IFRC REAL TIME EVALUATION GUIDE AND PROCEDURES

Handwashing facilities in Madagascar-2021. iAko Randrianarivelo/IFRC


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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Audience

This guide seeks to support quality and useful Real Time Evaluations (RTEs) of emergency operations from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). RTEs are used at the IFRC to provide timely information during ongoing humanitarian operational response to field, regional and global managers to inform decision making in real time for improved service delivery, contributing to greater efficiency and effectiveness, and upholding accountability.

This guide provides an overview of RTE theory, and describes how RTE is used by IFRC, providing procedures and tools for managing RTEs. It complements the IFRC Framework for Evaluation (2011), which provides overall guidance for how evaluations at the IFRC are planned, managed, conducted, and utilised at IFRC.

Three key audiences are identified for this guide:

a. People responsible for commissioning, supporting, designing and managing IFRC RTEs.

b. IFRC network's[1] personnel involved in RTEs, whether as part of the operation being evaluated, or the RTE team conducting the evaluation.

c. External consultants conducting an IFRC RTE.

1.2 Structure of this guide

This guide starts with an overview of RTEs and is then focuses on 10 key aspects or phases of the RTE process – see **Diagram 1**. It is important to note that these phases are not strictly chronological, but are used to help organize content for this discussion. In actuality, the phases are interrelated and processes may occur simultaneously. For instance, providing real time feedback typically occurs during data collection and analysis.

DIAGRAM 1: Key Phases of the RTE Process

1.3 Development of this guide

This guide is based on experiences and lessons learned from RTEs managed by IFRC during the past twelve years (2010 - 2022) and draws from already existing industry guidance. This includes the ALNAP

[1] IFRC network refers to both National Societies and the IFRC. IFRC refers to the secretariat in Geneva and the five regions.

guide on RTEs[2], IASC procedures for inter-agency RTEs[3] and UNHCR frequently asked questions on RTEs[4], as well as from experiences and lessons learned shared by other agencies such as Oxfam International, World Vision International and UNICEF.

2. OVERVIEW OF RTE

2.1 What

"A real time evaluation is an evaluation in which the primary objective is to provide feedback in a participatory way in real time (i.e. during the evaluation fieldwork) to those executing and managing the humanitarian response."[5] Therefore, the value of the RTE is not limited to the final report and its follow-up, but timely and rapid feedback to improve our work prior to the final report.

At the IFRC, RTE is a formative, utilisation-focused evaluation carried out during the early stages of and sometimes at intervals throughout an emergency response,[6] in accordance with recognised evaluation criteria. It is conducted by those with no managerial or implementing responsibilities for the programme and the findings are immediately disseminated so that they can be used in "real time."

RTE findings and recommendations can be checked for accuracy and relevance in the field and then used immediately to inform the emergency operation so that timely improvements can be made. This is enhanced by the RTE team's contact and exchange with the response team early in an emergency. RTEs can later feed into a summative, final evaluation of the given emergency evaluation, and also capture important lessons across time and place to inform future emergency responses.

RTEs can also be shared with and used by other responding organizations in a large-scale humanitarian crisis with many organizations involved. Sometimes, RTEs are "jointly" conducted, commissioned by multiple organizations in partnership, which can be an effective approach to consolidate data collection and analysis, maximize resources, and build ownership to coordinated response among organizations.

RTE is *not* an audit, staff performance review or a detailed technical assessment. Rather, it is a dynamic management tool that takes a snapshot of a situation to allow the response managers to assess and adjust the response.

2.2 Why

The benefits of doing RTEs can be summarised as follows:[7]

- **Timeliness:** RTEs are performed while the response is occurring, providing rapid feedback that can allow for adjustment of the response.

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[2] Cosgrave J, Ramalingam B, Beck T (2009) Real-time Evaluations of Humanitarian Action – And ALNAP Guide (pilot version), Overseas development Institute, UK.
[3] IA RTE Support Group (2010) IA RTE Procedures and Methodologies Guide
[4] Jamal A and Crisp J (2002) UNHCR Real-Time Humanitarian Evaluations – Some Frequently asked Questions, UNHCR, Switzerland
[5] Cosgrave J, Ramalingam B, Beck T (2009) Real-time Evaluations of Humanitarian Action – And ALNAP Guide (pilot version), Overseas development Institute, UK.
[6] RTEs can be used for non-emergency (humanitarian) evaluation, but at the IFRC and in this guide it is used for and referred to evaluation conducted in humanitarian contexts.
[7] Jamal A and Crisp J (2002) UNHCR Real-Time Humanitarian Evaluations – Some Frequently asked Questions, UNHCR, Switzerland

- **Perspective:** RTEs bring in an external perspective, analytical capacity and knowledge at a key point in a response. While personnel at a head office or in the field may be able to carry out such an analysis, they may not be objective and are usually too burdened by the day-to-day management of the response to have time for reflection.
- **Managing organisational risk:** RTEs are a useful tool for managing organisational risk in major operations. RTEs support improved early operational choices that are broadly informed reducing the risk of critical problems developing in the medium to longer term.
- **Standards:** They can be used to ensure the response upholds humanitarian standards such as codes of conduct, principles, policies and procedures.
- **Interactivity:** RTEs can also facilitate improved communication and understanding and manage expectations between head office, the field, organizational partners, and other key stakeholders.
- **Snapshot:** RTEs may provide head office or operational management a 'snapshot' of the whole operation that is not readily accessible from the on-going flow of monitoring information and reports.

2.3 When

RTEs are most effective at the early stages of an emergency response, when strategic and operational decision-making is most difficult and formative. If they occur too late in the response, they can become more similar to 'heavier' midterm evaluations; however, RTEs can also be effective at times of programme transition and during internal or external driven change processes in an emergency response.

While the RTE process should be initiated quickly, RTE evaluators should not necessarily be deployed immediately. Rather, the RTE is typically more useful (and feasible) between **four and eight weeks** after the launch of an emergency operation, allowing substantive response activity from which to identify trends (findings) and formulate recommendations. Having noted this, it is important to realise that *the specific timing of a RTE will vary according to contextual factors*, such as the availability of human and fiscal resources, accessibility, and similar exercises conducted internally or by partner organizations.

2.4 How

This guide specifies how RTE is conducted at the IFRC. Overall, RTE is characterized by data collection methods that are largely qualitative, stressing stakeholder participation and multiple perspectives; e.g. individual and group interviews, observation and documentary research. Sometimes quantitative methods are used, such as a questionnaire administered to key stakeholders, (whether in-person or online using computer of smart phone), but typically quantitative data comes from secondary sources. RTE is undertaken rapidly, but try to remain robust and avoid superficiality by triangulating data sources.

2.5 Who

RTEs are usually light exercises conducted by an evaluation team of one to four people. The evaluation team acts as the 'stranger who sees more' because of its distance from day-to-day activities. The team can be wholly internal, external or mixed. In the IFRC RTE context, an **external evaluator** is an independent consultant (not an employee of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement), and an **internal**

evaluator is an employee or volunteer, but not involved in the emergency operation or response being evaluated. IFRC most frequently uses mixed teams (see Section 3: Recruiting the RTE Team, and Annex 3: RTE position descriptions).

The **primary audience** of an RTE is typically those who are managing the response in the field, the secondary audience is management and leadership at headquarters (National Society, Region and Geneva), and the tertiary audience is the humanitarian system.[8]

3. RTE Key Phases

The IFRC Framework for Evaluation outlines 43 processes for the overall management of evaluations at the IFRC. The following section elaborates upon this, with specific focus on RTEs, but it is recommended that readers refer as well to the IFRC Framework for Evaluation. This section is organized into 10 phases, from commissioning them to their follow-up. While presented sequentially, elements of each phase may be interactive – for example, planning for the management response (phase 8) is best considered and planned prior to when it occurs.

3.1 Commissioning an RTE

A. Determine whether RTE triggers are met

Triggers for an RTE for IFRC emergency operations are identified in the IFRC Framework for Evaluation (Process 5.4.5), which states that an RTE shall be initiated within the first three months of an emergency operation under at least one of the following conditions:

1) **The emergency operation is over nine months in length**
2) **Greater than 100,000 people are planned to be reached by the emergency operation**
3) **The emergency appeal is greater than 10,000,000 Swiss francs**
4) **Greater than ten National Societies are operational with staff in the field.**

It is worth noting that RTEs are not limited to emergency operations meeting the triggers above, but may be undertaken whenever deemed worthwhile and feasible, e.g., special request from the field or important opportunities for real-time learning.

