AFRICA CEA PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING EVENT

NAIROBI, KENYA

NOVEMBER 2023

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms

ABC: Assisting Behavior Change

BRC: British Red Cross

BOCA: Branch Organizational Capacity Assessment

CBO: Community-Based Organization

CEA: Community Engagement and Accountability

CHS: Core Humanitarian Standards

CVA: Cash and Voucher Assistance

DREF: Disaster Relief Emergency Fund

DRR: Disaster Risk Reduction

FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions

FGD: Focus Group Discussions

IEC: Information, Education, and Communication

ICHA: International Centre for Humanitarian Affairs

ICRC: International Committee of the Red Cross

IFRC: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

IM: Information Management

KAP: Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices

KII: Key Informant Interview

KPI: Key Performance Indicator

KRCS: Kenya Red Cross Society

MEA&L: Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning

NS: National Society

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

PGI: Protection, Gender and Inclusion

PNS: Partner National Society

PRA: Participatory Rural Appraisal

PSEA: Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

List of Acronyms

RCCE: Risk Communication and Community Engagement

RCRC: Red Cross and Red Cresent Societies

RBM: Results-Based Management

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

SGBV: Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

TOR: Terms of Reference

VSLA: Village Savings and Loan Association

BACKGROUND

The Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) received funding from the British Red Cross (BRC) to implement a seventeen-month project (August 2023 to December 2024) to improve KRCS's institutionalization of Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) and enhance the proficiency of its teams in fulfilling CEA commitments. This is in line with the National Society's (NS) Strategic Plan 2021-2025 which aims at empowering the communities and having them at the center of all programming and operation initiatives and interventions. This thus calls for the integration of CEA not only in the KRCS projects but in all the thematic areas, and day to day-to-day activities and agendas.

Kenya Red Cross Society is among the Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) National Societies that enjoy support from the NS's management on matters of Community Engagement and Accountability integration where the KRCS management has had the buy-in and provided necessary support needed in the achievement of this agenda. The society also adheres to the principles laid out in the Red Cross and Red Crescent CEA guide of 2021 and the CEA Africa Strategy 2020-2023, as it consistently strives to promote meaningful community engagement. This commitment is realized through the application of participatory methodologies that consider the evolving needs, infrastructure, and preferences of the communities it serves.

In alignment with the NS's CEA institutionalization agenda and commitment to actively contribute to the realization of Project Outcome 2 focusing on Peer-to-peer learning, KRCS in partnership with the British Red Cross, and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), with additional support from the Swedish RC jointly organized a significant 3-day event in Nairobi, which had a distinct theme relevant to the advancement of CEA, which were:

1. Institutionalization and mainstreaming of CEA

2. Evidence-based programming

3. Community-driven programmes and responses for sustainable impact

This event convened a total of 20 African National Societies, along with representatives from Partner National Societies and the RCCE Collective services, to partake in the Africa CEA Peer-to-Peer Learning Event. The primary objective was to facilitate knowledge exchange, the event aimed to empower African National Societies to share, fortify, and optimize their experiences in CEA, thereby enhancing accountability standards across the African region.

1.1. Objectives of the Africa CEA Peer-to-Peer Learning Event

In pursuit of the integration and advancement of community engagement and accountability in humanitarian programs, the Africa CEA Peer-to-Peer Learning Event centered around key objectives, including:

1. Acknowledging the State and Progress: Participants actively engaged in recognizing the current state and progress of community engagement and accountability initiatives within their respective National Societies. This acknowledgment served as a foundation for constructive discussions and future planning.

2. Discussing and Agreeing on Lessons Learned: A critical focus of the event was fostering open dialogues to discuss and collectively agree upon the valuable lessons learned from diverse experiences in community engagement and accountability. Through shared insights, participants aimed to refine strategies and approaches for more effective humanitarian interventions. The emphasis on peer-to-peer learning played a pivotal role in shaping these discussions and agreements.

