THE RESEARCH PEOPLE

EVALUATION OF INNOVATION AT THE ICRC 2018-2023

ANNEXES

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ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

The evaluation was delivered according to the Request for Proposals provided here.

ANNEX 2: AREAS FOR INNOVATION

Table 1. Options to guide a Board decision on investment decisions.

Description	Advantages/opportunities	Disadvantages/Risks
Option 1: Programmatic Innovation Focus		
Strategic Direction: Articulate a narrower scope for the IFT based on innovations within clearly defined portfolios that focus only on operational/programmatic areas	• Clarify specific programmatic portfolios focussed on core services • Streamline resources towards program efforts • Look for opportunities for more consolidated learning between similar initiatives • Reduce the number of misaligned ideas received for example from finance and HR	• May miss out on cross-functional innovations. • Potential disconnect with organizational-wide initiatives.
Option 2: Diversified Innovation Hub with a focus on operational departments		
Strategic Direction: Rebalance innovation for the whole organization, with a focus on solutions for both programmes and institutional processes related to procurement, administration, finance etc. Include a team member with a focus on finance/HR innovations for comprehensive organizational development.	• Builds on the current tri-partite approach • Promotes inclusivity of innovation efforts with the opportunity to inspire innovative thinking across all metiers • More cross-functional collaboration • Opportunities to inspire innovative thinking across all metiers • Positive engagement with finance/HR which potentially has enabling functions for other innovations	• Splits resources across many initiatives • Challenges in maintaining focus on a wide range of metiers and delegations • Cultural shift towards engagement with finance/HR which may require
Option 3: Digital and Top-Down Innovation Hub		
Strategic Direction: Have a more exclusive focus on innovations in new technologies. This tighter focus appealed to a minority of stakeholders but risks less connection with the delegations.	• Streamline innovation toward potential breakthrough initiatives • Increase investment in scaling up breakthrough initiatives • Clear direction for technological advancements. • Leverage technology for organizational efficiency.	• Overlooks insights from bottom-up innovations • Reduces engagement with the delegations which have intrinsic benefits as well as fostering cross-organizational collaboration • The rationale for an IFT outside of TNI is reduced and potential overlap with • Limited exploration of grassroots insights

ANNEX 3: INVESTMENT CRITERIA

The conclusions state that the Board should build on the innovation impact areas to establish investment criteria for the IFT to ensure that the investments align with the team's goals and have a positive impact in the intended areas. Example criteria are included below based on the evaluation findings. Once decided, these investment criteria should be made available to all potential innovators and shared in the annual call for proposals.

Table 2.

Criteria	Description	Criteria
Priority area	The IFT is particularly receptive to problems linked to core core activities within its four approaches; the assistance approach, the cooperation approach, the prevention approach, and the protection approach. [Note these areas should be narrowed further to reflect the strategic direction of the team].	The reviewer should consider: ● Is the applicant able to clearly articulate the problem the innovation is addressing and why it is important? ● Does the problem link to one of the DEC's priority areas?
Potential for consolidated learning	Initiative leads should have a plan to gather and use learning. Applicants should consider how the activities differ from 'business as usual' approaches and how we can expect this to bring about transformative change for priority problem areas. Proposals should include plans for effective dissemination of learning to the wider ICRC and humanitarian communities and plans to collect information on the effects and impacts of the initiative.	The reviewer should consider: ● Does the project present a new approach to solving the problem? This might range from an incremental improvement to a radically different approach. ● Is there a plan for generating evidence on the effectiveness of the project?
Likely advantage of the new solution	The IFT is looking to support issues that address problems that have been identified and understood by relevant metiers and units. The strongest teams will describe the root causes of the problem, why it matters, and how it affects people.	The reviewer should consider: ● Is the applicant knowledgeable about existing solutions and why the proposed approach has a comparative advantage?
Potential to Scale	Applicants should consider their possible pathways to scaling and how they will use the IFT funding to progress on their journey to scale. The strongest teams will outline their scaling plans. Note that for research we would expect to see dissemination plans instead.	The reviewer should consider: ● Has the team articulated an ambition to scale beyond the current project site? ● Is there at least one possible pathway to scaling that the team could explore? ● Does the team/IFT have experience in scaling through that pathway?

ANNEX 4: SUMMARY OF BARRIERS AND STRATEGIES

Table 3.

Type of barrier	Barrier	Description/ how it was identified as a barrier	How the IFT has addressed the barrier
Institutional barriers	Risk-averse culture	The risk-averse culture of the ICRC was identified by the IFT as a barrier to innovation. 6% of innovators surveyed also identified risk aversion as a barrier.	Explicit communication to innovators on the ability to test and fail safely. The IFT shared knowledge and experience through communications products and events, eg. InspiRED days.
	Complicated institutional processes and policies	Complicated institutional processes such as procurement and IT were the most common barriers identified by innovators. Policies, particularly the Data Protection policy had posed an additional challenge to a number of the innovations we spoke to.	The IFT provided tailored support to innovators to navigate processes and policies (see the Effectiveness chapter in the full evaluation report).
	Lack of clear organizational strategy for innovation	The IFT identified the lack of clear top-down direction or a framework for innovation within the institution, especially in relation to operational priorities, as a barrier. Particularly as others within the organization may not understand what the IFT is trying to achieve. One survey respondent also identified a 'lack of senior management buy-in' as a barrier to their innovation.	The IFT worked according to its own objectives in line with the institutional strategy.
	Silos and territorialism across different parts of the ICRC	IFT members and innovators identified the rigid organizational structure of the ICRC and the resulting lack of connectedness and tensions across different parts of the organization (and the lack of connections to external partners) as a barrier to innovation.	The IFT navigated silo-ed working by connecting people working on similar initiatives together, identifying areas of interconnectedness, and leveraging opportunities to strengthen transversal efforts. They supported building blocks within these larger efforts and offered incentives - funding, comms support, connections - to encourage engagement with the IFT.

Type of barrier	Barrier	Description/ how it was identified as a barrier	How the IFT has addressed the barrier
			SFI, transversal thematics, the climate challenge, brown bag lunches and InspiRED days all helped to connect people across different parts of the organization.