B. Consult with key stakeholders to determine the evaluability (feasibility) of the RTE

Key stakeholders at this stage include the RTE Commissioner (the IFRC Under Secretary General of National Society Development and Operations Coordination (NSDOC), and relevant PMER and Disasters Climate and Crises personnel. Key considerations for the evaluability of the RTE include whether it is safe, appropriate and feasible to deploy and RTE team, taking into consideration situational and risk analysis, and available resources (human and financial). ***It is especially important to confirm that the appeal budget has sufficient funds allocated for the RTE costs.***

C. Decide/approve and commission the RTE

The RTE must be approved by the RTE Commissioner(s) – the IFRC Under Secretary General of National Society Development and Operations Coordination (NSDOC) and the relevant Regional Directors**.** In the event that an RTE is not commissioned when triggers have been met, the Regional Director or USG NSDOC will justify that decision and communicate reasoning to key stakeholders.

[8] Polastro R, 2015. Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation 29(1):118-134.

3.2 Planning an RTE

A. Establish a RTE Management Team

The RTE Management Team is responsible for the oversight of the RTE, upholding quality and ethical standards, and supporting management review, approval and follow-up to RTE deliverables. The RTE Management Team typically consists of 3 to 4 people drawn from PMER, DCC and the relevant region with appropriate experience and knowledge to guide decision-making for the RTE management, and reinforce legitimacy among stakeholders.

Resources: *Annex 1:* Example RTE Position Descriptions

B. Conduct a stakeholder Analysis & Engagement

A stakeholder analysis clarifies who might have a stake or interest in the evaluation, including any potential objections or concerns about the RTE to address to ensure engagement and ownership. Key stakeholders should be consulted by the Commissioner or RTE Management Team as soon as possible after the RTE has been commissioned to help to frame expectations and build mutual support and understanding for the RTE.

C. Develop, validate and disseminate the TOR

The TOR (Terms of Reference) identifies the purpose, scope, objectives and other aspects of the RTE. It is used to recruit external as well as internal RTE team members. It is important to note that the TOR may be revised during the inception phase of the RTE (see Phase 4, below), typically to refine the scope of RTE questions and methodologies so that it is realistic to the given context, (e.g. time, resources and needs).

The RTE Management Team oversees the development of the TOR, and it is important that key stakeholders are consulted and able to provide feedback to ensure ownership and support for the RTE. Typically it needs to be revised based on stakeholder input. The IFRC Under Secretary General of National Society Development and Operations Coordination (NSDOC) and Regional Director approves the drafted TOR.

Once the TOR is approved, it should be disseminated promptly *to relevant stakeholders and outlets, with attention providing enough time to recruit the RTE members* (see below).

Tip: Using the same questions across different RTEs can support comparing emergency response operations over time and place. However, RTEs may focus on different aspects of an emergency operation, in which case objectives and related questions may vary. Recommendations from previous RTEs can also inform evaluation questions, such as follow-up on the degree to which previous recommendation have been addressed in the current operation.

Resources: *Annex 2:* RTE Example TOR Format; *Annex 3:* Example Key Questions for RTE TORs

D. Draft an RTE Timeframe

The TOR should outline a draft timeframe for the RTE; this will be revisited in more detail in the eventual inception (see below), but at this stage it is important to have as much a realistic idea of timing as possible to begin preparations ASAP. Later, the timeline will be refined by the Management Team and then in the inception report by the RTE team.

The RTE duration will depend on several contextual factors, ranging from the evaluation objectives to the number of separate field visits. Following is an illustrative summary for estimating the RTE timeframe for the RTE team.

1) ***Inception Period***. 1 to 2 weeks for the RTE team to review background documents, conduct relevant interviews for the inception report, and draft the inception report.
2) ***Field work.*** 1 to 3 weeks, depending on the number of field visits, (e.g. one versus multiple countries or regions within a country). It is important to remember to schedule adequate time for the RTE to debrief and validate preliminary findings with key stakeholders.
3) ***RTE report***. 1 to 2 weeks to draft, review and finalize.

Note that while field visits occur in one block of time, time allocated for the inception and draft/final report periods is typically spread out. For example, two weeks may be devoted to the RTE report drafting, review and finalization, but the 40 hours may be spread out over 3 weeks or longer as input and feedback from the IFRC for the review can take time.

Note: This duration may also be affected during times of pandemics where activities will need to be carried out remotely. You may find that adjustments need to be made in your timeframe, methodology and/or overall evaluation process.

Resource: *Annex 2:* RTE Example TOR Format

E. Draft a RTE Budget

Overall RTE costs should always be included in the operation budget of an emergency response, but at this stage, it is important to realistically consider an itemized budget. As in any evaluation, key costs to itemize will vary according to context, but include fees for any external evaluator, travel accommodation, and daily per diem for all RTE Team members. In global pandemics such as COVID-19, and depending upon the country context, if data collection is allowed at a safe distance, it would also be important to take into consideration personal protective equipment, hand sanitizer, masks etc. Contingency costs are also recommended, as RTEs take place in complex and fluid settings for which unanticipated costs may arise.

The budget for the RTE comes from and is approved by the Region in which the RTE is to be conducted. However, it is important to note that participation of RTE team members drawn from National Societies may be funded by their respective National Society and not the Region's budget.

F. Confirm Administrative Support

RTEs require administrative support at both Headquarters and in the Field. For example, at the head offices, (whether regional or global), administrative support is required for disseminating the TOR, organising candidate interviews, and contracting selected consultants. At the field level, administrative support is needed to arrange the field visit itinerary and related logistics, such as travel and accommodation.

It is important to assign a dedicated focal point for the team in each of the countries they will be visiting. This person may not do all the administrative work, but will be the point person for the RTE Management Team and the evaluation team.

The relevant regional office, country delegation and National Society should be informed well in advance for preparations, which include, any official documentation for the RTE team (e.g., visas or letters of permission), in-country travel arrangements, accommodation, security briefing, scheduling participation of RTE participants and the respective venues for data collection.

3.3 RTE Team Composition & Recruitment

As stated in the *IFRC Framework for Evaluation*, evaluators, whether internal or external, should be recruited in a fair and transparent manner, based on their skills and merit. ***Recruitment for the RTE should begin well in advanced and is an involved process***, usually led by RTE Management Team, with support from Admin in Geneva.

A. Overall RTE team composition, size and skills

The specific configuration of the RTE team is first considered when drafting the TOR. At a minimum, it will consist of the RTE team leader, but typically it also includes between 2 to 4 team members. The more RTE team members increases the ability to collect data during a limited timeframe, and it can also increase the teams' experience and knowledge for the given evaluation, (i.e. adding subject matter experts). However, the larger the RTE team, the more resources and logistical support it will require.

A key consideration for the RTE team composition is whether to include internal or external team members. Internal team members can: 1) provide valuable knowledge of and experience with the IFRC mandate, structures, procedures, and organizational culture; 2) build understanding, ownership and support for the RTE exercise within the RCRC Movement; and 3) build RCRC capacity for evaluation. On the other hand, external team members can provide a certain reassurance of objectivity and independence as well as external perspective and expertise for the RTE.

At the IFRC, RTEs are conducted typically with a configuration using external consultants as RTE team leaders, and internal RCRC personnel as RTE team members. RTE team members support the RTE team leader, but s/he is ultimately responsible for the RTE execution and deliverables as identified in the TOR, and is the primary author of the evaluation report.

It is worth noting that as RTEs at the IFRC are not externally mandated, there is no requirement that they be led by an independent, external consultant; as such, an internal RTE team leader from within the RCRC could be selected if it was felt this person could best meet the RTE objectives as outlined in the TOR.

Tip: Attention should be given to an RTE team with appropriate gender balance, linguistic and cultural knowledge, and programme area experience**.**

B. Individual team member qualifications

The RTE team leader should have proven experience leading evaluations; not only methodological experience, but also proven ability to manage relationships to create a climate of trust and close cooperation among all stakeholders, whether other RTE team members, IFRC personnel, or external partners. Additional skills for the RTE Team Leader are summarized in ***Annex 1 – Example RTE Position Descriptions***

RTE team members can be selected from IFRC's network of National Societies. If relevant skills are not found from IFRC's network, RTE team members can be recruited externally.

Resource: *Annex 1: Example RTE Position Descriptions*

C. Recruitment of RTE Team Members

The Management Team has oversight of the recruitment of the RTE team members. As stated in the IFRC Framework for Evaluation, recruitment of evaluators should be fair and transparent; evaluators should not have been involved or have a vested interest in the recovery operation being reviewed; and recruitment should be based on professional experience, competence, ethics and integrity.

Recruitment of the RTE team leader should begin well in advance of the intended start of the RTE, primarily because it takes time. The final TOR needs to be posted on public outlets for at least 2 weeks, application materials need to be reviewed and short-listed for interviews using a transparent rubric; interviews need to be conducted and the consultant contracted. In short, this process can go over 1 month.

The Management Team makes the decision as to the RTE team lead and any other team member(s), endorsed by the RTE Commissioner. Once recruited, all members should sign a confidentiality clause for the RTE, if it is not already included in the offered contract.

