

End of Program Evaluation Report

for

CBDRR program Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction

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1. Executive Summary

The program

1. The program " Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) was supported by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) with funding from UK DFID and implemented by PRCS during 2012-2014.
2. PRCS managed to achieve goals in the targeted areas at variable levels due to variation in community needs and commitment. It ended with more resilient communities in terms of disaster reduction.
3. The 20 targeted communities in general were well selected. Although the program empowered these communities most still need more support, especially in disaster mitigation intervention.
4. The program objectives are valid for years to come and fit with national priorities, therefore PRCS need to expand such program to wider areas.
5. The program managed to qualify 113 members of community committees, 29 school and preschool teachers to systematically act during time of disasters. As well implemented 22 mitigation projects for the benefit of 20 communities. Although, such interventions were considered a reward or the community committees , still larger projects with more budgets are needed.

The Evaluation:

6. The end-of-program evaluation was conducted by the Arab European Foundation (independent institution) upon request from PRCS. The evaluation followed qualitative approaches to assess the extent to which the program achieved its goal and specific objectives. Namely, the evaluation tested the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the program's interventions.
7. Program documents were reviewed from the very beginning.. Qualitative data was obtained through semi-structured interviews with 21 key informants including the IFRC representative, program manager, coordinators, and trainers. Also 7 focus group discussions with beneficiaries, local committees and CBO's representatives, program' staff, and volunteers. The team visited three targeted sites for observing quality of work and sustainability of activities..

Major Findings and Recommendations:

8. The program achieved its goal and the specific objective as it not only reached planned results but also exceeded the targets. Positive variances

were recorded and finished within the specified program duration of three years.

9. The team in different areas followed unified management procedures. The program depended on PRCS internal and partner expertise to conduct training and awareness activities. Good model of coordination was recorded with all stakeholders such as ministry of education, civil defense police, and CBO's.
10. The project team succeeded in targeting interested needy communities. Program objectives remained consistent during the program duration, a new area was added in the last year.
11. As the program was planned following the participatory approach, stakeholders were involved in the programming phase as well as other phases. This fulfilled the beneficiary expectations and raised their satisfaction.
12. As activities were relevant to the needs, communities contributed in activities, especially in mitigation projects. The contribution was in form of material that ended up with work quantities exceeding the plan .
13. Activities were implemented with optimum use of resources.
14. The beneficiaries know-how was improved through training, drills, distribution of awareness material. People who received training acted accordingly when they were found in emergency situation..
15. The program contributed in organizing committees to act during disaster, prior to the project in majority of villages efforts were ad hoc. Committees paved the way for future expansion and systematic action in times of disasters..
16. The program team formed a community of practitioners, learning from each other during periodical (monthly) meetings and continuous communication. Knowledge sharing was practiced on different levels. The program has success stories, however documentation was not noticed.
17. The early impact of the program is clear in terms of community resilience through having qualified committees, preparedness plans, and even if not sufficient some risk mitigation measures. Communities were mobilized to raise some funds to contribute to such measures.
18. In general met people showed overall satisfaction of the program results and management. However, some indicated that budget of mitigation

projects are minor and did not end in many cases with a complete solution to reduce disaster risk

19. Beneficiaries are efficiently using the skills they acquired, the first aid kits handed to organizations, and awareness material received made a difference. However the quantities of items need to be increased.
20. Sustainability of program results was observed in all field visits and discussions. Relevancy of activities and their proper targeting, and the nature of activities are all aspects ensuring sustainability. Capacity building activities will have long lasting and scaling up effect. However, playgrounds were not up to expected work standards. Insufficient budgets could be the main reason
21. It can be stated that PRCS CBDRR program is in a good position as communities in general were motivated and showed high responsibility and tendency toward voluntarism. PRCS have accumulated experience in dealing with emergencies in time of crisis which is usual in a country like Palestine. Also there are different stakeholders with whom activities were complemented.
22. Recommendations are listed at the end of this report.

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2. Acronyms and Abbreviations

CBDRR	Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction
CBO	Community-Based Organizations
(DFID)	UK Department for International Development
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FA	First Aid
GRC	German Red Cross,
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
MoH	Ministry of health
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
Opt	Occupied Palestinian Territory
PRCS	Palestinian Red Crescent Society
SRC	Spanish Red Cross
SSI	Semi-Structured Interviews
ToR	Terms of Reference
WB	West Bank
WB&G	West Bank and Gaza

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1 The program

The program “Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction ” (CBDRR) in the West Bank and Gaza is supported by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) through Country office in Palestine with funding from UK DFID. The program started December 2011 and ended end of 2014.

3.2 The context

The program was designed in the second half of 2011; at a time of widespread poverty in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, high rates of unemployment (32.7%¹) and food insecurity (46%) particularly in rural areas and among women¹. The Palestinian Authority still relies on international budgetary support to maintain its operations and has limited resources for investment. The Palestinian living conditions standards in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip remain far below those prior to the second Intifada in 2000.²

The poverty rate of Palestinians averaged at 25.8% in West Bank and 38.8% in Gaza. The political situation continued to be fragile with restricted mobility on people and goods particularly Gaza, restricted access to jobs, services and markets and isolating communities. Women have been unduly affected by the crisis. The level of male unemployment has required women to assume more responsibility for the provision of income to sustain the family.³

