

UNHCR Evaluation Management Response			
Evaluation title:	<i>Baseline Assessment of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) for Refugee and Host Community in the East and Horn of Africa and Great Lakes Region: The Context of Burundi 2022</i>		
UNHCR evaluation reference:	<i>EVO/2024/13</i>		
Entity that commissioned the evaluation:	<i>East and Southern Africa RB</i>		
Due date of Management Response:	<i>5/May/2025</i>		
Coordinator of Management Response:	Asaad Kadhum/Hassan Abdi	Senior Public Health Officer/PHO	RB ESA
Management Response approved by (<i>senior manager in commissioning office</i>):	Name: Mamadou Dian Balde	Job title: Regional Director	Country/Office: RB ESA
Date:	<i>10/03/2026</i>		

General comments on the evaluation:	<p>The commissioning office welcomes the evaluation findings and appreciates the rigorous analysis presented. The results clearly highlight both the progress made and the persistent system-level gaps affecting NCD prevention, diagnosis and management in the refugee settings. We take note of the low screening and early detection rates, limited diagnostic capacity, shortages of trained personnel, and inconsistent availability of essential medicines and equipment. The recommendations provided are relevant, actionable and aligned with our operational priorities. In particular, we support the emphasis on strengthening community-level awareness, enhancing facility capacity, improving supply chain reliability, and deepening collaboration with government counterparts to ensure sustainable integration of NCD services. The office remains committed to working with partners to implement these recommendations and to ensure that NCD care for refugees and host communities continues to improve.</p>
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RECOMMENDATION 1:	<i>Championing against tobacco use: the assessment found that tobacco smokers were initiated to tobacco smoking at a very early age. The project should develop innovative approaches for advocating against tobacco use.</i>		
Management response:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Partially agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree		
Reasons (if partially agree or disagree):	<i>[add only if partially agree or disagree was selected] N/A</i>		
Unit or function responsible:	UNHCR Burundi Operation		
Top-line planned actions	By whom	Comments	Progress

			Expected completion date	Status	Comments	
1	Developed and disseminated youth-focused anti-tobacco IEC materials and integrated key messages into NCD awareness and community sensitization activities by Q3 2023.	UNHCR Burundi Country Office , together with implementing partners,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed and disseminated youth-focused anti-tobacco IEC materials; integrated messages into NCD awareness campaigns. • Included tobacco-risk content in all community sensitization activities and outreach sessions. • Provided CHWs with refresher briefings on tobacco-related risks and counselling methods. • CHWs delivered routine anti-tobacco counselling during household visits, group talks, and youth sessions. • Conducted youth engagement activities (dialogues, sports events, drama/skits) focusing on early tobacco-use prevention. • Coordinated with local health authorities to harmonize messaging and jointly deliver prevention activities. 	Dec 2024	completed	<i>Recommendation fully addressed. Key prevention activities were implemented in 2023, including development of anti-tobacco IEC materials and integration of counselling through CHWs and community outreach.</i>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • carry out targeted activities to address the identified gap, including development and 	UNHCR Burundi Country Office, in collaboration with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed and disseminated youth-focused anti-tobacco IEC materials and integrated 	Dec 2024	Completed	The recommendation has been fully implemented,

