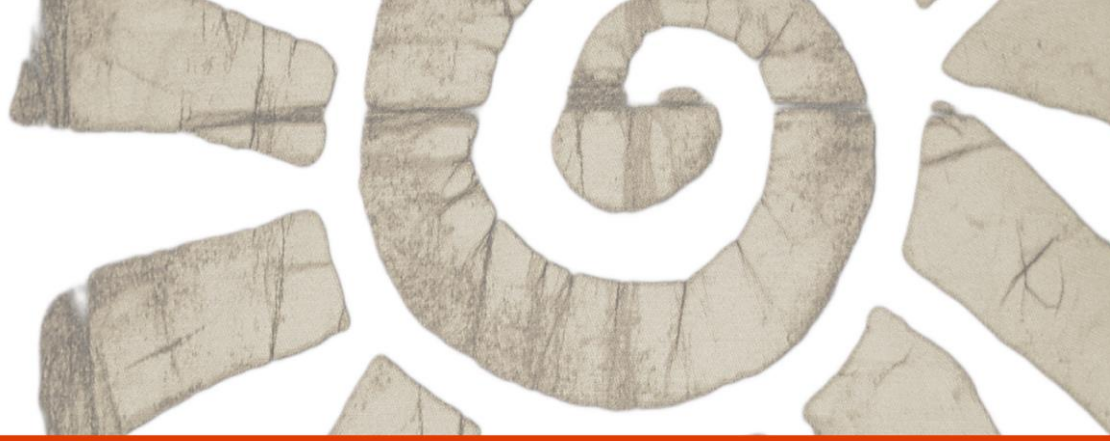




EMPOWERHOUSE



Final Report



End evaluation of the ADRA Action for Social Change Programme in Rwanda

By Birgitte Jallof
Team Leader

June 2018



**Umycuo CBG, Gashari.
Mukakabega Domitir. 53 years old. 5 children**

At the beginning of the process with ADRA/ACS she and her family were in a very difficult place. The husband had irregular jobs as a casual worker:

- She was trained in growing pineapples with the group
- Learned to read and write (and flashed her notes as a proof that she can do things with it!!!)
- Joined a savings group – and knows how to save and take loans for emergencies and to build up her life
- She bought livestock – had never ever imagined this
- She could sell its offspring, buy a plot, on flat land – not on the slope
- She could borrow for school fees for her children – all children are now studying – before all of this development this would NEVER have been possible
- Now she and her family live in a good house
- Received capacity building in the many different areas to continually strengthen all of the above

**“I am now a powerful and very happy woman.
This is very new in my life!”**



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Contributions from: Julius Namanya, national consultant, and ADRA DK and ADRA Rwanda staff

The views and interpretations in this report are the author's and do not necessarily reflect those of ADRA Denmark.

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Front page photo: In the livelihood CBG 'Umucyo Cooperative' in Karongi district, Western Province, the members wanted to demonstrate to the evaluation team, by the show of hands, how many members had been part of the REFLECT literacy work facilitated by the ASC programme. *Photo by Birgitte Jallo.*

Photos inside Report: Birgitte Jallo

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ASC leaves no-one behind! A personal foreword

It has been an honour and privilege to carry out the end evaluation of the Action for Social Change (ASC) programme in Rwanda. ASC is an effective and efficient programme, with a good design and of high relevance in the reality in which it unfolds, giving the programme a good level of impact and an unusual level of expected sustainability. This is to a high degree because this human-resources heavy programme is staffed by very capable people who are deeply committed to the focus and spirit of the programme and its partners.

This is all presented in the report, where no less than 10 representative testimonies of the more than 100 heard during the field work in Rwanda May 2018, present the value of the programme at the individual and community levels as well as in terms of changing the social norms.

In an era of donor fatigue and a resulting adverse funding environment; in a political climate where protectionism and populist slogans dehumanise 'the other' to justify heavy development assistance diversion and funding cuts; in a reality where claims that development programmes generate change are severely contested and where the motives behind 'development assistance' are increasingly questioned (unfortunately sometimes with very good right!), it was relieving, refreshing and ... simply wonderful (!) to meet the ASC reality created by ADRA Denmark and its partner organisations in Rwanda, Malawi, Uganda, Burundi, South Sudan and Zimbabwe (the two latter ASC programmes were closed down earlier).

The ASC programme shows that it is possible to facilitate important, relevant, positive development change among the poorest of the poor through the approaches and methodologies used. For this reason, the recommendation to ADRA Denmark – and its donor Danida – is to document the approach and ensure that it is systematically and effectively disseminated. Besides from all other value, it is the most powerful 'response' known by the author of this report (who has worked in this area for a lifetime) to the SDGs' insistent reminder to 'leave no-one behind'. This is what the ASC programme does: it leaves no-one behind where it operates.

It is my hope that the report does justice to the extraordinary quality of the programme and make some of the main lessons stand out clearly and usefully. The programme deserves it – and the world needs it – nothing less. Enjoy reading!

Acknowledgements

The successful conclusion of this end-evaluation of the ASC Rwanda programme is due to important and much appreciated efforts by many. The author of this report wants to acknowledge and warmly thank all involved in the organisation of this end-evaluation including preparatory activities, ensuring logistics, practical organisation, capable transportation over long distances at hardly passable roads of the rainy season, organisation of the requested meetings at all the many project sites and translation. Warm thanks go to ADRA Denmark and ADRA Rwanda and all the staff members engaged at different stages of the planning, implementation and reporting upon this evaluation.

While this report was written by and the sole responsibility of the team leader/author, the level of analysis, conclusions and recommendations had not been possible without the good exchanges during debriefing meetings in Kigali and Nærum, as well as through written comment received from the Rwanda ASC team and ADRA Denmark colleagues.

A special vote of thanks goes to my national (RW) consultant colleague Julius Namanya of **Research Hub**, with whom the inception report was prepared and the field work undertaken. Julius' in-depth knowledge of the Rwandan reality, recent engagement in significant and highly relevant research – along with his general information level about all that the ASC programme is about, has been invaluable. I have enjoyed working with and learning from you all!

*Birgitte Jallo, team leader
Denmark, June 2018*

List of abbreviations and acronyms

ADRA DK	Adventist Development and Relief Agency Denmark
ASC	Action for Social Change
CBG	Community-Based Groups
CFSC	Communication for Social Change
CRA	Child Right Ambassadors
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (Forum on development assistance of the OECD)
DKK	Danish Crowns (Currency of Denmark)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
LRRD	Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PTA	Parents-Teacher Association
PTCs	Parent teacher committees
RAB	Rwanda Agriculture Board
REB	Rwanda Education Board
REFLECT	Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques
RR	Radio Rwanda
RSF	Reporters sans Frontières (Reporters without borders)
SMC	School Management Committee
ToC	Theory of Change

Duhagurukiregukora CBG, Nyamasheke Josephine Mukankuranga, Vice President

- After the first training she started saving
- When money accumulated she borrowed 10.000 RWF to do petty trade
- She bought bananas and paid back loan
- Bought iron sheets to have a good roof
- Paid school fees for her kids
- Continues to do handicraft
- Has nice mattresses in her house
- Has a kitchen garden, so no more malnourished kids in her home

**“What I can confirm is that training
changed my life.
It is important that also new members
get this opportunity!”**



Executive summary

This is the end-evaluation of the Action for Social Change (ASC) programme in Rwanda. The ASC programme is funded by Danida through ADRA Denmark and implemented by ADRA Rwanda.

Despite Rwanda's remarkable development successes, poverty and inequality are still important with 39% living in poverty in 2015 of which 16% in extreme poverty. With a shared core objective that "People living in poverty empowered to participate and contribute to realise their rights to sustainable development", ADRA Denmark also manages ASC programmes in Uganda, Malawi and Burundi. Rwanda's ASC programme started in 2010 and will close down at the end of June 2018.

A Theory of Change was elaborated in 2015-16, the three change areas chosen were: 1) **Community and civil society structures**, including media, that permit community members and civil society to articulate their needs, concerns and rights and engage in peaceful dialogue and debate with formal and informal decision makers and authorities; 2) **Community members** that have the knowledge and skills to claim and realise their rights and utilise livelihood opportunities; and 3) **Social norms** support the equal participation of all citizens.

The main approaches used to build robust civil society groups were Communication for Social Change and a Human Rights Based Approach using advocacy. The programme supported creation of savings and loan groups as well as REFLECT-based literacy circles, while supporting Community-based groups in the areas of health, education and livelihood and food security.

Based on a background presentation of the Rwanda's political, economic, and social situation including a presentation of the 'not free' media environment, the report provides a history of the programme as well as the framework and methodology of the evaluation.

Of the two overall objectives of the evaluation, the first: 'to assess and document the impact of the Action for Social Change programme in Rwanda, 2010-2018' is presented through the analysis of findings along the DAC evaluation criteria in the body of the report. The second: 'to provide concrete and practical recommendations and best practices that ADRA Denmark and other ASC partners can use in future programme design in order to achieve the best possible results in relation to its objectives' is found the final section with 'practical recommendations and best practice', based on the full report directed at the remaining ASC programmes, at ADRA Rwanda and at ADRA Denmark.

The field work was carried out in the three provinces where the programme has been active including Eastern Province, where the programme closed in June 2016, providing an opportunity to see sustainability implications of the programme and its approaches used, 1½ years later.

Findings and conclusions

Relevance: the evaluation has found the ASC programme's design, strategy and approaches highly relevant in its context and to have met the needs and priorities of the beneficiary-participants. The approaches towards the achievement of 'social change' were found to be appropriate and well implemented. The use of community dialogues and radio programmes have made up integrated elements of the overall fan of the programme's implementation modes including both advocacy and HRBA. The Theory of Change (ToC) as an organising principle and framework for documentation of success, has been taken very serious by the programme's last phase (since 2015-16), substituting the more activity-oriented focus of the early programme phases.

Effectiveness: the evaluation found that the ASC programme objectives have been achieved to a very high degree as documented among others as over-achievement of set targets. This is true in relation to the overall objective as well as towards the three change areas where (i) community structures were found strengthened; (ii) the participating individuals/community members importantly empowered with needed capacity; and in relation to (iii) the change of social norms, significant change was recognized in the programme's priority focus on gender balance. Recognizing, as the evaluators do, that effective collective conscientization brings irreversible cognitive change, the change generated was found to be effective also in this way.

Efficiency: the evaluation team found that the programme strategy with its capacity building and empowerment approach has been efficient. With 1.175 beneficiaries per ASC staff member (including admin and management); an average of USD 320 spent per programme participant and 80% of the staff deployed in the rural areas, where the programme was implemented, the programme was found to have been not just effective, but also efficient. This is further underscored by the fact that the target population - vulnerable people living in poverty - are recognized as the hardest to reach for development efforts. Hardest to reach usually also means 'at higher cost'. This makes the positive assessment of the cost-benefit balance stand out as even more impressive.

Impact: the evaluation team found that the ASC programme impact had been high in all three change areas: at community and individual levels as well as in terms of social norms. While the programme in general was found to have overly positive effects – and no negative encountered by the team (in a nine-year programme unintended impacts are likely to have been incorporated into the main programme), the area found with most remaining untapped potential would be the provision of ready access to Media Platforms, which was, however, recognized as complicated in the repressive and pressured media reality of Rwanda. Furthermore, as stated above, the (expected) irreversible conscientization is promising in terms of expected long-term impacts.

Sustainability: the evaluation team is convinced that the community structures with VSL opportunities and with organisation (groups, coops, networks) around livelihood and health will continue to be found in the three provinces – probably in developed forms depending upon the reality around them. As for education the ASC work in the schools has found powerful expressions in some communities with the right champions. It, however, appears that the democratization reform carried forward with ASC support in its partner sectors, is not yet quite rooted within the Sector and District Authorities. The full benefit of the potential in this area will depend upon the authorities clarifying their role and rolling out their support. In terms of support from the local authorities as a possible sustainability measure in general, the ASC programme has found the leaders being 'moving targets' as they have short tenures in their locations, making the understanding and collaboration created, easily jeopardized.

Programme Management: the organisation, implementation, staff and programme management of the ASC programme was by the evaluation found to be both exceptional and extraordinary. Such superlatives are not easily deployed in an evaluation report, but when they match the reality evaluated, they should be. The Action for Social Change programme is an effective and efficient programme, with a good design and of high relevance in the reality in which it unfolds, giving the programme a good level of impact and an unusual level of expected sustainability.

It is not possible to run an empowerment-oriented programme focusing on people living in poverty - those hardest to reach - without passion, respect and care. The ASC programme staff possess these important qualities. By embedding staff in the field (80% of the ASC staff is based in the districts and sectors), the organization walks its talk. When based near the partner groups, moving around the dusty or muddy roads by motorbike, staff understands much more about the reality than when jetting out from the capital city in a Toyota Landcruiser with aircon (or similar). An additional example of how the programme lives its approaches is that all staff take part in quarterly 3-day planning and evaluation meetings in Kigali, integrating the full scope of learning in the body-of-knowledge of the programme – and in onward planning. This is at the same time empowering, it builds capacity and it enhances the programme quality.

Practical recommendations and best practices to the other ASC partners

While the evaluators do not know the reality of the ASC partners in Burundi, Uganda and Malawi, the below recommendations and best practices may be of more use to some than to others. They, however, represent outstanding practices identified in Rwanda – for inspiration and consideration.

The ASC programme is at the core of the 'mantra' of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) reminding to 'leave no-one behind'. Recognizing, as mentioned above and as the SDGs do, that

reaching the poorest, most vulnerable and often marginalised 20 % (some even argue 40 %) of a population, is very difficult and requires the engagement by those population groups themselves. The ASC programme has done – and is doing – just that. Effectively. Efficiently. Sustainably. Powerfully. It is therefore important to extract the lessons learnt – including elements to improve – as these deserve to be shared widely: with – and beyond – the ongoing ASC programmes.

Integrated, holistic approach, building on existing capacity, generating empowered action

1. **The first and most important best practice** is the **power of synergy** created through the combination of the selected approaches and work methodologies. These are all embedded in lessons around collective conscientization generating a sociological fantasy and empowerment, as developed by Paulo Freire and others in the 1970s. The programme matched this by CFSC and HRBA, which emerged in the 1990s with a focus on people's need to access their human rights effectively through development processes. These were based on communication, dialogue and getting a voice, bottom-up. Merging all of this has generated important change.
2. The field work and study of documentation points to a **high likelihood of sustainability**.
3. The holistic nature of the ASC programme, involving all of the elements above, is important to remember for a programme to remain relevant, effective, efficient, impactful and sustainable, as **summarised in the evaluator's 'Ecology of empowerment'** model (p.15). It should be mentioned that the ASC focus is on the collective – made up by empowered individuals.
 - To use the **HRBA**, which with a special focus on **advocacy**, demonstrated how the conscious mastering of this approach leads to access to individual and collective rights and services, generated through important understanding of and practice in reaching out.
 - **CFSC** was most effectively rolled-out in the health CBGs, while community conversations were embedded in all groups and all activities. It is important to stay alert as implementer: could we include CFSC tools, techniques and processes more?
 - **The media** could maybe have been used in more systematic and strategic ways? It is, however, recognized that with the very tight government grip and control of those, and the recent move for national media to generate income, it has proven complicated by a programme like ASC to be considered other than a potential source of. **Exploration of partner groups' own access to the media**, as producers and discussants, would have been interesting through community media using mobiles, social media and radio. This is less common and obvious in Rwanda than it might be in especially Uganda and Malawi.
4. **Working with communities as poor** and disadvantaged as the partner-participants of the ASC programme, **beginning with VSLAs is a powerful best practice**: once some financial space comes into the life of persons and families, other engagements are possible.
5. Sustainable continuation of practice is built-in where there is a **clear economic value emerging** from grouping, such as VSLAs, networking, REFLECT (slightly less), etc.
6. Similarly, **shared root conditions make the groups stronger** – such as the health groups formed by HIV positive women – and men.
7. **Working in committing groups extends social capital** collectively and individually: the collective cares for weaker elements – like a family.
8. As a part of this holistic approach, it is important to support partners to have capacity **to not get stuck in the middle of an important process**. An example in Rwanda is the problem of reaching markets. The ASC programme has helped the groups develop capacity in terms of advocacy and livelihood activities like growing pineapples or bananas – but the CBGs cannot reach potential markets. This recommendation already appeared in a CFSC assessment in 2013 and has been inbuilt in the programme since including through more than 20 'Formal Business Planning' trainings for different cooperatives. But they did not manage to commit local authorities to do their part due to frequent staff transfers, where agreements with one person/authority representative would have to be re-built continually. Despite many attempts, it did not work.