According to the World Bank Report on the State of the Palestinian Economy, (2013), occupation remains the prime obstacle to development in Palestine, costing the Palestinians economy 3.4 billion dollars annually. It is the cause of most health, social problems and disasters. The geographical location of Palestine is highly vulnerable to natural disasters, including a potentially devastating future earthquake (Jalal Dabeek, 2013)⁴. All these challenges comes at a time when Palestinians lack preparedness for such a disaster which if happens given the high population density, especially in the Gaza Strip, could cause large-scale of human losses.) The oPt is vulnerable to natural hazards: mainly earthquakes, floods, landslides, droughts and desertification. The whole region frequently faces small to mid-scale disasters and bears a high potential for large-scale (urban) disasters⁴

¹ 1 PCBS, September, 2008 Press release about unemployment in the PT

² <http://www.undp.ps/en/index.html>

³ FAO, WFP, PCBS, 2010, report on Socio-Economic and Food Security Survey West Bank and Gaza Strip, occupied Palestinian territory

⁴ Jalal AL Dabbeek , 2010. An Assessment on Disaster Risk Reduction in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. An - Najah Univ. J. Res. (N. Sc.) Vol. 24, 2010

The Syrian crisis coupled with the world financial crisis has also impacted Palestinians, and reduced external aid on which the local organizations including PRCS depend. The prolonged stalemate in the Middle East peace process, occupation, ongoing conflict, continued access restrictions, and internal Palestinian divisions have resulted in a protracted protection crisis. Serious protection threats and human rights violations have continued throughout program period, with Palestinian communities subject to policies that undermine their ability to live normal and self-sustaining lives. This has resulted in entrenched levels of insecurity and increased disaster risks and continued dependence on humanitarian aid. Palestinians have no control on Moreover, borders, movement between areas is restricted Such restrictions, will negatively affect relief efforts should such a disaster take place

During the program duration Opt suffered two major Israeli aggressions on Gaza, 2012 and 2014. Leaving tens of thousands of homeless people with various types of risks which were beyond the tolerance of Gaza people. Such aggressions adversely affected program activities in Gaza. In West Bank demolitions, tree uprooting, land confiscation and different types of aggressions on people and their property continued.

3.3 Program Objectives and planned results

The overall objective of the program was to strengthen civil society and contribute to more stable and prospering life for vulnerable communities in West Bank and Gaza., through working to reduce disaster losses and to build resilient communities as an essential condition for sustainable development. The result will be community based organizations that are enabled to better manage disaster risks. In the long run communities will have a culture of safety, social cohesion and tendency for voluntarism.

Results:

The program was implemented with the aim of achieving five main outcomes:

Result 1: 15 communities in West Bank and the Gaza Strip have developed their organizational structure with a view to implement community-based DRR activities.

Result 2: 75% or more of the 5625 vulnerable families in the targeted communities have acquired knowledge and skills in community-based first aid and knowhow to use them in emergencies.

Result 3: 18 or more teachers and 120 or more students of the six schools included in the project have acquired basic knowledge on disaster preparedness and know how to respond appropriately to emergencies.

Result 4: The PRCS' structures for disaster management have been strengthened and decentralised.

Result 5: Enhance PRCS disaster management.

3.4 Targeted areas

The program was originally planned to take place in 15 communities in three governorates (two in West Bank and a fourth in Gaza) However, in the last year of the project (2014) five villages in North West of Jerusalem were added. Therefore a total of 20 communities were targeted, those were:

1. Northwest villages of Jerusalem (Aljeb, Beit Ijza, Beit Exa, Al Nnabi Samuel, Beit Hanina)
2. Rafah district (Khrebet el adas, alshwaqa, hay elnasser, Al Awda, Tel alsultan)
3. Jenin district (Faqoaa, Zebda, , Bartaa, Jabaa' and Taybeh)
4. Tubas (Al maleh, Al aqaba, Ein Albeda, Kardala, Bardala)

Program activities were implemented for the benefit of four main groups:

- A. Community based organizations including local councils.
- B. Selected schools in which teachers and students were targeted
- C. PRCS volunteers and staff
- D. Households in targeted communities..

3.5 Implemented Activities

Within the context of the program a long list of activities were implemented:

- 1- Formation of 15 community committee in 15 communities in WB. Each include on average 7-8 members (volunteers) ranging from 1-24 members. With total number of 113 volunteers of which 47 are women.
- 2- Training workshops in different topics for preparing members of community committees to act before and during disasters. The total number of workshops was 44 for the benefit of 1268 persons. Majority of trainees attended a series of workshops.
- 3- PRCS in coordination with civil defense, police and local communities implemented 17 drills with participation of 839 persons. To test preparedness of communities to disasters and enable participants to better act during emergencies.
- 4- Staff of PRCS conducted 36 wide community meetings to discuss the program activities and coach committees in their work.
- 5- Twenty two mitigation projects were implemented in 20 communities for the benefit of 42,750 people.
- 6- Seventeen awareness activities for communities were implemented .
- 7- Printing awareness banners , training material and manuals which were distributed to trainees and communities.
- 8- Distribution of first aid kits to local communities, schools and CBO's.
- 9- Practical camp have benefiting 67 participants from different areas, it included theoretical and practical activities for camp management, water and sanitation.

3.6 The report

The end of program evaluation report is divided into five sections. The first section, describes the context of the Palestinian society where and when the program was implemented. The second section describes the planned program objectives, results and activities. The third section describes methodological approach, and list of people interviewed or participated in the discussions. The implementation guidelines and tools are reported in a separate annex to this report.