The Specific objectives for the event were to:

• Capture learnings on CEA from all African National Societies

• Ensure the workshop is a safe space for discussion, learning, and sharing challenges.

• Gain insight into programming: by exploring what projects are learning and reflecting on from practical experience; channelling information and receiving messages, and collecting feedback and complaints.

• Strengthen practice, partnerships, and Collaboration: by focusing on effective and efficient community engagement methodologies to adopt and adapt forms of CEA innovations to enhance community resilience through all inclusion approaches.

• Strengthen coordination and Capacity building: Building awareness of other NS existing strategies that would be beneficial to the enhancement of system strengthening and coordination.

- Strengthen a culture of learning: Building programme relationships, understanding, and demonstrating practical benefits for continued development of the existing opportunities to enhance sharing of ideas and support experiential learning.

1.2. Methodology

The Africa CEA Peer-to-Peer Learning Event was structured and designed to empower African NSs, placing them in the driving seat throughout the event. This facilitated extensive collaboration among NSs and emphasized ownership of the event by encouraging voluntary participation in various capacities. NSs actively engaged by taking up roles such as facilitation, moderation of sessions, and presentation of their work, employing their most preferred methodologies. Notably, the majority of event roles were assumed by the different African NSs, with PNSs and the IFRC playing a supportive and advisory role, undertaking only a few specific responsibilities.

The following approaches and methodology were used during the Africa CEA peer-to-peer Learning Event:
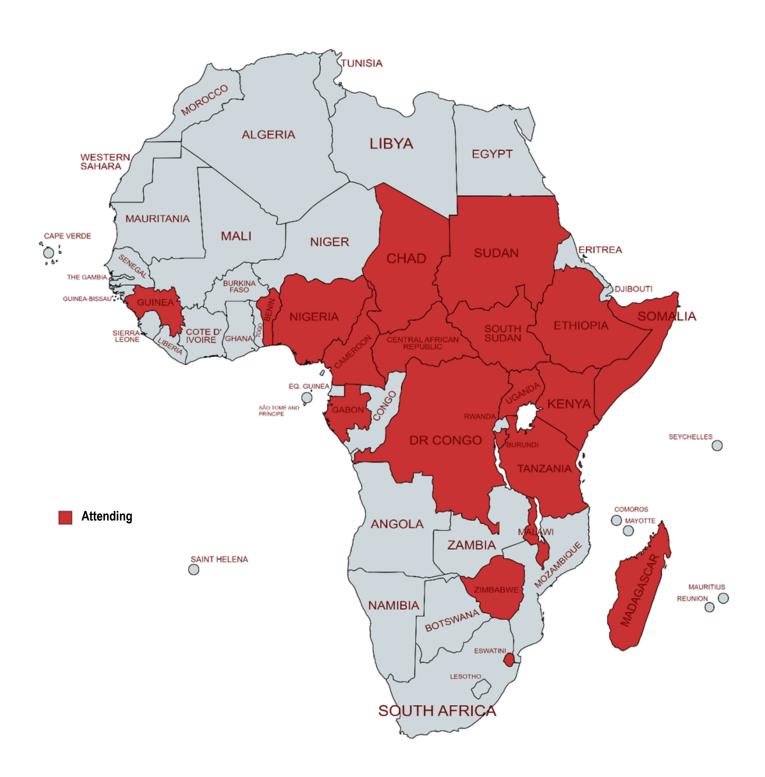
1. **Plenary Panel Discussion:** The Plenary Panel Discussions were a core session throughout the event, occurring daily, and included speakers and panelists from various African NSs with a representative from the PNSs and the IFRC participating in some discussions. The panel discussions were conducted in a hybrid format, offering valuable insights into the daily thematic focus, and prompting a question-and-answer session following each day's discussion.

2. **PowerPoint Presentations:** PowerPoint presentations were utilized throughout the event to convey information, case studies, and insights related to CEA. Presentations covered the different topics and served as visual aids, providing detailed information to complement verbal discussions led by the NS presenting. Participants gained insights into practical aspects of CEA and learned from the experiences of different National Societies.

