

British Red Cross

Renewal Audit – Summary Report – 2023/09/04

1. General information

1.1 Organisation

Type	Mandates	Verified
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Membership/Network <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Federated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> With partners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Development <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Development <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy
Legal registration	Special legal status - Royal Charter	
Head Office location	London	
Total number of organisation staff	3,353	

1.2 Audit team

Lead auditor	Jorge Menendez Martinez
Second auditor	Agnès Konrat
Third auditor	
Observer	
Expert	
Witness / other participants	

1.3 Scope of the audit

CHS Verification Scheme	Independent Verification
Audit cycle	Second
Coverage of the audit	Whole organisation. Domestic & International programmes and projects.

1.4 Sampling*

Total number of Country Programmes in scope			27
Total number of sites for onsite visit			2
Total number of sites for remote assessment			4
Name of country programmes	Included in final sample (Y/N)	Rationale for sampling and selection / de-selection decision	Onsite or Remote
Random sampling			
Eswatini	Y	Eswatini represents an appropriate example of BRC's work in the South Africa Region.	Onsite
Anguilla	N	Anguilla was not included because the UK was a more appropriate example of BRC's work in domestic services.	
Lebanon	Y	Lebanon represents an appropriate example of BRC's work in MENA Region.	Remote

South Africa	N	Nepal was included instead of South Africa to include a Country Programme of Asia Region.	
Nepal	Y	Nepal represents an appropriate example of BRC's work in Asia Region	Remote
DRC	N	DRC was not included because Sudan provided an example of how BRC supports the Sudanese Red Crescent through a Partner National Society (Danish Red Cross).	
Sierra Leona	Y	Sierra Leone represents an appropriate example of BRC's work in West Africa Region.	Remote
Sudan	Y	Sudan is a good example of how BRC supports a Host National Society through a Partner National Society (Danish Red Cross).	Remote

Purposive sampling

UK	UK represents a significant aspect of BRCs programming and project	Onsite
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Any other sampling performed for this audit:

The sampling covers both domestic and international programmes and country operating models, as well as different ways of working internationally through Partner National Societies (PNS) and Host National Societies (HNS).

The auditors purposively selected projects in each international country's programme portfolio to obtain a relevant sample of the sectors, as well as activities, in which BRC works. Domestic services were selected in collaboration with BRC to ensure the sampled services provide a typical example of BRC services in the UK; one of the services selected is in Wales, and the other in England, providing geographical coverage.

The auditors, together with BRC, purposively selected the list of staff, volunteers and some communities to interview in each country programme. Other community members were randomly selected when they went to receive assistance or service from BRC or the HNS.

Sampling risks identified:

Based on the representative sample achieved for the audit of BRC's humanitarian and development mandates, and the available evidence generated, the auditors have confidence in the findings and conclusions of the audit.

**It is important to note that the audit findings are based on a sample of an organisation's activities, programmes, and documentation as well as direct observation. Findings are analysed to determine an organisation's systematic approach and application of all aspects of the CHS across different contexts and ways of working.*

2. Activities undertaken by the audit team

2.1 Locations Assessed

Locations	Dates	Onsite or remote
London, United Kingdom, Head Office	2023/05/09 - 2023/06/07	Onsite and remote
Eswatini	2023/05/15 - 2023/05/19	Onsite
United Kingdom domestic programmes (Wales and Essex)	2023/05/22 - 2023/05/25	Onsite
Sudan	2023/05/31	Remote
Nepal	2023/06/01	Remote
Lebanon	2023/06/03 – 2023/06/05	Remote
Sierra Leone	2023/06/05	Remote

2.2 Interviews

Level / Position of interviewees	Number of interviewees		Onsite/ Remote
	Female	Male	
Head Office			
Management	8	10	Remote & Onsite
Staff	8	2	Remote & Onsite
International Country Programme and Domestic Services			
Management	4	2	Remote & Onsite
Staff	12	2	Remote & Onsite
Volunteers	0	3	Onsite
Host National Society staff	6	6	Onsite
Stakeholder		1	Onsite
Total number of interviewees	38	26	64