Staffing and organisation – adding significant value

9. To be able to do this, **the second layer of best practice is** about the **staff and organisation**: having the **adequate capacity of staff** both in terms of personal qualities (first and foremost - the rest can be learnt!), technical knowledge and experience, is important. The ASC programme spent, according to the programme manager, an important part of the first years to get the team capacity in place **matching the approach, values and work methods**.
10. As the approaches in themselves do not necessarily 'do the trick', they need to be matched by capacity to **work in a flexible manner, tailoring the sequence of interventions to local developments**, based on understanding and continued **listening to** the partners-participants.
11. Closely related to the qualities of staff is the fact that **the sector coordinators lived in the area where they worked**. This gave many important benefits (see above) – and it sent a message to the (i) partners-participants, (ii) CBGs and (iii) authorities alike: **we live and work with you!**

It takes time to change minds, norms and traditions

12. **Time. The third best practice layer is about time.** This programme has now been active for a period of nine years. As the ASC programme is not building bridges but changing understanding attitudes and practices, it takes time. Some of the same findings and figures could possibly have been extracted after six years (some documentation in this report actually has) – but there would not have been the same amount of time to root and anchor the new ways. Nine years – or 10 – would seem to be a minimum desired duration of a programme of this nature.

Something different – for inspiration in other ASC countries

13. **The Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) of the Rwanda Governance Board¹** is a great facility with a vision: "Active Rwandan Communities Participating in Sustainable and Inclusive Local Development Driven by Mutual Accountability". This is a forum where NGO programmes for instance have an occasion to showcase their approaches and results. Despite the obvious and impressive potential, it was found to be too 'hands off' in terms of actual engagement.

Practical recommendations to ADRA Rwanda

While sustainability can be seen as built into the DNA of ASC, the evaluation found it worth considering ways of some further consolidation by ADRA Rwanda:

14. Immediately upon closure of the programme open **a year of 'Post implementation monitoring'** - with one year of focused monitoring-cum-consolidation follow-up.
15. **Consider national level advocacy for services of use to the CBGs and Coops including**
 - (i) Identification of national support to rural actors' access to markets;
 - (ii) Further strengthen the ad hoc networks of CBGs to become real powerful collegial exchange networks;
 - (iii) Work with MinEd on transfor-ming the AIDS clubs in the schools to focus on sexual and reproductive rights in light of increasing teenage pregnancies;
 - (iv) Work with MinEd to anchor the new democratic PTA-like structures;
 - (v) opening access to the media for CBG members and other civil society actors – in RRs 'Community Radios' or others.

Practical recommendations to ADRA Denmark

The ASC experience would be an answer to development challenges in many corners of the world. It is therefore recommended to take on the responsibility to make it accessible and known. It is recommended to do this in the following ways:

16. **'The ASC Way – a book'**: Consider having a book developed with frameworks, approaches and case stories.
17. **'The ASC Way – a film'**: Have a film made about approach, frameworks and case stories (linked with book for schools, universities) with DR, Danish/Swedish film institutes? Danida?
18. **'The ASC Way – a resource centre'**: Consider a desirable and possible way of establishing a small 'centre of excellence and resources', including documentation / a body of knowledge, resources and experience, as a reference point for other development actors worldwide. This could be an office in ADRA Denmark, or in cooperation with a university or research institution?

¹ rgb.rw/joint-development-forum/joint-action-development-forum/

1. Introduction

The present report is the end-evaluation of the Action for Social Change (ASC) programme in Rwanda. The Action for Social Change (ASC) Programme is funded by Danida through ADRA Denmark and implemented by ADRA Rwanda. The ASC programme in Rwanda started in 2010 and will close down at the end of June 2018 – half a year earlier than originally foreseen due to funding cuts. ADRA Denmark therefore commissioned the present end-evaluation covering the full programme period, 2010 to 2018.

1.1 Context – situation in Rwanda

Small and landlocked, Rwanda is hilly and fertile with a densely packed population of about 11.9 million people (2016)². It borders the far larger and richer Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as its closest East African neighbours, Tanzania, Uganda, and Burundi. Rwanda has been able to make important economic and structural reforms and sustain its economic growth rates over the last decade with coffee and tea production among its main exports. The World Bank has praised Rwanda's recent "remarkable development successes", which it says have helped reduce poverty and inequality³.

1.1.1 Political, economic and social context

Rwanda has guarded its political stability since the genocide in 1994. Parliamentary elections in 2017 saw women fill more seats in Parliament than in any other country⁴, and the Rwandan Patriotic Front maintain an absolute majority in the Chamber of Deputies. Paul Kagame has run Rwanda since his rebel army ended the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of people in 1994⁵, first as vice-president and defence minister (but widely seen as the real power in Rwanda) and as of 2000 elected president by Parliament. An amendment to the constitution in December 2015 paved the way for the re-election of President Paul Kagame in August 2017 to a third 7-year term in office. To his admirers he is a visionary leader, but to his critics he is a despot who tolerates no opposition.

Rwanda's overarching economic goal⁶ of growth acceleration and poverty reduction includes four thematic areas: economic transformation, rural development, productivity and youth employment, and accountable governance. With poor infrastructure and a lack of access to electricity representing some of the major constraints to development, Rwanda aims to raise gross domestic product (GDP) per capita to \$1,000; reduce the percentage of the population living below the poverty line to less than 30%; and reduce the percentage of the population living in extreme poverty to less than 9%. These goals build on remarkable development successes over the last decade that include high growth, rapid poverty reduction and reduced inequality. Between 2001 and 2015, real GDP growth averaged at about 8% per annum.

Socially, the strong economic growth was accompanied by **substantial improvements in living standards**, with a two-thirds drop in child mortality and near-universal primary school enrolment. A strong focus on homegrown policies and initiatives has contributed to significant improvement in access to services and human development indicators. The poverty rate dropped from 44% in 2011 to 39% in 2014.

1.1.2 Media/Communication context

The ASC programme focuses on the facilitation of development change through building the capacity of solid civil society groups aware of own rights and how to access them, as well as through the use of media and communication for development such as theatre, song & dance, community conversations, and other interpersonal communication processes.

² Background country documentation from the World Bank profile: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/rwanda/overview>

³ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14093238>

⁴ <http://www.africanews.com/2017/07/10/rwanda-tops-un-list-of-countries-with-most-women-in-parliament/>

⁵ With information from: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-14093238>

⁶ : The second Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS 2)

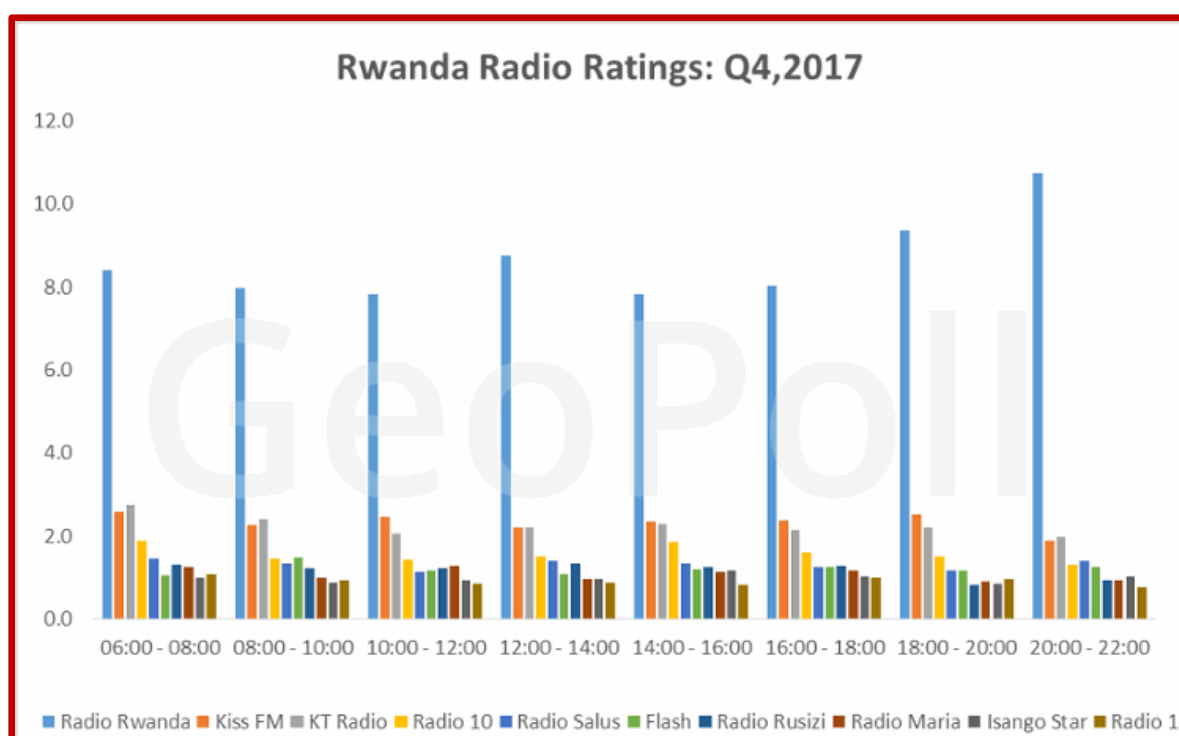
Traditional communication forms in Rwanda

In the ASC CFSC work, they lean on the traditions to fill known formats with new contents, relevant for opening discussions of everyday challenges. As in their neighbouring countries, music, dance and drama play a great role in the traditions of Rwandan people. Dances for instance represent bravery and excellence, as well as humorous dance styles and lyrics, and many themes are based in traditional agricultural roots⁷. Traditional songs are often accompanied by a solitary lulunga-a harp-like instrument with eight strings and often the dances are backed by a drum orchestra, which typically comprises seven to nine members who collectively produce a hypnotic and exciting explosion set of intertwining rhythms.

Media in Rwanda

State TV and radio reach the largest audiences, and state-owned publications predominate in the print sector. **Radio - the by far main source of news to most Rwandans** – is tightly controlled partly because of the role it played in the 1994 genocide.

According to the below most recent ratings, it is obvious that radio **listeners are loyal to Radio Rwanda** throughout the day with its highest point being between 8-10 pm with the commercial radios Kiss FM and KT Radio competing for the 2nd position in ratings⁸.



In the 2018 World Press Freedom Index⁹ Rwanda is listed as #156 of 180 countries rated. Censorship is ubiquitous as is self-censorship, says Reporters Without Borders (RSF) in its the press freedom index, where Paul Kagame is listed as one of five 'predators on press freedom' due to the number of journalists killed, disappeared, jailed or exiled since 1996¹⁰. There have been fewer abuses against critical journalists in recent years as most have gone abroad or self-censor, says RSF. Still, the 2018 **Press Freedom Status** is by Freedom House¹¹ identified as 'Not Free'. Looking to the **Net Freedom** which often has more space of operation than the press, it is as registered as 'Partly Free' due to intensified Government efforts to limit internet freedom and because numerous independent online news outlets have been blocked.

⁷ <http://www.allaboutrwanda.com/about-rwanda/culture-rwanda.html>

⁸ <https://knowledge.geopoll.com/rwanda-audience-measurement-q1-2018>

⁹ <https://rsf.org/en/ranking>

¹⁰ <https://rsf.org/en/>

¹¹ <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/rwanda>

1.2 The present report

The present end evaluation report answers the Terms of Reference (annex 1) and the framework presented in the approved inception report. First of all, the report lays out the basis for the evaluation through a presentation of the ASC programme and how ADRA Denmark and Rwanda have worked with it during the nine years.

The evaluation's objective and methodology follows, upon which the major findings are presented along the DAC evaluation criteria¹² including a presentation and review of the programme management. Building on this documentation and analysis, the report concludes by sharing 'practical recommendations and best practice', directed at the remaining ASC programmes, at ADRA Rwanda and at ADRA Denmark.



**Basket weavers –
Josephine dancing
before testimonies**

¹² <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

2. Action for Social Change – an ADRA Rwanda programme 2010-2018.

2.1 Background and overall programme approach

The Action for Social Change (ASC) programme is supported by ADRA Denmark in four countries: Burundi, Malawi, Uganda and Rwanda¹³. Since 2010, the ASC programme has worked with community-based groups to support their capacity to contribute as dynamic civil society actors in social, political and economic development processes locally and nationally.

The programme focuses on strengthening civil society through empowering groups of people living in poverty to take charge of their lives through building insight, understanding, knowledge and capacity. To develop such a liberating ‘sociological fantasy’¹⁴ the programme works with (i) Communication for Social Change (CFSC), and (ii) a Human Rights Approach (HRBA) where Advocacy is the tool used for its realisation. Furthermore, cross-cutting attention is paid to gender, democracy, governance, peace and reconciliation as well as environmental protection. The programme works with partners in the areas of Education, Livelihood and Food security, and Health.

With this mix of approaches and tools, the programme designers have provided a holistic environment for learning, organising and growing as entry aspects of empowerment. Their core functioning and mode of action are briefly presented here.

The Communication for Social Change (CFSC) is a strategic way of using interpersonal communication and public dialogue to generate and promote community empowerment and government accountability. The focus is on *social change* addressing structural problems, injustices or other root causes of social concerns.

The Human rights-based approach (HRBA) is a conceptual framework based on international human rights. Through the HRBA approach, inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems, discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress are analysed and redressed by the development interventions. A HRBA approach seeks to achieve a positive transformation of power relations between rights-holders and duty-bearers through advocacy.

Community Based Groups (CBGs) form the core organisational format/unit for the work and are the ADRA programme’s immediate partners. These groups become collective centre for both democratic organisational experience and lessons in good governance. CBGs are in this way the change agents for mutual support, which usually start up with the formation of ‘**Village Savings and Loan Associations**’ (VSLAs) and **adult literacy circles using the REFLECT methodology**. VSLAs and REFLECT circles represent the first steps in the rise from isolated lives in illiterate poverty and helplessness, as described by every one of the more than 100 testimonies heard during the evaluation field work¹⁵.

The ASC partner CBGs had different focus areas:

- Some worked with **livelihood and food security** through farming the land and having livestock; along with other Income-generating activities (IGAs)/ Businesses such as hand crafting, carpentry, tailoring, transport (Kivu lake), etc.
 - Others focused on **education**, primarily through supporting the school democracy and development through the traditional Parent-Teacher-Associations (now organised as School General Assembly Committees and School Auditing Committees);
- The third category focused on **health** – working with Community Anti- AIDs clubs, CBGs of people living with HIV/AIDS, Health mobilizers groups and School (Primary and secondary) anti-AIDs club via focal teachers.

¹³ The Introductory framework presentation is partially lifted from existing ADRA documents such as the ASC project document 2016-2018.

¹⁴ Charles Wright Mills in 1959 introduces ‘Sociological Fantasy’ as the ability to change from one perspective to another - and back. In the 1970s Oscar Negt develops the concept further as a mindset - or way of thinking, where the individual understands the connection between the individual life and the overall social conditions and development. With this insight and understanding the individual and community is enabled to work towards the desired change in their lives.

¹⁵ The evaluation field work is described below as part of the methodology. It took place during May 2018 in five programme districts.

2.2 Partnership between ADRA Rwanda and ADRA Denmark

ADRA Rwanda and ADRA Denmark have been working together on several projects and programmes for more than a decade. Initially, the projects of cooperation focused on the Needs-Based Approach through service delivery and rehabilitation. With the introduction of the ASC programme, focus has been on the HRB approach through capacity building and advocacy using the Communication for Social Change strategy as presented above.

