Lyman & Svyatahorsk	4
Total	9

Overall the consultant visited household of beneficiaries that had implemented various types of business including (but not limited to):

- Hairdressing;
- Poultry;
- Beekeeping;
- Tyre repair company;
- Meat smoking business;
- Vegetable garden.

VII.2.3. Phase 3: Analysis & report writing

Qualitative disaggregated data was be recorded and coded by type of stakeholders to analyse emerging trends. The analysis will be done iteratively to be able to adjust the data collection tools and explore some of the trends more in-depth.

Data was triangulated across sources to ensure accuracy. The consultants will gather all the data collected from primary and secondary sources in one coding matrix organised per evaluation questions and sub-questions. Findings for each question will be analysed and compiled into the report.

Preliminary findings were presented to the project team and donors on November, 6th 2018, which enabled the consultant to discuss the findings and discuss potential recommendations.

The team then produced a first draft of the evaluation report to highlight key findings, lessons learnt and best practices. Upon receiving feedback both remotely and during the workshop, the consultants produced the final version of the evaluation report.

VII.2.4. Potential limitations to data collection

Although the consultants were able to reach various stakeholders, the following limitations to data collection must be noted:

- Apart from one interview in Berdyansk, the consultant was only able to interview beneficiaries of the project, and was not able to gather impressions and opinions of rejected applicants;
- All beneficiaries consulted continued the activity they had received the grant for. Although teams in URCS local branches contacted beneficiaries that had received

the grant but were not successful in starting their business or had spent the grant on expenses unrelated to the business they received assistance for.

VII.2.5. Data protection policy

For this case study, the consultants complied with the E.U. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) directive, enforced on May 25th 2018. This directive sets out individuals' rights regarding the processing, handling, treatment and storage of their personal data.

For the data collected the consultants did:

- Present the objective of the project to potential interviewees.
- Obtain written or oral consent from each key informant before participating in the interview with Key Aid Consulting. This took the form of either a written email or an oral consent given and recorded at the beginning of the interview. It ensures that potential interviewees have been informed about the study, about their privacy and that they agree on their data being used for this report. Depending on their answers, the consultants decided either to integrate or exclude the data/ part of the data from the analysis.
- Store interviewee's data (audio recordings, transcripts, database) on a secured and password-protected online server, only accessible by Key Aid Consulting.
- Share only anonymised raw data collected (coding matrix) i.e. the interviewee's name, organisation as well as any descriptive information that could breach data protection (age, location, etc.) were removed.
- Not quote individuals or refer to interviewee by name in the final report.
- Not refer to specific job titles or organisations in the report unless the interviewee had expressly agreed to it. In the case where interviewees within the same organisation disagreed on the use of their organisation name, the most restrictive choice prevailed, and the consultants did not refer to the organisation in the report.

VII.3. Annex C: Data collection tools

VII.3.1. Key informant interviews

This structured interview guide provides an overview of all the topics and corresponding questions; however, each interview will be tailored to focus on the set of questions that are most directly relevant to the interviewee's expertise and interest.

Introduction

This study was commissioned by IFRC in order to determine whether the approach used in the 'Livelihoods Project' was relevant to the context and the needs of affected populations and analyse the effects of the intervention.

The information collected from you will be used to determine the appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of several aspects of the project and help determine what lessons can be learnt from this intervention for future programming.

The information you communicate will be anonymised and the final report will only make references to organisations if the data provided by them is public or if the interviewee agrees to take part in the study. Please also be aware that you have the right to amend or delete the data you communicated after this interview.

Do you agree to take part in this interview?

General information

Name:

Position:

Organisation:

Email address:

VII.3.1.1. Project implementers (IFRC and URCS staff) questionnaire

Introductory questions

1. What has been your involvement with the IFRC/URCS 'Livelihoods Project'? And over what time period?
2. What are your expectations of this evaluation?