3. **Breakout Sessions - World Café:** A World Cafe is a structured conversational process designed to facilitate open and creative dialogue on complex issues. It is often used in group settings to encourage the exchange of ideas and collective exploration of topics. Participants engaged in small-group discussions around tables, moving between tables periodically to gather new perspectives, share insights, and build on the ideas generated by others. Participants engaged informally in an array of topics and these sessions fostered collaboration and provided a platform for in-depth exploration of key CEA topics.

4. **Red Talks:** Red Talks were brief sessions held that highlighted practical experiences, challenges, and the ongoing journey toward a fully integrated CEA society in the different NSs. It provided a platform for open and honest dialogue and learning from each other's positive and negative experiences.

5. **Ice Breakers:** Ice breakers including dances, and a game of Kahoots, as well as a vibrant and open source of two-way communication through the event WhatsApp group were incorporated into the learning event to create a positive and interactive atmosphere among participants. The activities incorporated played a role in energizing participants and fostering a sense of community. These were essential for building connections, a vibrant learning environment, breaking down barriers, collaboration, and ensuring active engagement among participants.

1.3. Participants overview

The Africa CEA Learning Event was attended by 57 participants: 27 from National Societies (NS), 8 from the IFRC, and 7 from BRC. A total of 20 African National Societies (map below) were represented. This landmark event not only celebrated international solidarity but also broke new ground by being the first of its kind conducted in both French and English, symbolizing an inclusive commitment to linguistic diversity within the Movement. The echoes of shared values resonated in two of the world's most widely spoken languages, uniting voices that spanned continents.

AFRICA CEA PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING EVENT KEY TAKEAWAYS AND TOPICS DISCUSSED

The 3-day event was structured to delve into specific themes essential for the progress of CEA. Each day of the event was dedicated to a distinct theme, focusing on critical aspects of CEA advancement. The three overarching themes were:

1. Institutionalization and mainstreaming of CEA

2. Evidence-based programming

3. Community-driven programmes and responses for sustainable impact

The detailed agenda provided below outlines the specific discussions and key takeaways from each day, offering a comprehensive overview of the valuable insights shared during the event.

Topics/Themes	Key takeaways	Responsibility

Day 1: Theme: Institutionalization and mainstreaming of CEA

Topics/Themes	Key takeaways	Responsibility
08:00 – 09:00 Hrs (EAT) **Panel Discussion:** CEA Institutionalization (Hybrid)	KRCS, Cameroon, and IFRC shared insightful experiences on how to best institutionalize CEA. In the Discussions, the need to integrate CEA in all the RCRC programming and operations came out clearly since CEA is not a stand-alone program as discussed.	**Panelists:** Joe Mbalu KRCS; Sabrina IFRC; Fabrice: Cameroon RC; MoMir Bashiri: BRC
10:45 – 12:30 hrs (EAT) Institutionalization of CEA in Somalia, Cameroon, and Congo RC (hybrid)	Somali Red Crescent and Cameroon Red Cross shared their experiences and their journey towards institutionalizing CEA in their National Societies. Among the common barriers experienced in the two National Societies were Funding challenges and Insufficient personnel dedicated to driving the CEA Agenda. The two National societies however had the advantage of the management buy-in and thus worked with the available resources through integrating CEA with the existing resources and structures hence success.	Hussein Shire Somalia RC; Fabrice Cameroon RC
12:30 – 13:00 hrs (EAT) Sustainable financing for CEA	For successful institutionalization of Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA), resources are required to ensure smooth integration, implementation, and documentation. This hence calls for sustained financing of the concepts thus need for Funding streams. During the presentation, it was highlighted that CEA integration should be key in all aspects of programming to obtain sustainable funding. Some key funding on CEA is from the donor community and the resources from the individual NS.	Yves IFRC Cameroon
14:00 – 16:00 hrs (EAT) **World Cafe –** Institutionalizing CEA	The World Café staged the following key discussions; • Effectively sharing Most Significant Change (MSC) stories by CEA champions faces challenges in limited visibility. Mitigation involves a comprehensive communication strategy utilizing diverse channels such as social media, community bulletin boards, and collaborations with local influencers. Incorporating multimedia and providing storytelling training for CEA champions enhances engagement, ensuring a broader understanding and appreciation for community engagement initiatives. • Strengthening Community Engagement and Accountability understanding and capacity at all levels in the National Society. Where the NS shared their various inputs and experiences on how to strengthen CEA. • Allocate resources, including funding and staff, to strengthen and institutionalize community engagement and accountability. • Integrate community engagement and accountability into all National Society strategies, values, plans, policies, and tools so it becomes a standard way of working for all staff and volunteers • Establish a community feedback mechanism for the National Society, with processes for managing sensitive complaints	Kenya RC; Mable – Zimbabwe RC; Styline – Benin RC; Mamadou Kael – Gabon RC

