SYNTHESIS REPORT

Evaluating the Effectiveness of DOS/PRM Livelihoods Programs in Ethiopia and Burundi

EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DOS/PRM LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMS IN ETHIOPIA AND BURUNDI

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ACRONYMS

CFW	Cash for Work
CORD	Christian Outreach for Relief and Development
DOS	United States Department of State
FBS	Functional Bureau Strategy
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FH	Food for the Hungry International
FIC	Feinstein International Center
GoB	Government of Burundi
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGA	Income Generating Associations
IP	Implementing Partner
IRC	International Rescue Committee
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Services
KII	Key Informant Interview
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PRM	Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
SI	Social Impact, Inc.
SLF	Sustainable Livelihoods Framework
SOW	Statement of Work
USD	United States Dollar
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Associations
WR	World Relief

I.   INTRODUCTION

This Synthesis Report, produced by Social Impact, Inc. (SI), is the culmination of a one-year performance evaluation of refugee livelihoods programs in Ethiopia and Burundi supported by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (DOS/PRM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) from 2009-2013. The report examines the key themes identified after analysis of data collected through a desk review and field evaluations in Ethiopia and Burundi. The report synthesizes these key themes into actionable recommendations that can be applied at each stage of the program cycle outlined in the *Managing for Results: Department of State Project Design Guidebook (2012)* – hereafter referred to as 2012 DOS Guidance.

This synthesis report draws on the evaluations of six programs that included livelihoods components implemented by international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Ethiopia and Burundi. These programs were:

- **Ethiopia:** International Rescue Committee (IRC), the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) working with refugees from the neighboring countries, and
- **Burundi:** World Relief (WR), Christian Outreach for Relief and Development (CORD), and Food for the Hungry (FH), working with returned Burundi refugees.

Ethiopia Programs:

The **International Rescue Committee** has worked with Eritrean refugees in Tigray for over a decade and provides education, water and sanitation, gender, and community-based reproductive health services in Hitsats, Adi Harush, Mai-Aini, and Shimelba camps. This evaluation focused on the IRC's Youth and Livelihoods component which includes the Youth Action Kit, job training focused on construction and other vocational skills as well as business and life skills curricula, and the youth engagement and recreation programs such as sports, discussion groups, fine arts, and "Roots and Shoots."

Jesuit Refugee Services began programming in the Tigray and Dollo Ado regions in 2010 and also serves urban refugees in Addis Ababa. JRS currently works in the Mai-Aini, Melkadida, and Kobe camps (programs implemented at the latter two camps were excluded in this evaluation owing to security concerns that prevented field work). In Tigray, youth activities are centered on arts, sports, a community library, and mental health assistance for adults.

The **Norwegian Refugee Council** started programming in Ethiopia in 2011 and currently runs activities in camps in Tigray and Assosa. NRC's Youth Education Pack (YEP) program began in 2012 in Mai-Aini, Adi Harush, Sherkole, Tongo, and Bambasi camps and focused on literacy, entrepreneurship, and other vocational skills for youth under 25. NRC implements the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) in each of the Assosa camps, which includes courses on literacy, numeracy, English, hygiene, and the environment. NRC also runs a small business training and entrepreneurship program for refugees and local community members in Assosa and Dollo Addo.

Burundi Programs:[1]

World Relief began programming in the Makamba and Rutana provinces of Burundi in 2005; however, the projects for which it received PRM funding and that were evaluated as part of this contract began in 2009. Three iterations of a "resettlement assistance" project in Makamba focused on construction of shelters, pit latrines, primary schools, public latrines, and the distribution of seeds and chickens for livelihoods development.

Christian Outreach for Relief and Development began exploratory visits to Burundi in 2005 and programming for refugee returnees in 2009. Their initiatives in Burundi took place in the Bukemba and Giharo communes in the Rutana Province, and included the Gitanga Commune the first year and also Mpinga and Kayove communes in the last year. CORD's activities included improvements to shelter and malaria prevention, as well as activities to increase food security and access to primary education, and to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene.

Food for the Hungry began work in Burundi in 2009 in the Cankuzo Province (at different times, the Gisagara, Cendajuru, Mishiha, Kigamba, Giharo, and Bukemba communes) and Ruyigi Province (at different times, the Gisuru, Kinyinya, and Butaganzwa communes). FH's objectives were to improve food security and livelihoods, expand education opportunities, protect and enhance the environment, and reduce the incidence of sexual and gender-based violence. Main activities included seed and tool distribution, goat distribution, training in livestock husbandry, stable construction, and improved agriculture techniques.

Synthesis Report, Tools, and Guidance Document Purpose and Intended Use

The purpose of this year-long performance evaluation is to examine the appropriateness and effectiveness of livelihoods programs for refugees in Ethiopia and returned refugees in Burundi funded by DOS/PRM during fiscal years 2009-2013. This Synthesis Report is intended to provide PRM with guidance and learning to improve PRM's overall livelihoods programming strategy as well as its capacity to support the design and implementation of livelihoods projects that contribute to helping refugees and returned refugees become self-reliant.[2] Additionally, this report provides various tools and guidance intended to assist PRM with providing guidance to NGOs for proposals, reviewing such proposals, supporting the design and implementation of livelihoods programs with strong performance monitoring and evaluation systems, and monitoring livelihoods programs in the field. These tools and guidance documents are intended for use both by PRM and by multilateral organizations and implementing partners (IPs) in order to build their capacity to implement programs that improve livelihoods security and promote the self-reliance of refugees and returnees. The tools and guidance documents are included as **Annexes II – IV**.

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[1] Due to the passage of time since refugee resettlement in Burundi, these three programs were discontinued.

[2] Self-reliant for this report is meant to understand the tapering of refugee populations from international support. UNHCR has also defined self-reliance to mean, "the social and economic ability of an individual, a household or a community to meet essential needs (including protection, food, water, shelter, personal safety, health and education) in a sustainable matter and with dignity. Self-reliance, as a programme approach, refers to developing and strengthening livelihoods of persons of concern, and reducing their vulnerability and long-term reliance on humanitarian/external assistance." UNHCR: "Handbook for Self-Reliance" UNHCR 2005
Available at: http://www.unhcr.org/44bf7b012.pdf

Limitations

The livelihoods activities evaluated under this contract represent a very limited sample of the total livelihoods programs PRM funds. First, the activities evaluated were implemented in only two African countries (Ethiopia and Burundi) although PRM funds programs throughout the rest of the African continent and elsewhere in the world. For the most part, activities in the two focus countries consisted of rather small components of much larger and broader programs implemented by the partner organizations. Additionally, livelihoods activities of only three IPs were evaluated in each country, despite several other organizations conducting similar activities in the same locations. Since the guidance, learning, and recommendations provided in this report, as well as the accompanying tools, are informed by a limited sample of PRM's livelihoods programs, SI strongly encourages PRM to expand upon this research and learning to ensure that its overall livelihoods strategy and future livelihoods programs are informed and guided by a much more representative and comprehensive body of research and evidence.

Scope of the Evaluation Contract

In August 2014, PRM contracted SI to conduct a performance evaluation of livelihoods programs in Ethiopia and Burundi. The evaluation, which was completed over a 12-month period, consisted of four main components: (1) a global desk review analyzing best practices and recurring mistakes in implementing livelihoods programs for refugees worldwide; (2) a field evaluation of livelihoods programs for camp-based refugees in Ethiopia; (3) a field evaluation of livelihoods programs for refugee returnees in Burundi; and (4) this Synthesis Report and suite of tools and guidance documents to provide PRM with concrete and actionable recommendations for improving its livelihoods strategies and programming.

Evaluation Questions

This evaluation sought to answer the following questions:

1. What types of assistance/programs were provided?
    a. What were the types of livelihoods assistance provided? (e.g. technical/vocational training; business training; access to finance; cash grants; in-kind items)
    b. To what extent did these meet beneficiary needs and preferences for assistance?
2. Who are the recipients of assistance/programs?
    a. What are the characteristics of returned refugees who received livelihoods assistance?
    b. How well did partners reach vulnerable groups with livelihoods assistance?
    c. How many beneficiaries are continuing in the livelihoods activities for which they received assistance?
3. Were PRM-supported programs designed and implemented using best practices?
    a. Did IPs conduct baseline assessments such as market and livelihoods assessments?
    b. Were any external evaluations or internal M&E conducted?
    c. What indicators should PRM use to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the livelihoods programming it supports?
    d. Based upon the available evidence and the literature review, what are the qualities of successful refugee/returnee livelihoods programs? What are recommendations to PRM and other donors for future camp-based and returnee livelihoods programs?
4. What was the impact of the programs/assistance?
    a. Did beneficiaries' asset base change after participating in the programs? In what

ways? How long were changes sustained?

b. Where beneficiary incomes/assets did not noticeably improve, what are reasons for this lack of improvement?

c. What factors influenced the success or failure of the livelihoods programs?

d. Did PRM-supported programs promote self-reliance?

    i. Were beneficiaries able to meet more of their basic needs?

    ii. What percentage did and for how long?

e. How many beneficiaries were employed in the formal sector vs the informal sector?

f. What were the secondary benefits/costs of participation in livelihoods programs, if any? For example, did participants feel they were more/less vulnerable to abuse and exploitation and/or gender-based violence (GBV)?

Desk Review

The global desk review began in September 2014 with a thorough review and analysis of IP program documents, grey and white literature, and discussions with key stakeholders. The desk review examined UNHCR and NGO documents including proposals, reports, and interim evaluations of programs funded directly by PRM or indirectly through UNHCR. This literature included:

- **International guidelines**, including but not limited to: *Building Livelihoods: A Field Manual for Practitioners in Humanitarian Settings* (Women's Refugee Commission)*, Promoting Livelihoods and Self-Reliance (*UNHCR)*, and *Local Economic Recovery in Post-Conflict* (International Labor Organization).

- **Grey literature** refers to informally published written material, primarily reports, which are often difficult to trace because they are not published commercially or widely accessible. Grey literature is an important source of information because it is usually original, recent, and reflects the experiences of implementers, donors, and other experts in the field. Examples of such literature from the review include: *Cash transfer programming in emergencies* (Humanitarian Practice Network/Overseas Development Institute)*, Minimum Economic Recovery Standards* (SEEP Network)*, and *Refugee Livelihoods: a Review of the Evidence* (UNHCR).

- In addition, a small selection of **peer reviewed articles** was also included for review, primarily as case studies.

Documents in the desk review were those identified by PRM in the evaluation Statement of Work (SOW), as well as those recommended by the team's Senior Technical Advisor, Dr. Karen Jacobsen, and others identified through web-based searches. The desk review methodology also drew on key informant interviews with PRM staff members and experts in the field of refugee livelihoods.

The desk review culminated in the production of a Desk Review Findings Report which was finalized in March 2015.

Ethiopia Evaluation

The field-based performance evaluation of livelihoods programs for refugees in Ethiopia occurred from January 23 – February 9, 2015. While in Addis Ababa, the two-person team conducted key informant interviews with the three Ethiopia IPs referenced above, UNHCR, and government representatives. The evaluation team then visited six of the 25 refugee camps in Ethiopia: three in Assosa (Sherkole, Tongo, and Bambasi) near Ethiopia's western border with Sudan, and three in Shire (Mai-Aini, Adi Harush, and Shimelba) near Ethiopia's northern border with Eritrea. Due to security concerns, the team was unable to visit Somali refugee camps in the Dollo Ado region of Southern Ethiopia.

The mixed-methods performance evaluation employed standard rapid appraisal methods of document review, preliminary interviews, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and site visits. The five targeted data sources for the Ethiopia evaluation were:

- **Livelihoods and Refugee Technical Experts:** DOS/PRM; Feinstein Center (Tufts University);
- **Donor/United States Government Partners:** DOS/PRM; DOS/Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; UNHCR in Addis Ababa, Assosa, Shire, and Embamadri
- **Implementing Partners:** JRS; NRC; IRC
- **Governmental and Non-Governmental Actors and Collaborators:** The Ethiopian government Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs; World Vision; Lutheran World Federation; Partner for Refugee Service
- **Beneficiaries/Program Participants/Refugee Committee Members:** Youth Committee; Women Leader's Committee; Zone Leaders; Refugee Central Committee; Committee of People Living with HIV/AIDS; Committee of People with Disabilities; Islamic Religious Committee; Tigray Ethnic Committee; Committee of People Engaged in Business; Saho Ethnic Committee; Protestant Religious Committee

Upon completion of the fieldwork and analysis of the data, the evaluation team presented their findings, conclusions, and actionable recommendations to PRM. The Ethiopia Evaluation Summary Report was finalized in April 2015.

Burundi Evaluation

The field-based performance evaluation of livelihoods programs for returned refugees in Burundi occurred from March 16 – April 1, 2015. The fieldwork began in Bujumbura where primary data was generated through group interviews with UNHCR, representatives of the three Burundi IPs referenced above, and sub-contracted organizations. The two-person team then traveled to Ruyigi, Rutana, and Makamba provinces in Eastern Burundi along the Tanzanian border to conduct interviews with participants and non-participants in field locations where programs had been implemented. Secondary data sources were reviewed, including IP program documents such as internal and external evaluations, proposals, and agreements with PRM. Sources utilized for the evaluation included:

- **Livelihoods and Refugee Technical Experts**: PRM; Tufts University Feinstein Center;
- **Donor/US Government Partners**: PRM; UNHCR
- **Implementing Partners**: Food for the Hungry (FH); World Relief (WR); and Christian Outreach for Relief and Development (CORD)
- **Sub-contracted Partners**: Dutabarane; Floresta
- **NGO Actors**: Project Public d'Appui au Rapatriement et à la Réintégration des Sinistrés.
- **Members of Local Administration**: Communal Heads, Village Chiefs, Sub-Village Chiefs
- **Participants and Non-Participants of IP Programs** including individuals, members of Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) and members of Income Generation Associations (IGAs)

Upon completion of the fieldwork and analysis of the data, the team presented their findings, conclusions, and actionable recommendations to PRM. The draft Burundi Evaluation Summary Report was submitted in July 2015 and was approved in August 2015.