Appropriateness

1. Can you provide a short description of the planning, design and implementation of the project? (NB: question will likely be removed if the consultant gets a sufficiently good overview of the project phases during the workshop)
2. How were the targeted communities involved in these steps? Was this sufficient? If they were not involved, why not?
3. How did you determine the needs and context of the targeted communities? Have you been able to assess the distinct needs of the different crisis affected groups?
4. Has the assessment carried out before the first phase of the project (i.e. 'Scoping mission in support of the URCS for scaling up humanitarian Actions in Response to the Crisis', March 2015) or learning generated during implementation (i.e. exit survey, post distribution monitoring (PDM), etc.) helped the various activities reach targeted groups (i.e. women, older people, youth, specific minorities/castes, etc.)? Can you provide an example of how the targeting or project implementation changed based on this information?
5. What criteria did you use for targeting? Are beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries aware of them?
6. Were communities involved in determining the targeting criteria? If yes, how so? If not, why not?

7. In your opinion, did the targeting criteria that were used align to the determined needs and context? Why or why not?
8. In your opinion, were the interventions aligned to the communities' identified needs? Why or why not?
9. In your opinion, did the project adapt to the potentially changing needs of the target groups? Any example?

Effectiveness

10. Are there any project outcomes that have been difficult to achieve? If yes, why?
11. Has the project been able to reach different groups, i.e. women, youth, older people, people living with disabilities?
12. If yes to the question above, what has been the project's effect(s) on these groups? Can you provide examples?
13. What do you think would be the current state of the communities covered by this project if they had not received Red Cross support through the 'Livelihoods Project'?
14. Were there any unforeseen effects of the project? If yes, can you provide some examples? Positive or negative
15. In your opinion, has IFRC/URCS been able to implement the project in a timely fashion?
16. Were there any major delays in implementation? If yes, can you give an example or elaborate on the reasons behind this delay?

Efficiency

17. Do you think enough resources (i.e. financial, human, physical, information) were made available to conduct this project and reach the outcomes stated in the EA?
18. When resources were available, do you consider they were utilised in an efficient manner? Do you have any examples?
19. Do you think that cash assistance was an efficient modality to achieve the set outcome?
20. In your opinion, has IFRC's support been adequate to ensure smooth running of the project (including technical, management, and financial assistance)? Why or why not?
21. In your opinion, is the separation of roles and responsibilities between IFRC and URCS clear? Can you describe them to me?
22. How would you characterise the working relationship between IFRC and URCS?
23. Have you been satisfied with IFRC/URCS's coordination with external actors (i.e. government bodies, community organisations, NGOs, Livelihoods cluster, other Red Cross societies – e.g. French or German Red Cross Society)? Why or why not?
24. What have been some of the biggest successes or challenges to coordination with external actors?

25. Do you think the channels of communication between Red Cross and external actors were efficient? Did they enable to reduce potential overlapping activities?

Sustainability

26. **For URCS:** what are your future programming plans over the next 2-3 years?
27. Do you think that URCS would have the capacity to sustain project outcomes? Why or why not?
28. Do you think local actors have the ability (i.e. knowledge, capacity) to sustain the project's achievements? Why or why not?
29. In your opinion, does URCS have the capacity to handle livelihoods projects, increased as a result of this project? Why or why not? If yes, can you provide an example?
30. Would you have any suggestions to enable sustainability of project outcomes?

Compliance with RCRC Fundamental principles

31. Do you think the project is aligned with Red Cross and Red Crescent's principles of 'Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary service, Unity and Universality'?
32. Do you think the project is aligned with key RCRC documents such as the 'IFRC Guidelines for Livelihoods Programming' and the 'IRCRC Movement Guidelines for Cash Transfer Programming'?
33. If no, do you have any suggestions to enable the project to be aligned with them?

Wrap up questions

34. If you were to start the project all over again, what would you do differently?
35. Is there anything that we did not discuss that you feel is important to highlight?