To counteract territorialism the IFT focussed on incorporating a high degree of due diligence in their work and 'excellent levels of documentation' to demonstrate their value-add. They also chose to focus efforts more strongly in areas where there were less intractable political barriers and a collective commitment to innovate. |
	Resource constraints	Within the current financial crisis there has been a deprioritisation of new initiatives and staff reported being encouraged to 'return to their core mandate'. This is a barrier to the uptake of innovations in the ICRC after IFT funding ends and was identified by 23% of surveyed innovators.	Any new structure for integration and scale-up will need to include consideration of this barrier.
	Limited communications avenues	Limited communication avenues were recognized by stakeholders across the ICRC as a barrier to innovation as it limits awareness and understanding of innovation.	The IFT hired an external blog writer and published a monthly blog on a different funded initiative.
Innovation-specific barrier	Human resources	The majority of initiatives did not include staff time and so staff innovate on top of their regular roles. Staff may be stretched in terms of capacity, completing priorities and time. On top of this, many staff work in challenging or dangerous operating contexts which can be additionally demanding.

The IFT and 23% of innovators surveyed identified limited time and capacity as a barrier to innovation. | In recognition of the challenging work conditions and demands, the IFT has focussed on working hand in hand with innovators. This included offering time and support, listening and trying to meet innovator's needs when they had limited capacity (such as supporting reporting).

The IFT also put human resources behind initiatives by funding some positions, for example for the digital emblem, and digital health initiatives. They also provided in-kind support, for example to VRU and to other tech projects. |

Type of barrier	Barrier	Description/ how it was identified as a barrier	How the IFT has addressed the barrier
	Information management	The IFT identified information management as a key barrier, specific to their approach to innovation. In order to connect innovations together across the house it is essential to have a clear picture of what is taking place in different parts of the organization.	The IFT navigated this barrier through a focus on networking. They conducted a tech scan document to map different technologies and which units of ICRC were working on them.
	Structure for integration and scale-up	Both the IFT and innovators identified the lack of clear processes for handover for initiatives once funding ends. The IFT identified that the structure for scale-up will look different for tech and non-tech innovations. There is a gap between tech innovations and ICT frameworks and practices. The tech and data board currently only funds significant, organisation-wide projects so smaller tech innovations are often stuck with no path forward.	For tech innovations, the IFT engaged with the PMO and made some progress with the architecture board to officially recognize some tools. They have identified IT project managers as key people to have on board, and learned that having the metier validating the request is more effective. But this still poses a significant barrier to tech innovations. Governance (particularly the involvement of the Inno board), the shared position between Innovation and IT, and adapting their approach to support initiatives based on learning about the gap and how to deal with it have all been useful strategies to navigate this barrier. At field level, it was easier to integrate incremental non-tech innovations into the PFR after testing and showing it works. The IFT is in discussions with EcoSec and WatHab on replicating successful pilots in additional contexts.
	Lack of buy-in from relevant teams/ departments	In relation to the silos and territorialism across different parts of the ICRC, 19% of surveyed innovators identified a lack of buy-in from relevant teams/ departments as a barrier to innovation.	
	Lack of understanding of innovation in the ICRC	16% of innovators identified a lack of understanding of innovation in the ICRC as a barrier to innovation.	
	Funding amount	Interviews with innovators identified that the funding amounts and durations can be limiting.	Some innovators emphasized that despite the limited amounts of funding, the approach of the IFT enabled follow-on funding when required.

ANNEX 5: DEEP DIVES

Table 4. The table provides a summary of our outcome harvesting analysis for the nine deep dives included in the evaluation. The High/Moderate/Potential/Low ratings were assigned following the methodology outlined below (see Table 8). A * is used to indicate that the initiative is still in the relatively early stages of IFT support.

Deep dive	Consolidated learning	Comparative advantage of the new solution	Scaling of the new solution
VR	**Moderate** At least three peer-reviewed publications.	**High** Introduction of digital training using realistic scenarios.	**High** At least 20 unique training scenarios plus more than 100 video games created for training and learning.
Energy	**High** Baseline research on the ICRC's energy consumption and ongoing monitoring of the nine most energy-intensive delegations. Learning shared through webinar series and the establishment of knowledge-sharing centers in Nairobi and Dubai.	**Moderate** A series of potential new solutions, including IoT sensors and a carbon capture initiative.	**Moderate** Although elements of the initiatives were taken forward and replicated, they did not achieve the ambition or scale that had been hoped.
Digital Emblem	**High*** Publication of research on the advantages and risks of a digital emblem with engagement from delegations and National Societies.	**High*** Convergence of two research teams around a possible technical solution.	**Potential*** Plans for possible pathways to the adoption of the digital emblem in IHL.
SFI	**Moderate** Published three research reports and documented a series of SF exercises.	**Potential** Promising use of SF as a tool for operational planning.	**Potential** Plans for building SF facilitation, increasing the number of SF forum participants, and planning for data infrastructure are ongoing.
Complex Network Analysis	**Moderate** Publication of 2 research papers and 3 detailed reports on the use of CNA in identifying missing migrants.	**High** It's a more accurate and faster approach in comparison to paper-based tracing approach.	**Potential** Plans to embed it in the work of Central Tracing Agency upon the availability of more resources.
Climate and Conflict NAME*	**Potential *** Most innovations are still being implemented.	**Moderate*** Encouraged field-driven innovations and offered an excellent engagement approach with the delegations.	**Potential*** Plan for the metiers to adopt the successful innovations to their guidance(s).

Conflict and climate resilience in Niger	**Moderate*** Two research studies were conducted. Blog posts and presentations in INSPIRED days were delivered.	**Moderate*** The transversality and community-based approach challenged the traditional way of working.	**Low*** It is too early to consider replication but there were additional funds from complementary funding sources internal to the ICRC in Niger.
Autonomous RFL	**Potential** Informal information sharing and presentations to the movement contributed to sharing learning with the ICRC, movement partners, and external actors.	**High** Improved service provision and cost-effective solutions for restoring family links.	**Moderate** Replication by several delegations and Zambia Red Cross. Russia and Greece expressed interest in replicating.
ERCM	**Potential** Documentation of lessons learned in reports and blog posts.	**High** It is overwhelmingly positive, including reducing eRCM transmission times from 6 months to 2-4 weeks on average.	**Low** Lack of necessary buy-in from relevant departments.