Synthesis Report

In the original SOW, the Synthesis Report was intended to incorporate findings from the desk review and field evaluations, identify the most and least successful livelihoods interventions, and provide recommendations on best practices. After the field evaluations, the SI team and PRM agreed that the Synthesis Report should reflect the needs of PRM in dealing with the realities of refugee situations, i.e., the "manageable interests" standard of the 2012 DOS Guidebook. Accordingly, SI broadened the Synthesis Report to address two main areas of interest:

(1) Identify a set of key livelihoods themes relevant to the process of designing refugee livelihoods programs, drawing from the field evaluations and the desk review. **Section II** identifies four key themes, and examines how each applies to the refugee and returnee context when designing, implementing, and monitoring livelihoods programs;
and

(2) Develop a set of core recommendations for PRM and IPs based on the program cycle outlined in the 2012 DOS Guidebook. **Section III** delves into the five steps of the Program Cycle, discusses the weaknesses of the PRM-funded projects revealed during field evaluations, and provides recommendations SI considers most useful and relevant for future program design and livelihoods strategy development.

The SI team presented key findings from the Synthesis Report in a two hour, in-person meeting with PRM staff on July 13, 2015. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the preliminary findings with PRM and identify any missing discussion areas to add to the Synthesis Report.

II. KEY THEMES IN LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMMING

SI identified four themes that should be key considerations *before* designing livelihoods programs for camp-based refugees and refugee returnees:

1. **Clarify what a "livelihoods program" is, what the goals are, and why such a program should be supported.**

2. **Understand the wider context for livelihoods programs in camps.**

3. **Utilize "best practices" in the design and implementation of livelihoods programs.**

4. **Ensure adequate staff and budget.**

1. Clarify what a "refugee livelihoods program" is, what the goals are, and why such a program should be supported

One theme that emerged in SI's review is lack of clarity about the goals and objectives of the livelihoods program, *why* such programs are being put in place, and what they hope to achieve. Many NGOs use livelihoods language to increase the donor appeal of their proposals. Instead of integrating livelihoods activities clearly into their programs, they tack on poorly thought through livelihoods activities to existing programs whose broad goals might include food security, youth/women's empowerment, or even peacebuilding. In refugee settings, livelihoods programs can address a number of goals in addition to improving refugee households' economic capacity, and these should be clearly stated in proposals or program design, to ensure that benchmarks and monitoring can track the attainment of these goals. Importantly, a proposal should include a theory of change explaining how the proposed interventions will bring about the desired goals.

a. Impact of lack of clarity of livelihoods program goals

Livelihoods programs in humanitarian settings generally address goals concerned with protecting the skills and assets essential to people's livelihoods. Specific program objectives depend on the stage of the crisis (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Objectives of livelihoods programming (adapted from Jaspars 2006[3])	
Stage of crisis	**Objective of livelihoods programming**
Early	Livelihoods protection/mitigation (prevent erosion or destruction of assets).
Acute	Save lives and livelihoods protection.
Post crisis	Livelihoods recovery/rehabilitation (protecting and promoting livelihoods of people recovering from emergencies, restoring productive assets).
Development	Livelihoods promotion (improving resilience, diversification of livelihoods strategies, access to markets).

Livelihoods programs are usually conducted in relatively stable contexts, where there is peace and basic respect for human rights, and where food security, malnutrition, and mortality are at acceptable levels. Most refugee camps in protracted situations (i.e. which have been in existence for five years or more) meet these requirements. In unstable or emergency situations, humanitarian interventions focus on saving lives and if possible, livelihoods protection. As stability increases, programs seek to build or recover assets and protect existing ones. Livelihoods only become truly sustainable, however, if people have power in local, national, and in international markets—where refugees generally have some or any power.

The primary goal of livelihoods programs generally is to increase the capacity of households to provide for themselves, in ways that support people's own priorities and strategies. But livelihood programs can also have the goal of upholding people's rights, and, through advocacy with the government or other authorities, can seek to:
- Prevent or stop specific patterns of abuse and/or alleviate their immediate effects;
- Restore people's dignity and ensure adequate living conditions; and
- Foster an environment conducive to respect for the rights of individuals in accordance with the relevant bodies of law.[4]

Protracted camp and returned refugee settings (the focus of this evaluation) are in 'post-crisis' or even 'development' phases, and livelihoods programs for refugees or returnees concern the recovery/rehabilitation of their livelihoods, restoring their productive assets, improving resilience, diversification of livelihoods strategies, and improving access to markets. Specific program activities, therefore, can and should focus on **individual or household asset protection**, or on **advocacy to promote refugees' rights,** prevent abuses, and create more conducive livelihoods environments.

Household economic capacity is usually measured by the following **indicators**:
- Household income and the security of that income. Since household income is difficult to measure, **proxies for income** are:
    - Household assets (such as owning a vehicle, television, livestock, etc.)
    - Expenditures (including on food, rent, health care, schooling, etc.)
    - Debt level (number of monetary loans, in-kind labor exchange, etc.)
- E**mployment** of household members, including wage employment or self-employment (e.g. farming, small businesses). Household **employment** could be measured by

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[3] Susanne Jaspars (2006). What is Livelihoods Programming? (Supplement 3: From food crisis to fair trade, March 2006. p6. www.ennonline.net/fex/103/chapter2
[4] Caverzasio, 2001

- o Household members with new skills
- o Household members who are working (either self-employed or as wage earners)
- o Household dependency ratio (number of workers to dependents)

Refugee livelihoods programs generally have increased household economic capacity as a goal, with related goals of restoring the dignity and independence of refugees, preventing households from slipping into poverty, enabling them to support their own communities, and promoting self-reliance. In some camp settings, UNHCR and other aid agencies have **additional goals** for livelihoods programs. Some of these goals, however, are in the realm of beliefs rather than robustly supported by evidence.

One such belief by UNHCR and some analysts and donors is that **self-reliance** improves the likelihood of **durable solutions**, particularly successful repatriation.[5] The argument is frequently made that refugees who can build and protect their livelihoods assets in asylum countries (and thus become more self-reliant) are more able and likely to return to their home countries when it is safe to do so. This belief is widely held but the evidence base is rather weak. The few studies of the sustainability of repatriation suggest that returnee livelihoods are difficult to rebuild because livelihood strategies developed in the asylum setting are not easily transferable. For example, Omata's study of Liberian refugee repatriation from Ghana (Buduburam camp) found that: "if a returnee's livelihood means was embedded in the Buduburam environment, its transferability to Liberia was significantly restricted," and he gives the examples of refugees finding work as domestic help. As Omata points out, many returnees do not go back to their rural origins, but go to urban settings in their home countries, where assets like access to networks and remittances are more important for establishing livelihoods than self-reliance in the asylum country.[6]

While increased economic capacity *could* increase 1) the likelihood and 2) the sustainability of return, there is little hard evidence that this is the case, and the argument could equally be made that self-reliant refugees are more likely to stay in their host environments. One study of internally displaced persons (IDP) repatriation in Turkey found that "integration into a new environment in Western Turkey, measured by economic advancement and knowledge of Turkish, *reduces the likelihood of return*."[7] If they do return, those with livelihoods assets will have a strong economic base to begin their lives anew (although this seems intuitively true, we do not have the evidence that livelihoods assets increase the resilience of returnees), or indeed that returnees are able to return with many material assets.

A second reason UNHCR and donors promote livelihoods programs is because they can be designed **to benefit local populations as well as refugees,** and in doing so, can address the host government's concerns about the presence of refugees (economic competition, pressure on resources, etc.) and improve the asylum environment.

For all of these reasons—self-reliance, potential durable solutions, and host government concerns— UNHCR, donors, and other aid agencies have supported livelihoods programs and advocated for the

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[5] UNHCR. 2012. Livelihoods Programming in UNHCR: Operational Guidelines, p.9
http://www.unhcr.org/4fbdf17c9.pdf
[6] Naohiko Omata, 'Repatriation is not for everyone': the life and livelihoods of former refugees in Liberia'. *New Issues In Refugee Research*, Research Paper No. 213. June 2011. http://www.unhcr.org/4e0dc4709.html
[7] Djordje Stefanovic et al, "Home is Where the Heart Is? Forced Migration and Voluntary Return in Turkey's Kurdish Regions" *Journal of Refugee Studies* (2015) 28 (2): 276-296.

economic rights of refugees. Livelihoods programs can also serve protection goals. In the case of Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia and Sudan, the goal of livelihoods programming has been to discourage refugees from making a dangerous onward journey. In such cases of high levels of onward migration, livelihoods programs serve protection goals rather than the traditional goals of economic capacity building.

When livelihoods program goals are implicit rather than clearly stated in program documents, this creates a hindrance to adequate monitoring (benchmarks) and evaluation, and obstructs the development of an exit strategy, as is discussed later in this report. For the purposes of good program design, all program goals and objectives should be clearly stated.

   b) The importance of a "theory of change"

A livelihoods program should be based on, and linked to, a theory of change. Stakeholders value theories of change as part of program planning and evaluation because they create a commonly understood vision of the long-term goals, how they will be reached, and what will be used to measure progress along the way. However, in SI's review, it was apparent that many IPs did not know what a theory of change is, or did not clarify it in their program documents.

A theory of change is the explanation for how and why a program is expected to bring about improvement in the target population or context. It defines and explains the building blocks—the outcomes, results, accomplishments, or preconditions associated with the program—that are required to bring about the long-term program goal.[8] The change process is often graphically depicted as a framework of the building blocks creating a pathway of change. The theory of change describes how the types of interventions (such as a single livelihoods activity or a comprehensive community livelihoods initiative) will bring about the desired outcomes. Each outcome in the pathway of change is tied to an intervention, revealing the complex web of activity that is required to bring about change.

A theory of change must include the assumptions used by stakeholders to explain the change process. Assumptions explain the stakeholders' expectations about how and why proposed interventions will bring about early and long term outcomes. Assumptions are often supported by earlier research, which can strengthen the plausibility of the theory and the likelihood that stated goals will be accomplished.

For refugee livelihoods programs, which are often linked into broader programs, as described above, it is particularly important—for purposes of evaluation—that a theory of change is described. Doing so is not necessarily a complex or difficult task and can be stated in simple language, but donors should require that IPs are able to articulate the livelihoods goals of a program and how particular interventions will accomplish those goals.

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[8] There is a large literature on theories of change and how they are used in program development. This section was adapted from the Center for Theory of Change http://www.theoryofchange.org/what-is-theory-of-change/ Accessed July 28, 2015

2. Understanding the wider context for livelihoods programs in camps

One key finding of the team's review concerns the importance for program design (and evaluation) of a solid understanding of the wider camp and host area context. Depending on the goals of the program, some livelihoods activities might not be appropriate or the best option for camp settings. If the goal is simply to improve household income, it might be that programs such as cash for work (CFW) or cash transfers are more effective and easier to implement than other common livelihoods activities such as vocational training. If the goal is to promote small business enterprise, a mentoring program or partnership creation might be more useful (and take fewer resources) than a training. Exploring alternatives as part of a broader contextual assessment should occur before designing the program, and as part of a larger package of assessments that take place prior to the design of refugee livelihoods programs (whether in or outside of camps).

As advocated by UNHCR, this kind of contextual understanding will be much improved **through consultation with refugees and the host population**, and should happen well in advance of the design of livelihoods programs.[9]

While not all IPs have the capacity to conduct a full round of assessments, it is important that budget and resources be allocated to this phase of any program, as it will help to offset or prevent problems that occur later in the program.

The contextual assessment should include the following information.

a) *How are camps used? What has been done before? What will/will not work?*

This kind of information and assessment should include:
- How the camps are being used by refugees;
- What kinds of economic capacity building activities are already in place (or have been tried before);
- How both the refugees and the local host population view new or proposed livelihoods programs;
- Whether the wider market context is appropriate and conducive to the promotion of refugee livelihoods; and
- Whether the host government policy context is appropriate and conducive to the promotion of refugee livelihoods.

These issues could be addressed by a stand-alone contextual assessment, or integrated into needs assessments or market assessments (such as the Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis or EMMA Toolkit.)[10] However it is important that close attention is paid to the situation of refugees (or returnees or IDPs, etc.), rather than simply focusing on the market or value chain.

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[9] UNHCR. 2012, p.26 and throughout.
[10] The EMMA Toolkit is a widely-used guidance manual for relief agencies and humanitarian staff needing to understand market systems in disaster zones and sudden-onset emergencies. It aims to improve emergency response by encouraging relief agencies to better understand, support, and make use of existing local market systems.

Understanding *how the camps are being used by refugees* is important because some camps, such as the Eritrean camps in northern Ethiopia, are used as transit points or way stations for the onward movement of people departing their home countries. In such circumstances, if the goal of the program is to support durable solutions, putting livelihoods activities in place could be a waste of resources as the refugees are not interested either in returning to their home countries or integrating into the host country. Refugees are often seeking to move to urban areas, or more distant destinations where there is work (such as South Africa, Israel, or Europe, in the case of African refugees). While it may be difficult to document (through interviews with refugees) this pattern, local staff or other key informants know whether refugees are committed to staying in camps or whether most are on their way elsewhere.

