

# Impact Report 2023

NRC Sweden



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Insamlingsstiftelsen NRC Flyktinghjälpen Sverige

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*Caption for cover photo: Two children, participants of NRC Sweden's grant in Cameroon, receiving their birth certificates as part of the project's legal assistance efforts. Photo: Pouhe Patricia/NRC*

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# 1 Who we are

NRC Sweden (legally Insamlingsstiftelsen NRC Flyktinghjälpen Sverige) is a Swedish foundation established by the Norwegian Refugee Council in December of 2016, and its operations began in January 2017. The foundation has the goal to assist people displaced by conflict. It does this by making the Swedish public aware of the plight of displaced people and fundraising from private individuals and organisations to support people displaced by conflict.

All of this is done under the global brand of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), who NRC Sweden make grants to for work to support displaced people. Fundraising from the Swedish government humanitarian agency, SIDA, is managed by NRC Norway.

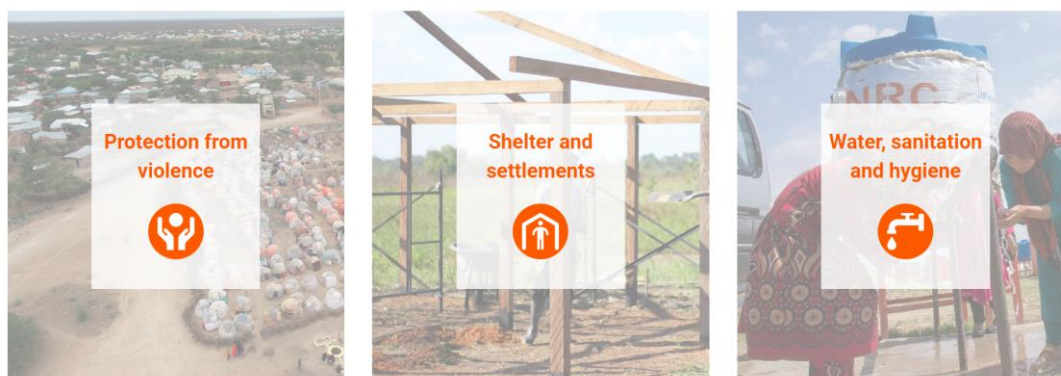
Since the beginning of its operations until now, NRC Sweden has managed to grant 119 million SEK to 15 countries, protecting thousands of displaced people during crisis all around the world.

## *Our global brand*

NRC Sweden is the Swedish arm of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), a global humanitarian organisation helping people forced to flee. We provide emergency assistance and protect people's rights in the world's most challenging crises. Our scale and expertise mean we reach and assist millions in areas where others cannot. Humanitarian principles are at the core of our mission. Our goal is self-reliance for the people we work with. We are a courageous advocate for displaced people. We enable others through partnership, and contribute to lasting global solutions. Together, we save lives and rebuild futures.

At the root of NRC's programmes are our solid technical expertise and specific sectorial knowledge. Our programmes aim for the highest possible quality, whether in stand-alone or integrated approaches. Through decades of providing assistance and protection to displaced populations in complex contexts, we have developed expertise in six sectors, which we refer to as our core competencies:





NRC also operates NORCAP, the world's most deployed emergency response force of approximately 1,000 experts from various countries that move out at short notice to assist the UN and other organizations in humanitarian crises. NRC's headquarters are in Oslo, Norway.

NRC Sweden has an ongoing relationship with NRC Norway to pursue their shared objectives, as well as provide and share funding and other resources to further these.

## 1.1 Reporting scope

### *Timeframe*

This report covers the results of grants awarded by NRC Sweden between July of 2022 and January of 2023. The execution and finalization of these projects were completed before December 31, 2023.

### *Geography*

The report encompasses 10 grants implemented in the following 9 regions:

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

Grant 1 – Amount granted: 6 MSEK

Grant 2 – Amount granted: 10 MSEK

Central African Republic (CAR)

Amount granted: 6 MSEK

Cameroon

Amount granted: 3 MSEK

Kenya

Amount granted: 7 MSEK

Mali

Amount granted: 8 MSEK

Somalia

Amount granted: 8 MSEK

Syria

Amount granted: 8 MSEK

Ukraine

Amount granted: 167 987 SEK

Venezuela

Amount granted: 8 MSEK

Specific areas of intervention within each country will be detailed in the results section, corresponding to each country's outputs.

# 2 Resources

## *Total operating costs for NRC Sweden in 2023*

End goal	-42 705 705 *	95%
Fundraising	-244 620	>1%
Administration	-1 976 570	4%
Total operating costs	-44 926 895	100%

\*It should be noted that the end goal costs are high because it includes allocation of funds collected in previous years.

# 3 Results

## *At a glance:*

- More than 19 million litres of water were delivered through water trucking, benefitting over 10,600 people in DRC.
- 8,084 children received school kits in North Kivu, DRC.
- 1,242 household heads received cash transfers in Kenya to reduce food insecurity.
- 1,600 people in Menaka, Mali, were issued birth certificates to strengthen their right to mobility and their access to basic social services.
- 600 households received cash transfers for food security in Somalia.
- 9,742 individuals were reached with water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) intervention comprising emergency water trucking, hygiene kits in Somalia.
- 400 households received financial assistance for food security in CAR.
- 223,215,019 litres of water delivered via water trucking in Syria.
- 1,979 displaced-affected people and vulnerable host communities received legal documentation in Venezuela.