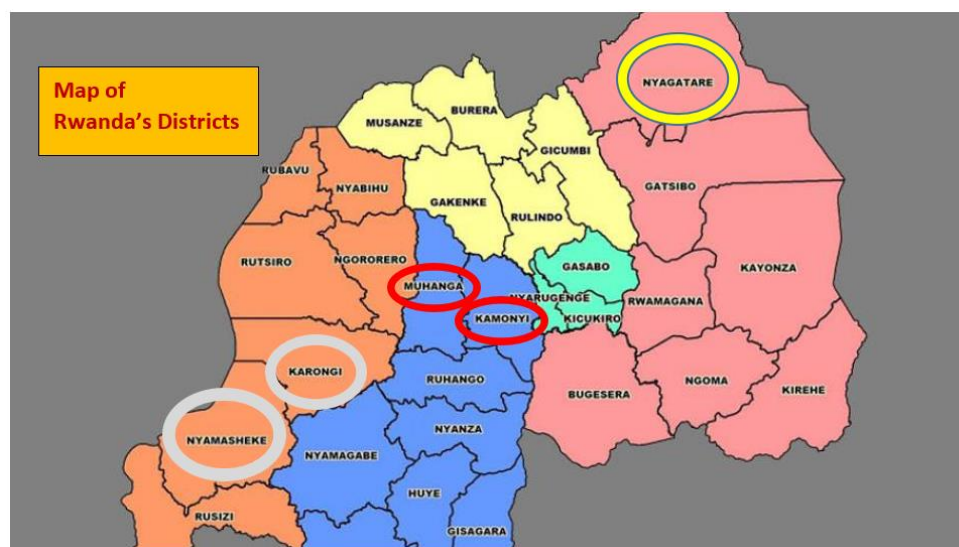
Districts:	Eastern Province	Western Province		Southern Province	
1 st phase 2010-2012	Nyagatare	Karongi	Nyamasheke		
2 nd phase 2013-2015	Nyagatare	Karongi	Nyamasheke	Kamonyi	Muhanga
3 rd phase 2016-2018	Phased out June '16	Karongi	Nyamasheke	Kamonyi	Muhanga

The shift in development approaches has represented a considerable re-orientation for both organisations as well as for ADRA Rwanda partners including authorities and some of the CBGs used to receiving service delivery in the form of 'hand-outs' from ADRA. ADRA Denmark has assisted this process through the provision of capacity building and advisors. Many other projects in ADRA Rwanda are still very much based on service delivery and humanitarian interventions with different partners and donors. The partnership between ADRA Denmark and ADRA Rwanda is founded in a formal partnership agreement.

2.3 History and development of the ASC Programme in Rwanda

The Action for Social Change (ASC) Programme covered three of the country's four provinces, while Starting up in Eastern and Western province in 2010, leaving Eastern Province June 2016 and engaging in Southern Province in phases 2 and 3.

The first phase of the Action for Social Change programme in Rwanda started in 2010, building on previous ADRA Denmark and ADRA Rwanda collaboration projects such as Youth for Unity, Rwanda Integrated Rural Education Project (RIREP), Uniformed Personnel and Prisoners (UPP), Women in Post-Conflict Situations (WIPS) I & II, Mini-FAL and Peace Education & Development (PED). Where the earlier programmes included important empowerment aspects, the ASC programme took this even further through the introduction of the CFSC approach and advocacy. This change meant that ADRA Rwanda staff needed to build their capacity and understanding of the new orientation.



The second phase of ASC was from 2013-2016, building on the experiences from the first phase, reinforcing the special elements of the ASC programme, which had proven effective in the first phase: (i) The Capacity Building objective securing that the CBGs were well-organized and able to mobilize their communities to address and take action on political, social and economic

development issues. (ii) The remnant of the earlier programme's service delivery, now called 'strategic service delivery' was contributions provided to CBGs to overcome investment challenges in the implementation of activities in relation to education, health, and food security. Furthermore, (iii) the Advocacy work focused on strengthening the CBGs to influence processes of democratization and promote their communities' rights and interests through dialogue, networking and advocacy. Finally, (iv) the partner objective of this phase was to also target ADRA Rwanda as a civil society organisation ensuring that it had the needed technical capacity to address identified challenges and felt needs in relation to education, health, and food security.

At the same time as focusing on the CBGs, the programme in the second phase worked with the Rwanda Cooperative Agency to better assist the CBGs become registered and therefore have the ability to widen the scope of their activities. Being a registered coop, i.e. being a 'legal persona' meant that the groups could prosecute any wrongdoing including with the goods of the coop. This was both an important preventive and – if needed – punitive measure of importance, making the organisations less vulnerable.

In the third phase the design and planning continued to move forward in strengthening the approaches presented above. ADRA Denmark chose – in line with general re-orientation of aid management guidelines - to substitute the logical framework approach with Theory of Change (ToC) (see below). This move in Rwanda was in line with all of the ADRA Denmark supported Africa-based ASC partners, leading to a long and intense engagement with the sustainability and change-focus of the programme, to better capture the results and social change of the programme interventions. This engaged all ASC Rwanda staff at the onset of phase three.

While the empowerment focus, through capacity building and advocacy in the third phase had taken over as the main sustainability furthering building blocks, the interventions of the programme continued strengthening the work of the CBGs in the Education, Livelihood and Food security, and Health thematic areas, with an inclusion of the crosscutting themes of gender, democracy and governance, environment conservation, and peace and reconciliation.

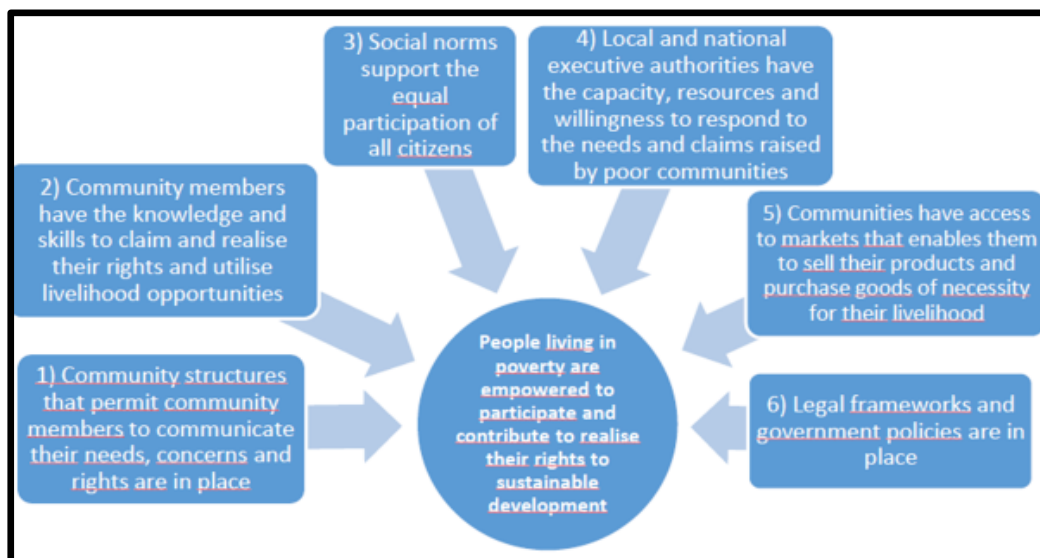
This is reflected in the programme's slight change of its overall objective in each of the three phases (see right).

During the 9 years, the ASC programme has worked with close to 900 rural Community-Based Groups (CBGs) to build self-sufficient and sustainable empowerment.

Overall objective of Action for Social Change – 3 phases

2010 – 2013	2013-2016	2016-2018
A strengthened vibrant, locally rooted civil society in Rwanda which can be a dynamic actor in social, political and economical development processes <i>in areas of formal, non-formal education, livelihood and food security and private market actors</i>	A strengthened, vibrant and locally rooted civil society in Rwanda that is a dynamic actor in social, political and economic processes <i>in order to enhance sustainable development processes.</i>	To contribute towards the empowerment of citizens living in poverty to participate and contribute to realizing their development rights and potential to break out of poverty.

As mentioned, phase III of the programme (2016-2018) took the ToC on board across countries. The overall goal of the ASC Programme in all four countries is to contribute towards the empowerment of citizens living in poverty to participate and contribute to realizing their development rights and potential to break out of poverty. The graphic illustration above shows the six potential 'change areas' for individuals and communities to contribute to the fulfilment of their rights. The ability to participate and contribute is a precondition for a sustainable and inclusive development process that benefits all people, regardless of their ethnicity, race, religion or gender.



Each of the ADRA countries running ASC programmes selected the preconditions to address in their programme, depending on their specific situation and context.

ASC Rwanda selected the first three change areas presented above:

- 1) **Community and civil society structures**, including media, that permit community members and civil society to articulate their needs, concerns and rights and engage in peaceful dialogue and debate with formal and informal decision makers and authorities.
- 2) **Community members** that have the knowledge and skills to claim and realise their rights and utilise livelihood opportunities.
- 3) **Social norms** support the equal participation of all citizens.

This means that the programme approaches introduced above along with the facilitation of the work in and around the CBGs, all focus on advancing the three change areas chosen in Rwanda in order to strengthen the civil society and its capacity to find sustainable solutions to challenges encountered.

The relevance, effect, efficiency, impact and sustainability of this will be discussed below.



3. Framework of the end evaluation

As the programme will be phased out by June this year (2018) the present evaluation is an end evaluation, reflecting upon the full 9-year period including both summative and formative aspects: on the one hand documenting the achievements of the 9-year programme, on the other extracting best practice to feed into other ADRA ASC programmes.

3.1 The Objective of the Evaluation

The key objectives of this end evaluation as formulated in the evaluation's Terms of Reference (ToR) in annex 1, are:

- To assess and document the impact of the Action for Social Change programme in Rwanda, 2010-2018.
- To provide concrete and practical recommendations and best practices that ADRA Denmark and other ASC partners can use in future programme design in order to achieve the best possible results in relation to its objectives.

The ToR's 'Scope of Work' further details the areas to (at least) be covered in view of the programme's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

It is further highlighted that sustainability is of particular importance as it is an end evaluation, but also as this all through the programme has been a focus area and the basis for the programme approach, including its emphasis on capacity building.

Composition of the evaluation team

The evaluation team was made up by:

- An international consultant (team leader), Birgitte Jallof
- A national consultant, Julius Namanya (active in preparation of and during the field work)

Furthermore, ADRA resource persons took part in the field mission, along with an ASC observer:

- Representative of ADRA/ASC Rwanda (Fabien Hitayezu)
- Programme Coordinator, ADRA Denmark (Signe Lund Christensen)
- Representative of ADRA Burundi (Jean Marie Bimenyimama)

The inception report

ADRA Denmark describes in the ToR that "the team will produce an inception report describing the proposed methodology and the report outline in more detail". This was delivered and approved, based on a desk study of relevant programme documents, reports, reviews and strategies shared by ADRA Denmark.

In the report, the team furthermore commented on the draft programme to ensure that the work period in Rwanda would bring forward all required information, documentation and data needed to produce a report, meeting the above-mentioned objectives of the evaluation.

Finally, the inception report was a good basis for a pre-departure briefing with the ADRA Denmark team, ensuring a good background understanding of the programme before the field work.

A detailed outline of the evaluation report made up a part of the inception report. This underscored the required compliance with the ADRA Evaluation Policy, requesting the evaluation report to meet the 1-3-30 format: a first page with recommendations for future interventions; 3 pages with the executive summary; and the 30 pages as the limit for the evaluation report itself.

3.2 Methodology of the evaluation

The evaluation methodology is predominantly qualitative and to the extent possible participatory. The work falls in five phases, each with their deliverables:

Evaluation components / phases	Information and data collection	Deliverables
Desk Study	All relevant documentation shared by ADRA DK, including programme documents, reports, reviews and strategies.	Inception report
Field work in Rwanda	Briefing cum consultation with the ADRA RW. Visits to CBGs, authorities and other stakeholders. Interviews with community members, relevant stakeholders. Group interviews; Interviews with staff and other professionals engaged in facilitation of CFSC processes.	Debriefing note /PPT presentation (a PPT presentation as the basis for the debriefing in Rwanda)
Final debriefing to ADRA RW –	To fact check and to discuss the debriefing's sequence of: findings > conclusions > best practice > recommendations	As above
Reporting – home-based	Interviews with ADRA DK staff and programme team members. Reporting	Draft evaluation report Final evaluation report
Presentation in Denmark to ADRA	Key findings, recommendations and learning to be shared with ADRA DK staff	Revised PPT presentation including final documentation

Use of different evaluation methods and techniques

The field work was carried in the **three Rwandan provinces of four** where the programme is active (see the field work programme in annex 2). The team visited **13 CBGs** where we heard **more than 100 testimonies** of background, struggle and change. Some of these led to further in-depth key information interviews (KIIs). The team furthermore visited the **sector authorities within five sectors and one district seat**, where two group and 9 individual interviews were carried out. Furthermore, **four media people** who had collaborated with the ASC programme were interviewed (for a list of persons met, see annex 3).

Proposed use of evaluation methodologies and techniques to meet evaluation objectives:								
	ADRA DK team	ADRA RW team	ASC RW field staff	CBGs	Individual community members	Authorities	Local 'free thinkers'	Radio professionals ¹⁶
Key Informant Interviews					Men Women			
Group Interviews, sex-disaggregated +								
Interviews with control communities ¹⁷					Men Woman			
Visits cum Observation								

The above matrix was presented in the inception report, proposing a qualitative use of tailored evaluation methods and techniques with an approach that is

- **qualitative** – and with a view to **attribution** all along¹⁸, to ensure the needed and possible rigour – included through visit to Eastern Province where the programme was closed almost two years ago
- as **participatory** as possible – at least effectively and intensely consultative;
- **gender sensitive**, ensuring to reflect the realities in and around the programme action areas for women and for men.

¹⁶ Referring to colleagues working with the ASC programme locally, nationally

¹⁷ This may be omitted due to time constraints

¹⁸ Highlighted in the ADRA DK evaluation policy (p.5) – and good, general evaluator practice.

Reflections on methodological challenges and adjustments carried out during evaluation

While the field work was carried out as planned and reflected in annex 2's programme, some adjustments had to be carried out in view of the inception report's plan presented above:

- The desired **sex-disaggregated community interviews** were not carried out disaggregated due to the strong insistence by the ASC programme management.
- The ASC team had all through the nine years of the programme **worked hard to avoid any difference given to women and men** – and gender awareness was built into each and any one of the hundreds of formal and informal capacity building events carried out.
- The evaluation team then **put increased emphasis on gendered questions** during group interviews as well as on our own observation.
- Furthermore, one group interview was organised with a **CBG consisting of women-only**.
- Similarly, the interviews desired with **local 'free thinkers' for added perspective** on actual community change occurring, registered by persons not directly engaged in the programme, were not found to be feasible by the team organising our programme.

As planned, the team was at every station along the way aware of ensuring to get information about particular approaches and results from several sources, so as to serve as basis for the triangulation needed for rigour. However, in view of limited time available for the mission, we also used our professional experience to see where we could base conclusions on the participants as sources.

At the end of every day in the field, the team met up along with the relevant ASC sector field coordinators and officers, in order to share and discuss the work of the day, outstanding findings and remarkable realisations. This confrontation by control-information from ADRA staff, was useful for putting case-information into perspective.

How this report meets the evaluation's objectives

The first of the two objectives: "To assess and document the impact of the Action for Social Change programme in Rwanda, 2010-2018" will be covered through the presentation of findings and analysis under the five overall DAC evaluation criteria.

The second objective: "To provide concrete and practical recommendations and best practices that ADRA Denmark and other ASC partners can use in future programme design in order to achieve the best possible results in relation to its objectives" will be extracted from the above in the final section of the report: "Practical recommendations and best practices".

3.3 Earlier Reviews / evaluations – how have recommendations been used?

The ADRA Rwanda ASC programme has never before been evaluated on its own. This is also why this end-evaluation has been given a high priority by ADRA Denmark and ADRA Rwanda.

ADRA Rwanda – and as part of its full programme portfolio, also the ASC programme – has, however been evaluated as a case country in Danida's 2015 review of ADRA Denmark¹⁹. Furthermore, the ADRA DK global ASC programme has carried out at least one thematic review with a focus on Advocacy, including ASC Rwanda²⁰, and in 2013 an 'Assessment of the ADRA Rwanda ASC CFSC Approach'

To reflect on the ASC Rwanda way of incorporating feed-back, a brief mention will be shared here of relevant elements of the recommendations from both of these reviews.

From the Danida review [ASC Rwanda relevant excerpts only]:

1. Results documentation should be strengthened... identify and formulate not only outputs, but also key changes to be promoted (outcomes).

The Rwanda ASC programme has since then through intense work with the Theory of Change worked with identification of not only outcomes/change areas, but also with documentation of the way these lead to the overall impact identified.

¹⁹ 'Review and Capacity Assessment of ADRA DK', NH Consultants, October 2015

²⁰ 'Holding Authorities Accountable. Cross-country review of ADRA's ASC program. Rwanda, Uganda and Malawi' May-June 2014

4. Partners (ASC programmes) should be encouraged to invite and chair coordination meetings with their donors. ADRA DK should, in dialogue with these donors, define how to strengthen the partners and how to enhance coordination and complementarity between ADRA DK and them...

This had not happened in Rwanda. We were wondering why they had not done this after having been informed August 2017 of the earlier June 2018 closure of programme? It was understood to have been found as rather overwhelming together with the planning and implementation of the 'speeded-up' exit work.

5. ADRA should prepare an overall strategy covering development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, as well as organisational development... policies should be finalised or developed and linked to the overall strategy, based on the Theory of Change (ToC).