The fourth section, which constitutes the majority of the report, covers the presentation and discussion of the findings within the contextual situation. While the last section of the report, present conclusions and recommendations

4. Evaluation Methodology

This evaluation was planned to provide PRCS, IFRC and partners with an objective, qualitative assessment of the achievements, of the Integrated Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction program compared to designed results. It was designed to meet PRCS and IFRC evaluation objectives and requirements as agreed in the ToR,

Evaluation Objective:

- § To evaluate the activities and achievement of the PRCS project. According to its overall goal: To reduce the risk to disasters in the target communities;..
- § Clarify the degree of fulfillment of the specific objectives of the action taken and the results achieved, as well as to gather lessons learnt in order to develop and improve the design of future projects in similar fields.
- § To have a reliable information on the implementation of the action.
- § To learn about the usefulness of the approaches and methods applied, possibly to be shared with other partner institutions working on similar projects,
- § To identify successes, obstacles, strengths and weaknesses related to the implementation of the project.
- § To provide concrete recommendation for further development and improvement of similar program in the future.

4.1 Evaluation Questions

The evaluation is designed to test the general evaluation criteria which are:

1. **Relevance:**
 - A) Did the implemented activities and interventions of the program correspond to the needs, priorities and policies of the targeted beneficiaries, National Society (PRCS), partner (IFRC) and donor (DFID). As well as does it come in alignment with IFRC strategy 2020 and PRCS Strategy 2014-2018?
 - B) Are the activities and outputs of the program consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives and succeeded in responding to changing development priorities of the beneficiaries or other stakeholders?
 - C) To what extent are the objectives of the program still valid?
 - D) Are the activities and outputs of the program consistent with the intended impacts?

2. **Effectiveness:**
 - A) To what extent were the project objectives achieved?
 - B) What were and are the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives, factors both internal and external to PRCS project, and the targeted areas and groups?

3. **Efficiency:** Measure the extent to which the costs of the project have been justified by the benefits obtained. Questions are:
 - A) Were the resources used to obtain the expected results sufficient and pertinent?
 - B) Were the human resources adequate?
 - C) Was the monitoring of the project activities, information, management and reporting adequate?
 - D) Has the project timeline and deadlines been followed as planned?
 - E) Has the transformation from resources to results been efficient?
4. **Impact:** The evaluation will focus on early impact of
 - A) What changes as a result of the project have been observed in relation to the different beneficiary groups?
 - B) What difference did the project make to the beneficiaries and key stakeholders?
 - C) How did the project affect the resilience of the vulnerable groups to combat risks.
 - D) Unexpected results: what unforeseen positive and/or negative impact on the beneficiaries be observed? Why such things happened?

5. **Sustainability:**
 - A) How adaptable is the achieved change?
 - B) To what extent do positive results of the project hold after its completion?
 - C) Has the project had a positive influence on institutional capacity-building of the National Society and targeted communities?
 - D) Are results still valid?
 - E) How can results be scaled up? What can be shared to contribute to organizational learning?
 - F) Are beneficiaries able to continue using outputs without external assistance? If not What do they need to do so?

The Planned evaluation looked into:

1. **Beneficiary Satisfaction:** The evaluation checked how satisfied were beneficiaries from the program results. With special consideration of vulnerable groups and gender.

2. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the program, assess coordination with donor, partners and beneficiaries identify the main management and operational procedures, evaluate them and suggest alternatives and lessons learned.
3. Identify the challenges and obstacles faced the program team and offer suggestions for how to expand and improve the effectiveness of similar programs in the future.
4. Thoroughly study the implementation, management and coordination arrangements and structure of the program. This included an assessment of the staff, experience, and their respective responsibilities; adequacy of staff size in relation to their individual and collective responsibilities; appropriateness of program activities and arrangements to the nature of the program. Also whether coordination arrangements were in place to mitigate the risk of duplication and to ensure complementation with other recipient programs (FAO, UNICEF, CRS and others). The evaluators will also document and assess the flexibility of the Program operations and the strategies used by implementers to mitigate the operational problems caused by the security situation in targeted areas.

4.2 Data Collection methods and Tools

The evaluation followed the qualitative approach to answer the evaluation questions. Assessment tools were developed to gather data throughout the evaluation from different sources to allow for triangulation. Methods used were:

1-- Literature/Documentation review: .

The evaluation team reviewed all available project documents, and referred to a related list of references. List of documents and references attached (annex 1)

2- Semi-Structured Interviews (SSIs): 19 SSIs were conducted to allow for validation of preliminary findings, conversation and reciprocal transmission of information between the Evaluators and the key informants being interviewed. In these SSIs, a broad areas of inquiry were investigated, and specific leading questions were formulated to guide the discussion . Interviewed people names and positions are listed in annex (2).

3. Focus Group Discussions (FGD): a total of 7 FGD were conducted in targeted areas. For each discussion groups there was a guideline . While list of participants is shown in annex (3).

4. **Observation and field visits:** the evaluator visited three mitigation projects in Faqoa'a, Tubas and Beit Hanina areas to check the quality and sustainability of work.

4.3 **Data Analysis**

Program reports and records were systemically analyzed by thematic identification and categorization. Information obtained through interviews, focus group discussions, and observations were also analyzed. The aim of content analysis is to test the relations between what was designed and what has been accomplished. The importance of this analysis is to validate the achieved results. Sustainability of the project was also tested at all levels of the result chain.

5. **Results and findings**

5.1 **Program Concept and Design**

The program was originally designed in participatory approach. Interviews with project team showed that staff who were working with PRCS participated in program design, they were involved in selection of targeted communities. Communities determined their priorities through VCA activities they practiced under the program activities.