	<p>dissemination of relevant IEC materials and integration of key messages into community sensitization activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen implementation by building CHW and partner capacity and utilizing existing community structures—such as youth groups, women’s committees, school clubs and religious leaders—to deliver consistent messages and reinforce behaviour change throughout 2023/2024. 	implementing partners	<p>tobacco-risk messages into NCD awareness and community outreach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built the capacity of CHWs and partner staff on tobacco-risk counselling. Used community structures (youth groups, women’s committees, school clubs, religious networks) to reinforce prevention messaging. Delivered routine anti-tobacco counselling through household visits, youth sessions and community health talks. 			with key prevention and community-based actions completed by dec 2024.
RECOMMENDATION 2:		<i>Sustained advocacy, awareness creation and engagement: of parents, caregivers, and faith leaders on their role in creating a healthy environment to support healthy lifestyles for children and their families to address issues that lead to NCDs and support practices that protects their families from being exposed to NCDs.</i>				
Management response:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Partially agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree				
Reasons (if partially agree or disagree):		<i>[add only if partially agree or disagree was selected]</i>				
Unit or function responsible:		UNHCR PH UN/RB ESA and BURUNDI CO				
Top-line planned actions		By whom	Comments	Expected completion date	Progress	
					Status	Comments
1			<i>[detail the actions to be taken]</i>	Dec 2024	Completed	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conducted targeted awareness and sensitization sessions for parents, caregivers and faith leaders through community dialogues, health talks and structured engagement forums throughout 2023. Leveraged existing community structures, including women's groups, youth groups, school committees and religious networks, to disseminate consistent messaging on healthy lifestyles and prevention of NCD risk factors, ensuring broad community reach in 2023/2024 	<p>UNHCR Burundi Country Office, with implementing partners, with technical support from UNHCR RB & HQ</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted awareness sessions with parents, caregivers and faith leaders on healthy lifestyles and NCD prevention. Leveraged community structures, women's groups, youth groups, school clubs and religious networks, to disseminate key messages. Provided CHWs and partner staff with briefings to strengthen delivery of behaviour-change messaging. Integrated NCD-prevention messages into routine community and religious forums. Engaged NCD patients as peer educators to share lived experiences, promote healthy behaviours and raise community awareness. 			<p>Recommendation fully implemented. Community awareness activities were conducted in 2023 using parents, caregivers, faith leaders, CHWs, community structures, and NCD patients as peer educators.</p>
3	<i>[continue as needed]</i>					
RECOMMENDATION 3:		<i>Advocating for targeted initiatives with high impacts in reducing food insecurity through livelihoods and targeted food security programs. This could include livelihoods-based interventions which will help the refugees secure adequate and sustainable income thus a reduction in food insecurity.</i>				
Management response:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Partially agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree				
Reasons (if partially agree or disagree):		<i>[add only if partially agree or disagree was selected]</i>				
Unit or function responsible:		UNHCR BURUNDI CO				
Top-line planned actions	By whom	Comments				Progress

			Expected completion date	Status	Comments
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with partners to provide complementary feeding support for NCD patients during Phase 1 of the project as an immediate, targeted measure to reduce food-related vulnerability. Engaged in advocacy efforts with partners and relevant stakeholders to explore livelihoods and food-security initiatives, while acknowledging that implementation was contingent on available funding. 	UNHCR CO BURUNDI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided supplementary/complementary food support to NCD patients as part of the Phase 1 package to mitigate diet-related health deterioration. Conducted initial advocacy discussions with partners, including livelihoods and food-security actors, to identify potential complementary interventions. Sensitized community structures and CHWs on the importance of diet in NCD management and encouraged household-level coping strategies where feasible. Explored—but could not operationalize—additional livelihoods-based interventions due to donor sustainability concerns and the decision not to fund these components in Phase 2. 	Dec 2024	<p>complemeary feeds was Completed by the end of the project in 2024</p> <p>Implementation partially achieved. Phase 1 complementary feeding was completed as planned, but broader livelihoods and food-security initiatives could not advance because these components were not approved in the Phase 2 proposal, and implementation remains contingent on future funding.</p>
RECOMMENDATION 4:		Staffing: The assessment advocates for additional staffing in the health facilities, specifically in the NCD unit.			
Management response:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Partially agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree			
Reasons (if partially agree or disagree):		<i>[add only if partially agree or disagree was selected]</i>			
Unit or function responsible:		UNHCR BURUNDI CO			
Top-line planned actions	By whom	Comments		Progress	

				Expected completion date	Status	Comments
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged with health partners and facility management to assess staffing gaps within NCD service delivery points and advocate for redistribution or reinforcement of available human resources. Provided targeted capacity strengthening for existing staff through training, mentorship and technical support to partially mitigate the limited staffing in the NCD units. 	UNHCR BURUNDI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborated with partners to review staffing needs in NCD units and propose feasible internal adjustments where possible. Provided on-site mentorship, supportive supervision and NCD-related training sessions to enhance the skills of existing clinical staff. Expanded task-sharing approaches, enabling nurses and CHWs to support basic NCD care within their scope. Maintained coordination with local health authorities to ensure continuity of NCD services despite limited staffing levels. 	COMPLETED		Partially implemented. Staffing shortages persisted, but capacity-building, task-sharing and strengthened supervision helped sustain NCD service delivery throughout the project period.
3	[continue as needed]					
RECOMMENDATION 5:		Support the equipping of health facilities with NCD equipment, diagnostic tests, and consumables to promote adequate and timely stocking of the health facilities.				
Management response:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Partially agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree				
Reasons (if partially agree or disagree):		<i>[add only if partially agree or disagree was selected]</i>				
Unit or function responsible:		UNHCR BURUNDI CO				
Top-line planned actions		By whom	Comments	Expected completion date	Progress	
					Status	Comments
1		UNHCR Burundi		2024	Completed in 2024 by the	Major procurement
2						