ASC Rwanda has in the lead up to phase 3 of the programme, in 2015-2016, seen the in-depth elaboration of the ToC as a powerful way of clarifying intended change and focusing programme on this. The ToC and its indicators have in the 3rd phase become the organising principle.

8. ADRA DK should, in countries of cooperation under the Danida framework funding agreement, to the extent possible actively promote ADRA DK partners becoming nationally registered and taking part in national civil society networks.

ASC Rwanda has actively done so – and continues during the present exit phase.

Likewise, ADRA DK's partners should be encouraged to actively engage in – and/or co-finance – national advocacy implemented by other national civil society organisations and networks implemented by other national civil society organisations and networks...

ASC Rwanda has been aware of this and tried. They have found it complicated as the whole programme organisation is field focused. They have, however, worked closely with representatives in relevant ministries and the evaluation team met senior officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, Cooperatives, and Education. It was obvious that these officials appreciated the high level of successful mobilisation, organisation and empowerment of ASC's rural partners, and were beginning to realise that the power of capacity-building might be more sustainable than service-delivery.

10. Partner capacity development should be done systematically based on a proper organisational analysis. The tools for capacity development should be formalised, including how to assess changes.

Due to the nature of the programme, capacity building interventions are only sometimes included in a longer-term plan. Very often needs pop up in the course of action and are met there.

From the cross-country advocacy review 'Holding Authorities to account'. [Relevant excerpts only]:

1. Revise program descriptions and objectives to clarify the program's strong focus on accountability and policy implementation.

ASC Rwanda has very much done this in connection with their Theory of Change work.

2. Clarify if – and how – the ASC program would want to engage in policy advocacy – or focus on the citizen centred advocacy mainly.

As mentioned above, ASC Rwanda has mainly done this through personal contacts at Ministry, District and Sector levels, and through their irregular radio programmes (more about this below). So, by far the main advocacy focus has been citizen centred.

3. Revise the ASC program's framework for monitoring and documentation of results.

As a result of the ToC process, the monitoring framework has been adapted to match this. ASC Rwanda was very happy with this and found that it worked very well.

Measuring effects of radio and TV programs (a separate sub-recommendation under rec. 3).

ASC Rwanda stressed that they had not found any way of doing this effectively within their economic means. The team, and especially the M&E officer had a good feel of where and how especially the radio programmes were used. (more below)

4. Develop a 'graduation strategy' for mature groups who have declared that they can operate without ADRA's support.

This was done effectively and used. Will be referred to below.

From the 2013 CFSC assessment [relevant excerpts only]

Help cooperatives in most remote areas to find markets for their products

Two Recommendations were adopted. One for training in marketing skills and Field visits. We did not only provide the exchange visits within the Programme implementation areas, but to other parts of the country where we would find a better model for learning for the groups.

Coordinate a pool fund for CFSC that cut across development programmes advance CFSC resources.

When we scanned the environment, we did not find many entities. So, did not pursue this one.

Negotiate for reduced airtime rate - ASC programme supports government development programmes. As such, one would expect the Government of Rwanda, to make an effort to co-finance CFSC interventions.

We thought so too, however, when we visited the government-owned Radio Rwanda, it was futile because government had just implemented a policy that Radio (and TV) needed to be self-financing. The Radio's Commercial department became the most important, they only talked about money.

Increase access to ASC CFSC development information through listening groups in the cooperatives for transformative debates. ADRA Rwanda should support duplicating as many radio programmes as possible and giving them in batches. The cooperatives could be asked to give comments to the programme producers through the established feedback mechanisms to ensure compliance. Also, the ASC communications office should consider producing cheaper, low literacy print materials containing success stories from ASC.

We did not provide the audio-video players, but we encouraged the groups to be listening to the radio programmes. We introduced weekly competitions and were giving prizes to the lucky winners. We started producing a quarterly magazine with success stories and we were distributing to the CBGs, sector offices, and to schools.

Appeal to Rwanda Government (RCB, RAB) to share CFSC broadcast cost of the live radio programme so that the duration increases from duration 60 to 90 minutes to accommodate more questions from the public.

This was not done: (i) government agencies did not see the programmes as theirs. They rather requested refund of transport of their staff appearing in an ASC programme; (ii) We did not agree on need to increase time from 60 to 90 minutes. Time blocks in stations are normally 1-hour max.

Work with RCA to disseminate correct information on Village Savings and Lending methodology, to avoid sending out contradicting information about government regulations and laws governing VSLGs

We organized Community Discussions where we brought officials from RCA at district and national level to provide accurate information and answer questions.

Gather monthly success narratives - it would be a success story for the ASC programme. Further, M&E and Comms should gather stories from areas currently not physically covered by the ASC to understand how CFSC approach has rippled into Rwandan society and whether the public is benefitting from the ASC CFSC approach.

The quarterly magazine had such feature stories. We carried the same stories in our weekly radio broadcasts. We had planned to start gathering stories from outside the implementation area by introducing a competition where those 'outsiders' would be telling us what they have done as a result of listening to the ASC radio programmes. We did not implement the plan due to funding cuts.

Maintain Current Knowledge Management System (KMIS) (multi-thematic & multi-communication) approach and KMIS since social development is holistic, backing up all radio and TV programmes, photographs and use online storage facilities such as Drop Box, Google Drive and Skydrive. Soft copies of print should also be saved.

Our most reliable online storage system has been the ASC Yahoo-groups. We have preserved most of our work there and it is accessible to anybody we authorise to access.

In summary ADRA Rwanda was by the present end-evaluation found to be a listening and engaging programme implementer, taking up recommendations from reviews and assessments and implementing these when and where possible.

The only area where the evaluation team did not quite understand that the ASC team had not engaged, was where it was recommended to involve, engage and commit authorities more to support and follow-up the CBGs/COOPs upon ADRA Rwanda withdrawal. This is therefore mentioned in our recommendations.

4. Major findings

Whereas the above is informed by a combination of desk review, management interviews and the field work, this section takes us to Rwanda, to the reality of the ASC programme as implemented by ADRA Rwanda in close partnership with ADRA Denmark. It presents the evaluation team's findings during the field work as presented above, based on the study of programme documentation.

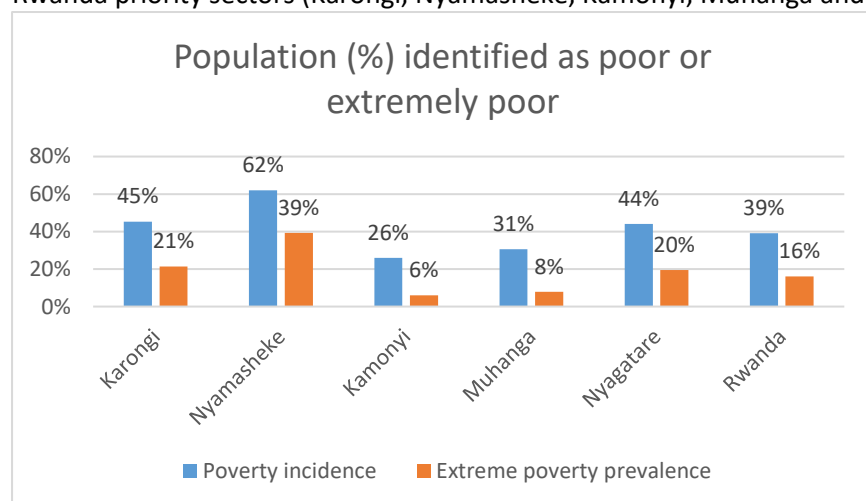
4.1 Relevance

When looking to the relevance of the ASC programme in Rwanda, the response by the evaluation team is that the programme is and has been highly relevant in all ways. The variety of approaches selected for the work has proven effective in support of strengthening civil society in terms of appropriateness of design, and of strategies developed and implemented.

Despite the general impressive success of Rwanda's strife to pull its population out of poverty as mentioned above, the country still has pockets of its population living in extreme poverty²¹. This was even more so at the onset of the programme in 2009-10, and ASC has chosen to work in the poorest areas of the country, where the approach selected is appropriate for targeting the lowest national percentages, so hard to reach, and for whom the SDGs' mantra to 'leave no-one behind' is cornered.

The poverty prevalence in the ASC partner areas is generally higher than the national average - in all but two districts of Muhanga and Kamonyi. Nyamasheke and Karongi had the highest rates of extreme poverty and a poverty incidence with 62% and 45% of the population classified as poor, whereas 39% and 21% were identified as poor respectively according to the 2015 integrated household living study conducted by National institute of statistics of Rwanda (NISR) (see below).

The last, right-hand information in the figure below is the national average – putting the five ASC Rwanda priority sectors (Karongi, Nyamasheke, Kamonyi, Muhanga and Nyagatare) into perspective.



Living in these levels of poverty, being illiterate, often not being able to send the children to school, not affording medical insurance and having no functioning social community tissue, gives the feeling of being stuck with no rights and no way out, as highlighted by the vast majority of persons met and the testimonies heard.

Percentage of households identified as poor and extremely poor²²


Building on a realization that in this reality you cannot 'develop from above': people and communities need to engage personally to advance, and wanting to 'leave no-one behind', the ASC holistic approach has proven to importantly open for ways of moving out of poverty through the power of the collective. Important aspects highlighted is the combination of the ASC approach matched by the facilitation of establishment of Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) and the REFLECT adult literacy process.

²¹ "Extreme poverty...was originally defined by the United Nations in 1995 as "a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to services." From: United Nations. "Report of the World Summit for Social Development", March 6–12, 1995. In 2018, "extreme poverty" widely refers to earning below the international poverty line of \$1.90/day (in 2011 prices), set by the World Bank. This measure is the equivalent to earning \$1.00 a day in 1996 US prices, hence the widely used expression, living on "less than a dollar a day". <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview>

²² Source: National institute of statistics of Rwanda (2015)

The uniqueness of the ASC programme's capacity to lift people out of poverty, not happening to the same extent in the country as a whole, was evidenced through CBGs (both livelihood and education) being called upon by neighbouring communities to share approaches, and through the feedback to success stories shared in the ASC radio programmes, where listeners from other parts of the country invited ADRA to their areas, to do with them what they had done with the groups featured on radio.

Advocacy was an important component in all the ASC capacity building, and an important element in the ASC programme's development of a strong civil society consciousness, building on human rights. During the evaluation's field work, quite a number of examples were shared of how the CBGs managed to negotiate access to their rights. In the first CBG we met in Muhanga (Abizerwa Cooperative) the group described how they were able to secure government land to expand their operations. This followed their understanding of 'power brokers' within their ecosystem. This ability to analyse who can do what came from the capacity building they received from the programme.



Umucyo CBG, Gashari.
Veriana Mukamwiza. 70 years old. 3 grandchildren

Joined Coop after death of her husband
 When she joined she was in a very weak position

- Trained in one of 7 REFLECT groups
- Joined an VSLA to pool money
- Borrowed 150.000
- Bought a calf – had never owned one before
- It got a female calf, which meant more milk
- She learnt to develop good fertiliser which helps
- Still active in the coop
- Already paid back loan
- Can read and write – enjoys even at her old age (see the book she shows as proof in her arms!)

**“Look at me –
 due to the support of the cooperative,
 my life is good and my grandchildren healthy.
 This would not have been so without the cooperative!”**

The ASC programme has furthermore meant that many women have found themselves new, powerful roles, which have generally been much appreciated by themselves, their partners, families and community. In the secure framework of a group, participants have received a lot more than individual capacitation, but also find themselves in secure and well-functioning communities with a functional social tissue.

The ASC Capacity Building activities

With the building of capacity at the core, the ASC capacity-building programmes consisted of both 'formal' and 'informal' training activities in the many different areas including advocacy (knowing how to identify your challenges and know how to solve them); literacy (ASC organised REFLECT literacy-cum- empowerment circles); how to run a VSLA; how to run a community based group (livelihood, health or education); knowledge needed on Income Generating Activity (IGA) aspects of for instance farming, as well as knowledge for being able to engage well-informed in the groups on education and health (see the example from a Health CBG above).

Nyamasheke
Duhuzimbaraga Health CBGs
Drucilla Kabanyana

- All members in the CBGs have been tested and disclosed their status.
- This has had a significant effect – some were positive.
- Now we work on how to live positively – we no longer think it is an issue to live positively – it is our life
- Now I do household visits
- Tell about taking the drugs
- How to prevent themselves – especially if only one is positive

**We are all vulnerable
 – but together we are strong.**

**We thank ADRA for all the training
 in so many different areas:
 GBV, circumcision, relationships,
 palliative care, prevention...**



For the 'formal' training activities, the programme generated TORs and sourced outside consultants to provide the training. The 'informal' capacity building was primarily carried by the ASC staff following-up with coaching of the beneficiaries based on the formal training provided on a continuous basis. This means keeping knowledge provided through formal training 'alive' for long. While the programme in its reporting focuses on change-related results and not on activities leading to the change, the following information on the amount of capacity building carried out, was provided by the ASC programme management to the evaluator:

ASC capacity building	Formal Training per year	Formal training 2010-2018 ²³	Informal training per year (average)	Informal training 2010-2018 (footnote 25)
Livelihoods, Food Security	40-60	340-510	240	2040
Health	20-32	170-384	240	2040
Education	20-40	240-480	240	2040
Total training	Per year: 80-132	Project total: 750-1374	Per Year: 720 (between 360 & 1080)	Project total: 6.120

Claiming that the ASC programme has a capacity-building focus is no under-statement. More than 100 formal and 700 informal training activities per year, means that in the programme's lifetime **more than 800 formal and 6000 informal training and other capacity-building activities** have taken place. This ball-park figure was as impressive as expected by the evaluators. Meeting the communities, the CBGs and the individuals, the results of this intense engagement and learning was obvious.

The relevance of the ASC approaches

Spelling out why and how the programme was found to score so high in terms of relevance, the

following was found through evidence in the more than 100 testimonies heard and interviews carried out with programme participants: With a capacity building focus at the core of the programme (as outlined above²⁴), ASC builds the capacity of the participants to slowly, but surely, get a better financial situation, read and write, pay health insurance for their families, eat healthier through nutrition knowledge and kitchen gardens, bring their kids through school, engage in community debates at an informed level, and all of this resulting in more harmonious and happy families as well as stronger, more dynamic and more supportive communities.

Duhagurukiregukora CBG, Nyamasheke Sidor. Tailor, owner and employer

Came out of a tough, personal hardship, but wanted to move on, learn to read and write, wanted to get out of poverty

"When I talk with financial institutions, they wonder how I got here!"

- Heard on Radio Rwanda about how to learn to read and write
- He found the basket-weaving cooperative and joined.
- Learned to read and write – and other things along with it – got into a VSLA
- Acquired 25.000 in loan
- Bought a goat – which got babies – wanted more
- Approached someone who was welding, learnt from him
- Sold goat and bought a sewing machine
- Now he has employees sewing for him
- Happy!



These results are based on the basic methodologies of the ASC programme. Without communication nothing is possible, and ASC has used CFSC at the core of all the ASC programme's engagements: community dialogue, participation, getting a voice and contributing to agenda-setting. Matching this with a full understanding of having rights and knowing where to go to get them, is at the core of both the advocacy approach and the HRBA.



While ASC focuses on strengthening the civil society – and the collective, the evaluators met the dramatic transformation of individuals through testimonies, as the important building stone of the strong groups. The effect of moving through a process where all of the above described aspects fall in place, was found to spur a strong sense of empowered being ²⁵.

²³ Annual figure multiplied by 8,5 years

²⁴ The ASC programme focuses on development of capacity and empowerment in lieu of earlier times' hand-out oriented 'service delivery'.

²⁵ This illustration developed by the team leader of this evaluation as a reflection of the holistic relevance of the ASC programme.

The evaluation cannot single out any one of ASC's approaches, but found the combination of approaches to have made the improved lives of so many people possible.

In summary, the evaluation has found the ASC programme highly relevant in its context and to have met the needs and priorities of the intended beneficiaries. The approaches towards the achievement of 'social change' were found to be appropriate and well implemented. The use of community dialogues and radio programmes have made up integrated elements of the overall fan of the programme's implementation modes including both advocacy and HRBA. The Theory of Change (ToC) as an organising principle and framework for documentation of success has been taken very seriously by the programme's last phase (since 2015-16), substituting the more activity-oriented focus of the early programme phases.

4.2 Effectiveness

When assessing the degree to which a programme is effective, we look at the degree to which the programme through its implementation (deliverables) achieves to reach its outcomes by looking to indicator monitoring and reporting on the change achieved according to objectives set.