ANNEX 6: MODELS OF INNOVATION IN THE HUMANITARIAN SECTOR

Four challenges for the current innovation model were identified through the interviews, with interviewees expressing ideas about how these might be addressed:

1. Limited connections with the field offices
2. Informal mechanisms for identifying potential innovations
3. Difficulty of scaling innovations
4. Not enough breakthrough innovations

These challenges represent different potential future directions for the innovation team. The table below provides examples of how some of these challenges have been addressed through different models for innovation - with some of the advantages and disadvantages of each model.

Table 5.

Possible models	Examples	Features
Regional innovation managers	UNHCR Innovation Fund The UNHCR Innovation fund aims to promote a culture of innovation within UNHCR. Regional innovation managers communicate about innovation opportunities with field teams and support teams in developing proposals. An interest in innovation is fostered through a website, blog, digital events and training, and an organisation-wide email call for ideas.	- Stronger connections to field offices - Teams in field offices receive face-to-face support - Innovation team is not co-located - Expense of multiple innovation managers
Competitive funding panels	Elrha's Humanitarian Innovation Fund The HIF team longlists proposals based on eligibility criteria. Sector experts score and provide feedback on each proposal. A funding panel makes a collective decision on the portfolio of innovations that will receive funding. GSMA Mobile for Humanitarian Innovation Fund. The GSMA team shortlists innovations based on minimum standards and provides a recommendation on each proposal. A funding panel scores all shortlisted proposals and then meets to unanimously agree on an overall portfolio of projects.	- Formalises role of board in defining problem areas - Formalises role of board/funding panel in ranking and selecting innovations - Provides formal feedback to innovators - More time-consuming for Board - Requires teams to spend more time developing formal proposals - Many teams will develop proposals and will not get funded

Possible models	Examples	Features
Bespoke mechanism for scaling within the initiative	Grand Challenges Canada Transition to Scale (TTS) TTS provides grants of 400k USD - 1.7m USD which are awarded to grantees to scale up their innovations in new settings. Technical and mentoring support is also provided through cohort-based workshops and one-to-one expert mentoring. Grand Challenges Canada consolidates and publishes learning from its TTS portfolio. Elrha's HIF Journey to Scale. Grants of around 600k GBP are given to grantees alongside coaching in developing a scaling strategy. The HIF also aims to support innovators in building relationships with different partners in the sector.	• Makes scaling an explicit objective • Dedicated time and expertise in how to scale innovations • Focusses learning on adoption and scaling • Potentially enables innovators to find ways of scaling their innovations outside the ICRC • Innovators may end up developing scaling pathways outside the ICRC • Scaling initiatives takes time and money and outcomes are not necessarily seen for many years
Identifying breakthrough innovations from outside the organization	**WFP Innovation Accelerator** The Frontiers Innovation Programme researches, tests and scales "game-changing" innovations in new technologies. The Innovation Accelerator has formed partnerships with industry and government partners like the European Space Agency, the German Space Agency, and Google Research to commission partnerships and fund the development of ideas. In addition, it implements a series of bootcamps and innovation programs to fund external ideas and help them to develop partnerships with relevant teams within WFP. **UK Humanitarian Innovation Hub** The UK HIH commissions research using Strategic foresight, Horizon scanning, and other futures methodologies to identify relevant frontier technologies for the humanitarian sector. Partnerships are formed with specific private and public sector entities to collaboratively develop and fund pilots in these areas.	• Makes breakthrough innovation an explicit objective • Awareness of emerging technologies and approaches • Partnership and collaboration to access expertise • Requites clarity about the problems to be addressed • Innovations may be developed outside the organization • Challenge of integrating external innovations into existing programmes and approaches

ANNEX 7: EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The evaluation framework provides the four evaluation questions (EQs) with associated sub-questions. The evaluation is both summative (questions indicated in white boxes) and formative (questions in gray boxes). Minor changes were made to the evaluation framework, which were documented in the Inception Report.

Table 6. Evaluation framework

Evaluation sub-questions	Methods
EQ 1: How relevant[1] was the innovation approach[2] for the ICRC? Is it still relevant?	
1.1. To what extent has the organization experienced innovation in the past 5 years, considering both internal organizational changes and external factors that may have impacted the uptake of the Innovation Facilitation Team (IFT)'s approach across the ICRC?	- Desk review - Interviews with IFT, Board, and selected departmental and field decision-makers - Thematic analysis of interviews - Capturing change analysis - A rubric scale for each of the change areas
1.2. How did the innovation approach change and how relevant were the changes given ICRC's internal context?	- Desk review - Critical turning points for the IFT (and wider organization) - Thematic analysis of interviews with IFT, Board, and selected departmental and field decision-makers
1.3. What influenced the approach to innovation and how was it affected by external factors?	- Critical turning points for the IFT - Critical turning points in the wider organization - Analysis of differences between innovation at ICRC and the wider sector
1.4 Was the intent of the IFT understood by Innovators and others?	Interviews with the Board and Innovators
1.5. What adjustments should be made to the innovation model to ensure its continued relevance to the ICRC in the near future?	Generate a list of alternative models for innovation for discussion with the IFT and Board
1.6. How can the innovation facilitation team help prioritize the innovation initiatives going forward, given the volume of new ideas and new projects?	Generate a list of alternative approaches to prioritisation for discussion with the IFT and Board
EQ2: How effective[3] has the innovation approach been in achieving its objectives?	
2.1 To what extent did the IFT achieve its objectives?	Desk review

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[1] Relevance in this context considers the purpose of the approach to Innovation, the extent to which the direction was adapted to changing contextual factors both internally and externally.
[2] As set out in the 2017 Directorate Resolution
[3] Effectiveness refers to the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups, answering the question "Is the intervention achieving its objective?" Source: OECD Evaluation Criteria.