2.3 Consultations with communities

Type of group and location	Number of participants		Onsite or remote
	Female	Male	
Group discussion #1 Eswatini - Food distribution - Watsan	3	3	Onsite
Group discussion #2 Eswatini - Eswatini Red Cross Community Volunteers	1	2	Onsite
Group discussion #3 Eswatini - Livelihood	5		Onsite
Group discussion #4 Eswatini - Eswatini Red Cross Community Volunteers	2		Onsite
Group discussion #5 - Community Leaders	1	4	Onsite
Group discussion #6 - Community Leader - Volunteer - Beneficiaries	2	3	Onsite
Interview #1 Eswatini - Clinic user	1		Onsite
Interview #2 Eswatini - Clinic user	1		Onsite
Interview #3 Wales - Health Service user	1		Onsite
Interview #4 Wales - Health Service user	1	1	Onsite
Interview #5 Wales - Health Service user		1	Onsite
Interview #6 Wales - Health Service user		1	Onsite
Interview #7 Wales - Health Service user	1	1	Onsite
Interview #8 Essex - Refugee Service user	1		Onsite
Interview #9 Essex - Refugee Service user	1		Onsite
Total number of participants	21	16	37

2.4 Opening meeting

Date	2023/05/09
Location	Online
Number of participants	20
Any substantive issues arising	no

2.5 Closing meeting

Date	2023/06/26
Location	Online
Number of participants	8
Any substantive issues arising	no

3. Background information on the organisation

3.1 General information

The British Red Cross (BRC), founded in 1870 and granted a Royal Charter in 1908, is a member of the International Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) Movement, the world's largest humanitarian network with 14 million volunteers in 191 countries.

The Movement has three main components:

- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) helps people affected by conflict and armed violence and promotes the laws that protect victims of war.
- The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) works with National Societies in responding to disasters around the world coordinating and directing international assistance following natural and man-made disasters in non-conflict situations.
- 191 individual and autonomous National Societies dedicated to the fundamental principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

The Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) statutes explain that “The components of the Movement, while maintaining their independence within the limits of the present Statutes, act at all times in accordance with the Fundamental Principles and cooperate with each other in carrying out their respective tasks in pursuance of their common mission.”

In the UK, 3,353 staff and more than 12,000 volunteers support the BRC in its role as a crisis preparedness, response and recovery organisation supporting first response, and a range of other services, including ambulance, health service, and refugee and asylum seeker support services. Internationally, the BRC partners bilaterally with Host National Societies (HNS) and multilaterally with the IFRC and ICRC. In addition to HNS, the BRC also supports Red Cross organisations in British Overseas Territories - Overseas Branches (OSBs).

BRC's corporate wide Strategy 2030, set up in 2020, sets out goals under three priority issues:

1. **Disasters and emergencies:** People are safe and able to survive and recover whenever disaster strikes.
2. **Health inequalities in the UK:** People in the UK receive the care and support they need without falling through gaps in the health system.
3. **Displacement and migration:** People experiencing displacement feel safe, live with dignity and have choices and opportunities on their journey.

Within each priority issue, Strategy 2030 applies three thematic priorities to domestic and international interventions: service and programme delivery, strengthening partnerships, and advocating for change. A commitment to carbon neutrality, and themes of social connectedness and kindness run through the strategy: “BRC will work with people,

communities and different organisations involved to strengthen these connections, so that, together, they can better prepare for, respond to and recover from a crisis.”

Strategy 2030 also raises the profile of the Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) approach as a specific focus area with learning questions and targets to meet. The “Better and Better in UK Services” quality improvement initiative provides avenues for achieving this commitment.

Under BRC’s corporate wide strategy sit the International Strategy 2019-2025 and the domestic strategy, the 2023-25 Directorate Business Plan.

The chosen areas of focus in which BRC will prioritise resource allocation and partnership for its international programmes are:

1. Disaster Management.
2. Migration and Displacement.
3. Hunger Crisis and Famine Prevention.
4. Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA).
5. Community Engagement and Accountability.

The intended outcomes for the BRC Transforming UK Operations programme are:

1. Improving the quality and consistency of services.
2. Improving people experience.
3. Extending reach and impact.

In 2022, BRC’s income was £439.0 million, up 94% from the 2021 income of £226.5 million, driven largely by contributions in response to the crisis in Ukraine.