Success rate across nine key performance indicators

Action for social change (ASC) has nine key performance indicators through which programme progress is assessed in all geographies. These were identified in 2015/16 when the Theory of Change was elaborated. For Rwanda, the average success rate across the nine indicators is 101% a slight (1%) overachievement. The table below shows that performance overall was generally high across key targets but presented important over-achievement in the following areas: increased income of CBG members (146%), annual savings of VSLA members (125%), rights' holders access to public services as a result of the programme (121%), and involvement in advocacy activities (113%). The targets for each of these were collected by the M&E responsible of the programme.

Quantitative Performance Indicator Tracking Table (PITT) ²⁶ of programme change areas				
TOC change areas ²⁷	Indicator	target (phase 3)	Achievement	Over/underachievement (%)
1	# of CBGs actively involved in advocacy initiatives	96	108	113
1	# of new and # of ongoing advocacy initiatives undertaken at community and/or district level	125	92	74
1	# of media programmes addressing rights related issues broadcast	380	314	83
1	# of rights related issues raised by CBGs addressed by duty-bearers at community and/or district level	85	68	80
1	# of rights-holders who have gained access to public services due or partly due to the ASC programme	33382	40312 ²⁸	121
2	# of VSLAs with an increase in annual savings per member (<i>compare end-of-cycle total savings with the previous</i>)	165	206	125
2	# of individual CBG and VSLA members with increased net income from income generating activities	4283	6237	146
3	# of CBGs that have female representation in the leadership ²⁹	508	443	87
1	# of issues concerning government policy, which directly affects people living in poverty, raised on national platforms	35	30	86

²⁶ The ASC programme manager writes: The program Change Area PITT is an additional document of the ASC programme TOC providing Programme quantitative indicators at the Change Area levels. PITT Indicators 1-5 and 9 are for Change Area 1. PITT Indicators 6 and 7 are for Change Area 2. PITT Indicator 8 is for Change Area 3.

²⁷ Change Area A: Community Structures in place; Change Area B: Community members' capacity; Change Area C: Social norms.

²⁸ Figure includes the number of individuals having access to the service by checking the duty bearer's records.

²⁹ This highlights that the only area tracked annually in terms of social norms change, is female leadership representation.

Interviews with various stakeholders including local government officials and programme staff revealed that embedding staff in community structures and working with CBGs to identify their own needs, accounted for the overall impressive performance. Many of the CBGs were able to address issues where change was needed, identified by themselves, without ADRA staff hand-holding.

CBGs highlighted the importance of self-reliance in identifying challenges and finding ways to solve them including examples like getting land for loan initially from the authorities to start up a farming cooperative in several livelihood CBGs/Coops, negotiating repair of impassable roads, getting clinics staffed and better access to public services in general. As seen above 40312 rights-holders gained access to public services due or partly due to the ASC programme. This is really powerful!

In a health CBG met, the group presented a very clear analysis of the challenges met by the group including those that could be addressed and tackled by the group themselves, and those where a challenge of local duty-bearers was needed. One example here was that the group made up by predominantly HIV-positive people, had to travel to the next district for testing and counselling. After effective advocacy efforts with the local authorities both testing and counselling services were brought to their district and sectors. This level of understanding, analysis and capacity to reach out and get their needs met is the basis for *the 'People living in poverty empowered to participate and contribute to realise their rights to sustainable development'*.

Looking to the overall monitoring of achieved success in terms of the Change/results objectives, **Change Area A: Community Structures that permit community members to communicate their needs, concerns, and rights are in place** has no less than 6 of the 9 indicators, where two are very much over-achieving (both advocacy related: knowledge about access and access gained); 3 under-achieving in the 80s % focusing on media programme focus, duty-bearer take-up of issues raised by CBGs and at national level. In change area **B: Community members have the knowledge and skills to claim and realise their rights and utilize livelihood activities**. Both indicators focus on income through VSLAs – and both have over-achieved. **Change Area C: Social norms support the equal participation of all citizens**. The area highlighted here as an indicator is that CBGs have female representation in the leadership. This one is under-achieving according to target, by 87 % of the desired outcome.

Securing the needed gender balance for individual and community development

The second lens through which effectiveness was assessed is the degree to which both women and men were targeted. Both qualitative and quantitative data generally show that women and the improved role of women were the winners within the programme. Where usually 30% women involvement including in management positions, the 52% of women centrally involved in programme is approximately 175% of that ordinarily desired level of women's representation and engagement.

	#	F	M	T	% female	% male
Livelihood						
Livelihood CBGs	257	7641	8896	16537	46%	54%
VSLAs	277	3565	2442	6007	59%	41%
Education						
PTCs	93	310	483	793	39%	61%
SMCs	93	186	302	488	38%	62%
CRAs (in school)	277	106	171	277	38%	62%
CRAs (out of school)	175	82	93	175	47%	53%
Catch up classes	62	1299	1248	2547	51%	49%
Catch up teachers	126	77	49	126	61%	39%
REFLECT circles	221	3168	1451	4619	69%	31%
REFLECT teachers	427	190	237	427	44%	56%
Health						
Health/HIV CBGs	64	1839	904	2743	67%	33%
Focal teachers	281	109	171	280	39%	61%
School clubs	93	202	268	470	43%	57%
TOTAL		14645	13552	28,197	52%	48%

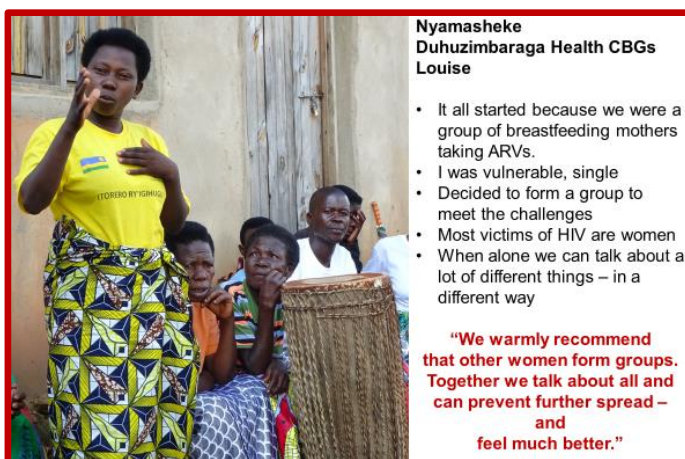
Population reached by Component and gender - Source: ADRA ASC programme (2018)

Through VSLA, women, who would never have had access to financial services, were reached and testimonies from beneficiaries pointed to this finding and its empowering impact to the individual, their families, the CBG and the overall community.

The REFLECT approach was also effective in terms of bridging the gender divide on the issue of illiteracy. As women also in Rwanda have a higher rate of illiteracy³⁰, a considerably higher number of women were found in the REFLECT circles. It was, however, also mentioned by the ASC coordinators, that a contributing reason was an embarrassment for men to take part – also when they in their everyday work found that many men could have benefited from stronger reading and writing skills.

An additional perspective to the gender engagement was added when meeting up with a health CBG, originally made up by HIV positive people. As a number of different challenges are gender specific, a women's group was formed. The powerful effect means that the women with this experience now advocate for this to continue.

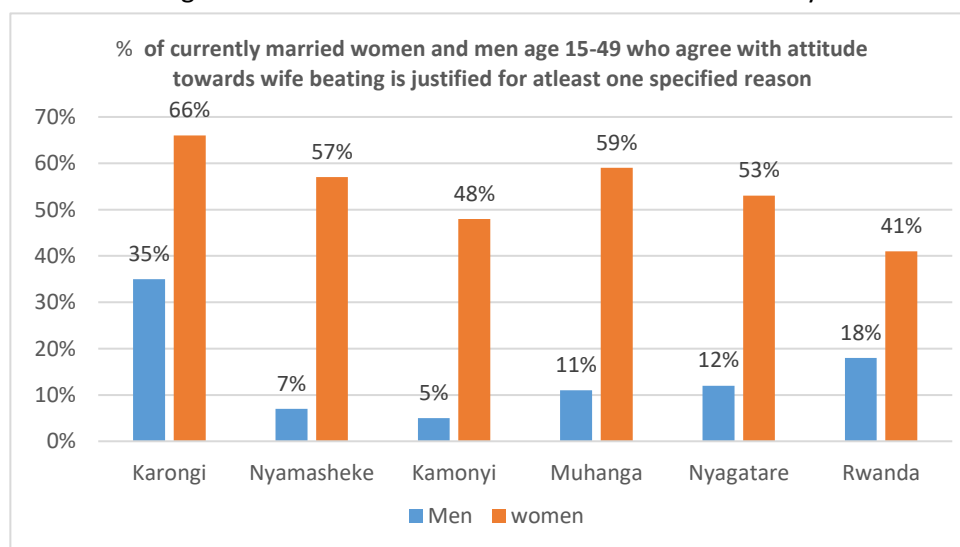
Several of the CBG presidents met were women. While both women and men recognized that this was an achievement and a sign of recognition, the evaluation team had no sense that it was found odd or out of place.



Attitude towards wife beating and the ASC approach and organisation – a perspective

The above being said, the importance of the space found for women in the ASC programme, is put in perspective when looking at attitudes towards wife beating as one indicator of women's role in a society. As mentioned in the introduction, Rwanda is generally regarded as a beacon of progress on issues of gender empowerment. Not only does the nation have a majority of women in parliament (64%), its cabinet is also slightly skewed towards women. Available evidence nonetheless indicates that the 'trickledown effect' is yet to be felt at the grassroots where not much has changed in terms of retrogressive social norms and attitudes towards and by women. Rwanda demographic health

survey (RDHS) conducted in 2015 indicated that over 41% of women and 18% of men agreed that a husband is justified in hitting or beating a wife for at least one specified reason such as if she burns food, argues with him, goes without telling him, neglects the children and refuses to have sexual intercourse with him.



³⁰ People age 15 and over, who can read and write were in 2015 70.5% of the population. Of these male literacy was: 73.2%, female: 68% (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rw.html>).

Wife beating tolerance is even higher in 'ASC' districts of Kamonyi (66%) Muhanga (59%) Nyamasheke (57%) and Nyagatare (53%). It thus appears that a conducive policy framework and pro-women legislation have not been sufficient to alter social norms on the place of a woman in society.

It is the review team's conviction that the ASC programme's bottom up approach has potential to rollback these stereotypes and attitudes that devalue women – as demonstrated. Besides from the approaches used, embedding resource persons in communities and focusing on social norms as one of the change areas, the programme was found both relevant and effective also in this respect.

Capacity development of the CBGs

In December 2015, the ASC programme conducted an assessment of CBGs to map their institutional capacity. As can be clearly seen here, the ASC model of supporting the CBGs embeds democracy-learning and the backbone of good governance in a small organisation. The ranking criteria included among others whether or not the CBG:

- 1) was legally registered,
- 2) could provide an example of an issue it had helped to find a solution,
- 3) had internal laws and regulations governing it,
- 4) all the committee members and structures were in place as stipulated in law,
- 5) activities of the CBGs were in line with the action plan
- 6) could show different books to keep different documents
- 7) and had resource mobilization strategies.

Based on these and other criteria CBGs were ranked on a scale of 1-4, one being the least compliant while four being the highest rank. Results of the assessment indicated that 61% of all CBGs were either in category 4 (14%) or in category 3 (47%). Just over 38% of CBGs were in category three whereas 0.6% were found in category one.

This is generally impressive results given how long it takes to build structures and systems of a nascent rural organization. One caveat is that there was neither baseline nor follow-up assessment in the later years to serve as reference point. It's possible that some of the CBGs have since graduated to categories above them or lost momentum and backslid to lower categories.

It was not possible to conduct an assessment in the weeks remaining to the end of the programme due to obvious logistical challenges. When discussing this both with the coordinators based in the programme sectors and the overall ASC programme management, however, they stressed that they had not observed any CBGs deteriorating and that a few CBGs had, indeed, moved from 3 to 4.

Table: Performance of CBGs at the end of 2015										
	Category 4		Category 3		Category 2		Category 1		Total	
Component	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Livelihood & food security	26	8.2	136	42.6	154	48.3	3	0.9	319	100
Education (PTAs)	22	24.4	51	56.7	17	18.9	0	0.0	90	100
Health (community)	18	30.0	33	55.0	9	15.0	0	0.0	60	100
TOTAL	66	14.1	220	46.9	180	38.4	3	0.6	469	100

CBG capacity assessment outcome --- Source: ADRA ASC Programme (2018)

During the exit phase, the programme has focused on consolidation of the category 3 and 4 CBGs and supported CBGs ready for getting national recognition and registration as Cooperatives to do so.

In summary, the evaluation found that the ASC programme objectives have been achieved to a very high extent as documented among others as having over-achieved towards set targets. This is true in relation to the overall objective, shared with other ASC programmes: 'People living in poverty

are empowered to participate and contribute to realise their rights to sustainable development' as well as towards the three change areas focusing on (i) community structures, which have been strengthened; (ii) the participating individuals/community members, who are benefiting from the strengthened structures and own increased empowerment and capacity. Finally, in relation to (iii) the change of social norms, the indicator chosen by ASC focuses on the gender balance, the importance of which we have evidenced above through wife beating, taken as a proxy. Also, in this area the programme has generated important and – it would seem - irreversible change.

Having achieved these results is – as described in the section above on 'relevance' – seen to be caused by the effective blend of the appropriate parts of the ASC methodological approach: in the health / HIV CBGs the variety of CFSC tools used is for instance much broader, whereas community conversations are at the core of everything – and radio has had a supportive role. VSLAs were found to be integrated very effectively in the work with all groups – and most often found to be the starting point for participants, finding themselves destitute at the time they got involved with the programme. The work of the VSLAs took place hand-in-hand with the IGAs – very effectively.

4.3 Efficiency

When measuring efficiency of any development intervention, an important principle to consider is whether there was value for money and whether more could have been achieved with less. The evaluation team therefore considered the degree to which the ASC programme prudently and frugally used resources for the benefit of the intended recipients using two yardsticks: (i) ratio of staff to beneficiaries and (ii) programme expenditure per capita. Other efficiency aspects are based on this.

1.175 beneficiaries per ASC staff member

The programme staff head count stood - at the time of the evaluation - at 24 full time personnel serving 28,197 CBG members giving a ratio of one member of staff for every 1,175 beneficiaries. While it is obvious this is an average, it shows substantial value for money – not least in view of the effectiveness of the programme, presented in the section above.

Furthermore, of the 24 staff members that worked in the programme, only 5 were centrally located, i.e. only 20% based in the head office. That means the rest lived and worked in communities where CBGs are based. The evaluation has no doubt that the decision to embed staff in communities where the CBGs are based, carries an important part of the reason for the good efficiency.

It should be mentioned here that the programme had a different cost distribution than most development programmes, with a reasonable 7% for administration/overhead costs, 30 % on activities and the remaining 63% on staff salaries and activity-related costs such as fuel, office rent, office and vehicle maintenance, etc. This is, however, the balance needed in view of the human resource-intensive capacity building approach. Doing otherwise would have diluted the impact and threatened the effectiveness and sustainability of the interventions.

The programme spent an average of USD 320 per programme participant

The total programme expenditure over the nine years was 56,457,720 DKK or USD 8,916,110. With 28,197 programme participants/beneficiaries, the expenditure to reach, engage, train and work with one person has been 2,002.30 DKK or less than USD 320.

The evaluation team finds this to be a very reasonable price for the important – and impressive – value found by each individual participant as documented through testimonies and observed changes in the lives of beneficiaries. This becomes importantly more significant, when realising that 'one life saved' in this manner through the ASC programme often means the improved livelihood of a whole family!


In summary, the evaluation team found that the programme strategy with its capacity building and empowerment approach has been efficient. This not least in view of the fact that the target population, vulnerable people living in poverty, is recognized as the hardest to reach for development efforts. Hardest to reach usually also means 'at most cost'. This makes the positive assessment of the cost-benefit balance stand out as even more impressive.

4.4 Impact

When holding the ASC programme performance up against the overall project objective ***‘People living in poverty are empowered to participate and contribute to realise their rights to sustainable development’*** the evidence found through this evaluation’s field work and desk study of ASC documentation points to ASC in Rwanda having had an important impact.

More specifically, the impact will be considered by each of the three change areas of the ASC ToC focusing on (i) strengthened **community** structures, (ii) the participating **individuals**/community members; and (iii) the change of **social norms**.

ASC Impact on strengthening of conducive Community Structures



Umucyo CBG, Gashari.
Pauline Mukanalitiye. 68 years old.