Resource: *Annex 6*: IFRC Confidentiality Clause for RTE Evaluation Team Members and RTE Management Team.

3.4 RTE Inception Phase

The inception phase is the period during which the inception report (see below) is developed. Data collection actually begins during this period – i.e., before the recruited RTE team goes to the field.[9] Depending on the purpose and scope of the RTE, as well as how early the RTE team is recruited, and the briefings which may take place, this period typically lasts between 1 to 3 weeks.

A. Background Documents

The Management Team should reach out to relevant people to assemble and provide to the RTE team relevant background documents, including:

- ✓ Appeals and plans of action related to the operation
- ✓ A copy of the needs assessment report and other key operational documents of relevance to the evaluation, such as situation updates and reports, etc.
- ✓ Relevant IFRC policy documents, e.g., IFRC Framework for Evaluation, disaster management policies, Code of Conduct, and policies relevant to the thematic (programme) area/s of the operation.
- ✓ Any relevant evaluation or review report to the operation.
- ✓ Any information from stakeholder complaints and feedback mechanisms that may be in place, (either from the affected population, RCRC personnel, or partner organizations).
- ✓ Relevant, past RTE reports from the IFRC.

Tip: Background resources can be shared using an online shared folder (e.g.MS Teams), and it is prudent for the RTE Team to begin a list of resources that can be later included as an Annex in the RTE final report. It is important to remember that secondary data should be

[9] The term 'field' used in the remainder of this document refers to the country office/s and emergency operation sites identified for the RTE.

reliable and relevant to the RTE. Also, it is useful when data can provide relevant benchmarks to assess the operation and answer the identified evaluative questions, (i.e. such as policy commitments, sectoral and thematic guidelines, standards, and specific operational objectives as stated in the Operational Strategy).

B. Key Informant Interviewees

The Management Team should reach out to relevant people to identify key informants and their contacts early during the inception phase of the RTE. Providing a draft list of key informants that can be added to during inception phase assists the RTE in two primary ways:

1) A draft list of key informants can be share with the IFRC field office, with reasonable time to arrange logistics for RTE team members to meet with key informants.
2) The RTE team can identify with the IFRC those key informants to prioritize and interview early to inform the development of the inception report (see below).

Tip: The list of key informants begun at this phase can be built upon in an Annex in the RTE final report; understandably, the list started at this stage is typically added to as the RTE team is referred to other individuals to interview (snowballing).

C. Inception report

The inception report is used to demonstrate a clear understanding and realistic evaluation plan for the RTE, checking that it is in agreement with key stakeholders. It is a primary, first-deliverable of the RTE team prior to field work, supporting mutual understanding and expectations between the RTE team and the RTE Management Team. To a large degree, the inception report elaborates the ToR, ensuring it is realistic and practical for the given objectives. As such, ***it is not unusual that an inception report will revise ToR objectives and scope***.

The Inception report is informed by the RTE team's review of key background documents, as well as interviews with most relevant key informants, (as noted above). This includes, at a minimum, the RTE Management Team. This is best done through meeting, either in-person or through teleconferencing. The RTE Management Team must approve/endorse the inception report before the RTE team commences field work.

While the actual contents of the inception may vary, key contents include:

1) Executive summary
2) Summary of relevant background information
3) Proposed methodology, including methodological limitations, and any potential challenges to implementation of the methodology
4) Data collection and reporting plans – noting times, places, responsibilities within the RTE team, and travel and logistical arrangements for the team.
5) Itemized budget – when required,
6) Annexes: ToR; Draft data collection tools such as interview guides

Tip: In the preparation of the inception report, the RTE team should give attention to the evaluation objectives and key questions to answer within the given timeframe and available resources. If it is not advisable, the RTE team should discuss this with the Management Team with proposed revision **before** drafting the inception report.

3.5 RTE Field Visit/s

The processes outlined in the [***IFRC Framework for Evaluation***] summarizes key considerations for data collection and analysis during evaluation, which the RTE team and the RTE Management Team should review – especially upholding key quality and ethical practices, such as informed consent. This section highlights some key considerations specific to RTEs.

A. Analysis

One of the constraints of a RTE is that the team does not have weeks to process and consider the evaluation findings if they are to be provided in "real-time." Therefore, **it is critical that the team conducts analysis and identifies findings, conclusions and preliminary recommendations as data collection is in progress**. This will allow the team to report and validate (see below) preliminary finding to inform the emergency operation response team before the RTE team leaves the field, and the written report to be drafted in a timeliest manner.

Tip: Lessons that can inform improved performance can come from both good and bad practice. Humanitarian evaluations have a tendency to focus on activities and immediate issues which are proving problematic, but a RTE should also identify those processes and practices that work well.

B. Real-time reporting and validation

The findings, conclusions and recommendations of a RTE should be communicated openly, quickly and creatively to key stakeholders in the field, region and Geneva. Benefits of timely sharing of RTE findings with relevant stakeholders include:[10]

1) Greater influence on current practice, enabling field teams and other relevant implementers to start responding to relevant recommendations in a timely manner.
2) Opportunity for people in the field to cross-check preliminary findings for accuracy and to express difference of opinions regarding conclusions and recommendations. It helps to triangulate data, and to avoid exclusion errors (overlooking key findings), and inclusion errors (recommendations that are unsupported by evidence).
3) Within the compressed timeframe of an RTE, it provides an opportunity for participatory analysis with those directly involved.
4) It can help prevent any unexpected "surprises" from content included in the final RTE report, building understanding and ownership for the RTE exercise.

Tip: ***Priority should be given to any immediate and urgent concerns to inform the operation, but consideration should be given to sensitive issues***. This especially includes protection and safety issues for anyone in the operation (whether target population, RCRC personnel or other responders). Per section 5D below, issues involving wrong-doing and publicly sensitive data is discussed separately.

C. Conducting Validation Workshops

Validation workshops are an important RTE deliverable for real-time reporting and validation. The number of workshops will depend on the scope of the RTE, time and capacity, but at a minimum, one workshop is recommended per each field visit prior to departure, and workshops should be considered for regional and global headquarters.

Tips:

[10] Cosgrave J, Ramalingam B, Beck T (2009) Real-time Evaluations of Humanitarian Action – And ALNAP Guide (pilot version), Overseas development Institute, UK.

- Schedule and communicate the workshop timing well beforehand to ensure key stakeholders can be present.
- When practical considerations restrict a regional or Geneva workshop, consider having a virtual workshop using teleconferencing.
- It is best to include two primary stakeholder groups in the workshop: 1) frontline implementers and 2) key influencers/decision-makers for the operation being assessed.[11]
- Workshop duration can range from 1 to 2 hours to a half or full day, depending on cultural and operational contexts and need, i.e. the available time (and attention span) of attendees. It is also important to allow time after the workshop for people to approach team members with questions or observations, as this may be when additional points are raised worth noting.
- The RTE team should prepare and share beforehand a workshop presentation summarizing preliminary findings, draft conclusions, and any formative recommendations. Sharing this beforehand will help workshop participants reflect and prepare to contribute during the workshop, especially on any contentious issues.
- "When doing an RTE, the team should prioritise facilitated, reflective, participatory methods to the point of developing and delivering final recommendations with the main stakeholders in the affected countries."[12]
- Although the RTE report is not finalised at the time of validation workshops, summaries of preliminary key findings can be left with field teams and other relevant stakeholders to support timely action planning and follow-up to relevant recommendations.
- It may be advisable for those present at the workshop to begin to discuss and develop an action plan to respond to relevant recommendations.

D. Wrong-doing and publicly sensitive information

The reporting of wrong-doing and publicly sensitive data is one topic that deserves special protocol. As outlined in Process 5.27 in the *IFRC Framework for Evaluation*, any evaluation has the ethical and legal responsibility to respond to evidence encountered of unlawful or harmful activity of wrong-doing (e.g. embezzlement, theft, sexual or physical abuse). Related, there are times when the RTE team may encounter sensitive information that can damage or endanger the public image of and thus cause harm to individuals, the IFRC, National Societies, or partner organizations.

On such matters, it is the responsibility of the RTE team to avoid or reduce any further harm to all those involved with wrongdoing, and to fulfil obligations under law or their professional codes of conduct. Per the IFRC Framework for Evaluations, this is one instance where conflict with confidentiality agreements may arise, so good judgement must be exercised.

All such cases of wrong-doing or sensitive information should be communicated by the RTE team leader immediately and confidentially to the RTE Management Team, which can then investigate and take necessary steps as required. Such information should not be shared during validation workshops and during other interactions with stakeholders during the RTE. If the issue involves ongoing or imminent physical and/or psychological harm, it should be reported immediately to the IFRC Head of Delegation, who can engage local authorities if necessary.