## 3.1 Democratic Republic of the Congo

### *Grant 1*

#### *Problem identified*

The crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) remains one of the most complex and protracted humanitarian crises in the world, consisting of multiple and overlapping crises across the country. The number of internally displaced in DRC is over 5.6 million<sup>1</sup>, making it the third largest displacement crisis in the world. Over 877,669 were displaced in 2022 alone<sup>2</sup> (87,000 in North Kivu, 26,000 in Tanganyika and 7,000 in South Kivu). The DRC also holds the largest hunger crisis in the world, with an estimated 27 million experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity, of which 6.1 million people are experiencing critical levels<sup>3</sup>. NRC's global annual report on the most neglected displacement crises of 2022 named the DRC the most neglected crisis in the world for the second year running, in terms of funding, media attention and political attention to resolve the crisis. With over 120 active armed groups in the eastern part of the country, DRC faces very high humanitarian access constraints.

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<sup>1</sup> UNHCR Democratic Republic of the Congo.

<sup>2</sup> OCHA – Factsheet IDPs and returnees. June 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Integrated Food Security Classification – DRC situation. August 2022.



This context contributes to a devastating impact on learning and often leads to children's rights to education being denied or interrupted. According to UNICEF data<sup>4</sup>, the education of around 750,000 children has been disrupted in eastern DRC and at least 2,100 schools in North Kivu and Ituri were forced to stop operating due to the severity of the security situation. Violence by armed groups has forced thousands of families from their homes in search of safety, preventing their children from attending school.

### **Goal of the project**

The goal of the project was for populations affected by displacement, particularly children, in Tanganyika and North Kivu to improve their living conditions and benefit from an increased protection through access to shelter, education and WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene).

### **Outputs**

During the project implementation period, the context in Tanganyika was marked by an increase of crime. In North Kivu, the humanitarian situation deteriorated considerably because of armed clashes between FARDC (Congolese National Armed Forces) and ADF (non-state armed group) that resulted in the displacement of around 50,000 households from the villages towards the Oicha health zone. To provide an emergency response to the internally displaced people (IDP) needs, this funding was used to co-fund an ECHO<sup>5</sup>-funded multisectoral project.

#### **Output 1: 2,951 School-aged children were provided with school kits.**

School kits were distributed in 8 targeted schools in Tanganyika, benefiting 2,951 pupils, including 1,411 girls and 1,540 boys. Project participants included 855 pupils (442 girls, 413 boys) from displaced families; 1,504 pupils (668 girls, 836 boys) from returnee households; and 592 pupils (303 girls, 289 boys) from the host community. In North Kivu, 8,084 (3,932 girls, 4,152 boys) received school kits. The project also delivered Non-Food Item Kits (NFI) to 11,035 children, where 5,343 of the project participants were girls and 5,701 were boys.

In addition, 460 children (224 girls, 236 boys) were enrolled in non-formal education classes, while 2,781 children (1,400 girls, 1,381 boys) were enrolled in recovery classes. Due to various waves of displacements in Oicha, the budget allowed to enroll more children than initially foreseen with the agreement of the Ministry of Primary, Secondary and Technical Education of DRC.

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<sup>4</sup> UNICEF, Conflict in eastern DRC is having a devastating impact on children's education. 2023.

<sup>5</sup> European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

#### Output 2: An assessment for evidence-based programming was conducted.

A multisectoral needs assessment was carried out in the Ituri and North-Kivu provinces and used to inform and strengthen the project. Additionally, an environmental study of shelter and WASH projects in the provinces of Ituri and Tanganyika was done. The study aimed to list the impact of NRC's activities on the environment and to propose realistic recommendations to reduce the footprint.

#### Output 3: Education and teaching materials were provided to primary school institutions, benefiting over 130 teachers.

Teacher training was delivered to 42 teachers (9 women, 33 men), all returnees. Furthermore, 131 teachers (53 women, 78 men) received materials for their classes. Out of those, 67 were (IDPs), and 64 were from host communities.

#### Output 4: Three safe rooms constructed.

In Goma and Oicha, three safe rooms were constructed, two in Goma and one in Oicha.

### **Lessons learned**

- Collaboration with education authorities: The involvement of the education authorities in every step of the project implementation has shown to be critical for the success of the initiative, e.g. their involvement in the preparation and running of training sessions for teachers, which helped ensuring the sustainability of the project beyond its lifetime.
- Free basic education: Implementing the government's commitment to ensure free basic education for children (including strengthening infrastructure and paying teachers) can increase enrollment and participation in lessons, as well as parental involvement.
- The flexible use of funding between different donors has made it easier to care for and assist more children, and thus have a greater impact on program participants.

### **Grant 2**

#### **Problem identified**

The resurgence of the Movement of March 23 (M23), a non-state armed group, was first detected in November 2021 and culminated in a series of attacks on the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in North Kivu. Their subsequent continuous clashes to gain control over the country caused at least 450,000 people to be displaced in the Lubero, Rutshuru and Nyiragongo territories.<sup>6</sup> Around 60,000

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<sup>6</sup> OCHA Democratic Republic of the Congo - North-Kivu Displacement trends: Crisis affecting Rutshuru - Nyiragongo – Lubero. 2022.

people reportedly returned to the M23 controlled areas, and an additional 11,000 sought refuge in Uganda<sup>7</sup>.

The majority of these displaced persons are in Nyiragongo Territory (240,000<sup>8</sup>), more than 97% of whom live in collective centres (churches, schools, stadiums) and improvised sites, while the rest are staying with host families. Women represent 51% of the displaced, while girls under 18 account for 58%.