The program design followed participatory approach. The local context was analyzed, locality needs were well assessed through potential beneficiaries. This is clear in the proposal. The result chain is clear, although there was no set of SMART indicators in the proposal, however the evaluator noticed that data on indicators were shown in reports but not in a clear consistent sheet showing progress towards targets. Such sheet will help track progress and facilitate reporting. For this and as indicated by German Red Cross a training on M&E is planned January 2015 for all PRCS DRR team working on different areas including the project team.

The targeted areas were in general well selected, and characterized as vulnerable areas and hot spots in terms of occupation. Residents are highly subject to occupational and environmental risks. This is true knowing that some communities faced disasters during the program period. However, targeted communities varied in commitment of committee members to different program activities. In certain areas people were either busy in their agricultural activities or have difficulty in reaching center of activities. For example in Maleh Bedouin/ Tubas area it was not possible to form a committee and only one member used to attend the project events, This Bedouin community is very conservative men do not agree to send their women to participate in any out house activities while men are busy with herding. To solve this problem of inability to commit from some volunteers the program team added volunteers from Tubas city itself.

Those volunteers contributed to PRCS interventions when disasters happened in the targeted area. Examples of such disasters in which Tubas PRCS volunteers intervened are: flooding late 2014, and repeated demolitions of people tents in Maleh community. This is a sign of flexibility to meet challenges.

The program targeted community leaders and active people who were willing to volunteer. Most interviewed people or who attended FGD looked young. Women participation in the program was clear from the design phase as shown in planned targets, meaning it is gender balanced. Although there was no base line survey for the program, earlier studies on risk assessment showed that at village community level program, related indicators are close to zero in terms of readiness in dealing with risk and disasters. The VCA's implemented in communities could be considered as base line for each community, however need to be better focusing on program indicators.

5.2 Gender Balance:

Result of analysis of available data on balance between men and women are shown in the following table:

Table (1): Program beneficiaries disaggregated according to gender

#	Activity/ Group	Men	%Men	Women	%Women
	Community Committees	66	58%	47	42%
	Participants in workshops	362	78%	104	22%
	Participants in awareness activities	759	34%	1429	66%
	Team members	3	60%	2	40%
	Total number of participants in training trainees (Jerusalem, Tubas and Jenin) *	348	49%	362	51%

- *In Rafah 500 trainees were not detailed as male and female*

The table shows that gender participated at variable percentages in different activities and committees. The lower percentages are due to the reality of being conservative communities where women are not fully free to participate. While the number of women in voluntary community committees ranged from zero to 9, the number of men ranged from zero to 17. This means there was full board women committees (like Nabi Samoul), and in some communities there was no women, however this is a case in Maleh community where the committee is composed of just one member whose a man. The nature of this community is very conservative as Bedouins, where women are very busy and not allowed to participate. Program targeted whole communities in mitigation projects which

means natural gender balance. While in the program staff women represented 2 out of 5 of team members. . This means that the program management tried to have gender balance as much as possible.

It can be stated that the program team did their best to engage women. All community slices were targeted, young students, youth, responsible people (head of local councils, teachers), as well as volunteers from different ages and backgrounds. This was also observed in FGD, where women participation was significant in term of numbers as well as in the level of information

5.3 Relevance

The current evaluation tested the relevance of implemented program intervention to community needs as well with national and donor priorities. The following findings were reached:

Relevance to national priorities: The program design is relevant to, and was built on the developmental priorities adopted by Related Palestinian National Sector strategies valid during the program period or around (2011-2014). For example in health national strategy 2011-2013⁵ disasters and emergencies were pointed as cross cutting issue. In the planning phase of the program PRCS indicated the dire need to build the capacity of communities towards reducing disaster risk and increase their resilience in responding to emergencies in a systematic way.

A study conducted by Najah University⁶ 2009/2010 recommended that *"Authorities should see non-governmental organizations as the principal enablers of community based mitigation techniques and therefore seek their active participation. Governments should therefore stimulate training in disaster management at all levels of society. Disaster reduction training should not only aim at raising awareness, but also try to improve the understanding of the disaster process, develop skills and enhance self – realization"* This means that the program contributed to the fulfillment of the national needs.

Relevance to PRCS: the program came as one of the PRCS intervention of 2010-2014 strategy. The program fits under Strategic Goal 2: Strengthen risk reduction concept and increase the PRCS ability to respond to disasters and Strategic Goal 4: The PRCS contribute to social development to improve quality of life.

The program remained valid in 2014-2018 strategy and even became more obvious and focused. Strategic objective 1 (SO) entails *Upgrading PRCS'*

⁵ Palestinian National Health Strategy, 2011 – 2013 <http://www.moh.ps/attach/20.pdf>

⁶ Jalal AL Dabbeek , 2010. An Assessment on Disaster Risk Reduction in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. An - Najah Univ. J. Res. (N. Sc.) Vol. 24, 2010

preparedness and humanitarian interventions in times of disaster, crisis and emergency

And SO2 entailing Active participation in building the capacities and resilience of local communities and mitigating risks caused by natural and/or man-made disasters

Relevance to IFRC strategy 2020:

The program contribute to fulfilling the first two aims of IFRC strategy 2020, those are:

Strategic aim 1: Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises

Strategic aim 2: Enable healthy and safe living

- The needs of targeted groups and communities, which were already determined in the programming phase were verified and quantified in the VCA activities as participants of FGD indicated.
- Program objectives remained consistent during the program duration, despite the extra unordinary case in Rafah during the Israeli aggression 2014. In all program documents and deliverables those objectives and results were mentioned in the same manner. All deliverable or activities reports, were relevant to program results framework..
- In general results of the evaluation showed that implemented activities met the need and expectations of targeted groups. In terms of community involvement local committees were formed in every targeted location (with some exceptions, where no real committees formed). In the focus group discussions (FGD), local councils assured that they participated in selection of members of community committees, they were also part of the decision to select the risk mitigation projects, however, some indicated that they were not part of procurement for some projects like playgrounds and waste bins which were procured centrally by PRCS. .
- The training offered for community committees: volunteers and school teachers and other community members felt the importance of all training topics, especially the training related to first aid and firefighting. The level of participation and commitment to training was high in most courses with some variations between communities. In some cases like Tubas there were changes in trainees from a course to another which ended with less accumulation of comprehensive skills and knowledge to deal with disasters.
- In general women were more committed in training activities than men.
- Beneficiary contribution in project costs: In projects where design was needed local councils provided the design through private engineering offices or engineers of ministry of local governments. In cases where the mitigation

project needs cost higher than the allocated budget, the local council contributed directly, or was mobilized to reach other donors to contribute to the project, example Beit Hanina got fund from British consulate to prepare the land for the playground supports as part of the CBDRR program. Contributing to any project would never be possible if the project is not relevant to the community and falls within priorities. However, the value of the contribution was not documented.

- Voluntary work, and social solidarity was recorded in all program stages: It was verified in discussions with beneficiaries, and field supervisors. Program team highly appreciated the role of voluntary work of committees and recommended a better rewarding system for them.
- Implemented activities are consistent with the overall goal of the project and come within the planned results. Program annual reports described progress based on the five planned outcomes. Such reporting facilitated tracking of activities, however some activities contributed to more than one outcome.
- Program objectives are valid and will continue to be as it is related to natural need of intervening when a disaster occurs. The need for the outputs of the project is still there. Having equipped community leaders, volunteers, school teachers, students and local people with needed skills will last with them and be beneficial at different occasions when a threat is noticed. During SSI and FGD with CBDRR volunteer committees a mass of events were given as examples of how they used acquired skills (*will be discussed in impact and sustainability sections*).

5.4 Effectiveness

To test the effectiveness of the program in reaching its targets within the program timeline, the reports submitted by PRCS was reviewed analyzed and compared to field evaluation findings. Results showed that the program exceeded the planned targets in almost all activities. All activities were implemented during the program duration. Capacity building activities were almost the same in different areas, while mitigation projects were selected and implemented according to community priorities determined in a participatory approach through the VCA activity.

The variance between planned and attained results is positive in most cases. This means that the PRCS was effective in achieving planned results. However, there was no clear reporting on some expected results like training of vulnerable families.

Table (2): achieved results compared to originally planned in the proposal

Result	Target	Achieved	Variance	%
Benefiting communities	15	20	+5	133
Trained community members	75	113	+38	150
Indirect beneficiaries from mitigation projects	18,000	39,800	+21800	220
Drills	20	17	-3	85
# training workshops	NCP*	44		
teachers acquired knowledge on disaster preparedness	18	29	+11	161
# schools targeted	6	18	+12	300
Mitigation activities	15	22	+7	147
CBFA manuals distributed	75	117	+42	156
Volunteers and trained in CBFA	375	455	+80	121

**NCP: Not clear in the proposal*

*** NCR: Not clear in Reports*

5.5 Replication/ scaling-up

A good sign of effectiveness is finding some communities contributing to expanding their mitigation project, the good example is Rehabilitation and development of the electricity network project in Kardala. Another example in Beit Ekksa the VCA exercise ended with a database for the village. The village council adopted forms and are using for every villager visiting the office of the village council so a full database about inhabitants of the village will be reached.

5.6 Efficiency

The average unit cost of all training activities is a minimal that can be found in Palestine. Just to give examples: In Faqoua basic School for Girls, a two days awareness campaign for 150 students cost was 888NIS. And a training day in disaster risk reduction in villages of northwest of Jerusalem for 30 volunteers cost was only 552NIS. This was only possible through use of PRCS capacities and expertise. All trainers are either working or volunteering with PRCS branches. Facilities are either owned by PRCS or communities, external resources were also minimal. However, a better incentives system for trainers would be motivating them more.

For mitigation projects budgets were limited and relatively low compared to needs, collective purchasing of waste pins for different communities lead into getting good prices. However, some communities pointed their interest in direct implementation (through the community), this will lead to lower costs than through contractors, according to their opinion. From my experience in similar projects and communities direct implementation is always requested, however, we believe it proved its failure in reaching acceptable work standards.

5.7 Implementation and management arrangements

5.7.1 The program management team

The program team included manager, area coordinators with backsting and support from higher management and financial department. While training and awareness activities was delivered by more than 120 trainers from PRCS and partners. The top management line indicated that the program team was sufficient. The team followed PRCS management procedures and systems with no specified requirements from the donor.

Looking at the qualifications of the program staff there are qualified persons with multidisciplinary field of expertise related to program type of activities. All started as volunteers with PRCS, all are trainers in one or more of the program subjects. During their accompany in evaluation events they showed impressive relation with local community members.

Project coordinators used to meet regularly on monthly bases and occasionally when needed during the month. In all SSI and FGD participants valued these meetings as source of problem solving of emerging issues.

4.5.2 Management Procedures

Coordinators indicated that management procedures were acceptable, while they wished to shorten the financial procedures and having flexibility in the delegation for them. In some communities it is impossible to have VAT invoices, merchants do not accept delayed payments, so financial advances were needed. All coordinators pointed that the routine in financial payments and long time it takes to cover petty costs for training activities was not accepted by coordinators.