Another factor that could influence refugees' willingness to commit to livelihoods programs is resettlement. There are anecdotal reports of refugees' reluctance to engage in livelihoods programs when they believe doing so would decrease their likelihood of being selected for resettlement since they were already benefiting from a special assistance program and were expected to gain skills to improve their situation in place. This is an under-researched area, and requires further exploration of the success of livelihoods programs where an active resettlement program is in place.

Prior to deciding whether a livelihoods program is needed, it is useful to review and assess the kinds of livelihoods-type *activities that are already in place or have been tried before* because these can point to what works and does not work, contextual problems, and good ideas that can improve future program design. Such a review might indicate better options than new livelihoods programs. Again, consultation with refugees about past and current activities is essential for a proper understanding of what is likely to work. Sometimes, of course, "political" factors will intervene such as in the case of the Eritreans in Ethiopia where stakeholders were desperate to find a way to dissuade youth in particular from undertaking dangerous secondary flight or migration.

b) Legal context –refugees' economic rights

An important consideration is the legal context for refugees and their economic rights. In many refugee settings, the political context in which refugees pursue livelihoods is very unsupportive. In countries with encampment policies, the host government seeks to prevent refugees from working, and to keep them in camps where they are to be supported by humanitarian agencies. These governments are often actively opposed to livelihoods programming, which is seen as promoting the ability of refugees to work, compete with locals, and remain in the country. In remote camp settings (such as northern Ethiopia), where refugees have to supplement humanitarian assistance through their own efforts, local authorities and the local host population play an important part in preventing or enabling refugees to pursue livelihoods outside the camps. The situation is often complicated and politically sensitive, and requires careful investigation before a livelihoods program is designed. Such an exploration should be part of an assessment carried out by PRM or other donors prior to solicitation of proposals.

In contexts where refugees are not supposed to work, advocacy for livelihoods programming must be carefully considered, in order to avoid making the situation worse. In settings where the government tends to turn a blind eye to refugees working, such as Egypt or Kenya, overly active promotion of 'the right of refugees to work' can backfire. The government might cease to turn a blind eye and respond negatively. A more effective approach might be to identify windows of opportunity and work within

them. For example, a new influx of refugees could provide an opportunity to discuss new ideas with the government or local authorities.[11]

c) The donor context – the need for adaptability

One important aspect of the context for a livelihoods program is the wider donor context and political shifts that have implications for the program. New or intensified problems (such as the spike in North African migration across the Mediterranean and associated deaths of migrants), or sudden onset emergencies (political violence, new conflicts, or natural disasters that lead to displacement,) can affect what is possible for humanitarian donors. Funding for programs in protracted situations might have to be reallocated towards emergencies. Changes in priorities for global food aid also affect donor commitments, and such changing priorities can also make the funding of livelihoods programs in humanitarian settings less possible. Political analysis of the program context could usefully be (and often is) conducted by donors who will have a different perspective than IPs, but ideally such an analysis would have input by both IPs and donors, and should be conducted prior to program design. The politics of livelihoods support is an important design consideration, especially when livelihoods programs are intended to be in place for several years, or if there is any evaluation component of the program.

Livelihoods programs should be designed to take into account potential donor shifts in funding. They will need to be adaptable, i.e. able to ride out funding shortfalls and program reprioritization from headquarters.

3. Utilizing "best practices" in the design and implementation of livelihoods programming

UNHCR has developed a set of good practices that draw on a range of documents.[12] While many of their recommended practices are widely accepted and well established, there are some issues that are the subject of debate, and what constitutes "best practice" is still inconclusive.

a) Targeting

One such issue is targeting. UNHCR recommends to "**Target livelihoods support on the basis of socio-economic profiling"** and goes on to say:

> *Targeted interventions should support entrepreneurs and skilled refugees, and promote the skills and experience of youth and women exposed to protection risks associated with the lack of formal employment opportunities. "Graduation approaches", which match support with an individual's capacities and adapt as their skills and assets develop, are strongly encouraged.[13]*

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[11] Adapted from Feinstein International Center, 2012. "Refugee Livelihoods in Urban Areas: Identifying Program Opportunities. Recommendations for programming and advocacy." Feinstein International Center, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University, Boston, USA. http://fic.tufts.edu/publication-item/refugee-livelihoods-in-urban-areas-identifying-program-opportunities/
[12] UNHCR 2012, p.9 *Livelihoods*
[13] Ibid, p. 12

Recommended practices around targeting are difficult to implement in field settings where livelihoods capacity (such as skills, and past work experience) and needs are not known, because proper livelihoods assessments have not been conducted. Instead, it is more common for IPs to target traditional "vulnerable groups" such as women, female-headed households, youth, etc.—without necessarily doing a test to ensure these are the most vulnerable populations in the camp or whether individuals in these populations have the requisite skills to be successful in the particular program.

In refugee settings, targeting any sub-group can lead to perceptions of unfairness. It can create or aggravate tensions with the host population and within the refugee population if the targeting is seen to be poorly conceptualized or conducted without adequate input by refugees, or flawed because of poor understanding of the refugee situation. However, it is rarely feasible for a livelihoods program to be available to an entire refugee population, and therefore, some form of targeting will almost always be required. When targeting is part of a livelihoods program, it needs to be justified and a full explanation of how it is to be implemented is necessary.

b) Vulnerability

While vulnerability is often determined based on local perceptions, PRM could consider a standard set of criteria that could be adjusted for the local context. Such criteria might include: child headed households, physically or mentally disabled people, or households below a (locally agreed upon) poverty threshold. In Burundi, the landless were considered vulnerable, as were those that had been outside of the country for more than 30 years. Livelihoods interventions might differ depending on the category of vulnerability—for example, severely disabled people may be best supported with safety net approach, while orphans might be best supported by skill-building. The evaluation showed that the most vulnerable were generally not targeted in the six programs reviewed, and many of the evaluated activities precluded vulnerable groups from participation because the activities required income or physical strength.

PRM should also determine its policy towards the least vulnerable—this includes representatives of local governance structures who often serve as gatekeepers for IPs to conduct their work locally. In Burundi, the evaluation revealed that the most powerful and influential members of communities were the first to receive assistance, reflecting common social practice but galling donors whose philosophy favors giving benefits only to the most needy. PRM should be aware of the inherent tensions in both including and excluding local authorities from programs. PRM should require IPs to explain how they plan to manage this tension, and this should be followed throughout the project cycle. Part of this dilemma concerns how to address non-vulnerable members of the target community. The "trickle down"' argument can be made that supporting successful refugees (e.g. who have managed to start a small enterprise) can enable them to create still more jobs and therefore livelihoods for more people. Similarly, the argument that healthcare workers and teachers should not receive livelihoods assistance because they are not vulnerable is specious. UNHCR's "best practice" focuses more on capacity to benefit as well as protection benefits rather than on vulnerability per se. The way in which PRM supported programs should incorporate local authorities and the vulnerable is a philosophical position that PRM should either clarify for itself, or resolve to leave to the decision of target communities and IPs. While a vulnerable-only approach is probably impractical—most programs should involve a vulnerable specific dimension.

C) Conditionality

Another issue where there is lack of consensus is conditional assistance. UNHCR recommends: "Cash / food / rental assistance provided by UNHCR and partners should be *short-term and conditional and gradually lead to self-reliance* activities as part of longer-term development."[14] However, making assistance conditional, i.e. where assistance is contingent on certain criteria being met (e.g. graduation from a loan program), and what these conditions should be, is controversial and difficult to implement. There is lack of guidance about what is meant by UNHCR in this sentence, and how to implement conditionality. What conditions should be attached to assistance? There is lack of clarity and guidance in the UNHCR documents. The experience of other agencies, such as the Danish Refugee Council, who have experience with implementing livelihoods programs, including cash-based ones, should be drawn on to explore whether and how they have used conditionality in their programs. However, such an exploration was beyond the remit of this review.

d) The length of the validity period for refugee livelihoods programming

How long a livelihoods programs should be in place, and the best way it should be completed (the "exit strategy") are practices that lack research and clear guidance. Livelihoods assistance in the form of cash and rental support (which is a form of cash, given fungibility) are recommended to be kept "short-term" (see UNHCR quoted above), but does this mean, and should the length of a program be locally decided or a standard one based on criteria set by headquarters? Other guidance, such as an explanation of why assistance should be short-term, what benchmarks should be in place, and how the length and benchmarks of a program link to the theory of change, are not easily found in the literature.

The evidence base for livelihoods in refugee contexts is still limited, and the ways in which specific program requirements such as conditional assistance or targeting influence outcomes is not well established. Other good practice such as the use of "livelihoods zones" are similarly unclear in their meaning, and, in the absence of adequate evaluation, there is little evidence that using such an approach improves livelihoods outcomes or helps programming.[15] Absent more substantial evidence, in the form of studies and impact evaluations that examine whether and how specific practices lead to desired outcomes and stated goals, we cannot say that refugee livelihoods programming is supported by a set of good programming practices.

Good practices that are well established in all programming should always be used in livelihoods programming as well. These include:
- Regular consultation and interaction with refugees in program design;
- Regular monitoring and impact evaluation;
- Testing and pilots of programs, especially those that are designed in headquarters and imported into field settings. All such programs need to be fully adapted and customized for specific settings, and should be piloted and revised before full funding is allocated.; and
- Clear explanations of the length of the program, related benchmarks, and the planned exit strategy.

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[14] Ibid
[15] Ibid, p. 13 and 28

4. Ensuring adequate staff and capacity

Livelihoods programming is a relatively recent field, and livelihoods programming aimed at refugees is even more undeveloped. This means there is a lack of staff capacity—particularly at the field and regional levels. Implementation of refugee livelihoods programs requires technical expertise and some knowledge of refugee law and assistance, livelihoods frameworks, theories of change, and monitoring approaches. This is clearly an area where training is needed. In situations where livelihoods programs are poorly designed and there is a coterminous lack of expertise in both livelihoods programming and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) at the implementation level, the program is bound to fail.

PRM should seek to fund IPs with existing capacity in livelihoods programming and require the IPs to propose a robust evaluation plan for their program. Likewise, PRM should avoid funding IPs for livelihoods programming unless they have proven that they have the personnel capacity to handle it. This lesson was well understood by the microfinance industry, which ten years ago watched humanitarian NGOs with no understanding of microfinance try to implement microfinance programs with disastrous results. Some learning has occurred in that industry as a result, and it would be useful for livelihoods programs to note those lessons. At the least, IPs should ensure that a staff and capacity assessment is included with other assessments.

III. UTILIZING THE PROGRAM CYCLE TO IMPROVE LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMMING

Rationale for Following the Program Cycle

Among the main findings from the field-based work in Ethiopia and Burundi was the weakness in program design, implementation, and management. A comprehensive approach is needed to strengthen these aspects of PRM's livelihoods programs. PRM tasked the team with evaluating the following program dimensions:

- Use of best practices;
- Qualities of successful programs;
- Assessments, monitoring, and evaluation;
- Promotion of self-sufficiency;
- Program sustainability;
- Beneficiary targeting; and
- Indicator development.

The team identified the DOS Program Cycle as an appropriate and effective entry point due to the strong connection between the program dimensions listed above and the five core steps of the 2012 DOS Guidebook's Program Cycle. The Guidebook provides basic concepts, principles, and procedures necessary for effective project design, implementation, and management, to be used for projects whenever possible. In this part of the report, the team elaborates on each step with field-based evidence from Ethiopia and Burundi and makes recommendations for PRM regarding how to implement the suggested changes.

The five steps of the DOS Program Cycle include:

1	2	3	4	5
Assess the Environment - Identify Problems, Needs and Issues	Set Project Objectives Based on the Desired Outcomes	Determine Project Activities and Implementing Mechanisms	Develop Performance Measurement/ Monitoring and Evaluation Plans	Develop and Review Work Plan and Budget

FIELD-BASED FINDINGS FROM ETHIOPIA AND BURUNDI

The findings from both Ethiopia and Burundi exhibit the lack of focus IPs placed on designing, implementing, and managing the livelihoods activities when such activities were only one aspect in their package of interventions for returned refugees and camp-based refugees. As mentioned previously, livelihoods activities examined by SI were merely components of a larger suite of other interventions and activities, which occupied a larger and more important focus of IP programs. In Ethiopia, livelihoods activities were more robust than in Burundi, but still received marginal funding compared with other activities such as latrines and shelter construction; water points; education and skill training; and

psychosocial, sexual, and mental health services. Particularly in Burundi, livelihoods activities involved one-off distributions of goods such as chickens, seeds, and cuttings, rather than an integrated set of activities and services. This "truck and chuck" model does not reflect a thoughtfully designed, implemented, or managed livelihoods intervention. While distributions of goods are very much needed by returnees, such one-off distributions—with little to no follow up—do not promote the sustainable livelihoods outcomes that promote self-reliance claimed in the IPs' program goals and objectives.

The IPs' program goals ranged from enhancing protection and promoting durable solutions for refugees, to providing multi-sectoral services for refugees to allow them to live with dignity and health, to supporting the re-integration and self-reliance of returnees by supporting recovery of productive livelihoods and primary education, as well as promoting sexual and gender based violence prevention. There was a disconnect between these goal statements and the types of activities IPs were implementing. Where IPs listed project outcomes such as peaceful reintegration and household food security, activities were not capable of achieving these lofty results. When livelihoods activities are an add-on or afterthought in unintegrated programs of disparate activities, they will fall short of producing such high-level results and achieving robust program goals.

In Burundi, CORD's livelihoods program sought change in household access to food by providing a one-time distribution of seeds, cutting, and livestock, and in some cases a one-to-two hour agricultural and animal husbandry training. Changes in household access to food require much more sophisticated interventions and in order to measure any change in food security, feasible targets and proper methods of measurement must be employed. In other words, household access to food was outside CORD's manageable interest with regard to the design of their activities.