3.2 Governance and management structure

The BRC is governed by a structure that includes a Board of Trustees and its executive leadership. The Board of Trustees (Board) provides oversight and strategic guidance, while the executive leadership team is responsible for implementing the organisation’s objectives and managing its day-to-day operations.

The Board is committed to ensuring that the governance arrangements are effective and relevant, as well as ensuring that the board members reflect the communities in which BRC operates. It has up to 13 members - 7 elected members and up to 6 co-opted members selected for their skills and experience from sectors such as business, the diplomatic service, and the health sector. Recent changes include the appointment of a new Chair in 2022 and the onboarding of two new members in 2023. BRC has nine committees to support the Board: Finance and audit committee, Remuneration committee, Risk and assurance committee, Governance and nominations committee, Emblem committee, Ethical fundraising and quality assurance committee, Investment sub-committee, Movement policy committee, and UK Solidarity Fund committee.

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT), led by the Chief Executive, oversees and implements the corporate strategy per society policies. ELT reports to the Board via the Chief Executive. The ELT comprises the Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Supporter Officer, Executive Director of Communications and External Affairs, Executive Director of International, and the Executive Director of UK Operations.

To fulfil its Strategy 2030, BRC is undergoing an organisational redesign process, “Fit For the Future”, with change-goals in strategy; organisational design; governance, performance and management; leadership, people and culture; data, insight and technology; processes and locations; products and services; and income and expenditure. The process seeks to improve decision-making, internal coordination and learning through structural changes towards fewer, larger and more coordinated teams able to meet community needs more efficiently.

Recent and upcoming changes in senior management that could have an impact on how the CHS is integrated into BRC's activities include the departure of the CEO in 2023 and the arrival of a new Director of Performance and Accountability in 2022.

3.3 Internal quality assurance mechanisms and risk management

The Board holds principal responsibility for risk management arrangements and identifying and mitigating major risks. Committees of the board, along with other internal steering groups, provide regular in-year oversight of specific risks. The corporate risk register is also reviewed by the ELT and submitted quarterly to the board's finance and audit committee, and risk and assurance committee (RAC).

BRC's risk management culture includes the following:

- Visibility and ownership of risks.
- Compliance with external legislation, regulations, contracts and standards.
- Health, safety and security.
- Flexible and adequate responses.

BRC's Risk Management Framework, Policy and Procedures ensure risks are identified, assessed, managed and actively monitored, and are supported by a risk register in each of the directorates and an overarching corporate risk register, which sets out its top risks. In 2022, the principal risks were set out in four main categories: strategic, financial, operational and compliance, and included a focus on the Ukraine crisis and the rise in the cost of living. In September 2022, The Board approved The Risk Appetite Statement, which states the amount of risk the BRC is willing to accept in pursuit of its strategic objectives.

The International Quality Methodology (IQM) supports quality and accountable programming in all contexts in which International Directorate works, and includes specific guidance on how to manage risks. Internal quality assurance includes the use of the Programme Information Management System (PIMS), streamlining the performance and accountability expectations for staff, as well as tools to use.

Risk and incident minimisation is a priority focus of the "Better and Better in UK Services" initiative, laying out BRC's commitment to quality improvement. Risk in new activities in the UK is considered along multiple lines: strategic insight, business development, practical systems support requirements (i.e. IT) and quality and safety. Under the Quality Initiative lies the Health Service Quality Standards Framework, which sets out BRC's evidence-based assessment process to measure the quality and effectiveness of service delivery across the service.

Risk-based internal audits feed identified risks into the directorate management processes by the Head of Internal Audit. Audits assess compliance against an internal set of quality standards that must be met for BRC to comply with the internal audit policy (one of which is a complaint management process). Audits look at the existence of systems, awareness and implementation of systems and learning within and from systems. Any risks identified during internal audit assessments of the quality of programmes and services will be flagged through relevant directorate risk registers and committees of the Board of Trustees.

BRC's code of conduct and RCRC Fundamental Principles present standards of professional conduct and serve as the foundation of BRC's policies. They aim to ensure that BRC carries out its work following ethical and moral principles, covering sexual abuse and harassment, fraud, corruption, and other abuses of power. BRC webpage indicates how to raise a complaint.