In terms of education services continuity, the crisis has affected the smooth running of schools in both areas of origin and displacement. The learning environment has been eroded by waves of IDPs, who have increased the occupation of classrooms and school premises, with children dropping out of school and schools destroyed or looted.

Given the lack of adequate access to drinking water to respond to the needs of displaced people and host communities, the number of cholera cases has increased to such an extent that the Governor of North-Kivu province has declared an epidemic in November 2022 with the risk spreading to the population of Goma.

### **Goal of the project**

The proposed intervention was to strategically complement NRC's initial emergency response intervention of water trucking, WASH kit distribution and Education in Emergency activities in Kanyaruchinya, Nyiragongo Territory, funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

NRC was one of the first actors to intervene in the collective sites of Kanyaruchinya, Nyiragongo, with the provision of clean water to 5,000 households complemented by a distribution of WASH kits supported by hygiene promotion and cholera prevention messaging. This grant ensured the continuity of water trucking with an increase in the provision per person per day, to sites where there are no viable alternatives for the provision of clean water, and at a time when there is a significant rise in the number of cases of cholera.

Given that many people were living in schools, NRC also initiated an Education in Emergency response, to assist the schools hosting the IDPs, through the distribution of education kits for children, supported by the provision of psycho-social support, teacher training, parallel learning initiatives and integration into the school system.

### **Outputs**

#### **Output 1: Provision of Education in Emergency in 5 schools.**

NRC provided an emergency education response in 5 targeted schools. The project achieved 1,200 teachers to receive training in psychosocial support, as well as the

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

Better Learning Program – a programme of classroom based psychosocial support. Additionally, 3,700 children received non-food item kits and over 3,800 participated in recreational activities. For education in first-phase response purposes, more than 13,460 USD were distributed to 51 individuals and 5 institutions in cash/vouchers. In the same line, over 5,000 USD were distributed for school integration plans. This money was allocated to improving infrastructure and purchasing new books, desks or teaching materials for the children. The action plans were drawn up by school directors and teachers' representatives and validated by the Ministry of Primary, Secondary, and Technical Education of the DRC.

Output 2: Provision of more than 19 million litres of water, as well as sanitation facilities and hygiene promotion for households.

More than 19 million litres of water were delivered through water trucking, benefitting over 10,600 people. The construction and rehabilitation of 80 handwashing stations was another notable result, as well as 120 communal bathroom facilities provided and over 2,000 sanitation kits distributed.

### **Lessons learned**

- The training for Parents' Committees members and School Management Committees on good governance enabled participants to acquire the ability to manage the various cash transfers allocated to schools with more transparency.
- Building the capacity of community relays and members of hygiene committees living in the sites to test the quality of water delivered enabled them to take ownership of the activity.
- It was challenging to respond to new needs in terms of classroom construction and/or rehabilitation as well as WASH activities in the intervention zone.
- Rising prices for construction materials (due to difficult access to areas occupied by the M23) was a challenge that required a revision in budget.

## **3.2 Central African Republic**

### **Problem identified**

According to the 2024 Humanitarian Needs Overview<sup>9</sup>, there are 2.8 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in CAR, which represents around 46% of the population. Per UNOCHA<sup>10</sup> data, as of June 2022, flooding has caused over 6,000

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<sup>9</sup> OCHA, Global humanitarian overview. 2024.

<sup>10</sup> OCHA, Overview of the humanitarian situation following flooding, CAR. 2022.

displaced people and globally affected approximately 104,000 people in more than 176 localities, destroyed or submerged more than 6,300 houses and more than 19,500 hectares of crops, and damaged numerous infrastructures in 12 of the country's 17 prefectures, including the capital of Central African Republic, Bangui, Ombella M'Poko and Nana-Gribizi. These floods come at a time when humanitarian needs have increased exponentially across the country, with over 63% of Central Africans in need of assistance and protection. Among the main needs reported within this armed and environmental complex crisis were water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter and food security.

### **Goal of the project**

The initiative's goal was to provide quality and emergency support in the Nana-Gribizi and Ombella M'Poko Prefectures of CAR with a multi-sectoral and integrated Food, Shelter/NFI and WASH assistance that aimed to meet people's immediate needs. Priority was given to the most vulnerable people doubly affected by conflict and floods episodes.

### **Outputs**

The project exceeded its initial target of 2,400 individuals participating in the project, reaching 2,661 people (1,344 men, 1,317 women). The difference is due to an average of 6.6 people per household, instead of the planned 6.

The project identified villages affected by both the crisis and flooding: Banyao, Ayolo 1&2, Yomboc Bac (Nana Gribizi) and Bimon (Ombella M'Poko) and in total targeted 400 households among the most vulnerable with cash and in-kind assistance for food and shelter, as well as with sensitization sessions on food hygiene and food diversity, reaching 100% of the target.

#### **Output 1: 400 households received financial assistance for food security.**

Each household received three instalments of XAF 40,000 (approximately 642 SEK), for a total of XAF 120,000 per household (approximately 2,076 SEK). A survey revealed 97% of assisted households were entirely satisfied with the way the targeting and cash distribution activity had been organized. After this, 70% of households surveyed had an acceptable food intake (AFI), while 27% had a borderline AFI. This meant that 90% of households had sufficient and diversified food consumption by the end of the project.

According to information gathered from local authorities and communities during focus group discussions, cash transfers have enabled households not only to cover their food needs, but also to invest in production assets (purchase of hens, goats, seeds and farming tools, income-generating activities) which have gradually helped them to strengthen their livelihoods.