In Ethiopia, NRC's design of the small business start-up programs in Sherkole Camp did not follow a specific methodology. Some participants received single grants for business start-up and others received grants for group-based start-ups. When questioned about this model, staff members were unable to provide the team with a reasonable explanation for the design choice or to present plans for program learning. The design was a response to individual participant preferences only, reflecting a lack of thought and planning in the design of NRC's small business training and start-up program. Although participant preferences should be considered, program design must be informed by additional assessments as discussed in the recommendations section of this report. While there were opportunities for learning about the challenges and successes of businesses owned and operated by single owners versus small groups, NRC struggled to conduct basic monitoring of participants, let alone tracking higher-level indicators seeking to capture differences in the outcomes. Although the team could not ascertain the exact source of this problem, possible explanations include limited supervision of UNHCR, poor understanding of M&E among the IPs, and a lack of training in best practices for performance management.

STEP 1: ASSESS THE ENVIRONMENT

Step 1 of the DOS Program Cycle emphasizes the importance of understanding both the context and the problem or need that exists. Step 1 requires a thorough assessment of the context, demonstration of need, and establishment of the rationale for a program intervention. Once the need has been demonstrated, the problem and its root causes must be defined so that the intervention can be designed, implemented, and managed to address them. Step 1 also encompasses stakeholder involvement, including identifying the stakeholders, cultivating buy-in and developing plans for achieving sustainability.

In the context of livelihoods programs, findings from Burundi and Ethiopia as well as the desk review underscore the importance of carrying out a wide range of assessments and data collection activities to inform program design, implementation, and management. First and foremost is assessing the basic needs, capacities, and preferences of the target population, and a needs assessment should include a vulnerability assessment. A vulnerability assessment would include first, a definition of who is vulnerable given the context (and may rely on pre-determined definitions outlined in 3b), and secondly, what each group's differentiated needs are. Market assessments—local, regional, and national ones— are likewise useful to understand value chains and for identifying stakeholders. The legal and non-legal barriers in a particular refugee context should be carefully examined and assessed—especially such issues as the right to work, discrimination, and relationships between refugees/returnees and host/home communities. An assessment should also catalog other projects and activities in the area to mitigate the possibility of duplicating efforts as well as leaving gaps that might compromise the achievement of objectives. Where necessary, Step 1 should include a conflict analysis, and a gender analysis should be mainstreamed into all other assessments as well as program design.

FIELD-BASED FINDINGS FROM ETHIOPIA AND BURUNDI

Findings from Burundi and Ethiopia reveal an overarching lack of importance placed on conducting assessments to inform program design, implementation, and management. Lack of reliable assessment data meant poor design of practical livelihoods strategies and low effectiveness of livelihoods programs. Effective and appropriate programs cannot be designed without a comprehensive mapping of markets and value chains; opportunities and challenges; and capabilities and gaps, but this did not occur in either program setting.

In Burundi, IPs' understanding of livelihoods was largely anecdotal and lacked an accurate characterization of the challenges, opportunities, capabilities and gaps within the target population and among the returnees in particular. The IPs demonstrated poor understanding of the types of activities and programs necessary to achieve their stated goals and relied too heavily on self-reported preferences to inform program design. In several instances, programs were reportedly based solely on participant preferences, rather than a systematic assessment of needs. Participant preferences, if used exclusively or in a manner that is not transparent, can lead to biased or limited information depending on how the data are gathered. For example, IPs said that in some instances, returnee's and stayee's needs were first captured by local authorities and village leaders, who then shared them with the IPs. Given concerns about manipulation related to selection/targeting—this information is likely to be unreliable. Although preferences are an important dimension of needs assessments, exclusive reliance on such information lacks consideration of other important factors. For example, CORD's provision of goats was appreciated by several participants despite reporting that the goats died shortly after delivery. Although the goats did not appear to yield any benefits, economic or otherwise, and indeed, became a liability in some cases, several interviewees expressed a desire to receive more goats in the future.

In Ethiopia, several market/livelihoods assessments were conducted in the camps either by the IPs themselves, or in collaboration with UNHCR. Available assessments identified existing skills and assets in the camps as well as self-proclaimed needs and preferences, and made recommendations for adjusting program activities to align more closely to these findings. The assessments also noted differences by sex. However these assessments were not conducted on a regular basis or prior to program

implementation.[16] Discussions with IP staff in Ethiopia at headquarters, regional, and camp levels revealed varying degrees of awareness of and familiarity with these assessments. Most staff described the reports as a "wish list" of refugee and local community desires for programming and activities. Staff members were unable to explain the link between program design and implementation decisions and livelihoods or market assessments. In particular, when queried about the decision to continue with vocational and entrepreneurship programs for which graduates are now sitting idle and unemployed, IP staff struggled to draw connections between the market context, refugees' skills and capacities, and programming decisions. Overall, the team found little connection between assessments and program design and implementation decisions.

RECOMMENDATION

PRM should require that proposals demonstrate a deep understanding of the relevant livelihoods and market context, in order to determine the appropriateness of livelihoods programs. While not all IPs have the capacity to conduct a full round of assessments, it is important that the proposal shows some contextual awareness, and where more understanding is needed, that budget and resources be requested and allocated to this phase of any program. Doing so will help offset or prevent problems that occur later in the program.

The full set of assessments includes:

- An overall *contextual analysis* that covers a detailed understanding of:
  o Legal and non-legal barriers affecting refugees;
  o Migration patterns;
  o Conflict analysis in active conflict and post-conflict settings to identify any current conflict situations that may affect the intended beneficiaries;
  o The socio-political context in terms of land ownership and use, markets, politics, ethnicity, gender, social structures and networks, wealth, and religion, among others; This information should also identify the legal barriers that may hinder or prevent the intended beneficiaries from finding employment opportunities in the formal sector;
  o An overview of governmental and non-governmental bodies that are currently programming (who is doing what, where and why?);
  o Other NGOs/IOs operating in the same region and with the same population. Specific focus should be provided to existing livelihoods programs. Also important is to map the activities of humanitarian and development interventions in general;
  o Gender Assessment streamlined to identify gender imbalances and norms.

- A *market assessment* that ensures livelihoods programs and interventions are grounded in market realities and value chains, and can identify market niches and service sectors that suggest livelihoods programs or employment opportunities. As markets fluctuate regularly, it is

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[16] These include: UNHCR-led Participatory Assessments in Shire 2011-2013; IRC's Participatory Market Assessment in Adi Haroush, 2011; NRC's Labour Market Assessment in Tigray, July 2012; UNHCR et al's Joint Education Assessment in Dollo Ado, June 2013; NRC's Education Baseline Assessment and Market Survey in Dollo Ado, May 2014; and NRC's market assessment in Assosa, August 2014

advisable to update assessments throughout the project. One useful tool and guidance is EMMA.[17]

- A **household needs assessment** or profiling of refugee and host populations that includes:[18]
  - o Household composition and living conditions
  - o Household food security
  - o Livelihoods and sources of income
  - o Financial profile: assets and spending patterns, savings and access to credit
  - o Coping strategies
  - o Capacity and competencies i.e. existing skills, preferences and knowledge

All household profiling data should be disaggregated by nationality, sex, and age. Doing so will enable a comprehensive gender and age analysis that includes men and women, boys and girls. Ideally, analysis of household profiling data will include a *vulnerability analysis* that identifies groups with specific forms of vulnerability. The analysis should include a definition of vulnerability and provide a supporting rationale for this definition given the local context. This analysis should indicate the prevalence of different groups of vulnerable groups, and how their needs and experiences differ from the non-vulnerable population.

PRM and IPs should ensure that assessments use **participatory methods** as much as possible. Carefully conducted assessments can promote sensitivity to culture and values, and encourage participation in, and ownership of programs. New assessments might not be needed if recent and reliable secondary data is available. However, IPs should re-package secondary data so that it is organized clearly according to the categories listed above. PRM should promote coordination and information sharing between IPs whenever possible.

STEP 2: ESTABLISHMENT OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES BASED ON DESIRED OUTCOMES

Step 2 involves drawing on the assessments and data analysis produced under Step 1 and strategizing about what PRM wants to achieve with its investments in different countries and contexts and with various populations and communities. Step 2 involves much more than espousing a desire to improve refugee livelihoods, it requires thinking through what that means and how such a program will work in a particular context or population. Step 2 requires analysis and planning to identify the project goals, theory of change, and specific and measurable desired outcomes and the activities required to produce those outcomes.

Goals are statements of the long-term outcomes a program seeks to achieve. It is critical that the project design team understands the goals to ensure that, despite limited resources and duration, proposed projects contribute to their achievement. As noted above, the IPs being evaluated in Burundi conflated planned project outcomes with achievement of long-term goals. As part of a Bureau-wide overall livelihoods strategy, PRM should clarify who (which segment of society) it hopes to assist with

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[17] The Emergency Market Mapping Analysis toolkit, widely used and found at
http://emma-toolkit.org

livelihoods interventions, and how the interventions will work (e.g. support the middle class as drivers of economic change or provide a safety net to the most vulnerable?) This may differ from situation to situation as the overall strategy is applied to specific situations.

Objectives state the intermediate outcomes that will lead to the long-term outcomes or goals. Objective setting also includes reviewing the Mission/Bureau/Office strategy to ensure there are direct links between the project objectives, the problem being addressed, and the relevant strategies that underpin the investment. When designing project objectives, the concept of **manageable interests** is crucial to keep at the forefront of the decision-making process. Manageable interests involve assessing whether or not the proposed project/activity will lead to, contribute to, or produce, the desired outcome or goal. Another way of determining whether the proposed project/activity is within the IP's and PRM's manageable interests is assessing whether the scale of the project/activity is proportional to the scale of the problem or need being addressed.

IPs designing livelihoods interventions should consider the following program dimensions when assessing their manageable interests, and PRM should likewise ensure that proposals for funding reflect these dimensions in their program design, implementation, and management.

1. Cost and cost-effectiveness of required staff time and funding resources;
2. Ability to mobilize operations in an efficient timeframe;
3. Timeframe for conducting the activities;
4. The operating environment (conflict and instability, political will, seasonality) and whether it allows for the implementation of the activities; and
5. Appropriateness of the activities to the operating environment.

FIELD-BASED FINDINGS FROM BURUNDI AND ETHIOPIA

The IPs did not follow most of the elements that are included in Step 2 of the DOS Program Cycle, particularly regarding the development of a logic model, but also in assessing whether or not the planned activities were appropriate for the context. The latter is likely the result of the lack of assessments (as espoused in Step 1).

Most IPs did not develop objectives based on assessments, and objectives were not properly aligned to participants' needs and were beyond IPs' manageable interests. The objectives lacked contextual nuances or measureable indicators. In Burundi, WR's objective was "vulnerable households are strengthened through improved access to human, social, and financial capital." Absent measureable definitions for terms such as "strengthened," "improved," and "access," WR cannot determine whether its activities will lead to this objective. In Burundi, program objectives were improperly structured as activities, lacked definitions, and included targets, for example: "500 recent returnees and the most vulnerable households are re-integrated through improved access to human, natural, social, physical and financial capital in Makamba and Rutana provinces. These beneficiaries receive assistance with house and latrine construction as well crop and livestock inputs." The evaluators acknowledge that the IPs were following what PRM negotiated in terms of objectives and indicators. See below for recommendations to PRM on restructuring its practices.

RECOMMENDATION

PRM should consider how supporting IPs with livelihoods assistance relates to its overarching Functional Bureau Strategy (FBS) as well as its Livelihoods Strategy (which is still in development). The FBS should include well-articulated priorities and operational procedures related to the various technical sectors in which PRM supports programming, including livelihoods. The Livelihoods Strategy should clearly feed into the FBS, and livelihoods programs that PRM funds should feed into the Livelihoods Strategy. The FBS and Livelihoods Strategies together should be depicted in a logical framework that demonstrates the sequence of cause-and-effect relationships among program activities, outputs, and outcomes, and the objectives of the livelihoods strategy and the goals of the FBS. The logic model should explicitly cover livelihoods programs for camp-based refugees and returned refugees, as well as demonstrate how livelihoods activities should be integrated into all PRM interventions, should PRM conclude that that is desirable and within its manageable interests. This framework, which depicts the two strategies, should be used as the basis for how awards are made and how IPs are monitored and evaluated over time. PRM should require IPs to develop their own logic models that link program objectives to indicators and data collection methods (at the process, output, and outcome levels). PRM should require IPs to report on all indicators specified in logic models, including on outcome measures, and many of these should feed directly into PRM's own logical framework that informs its livelihoods strategy and FBS.

PRM should require implementers to begin planning for sustainable results at the project design stage and conduct all project activities with sustainability in mind throughout the life of the project. In cases where refugees' right to work or move is limited, such efforts may be complemented with advocacy among host communities and governments.[19] Proposed program objectives should seek to achieve sustainability of outcomes, and in some cases when warranted, self-reliance, among program participants. To ensure objectives can be reasonably achieved, project logical frameworks must include intermediate results and outcomes that will lead to these objectives, along with appropriate indicators to monitor whether the program is effectively producing these intermediate results and outcomes.

PRM should define and recognize the difference between short-term and longer-term livelihoods objectives to ensure that activities are capable of achieving desired results. PRM should ensure that IPs do the same. After PRM has defined for itself the difference between short-term and long-term livelihoods objectives, PRM should categorize each proposed activity/program as having short- or long-term objectives. Then, PRM should assess whether the activities proposed can reasonably meet their objectives in the designated timeframe. If it is not feasible to achieve desired results in the timeframe proposed for the activity, then PRM should reconsider the proposal or require the IP to adjust their timeframe or activity objectives. In the programs evaluated in Burundi, where activities were largely one-off distributions conducted over a short-term, multi-month period, program objectives seeking to improve household food security, for example, were outside the manageable interests of the project.