- She was left with twins, she could not breast feed
- The children were malnourished
- She had no means and no idea what to do
- The Cooperative helped her
- Now she grows pineapple
- They showed her how to create a kitchen garden
- Now the kids get very healthy meals
- The Coop helped her to get a latrine
- The Coop also helped her get a roof on her house

“I want to thank the Cooperative for so much support in my life!”

How much have community structures been improved to permit community members to communicate their needs, concerns and rights? The evaluation found that members of formal and informal networks trust and support each other very much in their different CBG structures. It was powerful to witness how selfless that the CBGs/cooperatives met were, and the sense of community shown.

The groups furthermore demonstrated how they were capable of solving conflicts and work according to a shared vision – maybe the most important of all. The evaluation team met many examples of how the implemented capacity built in ‘peace and reconciliation’ found frequent use, paving the way for all the successful implementation of the rest – and hence the programme impact.

The president of the Imboni Cooperative, Antoinette Kayitesi told, that they in their cooperative had discussed how women are actually very good leaders also in this sense: they are used to manage their families and know how to negotiate and find good solutions for all. She stressed that the leadership capacity building had helped structure this a lot.

In all CBGs met it was noteworthy that the social (community) tissue, which all describe as non-existent before the groups were formed, became even very

firm and supportive once the group was formed and started to gain momentum. It was mentioned above (Page 16) that 61% of the ASC CBG-partners are to be found in best categories - 3 and 4 – in the CBG performance mapping, and more than 20% of the CBGs have graduated to Coops.

Based on the advocacy capacity built, the formal and informal networks supported by ASC work to promote the rights of their members through encounters with local authorities. The evaluators should like to remind readers that ‘advocacy’ in the strictest sense of influencing policies at macro-level is very difficult in Rwanda due to the level of strict government control. But CBGs and Rwandans in general have found a way to politely bring up issues to the duty bearers at local levels – and the ASC groups have actually, despite the complicated access to the national level and the suppression there, managed to bring issues through to the national level.

Imboni Cooperative in Tabagwe, Nyagatare **Tegunigore Brucelle, 56 years old**

- Member of the maize-growing cooperative
- Doesn’t have a husband
 - Does not read and write
 - Is so happy to be a part of the cooperative:
 - The cooperative gave her the first land and helped her with the first potatoes for her kitchen garden
 - Her three children are doing much better in all ways than they would have done without cooperative:
 - All three children are about to end university. This has been funded by the cooperative.

The cooperative has given my children the gift of education. It is the biggest gift I have ever received!



When visiting the Umujo PTA and Anti AIDS club in Gashari Sector, Karongi, many examples were given of how the interaction with the authorities had changed and improved the school both administratively, in terms of content and learning and in view of the school children's attendance and engagement.

Another example³¹ is from the Rukoma sector, Kamonyi district, where the KOABAKA Murehe cooperative undertook an advocacy initiative on zero grazing in their coffee plantation. The challenge was that some community members who own goats have the habit of grazing their goats in the coffee plantations of the Cooperative which destroys the plantations. The issue was presented to the sector agronomist in Rukoma sector. The sector agronomist with the cell executive secretary and the NAEB (National Agriculture and Export Board) technician at the district level visited the place and organized a meeting in the community to discuss the issue. They agreed to no longer graze their goats in the coffee plantations. The issue was considered resolved.

As in these examples, the authorities towards the end of the programme continued to show good will and interest in supporting the ADRA groups, including in supporting youth-friendly services at health centres, construction of school blocks, connecting schools to power grid, etc. The ASC Rwanda 2017 annual report highlights that 99 out of 158 issues raised with the authorities during the lifetime of the programme had received a satisfactory response. With 62.6 % response rate, it was 2.6 % above the 60% target – and as such by ASC considered highly satisfactory.

That a 62% success rate is considered extraordinary should be understood by acknowledging that the recognition that ordinary – maybe even very poor - people have rights and can call on the duty bearer to fulfil his/her mission, conflicts with traditional understanding of roles. Duty bearers might still be having the feeling that they are superior to the community members and therefore should not be told what to do. As the ASC manager says: "Community members demanding services is a new phenomenon that is not very common in most NGO approaches in Rwanda. In Community discussions in the presence of local leaders we address the roles and responsibilities of both the citizens and the leaders to help leaders understand that they are in their leadership positions to be responsive to the needs of the people."

ASC impact on strengthening the knowledge and skills of community members

- to claim and realise their rights and utilise livelihood opportunities was found to be good with an overachievement for the two indicators directed at this change area (see matrix page 16 above) of 125% and 146% respectively. "# of VSLAs with an increase in annual savings per member" and "# of individual CBG and VSLA members with increased net income from income generating activities". An area encountered, where the impact could have been greater for some CBGs and Coops, is the lack of much needed support to the groups' marketing activities and identification of markets, as well as finding ways of getting the goods there.

The vast body of qualitative underpinning of the value of learning for community members is shared extensively above, including the fact that more than 800 formal and 6000 informal training and other capacity-building activities have taken place during the lifetime of the ASC programme (pages 14-15) – and the important active capacity, sociological fantasy and empowerment this has brought, is illustrated through the author's 'Ecology of Empowerment' model page 15.

In terms of Media Platforms for public articulation of concerns ASC used radio for national advocacy through a 25-minute recorded weekly program on RR; a Live 1-hour programme on Flash FM on a monthly basis (for 2 years); and at least one TV broadcast on TV-1. This limited presence in the media meant that some informants who wanted to follow the programme stressed that it could be hard to know when on air and agreed that these high quality, relevant programmes documenting real life challenges to ordinary people – and solutions to them, would have merited a steadier listener-/viewership.

³¹ This case is reported in the ASC 2017 annual report

Nevertheless, these programmes appear to have had a major impact on the ASC national advocacy, according to ASC management: “We believe the reason is that the concern-ed duty bearer is aware that the whole country, including his/her bosses might be listening. So, to avoid being considered a 'bad' or 'corrupt' duty bearer, they act quickly to address the situation.”

While both observations of limited use of the media by the evaluation team and the CBG members interviewed are relevant, the ASC programme manager agreed with the observation, but stressed that it was not easy. Referring to the general media situation in the country (see section 1.1.2 page 2 above – **the media in Rwanda is “not free”**) ASC initially tried to negotiate an integration of their programmes with RRs own, which would have been ideal, but failed. It appears that Government considered a programme like ASC a vehicle for bringing income, rather than as a potential partner.

ASC impact on Social norms being discussed to ensure support the equal participation of all citizens

While people living in poverty are in general less open to challenge and change social norms, the ASC programme has had good success of beginning this in the area of (lack of) gender equality, as also mentioned above: “Activities in social norms are progressing, and there is growing awareness about the need for equal participation in various CBG roles and responsibilities. Most of the parents treat their children (boys and girls) equally – sending them to school, and sharing leadership positions in different groups based on ability.”³² 318 out of 510 CBGs, for instance, representing 62% have equal participation of female and male in leadership committees and auditing committees.

Women and men stressed the importance of women’s new empowered role and self-esteem. Contrary to the expectation by the consultant (based in earlier experience and the Violence Against Women statistics above) all CBGs visited insisted unanimously, that women rising to power did not call for punitive measures by husband, other family members or the community. Due to the limitations of this assignment it was not possible to dive deeper into an explanation about this, but it would be very interesting – and important – to do so.

Besides from ASC having had a very positive impact on addressing social norms among its partners in relation to gender roles, evidence was also shared towards the fact that stigma and taboo had importantly diminished in the communities, groups and schools, where HIV/AIDS was systematically addressed, finding also persons who were not HIV positive wanting to engage in their groups and to follow advice on encouraged positive living. In many of the school’s HIV/AIDS clubs, discussions had broadened, and work was being carried out to systematically change misconceptions around sexual and reproductive rights, among others since many communities were witnessing a steep increase in the number of teenage pregnancies.

In summary, the evaluation team found that the ASC programme impact had been high in all three change areas at community and individual levels as well as in terms of social norms. While the programme in general was found to have overly positive effects – and no negative encountered by the team, the area found with most remaining untapped potential would be the provision of ready access to Media Platforms for public articulation of concerns – for people themselves living in poverty as discussed above. Similarly, it will be recommended to take the consequence of the very low levels of HIV and AIDS in Rwanda, which seems to be taking some of the ‘wind’ out of the AIDS clubs and refocus them to deal with sexual and reproductive health.

Believing, as stressed in the section below, that collective conscientization - as the evaluator considers the ASC work to be – is an irreversible, cognitive process, then considerable long-term impacts are expected from this process. While some of the elements of the obvious ASC success may have been unintended at the time of initiation, the systematic, analytical work with the programme over the nine-year period now means that there is little left appearing to be unintended impacts, as the programme was met by the evaluation team.

³² ASC Annual Report 2017 page 13.

4.5 Sustainability

If it is true that conscientization is an irreversible cognitive process (and many scientists agree that it is) – then all, who have been in touch with ASC, should carry a seed. One could say that sustainability in this way is built into the DNA of the project with its holistic, organic, empowering approach, modelled in the ‘Ecology of empowerment’ model developed by the evaluator (p.15).



In the Umucyo Cooperative in Karongi, the Cooperative President Nathan Nzirabatinyi (left) stressed that they are now very far in their development process and do not expect the closure of the ASC programme to have a negative impact on their work. On the contrary, they had recently started to mobilise and organise the communities around them including start-up of VSLAs, alphabetization using the REFLECT methodology, support to farming IGAs and the advocacy and HRBA to move it all forward.

This is found to be a strong example of a sustainable organisation. While Umucyo was the most powerful example, several other CBGs and Coops met, had this perspective, self-confidence and power. This was also true for Education-based groups met (“we are now fine, but we need to find out how to support our neighbouring schools”) and the one health CBG met, which was also forming new groups, especially women’s groups (see p.18).

The Icyerekezo Health CBG was part of **a network of 13 health CBGs** – all with a base of HIV positive members. This network was used as a basis for – together – supporting the start-up of new related CBGs. Also **a group of**

pineapple growers had formed a network. They were only 3 CBGs in the network, but still this formed the basis for sharing of experience and ideas – for sustainability.

Sustainability - 2 years after the ASC programme left the Eastern Province

The evaluation team had an opportunity to visit four CBGs and an authority representative in the Eastern Province. The ASC programme was closed down June 2016 here, which provided an opportunity to have some understanding of the sustainability of the ASC approach and implementation ex post. We found, two years after the programme had left:

- All 4 CBGs visited were operational and of great value to members
- VSLA’s in all CBGs active;
- Networks of CBGs still active and useful in the two CBGs, where we asked;
- 2 of 4 leaders were women – all agreed that the space for women had not been questioned and not diminished;
- CBGs experienced raising of revenue for investments difficult – with 1 successful exception;
- Limited explicit mention of advocacy processes – some built into way of working;
- Fine contact with sector authorities – advice until a certain limit, as in other 2 provinces.

This opportunity to use the Eastern Province programme as a ‘crystal ball’ for assessing sustainability aspects for the future of the closing ASC programme was very useful.

It is obvious that the structures found to be of immediate use were still active. This is true for the VSLAs, the CBGs including the um IGAs and the networks of CBGs.

The level of personal capacity, self-respect and integrity of systems was also all found to have remained – and most likely increased, even though this is hard to say with much weight after the short visits to the communities.

In any case, the sense of sustainability potential received from the first round of field work in the Southern and Western provinces, was importantly reinforced after visiting the earlier ASC partners.

Sustainability assessment of the different ASC partners

The ASC programme works with different kinds of CBGs as well as priority approaches with different inherent sustainability potentials – or not – as seen by the evaluator:

- **VSLAs** were described as the foundation stone in all testimonies, when beginning the climb out of poverty. There is a strong immediate usefulness to this programme, which lends it a **very high sustainability potential**
- **Coops** are the organising framework and (social) security of the productive work and IGAs, and have the power of being a legal persona, which lends security. **High potential.**
- **CBGs** have the same importance in the lives of the participant-members, but not (yet) the security of the Cooperative registration and rights. But still, **high sustainability potential.**
- **Education CBGs** are different from the livelihood and Health CBGs. As the continuation of the new and democratic school structures does not impact the immediate livelihood of the families, but of course the quality of the education of their children, their sustainability will to a higher degree depend upon a local champion or an increased support by the authorities in rooting the new democratic frameworks. **Medium likelihood of sustainability**
- **Networks of CBGs** represent an extension of the power of community found in the CBGs and Coops – with potential for mutual reinforcement. This requires good organisation-cum-coordination skills, which could be a vulnerability. **Medium to high sustainability potential.**
- **REFLECT** is based on a powerful conscientization process beyond learning to read and write. It would seem to carry a power nearly as strong as that of the VSLAs – as seen in some realities. This would lead to a **medium sustainability expectation.**
- **AIDS/School Clubs** are functional, but seem to need a re-orientation as mentioned above. But as it is institutionalized in the education system, they will survive – the question is with how much dynamism. **Medium to high sustainability potential.**
- **Child Rights Ambassadors** – as above. **Medium to high sustainability potential.**
- **Focal Teachers** – as above. **Medium to high sustainability potential.**

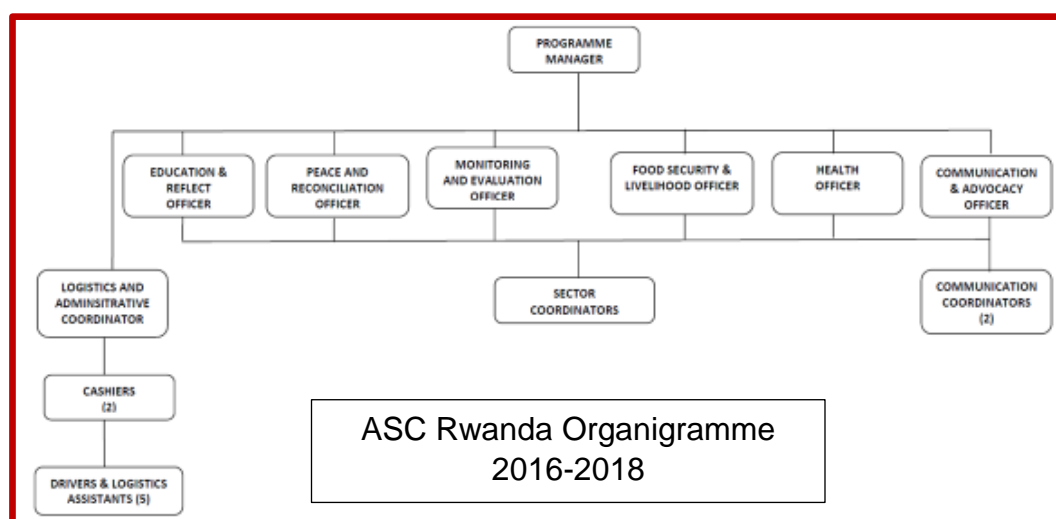
In summary, the evaluation team is convinced that the community structures with VSL opportunities and with organisation (groups, coops, networks) around livelihood and health will continue to be found – probably in developed forms depending upon the reality around them. As for education when the generations of close to full schooling grow up, adult literacy will be less and less required. As literacy is so central to engaging in any organisational activities, in claiming one's rights, it is, however, the expectation that REFLECT-like programmes will continue to exist in some ways.

While the ASC work in the schools has found powerful expressions in some communities with the right champions (and maybe not quite so destitute surrounding community?) it appears that the democratization reform carried forward with ASC support in its partner sectors, is not yet quite rooted in the Sector and District Authorities – so maybe the full benefit of the potential in this area will depend upon the authorities clarifying their role and rolling out their support. While some of the groups in the schools will continue to bloom, it is feared by the evaluation that others may fold or withdraw to earlier times' much lower activity levels. It should be noted here, that the ASC programme have found the leaders of the different local authorities being 'moving targets'. Unlike the CBGs and Cooperatives who will always be in the same location, the former have short tenures in their locations, and the ASC programme has found a big difference in understanding of the roles and responsibilities and the ASC approach between new leaders and old leaders, who have apparently not passed on the level of understanding and integration achieved initially.



5. Programme management

The ASC programme has been implemented by ADRA Rwanda in partnership with ADRA Denmark. While it was foreseen that all implementation staff including the programme manager would be based in the programme office, in reality only the programme manager, the financial administration, communication and the M&E responsible were based in Kigali. All thematic officers were based in the districts, where they doubled as local office managers. They had a driver and a car and in one instance a financial support staff. The sector coordinators were based in the sectors where the ASC programme was implemented, and they got around by motorbike³³.



The ADRA Denmark programme coordinator in direct contact with the ASC programme manager, works under the ADRA Denmark Programme Director. Similarly, the ASC accountant worked in direct connection with the ADRA Denmark controller.