Topics/Themes	Key takeaways	Responsibility

Day 1: Theme: Institutionalization and mainstreaming of CEA

16:15 – 17:00 hrs (EAT) Red Talk	The Tanzania Red Cross and DRC Red Cross shared their talk/experiences on how they are implementing CEA in their work. The two National Societies also shared their various challenges which included funding for CEA and staffing toward fully achieving a CEA Integrated NS.	**Facilitators:** Kenya RC; Mable – Zimbabwe RC; Styline – Benin RC; Mamadou Kael – Gabon RC

Day 2: Theme: Evidence-Based Programming

08:40 – 09:45 Hrs (EAT) **Panel discussion** – Evidence based programming (Hybrid)	Evidence-Based Programming and Documentation of Feedback was discussed in detail by the panelists. Difference Case examples and experiences on CEA integration Successes were shared by the Kenya Red Cross Society, Benin Red Cross, DR Congo Red Cross, and Guinea Red Cross. To establish a connection between community feedback and evidence-based practices, a needs assessment is vital to understand preferences for feedback. Cultural considerations, including language and beliefs, are integrated into community engagement. The use of digital tools such as social media is emphasized, along with an integrated database and AI for comprehensive data collection. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) focus on community perception, transparency, information sharing, participation, and feedback effectiveness, strengthening the relationship between community feedback and evidence-based practices. This approach requires skilled personnel, increased funding, and reliable technology access. The participants were well engaged in asking questions and sharing their own experiences in line with Evidence Based Programming and CEA.	**Panelists:** Lis Ganter IFRC; Kadiatou Guinea RC; Reuben KRCS; Styline Benin RC; Wilhelmine DR Congo RC
09:45 – 10:30 hrs (EAT) **Presentation:** Managing sensitive feedback	Managing Sensitive Feedback is crucial and key to Community Engagement and accountability. Sensitive Feedback includes Safeguarding concerns in the community, Concerns about the behavior of Red Cross and Red Crescent staff and volunteers, or persons associated with humanitarian organizations, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), Corruption, Fraud, and any other serious breach of our code of conduct. From the Presentation, it was highlighted that: - • Having an integrity toll-free line/email dedicated to specific staff to manage the cases is very important in handling sensitive feedback. • Once the CEA Focal persons receive the feedback, the person is assured that the matter will be handled discretely and the feedback is logged in the database and cascaded to the Head of the MEA&L department who forwards the feedback Head of the audit team for further investigations and reach outs. The feedback team is not responsible for investigating sensitive feedback (unless trained). The trained focal points are needed – HR, PSEA, etc. – • The reported matter is looked into and the person who gave the feedback might be reached out for more details or clarifications and only the relevant team is responsible. For investigations, the team is usually required to go to the site conduct a survey, and write a report on it for the issue to be addressed.	Aisha Mazrui – KRCS