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[19]Although, as discussed above, in these contexts advocacy for livelihoods programming must be carefully considered, in order to avoid making the situation worse. In settings where the government tends to turn a blind eye to refugees working, such as Egypt or Kenya, overly active promotion of 'the right of refugees to work' can backfire. The government might cease to turn a blind eye and respond negatively (The SI team has been exposed to anecdotes about this happening, particularly in the case of Cairo, when the government was approached about allowing refugees to work. This has not been documented.) A more effective approach might be to identify windows of opportunity and work within them. For example, a new influx of refugees, could provide an opportunity to discuss new ideas with the government or local authorities

Short-term interventions are less likely to contribute to self-reliance and sustainability. However, PRM's funding cycles and other modes of operation may not be compatible with longer-term assistance.

Short-term programs may be better targeted to skills and vocational trainings, youth engagement and development programs, small-scale agricultural interventions such as homestead and community gardening, and production of disease and drought resistant seed varieties. Longer-term programs may be better targeted to small business and entrepreneurship development, large-scale, improved agricultural production, market development, and savings and loans programs.

STEP 3: DETERMINE PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND IMPLEMENTING MECHANISMS

Step 3 follows from Step 2 in that program activities are exclusively based on the identification of problems, needs, root causes, challenges, and opportunities. PRM should ensure that IPs' proposed activities complement and reinforce the outcome-based objectives and higher-level strategic goals elaborated in Step 2.

The DOS Program Cycle guidance advises that there are four primary questions to ask during Stage 2:

1. What will be done and with what resources? (activities and inputs)
2. What goods and services will be produced and delivered? (outputs)
3. What are the changes that can be at least partially attributed to your project? (outcomes)
4. How will the activities be accomplished? (implementing mechanisms)

To effectively answer these questions, building a logic model is an imperative component of Step 3. A logic model is a graphic depiction of what a project/activity intends to achieve and the necessary and hierarchical/sequential steps for getting there. Logic models illustrate the sequence of cause and effect or if-then relationships beginning with inputs and culminating in expected outcomes. A basic logic model includes: assumptions, inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and goals. Some logic models depicting more complex interventions will include intermediate results following outcomes to demonstrate the additional level of accomplishments required to achieve a particularly lofty goal.

The final phase of Step 3 involves identifying how the activities will be conducted, who will be in charge of implementing them, and how the work will be carried out. PRM must ensure that IPs' proposals are explicit to this extent, defining the necessary roles and competencies, and proposing qualified candidates not only to effectively implement the activities, but also to oversee and manage the project.

FIELD-BASED FINDINGS FROM ETHIOPIA AND BURUNDI

Findings from both Ethiopia and Burundi highlighted the IPs' dearth of livelihoods expertise and experience. A particular concern was the lack of micro-savings and finance expertise among Dutabarane and NRC, and the deficiencies in other livelihoods expertise demonstrated by IRC and JRS.

In the review of program documents for each IP, the team struggled to identify one logical framework or theory of change. IPs need to articulate their theories of change to ensure that proposed activities will realistically be capable of achieving desired outcomes.

In Ethiopia, livelihoods programs were not designed appropriately for the context or the population in the judgment of the evaluators. Vocational training programs provided participants with skills for which no local market was available. While the intent was to provide skills that would also be usable if

refugees moved on to countries with more developed economies or returned home, the lack of a local market contributed to some refugee frustration with the programs. Most vocational and entrepreneurship activities targeted male participants' livelihoods. Many IPs in Ethiopia lacked sufficient resources to fully implement their activities according to plan. IPs in the camps reportedly faced scarce resources in terms of facilities, budget, and technical assistance from regional or national offices.

In Burundi, the deficiencies in the kind of activities listed in Steps 2 and 3 contributed to the absence of a program logic model and to activities that were not capable of achieving the stated objectives or of producing sustainability and self-reliance. Program goals such as peaceful reintegration or increased household food security require detailed logical frameworks that explain the inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and intermediate results necessary and sufficient for achieving such complex and sophisticated goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Selecting Partners

PRM should ensure that livelihoods programs are implemented by IPs well positioned and qualified for the work. Requests for proposals should require detailed information about the IP's expertise in livelihoods including how they define it, programs they have implemented in the past (past performance), and the skills/qualifications of their staff who are in charge of implementing and overseeing the programs. IPs should both demonstrate knowledge of the overall context, and provide relevant assessments locally (as outlined in Step 1). PRM should ensure that the projects proposed are not simply the "easiest" or "business as usual" for the IPs, but rather the best possible intervention given the environment. As well, IPs should describe how they will coordinate with or complement the work done by other IPs on livelihoods in their proposed areas of intervention.

Relatedly, PRM should establish a working definition of livelihoods as part of its Livelihoods Strategy and communicate it to NGO partners to ensure mutual understanding of what does or does not constitute a livelihoods activity. In Burundi, NGO field based staff and managers were often not able to articulate what was meant by livelihoods strategies and activities. PRM should continue to encourage grant seekers and grantees to draw on existing guidance about refugee livelihoods programming. However, PRM should not be overly prescriptive about the types of activities that occur within livelihoods or more generally-oriented programs. Instead, grantees should seek out emerging evidence about various activities and their suitability for different contexts. The appropriateness of activities depends on factors that can be determined through assessments as outlined in Step 1.

Project Activities

The field-based staff members of IPs in charge of implementing and overseeing livelihoods programs should be properly trained and skilled in livelihoods, and PRM should verify these skills (see Step 4). National staff should develop systems and tools to provide their field-based colleagues with stronger technical guidance and support to do their jobs. Not only do many field-based staff lack education and training in livelihoods, but also they are burdened with heavy workloads and responsibilities. UNHCR and IPs should dedicate time to **internal staff trainings** on livelihoods for all levels of staff members (from national headquarters down to the field level) in basic M&E as well as the development of indicators for outcome monitoring.

PRM needs to assess the implementation context and ensure that project activities are suited to the context. The assessments conducted in Step 1 should be analyzed again at this stage in order to inform program design. All programs should be grounded in this knowledge.

Livelihoods programs that focused on **social assets and capital** such as those that **engage refugee youth** in educational, recreational, and social development activities, appeared to achieve better results than those programs that provided vocational training without a market in which to employ the graduates or programs that provided one-off distribution of goods. Activities such as the ones implemented by JRS and IRC focusing on youth and recreation should continue to receive funding while PRM should also seek to better support other types of programs for youth such as fine arts, music, theater, discussion groups, peer mentorship, and leadership groups. However, these kinds of activities should be evaluated to see whether they contribute to positive secondary outcomes, such as reduction of secondary migration.

In both camp and non-camp settings where multiple IPs are implementing livelihoods programs, more emphasis should be placed on **coordination and complementarity of activities** among organizations. The provision of comprehensive livelihoods interventions—as guided by PRM's overall strategy on livelihoods—should be the goal, rather than single, disjointed activities. IPs should aim to specialize in various dimensions of livelihoods protection and development and should work together to meet all the livelihoods needs among the various refugee populations.

PRM should work with UNHCR to establish or encourage a **livelihoods working group** among the IPs to encourage broader research and learning, share IP visions and practices for livelihoods, and generate a deeper understanding of what works and what does not in each context and among each group of individuals. Working groups should be established at both the national headquarters level and the field/camp level and should ensure report-outs and sharing of information between the two levels on a regular basis. National level working groups need not be overly burdensome in terms of resource commitments and can be operational rather than policy-based; however, there is a need for all stakeholders working on livelihoods in a given country to be aware of what others are doing to avoid duplication and share major learnings.

STEP 4: DEVELOPMENT OF MEASUREMENT/M&E PLANS/EVALUATIONS

The critical component of Step 4 is the **performance monitoring plan** (PMP), which details how the program strategy is working. A PMP is a tool that supports monitoring, analyzing, evaluating, and reporting progress towards achieving project goals and objectives. Instituting strong performance management is fundamental to ensuring that resources are used as effectively as possible to achieve foreign policy, development, and humanitarian results.

A good PMP will function as **a communication tool** and will enable both IPs and PRM to make sound decisions about the project's theory of change and required adjustments, whether assumptions underpinning the project have changed and need to be re-assessed, and whether objectives are being met, executed on schedule, and fulfill all legal and funding requirements. PMPs also improve knowledge and learning from investments, increase transparency and accountability, and enable projects to withstand scrutiny from foreign assistance managers, Congress, and the Office of Management and Budget.

PRM should require IPs to develop PMPs in conjunction with designing a project's goals, objectives, and activities. The PMP helps organize the essential information needed to document the project outcomes. It specifies what information needs to be collected, who is responsible for its collection, how and when it will be collected, and ways it will be used. The plan guides staff members and implementing partners in tracking project results and helps ensure consistency throughout the monitoring process.[20]

To effectively develop a PMP requires a **comprehensive baseline assessment** to establish the point from which a project is implemented. Baseline data should be collected for each of the project indicators in order to establish a before and after understanding of the intervention. In the absence of baseline data, it is difficult to determine whether a project's desired outcomes have occurred. Likewise, baseline data is essential for a project to set realistic performance targets.

FIELD-BASED FINDINGS FROM ETHIOPIA AND BURUNDI

In Burundi, IPs were not engaged in routine, systematic monitoring of their activities during the period of performance. The only data IPs appeared to collect—and this was not universal—were the names of beneficiaries and their status (repatriated/stayee), and the total number of program participants by location. In some cases, this data was found to be quite detailed, such as CORD's records listing the names, village-level locations, and specific items received by each of the participants. In other cases, participant data was much less reliable, such as Dutabarane's VSLA data, which did not include participant names or their village-level locations, and FH's which described the types of activities conducted in various locations and the number of participants in each location, but lacked participant names, village-level locations, and the specific activities or items individuals participated in or received. Data about activity performance was almost entirely anecdotal, except for Dutabarane, which collected savings data for each of their participants. IPs appeared to struggle with M&E and could not effectively demonstrate livelihoods outcomes or learning from PRM-funded programs. In particular, the absence of outcome-level indicators limits the depth of learning about these programs that can be achieved at this time – six years after the activities were undertaken.

Similarly in Ethiopia, the only data IPs appeared to be collecting were the number of program participants. In some cases, these data were recorded, tracked, and stored on posters hung on the interior office walls, in other cases, they were stored on a computer. When queried about the kinds of indicators they monitor, not one IP indicated familiarity with the term indicator and some mistook it for a target. Data about the outcome of trainings and program results, including data on employment, small business revenue, and expenditures were predominantly anecdotal. Particularly concerning was a general lack of monitoring of vocational and skill training program graduates in the years after the program ended as well as recipients of small business grants and entrepreneurship awards. The goal of the programs was employment for graduates and to support them in developing and launching small businesses, but most IPs had little to no information on graduates.

Several evaluation questions focused on measuring impact and change over time. Such questions can only be answered when baseline and monitoring data are available. In Burundi, none of the IPs collected systematic baseline data. WR provided the team with a baseline assessment report from their BPRM7 funding—the funding mechanism from WR's subcontracted local partner, Dutabarane; however, the indicators were not appropriate for informing PRM's evaluation questions. The monitoring data the

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[20] "Managing for Results: Department of State Project Design Guidebook." October, 2012.

team did receive, such as WR/Dutabarane's VSLA earnings data, were largely output focused and of little utility in understanding whether program objectives had been reached. These monitoring and baseline data could not be used by the team to address impact and longitudinal questions. Likewise, the lack of useful baseline data meant the team could not assess the extent to which IPs' activities met beneficiary needs and preferences.

In Ethiopia, several market/livelihoods assessments had been conducted in the Ethiopian camps either by the IPs themselves, or in collaboration with UNHCR. However, these assessments were not conducted on a regular basis or prior to program implementation.[21] Most were carried out prior to 2014. The available assessment reports identified existing skills and assets in the camps as well as the communities' self-proclaimed needs and desires and made recommendations for adjusting program activities to align them more closely to these realities. Baseline assessments had not been conducted by any of the IPs in Ethiopia. Information on livelihoods remains largely anecdotal and there is no accurate characterization of the challenges and opportunities within the camps in general, or capabilities and gaps among the refugee communities in particular.

In sum, the lack of comprehensive baseline assessments and monitoring data meant that this evaluation could not attribute any change in beneficiary livelihoods to the evaluated programs and that the learning potential of PRM-funded programs in Ethiopia and Burundi was undermined. Nonetheless, this experience points to some general recommendations below about using Step 4 in the DOS Program Cycle guide.

RECOMMENDATION

As briefly outlined under Step 1, above, PRM should require all IPs to develop project logical frameworks that clearly state their program objectives and the series of activities that will produce the required outputs, outcomes, and intermediate results to achieve those objectives. The project logical framework should include the necessary custom and standard indicators (as offered by PRM) to monitor program or activity implementation over time. Indicator targets can also be set where necessary. The logical framework should be designed in a way that demonstrates careful consideration of the pre-design and implementation assessments that have been conducted of the needs and context. Additionally, it should reflect appropriate consideration of the available financial and staff resources and the timeline. The logical framework should be supported with a comprehensive program work plan and standardized reporting templates that encourage implementers to use monitoring data for management, decision-making, and improvements to projects and programs.