#### **Output 2: 1,500 displaced and returnees benefited from the rehabilitation of three damaged water points (two in Nana-Gribizi and one in Ombella M'Poko).**

NRC set-up three water point management committees (five members each), that were trained and equipped with water point maintenance and operating kits. Water quality analyses were carried out in the country's reference laboratory to meet Sphere and

WHO standards. Quality tests were also carried out in households following awareness-raising campaigns on the water supply chain.

NRC sensitized at least 2,400 people, mainly on handwashing with soap, menstrual hygiene management, and the spread of communicable diseases.

Output 3: Over 400 essential household items (NFI) kits distributed per household, benefiting over 2,400 people.

NRC provided emergency shelter kits (tarpaulin, rope, straw and wild wood) to 400 households (100 in the Ombella M'Poko prefecture and 300 in the Nana Gribizi Prefecture), to meet their needs and ensure their physical protection. In Nana Gribizi, shelter kits have been distributed in-kind. In Ombella M'Poko, NRC used a cash approach, with NRC technical staff monitoring the work and providing technical advice to project participants.

Output 4: Implementation of workshops to develop community flood protection plans.

Through this action, NRC supported affected communities to develop and implement their own strategies for mitigating the flood risks to which they are exposed. During these workshops, communities were helped to understand what flooding is and, depending on their context, were asked to identify the various factors (causes/origins) that contribute most to their exposure to this flooding phenomenon, the indicators (signs) that mark the occurrence of a flood in any given year, including possible strategies for mitigating this risk.

NRC, for its part, also supported the communities with materials to help implement the plans they had drawn up. Mass awareness campaigns were also carried out in all the target communities to disseminate the plans developed.

### **Lessons learned**

- The risk analysis prior to the cash distribution, that was carried out by the Protection from Violence team, made it possible to guarantee the safety of project participants, of NRC staff and of agents of the financial service provider – before, during and after the implementation of project activities.
- The creation of photo identification cards for project participants helped reduce cases of fraud and misappropriation at community level.
- The setting up of complaints and feedback committees in the project communities (with the responsibility of receiving complaints and referring them to NRC) significantly helped the project participants to take ownership of the project.
- The set-up of committees for the selection of project participants based on agreed criteria also contributed to the smooth implementation and community ownership.

## 3.3 Cameroon

### **Problem identified**

Cameroon hosts the largest refugee population from the Central African Republic (CAR), with over 345,000 individuals who are mainly located in the East, Adamaoua and North regions.<sup>11</sup> The armed conflict in western CAR continues to trigger movements of populations across the border with an increase in the number of refugees having been observed in 2021. Almost 32,000 new refugees arrived in Cameroon in 2021, fleeing fresh outbreaks in violence related namely to the CAR elections which took place in December 2020. Over 70% of CAR refugees were staying within host communities at the time, putting significant pressure on already limited resources and services. Tensions between refugees and the host community exist for access to services like water, education, or land. Additionally, many refugee children born in Cameroon remain without a birth certificate, preventing them from accessing key services and rights.

### **Goal of the project**

The main objective of the project was to provide Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance (ICLA) and shelter assistance to support vulnerable refugees and host communities in the East Region of Cameroon, in order to enhance the exercise of their House, Land and Property (HLP) and legal identity rights towards access to durable solutions.

### **Outputs**

#### Output 1: Provision of legal counselling to over 250 households.

NRC provided individual counselling to households affected by displacements (refugees and vulnerable host community members), addressing the HLP concerns of 254 households, thus enabling them to claim their customary or subsidiary land rights as these rights were threatened. Complementary training on collaborative dispute resolution to community leaders resulted in the adoption of a culturally adapted approach to tackle intercommunity conflicts, increasing community trust in dispute resolution mechanisms at the local level.

#### Output 2: Provision of birth certificates to 500 children.

NRC identified 500 children (139 refugee girls, 150 refugee boys, 108 host community girls, 103 host community boys) without birth certificates and provided them with legal assistance. After a nine-month procedure involving civil status services, health institutions, the justice court, and NRC, all 500 children were issued birth certificates, not only enhancing their chance to complete the primary school education cycle as its

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<sup>11</sup> OCHA Cameroon, *Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO)*, 2022.



exams require civil documentation but also effectively preventing risk of statelessness. Furthermore, in case of voluntary return to CAR, this will enable refugees to provide due justification and obtain CAR civil documents through the transcription of birth certificates obtained in Cameroon.

### Output 3: Provision of shelter solutions to 57 displaced households.

Based on an assessment of vulnerabilities, NRC provided 57 households with shelter solutions. Household-level assessments, community consultations and visits of shelter staff identified the specific rehabilitation needed in each household to comply with SPHERE and national standards. Each household was equipped with non-food items kits and tools and received cash assistance to enable contracting local workers. NRC provided technical guidance throughout the activity, ensuring the quality of the rehabilitations. The rehabilitation of shelters contributed to vulnerable families having safe, adequate and dignified housing which protected them from the elements and offered them more privacy.



*Family receiving legal counselling. Photo: Pouhe Patricia/NRC*

### **Lessons learned**

- Right of occupation enhanced through due diligence. NRC's due diligence in verifying land ownership and right of occupation of households selected for shelter rehabilitation and construction significantly minimized the risk of eviction.
- Unpredictable weather conditions. The unusual extension of the rainy season led to delays in the constructions and rehabilitation as moulding and drying of bricks require dry weather conditions. In the future, NRC will integrate this in planning for construction activities.