Evaluation sub-questions	Methods
	- Meta-analysis of investments - Team discussions with IFT
2.2. What are the barriers to innovation within the ICRC and how have they been addressed by the IFT?	- Desk review (including comms outputs) - Interviews with IFT, board, selected departmental and field decision-makers, other departments, Strategic Foresights (SF) and challenge participants - Case studies
2.3. How did the IFT coordinate with other ICRC functions and metiers focused on adapting and improving operational and management processes to be more effective in the implementation of its mandate?	- Desk review - Interviews with IFT, board, selected departmental and field decision-makers, other departments, Strategic Foresight (SF) and challenge participants
2.4. How can the relationship between research and innovation be leveraged effectively to generate innovative solutions that serve the needs of the ICRC? What is the best way to cooperate for the most effective results?	As above
2.5. What is the best way to organize innovation at the IFT?	Generate list of alternative models for innovation for discussion with the IFT and Board (see 1.5)
2.6. Where has the IFT focussed its efforts so far and what areas of the ICRC could benefit most from innovation?	As in 2.3
2.7. How can the IFT support ICRC's staff members to use innovative approaches and tools?	As in 2.3
EQ3: What preliminary impact[4] can be observed within the ICRC as a result of the innovation approach since its implementation?	
3.1. What are the most impactful innovation tools, applications and solutions that were supported by the IFT within the evaluated timeframe?	- Team discussion on objectives/values - Capturing change analysis - Meta-analysis of investments - Review of investment data and KPIs
3.2. To what extent have the innovation initiatives generated catalytic effects that will yield results across the organization?	As above
3.3. How did the Innovation Facilitation Team's connections, influence and achievements help position	Interviews with other initiatives

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[4] The evaluation considers impact at multiple layers: the impact on the organization of the approach to Innovation in terms of building culture and opening space for innovation; and the results of the portfolio of innovation initiatives. Within this, innovation and the initiatives contain different elements of 'sustainability' which may refer to embedding of practices or the take up of interventions or institutional knowledge and learning.

Evaluation sub-questions	Methods
the ICRC as an innovator amongst other humanitarian actors?	
3.4. How did the innovation facilitation team bring new thinking and practice into the ICRC?	● As above (3.1)
3.5. To what extent do the current KPIs reflect the value-add and the impact of innovation across the ICRC? What other indicators or measurements could be used to measure and capture the effects of the innovation approach within the ICRC? How is success defined for the innovation approach?	● KPI Workshop
EQ 4: What lessons have been learned from the successes, challenges and opportunities experienced by the innovation facilitation team?	

4.1. How can these lessons learned be used for future innovation purposes?	● Desk review of strategic documents, IFT documents, project documents and finance documents (incl KPIs)
	● Interviews with:
	   ○ Selected departmental and field decision-makers
	   ○ IFT
	   ○ SF and challenge participants
	   ○ Other innovation initiatives
	● Thematic analysis and case studies

4.2. What limitations can be addressed to improve them and foster greater innovation uptake across the ICRC?	
4.3. What successes can be built on to better support the organization's strategic objectives?	

ANNEX 8: FULL METHODOLOGY

Inception

The evaluation began with a kick-off meeting followed by a two-day inception visit to Geneva, where we met with the IFT and key stakeholders engaged in innovation. During this visit, we facilitated a discussion on *Critical turning points* and conducted 11 interviews where we learned about the set-up of the IFT, its projects and the innovation landscape from the IFT, technical teams, board members and innovators. The inception phase refined the scope and focus of the evaluation questions. Minor changes from the ToR were clearly illustrated in the inception report.

The inception visit helped to clarify the evaluation's objectives, questions, and scope. Interviews were conducted with:

- Melissa Kiehl, Strategic Foresight, Virtual Reality Advisor
- Mima Stojanovic, Portfolio Manager
- Elsa Gehanne, Innovation Officer
- Blaise Robert, Innovation Officer, Generative Artificial Intelligence
- Kristina Almonte, Associate Strategic Foresight
- Vincent Graf, Strategic Technology Advisor
- Monica Scott Ray, Experience Design Manager
- Marco Albertini, Partnership Operations Coordinator
- Thao Ton That Whelan, GIS Data Scientist
- Erik Tollesfen, Head of Weapons Contamination Unit
- Robert Mardini, Director General

An initial review of strategic and operational documents included:

- ICRC, Towards Innovation 3.0 in the ICRC: Summary note. 2018
- ICRC, Innovation at the ICRC: Directorate Resolution. 2017
- ICRC, ICRC Strategy 2019–2024, Institutional strategy. 2018
- ICRC, Innovation in brief. 2021
- ICRC Innoboard Innovation Facilitation Team Summary Report: 2017-2019
- Innoboard Meeting Q1 2022. PowerPoint Presentation
- Strategic Foresight Infographic (Dec 2021-May 2022)
- ICRC, Framework of evaluation analysis
- ICRC, Framework on integrity and ethics for independent evaluators
- ICRC Organizational Chart
- ICRC Organograms: Executive Office of the Director General; Department of International Law, Policy & Humanitarian Diplomacy; Department of Mobilization, Movement and Partnership; Operations Department; Department of Protection and Essential Services (PES); Department for Support and Digital Transformation

The findings and plans from the inception phase were summarised in an Inception document, including a detailed timeline workplan.

DATA COLLECTION

Desk research

Desk research was used to respond to the evaluation questions, verify other sources, and provide triangulation. A structured approach was taken to reviewing documents ahead of the primary data collection in line with the key topics listed in the Evaluation Framework. This allowed us to identify themes and gaps in the reports as well as lessons learned. The desk research also guided the selection of the deep dives, and contributed to their development and analysis. A full list of documents is included in Annex 9.

Interviews

The data collection phase relied on key informant interviews (KIIs) as one of the main data collection methods. We worked collaboratively with the ICRC innovation and evaluation focal points to identify key informants from relevant teams. Purposeful sampling was used to identify individuals who could provide the most information for the evaluation on the basis of the following criteria:

- Role in the ICRC
- Location (field, regional, Headquarters)
- Level of engagement with the IFT (senior-decision maker, board, team, user, other)

To ensure representation on all aspects of the work of the IFT, we kept the number of interviewees within a planned quota for each level and respondent group.

In total 72 potential interviewees were sampled and 61 interviews held with individuals who had led, interacted with, used, or aspired to access innovation support at the ICRC. The KIIs offered an opportunity to strategically explore areas uncovered during the inception phase, document review and survey, in line with the evaluation framework. Annex 10 lists the interviews conducted.

We developed interview tools to guide the evaluation team and strengthen the internal validity of the evaluation process, under the following categories:

- Strategic level - focussed on the approach and achievements of innovation at ICRC.
- IFT level - focussed on internal and external relationships, and design and achievements at the portfolio level.
- Project level - focussed on project processes and achievements and form the basis of the case studies.

Templates for each category of interview are available [here](#).