In instances where the RTE team itself is accused of misconduct or wrongdoing, the RTE Team Leader should immediately communicate this to the RTE Management Team, and, if in the field, to the IFRC Head of Delegation. The accusation will need to be verified, and the IFRC can act as an intermediary to

[11] Any challenges in having representatives of both these groups present should be raised with the MC to be addressed.
[12] Polastro R, 2015. Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation 29(1):118-134 (126)

assist resolving or mitigating the matter in a transparent and accountable manner to minimize its impact on successful, credible RTE outcomes. If this is not possible, the RTE may be terminated, or team members may be removed or replaced.

E. Terminating a RTE

It may be necessary to terminate a RTE in the event that the health and safety of the evaluators, or the RTE team has infringed on quality or ethical standards per the IFRC Framework for Evaluation that comprise the safety of others, or the integrity of the RTE. In such cases, the RTE Management Team, after discussion with the RTE Team Leader, should contact and inform relevant stakeholders in an open and transparent manner, explaining the reasons for termination with attention to maintaining positive relationships. The decision to terminate an RTE should be documented by the RTE Management Team through a justification email/note and signed off by the RTE commissioner, the IFRC Under Secretary General of National Society Development and Operations Coordination (NSDOC) and the respective Director.

3.6 RTE Report Review & Approval

While much of the utility of a RTE is through real-time feedback to operations before the RTE report is even completed, this report is still an important deliverable. The RTE report is written by the RTE Team Leader, with support from RTE team members.

A. RTE Report Content

The content and structure of the RTE report is the prerogative of the RTE team leader, who is its primary author. As noted earlier, s/he makes the final decision regarding differences of opinion; in short, to ensure the independence of the exercise, s/he "tells the story" as they see it. Typically, the structure of the report includes:

1) **Executive summary** (recommended not more than 1,000 words)
2) **Background information**
3) **Methodology**, including methodological limitations, and any potential challenges to its implementation encountered
4) **Findings and conclusions**
5) **Recommendations**
6) **Annexes**: Depending on the length, these may be attached as a separate document, including: the ToR; Inception report; List of key informants interviewed; List of site visits (if not included in the Methodology section); primary data collection tool/s; relevant maps, evidence, etc.

B. RTE Draft Report Review – Substance

The RTE Management Team should ensure that feedback during the report review addresses the following points:

1) ***Inaccuracies**:* factual inaccuracies, supported with evidence, will be corrected in the evaluation report itself.

2) ***A clarification***: additional, explanatory information to what the evaluators provided in the report. If the evaluators receive the clarification but decide not to revise their report, then the clarification can be provided through the management response.

3) ***A difference of opinion**:* does not pertain to the findings (which should be factual), but to the conclusions and/or recommendations. Upholding the principle of independence, the RTE team

and ultimately the team leader makes the judgment on if, what and how to address a difference of opinion. The IFRC can address any difference of opinion that is not addressed in the final version of the evaluation report in the management response (see below).

4) ***Report content***: the report should effectively communicate the key findings, conclusions and recommendations, with attention to the following quality criteria:
   - ***a.*** Relevant to the agreed upon objectives and evaluative questions as identified in the TOR and inception report, and where not, reasons should be clearly explained and acceptable.
   - ***b.*** Coherently structured, free from internal contradiction, written with a concise, logical, and user-friendly flow.
   - ***c.*** Clear line of evidence supporting conclusions and recommendations.
   - ***d.*** Particular attention to relevant recommendations that are specific and realistic.
   - ***e.*** Respects the evaluation standards (see IFRC Framework for Evaluation)

Tip: Transparently share the above list with both reviewers and the RTE team so that all have a clear understanding to manage their expectations.

C. RTE Draft Report Review – Process

The review period after receiving draft zero of the report should not exceed 4 weeks. The RTE Management Team oversees the review of the RTE report. It is critical to streamline the review process so that it does not hold-up the real-time sharing and value of the potential of the report. There is no "blueprint" for this process, the recommended steps below can be adopted with approval of the RTE Management Team):

Action	Timing
1) **RTE team leader submits Draft-0 of the RTE report**. This should be within 2 weeks of the completion of the field visits, (unless another significant round of remote key informant interviews is required. ***Note that the watermark "DRAFT" should be formatted on all pages.***	Within 2 weeks after completion of field visits
2) **Management Team reviews Draft-0**, to determine whether the report is of sufficient quality to be shared with a broader group of stakeholders. This includes attention to relevance of content RTE objectives, clear structure/coherence, etc.	Within 3 days of receiving Draft-0
3) **RTE team leader revises report for Draft-1** based on Management Team's review input.	Within 1 to 2 days
4) **Management Team disseminates Draft-1 to key stakeholders identified for the review.** a) **Who is included in the review?** Typically, those involved in the review include interviewed stakeholders(IFRC, NS and ICRC staff, and, when appropriate, non-Movement people participating in the evaluation). b) **How is the selection of reviewers decided?** A list is drawn up in agreement between the RTE team leader and the Management Team. While it would be ideal to include everyone who participated (e.g. was interviewed) in the evaluation, this is sometimes not possible. Thus, a balance should be sought to arrive at a list that provide sufficient representation to 1) ensure adequate review of facts and opinions and 2) support legitimacy and credibility among all stakeholders, while 3) not being overwhelming and impractical.	1 day

c) **How is the Draft-1 disseminated to identified reviewers?** The Management Team can disseminate the draft through a platform such as MS Teams. This will allow for transparent collaboration on the document, as all invited stakeholders will be able to see each other's comments; and for efficiency, as it would limit the repetition of similar comments during the review process. People targeted as reviewers should include key people participating in the RTE, or responsible for aspects of the operation evaluated in the RTE.

It is understood that everyone who participated in the RTE cannot be included in the review, (especially any community members without internet access). However, the wider the review, the greater use and legitimacy with stakeholders.

Once the draft document has been included in MS Teams, the Management Team can then send out a link to the draft report in MS Teams or another online shared document protocol, which serves as an effective way to consolidate comments. This email can be sent directly by the Management Team, or by the MC to individuals who are responsible to further disseminate the draft report.

The email should also include review instructions to frame input and expectations – this includes the process, deadlines, and review focus (see 6B above).

5) **Key stakeholders review Draft-1.** Per section 4B above, any feedback should be limited to inaccuracies, clarifications, difference of opinion, and report content. It is best if review input/comments are consolidated, for which reason MS Teams is recommended above. If this is not possible, then point people should be identified to consolidate input/comments from different stakeholder groups. **Tip**: When using MS Teams, set the document so that content cannot be changed, but only comments added. In this way, everyone sees the originally submitted report, and the RTE team can consider comments on the side. **Tip**: To support a timely management response to the RTE, it is recommended that relevant stakeholders consider/draft management responses to draft recommendations in parallel with the review process.	Within 2 weeks
6) **Management Team provides consolidated feedback to RTE team leader.** This duration/effort of this step will depend on the degree to which input/comments can be consolidated as framed above.	1 day
7) **RTE team leader revises draft report based on feedback, resulting in final RTE report.** Per section 6B above, inaccuracies, clarifications and content issues should be addressed, but addressing difference of opinion is the prerogative of the RTE team leader.	Maximum 1 week

D. RTE Final Report Approval

The final RTE report is approved by the RTE commissioner, IFRC Under Secretary General of National Society Development and Operations Coordination (NSDOC) and the respective Director. If the review process is delayed beyond this period, then the RTE Management Team should bring it to their attention.

3.7 RTE Team Closure

As identified in the *IFRC Framework for Evaluation* (Process 5.42), the IFRC management response is a critical part of an IFRC evaluation. It helps ensure that evaluation findings and recommendation are considered by senior management and other relevant decision makers. This is particularly critical for RTEs if they are to have better real-time influence on ongoing operation and programme implementation (as intended).

A. Payment of Consultant

Upon approval of the final RTE report, and completion of all other deliverables per the contract, external consultants on the RTE team can be paid according to contract, and reimbursed for related expenses.

B. Review of RTE Team Leader Performance

Written feedback is recommended of the RTE Team Leader, and this should be announced to the team leader prior to contracting. Reviews provide useful feedback, and when recorded they can be used to also inform future recruitment of RTE team leaders. An assessment form is provided in Annex 8, which can be used to support this process.

Resource: *Annex 9: RTE Team Leader Assessment Form*

3.8 IFRC Management Response

A. RTE Management Response Content

The Management Response includes:

1) **Whether the recommendation is accepted** – if recommendations are not accepted, the reason will be clearly stated.

And for accepted recommendations:

2) **Any action already taken**, by whom and when, to address the recommendation or the underlying issue.
3) **Any action planned to address the recommendation** or the underlying issue, responsibilities for delivering on and approving the identified action/s (not necessarily the same person), and the projected timeframe for completion of identified action/s.