5.1 Organisation of the programme management between Kigali and Nærum

Whereas ADRA Rwanda is accountable for signing a programme contract with ADRA DK, the latter is in turn accountable to Danida for the successful implementation of the programme. A Programme Coordinator in ADRA Denmark is assigned to this Programme, to whom all communication and reports regarding the Programme are directed. The programme document is the core management document, against which ASC prepares quarterly report to ADRA Denmark. The fourth quarterly report functions as an annual report, and at the end of a three-year programme phase, an end-of-programme report is prepared.

The programme was initially under Danida's civil society programme modality but has since 2013 been funded through a framework agreement. Whereas ADRA Denmark receives the planned funding for the upcoming year, the funds are transferred to the ASC programme based on a budget control sheet, forecasting the expenditures for the coming months. The ASC programme manager and the Danish programme coordinator both stress how smooth the coordination has been, building on a high level of trust within the secure ADRA financial risk control environment. The ADRA Denmark coordinator highlights that with a programme manager of the incumbent's calibre, the coordination is inspiring, and the programme has been running effectively.

He in turn highlights the high level of flexibility and openness to listen and accommodate field dictated changes by the Danish coordinator. He is aware that what makes programme and budget adjustments appear seamless, is the result of professionalism and flexibility by the ADRA Denmark staff – and in turn Danida, with whom they need to work out changes. A professional relation beyond facts and figures – a collaboration with mission, values, will and quality capacity to strive towards the change needed.

³³ The ASC Organigramme does not reflect the actual status of things as some staff had already left in light of the upcoming closure of the programme. This is among others true for the communication and advocacy officer.

5.2 Efficiency and effectiveness of the programme's organisation and management structure

The Action for Social Change programme is an effective and efficient programme, with a good design and of high relevance in the reality in which it unfolds, giving the programme a good level of impact and an unusual level of expected sustainability. This is all presented above. This is to a high degree because this human-resources heavy programme is staffed by very capable people who are deeply committed to the focus and spirit of the programme and its partners.

It is not possible to run an empowerment-oriented programme focusing on people living in poverty, those hardest to reach, without passion, respect and care. The ASC programme staff all possess these important qualities. During the week they live in the district-based programme offices (each has a small room) and return to their families – and sometimes even very young children – on the weekend. It is important to mention this along with the fact that they are hard-working result-creators. The effectiveness and efficiency of the programme would not have been as presented above without this organization and this staff quality.

By embedding staff in the field (80% of the ASC staff is based in the districts and sectors), the organization walks its talk. When based near the partner groups, moving around the dusty or muddy roads by motor-bike (photo right), staff understands much more about the reality than when jetting out from the capital city in a Toyota Landcruiser with aircon (or similar). Staff furthermore in this way spends considerably less time on the road and more with the partners, coaching, mentoring, and bringing the programme objectives forward.



A programme organised and managed like this is naturally a reflection of the leader, who has been on board during all nine years and formed the programme over time. Without a powerful, focused, appreciative and accommodating leader, a big group of staff cannot perform like this.

An additional example of how the programme lives its approaches is that all (!) staff take part in quarterly 3-day planning and evaluation meetings in Kigali, integrating the full scope of learning in the body-of-knowledge of the programme – and in onward planning. This is at the same time empowering, it builds capacity and it enhances the programme quality.

5.3 How do local partners see the ASC programme?

When visiting the sector and district authorities they all highlighted that the collaboration with ADRA was different. They stressed the quality, professionalism and effectiveness of the staff at all levels: smooth collaboration, goal- and solution-oriented, flexible – generating change. They unanimously highlighted that where meetings with most other NGOs could have a high level of tension built in, the meetings with ADRA staff were different. Furthermore, they appreciated that the ASC programme was ready to engage with the District and Sector development priorities, so that they could work hand in hand.

An area of contention between the ASC programme and the local authorities had been the fact that ASC focuses on building the capacity and power of the partners, where the authorities would have preferred service-delivery and hand-outs. The ASC programme manager stresses this in his 2017 Annual report (p.6):

*“The ASC programme did not harmonize its activities fully with the annual district performance activities (Imihigo Contracts) of the districts. This has always been a problem because **the districts prioritize service delivery and structural contributions** instead of capacity building activities. Consequently, the capacity building activities of the programme do not find an appropriate place within the district annual plans. Year in, year out, district **authorities insist that all development partners should also prioritize service delivery activities included in the district performance contracts, or risk being banned from operating in the districts.** This constitutes a challenge for the ASC programme whose activities are outside the appreciation realm of the authorities because the activities do not directly contribute to the achievement of the activities defined in the district performance contracts”*

Whether the District and Sector authorities had suddenly realised that they were wrong and capacity building actually in their interest, that the programme advocacy in this area had finally gotten through to them, or whether the authority representatives met did not want to antagonize evaluators travelling in, is not to be known now, but in the evaluation meetings with 5 different sector authorities, one district and three at Ministry level, all underscored the innovative and important approach by the ASC programme, and highlighted how ‘a change of the mindset of the people in the CBGs’ was at the core of development.

In summary, the organisation, implementation and programme management of the ASC programme was by the evaluation found to be both exceptional and extraordinary. Such superlatives are not easily deployed in an evaluation report, but when they match the reality evaluated, they should be. They are released by the quality of programme management of the ASC programme and their Danish partners, as well as by the internal organisation and the quality of the programme team.

6. Practical recommendations and best practices

The second objective of this evaluation is “To provide concrete and **practical recommendations and best practices** that ADRA Denmark and other ASC partners can use in future programme design in order to achieve the best possible results in relation to its objectives”. Where the above part of the report focused on the first evaluation objective (the impact of the programme), this final section of the evaluation will therefore extract practical recommendations and best practices based on the above presentation and analysis of the evaluation findings.

Practical recommendations and best practices to the other ASC partners

While the evaluators do not know the reality of the ASC partners in Burundi, Uganda and Malawi, the below recommendations and best practices may be of more use to some than to others. They, however, represent outstanding practices identified in Rwanda – for inspiration and consideration.

The ASC programme is at the core of the ‘mantra’ of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) reminding to ‘leave no-one behind’³⁴. Recognizing, as mentioned above and as the SDGs do, that reaching the poorest, most vulnerable and often marginalised 20 % (some even argue 40 %) of a population, is very difficult and requires the engagement by those population groups themselves. The ASC programme has done – and is doing – just that. Effectively. Efficiently. Sustainably. Powerfully. It is therefore important to extract the lessons learnt – including elements to improve - as these deserve to be shared widely: with - and beyond - the ongoing ASC programmes.

Integrated, holistic approach, building on existing capacity, generating empowered action

1. ***The first and most important best practice*** is the **power of synergy** created through the combination of the selected approaches and work methodologies. These are all embedded in lessons around collective conscientization generating a sociological fantasy and empowerment, as developed by Paulo Freire and others in the 1970s. The programme matched this by CFSC and HRBA, which emerged in the 1990s with a focus on people’s need to access their human rights effectively through development processes. These were based on communication, dialogue and getting a voice, bottom-up. Merging all of this has generated important change.
2. The field work and study of documentation points to a **high likelihood of sustainability**.
3. The holistic nature of the ASC programme, involving all of the elements above, is important to remember for a programme to remain relevant, effective, efficient, impactful and sustainable, as **summarised in the evaluator’s ‘Ecology of empowerment’** model (p.15). It should be mentioned that the ASC focus is on the collective – made up by empowered individuals.

³⁴ <https://www.odi.org/publications/10956-defining-leave-no-one-behind>

- To use the **HRBA**, which with a special focus on **advocacy** in the Western province, demonstrated how the conscious mastering of this approach leads to access to individual and collective rights and services, generated through important understanding of and practice in reaching out.
 - **CFSC** was most effectively rolled-out in mutually reinforcing forms of communication in the health CBGs (assessment based on a comparison of the groups met by the evaluators), while community conversations were embedded in all groups and all activities. It is important to stay alert as implementer: could we include CFSC tools, techniques and processes more?
 - **The media** could maybe have been used in more systematic and strategic ways? It is, however, recognized that with the very tight government grip and control of those and the recent move for the media to be sustainable, it has proven complicated by a programme like ASC to be considered other than a potential source of income – instead of being taken in by government as an important partner. RRs own ‘Kazi ni Kazi’³⁵ could have been such a collaboration programme. **Exploration of partner groups’ own access to the media**, as producers and discussants would have been interesting to explore through community media using mobiles, social media and radio. This is less common and obvious in Rwanda than it might be in especially Uganda and Malawi.
4. **Working with communities as poor** and disadvantaged as the partner-participants of the ASC programme, **beginning with VSLAs is a powerful best practice**: once some financial space comes into the life of persons and families, other engagements are possible.
 5. Sustainable continuation of practice is built-in where there is a **clear economic value emerging** from grouping, such as VSLAs, networking, REFLECT (slightly less), etc.
 6. Similarly, **shared root conditions make the groups stronger** – such as the health groups formed by HIV positive women – and men.
 7. **Working in committing groups extends social capital** collectively and individually: the collective cares for weaker elements – like a family.
 8. As a part of this holistic approach, it is important to support partners to have capacity **to not get stuck in the middle of an important process**. An example in Rwanda is the problem of reaching markets. The ASC programme has helped the groups develop capacity in terms of advocacy and livelihood activities like growing pineapples or bananas – but the CBGs cannot reach potential markets. This recommendation already appeared in a CFSC assessment in 2013 and has been inbuilt in the programme since including through more than 20 ‘Formal Business Planning’ trainings for different cooperatives. But they did not manage to commit local authorities to do their part due to frequent staff transfers, where agreements with one person/authority representative would have to be re-built continually. Despite many attempts, it did not work.

Staffing and organisation

9. To be able to do this, **the second layer of best practice is** about the **staff and organisation**: having the **adequate capacity of staff** both in terms of personal qualities (first and foremost - the rest can be learnt!), technical knowledge and experience, is important. The ASC programme spent, according to the programme manager, an important part of the first years to get the team capacity in place **matching the approach, values and work methods**.
10. As the approaches in themselves do not necessarily ‘do the trick’, they need to be matched by capacity to **work in a flexible manner, tailoring the sequence of interventions to local developments**, based on an understanding of and continued **listening to** the partners cum participants.
11. Closely related to the qualities of staff is the fact that **the sector coordinators lived in the area where they worked**. This gave many important benefits (see above) – and it sent a message to the (i) partners-participants, (ii) CBGs and (iii) authorities alike: **we live and work with you!**

³⁵ “The work is being done”, own free translation from Kiswahili through online translation services.

It takes time to change minds, norms and traditions

12. **Time. The third best practice layer is about time.** This programme has now been active for a period of nine years. As the ASC programme is not building bridges but changing understanding attitudes and practices – or as some of the authority representatives said: changing the mindset of the people”, it takes time. Some of the same findings and figures could possibly have been extracted after six years (some documentation in this report actually is a few years old) – but there would not have been the same amount of time to root and anchor the new ways. Nine years – or 10 – would seem to be a minimum desired duration of a programme of this nature.

Something different – for inspiration in other ASC countries

13. **The Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) of the Rwanda Governance Board³⁶** is a great facility with a vision: "Active Rwandan Communities Participating in Sustainable and Inclusive Local Development Driven by Mutual Accountability". This is a forum where NGO programmes for instance have an occasion to showcase their approaches and results. Despite the obvious and impressive potential, it was, however, found to be too ‘hands off’ in terms of actually engaging in introducing initiatives to each other, amplifying opportunities and extracting lessons learnt. As a potential sustainability buffer, this should be challenged. An idea for replication (and improvement) in other ASC countries?

Practical recommendations to ADRA Rwanda

As painful as it is for a successful programme in full implementation to close, as embedded in the nature of development programmes it is. The time has come to the ASC Rwanda programme, and the ambition behind the recommendations here is to point towards ways of further anchoring and consolidating the impressive results generated during the lifetime of the ASC Rwanda programme.

While sustainability can be seen as built into the DNA of ASC, the evaluation found it worth considering ways of having some consolidation options as a built-in feature of ADRA Rwanda:

14. Immediately upon closure of the programme (June 30, 2018) open a year of **‘Post implementation monitoring’** - with one year of focused monitoring-cum-consolidation follow-up.
15. **Consider national level advocacy for services of use to the CBGs and Coops including**
- (i) Identification of national support to rural actors’ access to markets; (ii) Further strengthen the (seemingly?) ad hoc networks of CBGs to become real powerful collegial exchange networks; (iii) Work with MinEd on transforming the AIDS clubs in the schools to focus on sexual and reproductive rights among others in light of the increasing number of teenage pregnancies; (iv) Work with MinEd to anchor the new democratic PTA-like structures; (v) find ways of opening access to the media for CBG members and other civil society actors – through access programmes in RRs ‘Community Radios’ or others.

Practical recommendation to ADRA Denmark

Recognizing that this is the first full evaluation of the ASC programme in Rwanda, and the fact that the world needs this experience, it is strongly recommended to find ways of effectively sharing the methodology, tools and processes, and the experience you have worked with for nine years.

16. **‘The ASC Way – a book’:** A book with frameworks, approaches, ‘how to’ and case stories³⁷.
17. **‘The ASC Way – a film’:** Have a film made about approach, frameworks and case stories (linked with book for schools, universities) with DR, Danish/Swedish film institutes? Danida?
18. **‘The ASC Way – a resource centre’:** Consider a desirable and possible way of establishing a small ‘centre of excellence and resources’, including documentation / a body of knowledge, resources (including training courses, process outlines etc) and experience (what worked?), as a reference point for other development actors worldwide, wanting to work for empowerment and capacity **the ASC way** – knowing how to fight for and achieve one’s rights. This could be an office in ADRA Denmark, or in cooperation with a university or research institution?

³⁶ rgb.rw/joint-development-forum/joint-action-development-forum/

³⁷ This could also dive deeper into figures about # of women in leadership roles, a more precise mapping of the nature of capacity building efforts and a deeper understanding of whether specific areas of advocacy (health? Education? Livelihood? Benefiting women, men, youth) found a positive response by the authorities cum duty-bearers than others.

ANNEXES



A network of 13 Health CBGs initially formed by people living with HIV/AIDS. Using CFSC incl.:

- Community events to communities
- Household visits
- Theatre, Music & Singing
- Sport

Network good to share experiences

Terms of Reference for End evaluation of Action for Social Change, Rwanda

Background:

Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Rwanda and ADRA Denmark have been working together on several projects and programmes for more than a decade. The partnership between ADRA Denmark and ADRA Rwanda is founded in a formal Partnership Agreement.

The Action for Social Change (ASC) Programme is a Danida funded development programme through ADRA Denmark, implemented by ADRA Rwanda. The first phase of the ASC programme in Rwanda started in 2010. It introduced the Communication for Social Change approach and advocacy to ADRA Rwanda and required strategic capacity building of staff. The interventions of the programme are in the Education, Livelihood and Food security, and Health thematic areas, with an inclusion of crosscutting themes of gender, democracy and governance.

The overall goal of the ASC Programme at the global level³⁸ is to contribute to a status where citizens living in poverty are empowered to participate and contribute to realise their development rights and potential to break out of poverty.

To achieve this main goal at the continental level, ASC Rwanda has been working to promote the following three Change Areas:

- 1) Community structures that permit community members to communicate their needs, concerns and rights are in place
- 2) Community members that have the knowledge and skills to claim and realise their rights and utilise livelihood opportunities.
- 3) Social norms support the equal participation of all citizens.

The first phase of the Programme (2010-2012) was implemented in Nyagatare district in the Eastern Province, and Karongi and Nyamasheke districts in the Western Province. Due to funding constraints, the Nyagatare intervention was phased out in June 2016.

The second phase of ASC Rwanda was from 2013-2015, while the third phase (2016-2018) has been fully implemented in four districts of Karongi and Nyamasheke in the Western Province, and Kamonyi and Muhanga in the Southern Province.

Due to funding cuts to ADRA Denmark from Danida, it was decided to phase out ASC in Rwanda by the 30th of June 2018.

The evaluation will serve to document the impact of the intervention as well as provide learning and best practices for other ASC programmes. This evaluation should provide ADRA Denmark and ADRA Rwanda with documentation of the achievements and impact of the programme. One of the main theories of change of the ASC Programme was that its emphasis on capacity building approaches would increase sustainability long after the phasing out of the programme. One of the main intentions of this evaluation, therefore, is to assess the sustainability of the intervention.