Survey

A survey was used to gather a wide range of experiences, learning, and insights from initiative leads. The survey questions captured their experience leading and implementing innovation and were used to fill the gaps on the impact of the innovation fund and IFT. Survey findings were triangulated against the larger analysis.

Team discussions

We held four in-person team discussions with the IFT:

- Critical turning points – An exercise to identify and discuss key events, changes, and adaptions made between 2018 and 2023.
- Objectives of innovation – A discussion of different views on the objectives of innovation at ICRC, including the extent to which the IFT sought to support "breakthrough" vs "incremental" innovation and the extent to which "sustainability" and/or "scaling" were intended.
- Overcoming barriers – An exploration of the barriers to innovation at ICRC, and the different strategies taken by the IFT in overcoming them.
- Innovation models – A discussion exploring alternative models for structuring innovation by other humanitarian actors.

Capturing change

The process for capturing impact (or "changes") was adapted from an Outcome Harvesting methodology. Changes were identified by the evaluation team through the desk review and through capturing change questions in interviews. The task was not to evaluate the work of each grantee, but rather to explore the changes that had occurred at different levels and how the IFT contributed to the changes. We recorded:

- Description
- Year of change
- Type of change
- Significance
- IFT contribution to the change
- Source of the change statement
- Was the change substantiated

The outcome harvesting methodology asks open questions about change to enable participants to identify changes that are valuable to them, and to give insight into unanticipated changes. This approach is particularly valuable in complex environments, where change is unpredictable and multiple actors contribute to outcomes. Qualitative analysis was prioritized over a quantitative approach.

Deep dives

Case studies, where the evaluation examines a series of different units of analysis to draw general conclusions about the intervention, are probably the most common evaluation design for humanitarian action.[5] This involves an intensive description and analysis of the examples, providing rich data, and allowing for analysis of complex interventions such as innovation.

We sampled 9 cases (initiatives/innovations) using a purposeful approach in order to address questions on **effectiveness, impact and lessons learned**. The criteria were:
- Thematic area
- Location
- Age/Gender/Disability of the innovation lead (where available)
- Success/failure of the innovation

Descriptions of the process and impacts of the initiatives were generated based on documents and interviews. We also drew out the lessons learned including explanations of how the IFT has contributed to the inception and development of the initiatives and what factors were important in each case and why.

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[5] ALNAP (2016) Evaluation of Humanitarian Action Guide. ALNAP Guide. London: ALNAP/ODI.

Meta-analysis of innovation database

A meta-analysis is an important way of understanding what has been funded and the collective contribution of the initiatives. It aims to provide data on effectiveness and impact. Over the past six years, we have conducted meta-analyses with more than ten humanitarian innovation funders including UNHCR, Elrha's Humanitarian Innovation Fund, GSMA Foundation's Mobile for Humanitarian Innovation (M4H) Fund, the Start Network and the Response Innovation Labs.

Like most humanitarian innovation initiatives, the IFT has had limited opportunity to collate impact data on its funded initiatives (most of which are early stage). Nevertheless, we developed a database of innovation initiatives by drawing on document reviews and the knowledge of IFT members. The database included:

- Innovation name and description
- Year funded
- Unit(s)
- Location(s) (country)
- Status (open/closed)
- Challenge area (if applicable)
- Thematic area (if applicable)
- Name of budget owner
- Gender of budget owner (*not currently self-identified)
- Financial data (budget and spend)
- Implementation dates
- Technology type
- Innovation outcome pathway after closing

The database was analyzed using Excel to generate basic descriptive statistics on funding and outcomes of the innovations (frequencies; averages; variation). The analysis also included disaggregation by demographics.

ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis

To understand perspectives on the relevance, effectiveness and impact of the IFT, transcripts were coded against the evaluation questions. Findings were regularly discussed and amended through discussions by the evaluators to reflect the emerging themes. Detailed tables of the team's goals, barriers to innovation, and alternative models for innovation were produced.

Strategic review

We anticipated that the questions on the IFT's approach and objectives would be most difficult to answer rigorously. The thematic analysis (see above) generated a wide range of perspectives on the purpose of innovation at ICRC and how best to operationalize innovation funding and support. In order to ensure that our conclusions are robust and useful we aimed to guide this analysis by exploring the IFT's underlying questions on relevance. During the second Team Discussion, we worked with the IFT to generate a set of objectives/values that reflect its ambitions. During the fourth workshop we used emerging findings to explore how the IFT's strategy compares to those of other agencies. We used these objectives and findings to generate lines of inquiry that then guided our analysis.

To explore alignment with the ICRC's organizational strategy we also assessed the deep dives against the strategic priorities of the team and organization. A simple rag rating approach was developed to capture the IFT's objectives and an assessment of how investments align with those objectives.

Comparative analysis

Our understanding of the position of the ICRC as an innovator amongst other humanitarian actors was informed by a light-touch analysis of how the IFT compares to other peer organizations, bearing in mind their own innovation objectives, structures and achievements. The positions of these organizations was established through a short document review but also drew upon the Evaluation Lead's substantial engagements with innovation initiatives across the sector over the last seven years.

It is not possible to establish a conventional counterfactual as a basis to infer how alternative organizing structures would increase the impact of the IFT. Instead, we used the findings of this comparative analysis, alongside the perspectives of senior stakeholders about the role of innovation, in order to explore alternative models with the IFT.

Evaluation rubrics

The final step of the analysis is to combine the findings generated through the different methods into conclusions and recommendations.

We aimed to take a rigorous and transparent approach to answering evaluative questions. Findings were presented against each of the evaluation questions. We used an evaluative rubric (a table) to describe what evidence should look like for the key criteria and at different levels. The intention was to 'offer a process for making explicit the judgments in an evaluation and are used to judge the quality, the value, or the importance of the service provided'[6].

Two different rubrics were used.

For the question on objectives (EQ2.1) we considered: 1) the approach of the IFT towards each goal, and 2) activities undertaken that contributed towards achieving it. Each goal was assigned a rag rating (red-amber-green) based on the IFT's progress so far. A red rating indicated that no progress has been made towards the goal, an amber rating indicates that some progress had been made but it was limited, and a green rating indicated that progress is on track towards achieving the goal. This approach took into account the time frame of the evaluation and the nature of some of the goals which are based on a longer-term approach and would therefore take longer to be achieved.