## 3.4 Kenya

### *Problem identified*

The unprecedented drought in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) of Kenya following five consecutive below-average rainy seasons since the end of 2020 culminated into a dramatic increase in humanitarian needs. Food insecurity and acute malnutrition rose significantly over the course of the year, as communities' ability to cope had been eroded. More than 4.2 million people representing 24% of the population were facing high levels of acute food insecurity.

### *Goal of the project*

The objective of the project was to provide life-saving assistance for drought affected and food insecure communities in northern Kenya (Garissa County) through provision of multi-purpose cash assistance.

### *Outputs*

#### Output 1: Cash transfers implemented to 1,242 household heads.

In partnership with Arid and Semi-Arid Land Humanitarian Network (AHN), a consortium of both international and local organizations (Relief & Reconstruction Development Organization (RRDO) & Pastoralist Girls Initiative (PGI)), NRC implemented five cycles of cash transfers to 1,242 household heads (769 female, 473 male) in Dadaab & Lagdera sub counties of Garissa County. Cash transfers were provided to 1,242 vulnerable and food insecure households (769 female headed, 473 male headed) impacted by the drought. This guaranteed purchasing power in targeted households, enabling them to meet their basic needs while offering flexibility and diversity of expenditure at the household level.

Project endline findings indicate that the food security situation among household members has improved after receiving the cash transfers. Households with poor or borderline Food Consumption Score decreased from 88% at the baseline to 69%.



*Cash transfers give women like Falhato an opportunity to repair their roof. Photo: Eyeris Communications.*

### **Lessons learned**

- Partnerships and correct targeting allowed for a precise intervention. Working with local partners were observed to be an appropriate, efficient, and effective modality, which gave households the choices they needed in a timely and cost-effective manner, as opposed to traditional methods (in-kind and direct implementation) that NRC had previously used to deliver humanitarian assistance.
- Consultation with community leadership ensured fair targeting. Household targeting was undertaken in consultation with community leadership to ensure a fair distribution of vulnerable households, which was key in determining eligible households.
- The accountability mechanisms increased efficiency. The Complaints, Reporting & Feedback Mechanism (CRFM) undertaken continuously, and Post Distribution Monitoring conducted after every cash disbursement cycle were key in ensuring that the consortium remained accountable to recipients of the cash assistance.

## **3.5 Mali**

### **Problem identified**

Mali is facing an extremely complex humanitarian emergency. Environmental degradation, conflict, population movements, natural disasters, and widespread insecurity impede the ability of vulnerable people to meet their basic needs. All of these factors are contributing to an increase in the flow of population movements and an increase in basic needs in major population centres such as Ménaka and Gao. They

currently hold 29,645 and 58,308 internally displaced persons (IDPs) respectively<sup>12</sup> while combined they have 40.3% of all refugees registered in the country. More than 60% of schools have closed in the Ménaka region and over 1.3 million people face acute food insecurity in Mali.<sup>13</sup> Access to water and civil status documents also remains a major and recurring problem.

### **Goal of the project**

The project aimed at improving social and economic well-being and self-reliance of people affected by displacement in Menaka region, Mali. NRC's interventions were designed to meet the needs and contribute to self-reliance of the displaced population.

### **Outputs**

#### **Output 1: Access to basic social services for people affected by displacement.**

NRC reintegrated into formal education 100 recently displaced, out of school, children between the ages of 6 and 17, and provided catchup courses for 400 children, including 166 girls, who had dropped out of school. At the end of the project, 100% of these children remained in formal school. Parents and teachers were also provided with capacity-building on psychosocial support, enabling them to take care of children who are vulnerable.

Additionally, 250 IPD households were provided with multi-purpose cash to enable them to meet their immediate needs. From that assistance, 60% was spent on food, 15% on non-food items, 12% on health care, and 13% on other needs including rent, support to relatives, and education.

To ensure protection and a dignified life for the participants, NRC offered 80 transitional shelters in the form of traditional straw huts to 518 individuals (263 women, 255 men).

NRC also provided access to safe water for 852 individuals (435 women, 417 men). NRC built an improved hydraulic system with a solar-powered pump taking water from borehole to a 10 m<sup>3</sup> tank before being distributed to consumers (people and animals) via three community standpipes (6 taps). To mitigate the risk of conflict arising over the use of water for drinking and watering livestock, NRC built two cattle troughs.

#### **Output 2: Provision of birth certificates for 1,600 people.**

NRC promoted people affected by displacement's secure access to their basic rights. In such a context of constant displacement, people affected by displacement fleeing the conflict often leave behind all their belongings, including their identity papers. They are marginalised in their host communities and treated badly because they do not

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<sup>12</sup> IOM, Population Movement Report. 2022.

<sup>13</sup> World Food Programme, Mali. 2024.

have their civil documents (birth certificates, identity cards), which limits their right to mobility and their access to basic social services (schools, hospitals, markets, etc.). Therefore, NRC facilitated access to birth certificates for 1,600 people (700 women, 141 men, 339 girls, 421 boys).

Output 3: Delivery of agriculture solutions to 100 household representatives.

NRC supported 100 representatives of households, who had stopped growing vegetables because of the displacement, to resume their activities. Given the lack of availability of arable land in the area, NRC offered the project participants soil-less agriculture solution (hydroponics). The average harvest of 200 kg of vegetables per household was used for domestic consumption (60%) and for sale (40%).

The project supported recapitalization of livestock for 50 households through distribution of a nucleus consisting of three females and one male. At the end of the project, each participating household had an average of 10 goats. This activity enabled households to produce milk for feeding their children, and over time it will generate income for them.