3.4 Work with partner organisations

The Fundamental Principal "UNITY" clearly state that there can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country; therefore, the BRC, as a member of The Movement, cannot directly implement projects in any country outside the UK. The manner by which RCRC members organise is described in the Sevilla Agreement "Movement Coordination for Collective Impact Agreement", this agreement applies to those international activities which the components are called upon to carry out in cooperation, on a bilateral or multilateral basis. The Code of Good Partnership was adopted at the Council of Delegates¹ in 2009, and its objective is to promote a culture of respectful attitudes and behaviours in carrying out humanitarian work by the components of The Movement. The BRC works internationally, mainly in partnership with Host National Societies (HNS). In emergencies and crises, BRC supports the IFRC and ICRC with funds and technical staff if necessary. In some countries, BRC also partners with Partner National Societies that already work with the HNS in order to make efficient use of available resources.

BRC's approach to partnership is based on the belief that working together will result in greater humanitarian impact. The partnership policy (at this moment under review) details the principles that BRC's approach will have:

- Contextualised: All partnerships are different, based on the partner's context, strategic priorities, strengths and capacity needs and on BRCs own capacity to meet these needs.
- Shared partnership vision: partnerships should be built on jointly agreeing on how BRC can best support partners to effectively fulfil their mandates and have a greater sustained humanitarian impact.
- Equality and mutual benefit: BRC is committed to equality and mutual benefit in its partnerships and understands that both partners achieve not only greater humanitarian impact by working together, but gain significant value, learning and knowledge from each other.
- Effectiveness: partnerships should aspire to be as effective as possible.
- Mutual accountability, integrity, openness and courage: partners should be accountable to one another and to other relevant stakeholders, including affected communities and donors.

BRC, before entering into a partnership with HNS or PNS, conducts a due diligence exercise to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement, many aspects of which are relevant to the CHS. HNS develop their own development plans, that BRC supports.

BRC also has "Overseas Branches", that is, branches of the Society established in the British Overseas Territories. Such Overseas Branches may be established as separate legal entities in accordance with the relevant local legislation, but they are part of BRC for the purposes of the Movement. BRC supports them with funds and technical advice for project and programme development as well as their capacity building.

4. Overall performance of the organisation

4.1 Effectiveness of the governance, internal quality assurance and risk

BRC continues focusing on strengthening its approach to quality assurance and has good management and quality assurance systems in place. The Performance and Accountability Unit for international programmes and projects, and the Insight and Improvement Unit for domestic services are in charge of oversight of the application of the CHS across the organisation.

¹ The Council of delegate is the forum through which the Movement sets a common strategy and approaches to global humanitarian issues.

management of the organisation

BRC updated its Risk Management Policy and Procedure in 2022. At both country and programme levels, BRC staff develop risk registers. Risk management includes:

- Staff and volunteer training on BRC policies and procedures to establish expectations.
- Risk-based internal audits.
- External audits, risk assessments and regular monitoring.

There is a culture in BRC that serious misconduct is taken seriously and acted upon. This is clearly conveyed by management and builds upon the language of PSEA and safeguarding. Policies reflect a clear commitment to avoid negative effects, design safe programmes for all participants, and meet the needs of people with specific vulnerabilities; however, this culture is not in place in all Country Programmes. Efforts are made to involve the participation and engagement of communities at all stages of the work. Staff at all levels of the organisation are able to explain their responsibilities, demonstrating the degree to which they have been internalised. BRC consistently informs communities and service users about the Red Cross and programmes, projects, and services that BRC and HNS are implementing and what they intend to deliver. BRC at the domestic level include information about the staff behaviours in leaflets for the service users; however, BRC staff and the HNS staff do not systematically inform communities and service users about the behaviour they can expect from BRC and HNS staff.

The audit notes the effort to implement the Community Engagement Approach (CEA) at the international level and Co-production Approach at domestic level. Feedback is welcome at both domestic and international levels, and service users and community members have several means to provide feedback; however, mechanisms are not universally established and do not systematically provide appropriate avenues for reporting misconduct.