Resource: *Annex 5: Management Response Template*

B. RTE Management Response Process

The IFRC RTE management response is best included in the Annex of the final RTE report for dissemination on the IFRC Evaluation Database. As such, ***the Management Response should be planned in advance and conducted in a timely manner so as maximize the real-time potential use of the RTE***. With this in mind, it is useful to ***begin to draft responses to recommendations in parallel with the review process.***

If the management response is delayed, the RTE Management Team should inform the Under Secretary General of the National Society Development and Operations Coordination (NSDOC), and the respective Regional Director. Related, an alternate timeline for the management response can be considered. For example, the RTE final report can first be published and the Management Response can be added as an annex to the report at a later time, and shared with relevant stakeholders accordingly.

The review period after receiving draft zero of the report should not exceed 4 weeks. The RTE Management Team oversees the review of the RTE report. It is critical to streamline the review process so that it does not hold-up the real-time sharing and value of the potential of the report. There is no "blueprint" for this process, the recommended steps below can be adopted with approval of the RTE Management Team):

	Action	Timing
1)	**Appoint/confirm a point person/team to coordinate the management response**. While a Management Response Team can ensure more ownership, this is not always possible, but at a minimum, one person should spearhead the process and shepherd responses from various stakeholders. Typically, the point person coordinating the management response is someone from the DCC programme area. Whoever is appointed, they should be approved by the RTE Commissioners – the IFRC Under Secretary General of National Society Development and Operations Coordination (NSDOC) and/or respective Regional Director.	Done prior to the submission of Draft-0 of the RTE report
2)	**Prepare and disseminate a RTE Management Response Matrix to relevant stakeholders** – this is led by the Commissioner with assigned point/person/people from units/departments. **Annex 5** provides an example template of the matrix. Each recommendation should be listed in the Recommendations column, and relevant stakeholders to respond to each recommendation should be listed in the respective Responsibility column. All relevant stakeholders should be confirmed by the IFRC Under Secretary General of National Society Development and Operations Coordination (NSDOC). If two or more departments or units are responsible to draft management response to a specific recommendation, identify one department or unit as having lead responsibility in drafting the response.	Done during the stakeholder review period of Draft-1 of the RTE report
3)	**Relevant stakeholders draft responses to recommendations**. In the case that there is irreconcilable disagreement between two or more departments or units, the draft response shall reflect all views and inform that it has not been possible to provide a unified position by the responsible departments, for the Commissioner to consider (see below). **Tip**: Relevant reviewers can begin to consider/draft responses to recommendations in parallel with the review of the draft report, which can later be revised once the final report is completed. **Important!** If the management response process is delayed, then the point person/people responsible for its coordination should immediately communicate this to the RTE Management Team, the IFRC Under Secretary General of National Society Development and Operations Coordination (NSDOC), and the respective Regional Director.	Considered during the review of the Draft-1 of the RTE report, and completed within 2 weeks after approval of the final RTE report.
4)	**Consolidate responses to recommendations and draft the "Background" and "Summary of the Management Response" sections of the RTE Management Response Matrix** – this is done by the assigned the point person/people from units/departments.	1 day

5) **RTE Commissioner reviews and approves the draft RTE Management Response Matrix**. S/he can ask for additional input from senior management or others as appropriate, and request revision as appropriate. — 3 days

In case of disagreement between two or more stakeholders responsible for management response to a specific recommendation, the Commissioner may raise the responsibility one management level up until a unified position is agreed within an established timeframe or may decide directly what the final response will be.

6) **Finalize the approved Management Response Matrix and add it as the first Annex in the RTE final evaluation report** – this is done by the assigned the point person/people from units/departments. — 1 day

Resource: *Annex 5: Management Response Template*

3.9 RTE Report Dissemination

The final RTE repot should be disseminated in a timely manner so as maximize the real-time potential use of the RTE exercise.

A. Post the approved RTE Report on the IFRC Evaluation Database

Once the RTE report has been approved and the management response annexed, it is mandatory (per the IFRC Framework for Evaluation, (Process5.41) that the report is posted on the IFRC Evaluation Database. It is the responsibility of the PMER Unit member on the RTE Management Team to upload the evaluation to the database.

B. Disseminate the RTE Report in a Variety of Formats and Outlets

In addition to the written report and the IFRC Evaluation Databank, there are other formats and outlets to share and broaden dissemination of the RTE findings.

At a minimum, a link to the Evaluation Database where the report is posted should be shared with all relevant stakeholders via email, either directly to them or from a relevant focal point (e.g. country office representative).

Other considerations to support knowledge sharing and learning include:

a) Linguistically and culturally appropriate ways to share the RTE findings with local people receiving RCRC services – from community "report-out" meetings to posting summaries of key findings.

b) One to two page factsheets using data visualization to summarize key findings.

c) PowerPoint or related slide presentations that can be used for in-person presentations or webinars and recorded webcasts.

d) Posters and announcements of key findings on physical or virtual discussion or bulletin boards, and using local radio stations.

e) Email dissemination via relevant list serves and communities of practice of key findings.

f) Tweets and use of other forms of social media to alert people where they can find the full report, summaries of the report, or other products identified above.

The RTE Management Team and relevant units/departments can play a critical role supporting the dissemination of RTE findings, which requires advanced planning and sustained follow-up.

3.10 RTE Follow-up

- Incorporate follow-up actions required in the management response into work plans
- Integrate monitoring and reporting on progress of planned follow-up actions into the regular IFRC performance management system of the respective departments and units
- Regularly provide progress reports relating to these issues to the Global Leadership Team
- Compliance mechanism and trouble-shooting incompliance.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Example RTE Position Descriptions

The following three position descriptions are generic examples that should be tailored according to the specific RTE context and needs.

Position description for RTE TEAM LEADER

Position Summary

Once a Real Time Evaluation (RTE) has been commissioned, the RTE Team Leader is responsible for coordinating the evaluation in accordance with the finalised Terms of Reference and eventual inception report. The Team Leader is required to lead and manage the RTE Team and work collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders in order to achieve the evaluation objectives and deliverables, upholding quality and ethical standards. The RTE Team Leader should not be directly involved with, or responsible for the relief operations being evaluating.

Responsibilities and Tasks

The RTE Team Leader is responsible for the overall conduct of the evaluation, including:

- Ensure that the RTE is conducted in accordance with the IFRC Framework for Evaluation and IFRC Real Time Evaluation Guide and Procedures.
- Review & understand Terms of Reference (TOR) prior to deployment – this may include contributing to the finalization of the RTE TOR for the specific emergency.
- Lead and manage the RTE Team, (when applicable), including: ensure team members are aware of key objectives and deliverables as identified in the ToR and inception report; delegate tasks and manage roles and responsibilities within the RTE team; consolidate and incorporate team input to deliver RTE outputs according to schedule.
- As appropriate, mentor RTE team members, contributing to their professional development.
- Develop relationships and work collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders.
- Report & provide progress updates to internal and external stakeholders as required.
- Perform as the primary author and presenter for written deliverables and oral presentations for the RTE, including the inception report, RTE report, validation workshops, etc.
- Provide feedback and advice to IFRC in the development of RTE tools, systems and processes.

Experience, Skills & Knowledge

- Demonstrable experience in leading evaluations of humanitarian operations responding to major disasters, with specific experience in RTEs preferred.
- Knowledge of strategic and operational management of humanitarian operations and proven ability to provide related recommendations to key stakeholders.
- Knowledge of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and IFRC's disaster management systems, with direct working experience preferred.
- Strong team leadership and management skills including negotiation, facilitation and time management.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, cultural competence, and ability to build rapport and establishing positive and constructive relationships with people at all levels.

- Experience in qualitative data collection and analysis methods for emergency operations, and quantitative data collection and analysis methods as appropriate, with examples of data collection tools used.
- Strong analytical skills and ability to clearly synthesize and present findings, draw practical conclusions, make specific and realistic recommendations, and prepare well-written, coherent reports in a timely manner.
- Excellent English writing and presentation skills, with relevant writing samples of similar evaluation reports and related products.
- Flexible and able to cope with changing environments and plans, able to function effectively under stress.
- Regional knowledge of [country of operation] preferred but not required.
- [insert language] skills required (delete if not required).
- Minimum qualification of a PhD in relevant field of study, or a Masters with equivalent combination of education and relevant work experience.
- Immediate availability for the indicated period.

Position description for RTE TEAM MEMBER

Position Summary

The Real Time Evaluation (RTE) Team Member is identified from IFRC's network of National Societies. If relevant skills are not found from IFRC's network, RTE team members can be recruited externally.

Responsibilities and Tasks

- Work in accordance with the IFRC Framework for Evaluation and IFRC Real Time Evaluation Guide and Procedures.
- Understand the Terms of Reference and eventual inception report so as to properly support the RTE.
- Provide advice and support to collect and analyze data for the RTE, and contribute to the identification and prioritization of findings, conclusions and recommendations for the RTE.
- Work collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders.
- Undertake tasks as delegated by the RTE Team Leader.
- Participate in validation workshop in the field and post event debriefs as required.
- Provide feedback and advice to IFRC in the development of RTE tools, systems and processes.