To contribute to the agricultural value chain, NRC has strengthened the capacity of 50 vulnerable women to undertake small-scale transformation of agricultural products, allowing them to earn roughly a monthly income of 85 euros each to respond to their basic needs.



*Traditional hut built for a displaced household on the Intitaliwène site. Photo: Lamine Traoré NRC's Shelter/WASH Officer.*

### **Lessons learned**

- Affected population participation is a key to the effectiveness and sustainability of humanitarian action. The communities expressed their wish to opt for a more permanent measure, which was to rehabilitate and equip two classrooms that were no longer being used because of their state of deterioration. Instead of building two temporary learning facilities, NRC rehabilitated two classrooms, enabling learners to study in a safer and more protective environment, and the school to benefit from more durable infrastructure.

## **3.6 Somalia**

### **Problem identified**

Somalia is experiencing what could turn out to be the worst drought in decades. More than 3 million people are struggling with food insecurity in the country and in 2022 alone, 43,000 people died because of this crisis.<sup>14</sup> The settlements lack basic hygiene and sanitation facilities, creating all the conditions for disease outbreak. The Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (IDSR)<sup>15</sup> reports indicate an increase in acute water diarrhoea, and suspected cases of cholera and typhoid during this time. Assessments in IDP settlements across the states indicated a prevalence of hunger and cases of deaths due to malnutrition and disease at worrying levels.

### **Goal of the project**

The overall objective was to provide emergency support for communities affected by drought in hard-to-reach areas of Somalia, specifically in the Dhahar, Qardho and Ufeyn districts in the Bari and Sanag regions, located in the state of Puntland. The project aimed to ensure that the affected communities received timely assistance, which enabled them to access food, water, hygiene- and other unmet needs and deal with the adopted negative coping strategies.

### **Outputs**

#### **Output 1: Cash transfers for food security to 600 households.**

Cash transfers were provided to 600 households for food security, reaching 3,312 individuals, in the rural villages of Ufeyn (300 households) and Qardho (300 households) districts. Of these households, 343 were headed by women, while 257 were headed by men.

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<sup>14</sup> Red Cross, Somalia drought. 2023.

<sup>15</sup> World Health Organization, Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response Strategy. 2021.

This was achieved through the implementation of a gender-balanced Village Relief Committee who received training on project participants selection criteria and vulnerabilities.

According to the findings of the Post-Distribution Monitoring, 100% of the surveyed project participants reported that their access to food had improved because of the cash transfers provided. Additionally, 14% mentioned that they were able to repay their debts due to the surplus cash. Approximately 83% of the project participants from both districts, Ufeyn and Qardho, reported using the cash to purchase food from a nearby market, while the remaining 17% allocated the funds to manage other essential expenses including debt repayment.

#### Output 2: Delivery of water and sanitation services to over 9,000 people.

NRC's WASH intervention reached 9,742 individuals, comprising emergency water trucking, hygiene kits and rehabilitation of borehole (deep, narrow holes drilled into the ground to access groundwater), and associated infrastructure as well as a WASH Committee training.

Additionally, 4,742 individuals were reached via emergency water trucking to 630 households, while 200 received hygiene kits. A total of eight water storage bladders were installed (five in Dhahar and three in Qardho). Water was provided for a 45-day period.

Similarly, 200 of the households received a labelled cash transfer of 25 USD for the purchase of basic hygiene kits. The kit included 100 aqua tabs for water treatment, 8100 grams of soap for personal hygiene, and one 20L-Jerry can.

One borehole was rehabilitated in Meygag village in Qardo district serving 5,000 individuals. Three water points were also rehabilitated to improve access to water.





*Delivery of water in Somalia. Photo: Abdulkadir Mohamed/NRC.*

### **Lessons learned**

- Water trucking provided a quick impact to drought-affected communities in remote rural areas because they immediately used clean water.
- Electronic mobile money transfer has proven to be the most reliable payment mode for humanitarian aid. It is efficient, safe, and dignified, and it allows for greater transparency, accountability, and real-time support.
- The complaint response number was displayed on visible sites in the villages. As a result, project participants were able to register their concern, and NRC was able to monitor program remotely.
- The labelled cash grants for hygiene kits proved the effectiveness of labelling of cash transfer to reach sector-specific outcomes (in this case improved hygiene).

## **3.7 Syria**

### **Problem identified**

The conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic has continued for eleven years, resulting in a prolonged humanitarian crisis affecting a majority of the population. Out of the estimated 20 million people living in Syria, 13.4 million are in need of humanitarian assistance. Out of those 13.4 million, 4.65 million have acute needs and at least 6.1 million were internally displaced as of December 2020, with many having faced

multiple displacements. The 2022 humanitarian needs overview data estimates 13.2 million people require WASH assistance.

### **Goal of the project**

The objective of the project was for conflict and displacement affected populations in north-west and north-east Syria to be able to access safe and adequate water and sanitation.

### **Outputs**

#### Output 1: 244,836 persons used the 74 solid waste communal collection stations.

During the project period, NRC collected and disposed solid waste from 74 designated communal collection stations in north-west Syria, Al Dana district camps, making 244,836 individuals (124,866 males, 119,970 females) benefitting from waste collection and disposal activities. The overachievement was because the north-west Syria WASH Cluster identified gaps in water and sanitation provision in several camps in Al Dana sub-district targeted under this project. NRC conducted a needs assessment in additional camps and found a high demand for clean water and sanitation services, resulting in an increase in the achievements of all its activities under this grant.