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked with implementing partners and facility management to identify priority NCD equipment, diagnostic needs and essential consumables, and supported procurement within available project resources. Facilitated timely distribution of procured items to targeted health facilities to strengthen NCD screening, diagnosis and routine case management. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted joint reviews with partners to determine gaps in NCD equipment, diagnostics and consumables in camp-based health facilities. Procured and supplied essential items such as basic diagnostic tools, BP machines, glucometers, test strips and related consumables within Phase 1 resources. Sophisticated NCD machines were procured Coordinated with partners and facility teams to ensure proper utilisation, documentation and stock monitoring for timely replenishment. Provided guidance to health staff on correct use and maintenance of the equipment to optimize service delivery. Explored opportunities for additional support, although further procurement was limited by funding constraints beyond Phase 1. 		<i>end of phase 1</i>	<p>was completed in line with the project proposal, and both partner-run and government health facilities received essential NCD equipment and consumables. While needs in the facilities remain immense, the support provided in 2023 significantly strengthened diagnostic capacity within the scope of available resources.</p>
RECOMMENDATION 6:	<i>Establishment of peer support programs/ groups to provide community level support in response to the shortage of CHWs in conducting follow-ups among patients therefore enhancing support for the delivery of mental health services that complement the efforts of CHWs. The group participants can assist in conducting follow-ups, monitoring medication adherence, providing basic support, and referring clients to specialized mental health services as needed</i>					
Management response:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Partially agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree					
Reasons (if partially agree or disagree):	[add only if partially agree or disagree was selected]					
Unit or function responsible:	<i>UNHCR Burundi</i>					
Top-line planned actions	By whom	Comments			Progress	

			Expected completion date	Status	Comments	
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitated the creation of peer-support groups to complement CHW efforts by providing community-level follow-up, basic support and adherence monitoring for NCD and mental-health patients. Provided orientation and light-touch training to selected peer group members to strengthen referral, follow-up and medication-adherence support within their communities 	UNHCR BURUNDI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified and mobilized community members—including stable NCD and mental-health patients—who could serve as peer supporters within their neighbourhoods. Formed small peer-support groups in the camps to help monitor medication adherence, provide basic psychosocial support, and encourage attendance at health appointments. Linked peer groups with CHWs and health-facility focal staff to streamline referrals and ensure follow-up for individuals presenting with worsening symptoms or missed appointments. Conducted orientation sessions for peer supporters on confidentiality, appropriate support boundaries, identifying red-flag symptoms and when to refer clients to CHWs or health facilities. Encouraged integration of peer-support activities into community structures (e.g., women’s groups, youth groups, faith-based groups), improving continuity of support despite CHW shortages. 	2024	completed as per the proposal expected to continue in phase 2 and as per routine	Partially implemented. Peer-support mechanisms were established in 2023 to reinforce follow-up and adherence support in the community, helping mitigate CHW shortages. Further expansion will depend on future resources and partner capacity.
3	[continue as needed]					
RECOMMENDATION 7:		Awareness creation on drug adherence: To enhance good health seeking behaviours among the target population, there is need to counsel and educate the NCD clients on the importance of modern medicine and drug adherence before providing them with				

		<i>the medication</i>				
Management response:		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Partially agree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree				
Reasons (if partially agree or disagree):		[add only if partially agree or disagree was selected]				
Unit or function responsible:		UNHCR Burundi				
Top-line planned actions		By whom	Comments	Expected completion date	Progress	
					Status	Comments
1			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counseled NCD clients at health facilities on the importance of completing prescriptions, avoiding treatment interruptions, and recognizing early warning signs. • CHWs provided adherence reminders, follow-up visits, and basic guidance for clients struggling with consistent medication use. • Delivered short educational sessions through community structures (women’s groups, youth clubs, faith-based groups) to strengthen understanding of modern medicine and its role in controlling NCDs. • Distributed simple IEC materials promoting adherence and explaining how medication supports long-term disease control. • Encouraged peer-support groups to share reminders and encourage members to remain consistent with treatment plans. 	2024	<i>Completed with the project but expected to continue as routine service</i>	Fully implemented within available scope. Drug-adherence counselling was integrated into facility- and community-level activities in 2023/2024, improving understanding of modern medicine and supporting better follow-up among NCD clients.