Experience, Skills & knowledge

- Experience in data collection and analysis, preferably in emergency contexts, and more preferable if for evaluations.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, cultural competence, and ability to build rapport and establishing positive and constructive relationships with people at all levels.
- Knowledge and experience working with the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.
- Knowledge and experience of emergency management and emergency response in domestic or international context.
- Good research, reporting and analytical skills including ability to clearly synthesise and present findings, draw practical conclusions, make recommendations.

- Ability to work independently and in a multi-discipline and multi-national team environment.
- Ability to management time and meet deadlines and the demands of an RTE, remain flexible and cope with changing environments and plans, and function effectively under stress.
- Regional knowledge of [country of operation] preferred but not required.
- [insert language] language skills preferred but not required/required (or delete if not needed)
- Minimum qualification of a master's degree or equivalent combination of education and relevant work experience.
- Completed IFRC security training.
- Immediate availability for the indicated period.

Position description for RTE MANAGEMENT TEAM MEMBER

Position Summary

The RTE Management Team is responsible for the oversight of the RTE, upholding quality and ethical standards, and supporting management review, approval and follow-up to RTE deliverables. This includes facilitating the development of the terms of reference (TOR), and providing strategic and operational advice and support to the RTE Team.

Key Responsibilities and Tasks

Key responsibilities and tasks for the RTE Management Team are detailed in the IFRC Real Time Evaluation Guide and Procedures. The following is a summary:

- Provide overall management of the RTE team to ensure that the exercise adheres to the quality and ethical standards outlined in the IFRC Framework for Evaluation and IFRC Real Time Evaluation Guide and Procedures.
- Undertake stakeholder analysis and consultation in line with regional consultation/advice to ensure key stakeholders are engaged and kept informed.
- Facilitate the development of the RTE terms of reference (TOR) with relevant stakeholders.
- Lead the transparent recruitment of the RTE team, including the Team Leader and other team members as required.
- Oversee the contractual and logistical arrangements of the evaluation, and ensure administrative support is assigned to RTE team in field.
- Monitor and assess the quality of the RTE, providing strategic and operational advice as required.
- Provide documentation, guidance and institutional support to the RTE team, especially on issues of methodology.
- Review and provide input/feedback on all RTE deliverables, including the inception report/work plan, RTE report, and any other products identified in the TOR and inception report.
- Lead stakeholder feedback on RTE and review.
- Facilitate the RTE team's access to key stakeholders in line with regional consultation/advice and specific information or expertise needed to perform the evaluation.
- Manage issue resolution and/or RTE termination if required in coordination with relevant stakeholders.
- Facilitate planning for and development of Management Response Team (MRT).

- Recommend to the RTE commissioner the approval of final report.
- Support the dissemination of the RTE final report and other reporting products as appropriate, including posting the final RTE report on the IFRC Evaluation Database.
- Provide guidance for the follow-up to the RTE so that it is useful and used.

Annex 2: RTE Example ToR format

Instructions: the TOR should be tailored to the specific operational context and needs, and the following example is just that – a generic example to assist with drafting a RTE TOR. It is also useful to look at actual TORs from past RTEs, which the IFRC PMER team can provide upon request.

Terms of Reference for the Real Time Evaluation of the [insert]

1. Summary

1.1. Purpose: This real time evaluation (RTE) will assess the ongoing IFRC response to the [include the name of the operation] to inform the continued response as well as future global emergency relief operations.

1.2. Commissioners: This RTE has been commissioned by the [include name, role]

1.3. Audience: This RTE will be used by the [include the name of the NS], the [include the name of the region], and at the international headquarters in Geneva; it will also inform [include here National Societies or other stakeholders based on the stakeholder analysis]

1.4. Duration of consultancy: approximately [number of days] days (with approx [number of days] days in the field)

1.5. Estimated dates of consultancy: [Include only dates for the consultants not the overall management of the evaluation.]

1.6. Location of consultancy: [Include any locations where the consultancy will take place.]

2. Background

[Include a **short summary** of the operation to be evaluated, i.e. a short history as well as the current status of the operation. Include relevant information to inform the proposed evaluation and identify key contextual factors that impede or support achievement of expected results, and affect its assessment.]

3. Evaluation purpose & scope

Purpose: [State why the evaluation is necessary (at that particular point in time), how the information will be used, and by whom (the audience). This should include the key stakeholders using the information from the evaluation.]

Scope: [Explain the focus of the evaluation by setting the boundaries for what will and will not be included, such as the ***unit of analysis*** covered by the evaluation, the ***time period*** or phase(s) of the programme to be evaluated, the ***funds*** actually expended at the time of the evaluation versus the total amount allocated, the ***geographical coverage*** of the evaluation, and the ***target groups*** or beneficiaries to be included in the evaluation.]

4. Evaluation criteria and key questions

Evaluation criteria: [Identify relevant evaluation criteria with the help of the IFRC Evaluation Framework]

Key questions: [List key RTE questions for each chosen evaluation criteria. Select questions from Key Questions for RTE Criteria in annex 4 of this guide.

5. Evaluation methodology & process

The evaluation will be managed according to the draft IFRC Real Time Evaluation Guide and Procedures. The methodology will adhere to the draft IFRC Management Policy for Evaluations, with particular attention to the processes upholding the standards of how evaluations should be planned, managed, conducted, and utilized. An IFRC **evaluation management team** will oversee the evaluation, with the evaluators.

The **RTE team** will consist of [include number of people] people: [include number of people] external evaluator, and [include number of people] internal IFRC evaluator.

The specific evaluation methodology will be detailed in close consultation between the RTE team and IFRC evaluation management team, but will draw upon the following primary methods: [Modify methodology as required]

1. **Desktop review** of operation background documents, relevant organisational background and history and any relevant sources of secondary data
2. **Field visits/observations** to selected sites
3. **Key informant interviews**
4. **Focus group discussions**.

6. Evaluation deliverables & illustrative timeline

The following will be developed and delivered in line with the draft IFRC Real Time Evaluation Guide and Procedures:

- **Evaluation work plan/ inception report** will be submitted prior to the RTE team being deployed to the field.
- **Validation workshop in the field** to take place prior to the RTE team leaving the field and verbal debriefs with key stakeholders.
- **Draft RTE report** will be submitted within two weeks of the consultants' return from the field.
- Where an RTE covers more than one country, individual country reports will also be provided to the relevant National Societies if these contain more specific detail than the overall final report. [delete if RTE only for one NS]
- **Final RTE report** –will be submitted one week after receipt of the consolidated feedback from IFRC and meet the requirements outlined in the IFRC RTE Guide and Procedures.

All products arising from this evaluation will be owned by the IFRC. The evaluators will not be allowed, without prior authorization in writing, to present any of the analytical results as his or her own work or to make use of the evaluation results for private publication purposes.

The following is an illustrative timeline that will be revisited and refined with more detail during the inception stage of the RTE:

Time Schedule	Activities	Deliverables
Week 1	1. Desktop study of background information 2. Initial briefings and interviews to inform development of inception report.	
Week 2	1. Virtual key informant interviews 2. Development of detailed inception report, or data collection/analysis plan and schedule, draft methodology, and data collection tools. 3. Briefing meeting at IFRC office (either Geneva or Regional)	1. Inception report with detailed data collection/analysis plan and schedule, draft methodology, and data collection tools. 2. Briefing meeting
Week 3	1. Data collection in target communities according to data collection schedule.	1. End of week progress report.
Week 4	1. Field data collection in target communities according to data collection schedule. 2. Validation workshop	1. Validation workshop
Week 6	1. Prepare draft evaluation report.	1. Draft version of evaluation report.
Week 7-9 (Intermittent)	1. IFRC Review	
Week 10	1. Revise and submit final evaluation report.	1. Final draft of evaluation report.

7. Evaluation quality & ethics

The evaluators should take all reasonable steps to ensure that the evaluation is designed and conducted to respect and protect the rights and welfare of the people and communities involved and to ensure that the evaluation is technically accurate and reliable, is conducted in a transparent and impartial manner, and contributes to organizational learning and accountability. Therefore, the evaluation team should adhere to the evaluation standards and applicable practices outlined in the IFRC Framework for Evaluation and respect the **Red Cross Red Crescent 7 Fundamental Principles**.