BRC shows a high level of commitment to addressing the issues raised at the Mid-Term Audit and developed an action plan after receiving the audit report; the action plan is a live document that is updated according to action ownership.

4.2 Level of implementation of the CHS and progress on compliance

BRC has a good performance in the application of CHS and has demonstrated that its programmes and projects are appropriate, relevant, coordinated, and complementary. Effort is targeted to ensure that HNS capacities are strengthened, and assistance is based on communication, participation, and feedback. Practices that align with CHS are not yet fully consistent across all country programmes, for example, in relation to application of the Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) Approach.

Strengths identified since the previous audit are:

- BRC has made progress in safeguarding since the last audit. BRC has trained focal points at the domestic and international levels. They are in charge of supporting staff and volunteers including HNS staff and volunteers.
- BRC continues to support HNS and BRC staff with training and advice on CEA and Protection, Gender and Inclusion.
- The Partnership Policy and BRC approach to localisation are in the process of being updated to ensure the HNS are at the centre, and they are able to decide on which areas BRC can support them. Also, in line with this, BRC has a commitment to improve the capacities of the HNS to deliver projects and programmes.
- BRC continues to develop training and tools to ensure the HNS and its staff and volunteers increase their capacities.
- BRC is updating its complaints mechanisms and protocols to ensure they are in line with the CHS requirements.

Some weaknesses remain in specific areas, such as:

- An absence of complaints mechanisms in some Country Programmes.
- Ensuring BRC staff and volunteers, and HSN staff and volunteers, inform communities and service users about how BRC staff and volunteers should behave.
- Identifying safeguarding and environmental risks in international programmes.

4.3 Performance against each CHS Commitment

Commitment	Strong points and areas for improvement	Feedback from communities	Average score*
<p>Commitment 1: Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant</p>	<p>BRC continues to uphold its commitment to impartial assistance based on needs in its international programmes and domestic services. BRC has articulated a common understanding of how to take account of the diverse needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of communities through Safe and Inclusive (S&I) programming and Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA).</p> <p>BRC's context and stakeholder analysis processes are well integrated at the service and programme design stage, and BRC-funded programmes are based on assessments. However, assessments are not conducted in a systematic and standardised way, and stakeholder analyses are not yet systematic. In addition, systems to respond to incidents of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Gender Base Violence (GBV) are not always identified at the initial stages of services and programmes.</p>	<p>Communities and service users perceive BRC as impartial, independent and non-discriminatory and feel that the organisation takes their diversity into account.</p> <p>Project activities and support received are in line with their needs and priorities, and there is evidence of changes in project activities according to their needs, preferences and capacities.</p>	2.7
<p>Commitment 2: Humanitarian response is effective and timely</p>	<p>BRC designs realistic programmes that use relevant technical standards and are timely in their delivery.</p> <p>Through the update of its Security Policy and tools, BRC has made progress in identifying constraints and risks. However, mitigation measures are not systematically identified for safeguarding risks in its international programmes. Domestically, BRC continues to use its position as an auxiliary to the UK government to identify and refer unmet needs and some referral pathways have been broadened to support new services. Internationally, BRC now requires the mapping of referral pathways at the design stage. Referral pathways are not systematically documented.</p>	<p>Community members and service users are satisfied with the timeliness of services and programmes.</p> <p>They state that they can access activities and services safely and without any fear of harm. They perceive that BRC and HNS staff and volunteers have adequate technical skills. However, not all communities feel their input is listened to and taken into consideration, or that their views are sought on the activities, outputs and outcomes of responses.</p>	2.6