Topics/Themes	Key takeaways	Responsibility
Day 2: Theme: Evidence-Based Programming		
11:00 – 11:30 hrs (EAT) Institutionalization of CEA – evidence and impact on communities	Malawi Red Cross Society (MRCS) shared their wide experiences and journey towards institutionalizing CEA, highlighting a case study they conducted supported by IFRC, on the impact of Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) on public health responses. The Malawi Red Cross also shared some barriers, enablers, and resolutions they've had in achieving CEA Institutionalization. One of the barriers highlighted was, that they have inadequate PMER capacity to support data collection and analysis to inform evidence-based programming while the enabler was to have a good PMER capacity to support data collection and analysis to inform evidence-based programming.	Patrick – Malawi RC;
11:30 – 12:00 hrs (EAT) **Red Talk**	The Madagascar Red Cross and Burundi Red Cross Societies shared how they are implementing CEA in their work in their National Societies. The conclusions drawn from the MRCS experience highlight the positive impact of community feedback on enhancing CVA. The participatory mechanisms, deeply embedded in local structures, showcase active ownership through organized activities. Localization and appropriateness are emphasized, considering local power dynamics, customs, and language. Face-to-face interaction emerges as a crucial communication channel for community members to express needs and provide feedback. The evidence indicates that feedback collection aids the national society in refining CVA programs. MRCS recommends early community involvement in initiative design, providing alternative communication channels, and allocating specific resources to promptly address received feedback, emphasizing a continuous and responsive feedback loop. The CEA approach, recognized for improving the National Society's image and resolving conflicts through the Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM), has empowered volunteers to address issues independently; however, challenges arise as similar mechanisms make it hard for community members to differentiate. Additionally, some project managers overlook the CEA approach, and the tools provided are deemed insufficient in the community The two societies demonstrated how they have successfully integrated CEA in all their thematic areas including but not limited to Health and Social Services, DRR, and Organizational Development.	Sylviane– Madagascar RC; Gad – Burundi RC
12:00 – 13:00 hrs (EAT) Systems to Manage CEA data and community feedback mechanisms	Feedback mechanisms should be as inclusive as possible to ensure that all community groups access and get feedback on time. During the discussions, the participants also proposed the use of drawings and audio channels to reach children and people with special needs respectively in a way of ensuring inclusivity. • Feedback Loops should be closed within 72 Hours • Complaints are Feedback and Feedback is Not Complaints	Mamadou – Gabon RC; Pauline Santana – Cameroon RC; Georgia – CAR RC

Topics/Themes	Key takeaways	Responsibility
14:00 – 16:00 hrs (EAT) **World -café:** Closing the feedback loop	During the World Café, the following key areas were discussed by the participants: • Participatory monitoring and evaluation practices and lessons learned from their various experiences. • CEA & PGI During the PGI & CEA discussion in the groups, it was noted that CEA and PGI are not independent concepts, rather, the two concepts complement each other. The participants also sighted that when CEA is effectively implemented in the NS programming, then by default, the mainstreaming of PGI and safeguarding will be achieved	Amulen Frances – Uganda RC; Mofe – Nigeria RC; Jane – South Sudan RC; Tebukhosi – Eswatini RC