For the question on impactful tools and solutions (EQ3.1) we used a coding approach based on types of innovation impact. The factors included (a) learning (b) new solutions and (c) progress toward replication wider and scale.

Table 8. Outcome analysis

Learning	Improved Solution	Replication
High - The project generated learning about the innovation which used by others in the ICRC or the movement. **Moderate** - The project generated learning about the innovation which is being used	**High** - The change was at the scale of the organisation or the wider humanitarian sector; a major change in proportion to the size of the problem or opportunity. **Moderate** - The change was for a larger group of people (e.g. a	**High** - Engagements promoted widespread adoption of innovations from across the scale portfolio **Moderate** - Partnerships formed and examples of adoption

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[6] Davidson, E. J. Evaluative Reasoning. Florence: UNICEF. 2014

internally **Low** – The project did not generate learning	department), way of doing things (approach); a bigger change in proportion to the size of the problem or opportunity. **Low** – The change impacted a small team or group in the affected population; it was a small change in proportion to the size of the problem or opportunity.	**Low** – No stakeholders identified to support adoption

For each of the evaluation criteria we triangulated data from each of the sources and assessed the innovation's performance and the strength of available evidence. At this stage, we also noted any areas where there are differing or contradictory findings.

Report writing, presentations and feedback

Our analysis was guided by the IFT and governance stakeholders. Sensemaking workshops were held in late October where the emerging findings and recommendation areas were presented and discussed with:

● IFT
● Board, incl Director General (DG)

A set of recommendations were drawn from the conclusions.[7] An initial set of recommendations was developed by the evaluation team and these will be refined through a consultative process with the IFT and Board. Recommendations have been grouped under key categories according to stakeholders responsible for actions.

The evaluation report provides enumerated findings, conclusions and recommendations. The IFT and Evaluation Office will provide comments and final amendments to the report and associated documents. We will create a feedback log to document how we address each comment.

USE AND STAKEHOLDERS

Based on the current context and unique dynamics of the ICRC, we considered the engagement and involvement of three key stakeholder groups for this evaluation critical to its use and implementation. On this basis, we intentionally engaged with these stakeholder groups through the inception and analysis phases of the evaluation. We aimed to ensure that they were able to shape the evaluation, felt invested in how it is used, and will use it themselves.

Table 9: Primary users of the evaluation

	Primary users	Engagement across the phases of the evaluation process	
1	Innovation Board	Inception	● Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with two board members
		Data collection	● KIIs with all board members, the Director of MMP and the Foundation Manager
		Findings	● Early findings presentation, questions and feedback ● Feedback on the evaluation report

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[7] Roberts-Gray et al. (1987). *Linking data with action: Procedures for developing recommendations.* Evaluation Reviews, 11 (5), pp. 678-684

2	Innovation Facilitation Team (including the Head of the IFT and incoming new head)	Ongoing	● Weekly update and call with Head of Innovation
		Inception	● Team discussion on critical turning points ● KIIs with all team members ● Review and feedback on the inception report
		Data collection	● KIIs with all team members ● KIIs with the current Head of Innovation and new Head of Innovation (once appointed) ● Team discussions x 3
		Findings	● Early findings presentation, questions and feedback ● Two rounds of review and feedback on the evaluation report
3	Departmental and field decision-makers/ primary users	Data collection	● KIIs with departmental and field decision-makers/ primary users
		Findings	● Early findings presentation during Evaluation Week

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

We followed the ICRC's Code of Conduct and the ICRC Rules on Personal Data Protection in our approach to informed voluntary consent, data collection, storage and sharing. We attended the ICRC ethics orientation and adhered to it's requirements.

We developed a **detailed risk assessment** that outlined methodological risks such as biases; ethical considerations including confidentiality and safeguarding; and contextual risks such as evaluation use. We developed mitigating strategies for each risk to foster a more robust and trustworthy process.

The evaluation inception report was reviewed by the IFT and the Evaluation Office and put through the Evaluation Office's Quality Assurance process. The inception report outlined the nature of the evaluation, the potential risks to participants, and how the evaluation was aligned to established ethical guidelines. The approach was approved by quality assurance.

Evaluation stakeholders were identified during the inception phase, and a plan was developed for how best to engage different stakeholders at different stages of the evaluation. We created four different interview tools to ensure the specificity of the questions to each stakeholder group. We did not interview or engage with the affected communities.

The willingness of participants to share their experiences and insights hinged **on the assurance that their identities and contributions would be safeguarded from untoward exposure.** To do that, we followed a consent process and ensured anonymous and non-attributable analysis to protect the identity and confidentiality of the evaluation participants. KIIs were recorded with consent. All data (recordings and notes) will be destroyed by the evaluation team six months after the completion of the evaluation.

All the evaluation team members were trained in ethical research processes and have experience in navigating ethical complexity in research and evaluations. The team worked independently and free from undue influence to produce the findings and evaluative judgements.

As a team of external evaluators, **we adhered to a rigorous conflict of interest policy**, with evaluation team members transparently declaring no conflict of interest. This approach ensured the team's independence, free from undue influence, allowing for an impartial and objective evaluation process. We committed to the principles of impartiality and transparency when conducting data collection activities and analysis.

METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

Innovation means different things to different people. It involves complex processes where change happens in fits and starts and where there may be very little visible impact for long periods of time. These things make evaluating innovation difficult. We delivered the evaluation working closely with the IFT to understand their underlying questions and their definitions of success. We triangulated findings based on multiple data sources. We drew on the IFT's documents, but where data on performance was limited we augmented it with survey responses, interview data, and our own judgments on the position of the IFT.

The primary risks and limitations of the methodology were:

1. **Theory of change:** The absence of a pre-existing Theory of Change or Innovation Objectives for the IFT posed challenges in guiding the measurement of progress, effectiveness, and impact. To address this gap, collaborative efforts with the IFT were undertaken to retrospectively articulate objectives during the evaluation process, albeit with the limitation that the objectives may have changed over time and/or been viewed differently by other stakeholders.

2. **Evaluation timeframe:** It takes time for innovations to be developed, tested and adopted. The evaluation included the perspectives and achievements of grantees awarded between January 2018 and June 2023. Innovations receiving funding in recent months and years have had limited time to be tested, adopted, integrated with wider programmes, or scaled to other contexts.