PRM, UNHCR, and IPs should work together to utilize monitoring data and evaluations to inform routine program management and decision-making. Monitoring data should be used to guide decisions on funding priorities, continuation or termination of funding for various programs and activities already in place, trigger field visits by Refugee Coordinators, and many other important management decisions. PRM should develop a plan for how to utilize monitoring data and apply it to these types of decisions and actions. This could simply be a list of programmatic milestones that trigger a review and analysis of

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[21] These include: UNHCR-led Participatory Assessments in Shire 2011-2013; IRC's Participatory Market Assessment in Adi Harush, 2011; NRC's Labour Market Assessment in Tigray, July 2012; UNHCR et al's Joint Education Assessment in Dollo Ado, June 2013; NRC's Education Baseline Assessment and Market Survey in Dollo Ado, May 2014; and NRC's market assessment in Assosa, August 2014

data and any relevant decisions. For example, at a program's midpoint, PRM may wish to review the monitoring data to determine if certain parts of the program should be scaled up or discontinued.

In addition to the increased and improved monitoring that IPs should undertake, PRM should likewise invest resources in **more frequent visits to project sites**. It is critical that visits include unscheduled time with IP staff, unannounced tours of program facilities, and interviews with random program participants in addition to, or rather than, highly programmed tours that include carefully orchestrated graduation ceremonies, training observations, and meetings with community and village leaders and program participants who are hand-selected by the IP well in advance of the visit. Seeing the projects and activities without the lens of pre-planning may yield a more realistic picture and understanding of the projects' performance, successes, and challenges and likewise, may help to inform more useful and answerable evaluation questions.

STEP 5: DEVELOP AND REVIEW WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

Effective program implementation and M&E requires sufficient budgets with dedicated lines of spending for both staff positions and conducting monitoring and assessments. Sound program design and implementation requires comprehensive work plans and standardized reporting templates that encourage implementers to use monitoring data for management, decision-making, and improvements to projects and programs.

The final step in project design is to develop a work plan which describes all the issues that need to be addressed, actions to be taken to implement the project, and the corresponding timeframes and milestones. Some work plans express these things in terms of deliverables, which include all activities, processes, decision points, and products/documents. The work plan should also identify the individual(s) responsible for each deliverable.

"Once the work plan is complete, a budget should be constructed that identifies all costs – staff time, events, document production, transportation expenses, etc. If the project will be implemented through a contract, grant, or cooperative agreement, an Independent Government Cost Estimate will be needed for the contracting or grants officer responsible for the procurement. The officer will advise the design team as to what must be included in the estimate."[22]

FIELD-BASED FINDINGS FROM ETHIOPIA AND BURUNDI
Review of budgets was outside the scope of this evaluation. As such, the team did not have access to comprehensive budget information; however, the team surmised from the program proposals and reporting documents that budgets for livelihoods and M&E activities were limited as compared to other program components. This, compounded with reports of limited budgets, leads the team to believe that the budgets contained little room for rigorous assessments, monitoring, and evaluation activities.

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[22] "Managing for Results: Department of State Project Design Guidebook." October, 2012.

RECOMMENDATION

In each cooperative agreement, PRM should require a fully-dedicated staff position to carry out program monitoring and reporting, as well as a budget line of 5%-10% for program monitoring, not including the staff position. PRM should also consider requiring an additional budget line for program evaluation. This would be most feasible for multi-year projects, where small-scale, possibly internal, mid-term evaluations should be conducted in each year of funding. Alternatively, PRM should consider the benefits of funding evaluation designs that are implemented across the lifespan of programs and are capable of assessing attribution and change over time. In this case, more complex, external evaluations are preferable.

PRM should **encourage innovation in M&E** approaches, particularly if proposed tools are more conducive to the unique context of refugee camps. Developmental Evaluation is one example of an approach to evaluation that allows for adaptation and flexibility. Developmental Evaluation is a process in which an evaluator is embedded within a project team, and is charged with "bring[ing] evaluative thinking into the process of development and intentional change," that is, to encourage routine assessments of how projects are going and in what ways they may be improved. Given the complex and evolving settings in which these programs take place, non-traditional M&E practices may be more suitable for measuring their progress and success.

PRM should require IPs implementing income-generating activities to submit quarterly progress reports with budget log information for all program graduates. Follow up with program graduates should be conducted for a full year to track progress over time. To effectively sustain program monitoring following implementation, PRM should provide IPs with guidance about multi-year funding opportunities where year 2 budgets can be composed with a substantial amount of M&E funds.

IV. ANNEXES

Annex I: Evaluation Statement of Work

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Livelihoods Programs for Refugees and Refugee Returnees in Burundi and Ethiopia

NATURE AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this solicitation is to obtain the services of a contractor to carry out an evaluation, lasting up to 10 months, of livelihoods programming supported by the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) for refugee populations in targeted countries. The evaluation will consist of: (1) a comprehensive desk review and analysis of best practices and recurring issues regarding the implementation of livelihoods programming for refugees, global in scope, including but not limited to Africa; (2) field-based evaluations in two countries (Burundi and Ethiopia) where PRM has made significant investments in refugee livelihoods programs; and (3) elaboration of guidance that can be used in future evaluations of livelihoods proposals and programmatic outcomes . Both the desk review and the field-based evaluations should prioritize identifying: (1) the qualities of successful refugee livelihoods programs; (2) whether PRM-supported programs were designed and implemented using best practices; (3) whether PRM-supported livelihoods programs promoted self-sufficiency; (4) whether self-sufficiency was a realistic objective; and (5) the secondary benefits/impact, if any, of participation in livelihoods programs. The evaluation will also analyze the economic, social and legal factors that influence the success or failure of livelihoods programs in refugee settings. Recommendations should be concrete, actionable, and provide guidance, checklists, and indicators for PRM to consider when: (1) writing requests for proposals that include livelihoods components; (2) reviewing proposals with livelihoods components; (3) monitoring livelihoods programming in the field; and (4) engaging host governments, multilateral partners and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) on refugee livelihoods. The contractor will coordinate with PRM, UNHCR, and NGOs.

BACKGROUND

PRM's mission is to provide protection, ease suffering, and resolve the plight of persecuted and uprooted people around the world on behalf of the American people by providing life-sustaining assistance, working through multilateral systems to build global partnerships, promoting best practices in humanitarian response, and ensuring that humanitarian principles are thoroughly integrated into U.S. foreign and national security policy. The United States government, through PRM, is the largest bilateral donor to UNHCR as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and among the largest bilateral donors for the International Organization for Migration (IOM). PRM funds NGOs to fill critical gaps in programming by international organizations and host governments. It is important to note that the Bureau considers its humanitarian diplomacy to be as important as its programming.

Securing durable solutions for refugees is a PRM priority. It is generally accepted that there are three durable solutions for refugee populations: (1) safe and voluntary return to country of origin; (2) local integration in country of asylum; and (3) resettlement to a third country. Refugees are often outside of their country for many years before safe, voluntary return is possible. Further resettlement is possible only for a limited number of refugees. It is generally believed that refugees with access to livelihoods are better able to care for and protect themselves and their families. Therefore, promoting livelihoods,

and thus self-sufficiency/self-reliance to the extent possible, is important for both refugee protection and assistance. From a legal perspective, the 1951 Refugee Convention/1967 Protocol confer on refugees the right to seek employment, to engage in other income-generating activities, to own and dispose of property, to enjoy freedom of movement and to have access to public services such as education (though these may be constrained in practice by host governments even when those governments are a party to the Convention). From an economic perspective, if refugees are able to exercise these rights, they are better able to establish sustainable livelihoods, to become more self-sufficient, and to become less dependent on humanitarian assistance.

Approaches to promoting livelihoods may vary dramatically upon whether a refugee is residing in a camp or a city. In camps, livelihoods are often impeded by restrictions the host government has placed on travel, denial of ability to work in the formal sector, and/or use of available land for farming. In camp settings, refugees are often more dependent on the international humanitarian community for food, shelter, and other basic necessities of life. While refugees in cities may face formal restrictions on their ability to work, many still find livelihoods in the informal sector allowing them to be more self-sufficient than they otherwise would be in camps. However, commodities are often more expensive in urban areas and poverty for urban refugees is an enormous challenge. Research commissioned by PRM indicates that the ability of urban refugees to become more self-sufficient is strongly influenced by their integration into surrounding host communities over time. This includes research conducted by Church World Service on promoting access to protection and basic services for urban refugees and the Women's Refugee Commission research on promoting access to livelihoods in cities with large populations of urban refugees. Links and summaries of these and other research projects and evaluations, including an impact evaluation of PRM humanitarian assistance for the repatriation and reintegration of Burundi refugees, are available at: http://www.state.gov/j/prm/...

The contractor will:
- **Conduct a global desk review**; analyzing best practices/recurring mistakes in implementing livelihoods programs for refugees worldwide in order to contextualize the evaluation. The evaluation will include but not be limited to Africa and should take into account gender dynamics. The evaluation team should draw from both grey and white literature, discussions with key stakeholders, and research to determine where livelihoods promotion with refugees in Africa and the rest of the world has and has not been successful and reasons why. The review should take into account how limitations imposed by various host governments on the ability of refugees to work, farm, or travel affects livelihood interventions.

- **Carry out field-based evaluations in Burundi and Ethiopia,** where PRM has supported livelihoods programming with refugee populations. Field evaluations will assist in determining to what extent PRM-supported programming has been successful in promoting livelihoods over the long term. The evaluations should answer the following questions with an emphasis on developing best practices, lessons learned, and actionable recommendations to inform the programming and diplomacy of PRM and its partners.
- Were PRM-supported programs designed and implemented using best practices? How, for example by conducting market and livelihoods assessments?
- What were the types of livelihoods assistance provided (e.g. technical/vocational training; business training; access to finance; cash grants; in-kind items)? To what extent did these meet beneficiary needs and preferences for assistance?

- What were the characteristics of refugees received livelihoods assistance? How well did partners reach members of vulnerable groups (e.g. women; female heads of household; older persons; youth; persons with disabilities) with livelihoods assistance?
- What percentages of beneficiaries are still continuing in the livelihoods activities for which they received assistance? In other words, if someone was trained as a tailor in 2009, is s/he a tailor at present?
- Did beneficiary incomes or asset holdings increase after receiving livelihoods assistance? If so, what is the range of percentage increases, and what is the average amount of time it took to improve self-reliance? For how long were increases sustained?
- Is there is a difference in the success of the livelihoods programs according to the year/period of the beneficiaries' repatriation?
- Where beneficiary incomes/assets did not noticeably improve, what are potential reasons for this lack of improvement?   Are there demographic differences (e.g., by gender) in the outcomes of livelihoods programming? Elaborate.
- Did PRM-supported livelihood programs promote self-sufficiency? In other words, did PRM livelihoods programs enable beneficiaries to meet more of their basic needs then would have been able to otherwise possible? If so, how? What percentage did and for how long?
- How many graduates of the livelihoods programs are employed in the formal sector v. the informal sector?
- What indicators should PRM use to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the livelihoods programming it supports?
- What were the secondary benefits/impact of participation in livelihoods programs, if any? For example, did refugee livelihoods participants feel they were less vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation and/or gender-based violence?
- Based upon the available evidence as well as the literature review, what are the qualities of successful refugee livelihoods programs? What are recommendations to PRM and other donors for future livelihoods programs?

Annex II: Checklist for Monitoring Livelihoods Programs in the Field

Checklist for Monitoring Livelihoods Programs in the Field

The following lists represent the ideal set of individuals to meet with and questions to ask. The team identifies priority people and questions in regular text and those in *italics* as ones that should be included as time, schedule, and budget allow. However, PRM should decide where and how and how long their site visits will be, whether they can only visit capitals or go to program sites, and how long they have for interviews based on available resources. Some of the questions are italicized because the information can be gleaned from other sources (e.g. proposals or other program documents). The full set of points can be considered the "ideal" list from which PRM and IPs can develop a feasible monitoring plan for the life of the program.

Livelihoods Field Monitoring Topics
Consultation
Individuals with whom PRM should consult and coordinate: • UNHCR Community Services or Program Officers   • *UNHCR Livelihoods Coordinator*   • *UNHCR M&E Officers*   • NGOs/UNHCR/ IP staff in charge of managing/implementing livelihoods programs   • Refugees/Returnees/Stayees (whichever relevant)   • Community groups/leaders, including youth groups, faith groups, women's groups   • *Local community members*   • *Local authorities*   • *Other NGOs not working on livelihoods programs*   • *Vocational training instructors, vendors at local markets, agricultural producers in the area, other local business owners*
Good questions to ask UNHCR staff members: • *What assessments have been conducted to inform the design and implementation of livelihoods programming? Who conducted the assessments and when were they conducted?*   • What kinds of livelihoods programs are best suited for this context? Based on what information?   • Which groups of individuals are considered to be the most appropriate targets for livelihoods programming? Why?   • *What types of livelihoods activities best meet the needs of the community and why?*   • What do you think is working well with the livelihoods programs that are currently being implemented here? What activities/programs need more attention?   • *Are there any livelihoods programs you would like to see that aren't currently being implemented? If so, why are they not being implemented?*   • Are there any groups that are underserved by livelihoods programs?   • What are the major challenges to implementing effective livelihoods programs here?

Good questions to ask NGO staff members:

- *What assessments have you conducted to inform the design and implementation of livelihoods programming? Who conducted the assessments and when were they conducted?*
- What kind of livelihoods activities are you implementing?
- How do you target your program beneficiaries?
- *How many staff members (at the field-level) have training/expertise in livelihoods programming? Did they also receive training in working with x type of beneficiary? What are their roles/responsibilities?*
- *How many staff members (at the field-level) are responsible for program monitoring? What are their roles/responsibilities?*
- What are the primary indicators you are measuring for your livelihoods programs? How often are you measuring them? What are the data telling you?
- What is working well with your livelihoods activities/program? What activities need more attention?
- What kinds of changes, if any, have you seen in your livelihoods program beneficiaries since the beginning of implementation?
- What are the major challenges you are facing with the implementation of your livelihoods programs? Or What program objectives are not being met, and why?