VII.3.1.2. Local actors (i.e. district and region-level stakeholders, Village Development Committee) questionnaire

Introductory questions

1. What has been your involvement with the IFRC/URCS 'Livelihoods Project'?

Appropriateness

1. Can you describe the role of your organisation in the planning, design and implementation (i.e. the various stages) of the project?
2. Are you familiar with what the criteria for targeting were (i.e. how people or householders were selected to receive assistance)? If yes, can you explain them to me?
3. How were you involved in determining the targeting criteria (i.e. who was selected to receive assistance)?
4. In general, do you think the right people received assistance? Why or why not?

5. Do you think non-beneficiaries in your community understand why they were not targeted? Please explain.
6. Did IFRC/URCS consult you to determine the needs and context of your community? If yes, can you describe how this occurred?

Effectiveness

7. In your opinion, what have been the major effects of the assistance provided? In other words, what has changed since people started to receive assistance?
8. To the best of your knowledge, has this assistance reached different types of groups, i.e. women, youth, older people, people living with disabilities and from different castes/ethnic groups? Why or why not?
9. If yes to the question above, what has been the assistance's effect(s) on these groups? Can you provide examples?
10. What do you think would be the current state of your community if it had not received assistance from the Red Cross?
11. In your opinion, was assistance provided in a timely fashion? Was it quick enough to meet your community's needs? Why or why not?
12. Were there any major delays in assistance being provided? If yes, can you give an example?
13. Do you think the project was implemented in a culturally sensitive manner? If not, are there any suggestions you could make to make it more culturally sensitive?

Efficiency

14. Have you been satisfied with the Red Cross' efforts to coordinate with your organisation? Why or why not?
15. What have been some of the biggest successes or challenges to coordination?
16. Have you been satisfied with the Red Cross' level of communication with you? Why or why not?
17. Are there any overlapping activities in your community (between the Red Cross and another aid organisation)?

Sustainability

18. Do you think the effects the assistance has created in your community can remain without continued support of the Red Cross? Why or why not?
19. Are you confident in your and other local actors' knowledge and capacity to maintain the project's positive changes? Why or why not?
20. What are your organisation's plans to ensure the sustainability of these positive changes?

Wrap up questions

21. If the Red Cross were to start the project all over again, what would you like them to do differently?

22. Is there anything that we did not discuss that you feel is important to highlight?

VII.3.1.3. External actors (ICRC, CWG, Livelihoods cluster, non-URCS Red Cross National Societies etc.) questionnaire

Introductory questions

1. What has been your involvement with the IFRC/URCS 'Livelihoods Project'?

Appropriateness

2. To what extent were you aware of IFRC/URCS needs assessment? Was it shared externally?
3. Does the project fit within your organisation's strategy?

Effectiveness

4. Has the project been able to reach different types of groups, i.e. women, youth, older people, people living with disabilities and people from different castes/ethnic groups?
5. If yes to the question above, what has been the project's effect(s) on these groups? Can you provide examples?
6. Were there any unforeseen effects of the project? If yes, can you provide some examples?
7. What do you think would be the current situation of the targeted communities if they had not received assistance from the Red Cross?
8. In your opinion, was assistance provided in a timely fashion? Was it quick enough to meet the communities' needs? Why or why not?

Efficiency

1. IFRC/URCS have used conditional cash grants for livelihoods. Have you also used CTP? Is it an effective modality to meet those needs in this context?
2. Have you been satisfied with URCS/IFRC' coordination with your organisation? Why or why not?
9. What have been some of the biggest successes or challenges to coordination?
10. Have you been satisfied with the Red Cross' level of communication with you? Why or why not?
11. Are there any overlapping activities for the targeted communities (between the Red Cross and another aid organisation)?
12. Do you feel IFRC/URCS contributed sufficiently to the sectoral coordination groups?

Sustainability

13. Do you think URCS has the knowledge and capacity to continue delivering programming without further support from IFRC? Why or why not? What do you think can be done to further enhance their capacity and deliver better outputs?

14. Do you think the progress that the project has achieved thus far will remain without continued support of the Red Cross? Why or why not?