5.7.2 Flow of information and reporting

Quarterly reports, annual reports and final report were submitted describing progress in Implementation. Formats were not consistent, however informative. Reviewing program reports showed potential for improvement: monitoring and tracking table need to be developed from the early beginning of implementation. The format of the report could be better showing cumulative progress. Financial data could be presented in a separate report attached to the narrative. The report presentation could be better with inserting photos of before and after the intervention.

5.7.3 Implementation constraints, Risk and how mitigated

PRCS team encountered various risks, but they showed ability to manage these risks and reach or even exceed the targets. This is related to flexibility in management plans and having alternatives. Restriction on movement and accessing certain communities by occupation was major constraint. Nabi Samoel, Beit Iksha, and Barta'ah were the hardest to access with need of special coordination. leaders of some communities were less cooperative. he

war on Gaza was out of any imagination and led to destruction of the one of the mitigation projects in Shawkeh/ Rafah and delay in implementation due to the war.

Clear role and responsibilities of project coordinators contributed to the ability to reach targets within program duration. Adoption of unified manuals and forms facilitated decision making and contributed to consistency of management in different areas. The periodical meetings acted as knowledge sharing platform and contributed to institutional learning. The evaluation team observed the common language in semi-structured interviews (SSI) with program staff, which shows impact of learning process and sharing of experiences.

5.8 Program Impact and sustainability

This section shows results of the evaluation team efforts to capture the positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term economic, environmental, social change(s) produced or likely to be produced by program, Impact could be direct or indirect, intended or unintended. Sustainability is a cross cutting to all aspects of evaluation but it is much related to impact, therefore both are discussed together. However, another section will describe additional sustainability aspects .

Reviewing the implemented activities against the five program results showed that the program outputs/ outcomes had immediate impact on direct and indirect beneficiaries as well as on the community as a whole had a great growing impact and sustainability. The nature of activities touched the strategic needs of Palestinian community of increasing their resilience to face disaster risks). However, the impact varies from community to another depending on susceptibility to disasters.

The impact is described for each result as follows:

5.8.1 Result 1: Communities in West Bank and the Gaza Strip have developed their organizational structure with a view to implementing CBDRR activities

The program mobilized communities to organize their pre program ad hoc efforts to face disasters risks. In all communities except Jaba'a/ Jenin area indicted that before the project there was no well organized committees, even in Jabaa'the committee was formed 2007 by local institutions, of which PRCS was active member. The PRCS disaster committees became a reference for community members from one side and PRCS and other organizations from other side "*before forming the committee there was no specific address to call in case of emergencies, mobiles closed, people not found at time we need*

them, but now we have representatives (at least five) in different areas of Maleh", said Aref Daraghmeh/ head of village council. Same idea was pointed out in other communities. "*Voluntarism and voluntary committees became a culture in our village*", said Sami Sadeq, head of Aqaba village council. Fire fighting skills were highly valued "*The training broke the fear barrier, our idea was to escape if we see the gas jar burning, but the training showed us how to deal at time of fire*", said Snaa' Kiswani from Nabi Samouil. In Beit Ijza a fire case was recorded member of the committees helped with other people and stopped the fire.

The networking among committees is good form or organizational structure, however such structure need to be strengthened as some committees are weak, the number of members is not adequate.

When asked about the future of the committees if PRCS exit from the area, all indicated that the committee will continue working, the idea is "*conceived and printed in us*" said Ahmad Deewan- Beit Ijza. However, all insisted on their need of PRCS support to better improve what they gained.

5.8.2 Result 2: vulnerable families have acquired knowledge and skills in community-based first aid and know how to use them in emergencies

Beneficiaries received training in first aid (FA) as part of the program, as well training topics. This was reflected on their know-how. During FGD with beneficiaries participants mentioned examples on how they used their first aid to save lives. One example; FA trainee from YWCA in his way back from the training found himself in a taxi with a boy whose heart suddenly stopped and was in need of CBR, through his freshly-acquired skill he gave the boy the first aid (CBR) before taking him to the hospital and contributed to saving his life. Many other examples at school levels were mentioned were trainees assisted students in their schools. Impact was higher when school teachers were trained. While Zakareya Hasan from Beit Iksa said "*A man got a bee sting in his tongue, the bee was in his refreshment glass, I interfered according to what I got in the FA training*"

One of the most frequently mentioned important acquired skills that was efficiently used is how to carry injured people. This skill was efficiently used, people became aware that injured people should be moved carefully and by trained people.

5.8.3 Result 3: teachers and students of the six schools included in the project have acquired basic knowledge on disaster preparedness and know how to respond appropriately to emergencies

The program managed to reach three times the number of planned schools. School teachers and principals valued the training activities, awareness and drills implemented in schools. They indicated that such activities made us in better position to face risks. The major topics were: firefighting, the first aid drills and in some schools there was special awareness sessions of how to deal with suspected bodies. All met teachers and principals indicated that benefiting schools are now ready to deal with emergencies. Having students of different ages will have longer benefit of enabled students. Such committees of students are expected to lead efforts to combat any emergency.

Teacher Sameh from Jeeb school said "*the FA training helped me much for teaching the same topic (FA) as part of the Health and Environment Curricula*". While the school principle Jaber Odeh from the same school said "*The group of students and the teacher are ready to interfere when any personal accident happens, but Al Hamdo Lellah, nothing happened since we finished the training last October*".

The first aid kits, the brochures and the printed material are available in schools. Such material serve as reference for teachers and students. However, some informants indicated that the content of the FA kit is not sufficient at the school level. Increasing quantities and number of items will make it more practical.