Good questions to ask refugees/returnees:

- What are your biggest needs?
- What activities implemented have helped to improve people's well-being?
- What activities implemented have not been very helpful or have possibly made things worse?
- *Are the current activities implemented sufficient for refugees' needs? If not, what are the gaps?*
- *Are current activities in line with people's preferences?*

Coordination

- How are host governments and host communities engaged with livelihoods activities?
- *How is the private sector engaged?*
- What specific measures are being used by UNHCR and NGO partners to maintain and enhance collaboration?
- Are there any activities that are being duplicated by UNHCR and NGO partners?
- *Do NGO implementers (PRM and UNHCR grantees) have a common understanding of what is meant by livelihoods programming?*
- Are there any other IOs involved in livelihoods programming? What are they doing?
- *Are the monitoring agreements (e.g. performance monitoring plans) of PRM NGO grantees shared between the Regional Refugee Coordinator and the in-country UNHCR representative, or most appropriate person?*
- Are there joint field visits by IOs and NGO field representatives with shared agendas of looking at livelihoods activities being implemented in refugee camps/returnee communities?
- If other development actors are working at the camp, in urban neighborhoods, or with returnee communities with a high density of refugees, who initiates coordination and engagement and when does it occur?

Assessment and Monitoring

- *Are there monthly or quarterly reports available on the status of livelihoods activities and the beneficiaries of such activities?*
- *Does the NGO grantee have records on livelihoods activity beneficiaries (e.g. training attendance, current employment, current income)?*
- Is there a monitoring system in place? What kinds of follow up is happening with beneficiaries of livelihoods activities?
- *Are livelihoods indicators being used by IOs and NGOs? Are there significant differences in the livelihoods indicators used by each group?*

Work Rights and Secondary Migration

- *Are there national or local laws that prohibit refugees from seeking and securing employment?*
- *Have returnees faced any special challenges securing employment due to policies or laws?*
- *Are there organizations/NGOs that advocate for work rights for refugees? Are donors active on this issue?*
- Are returnees migrating outside the country for short-term and/or seasonal labor opportunities?
- To what extent do refugees choose to remain in camps to complete livelihoods programs, rather than migrate elsewhere or voluntarily repatriate?
- What is the rate of secondary migration in and between the camps?

Information, Education, Communication

- What forms of social messaging or communication regarding livelihoods opportunities are used in the camp/returnee communities?
- Are NGO grantees using appropriate social messaging methods to reach vulnerable populations and ensure participation in livelihoods activities?

Site Planning

- Are there business centers in the camp/community where livelihoods activity beneficiaries can seek assistance with job applications or small business start-up? If so, where are they located and how can they be accessed?
- Are training rooms and community centers equipped with the necessary materials for conducting livelihoods activities? If not, what materials are being used to conduct livelihoods activities? Where are the materials obtained from?
- *How are instructors for vocational training programs trained and given the appropriate resources to conduct their respective training?*
- Are community centers and training rooms equipped to meet the needs of women as well as men? How so?
- *In urban environments and returnee communities, are there community centers that focus on the needs of refugees/returnees? Where are they located? How long are they open to the population and how can they be accessed?*
- *In camps, are markets located centrally and easily accessible by foot? Where are the markets located and when do they operate? Who usually attends the markets?*
- Does the refugee population have access to host community markets both as shoppers and vendors? If so, what groups of refugees often attend the markets?
- Does the host community have access to markets within the camps where refugees are

the vendors? If so, what groups within the host population often attend the markets?
• Do returnee populations have physical access to local markets?

Gender Considerations
• Are incentives used to engage women in livelihoods activities? Are women accepting these incentives and participating?
• *Are there female-only support groups for women to express their livelihoods activity needs and preferences?*
• Are women and men, young people and the elderly, equally able to access community centers and training rooms (or other sites) to partake in livelihoods activities?
• *Are women and men equally able to access resources for small business start-ups and microcredit?*
• Are livelihoods programs targeted more towards the interests and abilities of women or men?
• *In urban environments, returnee communities, and camps, are women involved in refugee/returnee councils or management committees?*
• Are women involved in leadership and decision-making bodies?

Sustainability
• How are livelihoods programs designed to build beneficiary ownership and buy-in?
• After the program has ended, what aspects of the livelihoods intervention could continue? Who will continue these activities?
• Does the implementing partner have an exit strategy for when the program ends? If so, what measures are they taking to ensure that the effects of their intervention are sustainable?

NGO Livelihoods Proposal Review Checklist and Guidance

(please refer to the proposal review guidance following the checklist)

ASSESSMENTS	
QUESTION	**COMMENTS/EXAMPLES**
1. What kinds of assessments has the NGO conducted to inform the design of the proposed livelihood activities or project? When were these done and with what methods?	
2. How does the proposal use the assessment data to a) demonstrate need and rationale for the particular activity/project? b) inform the proposed activity/project design?	

PROJECT ACTIVITIES	
QUESTION	**COMMENTS/EXAMPLES**
1. What are the proposal's goals?	
2. How does the proposal seek to improve beneficiaries' a) economic well-being c) food security in the long-term?	
3. Will the local market be able to absorb the effects of the project (such as influx of cash if cash grants are provided)? 4. Does the proposal demonstrate the sufficiency of the following to support proposed activities? a) natural resources (such as fresh water, arable land) for agricultural programs b) Local sourcing of in-kind goods? c) Access to local markets? d) etc	
5. What strategies are proposed for involving camp and/or local community leadership structures?	
6. What risks are associated with proposed activities? What risk mitigation strategies are proposed? (eg SWOT analysis)	
7. How does the proposal address the issue of a) vulnerable groups/individuals b) targeting? c) How well does the proposal demonstrate staff	

competency and expertise in implementing and managing (including carrying out M&E) livelihoods programs for refugees? (eg. CVs for NGO staff)	
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT – MONITORING AND EVALUATION	
QUESTION	**COMMENTS/EXAMPLES**
1. How well does the proposal articulate a theory of change that explains activities → project outputs→ project outcomes→ objectives →goals? (eg logical framework)	
2. How clearly articulated are the following: a) Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) with indicators for all outputs and outcomes? b) assumptions underpinning project implementation? c) Collection of baseline data for all project indicators? d) Work plan? e) M+E plan? f) consideration of multi-year funding opportunities?	
TIMEFRAME AND SUSTAINABILITY	
QUESTION	**YES** **NO** **COMMENTS/EXAMPLES**
1. Does the proposal demonstrate consideration of multi-year funding opportunities?	
2. Does the proposed implementation timeline account for any possible contextual challenges such as season/climate, political processes, etc.?	
3. Does the proposal include a sustainability plan to help ensure that any outcomes the project achieves will be sustained beyond life of the project?	

NGO Livelihoods Proposal Review Guidance

Types of Assessments

We recommend that the following data be collected in as participatory a way as possible, and this could include a profiling survey.

- An overall **contextual analysis,** which can cover a detailed understanding of the following topics:
  - Legal and non-legal barriers affecting refugees
  - Migration patterns;
  - Conflict analysis in active conflict and post-conflict settings to identify any current conflict situations that may affect the intended beneficiaries;
  - The socio-political context in terms of land ownership and use, markets, politics, ethnicity, gender, social structures and networks, wealth, and religion, among others; This information should also identify the legal barriers that may hinder or prevent the intended beneficiaries from finding employment opportunities in the formal sector;
  - An overview of governmental and non-governmental bodies that are currently programming (who is doing what, where and why?);
  - Other NGOs/IOs operating in the same region and with the same population. Specific focus should be provided to existing livelihood programs. Also important is to map the activities of humanitarian and development interventions in general;
  - Gender Assessment to identify gender imbalances and norms.

- A **market assessment** ensures livelihoods programs and interventions are grounded in market realities and value chains, and can identify market niches and service sectors that suggest livelihoods programs or employment opportunities. As markets fluctuate regularly, it is advisable to update assessments throughout the project. One useful tool and guidance is EMMA.[23]

- A **household needs assessment** or profiling of refugee and host populations could includes:[i]
  - Household composition and living conditions
  - Household food security
  - Livelihoods and sources of income,
  - Financial profile: assets and spending patterns, savings and access to credit
  - Coping strategies
  - Capacity and competencies i.e. existing skills, preferences and knowledge

  All household profiling data should be disaggregated by nationality, sex, and age. Doing so will enable a comprehensive gender and age analysis that includes men and women, boys and girls. Ideally, analysis of household profiling data will include a *vulnerability analysis* that identifies groups with specific forms of vulnerability. The analysis should include a definition of

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[23] The Emergency Market Mapping Analysis toolkit, widely used and found at
http://emma-toolkit.org

vulnerability and provide a supporting rationale for this definition given the local context. This analysis should indicate the prevalence of different groups of vulnerable groups, and how their needs and experiences differ from the non-vulnerable population.

Annex IV: NGO Proposal Guidance and Standard Indicators

Recommended Language for NGO Guidance on Livelihoods Programming (Section 2: PRM Policy Priorities)

Livelihoods: Livelihoods programming can consist of a range of activities including but not limited to vocational skills trainings, income generating activities, food security and nutrition initiatives, agricultural productivity and livestock activities, and microcredit, microloan, and savings programs. NGOs must conductsufficient assessments to inform the design and implementation plans for the proposed livelihood activities or project.

Types of assessments NGOs should consider include the following:

- An overall **contextual analysis**, which can cover a detailed understanding of the following topics:
  - o Legal and non-legal barriers affecting refugees
  - o Migration patterns;
  - o Conflict analysis in active conflict and post-conflict settings to identify any current conflict situations that may affect the intended beneficiaries;
  - o The socio-political context in terms of land ownership and use, markets, politics, ethnicity, gender, social structures and networks, wealth, and religion, among others; This information should also identify the legal barriers that may hinder or prevent the intended beneficiaries from finding employment opportunities in the formal sector;
  - o An overview of governmental and non-governmental bodies that are currently programming (who is doing what, where and why?);
  - o Other NGOs/IOs operating in the same region and with the same population. Specific focus should be provided to existing livelihood programs. Also important is to map the activities of humanitarian and development interventions in general;
  - o Gender Assessment to identify gender imbalances and norms.

- A **market assessment** ensures livelihoods programs and interventions are grounded in market realities and value chains, and can identify market niches and service sectors that suggest livelihoods programs or employment opportunities. As markets fluctuate regularly, it is advisable to update assessments throughout the project. One useful tool and guidance is EMMA.[24]

- A **household needs assessment** or profiling of refugee and host populations includes:[ii]
  - o Household composition and living conditions
  - o Household food security
  - o Livelihoods and sources of income,
  - o Financial profile: assets and spending patterns, savings and access to credit

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[24] The Emergency Market Mapping Analysis toolkit, widely used and found at http://emma-toolkit.org

- o Coping strategies
- o Capacity and competencies i.e. existing skills, preferences and knowledge

To the extent possible, proposals should be developed in consultation with beneficiaries, communities, local authorities, and the larger humanitarian community. Proposals should clearly explain how the intended activities will fill gaps in assistance identified during an initial needs assessment. PRM strongly encourages its partners to integrate livelihoods components in both multi-sectoral and function-specific projects.

The Women's Refugee Commission Building Livelihoods Manual is available at:**http://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/programs/livelihoods**. Additional resources such as the Emergency Market Mapping and Analysis Toolkit (**www.emma-toolkit.org**); Building Livelihoods: A Field Manual for Practitioners in Humanitarian Settings (**http://www.eldis.org/go/topics&id=43614&type=Document#.Um_EQ2mx5rE**); and Market Development in Crisis-Affected Environments: Emerging Lessons for Achieving Pro-Poor Economic Reconstruction (**http://www.seepnetwork.org/market-development-in-crisis-affected-environments--emerging-lessons-for-achieving-pro-poor-economic-reconstruction-resources-233.php**), may also be useful in designing livelihoods programming appropriate to the context.

Recommended Standard Livelihood Indicators Section 4. C

NB: The majority of the following indicators have been borrowed from USAID, UNHCR, and PRM. The evaluation team left the wording of the indicators as they appear in the respective source from which they were selected. Therefore, the team understands that some elements of the indicators may need to be adapted in the "Notes for PRM" sections. SI encourages PRM to consider not only what adaptations may also be necessary not just for the indicators themselves, but also how they should be defined, measured, and disaggregated.

Economic Empowerment

1. **Output**: Number of beneficiaries participating in cash or food for work programs
Source: PRM
http://www.state.gov/j/prm/releases/factsheets/2014/219758.htm#_4._Proposal_Submission

Definition
Number of beneficiaries refers to the number of participants who undertake work as part of cash or food for work programs and receive compensation (cahs or food) for it. Individuals who participate in two or more programs may not be counted more than once.

Rationale
This basic output indicator tracks how many people benefit from temporary employment activities.

Disaggregated by:
- Sex of participants
- Population (refugee, returnee, host community member, etc.)

Data Collection
- Data source: Implementing partners collect data through payment receipts, distribution logs
- Frequency of collection: based on program design and period of performance – monthly, quarterly, or annually

Notes for PRM
- The evaluation did not cover any programs that use cash or food for work models, therefore the team is not aware of how prevalent they are in the greater body of PRM-supported programming. Nevertheless, the team endorses use of this indicator if capturing this information is of particular interest to PRM.

2. **Output**: Number of MSMEs, including farmers, receiving business development services from USG assisted sources
Source: USAID Feed the Future (FtF)
https://feedthefuture.gov/sites/default/files/resource/files/ftf_handbook_indicators_october2014.pdf

Definition
MSMEs refer to micro, small and medium enterprises with 1-10, 11-50, and 51-100 employees respectively. The business services may include, among other things, business planning, procurement, technical support in production techniques, quality control and marketing, micro-enterprise loans, etc.