8. Qualifications

Selection of the external evaluation consultant will be based on the following qualifications: Modify qualifications as required

1) Demonstrable experience in leading evaluations of humanitarian programmes responding to major disasters, with specific experience in RTEs preferred
2) Knowledge of strategic and operational management of humanitarian operations and proven ability to provide strategic recommendations to key stakeholders

3) Strong analytical skills and ability to clearly synthesize and present findings, draw practical conclusions, make recommendations and to prepare well-written reports in a timely manner
4) Experience in qualitative data collection and data analysis techniques, especially in emergency operations
5) Knowledge and experience working with the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement preferred
6) Demonstrated capacity to work both independently and as part of a multi-discipline, multi-national team
7) Excellent English writing and presentation skills in English, with relevant writing samples of similar evaluation reports.
8) Regional knowledge of [country of operation] preferred but not required
9) [insert language] skills required (delete if not required)
10) Minimum qualification of a PhD in relevant field of study, or a Masters with equivalent combination of education and relevant work experience
11) Immediate availability for the period indicated.

9. Application procedures

Interested candidates should submit their application material by [insert date] to the following email: [mailto:insert contact email]. Application material is non-returnable, and we thank you in advance for understanding that only short-listed candidates will be contacted for the next step in the application process.

Application materials should include:

1. **Curricula Vitae** (CV)
2. **Cover letter** clearly summarizing your experience as it pertains to this RTE, your daily rate, and three professional references
3. At least one **example of an evaluation report** most similar to that described in this TOR.

Annex 3: Example Key Questions for RTE TORs

The following RTE questions are examples to consider when drafting the evaluative questions in a RTE TOR. They are organized according to evaluation criteria identified in the IFRC Evaluation Framework. The actual number and wording of questions should be tailored according to RTE operational context and needs, and particular attention should also be given that the number of questions to answer are realistic and feasible for the given context.

1. Evaluation Criteria: The RCRC Fundamental Principles and Principles and Rules for RCRC Humanitarian Assistance

Possible questions for RTE:

1.1. To what extent were the Principles and Rules for RCRC Humanitarian Assistance adhered to?

1.2. To what degree were these Principles and Rules effective as a coordination tool to improve the delivery of humanitarian assistance? What improvements could be made in the future?

2. Evaluation Criteria: Relevance & Appropriateness – extent to which an intervention is suited to the
priorities of the target group, is tailored to local needs and context, and compliments other interventions from other actors

Possible questions for RTE:

2.1. Did the assessment promote participation of men and women, boys and girls and persons with disability and seek to understand their specific needs, vulnerabilities and capacities including those who are the most vulnerable and/or marginalized within the community? (Principles and Rules)

2.2. To what extent did communities including men, women, boys and girls affected by crisis access assistance appropriate and relevant to their needs? (CHS 1, Principles and Rules 1, 9)

2.3. To what extent is relief provided appropriate to the context, based on assessed risks, vulnerabilities and expressed needs of both women and men, and is of a quality and scale that meets RC commitments and expectations? (CHS1, PR2)

2.4. Did the response adapt to changes in need, capacities and context? (CHS 1)

2.5. How can the provision of humanitarian assistance be improved to better respond to the needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of girls, boys, women, men, persons with disability and marginalized groups?

2.6. Are there any activities that are creating/have the potential to create conflict or do harm to people and communities that need to be stopped and revisited? (CHS 3)

2.7. To what extent is humanitarian assistance provided in a manner which aims to prevent and mitigate the risk of violence, abuse, exploitation and harm for girls, boys, women and men? (CHS 3)

2.8. How is information identified regarding the capacities and activities of other actors working with the same vulnerable groups, or in the same sectors and geographic areas? (CHS 1 & 6)

2.9. To what extent has the design of the operation taken into account the capacities of the National Society, both at headquarters and branch level?

2.10. Have protection concerns been adequately addressed in the design of the response? (CHS 3)

3. Evaluation Criteria: Efficiency – extent to which the intervention was delivered in a cost-effective manner.

Possible questions for RTE:

3.1. To what extent is an effective management structure in place, providing direction, clarity and well-communicated decision-making?

3.2. What organizational systems strengths can we build on, and what weaknesses need to be addressed immediately? (HR, staff care, IT, supply chain, finance, admin, security, etc.)

3.3. How well are the M&E and learning processes used in the response and can they be improved? (CHS 7)

3.4. How well have we equipped the response staff and local staff to respond to the needs of the communities and people affected? (CHS 8)

3.5. To what extent are available resources are being used for what they were intended, without diversion or wastage? (CHS 9)

3.6. How does the programme take account of international environmental standards? (Principles and Rules)

3.7. Are the resources obtained for the response being used and monitored according to agreed plans, targets, budgets and timeframes? (CHS 9)

3.8. To what extent is assistance being delivered in a way that is cost effective (CHS 9)

4. Evaluation Criteria: Effectiveness – extent to which an intervention has or is likely to achieve its intended, immediate results.

Possible questions for RTE:

4.1. Are mechanisms in place for ensuring timely, effective and participatory needs assessment, planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (Principles and Rules)

4.2. How are women, men, boys and girls, communities and the National Society more prepared, resilient and less at-risk as a result of the humanitarian action? (CHS 3) / To what extent do communities and people affected by crisis consider themselves better able to withstand future shocks and stresses as a result of the assistance provided? (CHS 3) / To what extent has our response built the existing skills, capacities and coping strategies of girls, boys, women and men and enabled them to be better able to meet their immediate needs? (CHS 2) (select one)

4.3. To what extent do local authorities, leaders and organisations with responsibilities for responding to crises consider that their capacities have been increased? (CHS 3)

4.4. How well is the response addressing protection, gender and inclusion including for girls, boys, women and men in vulnerable circumstances? (Principles and Rules 3)

4.5. Do communities and people affected by crisis (including the most vulnerable) identify any negative effects? (CHS 3)

4.6. What contribution is being made to reducing the negative impact of the disaster on communities? (CHS 2)

4.7. Are appropriate technical standards used and achieved? (CHS 2)

Timeliness

4.8. To what extent do communities and people affected by crisis, especially those in more vulnerable circumstances, confirm that they have access to the humanitarian assistance they need at the right time? (CHS 2)

4.9. What internal and external factors have and are affecting the speed of our response? (include local, national, regional and global factors)

4.10. If there is another crisis what can we do now to be better positioned/prepared to respond?

Coordination

4.11. To what extent have communities and people affected by crisis received coordinated, complementary assistance? / Do communities and people affected by crisis identify any gaps and overlaps in the response? (CHS 6, Principles and Rules 8)

4.12. What have been good practices, challenges and lessons learned in coordination:

- Within the NS
- Within the Movement, both between National Societies (were relevant) and between the NS, IFRC and ICRC
    - To what extent has the IFRC been able to support National Societies through its coordinating role with partner NS and the ICRC? What key factors have supported and hindered the IFRC ability to do this, why, and what are specific recommendations to improve this area?
- Between the Movement and other actors, both in-country and global actors
- Between the Movement and the government response mechanisms
- Between the Movement and other actors, both in-country and global actors (specifically refer to the clusters and the Humanitarian Country Team) (Principles and Rules 7)

4.13. How effective were the contributions of regional assets (RDRT, etc) and how efficient was the cooperation and coordination with National Societies from the region acting internationally? (Principles and Rules)

4.14. How do responding organisations share relevant information? (CHS 6)

4.15. To what extent is needs assessment, delivery and monitoring of assistance coordinated with other responding organisations? (CHS 6)

4.16. To what extent has advocacy been strategically utilised to influence relevant international and in-country actors for increased action to address the vulnerabilities and unmet humanitarian needs of the people affected in this response? (CHS 2, Principles and Rules 5)

4.17. Are International Disaster Response Law issues identified and flagged for discussion with government and other stakeholders (through Humanitarian Country Team)? (e.g barriers with regard to customs, taxation, immigration)

4.18. To what extent is previous research or advocacy on International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) utilised or tools such as IDRL Model Decree promoted within government/ humanitarian community?

Trade-offs

4.19. What factors influenced how and when response decisions were made and the decisions themselves?

4.20. Are constraints and risks regularly identified and analysed, and plans adapted accordingly? (CHS 2)

4.21. Does planning consider optimal times for activities, accounting for factors such as weather, season or conflict? (CHS 2)

4.22. To what extent and how has the auxiliary role the National Societies have with the national government affected their ability to uphold the humanitarian imperative in their response? What are specific recommendations to improve this area?

Stakeholder perspectives

4.23. To what extent do communities and specifically women and men affected by crisis know their rights and entitlements, have timely access to relevant and clear information about the organisation and the programme (e.g. selection criteria, planned activities, community-level budgets, expenditure and results)? (Principles and Rules 2, CHS 4 & 9)

4.24. Communities and people affected by crisis participate in decisions that affect them? (Principles and Rules, CHS 4)

4.25. To what extent do communities and people affected by crisis have access to safe and responsive mechanisms to handle feedback and complaints? (Principles and Rules 2, CHS 5)

Learning

4.26. To what extent has the response demonstrated learning from previous/similar responses? (CHS7)

4.27. To what extent does the current response make provision for debriefing, reflection and learning? Is there provision for communities and people affected by crisis to identify improvements? (CHS 7)

4.28. How does the programme team aim to continuously improve the efficiency and quality of international humanitarian assistance by ensuring the implementation of the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (the Sphere Project) and/or other relevant standards? (Principles and Rules 5)

5. Evaluation Criteria: Coverage – extent population groups are included in or excluded from an intervention, and the differential impact on these groups.