	<p>Programme monitoring has improved, with new frameworks to assess BRC's domestic services. The monitoring processes of BRC's international programmes report against objectives and performance indicators, but they do not, yet, systematically enable the identification and addressing of poor performance, mistakes and weaknesses.</p>		
<p>Commitment 3: Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects</p>	<p>BRC continues to commit to resilience building, disaster risk reduction and the strengthening of local capacities through its strategies, policies, and its way of working through community-based volunteers and HNS. BRC focuses on cash transfers and on the localisation agenda. Also, BRC promotes services and projects that support early recovery and the local economy.</p> <p>Through the update of the Safeguarding Policy, the Risk Policy and associated tools, BRC has improved its capacity to identify potential or actual unintended negative effects, including on the environmental aspect. However, BRC does not yet systematically act upon them, and guidance on providing assistance to survivors/victims of SEA is not systematically in place, contextualised or applicable to all levels of the organisation.</p> <p>BRC has made progress in training staff on data security, but there is still no consistent and robust system in place to safeguard personal information collected from communities.</p>	<p>Community members and service users state that their resilience has been strengthened thanks to the activities they participated in, and that they feel more prepared to respond to emergencies and recover earlier after a crisis.</p> <p>They could explain how some activities benefit the local economy.</p> <p>Communities testify that they always sign a consent form when providing personal information or images to BRC and trust the organisation to manage their data safely.</p>	2.6
<p>Commitment 4: Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback</p>	<p>The imperative of engaging communities and reflecting their priorities is founded in CEA and Co-production Approaches, and flows through policies, guidance and procedures for staff.</p> <p>BRC ensures inclusive participation and engagement of communities at all stages of the work.</p> <p>BRC have a policy and procedure in place to ensure that the information shared at regional, country and community levels is appropriate. However, BRC does not ensure that staff, volunteers, and HNS consistently communicate information about how they are expected to behave.</p> <p>BRC demonstrates good practice in communicating respectfully and appropriately for different, especially vulnerable groups.</p>	<p>Communities, including marginalised people, confirm their participation in activities and discussions about the support they receive. They feel consulted and involved. They indicate that communication materials are accessible in terms of comprehensibility and appropriateness.</p> <p>Although they feel BRC and HNS staff and volunteers behave well, communities were not informed about how BRC expects its staff to behave.</p>	2.6
<p>Commitment 5: Complaints are</p>	<p>BRC has made significant progress towards reaching the requirements of this commitment.</p>	<p>Community members and service users feel safe to</p>	1.9

<p>welcomed and addressed</p>	<p>BRC has updated its complaints policy to address previous weaknesses, such as providing information on the timelines for managing complaints or how to refer complaints outside of the scope of the organisation. These changes are reflected on BRC's website and service user documentation. In parallel, BRC has made progress towards launching a new system to handle complaints that is intended to resolve the current system's weaknesses and enable the organisation to handle complaints in a systematic way. Some components have been launched but the system is not yet fully in place.</p> <p>BRC has made progress in supporting HNS to develop and strengthen their complaints mechanisms through CEA trainings and funding of staff. However, complaints handling processes are neither systematically documented nor in place in all BRC-funded programmes, and BRC and HNS do not systematically monitor and assess levels of awareness of communities regarding commitments made on Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH) and accepted behaviour of volunteers and staff.</p>	<p>make complaints, without fear of any repercussions by doing so. However, none have been consulted on any part of the complaint handling process, and not all are aware that they can raise complaints regarding the behaviour and attitude of staff.</p> <p>Most interviewed community members do not know how complaints are handled and addressed, nor are they informed about how and when complaints are referred to other parties or services.</p>	
<p>Commitment 6: Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary</p>	<p>BRC sets expectations for coordination and collaboration with others, mainly with the RCRC Movement. Staff participate in, lead or co-lead working groups and coordination structures.</p> <p>Coordination and collaboration with national and local authorities are key elements in the Movement. The Movement members define their relationship with the authorities in their country as auxiliaries, which are focused on supporting the government at national and local levels. Also, BRC requires its staff and HNS to conduct a stakeholder analysis to ensure all humanitarian actors are identified, and that BRC and HNS complement their work.</p> <p>BRC shares knowledge and research through multiple channels in the humanitarian sector. BRC staff share programme information with the Movement members, government and other stakeholders during the forum, conferences, working groups, etc. Through the CEA Hub and Cash Transfer Hub, BRC shares information and best practice in these areas to all humanitarian actors through the available public websites. BRC is also an active contributor to ReliefWeb and ALNAP.</p>	<p>Community members did not experience any duplication of assistance received, nor did they feel that the work done by BRC and HNS interfered with other activities or services provided by other stakeholders.</p> <p>They report that clear information is provided to them by partners or via local committees.</p>	<p>3.0</p>