Day 3: Theme: Community-driven programmes and response for Sustainable Impact

Topics/Themes	Key takeaways	Responsibility
08:30 – 09:30 Hrs (EAT) Panel discussion –	While Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) empowers communities to raise their voices and have a say in different program designs across all the faces, Community (Locally led) programs, and Response ride on the CEA aspects to ensure that the communities initiate projects and are supported to ensure ownership and sustainability. The following key points were picked from the discussions; • Community-driven programs are impactful and evidence of success since the communities drove the project agenda. • Community-driven programs are sustainable since they are owned by the communities • Communities should be engaged in all project phases • CEA ensures key community challenges are addressed in Community-driven programs	**Panelists:** Otto – Tanzania RC; Gad – Burundi RC; Lilian – IFRC; Wilhelmine – DR Congo RC; Jane – SSRC
09:30 -10:30 hrs (EAT) Red Talk	Sudan Red Cross Society (SRCS) presented on Disaster resilience. The Disaster Resilience concept was well explained using the following concerns; Government, Donors, Mitigation, Hazards, Timeliness, Communities, Humanitarian Actors, and Programs. Where it was noted that Disaster resilience is a collective action that requires the engagement of the communities as key stakeholders, the Government, and other actors/ partners. **Chad Red Cross Society facilitated discussions on Migration.** They indicated that the country receives asylum seekers, Refugees, and Returnees from different countries. CEA integration is very key in population movement because of the following key aspects as discussed; • The population on the move is exposed to GBV, and lack of proper and timely two-way communication and engagement, among other challenges, thus requiring protection and increased CEA interventions • The population is as well cosmopolitan and needs to be treated equally • The population has diverse needs and thus very important to engage them to serve them well • It is very key to disaggregate the Data to know the diverse population being handled.	Presenters: Omer – Sudan RC; Allamine – Chad RC; Mofe – Nigeria RC

Topics/Themes	Key takeaways	Responsibility
Day 3: Theme: Community-driven programmes and response for Sustainable Impact		
11:00 – 11:30 (EAT) CEA in Anticipatory action	The International Centre for Humanitarian Affairs (ICHA) is the Kenya Red Cross Society's research hub which provides society with innovative ways of responding to humanitarian needs. ICHA supports the society on matters of Climate Change programming and climatic analysis and advice on what program to implement in anticipation of climate change. Communities Engagement enables KRCS to come up with community action plans where the community members take up the actions through utilization of the resources shared ensuring that their resilience is enhanced during disasters.	ICHA – KRCS
14:00 – 15:30 hrs (EAT) **World Café:** CEA in Livelihood programming	Food Security has been the most common challenge across most of the African Nations over decades. Most of the RCRC National Societies have been implementing projects geared towards improving Food Security and Livelihoods in their courtesies. CEA also facilitates community-led programs in various National Societies. South Sudan RC shared its successes, challenges, and enablers in achieving this. One of the barriers highlighted was, they don't take enough time on community engagement while the enabler was to ensure there was adequate utilization of the existing participatory method. Case examples of Community-driven green response and Community-centred Resilience/DRR in Bangladesh by the Swedish Red Cross were also shared.	**Hosts:** Swedish RC + Bangladesh RC; Jane – South Sudan RC; Sharmake – Somalia RC; Janet & Elias – South Sudan RC
16:30 – 17:00 hrs (EAT) Movement coordination and collaboration & Boma Yetu	The Kenya Red Cross, IFRC, and British Red Cross led the teams in discussing how to continue the CEA peer-to-peer conversations going forward between all the National Societies in Africa and the RCRC Movement. It was agreed that the CEA Learning events will be done again and again to help societies institutionalize CEA and ensure full integration of CEA in all the NS programming and services.	**Facilitator:** Cynthia – IFRC; Mo – BRC; Keren – KRCS

LEARNINGS FROM THE WORKSHOP: BARRIERS, ENABLERS AND HOW TO MOVE CEA FORWARD.

During the concluding day of the peer-to-peer learning event, attendees synthesized essential insights and recurring themes. They emphasized shared successes and obstacles among actors in the RCRC movement and subsequently proposed resolutions aimed at the future.

Community engagement and accountability (CEA) success relies on the interaction between enablers, barriers, and resolutions. Enablers like available tools and leadership buy-in facilitate effective communication while existing projects and partners bolster CEA's impact. Barriers such as a lack of resources, leadership understanding, and a framework pose challenges. Resolutions include advocating for CEA through ambassadors, evidence-based programming, increased branding, and a commitment to comprehensive strategies and policies. These resolutions aim to address obstacles, leverage enablers, and establish a strong foundation for sustained and impactful CEA.