#### Output 2: 62,436 individuals used the 7,405 semi-permanent communal toilets.

During the project period, NRC provided desludging services for semi-permanent communal latrines/toilets benefitting 62,436 project participants (31,842 males, 30,594 females) in north-west Syria.

#### Output 3: 39,192 water-quality tests were conducted.

NRC conducted 32,216 water quality tests to maintain safe water standards and ensure the continuity of water sources.

#### Output 4: 331,683,019 litres of water delivered.

This was a distribution done in both north-east and north-west Syria. In the former, 42,339 benefited from this result. For the latter, 238,201 individuals in the Al-Dana district camps were benefited. This water is sourced from an approved safe water source and undergoes chlorination before being distributed to individuals in camps. Additionally, this treated water is made available to all residents in their homes for various purposes, including drinking and household use. To maintain water quality, rigorous daily tests are conducted on the physical, bacteriological, and chemical properties of water. These tests cover different points, from the water source (boreholes) to the water trucks, reservoirs (water tanks), and household storage containers.



## **Lessons learned**

- Continuing to provide safe water through water trucking, solid waste management, and the desludging of latrines is vital and was in line with the north-west Syria WASH cluster's cholera preparedness and prevention plan.
- The top three priorities for project participants found in north-east Syria are water tanks, food, and solar power. The water trucking assistance is vital to cover the basic needs of project participants. NRC will continue to provide safe water for drinking and daily use and ensure the delivery of its intervention to people in need.
- There was an overachievement in the goal for litres of water trucking delivered. This thanks to a new water trucking contract NRC signed at a lower price, which resulted in an increase in the period of water provision compared to the initial plan.

## **3.8 Ukraine**

### **Problem identified**

Following the Ukraine war crisis in 2022, an estimated 8.2 million people have fled the country as refugees<sup>16</sup> and 5.4 million people are internally displaced within Ukraine.<sup>17</sup> An additional 6.9 million are not displaced – “remainees” – but live in areas affected by active hostilities or threats from the war, primarily areas close to the contact line in the east and south, or live in areas hosting high numbers of internally displaced people (IDPs), primarily in the north and west, where there is increased competition for housing, jobs, over-stretched services, and price inflation of commodities. Following a period of displacement (minimum two weeks), 5.7 million people have returned to their place of habitual residence (returnees).<sup>18</sup> The number of returnees had estimated to have increased by 20% since December 2022 (326,000 persons).

### **Goal of the project**

NRC planned to closely work with local partner organisations to strengthen their sustainability and build community-level resilience through supporting local structures (civil society actors and NGOs), while laying the groundwork amongst local responders for recovery and durable solutions into the longer term.

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<sup>16</sup> UNHCR Operational Data Portal, Ukraine Refugee Situation. 2023

<sup>17</sup> IOM, “Ukraine Internal Displacement Report: General Population Survey, Round 12” (16–23). January 2023.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

## Outputs

NRC utilised its partnership modality of providing flexible mini grants to two local actors. Mini grants are granted to local partners who submit a short proposal, and then have the flexibility of the grant value (up to 10,000 USD).

### Output 1: 150 youth workers in youth centers benefited from the purchase of charging stations to continue working despite power outages.

One partner, Youth Platform, based in Lviv, developed a small proposal of which the objective was to ensure the smooth operation of the NGO during the winter period and potential power outages, to ensure continuity of its ongoing projects and initiatives. Youth Platform is a current partner of NRC, who cooperates with approximately 30 youth centres and 50 youth councils throughout Ukraine (most of them in the western regions of Ukraine). In total, these are about 150 youth workers in youth centres and more than 600 members of the youth council. Youth Platform purchased charging stations that allow employees to continue working despite power outages and disruptions.

### Output 2: Air dehumidifier purchased, and air recuperators installed in youth centres.

An air dehumidifier was also purchased and installed to combat high humidity and mold in the youth centers of Ukraine. Air recuperators were installed in the semi-basement meeting room, which has allowed the space to be used for training, events and meetings.

### Output 3: Procurement of equipment and supplies to improve the safety of staff from Perspektyva and fortify the readiness of humanitarian brigades operating in front-line territories.

Perspektyva is an existing NRC partner, who provides legal aid to front-line communities, deoccupied territories, and areas affected by the consequences of war. Perspektyva submitted a mini-grant proposal to enhance the resilience and capacity in the face of challenges posed by power outages, heating disruptions, and gas supply issues.

With the mini grant, Perspektyva procured equipment and supplies to improve the safety of its staff and allow for continued service provision amidst gas and power shortages. This includes gas cylinders, first aid kits, safety gear, power stations, thermopots, etc., which has significantly improved safety conditions for both employees and project participants.

The partner also procured safety equipment for vehicles with tools, medical supplies, and warming equipment to fortify the readiness of humanitarian brigades operating in front-line territories.

### **Lessons learned**

As the mini grants were disbursed as one-off support to the partners, there was no ongoing implementation period. Partners were required to spend the funds within a month and provide means of verification that they purchased the supplies and equipment aligned with their proposal.

Local humanitarian workers are now ready for various challenges related to power outages, can be more confident and secure during trips to the field, provide better services, take care of the comfort and safety of project participants, and if necessary, provide first aid, pre-medical assistance.

## **3.9 Venezuela**

### **Problem identified**

Seven million people in Venezuela required humanitarian assistance in 2022.<sup>19</sup> The need for food assistance remains a key concern. In February 2021, the Venezuelan Observatory for Food Security and Nutrition (OVSAN)<sup>20</sup> estimated that 21.6% of Venezuelan households were food insecure, 69.1% of the evaluated households classified as marginal food secured, and only 9% reported to be food secure.