Teachers were satisfied from the different activities, and recommended that such activities should be replicated in all schools. While in their schools they asked for repetition of the training activities for more students and teachers.

5.8.4 Result 4: The PRCS' structures for disaster management have been strengthened and decentralised

The committees formed by PRCS in the targeted communities represented nodes in DRD network and acted accordingly since formed in most areas. Committees formed a focal point, members act without waiting for interference from the PRCS branch, or other agencies. The importance is much more in areas where access is restricted even for fire fighters and ambulances, like Nabi Samoul, Beit Ikksa and Barta'a. Many examples were mentioned like in Beit Ikksa.

Informants in the SSI and FGD indicated that in case of any emergency, the community committee is the first to be present, the role is to do the assessment of the situation following skills acquired through the VCA

training, report to PRCS and give idea of what to do. Doing so relieved PRCS from the many indirect calls of the community members. The best example is during the demolishing of Bedouin tan houses in Maleh, committee from Tubas (who was trained through the program) helped people to build their tents following the training they got, and helped people through distributing relief needs during flooding.

Communities became more resilient with DRR committees through the following aspects:

- The committee, the trained teachers and students are the qualified people to act systematically and scientifically. The VCA skills are
- Breaking the fear barrier among committee members in cases of emergency especially fire
- Awareness of the emergency concept not only of the committee but also to community members who had the chance to access or read the material produced through the program.
- Having the committee as an address to go for during emergency, for the PRCS from one side and community members from the other side. Those people are closer to the event site so their response could be quick and more efficient.
- The networking and relations formed between committee members during training gave them the possibility to assist during emergencies
- The mitigation project: in some cases mitigation projects contributed to improving community resiliency like the box culverts, lighting a road. However, despite being selected in a participatory approach through VCA, some projects could not be guaranteed as mitigation activities. Even though, informants indicated that these were their priorities, the top priorities need budgets much larger than the program budget, therefore they were obliged to go to what can be implemented. At the same time such small projects are a form of community mobilization, an incentive of the committee, and a good example of how they should act.

5.8.5 Outcome 5: Enhance PRCS disaster management:

PRCS formed 20 voluntary committees in the 20 targeted communities. All members were equipped with needed skills. Such committees act with direct coordination with PRCS. These are reliable committees through which rapid intervention can be taken without the need of PRCS staff to go to the site of disaster, unless need be. Such committees contributed to the resilience of communities (discussed earlier).

PRCS enriched resources through preparing and printing a number of disaster risk extension and awareness pamphlets, banners and rollups distributed to beneficiaries. Such material can be replicated and used for larger slice of people. The content is valid for a long period.

Activities of the evaluated program were integrated with other PRCS programs. Participants in FGD were in many occasions referring to other PRCS activities. As well as with other stakeholders like civil defense. PRCS in CBDRR program coordinates well with the similar program implemented in other areas (Salit, and Nablus) through fund from German Red Cross, and Spanish Red Cross. This was assured by representatives of both RCS. Resources or PRCS, like the pool of trainers, are used in all similar programs.

The PRCS volunteers, staff and trainer (a total of around 120) enriched their experience while implementing activities, especially as almost all trainings were offered internally. A trainer who works in the PRCS general management/head of planning department considers the training and contacting with local communities as an opportunity to sense their needs. Such assessment was reflected in the planning process, specifically in developing 2015-2018 PRCS strategy.

In all discussions and interviews program staff, volunteers and coaches highly valued the training they received through the program. It has contributed to increasing the efficiency of people. Training is recognized as investment in people, its impact last and multiplies by time.

Story from Jabaa'

- Jabaa' town in Jenin could be the best example or real success where a branch for PRCS is present and the existing, active wide committee was empowered through the program. At the same time the town suffered 2014 flooding and other disasters. In such case volunteers had the chance to show their skills. Their intervention helped mitigate the flooding disaster. They worked on different aspects of how to deal with disaster, they alarmed, installed guiding signs and alarming ones, evacuated people, rescued others, gave shelters, and distributed relief material. The committee contributed significantly to disaster reduction. Such case need to be thoroughly systematized.

5.8.6 Other Sustainability aspects

Although sustainability was discussed with impact there are some observed aspects and analysis not covered, like:

- The program focused on soft skills and some infrastructure that are well known for its durability and long lasting. Other than playground equipment, minimal maintenance is needed for such outputs.
- Involving local committees, CBO's in implementation gives them feeling of ownership strong enough to do maintenance as needed. The activity that needs frequent remedy is playgrounds. Committees through village councils showed commitment for maintenance beyond program duration.
- Participatory and Strict site selection criteria ensure the targeting of interested people. Once an intervention is relevant to a beneficiary it is sustained.

5.9 Satisfaction

Interviewed persons showed high satisfaction of the program activities and the way it was managed. They indicated that activities came to fulfill their actual perceived needs. Trainings were implemented in an interactive way where practical training dominated. They were involved in selecting the mitigation activity. However, some communities had their notes on implementation specially the playgrounds. This was also observed through the field visit to Faqoa'a village where playground equipment were not installed

properly. Safety measure were not considered, sand was not yet spread around. Project coordinator indicated that they called the contractor who, yet did not receive his final payment, to do the proper work. From our experience, the budget of the playground could never be enough to deliver a well functioning park. Same for Ein El Bayda community the budget for the electricity project was not enough. For this the village council had to contribute more.

One aspect of satisfaction is the request of met people to expand the program to neighboring communities.