3. **Selection bias:** We used purposeful quota samples to identify a diverse range of respondents, ensuring representation across the thematic areas, different contexts, and different types and scales of innovation. We relied on the IFT to make recommendations and provide introductions. The findings are therefore susceptible to interviewee selection bias, given the IFT's influence in participant sampling for interviews and the selection of deep dives. This may have resulted in the limited inclusion of certain perspectives. The evaluation team's scope was also constrained by the availability of interviewees and data.

4. **Impact on conflict-affected communities:** As outlined in the RFP, the evaluation concentrated on assessing the IFT's contribution to the ICRC, omitting an examination of its impact on conflict-affected communities. This aspect remains a potential area for future evaluation efforts.

5. **Quality of interview and survey data:** To evaluate impact, we were largely reliant on self-reported data from interviews and survey responses. Such data is susceptible to respondents' subjective interpretation, recall biases, or social desirability bias. The current financial crisis at the ICRC may also have discouraged some staff from participating.

6. **Difficulty of generalizing:** The relative diversity of the innovators and innovations funded by the IFT made it difficult to generalize some results, especially related to lessons learned. We tried to mitigate this by triangulating case study findings with data from other methods.

ANNEX 9: LIST OF DOCUMENTS

General documents (29 documents)

- ICRC, Towards Innovation 3.0 in the ICRC: Summary note. 2018
- ICRC, Innovation at the ICRC: Directorate Resolution. 2017
- ICRC, ICRC Strategy 2019–2024, Institutional strategy. 2018
- ICRC, Innovation in brief. 2021
- ICRC Innoboard Innovation Facilitation Team Summary Report: 2017-2019
- Innoboard Meeting documents (2022-2023) (7 documents)
- ICRC, Framework on integrity and ethics for independent evaluators
- ICRC Organizational Chart
- ICRC Organograms: Executive Office of the Director General; Department of International Law, Policy & Humanitarian Diplomacy; Department of Mobilization, Movement and Partnership; Operations Department; Department of Protection and Essential Services (PES); Department for Support and Digital Transformation
- Updated Q3 Innovation Portfolio Monitoring spreadsheet - 22 October 2023 (title; unit; year; location; pathway)
- Donor Reports (4 documents)
- Inspired Days report and 2 blog posts (3 documents)

Documents for meta-analysis (109 documents)

- 106 project submission forms (title; dates; budget; innovation type)
- Innovation Portfolio Monitoring spreadsheet – Sept 2023 (title; unit; year; location; pathway)
- Initiative lead/budget holder contact list (title; name to match survey responses)
- INNO FIBER annual budget sheets 2018-2022 (budget; amount spent)

Documents for deep dives (22 documents)

- ICRC, Humanitarian Tech. 2023
- ICRC, Virtual Reality & Innovation. 2020.
- ICRC, Virtual reality for philanthropy: a promising tool to innovate fundraising. 2023
- ICRC, Virtual reality for philanthropy: a promising tool to innovate fundraising: Supplementary Information. 2023
- ICRC, Digitializing the ICRC Emblem. 2022
- ICRC, Digitalizing the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Crystal Emblems: Benefits, Risks, and Possible Solutions, ICRC, Geneva, 2022.
- Energy challenge (4 documents)
- Blogs on Energy Challenge (4 documents)
- Strategic Foresight communications documents, Infographics, baselines and outputs (10 documents)
- Horizon Planning Exercises (2022) (3 documents)
- Reports of complex network analysis (4 reports and 2 academic papers)
- ICRC, Eco-resillience pilot in Niger report
- ICRC, Israel and the occupied territories: Facts and Figures January to June 2023 (Blogpost)
- Falbriard, M., Huot, G., Janier, M. et al. A functional approach towards the design, development, and test of an affordable dynamic prosthetic foot. PLOS ONE, 17(5), 2022.
- ICRC, In Nigeria, an electronic application improves quality of health care for children. ICRC, Geneva, 2021.

- ICRC, Goma West Resilient Water Supply: Bridging the Humanitarian and Development Divide. ICRC, Geneva, 2022.
- ICRC, Taking sustainable energy to the next level: from challenge to transition, Geneva, 2021.
- Inside RedSafe, the ICRC's Digital Future. Blog post. 2022

ANNEX 10: LIST OF INTERVIEWS

Table 10.

Innovation Facilitation Team Head of Innovation, IFT Innovation Adviser Extended Reality, IFT Innovation Portfolio Manager, IFT Innovation Officer, IFT Innovation Officer, IFT Innovation Associate, IFT Innovation Digital Transformation and Data (DTD) Technology Advisor, IFT
Board (past and present) Director-General, ICRC Experience Design Manager Special Envoy for Foresight & Techplomacy Director of Support and Digital Transformation Africa Regional Director Chief Information Officer Head of Learning & Development (former board member)
Strategic Foresight Initiative Officer, Finance and Administration Department Regional legal Coordinator (Moscow) Protection Field Officer (Kano, Nigeria) Movement Cooperation (Kampala) Interpreter (Bangkok) Digital Services Manager (Geneva) Senior Advisor, Digital Technology & Data Protection (US) Data Process Manager (Geneve) Operating Manager, Protection and Essential Services ·
Innovation Users (HQ) Strategic Technology Advisor, Digital Transformation? Data Protection Office Head of Virtual Reality Training Tools Head of Unit – Economic Security (EcoSec) Head of Unit – Water and Habitat (WatHab) Head of Arms Head of Forensics Digital Health Manager Regional head of EcoSec in NAME Project and Portfolio management expert Head of New Financial Models Senior Techplomacy delegate Chief of Technology, Luxembourg Delegation
Innovation users (Delegations) Head of DRC Delegation Digitalization Program Manager, Central Tracing Agency

Restoring Family Links & RedSafe Officer (South Africa)
Global Adviser on Child Protection
Transregional Forensic Coordinator
Protection coordinator
Head of Central Tracing Agency
Head of Operations (Niamey delegation)
Climate-Conflict Resilience Manager
Head of Finance Digital, Architecture and Change

Other elements
Private Partnerships & Philanthropy Manager
Foundation CICR Manager

Selected departmental and field decision-makers
Partnership Operations Coordinator
GIS data scientist, Evidence and Analysis Unit
Head of Weapons Contamination Unit, Weapons Contamination Unit
Communication consultant
Auditor

Other departments
Head, Centre for Operational Research and Experience
Deputy, Trends, Reputation, Analysis and Knowledge
Support and Digital Transformation
Head of Staffing division, Human Resources

ANNEX 11. LIST OF INITIATIVES

Table 11.