	BRC supports HNS respectfully and is committed to equality and mutual accountability and learning.		
Commitment 7: Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve	<p>BRC continuously learns and improves and shares its resources and training materials with the Movement members and with the sector.</p> <p>New programmes, projects and services are designed based on prior experience, and existing programmes are adapted on the basis.</p> <p>Evaluations and learning reviews are conducted as per procedures. Management response plans are developed from evaluation findings and recommendations to ensure their implementation.</p> <p>BRC has mechanisms to record knowledge and experience, although systems to make this accessible throughout the organisation are not yet in place and BRC and HNS do not share learning and innovation with communities or service users.</p>	<p>Communities and service users cite examples where their feedback has resulted in changes to project and service activities.</p> <p>Communities and service users consider that BRC and HSN have improved over time. No communities and service users recall that BRC or HNS shared with them some learnings or innovations.</p>	2.7
Commitment 8: Staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably	<p>BRC staff continue working according to the mandate and values of the organisation and to agreed objectives and performance standards. Staff policies and procedures are fair, transparent, non-discriminatory and compliant with local employment law.</p> <p>BRC staff and volunteers are aware of the Code of Conduct, safety and security plans and the main policies and procedures. BRC has an appropriate induction process that ensures that new staff know the main policies and procedures. BRC staff have up-to-date job descriptions, receive performance appraisals and training to improve their skills and competencies. However, BRC does not always ensure that staff workload is appropriate according to human resource capacities and role requirements.</p> <p>BRC assesses the capacity of its partners and ensures that they have relevant policies in place, such as a code of conduct, safeguarding policy, anti-fraud policy, among others.</p>	<p>Communities and service users state that BRC staff and volunteers, and HNS staff and volunteers, are competent and skilled to implement the activities.</p> <p>They are satisfied with the behaviour of the staff and volunteers, and expressed that they are treated with respect and dignity.</p>	2.7
Commitment 9: Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose	BRC manages the risk of corruption and fraud through various methods such as procurement procedures, policies, guidelines, training, and internal audit. BRC's due diligence verifies that HNS have mechanisms in place to manage the risk of corruption and fraud; if partners do not have these in place, BRC supports them in	Communities and service users consider that BRC and HNS use resources appropriately and have not witnessed any misuse of funds.	2.8

	<p>developing and implementing them as part of capacity-building plans if the HNS requires them.</p> <p>Before accepting a donation, BRC carries out due diligence on the donor to ensure that it does not compromise Red Cross' principles and values.</p> <p>The Green Policy clearly states BRC's commitment to protecting the environment; however, BRC and the HNS do not systematically consider the impact of the service and projects on the environment.</p>	<p>They all say that they are aware of BRC and HNS' commitment to anti-fraud and anti-corruption.</p>	
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* *Note: Average scores are a sum of the scores per commitment divided by the number of indicators in each Commitment, except when one of the indicators of a commitment scores 0 or if several scores 1 on the indicators of a Commitment lead to the issuance of a major non-conformity/ weakness at the level of the Commitment. In these two cases the overall score for the Commitment is 0.*

5. Summary of open weaknesses


Weaknesses	Type	Resolution due date	Status & date	New resolution due date (if applicable)
2018- 3.6: BRC has limited formal procedures for identifying the full range of unintended negative effects.	Minor	2023/04/13	Closed	
2018-4.1 BRC does not systematically provide information on the Red Cross principles or expected behaviour to service users, domestically, nor do its HNS partners provide this information to communities in BRC-supported programmes.	Minor	2023/04/13	Closed	
2023-4.1 BRC does not systematically provide information on expected behaviour of its staff and volunteers to service users domestically, nor do its HNS partners provide this information to communities in BRC-supported programmes	Minor	2026/07/12	New	2026/07/12
2019 – 5.1: BRC does not consult with communities regarding the design, implementation and monitoring of complaints-handling processes and, internationally, does not support partners to undertake consultation processes.	Minor	13/4/2023	Closed	
2019-5.3: BRC does not manage complaints systematically.	Minor	2023/04/13	Closed	
2021-5.4a: A complaints-handling process is neither systematically documented nor in place in BRC-funded programmes.	Minor	2023/04/13	Extended	2026/07/12
2021-5.4b The current complaint policy does not cover programming and other abuses of power.	Minor	2023/04/13	Closed	
2021 – 5.5: An accessible system that supports and tracks complaints, investigations and timely responses is not in place.	Minor	2023/04/13	Closed	