Wrap up questions

15. If the Red Cross were to start the project all over again, what would you like them to do differently?
16. Is there anything that we did not discuss that you feel is important to highlight?

VII.3.2. Focus Group Discussion and Household Visit

VII.3.2.1. FGD & Household visits Guide (Project beneficiaries)

Instructions

NB: Background and general information are the same as for the KII questionnaire.

When conducting the FGDs be conscious of gender, minority groups, and of the time you are going to ask people to contribute (each FGD should be a maximum of 1 hour and 15 minutes). Be well prepared, know your questionnaire well and try to keep your group to a manageable size.

General Information

Data collection date			
Community District/Oblast			
Interviewer(s)	1. 2.		
Interviewee(s)	Name 1. 2. 3.	Role (Head of HH, etc.)	Telephone

Introduction Questions

1. Are you familiar with the Red Cross' activities in your community?
2. What assistance have you received through this project?

Appropriateness

3. Are you aware of why you were selected to receive assistance (or why you were not selected to receive assistance)? If yes, what was the reason?
4. Do you think the selection process was fair? If no, why?
5. Do you think the needy were the ones who received assistance in your community (i.e. women, older people, IDP/non-IDP, people with disability)? Why or why not?
6. Was the assistance you receive from the Red Cross what you needed? Why or why not?
7. Do you feel that your needs changed over the course of the project?
8. Did the Red Cross adapt its programming accordingly?
9. If yes, in what way? Are you satisfied with the way programming was adapted?

Effectiveness

10. What do you think would be the current state of your community if it had not received assistance from the Red Cross?
11. Did the assistance arrive quickly enough to help alleviate your need? Why or why not?
12. If yes, do you think the assistance has helped these various groups? Why or why not?
13. How satisfied are you with how your voice has been heard? (if there are multiple respondents have them vote – satisfied, not satisfied, or neutral). Are you confident in the response?
14. How is it perceived within your community to be part of the 'Livelihoods Project'? (social stigma/cultural appropriateness)
15. **Only for FGDs:** Did your participation in the project create tensions within your household? (cultural appropriateness)

Sustainability

16. Do you think the effects the assistance has created in your community can remain without continued support of the Red Cross? Why or why not?
17. What income generating activities are you currently engaged with?
18. What business did URCS support you with?

Wrap up questions

19. If the Red Cross were to start the project all over again, what would you like them to do differently?

Is there anything that we did not discuss that you feel is important to highlight?

VII.4. Annex D: Results – Livelihoods Workshop (24th October 2018)

As part of the data collection in Kiev, the consultant facilitated a session at 'Livelihoods Workshop' organised by IFRC from 22nd to 24th October 2018. All participants invited were either URCS staff from local branches where the 'Livelihoods Project' was implemented or staff from other ICRC or other PNSs also involved in livelihoods programming in Ukraine.

The consultant asked participants to conduct a SWOT analysis. The results of this analysis are detailed in the below figure:

Figure 5: Main results workshop facilitation 24th October 2018



VII.5. Annex E: List of documents available

- Angelovesky, D. 'FAO - Socioeconomic Impact and Needs Assessment, Donbass (Ukraine)', 2017. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5171e.pdf>.
- Brass, J. 'Field Mission/Visit Report to Kharkiv (Kup'yansk and Blakliva)'. IFRC, May 2018.
- de Hoop, J. and Furio, H. 'Cash Transfers and Child Labor'. Oxford University Press on behalf of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2014.