Year funded	Name of innovation initiative
2018	Behavioral Insights to Reduce Violence in Hospitals
2018	Partnering Cities for More Secure Healthcare
2018	Agilis
2018	Rehab Center Management Software
2018	Water Distirbution System
2018	Artificial Intelligence for Satellite Imagery
2018	Trace the Face Corners
2018	Electronic Red Cross Messages
2018	Trace the Face Facial Recognition
2018	Complex Networks to Identify Missing Persons
2018	Better Body Bags
2018	Virtual Reality for Safer Behavior Practices
2018	Energy Challenge
2018	Behavior Change and Extended Reality (XR) / VR Training on IHL
2018	New Financing Models (NFM)
2019	Advanced Ultrasound Machines for Improved Diagnosis
2019	Emergency Dispatch of First Aid Responders
2019	Diagnostic Tools for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)
2019	Locally Adapted Wheelchairs
2019	Remote Sensing for Harvest Monitoring
2019	Hydroponic Fodder Unit Assessment
2019	Microcredit for Sustainable Farming
2019	Detection of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), Mines, and Other Explosive Hazards / Thermal Sensing
2019	Building Gaza Resilience
2019	Building Information Modeling/3D Scanning
2019	Drone Operational Framework
2019	Collaboration on Education for Resilience
2019	Green Warehouse Solution/Corn Soya Blend Warehouse
2019	Market Assessment and Data Analysis Tool
2019	Carbon Accounting
2019	International Conference Digital Risks Exhibition
2019	ICT Sprints
2019	Internet of Things (IOT)
2019	Impact Evaluation
2019	Secure Communication
2019	Digital Whiteflag
2019	Beneficiary Platform
2019	Partnership and Social Business Models
2019	Nigeria (Tony Elumelu Foundation Project and Almanach)
2019	Partnership Brokering Training Capacity
2019	Partnership Initiative
2020	Chlorine Calculation App
2020	Virtual Reality for COVID-19 Training in IDP Camps

Year funded	Name of innovation initiative
2020	Forensics Chatbot for COVID-19
2020	Biometrics & IP Clauses
2020	Transversal Virtual Environment for IHL Training Tools
2020	Energy Webinar Series
2020	Energy Assessment for ICRC Premises
2020	Carbon Accreditation Study
2020	Accelerating Integration of Climate Risks and Trends
2020	Virtual Reality for Forensics Training
2020	Autonomous RFL Services in Deportation
2020	Feasibility Study for Isoscapes
2020	Third Party Monitoring
2020	Optimizing VR to Drive Philanthropic Behaviors
2020	Gender, Diversity, and Inclusion in Security
2020	Digital Service Models
2020	Solar Panel Compound test
2020	WatHab Urban Response to COVID
2021	Pilot AI Indexing of ICRC's WW2 Archives
2021	Digital Cyber Emblem
2021	Secure Instant Messaging App
2021	Open Source Information for Protection Work
2021	Energy Transformation Training Capacity, including Energy Hubs in NBI & Dubai
2021	Energy Collaboration Platform & Webinars
2021	Digital Health Challenge
2021	Targeting and Remote Beneficiary Management
2021	Cardiometabolic Device (CMP) Evaluation
2021	Water Treatment Technology
2021	Low Code / Rapid Application Development Testing
2021	AI on Premises Server
2021	Mirror World
2021	Testing Exhibition Formats
2021	Partnership Brokers Pilot / Pilot for Partnerships LnD Strategy
2021	Text to Speech for Info as Aid
2021	Evaluation of WatHab Programme in Jordan
2021	Enhanced Data Security Study
2021	WatHab Bioactivator / Bioactivator as part of WatHab Toolkit
2021	AirOps Airdop System
2021	Eco-resilience Pilot (Niger)
2021	Solar-powered Community Water Points (Burkina Faso)
2021	Biogas as an Alternative Energy Source (Mauritania)
2021	Seed Certification and Distribution Tracking (CAR)
2021	Better Climate Services (Mali)
2021	Community Greenhouse Project (Sudan)
2022	WeC Virtual Environment
2022	Immersive IHL Edutainment
2022	Prehospital Data & Quality Optimization
2022	Humanitarian Barter Token
2022	RFL GSM Solution
2022	Evaluation of Olympe

Year funded	Name of innovation initiative
2022	Satellite Images on Demand
2022	Photogrammetry with a Phone
2022	Resilient Places of Detention
2022	Ventilation in Places of Detention
2022	Climate Foresight
2022	Improved Ponds
2022	Prisoners of Climate Change
2022	Smart Water Management Practices for Irrigation
2022	Microgrid for Vulnerable Communities
2022	Cost-effective Direct Current Pumping for Vulnerable Farmers
2022	Improved Resilience of Honey Beekeepers
2022	Permaculture Approach at Household and Small Farmers Level
2022	Cactus as Livestock Feed
2022	Bee-Friendly Plants
2022	Community Recycling Station
2022	Irrigation by Condensation Using Geothermal Heat Exchange
2022	Wastewater Treatment for Agricultural Purposes
2022	Sustainable Solar Powered Irrigation System
2022	Individual Wastewater Treatment in Rural Areas
2023	Digital Emblem (Phase 2)
2023	Digital Dilemmas Upgrade
2023	Seed Tracking Process Design
2023	Maman Lumiere – Programatic and Geographic Expansion
2023	Livelihood Support through Terrace and Vertical Garden in Urban Areas
2023	Local Solutions to Flooding
2023	Upgrade of ALMANACH Nigeria
2023	Improve the Quality of Handwritten Text Recognition (HTR) AI Models by Combining an HTR-run System with Crowdsourcing.
2023	GRP Showcasing & Donor Engagement Model
2023	Use of Black Soldier Flies to Improve Agricultural Production
2023	Strengthening Hydro-meteorological Stations to Re-inforce Early Warning Systems
2023	Biofortified Sweet Potato: Food and Nutrition Interventions in Fragile Environments
2023	Enhancing Tech Governance
2023	Chatbot for Health Guidelines
2023	Low-code / Citizen Development
2023	Planetary Health
2023	Livelihood Support for Farmers
2023	Biomedical Equipment Tracking System