3.1 Theme: Institutionalization and mainstreaming of CEA

Enablers	Barriers
1. Tools and platforms are available 2. Leadership and management buy-in. 3. Having existing projects and willing partners to support CEA	1. Lack of human and financial resources 2. Lack of capacity and understanding by leadership. 3. CEA is not a priority for some National Societies 4. Lack of framework

Resolutions

1.Advocacy on CEA- Have CEA ambassadors and champions

2.Strengthen evidence-based programming on CEA

3.Increase branding on CEA for all activities

Commitment to the development of CEA strategies and policies

3.2 Theme: Evidence-based programming

Enablers	Barriers
1. Available data for analysis on evidence-based programming. 2. Collaboration between CEA and PMER 3. Good PMER capacity to support data collection and analysis to inform evidence-based programming.	1. Available data for analysis on evidence-based programming. 2. Collaboration between CEA and PMER 3. Good PMER capacity to support data collection and analysis to inform evidence-based programming.

Resolutions

1.Have a dedicated CEA officer with skills in data analysis

2.Capacity building on feedback data analysis

3.Documentation on evidence-based programming

Theme: Community-driven programmes and response for Sustainable Impact	
Enablers	**Barriers**
1.Existing participatory methods 2.Trusted xistence by communities Existing partners and donor appetite	1.We don't take enough time on community engagement 2.Low initiatives on community-driven programmes Inadequate monitoring and evaluation of community-driven programmes

Resolutions

1.Document lessons learned for future programming

2.Collaboration initiatives with other agencies

3.Regular engagement with communities
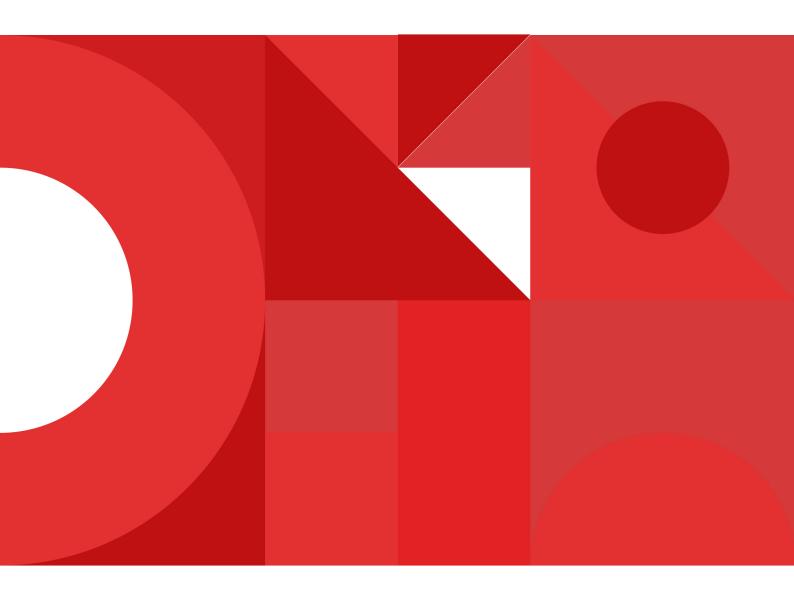
Identification and promotion of local solutions

ANNEXES

1. Africa CEA learning event Photos

2. Africa CEA learning event Zoom recordings

3. Africa CEA learning event Program/timetable

4. List of participating African NSs

In conclusion, the peer-to-peer learning event participated with the following CEA representatives from the following National Societies; Kenya Red Cross Society, Tanazanian Red Cross, Uganda Red Cross, Burundi Red Cross, Somali Red Cresent, South Sudan Red Crescent, Ethiopia Red Crescent, Malawi Red Cross, Zimbabwe Red Cross, Madagascar Red Cross, Chad Red Cross, Nigeria Red Cross, Benin Red Cross, Gabon Red Cross, Cameroon Red Cross, DR Congo Red Cross, Central Africa Republic Red Cross, Guinea Red Cross

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