An assessment by World Food Program (WFP) states, “25 per cent of households reported not having access to a stable source of drinking water at the time of the survey,” making that 2.7 million people in Venezuela in need of water assistance.

On the same line, serious shortcomings persist in Venezuela regarding access to formal education. According to a recent assessment, 2.6 million children need assistance for education in Venezuela, and 50% of them have the risk of abandoning schools.

### **Goal of the project**

The goal of the project was to provide humanitarian assistance to displacement-affected and vulnerable Venezuelans to relieve their most urgent needs and prevent further development of negative coping mechanisms, focusing mostly on water and sanitation, food security, access to legal aid, and education.

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<sup>19</sup> USAID, ‘Venezuela Regional Crisis – Complex Emergency Factsheet #1’. 2023.

<sup>20</sup> OVSAN, ‘Resumen de los hallazgos de la Encuesta de seguridad alimentaria y nutricional en Venezuela, 2020-2021.’ 2022.

## Outputs

Over 13 months, NRC achieved to provide humanitarian assistance to 7,604 displacement-affected and vulnerable Venezuelans (4,206 women, 3,398 men) to relieve their most urgent needs.

### Output 1: Agriculture kits were delivered to 290 households (154 represented by women and 136 by men).

This included capacity building support and training on gardening maintenance for 328 individuals (171 women, 158 men). The agricultural kits delivered included materials for the installation of an irrigation system, vegetable seedlings, fertilizers, and agricultural tillage small tools. Poultry (three laying hens and one rooster) have also been delivered to increase access to protein. On addition, 51 training sessions on food diversity, food hygiene, bio-controllers, biofertilizers, plant multiplication, cultural work, poultry breeding, and practical training in the preparation of bocashi, were held. The result was the installation of a community garden of 400m<sup>2</sup> where short-cycle vegetables such as sweet bell pepper, paprika, and eggplant were planted. The strategy for this garden is to plant two cycles (3,000 seedlings per cycle) per year. A drop irrigation system was also installed to provide water for the gardening activities with a 5,000-litre storage tank. The water to fill it comes from a communal deep borehole rehabilitated. Finally, participants are harvesting 1,400 kg of vegetables (sweet pepper, cucumber, and green pepper combined) at this moment.

### Output 2: Over 1,800 children received positive hygiene practices to improve their health.

This WASH solution was implemented in three schools in the state of Bolívar focusing on environmental sanitation and promotion of positive hygiene practices to improve children health. The project improved school hygiene environments, reducing the presence of vectors with the delivery of 30 garbage containers and 58 vectors traps, benefitting to 816 individuals (431 women, 385 men). In addition, NRC supported the improvement of hygiene practices in schools as a result from the provision of cleaning and disinfection kits to carry out daily maintenance. The capacity of school staff to manage the WASH infrastructure was also improved. Ten sessions were conducted for 62 individuals (58 women, 4 men) on several topics such as family hygiene and hand hygiene, waterborne diseases, safe water, food hygiene, environmental sanitation, solid waste management, and vector control.

### Output 3: Provision of legal identity documentation to 1,979 (1,381 women, 598 men) displaced-affected people and vulnerable host communities.

This was done in the states of Zulia and Táchira. One of the major impacts of the project was the provision of legal assistance to 432 people to obtain both ID cards and birth certificates, thus surpassing the project's original target by 432%. NRC also conducted 46 information sessions on legal identity for a total of 1,577 individuals (1,170 women, 407 men) providing information on the procedures for obtaining birth certificates and ID cards and answering the most frequently asked questions as well as clarifying common misconceptions. In addition, 672 individuals who took part in the

information sessions received individual counselling, a one-to-one meeting between an NRC ICLA staff and a project participant who requires additional information on how to obtain their LID. Thus, surpassing the project target of individuals receiving counselling by 134%.

Output 4: 2051 children accessed school kits and 2,126 benefited from education programs in Zulia and Táchira.

Due to the high drop-out rate (40-60%) in the areas of intervention, NRC encouraged children to continue their education and reduce protection risks (child labour exploitation, abandonment, neglect by caregivers). NRC trained 8 community members over 12 sessions. During these, NRC developed non-formal education programme (Bridging and Remedial Programme) for 75 children (37 girls, 38 boys) and implemented school motivation strategies to reduce the number of children out of the educational system. Regarding formal education, 72 children and adolescents (35 girls, 37 boys) were enrolled and advanced in their educational trajectory. Eventually, catch-up classes were delivered to 114 children (95 girls, 19 boys) who had not attended school for an extended period (what NRC calls a Remedial Programme). Besides, it supported the schools with school kits – benefitting 2,051 children (945 girls, 1,106 boys) – improving learning environment and contributing to reduced drop-out rates related to lack of material.



*Post ICLA monitoring, orientation and assistance in Zulia State. Photo: Christian Jepsen/NRC*

### **Lessons learned**

- Active involvement of the communities and effective communication between NRC and the project's participants allowed to continuously adapt the project to better respond to the participants' needs.
- Unexpected drought occurred and resulted in inconsiderable losses in crops and livestock production. Thus, the NRC team adopted preventive

measures such as use of irrigation systems, multiplication of seeds, and encouraging natural grazing to provide shade.

- The main difficulties limiting access to documentation remain the geographical distance to the relevant government offices, the complexity of the administrative processes, and the lack of information about the procedures. Strengthening adaptability of NRC protection team is essential to continue providing support to people without ID cards.



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