- https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/24189/wbro_29_2_202.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.
- Food Security and Livelihood Cluster Ukraine. 'FSLC Livelihood Activity Overview', n.d.
- Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster. 'Partner Activity Update for September 2018', 2018.
- Partner Activity Update for September 2018.
- FSLC. 'Joint Food Security Assessment, September 2017', 2017.
- https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/joint_food_security_assessment_on_gca_ngca_-_summary_report_.pdf.
- Hussain Shah, B. 'Field Mission (28/08/2017 - 31/08/2017'. IFRC, 2017.
- . 'Field Mission (31/01/2017 - 02/02/2017)'. IFRC, 2017.
- . 'Field Mission Report Liman 02.07-04.07.2017'. IFRC, 2017.
- . 'Field Mission Report Liman 09.08-17.08.2017'. IFRC, 2017.
- . 'Field Mission Report Liman 09.08-17.08.2017'. IFRC, 2017.
- . 'Field Mission Report Liman 10.07-13.07.2017'. IFRC, 2017.
- . 'Field Mission Report Liman 11.04-14.04.2017', 2017.
- . 'Field Mission Report Liman 18.07-20.07.2017'. IFRC, 2017.
- . 'Field Mission Report ZHAPORIZHIA 15-17.08.2017'. IFRC, 2017.
- . 'Operational Guidelines for the Use of Cash in Food Security and Livelihoods in Ukraine'. IFRC, 2017.
- IFRC. 'Beneficiary Profiling (Livelihoods)', n.d.
- . 'Emergency Plan of Action Final Report - Ukraine: Complex Emergency', 29 March 2018.
- . 'ENG Business Plan', 2017.
- . 'ENG Business Plan', 2017.
- . 'EN_Template Beneficiary List', n.d.
- . 'Needs Assessment Report', September 2016.
- . 'Operation Plan 2018 - Ukraine', 2018.
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VII.6. Annex F: Compliance table with IFRC Livelihoods Guidelines

The below table lists the main recommendations made by the IFRC Guidelines for Livelihoods programming and shows IFRC/URCS' 'Livelihoods Project' overall level of alignment with these guidelines. The table uses the following a colour code: Dark Green = Fully Compliant; Light Green = Mostly Compliant; Orange = Partially Compliant; Yellow = not compliant; Grey = Outside of this evaluation's scope/Evidence provided not sufficient to determine level of compliance.

Table 5: Compliance Table IFRC Livelihoods Guidelines

Category	Sub-category	Key lessons/recommendations (adapted from IFRC Livelihoods Guidelines)	Rating	Comment	Source
Project cycle	Achieving community participation throughout the project cycle	Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve key stakeholders from the start. • Present assessment findings to community representatives. • Visit affected and non-affected communities. 		IFRC involved key stakeholders in 2016 Needs assessment and IFRC delegates presented assessment findings to community representatives. Nonetheless, communities visited in the assessment were all conflict affected.	- 2016 IFRC Needs Assessment Report - Field visit reports from 2017 - KIs with project implementers
		Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite feedback to help with the design process. • Use consultation to start developing qualitative and quantitative indicators that are important for the community. 		IFRC/URCS invited feedback from external actors, local authorities, and beneficiaries to help with the design process. IFRC/URCS also defined quantitative output indicators (i.e. number of grants to distribute). However, they did not define outcome indicator of success such as '% of household who increased their income after the intervention' etc.	- 2018 Emergency Appeal Report (3rd Revision)

		Implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect and record individual and community views of the programme. • Cross-check the relevance of the programme throughout its implementation by discussing it with the people included and not included in the programme. • Invite feedback, including complaints from the people affected/target population. 		<p>IFRC/URCS collected and recorded individual and community views/complaints on the programme in an informal manner. This appears to be reasonable considering the limited number of beneficiaries. Nonetheless, it appears that IFRC/URCS staff members did not consider feedback of non-beneficiaries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KIs with project implementers - FGDs and household visits with beneficiaries.
Conducting a livelihoods assessment and analysis	Key elements of a livelihoods assessment and analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the main changes in livelihoods activities since the disaster or conflict (new associated vulnerabilities and coping strategies). • Analyse the severity of the situation based on capacities different livelihoods groups and how much and how long is needed for their recovery. Analyse the external factors (i.e. social, political, economic and seasonal) that most influence this recovery process including market dynamics. 		<p>IFRC/URCS have identified the main changes in livelihoods activities since the beginning of the conflict, the extent of the humanitarian assistance needed, as well as the external factors that influence the recovery process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2016 IFRC Needs Assessment Report - 2018 Emergency Appeal (3rd Revision) - KIs with project implementers
Project design	Targeting effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not duplicate the work of others. • Work within the competence of the host National Society. • Work towards self-reliance and sustainability of programming by increasing ownership through community structures. • When assisting livelihoods groups, include options for more vulnerable sectors of the population to factor in their specific needs. • Consider local advocacy efforts to support the poor and vulnerable. • Be mindful of the needs of children, women, disabled, single-parent households and the elderly by identifying their roles in livelihoods activities. 		<p>IFRC/URCS are aligned with the guidelines of this section. However, they did not use local advocacy efforts to support the poor and vulnerable neither especially considered age or gender segregated roles in livelihoods activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2016 Needs Assessment - 2018 Emergency Appeal (3rd Revision) - KIs with project staff

	Involving other stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify different individuals and groups of affected people, local authorities and external actors. • Identify how dependent your programme is on the activities of other stakeholders and include this in your logical framework column for risks and assumptions. • Look to see how the community has organized itself to gain support from different stakeholders. • Consider having a technical committee with various stakeholders that is tasked to approve the project. 		IFRC/URCS have identified and consulted various external stakeholders. Nonetheless, they did not develop a logical framework that includes risks and assumptions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2016 Needs Assessment - KIs with project implementers
	Deciding what livelihoods activities to support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical asset replacement is not enough to recover livelihoods at the household level; this type of programming works best when it occurs alongside other activities that strengthen livelihoods, such as training. • Build on relief activities and prioritise your livelihoods assistance when possible, based on changing needs. • Support livelihoods activities that allow households and communities to combine their assets and resources – consider whether cash, in-kind payments or a combination is most appropriate. • Identify which aspect of a livelihoods needs most support. 		IFRC/URCS prioritise assistance based on changing needs and considered cash/in-kind payment. However, IFRC/URCS do not include vocational trainings as part of their programming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2018 Emergency Appeal (3rd Revision) - KIs with project implementers
	Identifying a feasible exit or transition strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be realistic about what can be achieved in an often rapidly changing environment. • Design livelihoods assistance that builds towards sustainable use of assets and resources, especially the physical, social and natural. • Find an exit strategy that is relevant to your target criteria and the capacity of partners. Do look for opportunities to hand over and link the host National Society's programming and interests. 		Outside the scope of the evaluation.	N/A

	Including staff considerations	<p>Key skills to be included in the team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication skills, especially social mobilisation; • Written reporting skills; • Local context knowledge; • Programme skills related to assessment using PRA techniques; • Financial skills; • Gender awareness 		IFRC/URCS Livelihoods team has all the skills required to implement this project.	- Observations and KIIs with project implementers
Monitoring and keeping implementation relevant in a livelihoods programme	Ensuring interventions remain relevant during implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor participation and satisfaction levels during the project; • Liaise with local authorities and other stakeholders to keep up to date with their activities; • Monitor the security situation; • Monitor labour market trends (wage rates and employment opportunities); • Monitor market dynamics in terms of price trends, availability of goods and physical access to markets; • Monitor access to natural resources such as land and water; • Monitor successful/failing coping strategies; • Monitor community dynamics to find solutions to their priority concerns; • Monitor the presence of new actors in the community. 		IFRC/URCS monitor the security situation on a regular basis, liaise with local authorities regularly. Other factors are not monitored in a systematic manner.	- KIIs with project implementers and local authorities.