6. CONCLUSIONS

1. The program came as continuation and complementation of PRCS similar activities with more focus on disaster reduction the fact that maximized impact of the program. This integrated approach lead to better impact and sustainable results.
2. The type of program being carried out successfully by PRCS and partners over three years, was based on sustained support to vulnerable families. It is an integrated program, that was not possible without effective targeting process.
3. Designing the program in a participatory approach led to high relevance evaluation results for communities. The program comes also in alignment with the IFRC and partners.
4. This program produced a list of awareness and training material which can be employed in future similar activities.
5. The program team followed up program activities, however monitoring need to be better organized through a special M&E system.
6. Periodical meetings of a program team with presentation of achievements and discussing progress in work, and coordination and communication with similar programs are considered a good learning process for all parties. Learning need to be complimented with systematization of success and failure.
7. The program invested in PRCS team capacity building. Fruits of this investment will continue beyond the program duration. Such capacity will make expansion of activities to needy vulnerable communities easier.
8. The impact of program activities could be seen when a disaster or emergency happens, something that no one wishes. However, having a ready to respond community is one major output expected from the program, and this is the case most targeted communities.
9. Targeted communities who showed commitment in program activities, and accumulated skills through having same persons in training increased their resilience to DRR.
10. The baseline survey and profiling of communities is basic for evaluation. In this program there was no systemic baseline survey, however, the VCA could

help show the situation at the start up. Almost all communities were with no systematic readiness to respond to emergencies'.

11. The program has success stories in different areas and activities. Lack of proper documentation of such success was a weakness in this program.
12. Working through village councils has dual effect, presence of members of local councils synergized and facilitated implementation of the program and at the same time the program empowered local councils themselves.
13. Investment in people through training have a long term effect not only on people but also on their communities. The program ended up with pool of experts in training, awareness, drills, camps and VCA, such capacity is inevitably needed in future programs.
14. Satisfaction level is a function of proper need assessment and administration, it was high in majority of activities, however higher in soft skills than in mitigation activities.
15. Having PRCS branch in a community like Jabaa' and Tubas in which the local councils, CBO's as well as volunteers are represented is a model of success for community participation and involvement. It engages official organizations like local councils without adding a burden on them , gives legitimacy to the committee and contribute to sustainability of outputs.
16. The evaluation team tried to measure success of the program results within with comparing results to the study "*Key determinants of a successful CBDRR programme in 2011*" which was carried out by IFRC in over 700 communities as part of the Tsunami Recovery Program (TRP). The CBDRR program was compared to said study determinants of success and in brief the comparison conclusions were as follows:

Stakeholders: the program contributed to:

1. The motivation and capacity of the community and community leaders in DRR
2. The motivation and capacity of the RCRC stakeholders and the strength of partnerships between them
3. The capacity of external actors (government, NGOs, private sector) and the strength of partnerships with them

Program design: the program team showed

4. High level of community participation and ownership of the CBDRR program
5. High level of integration of CBDRR programs with other sectors
6. Having an appropriate balance between procedures and flexibility in implementation

Program management: The PRCS

- 7. Had worked on time to implement CBDRR program, although some delay was noticed in some activities.**
- 8. Used Internal as well as partner organization resources to implement program activities, but need more capacity building and better incentives for volunteers.**

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Community voluntary committees proved to contribute to disaster reduction, such committees need more investment, expansion in numbers and replication in other communities, starting with more vulnerable.**
- 2. Although the reporting procedures and the program report are informative precise and objective, the structure could be improved by moving detailed tables to annexes as well as leave financial data to the financial report.**
- 3. Monitoring matrix including all program indicators would facilitate tracking of program activities and results, as well thrive the report.**
- 4. Although communities were new to program activities which form a landmark for evaluation, a baseline survey conducted at the commencement of the program will assist in evaluation and better measure achievement. In future similar program VCA if implemented first in communities with some customization according to monitoring matrix, would act as a baseline survey. For training activities, a pre and post test would have been better to evaluate training.**
- 5. A mid-term evaluation of the program could be a learning process, with lessons learned reflected on the program itself. Annual program review is also recommended.**
- 6. Having in-house experience to implement the program activities, especially the training is a model that should be enhanced, however, grafting with external knowledge at the level of capacity building of PRCS team should be sought.**
- 7. Mitigation activities budgets should be increased to have a full output that meets standards. Budgets should not necessarily be equal sum for different communities, rather be determined according to priorities.**

8. **Local committees in coordination with the local councils and support of the PRCS equipped with the scientific approach of need assessment through VCA are recommended to approach donors whose mandate are related to the nature of mitigation activities, to get a fully fledged entity that prevent or reduce disaster risk.**
9. **Selection of mitigation projects should follow a predefined and agreed criteria showing the nature of mitigation project and not only relay on what priorities are coming from the VCA. Such criteria could be explained at the time or prioritization of needs. Some needs could be a community priority but by no mean considered a DRR intervention.**
10. **Efforts of the program invested in the capacity building need to be continued and scaled up to other communities.**
11. **Documenting success stories is crucial for the learning process, not only for reporting purposes. Stories should be systematized in a sharing modality , so as to use in training and share with peers. This necessitates building the capacity of PRCS and volunteers in systematization, particularly in writing success stories and video documentation.**
12. **Incentives to program team and volunteers should be studied well and improved. Those incentives could be covering transportation costs, communication and stipend.**
13. **Operational manuals, awareness and training material developed and used by the PRCS team are assets for responding to disaster risks. These are highly recommended to be distributed to all communities not only the targeted areas**

8. ANNEXES

Annex (1): List of Reviewed Documents

Annex (2): List of interviewed people in Semi Structured Interviews

Annex (3): List of Participants in Focus Group Discussions