2019 – 5.6: BRC does not ensure that service users are aware of the expected behaviour of staff nor does the organisation work systematically with partners to develop information sharing plans that describe expected staff behaviour.	Minor	2023/04/13	Closed	
2021-5.7: BRC's complaint policy does not refer out-of-scope complaints to a relevant party in a manner consistent with good practice.	Minor	2023/04/13	Closed	
Total Number of open Weaknesses	2			

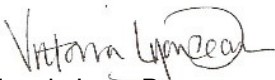
6. Recommendations for next audit cycle

Specific recommendation for sampling or selection of sites or any other specificities to be considered	We recommend that an Overseas Branch Programme and UK domestic services in Scotland and Northern Ireland are selected for the next Renewal audit.
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7. Lead auditor recommendation

INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION In our opinion, BRC continues to demonstrate a satisfactory level of commitment to the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability and its inclusion in the Independent Verification scheme is justified.	
Name and signature of lead auditor: Jorge Menéndez Martínez 	Date and place: Buenos Aires, 2023/07/12

8. HQAI decision

Registration in the Independent Verification Scheme maintained:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Refused
Next audit: before 2026/09/04	
Name and signature of HQAI Head of Quality Assurance:  Victoria Lyon Dean	Date and place: Châtelaine, 2023-09-04

9. Acknowledgement of the report by the organisation

Space reserved for the organisation	
Any reservations regarding the audit findings and/or any remarks regarding the behaviour of the HQAI audit team: <i>If yes, please give details:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Findings: I acknowledge and understand the findings of the audit I accept the findings of the audit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Name and signature of the organisation's representative: 	Date and place: 19/09/2023

Appeal

In case of disagreement with the decision on certification, the organisation can appeal to HQAI within 14 days after being informed of the decision. HQAI will investigate the content of the appeal and propose a solution within 10 days after receiving the appeal.

If the solution is deemed not to be satisfactory, the organisation can inform HQAI in writing within 30 days after being informed of the proposed solution, of their intention to maintain the appeal.

HQAI will transmit the case to the Chair of the Advisory and Complaint Board who will constitute a panel made of at least two experts who have no conflict of interest in the case in question. These will strive to come to a decision within 30 days.

The details of the Appeals Procedure can be found in document PRO049 – Appeal Procedure.

Annex 1: Explanation of the scoring scale*

Scores	Meaning: for all verification scheme options	Technical meaning for all independent verification and certification audits
0	Your organisation does not work towards applying the CHS commitment.	<p>Score 0: indicates a weakness that is so significant that the organisation is unable to meet the commitment. This leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent verification: major weakness. • Certification: major non-conformity, leading to a major corrective action request (CAR) – No certificate can be issue or immediate suspension of certificate.
1	Your organisation is making efforts towards applying this requirement, but these are not systematic.	<p>Score 1: indicates a weakness that does not immediately compromise the integrity of the commitment but requires to be corrected to ensure the organisation can continuously deliver against it. This leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent verification: minor weakness • Certification: minor non-conformity, leading to a minor corrective action request (CAR).
2	Your organisation is making systematic efforts towards applying this requirement, but certain key points are still not addressed.	<p>Score 2: indicates an issue that deserves attention but does not currently compromise the conformity with the requirement. This leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent verification and certification: observation.
3	Your organisation conforms to this requirement, and organisational systems ensure that it is met throughout the organisation and over time – the requirement is fulfilled.	<p>Score 3: indicates full conformity with the requirement. This leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent verification and certification: conformity.
4	Your organisation's work goes beyond the intent of this requirement and demonstrates innovation. It is applied in an exemplary way across the organisation and organisational systems ensure high quality is maintained across the organisation and over time.	<p>Score 4: indicates an exemplary performance in the application of the requirement.</p>

* Scoring Scale from the CHSA Verification Scheme 2020