Possible questions for RTE:

5.1. Who and how many people are we reaching (disaggregation of data by sex, age and disability where possible)?

5.2. How well has the programme addressed the differing needs of girls and boys, women and men, elderly, adolescents, and persons with disability?

5.3. What particular good practices or challenges have arisen in working with vulnerable or marginalized groups of people?

5.4. To what extent was our response in the geographical area with highest need?

5.5. To what extent did the people most in need of humanitarian assistance receive it? What factors related to context or process supported/hindered this?

5.6. To what extent was inclusion/exclusion bias managed in determining the target groups for assistance?

5.7. Have any unmet needs been identified? How have these been addressed? E.g. Are systems in place that facilitate referral to other agencies in situations where Red Cross has capacity constraints? (CHS 2)

6. Evaluation Criteria: Impact – positive and negative changes from an intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

An assessment of impact may be limited for an RTE due to the formative stage of the response.

Possible questions for RTE:

6.1. In what ways has the assistance sought to minimize any potential harmful social and economic impacts of assistance ('do no harm')? (Principles and Rules)

6.2. Have there been any positive or negative unintended consequences of the intervention? How have any negative impacts been addressed? (CHS 3)

7. Evaluation Criteria: Connectedness – extent that emergency response is implemented in a way that takes longer-term and interconnected factors into account.

Possible questions for RTE:

7.1. To what extent does the response link to disaster risk reduction/ longer term programmes/ recovery? (CHS 3, Principles and Rules 9)

7.2. How is the response building on local capacities, strengthening partners and reinforcing positive coping mechanisms? (CHS 1, 3, Principles and Rules 10)

7.3. To what extent is the response taking into consideration long term needs?

7.4. How is the response building, in an inclusive way, on the capacity of local community response capacity, local organisations and structures including the National Society? (Principles and Rules 10)

Annex 4: Example RTE Budget Template

The following is a example of how an Excel spreadsheet can be formatted. It is a basic example and should clearly be tailored according to the RTE.

Description	Unit	Unit cost	Quantity	Total
Team Leader				
Assignment fee	day	(CHF per day)	(# of days)	
Airfare				
In Country Transportation	e.g. taxi/train			
Per Diem	day			
Accommodation	night			
Team Member				
Airfare				
In Country Transportation	e.g. taxi/train			
Per Diem	day			
Accommodation	night			
Contingency Costs				
Aggregate Total				

Note: In the case of a pandemic, such as COVID-19, you may also need to consider a budget line for PPE, hand sanitizer and/or potential in-country quarantine requirements that may entail additional costs.

Annex 5: Management Response Template

Management Response to the Real-time Evaluation (RTE) of the (insert the name of the operation)

Background: (to be elaborated)

Summary of the Management Response: (to be elaborated)

Recommendation X: (Insert recommendation X of the RTE final evaluation report)			
Management Response:	**Key follow-up action / deliverable**:	**Timeframe**:	**Responsibility**:
(Management decision on the status of the recommendation: accepted / partially accepted / rejected. If the recommendation is partially accepted or rejected, an explanation must be provided in the 'Comments' section below as to the reasons for not accepting or partially accepting the recommendation).	*(Describe the key follow-up action/s and deliverable/s required to ensure accepted or partially accepted recommendations are followed and corrective action taken. These planned actions must be incorporated into the responsible departments or units work plans).*	*(Define the timeframe for implementation of key follow-up action/s and deliverable/s).*	*(Identify the department or unit responsible for implementing the key follow-up action/s and deliverable/s).*
Comments: (Provide any additional information or clarification regarding the recommendation and how it has been interpreted, any progress already made or actions taken to address the recommendation, or the reasons for not accepting or partially accepting the recommendation).			

Annex 6: IFRC Confidentiality Clause for the Real Time Evaluation Team and the Real Time Evaluation Management Team

This IFRC confidentiality clause should be shared with the RTE team and for the RTE Management Team by the administrative support to the RTE, as soon as all of the members are selected and in the case a confidentiality clause has not been made available for either RTE team members and/or the RTE Management Team.

Real Time Evaluation Team

Dear XXX,

Thank you for offering to participate as a Member of the Evaluation Team for the Real Time Evaluation XXX. Please find attached above the ToR for this evaluation.

Please note that further to your role as a Member of this team, it will be expected:

That for this evaluation you will not communicate at any time to any other person (legal body or individual), Government, National Society, IFRC or stakeholders outside the Evaluation Team, any information acquired by reason of their association with the IFRC, which has not been agreed to be made public, except in the course of agreed duties or by authorization of the Secretary General or his/her designate. As an Evaluation Team leader/member, you are prohibited from using any information from this evaluation for your private advantage.

Please revert with your acknowledgement and confirmation of the above via email **as soon as possible, and latest by XXX.**

Real Time Evaluation Management Team

Dear XXX,

Thank you for offering to participate as a Member of the Evaluation Management Team for the Real Time Evaluation XXX. Please find attached above the ToR for this evaluation.

Please note that further to your role as a Member of this EMT, it will be expected:

That for this evaluation you will not communicate at any time to any other person (legal body or individual), Government, National Society, IFRC or stakeholders outside the Evaluation Management Team, any information acquired by reason of their association with the IFRC, which has not been agreed to be made public, except in the course of agreed duties or by authorization of the Secretary General or his/her designate. As an Evaluation Management Team member, you are prohibited from using any information from this evaluation for your private advantage.

Please revert with your acknowledgement and confirmation of the above via email **as soon as possible, and latest by XXX.**

Annex 7: RTE Team Leader Assessment Form

IFRC RTE Team Leader Assessment Form

- **The purpose of this form is to support an open and useful review of the Evaluation Team Leader's performance on IFRC-commissioned RTEs.** The information can be used individual learning and development, and to inform future RTE recruitment.
- **The form can be used to assess the performance of the evaluation team lead as well as team members.**

It is best if the Evaluation Team Leader is informed of this Consultant Assessment Form prior to the RTE.

Assessment Form

Name	
Short description of work	
Period of hiring	

	CRITERIA	RATING (tick one box)				
		Excellent	**Fully satisfactory**	**Partly satisfactory**	**Not satisfactory**	**N/A**
1	Theoretical knowledge					
2	Practical knowledge of and experience in the field concerned					
3	Ability to adapt knowledge and experience to assigned tasks					
4	Initiative					
5	Productivity					
6	Ability to work with others					
7	Timeliness of work completed and reports					
8	Quality of report and recommendations					
9	Self sufficiency					
10	Invoicing and administrative issues					
11	Others (specify)					
	Overall performance					

Hiring manager	Name and function:	
	Date:	
	Comments:	
Consultant	Date:	

	Comments:	
Additional comments from the hiring manager	Date:	
	Comments:	

Narrative Descriptions of the Performance Evaluation Criteria

- **Theoretical knowledge -** Determine level of theoretical knowledge and ability to apply his/her knowledge to the realities of the operation.

- **Practical knowledge of and experience in the field concerned -** Did the team leader demonstrate practical knowledge and experience in the claimed areas of expertise? Were gaps apparent in knowledge or did he/she lack experience in one or more areas? Did he/she demonstrate a professional appreciation of the problems that arose?

- **Ability to adapt knowledge and experience to assigned tasks -** Did the team leader thoroughly investigate, understand, analyze, and report on all the aspects of the assignment? Was the relevant IFRC staff involved confident that he/she would competently complete the assignment?

- **Initiative -** Did the team leader propose any sound innovations? Was his or her method of searching for data practical and not disrupting the operation? Did he/she need more or less assistance than usual with the arrangements?

- **Productivity -** Did the team leader complete all the tasks in the terms of reference? Were his or her tables, calculations, and other written outputs complete?

- **Ability to work with others -** Did the team leader maintain cordial relations with IFRC staff and counterpart officials? Did he/she respect the local culture? Was he/she appreciated by the stakeholders?

- **Timeliness of work completed and reports -** Did the team leader complete the work according to the agreed upon schedule? Did he or she submit the report(s) on time? Did his or her report cover all the issues raised?

- **Quality of report and recommendations -** Assess whether the quality of the team leader's outputs was fully satisfactory. Was his or her report or contribution to the team's report well organized, clearly and simply written? Did he or she present his or her conclusions logically and convincingly, with adequate references? Were the team leader's inputs and outputs complete, covering all the requirements in the terms of reference?

- **Self-sufficiency -** Was the team leader self sufficient with travel arrangements, technical equipment, adequate funds, health insurance etc?

- **Invoicing and administrative issues -** Did the team leader invoice the IFRC correctly and was able to manage the administrative issues?