	Setting a monitoring system for livelihoods assistance in early recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key indicators to monitor process, results and context; • Clearly identify what monitoring information can be collected by whom and when; • Include quantitative indicators for output level; • Include qualitative output indicators for impact level; • Measure some of the indicators you choose as baseline indicators; • Monitor cross-cutting issues such as participation, gender and different age groups; • Monitor the external environment continuously; • If necessary, adapt activities according to your monitoring plan; • Ensure your budget takes into account the costs of your monitoring plan. 		IFRC/URCS did not identify outcome indicators to monitor neither conducted monitoring in a systematic manner. As a result they did not currently adapt activities according to results of monitoring;	- 2018 Emergency Appeal Report (3rd Revision)
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VII.7. Annex G: Compliance table IRCRC Movement for Cash Transfer Programming

The below table lists the main recommendations made by the IRCRC Movement Guidelines for Cash Transfer Programming and shows IFRC/URCS' 'Livelihoods Project' overall level of alignment with these guidelines. The table uses the following colour code: Green = Fully Compliant; Orange = Partially Compliant; Yellow = not compliant; Grey = Outside of this evaluation's scope/Evidence provided not sufficient to determine level of compliance.

Table 6: Compliance table IRCRC Movement Cash Guidelines

Category	Key recommendations (Adapted from IRCRC Movement Guidelines for CTP)	Rating	Comment	Source
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Grant distribution	Make payments in several instalments		Grant transfer is made in two tranches (50% upon signature and 50% after first purchases)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documentation - KIIs with project implementers
	Allow some flexibility in the use of the transfer as a portion of it may be required for services, materials, labour, training, down payments or instalments etc.		Beneficiaries reported they were given a lot of flexibility regarding the use they could make of the transfer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KIIs with project implementers - FGDs and Household visits with beneficiaries
Training/Technical support	Provide training and technical support to those who are establishing new livelihoods or diversifying their livelihoods.		Beneficiaries receive a one-day training on how to write a business plan. Nonetheless, there is no vocational training component to the project, due to lack of funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2018 Emergency Appeal document - KIIs with project implementers.
	Adapt application procedures to semi-literate, illiterate and vulnerable potential applicants do not understand the procedures.		IFRC/URCS have not reported illiteracy/semi-literacy amongst beneficiaries. Nonetheless, project implementers have simplified the application procedures to ensure even beneficiaries with limited educational backgrounds could apply. URCS staff members in local branches have also organised individual consultations with beneficiaries struggling with the application.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application questionnaire (2017 and 2018) - Beneficiary profilings forms - KIIs with project implementers.
Beneficiary communication	Agree on what misconduct could lead to a recipient being denied the next instalment of their grant		IFRC/URCS warns beneficiaries that they may not transfer the grant to any third party from their community and potential corruption tentatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beneficiary agreement on cooperation - KIIs with project implementers
Beneficiary communication	Design a communication strategy which includes information such as: who is entitled to apply for a grant, geographical boundaries of the targeted area, deadline for application, where application forms can be collected and dropped off, aim and purposes of the project, selection criteria,		IFRC/URCS included all elements in its communication strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - URCS Announcement of Project document; - KIIs with project implementers.

	obligations of applicants and recipients, contact details of the agency for potential questions.			
Targeting	When targeting, remember to take the following elements into account: business skills, existing skills, motivation, resources, marketability of the project output, existing assets and labour.		IFRC/URCS staff members took into account these elements when reviewing all applications.	- KIIs with project implementers.
	Limit distribution of grants to one person per household.		- IFRC/URCS staff members cross-checked applications names throughout the project lifespan to ensure only one household member obtained the grant	- KIIs with project implementers.
	Ensure men and women have equal opportunities.		- IFRC/URCS developed vulnerability categories that took into account the socio-economic vulnerabilities of both gender.	- 2016 Needs Assessment - Emergency Appeal - KIIs with project implementers.
Choice of activities	If provision of cash alone is insufficient to ensure starting or restarting a sustainable livelihoods or productive activity, consider using coaching modules, vocational training or internships to strengthen recipients knowledge and technical skills.		As follow-up monitoring has not yet been conducted, evaluators are not able to determine whether the provision of grants has enabled to restart livelihoods activities and, hence, whether other livelihoods activities should be implemented.	N/A

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