Rationale
The indicator measures access to business development services which contributes to expanding markets and trade.

Disaggregated by:
- Size (Micro, Small, Medium, as defined above MSME)
- Type (agricultural producer, input supplier, trader, output processors, non-agriculture, other)
- Sex of owner/producer

Data Collection
- Data source: Implementing partners collect data through training participant records
- Level of collection: Activity-level, direct beneficiary MSME
- Frequency of collection: based on program design and period of performance – monthly, quarterly, or annually

Notes for PRM
- Based on SI's review, PRM's programs would likely just work with micro or small businesses, so reference to medium-size businesses can be eliminated.
- Reference to "USG assistance may be replaced with "PRM assistance."
- This would be a relevant indicator for some of the programs evaluated under this contract.

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3. Output: Number of persons of concern (PoC) receiving production kits or inputs for agriculture/livestock/fisheries activities
Source: UNHCR
http://www.unhcr.org/530f107b6.pdf

Definition
PoCs include refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons, IDPs, and returnees. A PoC is considered to have received a production kit or inputs for agriculture/livestock/fisheries activities when that PoC has applied for and been granted financial and/or material support for an agriculture/livestock/fisheries activity.

Rationale
This indicator shows the output of programs aiming at supporting PoC in starting new businesses for a more sustainable livelihood.

Disaggregated by:
- Sex of recipient
- Population (refugee, returnee, host community member, etc.)
- Type of activity (agriculture/livestock/fisheries)

Data Collection
- Data source: Implementing partners collect data through distribution logs
- Level of collection: activity-level, direct beneficiaries
- Frequency of collection: based on program design and period of performance – monthly, quarterly, or annually

Notes for PRM
- PRM amend this indicator to consider all program participants, which may or may not include official PoCs (e.g. host community members).

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4. Outcome: Number of persons of concern (PoC) businesses registered
Source: UNHCR
http://www.unhcr.org/530f107b6.pdf

Definition
PoCs include refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons, IDPs, and returnees. A business is defined as registered when it has been officially documented by the government as operating in the country of interest and when that small business has been registered with the appropriate tax authority.

Rationale
The indicator can measure the number of beneficiaries of entrepreneurial skills trainings who are able to apply skills learned in the training to real-life business practices.

Disaggregated by:
- Size of business (micro, small, medium, or large)
- Type of business
- Sex of owner/producer

Data Collection
- Data source: Implementing partners collect data through training participant records
- Level of collection: activity-level, direct beneficiaries
- Frequency of collection: based on program design and period of performance – monthly, quarterly, or annually

Notes for PRM
- PRM may amend this indicator to consider all program participants, which may or may not include official PoCs (e.g. host community members).
- While it is ideal to have people work in the formal sector, this is often not possible for refugee situations where refugees are not legally allowed to register businesses. Therefore, PRM should consider the following custom proxy measurement: "*number of businesses documented with a business plan and profit and loss statements,*" which could capture the creation of informal businesses.

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5. Outcome: Number of persons of concern (PoC) earning incentives/wages from partner and from community contracting projects
Source: UNHCR
http://www.unhcr.org/530f107b6.pdf

Definition
PoCs include refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons, IDPs, and returnees. A PoC is defined as having earned incentives/wages from partner and from community contracting projects when that PoC has received a payment from that partner for their work on the contracting project.

Rationale
The indicator can measure the number of beneficiaries of vocational skills trainings who were able

to seek and secure employment either in the formal or informal sector by using the skills learned in the vocational training.

Disaggregated by:
- Sex of beneficiary receiving the incentive or wage
- Population (refugee, returnee, host community member, etc.)

Data Collection
- Data source: Implementing partners collect data through payment records, receipts.
- Level of collection: activity-level, direct beneficiaries
- Frequency of collection: based on program design and period of performance – monthly, quarterly, or annually

Notes for PRM
- PRM may consider amending this indicator to consider all program participants, which may or may not include official PoCs (e.g. host community members).

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6. Outcome: Percentage of program participants who report higher household income level by the end of the project period as compared to the pre-project baseline assessment

Source: PRM
http://www.state.gov/j/prm/releases/factsheets/2014/219758.htm#_4._Proposal_Submission

Definition
A program participant is defined as any person who has been a participant in any activity under the program aimed at income generation. A program participant is considered to have a higher household income at the end of the project period as compared to the pre-project baseline assessment if that person reports an income level that is increased from the level they reported during the baseline assessment. The numerator of this indicator is the number of participants who report a higher household income at the end of the project than they did at the baseline assessment. The denominator for this indicator is the total number of program participants.

Rationale
The indicator can measure the number of beneficiaries of all activities in a program and show which beneficiaries report higher income at the end of the program as a result of PRM's intervention. This indicator can shed light on the activities which produced the largest number of people reporting higher income.

Disaggregated by:
- Population (refugee, returnee, host community member, etc.)
- Sex of beneficiary

Data Collection
- Data source: Baseline assessment records, implementing partners collect data through a post implementation survey of all program participants
- Level of collection: Activity-level, direct beneficiaries
- Frequency of collection: based on program design and period of performance – post implementation

Notes for PRM
- While this indicator may be the most feasible way for implementers to track changes in income, there are important limitations to note. The information is self-reported and therefore cannot be assumed to be precisely accurate. In addition, this indicator does not take into account any other factors that could have contributed to the reported increase in the beneficiaries' income. As such, the programs cannot attribute the increase in income to the program based on this indicator alone; a more rigorous evaluation design would be required to attribute any change in income to the program.

Training and Guidance

1. Output: Number of project beneficiaries receiving training on appropriate skills as determined by market and livelihood assessments
Source: PRM
http://www.state.gov/j/prm/releases/factsheets/2014/219758.htm#_4._Proposal_Submission

Definition
PoCs include refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons, IDPs, and returnees. Beneficiaries are considered to have received trainings on appropriate skills if the trainings that they completed were designed and implemented using the data collected from a market or livelihoods assessment. Individuals are counted only once, even if they attend and graduate from more than one training that was designed and implemented using the data collected from a market or livelihoods assessment. Training is defined as being an activity that takes between one hour and six weeks and may include a host of vocational topics.

Rationale
This output-level indicator can show if trainings were designed and implemented using results from the market or livelihoods assessment and how many people in the target population are interested in completing these trainings

Disaggregated by:
- Sex of training participants
- Population (refugee, returnee, host community member, etc.)
- Skill type
- Length of training (short or long term)

Data Collection
- Data source: Implementing partners collect data through training participant records
- Level of collection: Activity-level, direct beneficiaries
- Frequency of collection: based on program design and period of performance – monthly, quarterly, or annually

Notes for PRM
- The evaluation team endorses this as a standard indicator.
- PRM should establish what counts as a training—here it includes anything ranging between one hour and six weeks based on what was observed in the field.

2. Output: Number of persons of concern (PoC) receiving life-skills training for livelihoods

purposes
Sources: UNHCR; Akaze Kanoze Youth Livelihoods Program, EDC
http://www.unhcr.org/530f107b6.pdf; http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pdacx525.pdf

Definition
PoCs include refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons, IDPs, and returnees. Life skills for livelihoods are soft skills that are valuable in a work setting, which may include team work, punctuality, communication, acquiring and using market information etc. A PoC is defined as having received life-skills training for livelihoods purposes when they have successfully completed a training course and received a passing score on the instructor's final project/test. Individuals are only counted once, even if they attend multiple trainings.

Rationale
This output-level indicator tracks attempts to increase PoCs' employment opportunities by building these skills, which may not necessarily be identified as necessary through a market assessment. Nevertheless, such skills enhance chances of finding suitable employment and providing training on these skills is a way to increase employment and livelihood options. This indicator can also demonstrate the interest among the community in the particular life skill being trained.

Disaggregated by:
- Sex of training participants
- Population (refugee, returnee, host community member, etc.)

Data Collection
- Data source: Implementing partners collect data through training participant records and final test scores
- Level of collection: activity-level, direct beneficiaries
- Frequency of collection: based on program design and period of performance – monthly, quarterly, or annually

Notes for PRM
- PRM should assess its position on how life skills relate to its working definition of livelihoods, particularly which activities count and which do not. Some of the programs evaluated included life skill components that had a more indirect or nebulous relationship than others (e.g. team work versus mental health).
- PRM may amend this indicator to consider all program participants, which may or may not include official PoCs (e.g. host community members).
- PRM should consider establishing a common threshold for NGOs to use as a "passing score" in order to compare across programs and aggregate data.

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3. Outcome: Number of beneficiaries using skills obtained at a vocational training for income generation within six months of completion
Source: Custom

Definition
PoCs include refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons, IDPs, and returnees. A PoC is defined as using skills obtained at a vocational training for income generation when that person has graduated from a vocational training and reported income from an employment opportunity for which they would not have been qualified prior to the vocational training.

Rationale
This outcome-level indicator measures the practicality and marketability of the skills trained at life-skills trainings. It can shed light on the employment opportunities available to beneficiaries after completing the trainings.

Disaggregated by:
- Sex of training participants
- Population (refugee, returnee, host community member, etc.)

Data Collection
- Data source: Implementing partners collect data through training participant records and follow-up with graduates
- Level of collection: activity-level, direct beneficiaries
- Frequency of collection: based on program design and period of performance – monthly, quarterly, or annually

Notes for PRM
- This indicator could also be adapted for other trainings, such as life skills or trainings/technical assistance provided to businesses or associations rather than individuals
- Timeline for follow-up can be adjusted if desired

Food Security and Nutrition

1. **Output**: Number of food security private enterprises (for profit), producers organizations, water users associations, women's groups, trade and business associations, and community-based organizations (CBOs) receiving USG assistance
    Source: USAID Feed the Future (FtF)
    https://feedthefuture.gov/sites/default/files/resource/files/ftf_handbook_indicators_october2014.pdf

Definition
This assistance includes support that aims at organizational functions such as member services, storage, processing and other downstream techniques, and management, marketing, and accounting. Only those organizations for which implementing partners have made a targeted effort to build their capacity or enhance their organizational functions should be included. In the case of training or assistance to farmer's association or cooperatives, individual farmers are not counted separately, but as one entity.

Rationale
This indicator provides a tool to track civil society capacity building that is essential to building agricultural sector productivity

Disaggregated by:
- Type of organizations defined in the indicator title
- New/Continuing: wherein a "new" entity receives assistance for the first time during the reporting year and a "continuing" entity has received assistance in the previous year and continues to receive it in the reporting year.

Data Collection

- Data source: Implementing partners collect data on this indicator through activity records of training and PRM assistance for these specific types of organizations/associations.
- Level of collection: Activity-level, direct beneficiaries
- Frequency of collection: based on program design and period of performance – monthly, quarterly, or annually

Notes for PRM
- This indicator could be adapted to measure assistance to individuals rather than organizations.
- Although the objective of increased food security seems to be above the manageable interests of the sampled programs from this evaluation, this is suggested as a possible indicator for any program that may choose to address food security comprehensively.

Agriculture

1. Output: Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training
Adapted from: USAID FtF
https://feedthefuture.gov/sites/default/files/resource/files/ftf_handbook_indicators_october2014.pdf

Definition
This indicator definition includes farmers, ranchers, fishers and other primary sector producers who receive training in best practices in productivity, post-harvest management, and linking to markets. There is no pre-defined minimum or maximum length of time for the training; what is important is that the training reflects a planned, structured curriculum designed to strengthen capacities, and there is a reasonable expectation that the training recipient will acquire new knowledge or skills that s/he could translate into action. Individuals are only counted once, regardless of the number of trainings received during the reporting year and whether the trainings covered different topics.

Rationale
This indicator measures enhanced human capacity for increased agriculture productivity, improved food security, policy formulation and/or implementation, which is critical to transformational development.

Disaggregated by:
- Producers (farmers, fishers, pastoralists, ranchers, etc.)
- Sex
- Status (refugee, returnee, host community, etc.)

Data Collection
- Data source: Implementing partners collect data on this indicator based on program training records.
- Level of collection: activity-level, direct beneficiaries
- Frequency of collection: based on program design and period of performance – monthly, quarterly, or annually

Notes for PRM

This indicator (or a modified version of it) should be a standard output indicator for programs that train farmers or other types of producers, such as those mentioned in the definition. This would be an appropriate indicators for several of the programs evaluated as part of this contract.

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2. Outcome: Percent of households with access to arable land or other productive natural resources

Source: UNHCR

http://www.unhcr.org/530f107b6.pdf

Definition

This indicator measures the number of households that do have access to the land and resources necessary to sustain an agricultural livelihood in comparison with the number of households that do not have that access. The numerator of this indicator is the number of households that do have access to arable land and other productive natural resources and the denominator is the total number of households in the target region.

Rationale

This indicator measures access to land and other resources that are necessary to sustain an agricultural livelihood. An increase in the percentage measured by this indicator would show a positive outcome of a livelihoods program aimed at increasing access to land and resources.

Disaggregated by:
- Gendered Household type:
  Adult Female no Adult Male (FNM),
  Adult Male no Adult Female (MNF),
  Male and Female Adults (M&F),
  Child No Adults (CNA)
- Status (refugee, returnee, host community, etc.)

Data Collection
- Data source: Implementing partners collect data on this indicator through an independent contractor or through the organization's own baseline and endline assessments.
- Level of collection: Program-level, direct beneficiaries and surrounding community households
- Frequency of collection: based on program design and period of performance – monthly, quarterly, or annually

Notes for PRM
- This indicator may be useful for an agriculturally-based refugee returnee context.

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