³⁸ ASC is also implemented by ADRA in Malawi, Burundi, and Uganda

Objective:

The key objectives of the end evaluation are:

- ✓ To assess and document the impact of the Action for Social Change programme in Rwanda, 2010-2018.
- ✓ To provide concrete and practical recommendations and best practices that ADRA Denmark and other ASC partners can use in future programme design in order to achieve the best possible results in relation to its objectives.

Scope of Work:

The assignment will include, but not be limited to the following lines of inquiry:

Relevance

- To what extent has the programme been relevant in relation to the context and the needs and priorities of the intended beneficiaries?
- To what extent has Communication for Social Change as a method for development been relevant as applied in the ASC programme in Rwanda? Have the selected activities (radio, community dialogue) been relevant?
- To what extent has the Human Rights Based Approach been relevant as applied?
- Has the ToC of the programme been relevant?

Effectiveness

- To what extent have the primary objectives been achieved?
- To what extent have the planned or expected results been achieved and the intended population reached?
- To what extent has the Human Rights Based Approach been effective in achieving the desired results?
- To what extent has Communication for Social Change – and particularly the use of media (radio) and community dialogues – been an effective approach?
- To what extent has the work of VSLAs and IGAs been effective?

Efficiency

- 4 How economically have resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) been converted to results?
- 5 Are the investment and recurrent costs justified?
- 6 Could the same results have been achieved with fewer resources?
- 7 Has the programme strategy been efficient; in particular the capacity building of local CBGs?

Impact

- What positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects have been produced by the programme, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended?
- To what extent have the advocacy activities included in the ASC programme been successful in influencing decisions and bringing about changes at local, regional and national level?

Sustainability

- 8 What is the probability of long-term results?
- 9 To what extent can the programme achievements be expected to be last when the support from ADRA Rwanda is phased out?
- 10 To what extent are the Community Based Groups sustainable? Will the VSLAs, advocacy work, IGAs etc. continue after the end of the programme?

Method of Work:

Prior to the field work, the team will conduct a desk study of all relevant programme documents, reports, reviews and strategies. Based on this, the team will produce an inception report describing the proposed methodology and the report outline in more detail.

The evaluation approach will predominantly be qualitative, and it is expected that the evaluation will use participatory methods including field visits to community based groups, authorities and other stakeholders, interviews with community members, staff and relevant stakeholders, group interviews (e.g. with CBGs) and possibly also a workshop with staff members if relevant. The team will be working in close collaboration with relevant resource persons in both ADRA Denmark and ADRA Rwanda.

The key findings, recommendations and learning will be shared with ADRA Rwanda at a debriefing in Kigali and with ADRA Denmark after the return of the team leader to Denmark.

Outputs:

- Inception report prior to the commencement of the evaluation (deadline 16 April)
- Debriefing note to be presented to interested parties at the end of the field visit (22 May)
- Draft evaluation report (including relevant annexes) (deadline 3 June). The report must follow a 1-3-30 format as outlined in ADRA Denmark's Evaluation Policy
- Final evaluation report not more than a week after receiving comments from ADRA Denmark (which will be given no later than 8 June)
- The report should include case stories demonstrating impact, indications of sustainability, as well as identification of best practices.

Composition of team:

The evaluation team will consist of:

- An international consultant (team leader)
- A national consultant
- Representative of ADRA/ASC Rwanda (resource person)
- Programme Coordinator, ADRA Denmark (resource person)
- Representative of ADRA Burundi (observer)

The team should possess the following skills:

- Local knowledge
- International experience, in particular in the field of international development
- Knowledge on community empowerment and sustainability with a focus on civil society development

- Knowledge of the Human Rights Based Approaches (HRBA) to Development
- Knowledge of the Communication for Social Change approach and use of radio in development
- Knowledge of working through community based groups
- Knowledge of advocacy
- Experience in conducting evaluations and writing reports
- Fluency in English (oral and written) and Kinyarwanda

Timing:

The evaluation will take place in May 2018 (please refer to separate time schedule).

	Team leader	National consultant
Task	Days	
Desk study and preparation	2,5	3,5
Field work	8	8
Debriefing with ADRA Rwanda	0,5	0,5
Report writing	5	
Travel	2	
Debriefing with ADRA Denmark	0,5	
Total	18,5	12

Background information:

The team will be provided with all necessary documents, including:

- Programme documents from all three phases
- Yearly and quarterly reports (if relevant)
- Programme strategies, including advocacy strategy
- Report from Advocacy review 2014 (Malawi, Uganda, Rwanda)
- Report from Danida review, 2015
- ADRA Denmark Evaluation Policy.

Stakeholders interviews programme in ASC program Rwanda final evaluation

Date	Agency/ District	Name of Respondent/Position	Phone #	Time
Monday 14May	Departure from Inside Africa Hotel to ADRA Rwanda Office			9h30
	MINAGRI(RAB)	Priscilla/Crop Protection Specialist. He was appointed by RAB to conduct the training of Trainers from livelihood and food security CBGs working with ASC program.	0788463379	10h00
	Radio Flash	Theo BARASA/Program Director . He has been the focal person to appreciate and censor recorded radio programmes that ASC program has aired on Radio Flash	0788843935	11h30
	Lunch time (13h00- 14h00)			
	ADRA Rwanda	ASC team (Briefing with Officers)		14h00
Tuesday 15May	Departure from Inside Africa Hotel to Kamonyi			8h30
	Muhanga	ABIZERWA CBG (Nyarusange)		12h30
	Muhanga	ABAKAMARUTOKI CBG (Nyarusange)		13h20
	Kamonyi	Vice Mayor Economic Affairs Kamonyi		18h00
	Lunch time (13h00- 14h00)			
	Departure for Karongi (Golf Eden Lock Hotel)			18h00
Wednesday 16May	Departure from the Hotel to Gashari sector			8h00
	Karongi	Umucyo Cooperative (REFLECT & VSLA) Gashari		11h00
	Karongi	GS St Rene (PTA & Anti AIDS Club) Gashari sector		12h58

	Lunch time (13h00- 14h00) Back to Karongi			
	Karongi	Permanent Secretary of JADF Karongi	0788541820	16h00
	Back to Karongi			
Thursday 17May	Departure from the Hotel to Nyamasheke			8h00
	Nyamasheke	Sector Executive Secretary/ Social Affairs in charge Mahembe	0788845811	9h00
	Nyamasheke	PTA Mugonero		11h00
	Lunch time (12h30- 13h30)			
	Nyamasheke	Intangarugero cooperative		13h30
	Nyamasheke	Duhuzimbaraga Health CBGs (Group of women)		15h30
	Back to Karongi			
Friday 18May	Departure from Karongi to Kigali			8h00
	Lunch time (12h00- 13h00)			
	MINEDUC (REB)	Bacumuwenda Nehemiah/Literacy and Curriculum Officer. He was recommended by MINEDUC to be the Focal person in the collaboration with ASC program as he has been trained in REFLECT methodology used for adult literacy by ASC program	0788830064	14h00
	TV1	Peninah/Finance and Marketing Manager. She has been the focal person to appreciate and censor TV programmes that ASC program has aired on TV1	0786384205	15h30
Sunday	Departure from Inside Africa hotel to Nyagatare			8h30

20May	Nyagatare	KOHIKA (Karama)		14h00
	Nyagatare	KOTWIBAIKA (Karama)		16h00
	Sector Agronomist	Tabagwe Sector	0788773509	19h00
	Night at Nyagatare			
Monday 21May	Departure from the hotel to Tabagwe sector			8h00
	Nyagatare	KODEPUATA (Tabagwe)		9h00
	Nyagatare	IMBONI (Tabagwe)		11h00
	Lunch time (12h00-13h00)			
	Back to Kigali			
Tuesday 22May	Departure from Inside Africa hotel to ADRA Rwanda Office			8h30
	RBA/Radio	Ardo/Director of Radio Rwanda. He was the focal person to appreciate and censor live and recorded radio programmes that ASC program has aired on Radio Rwanda	0788407152	9h00
	ADRA Rwanda	ASC team (debriefing with all ASC Team members)		12h00
		Lunch time (14h00- 15h00)		
	ADRA Rwanda	Meeting with Patrick - Programme Manager	0788304235	16h00

List of persons met as part of the End Evaluation of the ADRA Rwanda ASC programme May-June 2018

Name	Title/Location	e-mail	Phone
ADRA Denmark staff			
Helene Ellemann-Jensen	Programme Director	heljen@adra.dk	+45 4558 7703
Signe Lund Christensen	Programme and policy adviser	E-mail sigchr@adra.dk	Direct. +45 4558 7716
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ASC/ADRA Rwanda staff			
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Field Work Key informants

Government officials

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School general assembly committees SGACs (formerly Parents teachers associations / PTAs) – Also considered: Education CBGs				
Name	Title/Location	institution	District	contact
Ndinabo Cyprien	Head Teacher	Groupe scolaire saint Rene' Birambo	Karongi	0783428429
Gashugi Theodomir	PTA Committee	Groupe scolaire saint Rene' Birambo	Karongi	0787370647
Mukakalisa Marie Claire	PTA committee member	Groupe scolaire saint Rene' Birambo	Karongi	0785066048
Niyonagize Alexis	Focal teacher	Groupe scolaire saint Rene' Birambo	Karongi	0722208706
Habarugira Come	SMC	Groupe scolaire saint Rene' Birambo	Karongi	0783538171
Hitayezu Janvier	Student	Groupe scolaire saint Rene' Birambo	Karongi	-
Kagoyire Anociatta	Student	Groupe scolaire saint Rene' Birambo	Karongi	-
Claudine Ndatimana	Focal teacher	Groupe scolaire saint Rene' Birambo	Karongi	0783053482
Cyiza Prudence	Focal teacher	Groupe scolaire saint Rene' Birambo	Karongi	0788800920
Wiliyamu David	PTA Committee	Groupe scolaire saint Rene' Birambo	Karongi	0783145608
Emmanuel Twagirimana	PTA Committee	Groupe scolaire saint Rene' Birambo	Karongi	0785453539
Tuyisenge Epiphanie	PTA Committee	Groupe scolaire saint Rene' Birambo	Karongi	0782335626
Ntihabose Samson	President	Mugonero Primary school	Nyamasheke	073005585
Bizimana eldard	Vice President	Mugonero Primary school	Nyamasheke	073055595
Mukasine Thabit	Teacher representative		Nyamasheke	0786432420
Niyomukiza Alice	Teacher representative	Mugonero Primary school	Nyamasheke	0788721724
Nsabimana Samson	Teacher PTA		Nyamasheke	0783160580
Nihemuka Dieudonne	Teacher	Mugonero Primary school	Nyamasheke	078545632
Muhawenimana Theobald	Teacher		Nyamasheke	0785986320
Nshimiye Shadrack	Teacher	Mugonero Primary school	Nyamasheke	0783236982
Nyirahakizimana Christine	Teacher		Nyamasheke	078591137
Mukakarara Jaennette	CMS	Mugonero Primary school	Nyamasheke	0784064285
Hategekimana Francois	PTA member		Nyamasheke	0788752441
Mukeshimana Suzana	PTA member	Mugonero Primary school	Nyamasheke	0782642864
Kanyeshuli Vincent	CMS		Nyamasheke	0785046696
Mushimiyimana Thereze	CMS	Mugonero Primary school	Nyamasheke	0784814162

Community based groups (CBGs)				
Gacandaka Felix	member	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Ntihabose Fidele	member	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Nsabimana Felix	advisor	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Zimugorere Pierre	Auditor	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Hakuzimana Aphrodite	auditor	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Muragirinyana Veneranda	member	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Nyiraminani Monique	Member	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Mujawamriya Bernidina	Member	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Ndagijimana Juvenal	Member	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Yamuragiye Viriginia	Advisor	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Namaukasa Anastasie	Member	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Muteteria Alexia	Secretary	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Mukandinda Liberatha	Treasurer	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Mukamuhoza Eugenia	Member	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Ahobantegeye Leonice	President	Abakamurutoki CBG	Muhanga	-
Niyonsenga Rose	Advisor	Abizerwa Cooperative CBG CBG	Muhanga	-
Mukarugwiza Pelagie	Member	Abizerwa Cooperative CBG	Muhanga	-
Imaniraguha Olive	Auditor	Abizerwa Cooperative CBG	Muhanga	-
Ntakirutimana Laurence		Abizerwa Cooperative CBG	Muhanga	-
Bagirubwira Vedaste		Abizerwa Cooperative CBG	Muhanga	-
Nkiruyumugabe Albert	Auditor	Abizerwa Cooperative CBG	Muhanga	-
Rebero Lucie	President	Abizerwa Cooperative CBG	Muhanga	-
Ndahimana Aniclet	Advisor	Abizerwa Cooperative CBG	Muhanga	-
Mukazagye Josephine	member	Abizerwa Cooperative CBG	Muhanga	-
Nyirabazungu Odette		Abizerwa Cooperative Cooperative CBG	Muhanga	-
Mukansanga Donatha		Abizerwa Cooperative CBG	Muhanga	-
Ntigirehe Isidore	Member	Abizerwa Cooperative CBG	Muhanga	-
Mukakabera Eusebia	Audit committee president	Abizerwa Cooperative CBG	Muhanga	-
Mukanyandwi Maltilde	Secretary	Abizerwa Cooperative CBG	Muhanga	-
Nyiransabimana Priscila	Vice President	Abizerwa Cooperative CBG	Muhanga	-
Nzirabatinyi Nathan	President	Umucyo Cooperative	Karongi	0785075900

Yankurije Rose	Secretary	Umucyo Cooperative		
Mukandori Martha	Advisor	Umucyo Cooperative		0780575073
Nirere Florida	Auditor	Umucyo Cooperative		0782930690
Ntawudasaba Ephraim	Auditor			-
Mukakabega Domithila	Auditor	Umucyo Cooperative		-
Mukamwiza Beriana	Advisor	Umucyo Cooperative		-
Niyindogiye Appolinaire	Vice President	Umucyo Cooperative		073473418
Ndagijimana Jean	President	Intangurugero CBG	Nyamasheke	0733125814
Mukankuranga Josephine	Vice President	Intangurugero CBG	Nyamasheke	0782340794
Ntambineza Esperance	Treasurer	Intangurugero CBG	Nyamasheke	
Mujawayesu Jaennette	Secretary	Intangurugero CBG	Nyamasheke	-
Nyirandabali Jackeline	Auditor	Intangurugero CBG	Nyamasheke	-
Nyiransanzubuhoro Zibiye	Auditor	Intangurugero CBG	Nyamasheke	-
Habiyaremye Emmanuel	President	Duhuzimbaraga Health CBG	Nyamasheke	0785174552
Niyitegeka Elesephor	Vice President	Duhuzimbaraga Health CBG	Nyamasheke	0782948291
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Simburakiye Josephine	Advisor	Duhuzimbaraga Health CBG	Nyamasheke	0785471115
Twabunkinko Gervais	Secretary	Duhuzimbaraga Health CBG	Nyamasheke	0784605890
Yankurije Mariya	Treasurer	Duhuzimbaraga Health CBG	Nyamasheke	0782364919
Nyirahabimana Donatille	Advisor	Duhuzimbaraga Health CBG	Nyamasheke	0782949634
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Habumuremyi Pasteur	VSL group (1) President	KOHIKA Cooperative	Nyagatare	0785470472
Kajyambere Silas	VSL group (2) president	KOHIKA Cooperative	Nyagatare	0788712529
Ukwitegetse Clementine	In charge of infrastructure	KOHIKA Cooperative	Nyagatare	0787933540
Tuyiringiye Patrick	Cooperative support officer	KOHIKA Cooperative	Nyagatare	0786289161
Bitwayiki Etienne	Secretary audit committee	KOHIKA Cooperative	Nyagatare	0788884518

Nyirabavakure Elisa	Vice President (operations)	KOHIKA Cooperative	Nyagatare	0783248753
Mugisha Ephraim	President audit committee	KOHIKA Cooperative	Nyagatare	0784712602
Nyirangwiye Emeritha	Advisor	KOHIKA Cooperative	Nyagatare	0786180614
Ntamugabumwe Emmanuel	President	KOTWIBAICA	Nyagatare	0726992129
Ndagijimana Saidi	Secretary	KOTWIBAICA	Nyagatare	0786326486
Nsanzabera Alphonse	President audit committee	KOTWIBAICA	Nyagatare	0782342506
Nsengyimuva emmanuel	Secretary audit committee	KOTWIBAICA	Nyagatare	0785774560
Nyiranzabanita Anastasia	Advisor	KOTWIBAICA	Nyagatare	-
Bigirimana Auguste	Advisor	KOTWIBAICA	Nyagatare	-
Neretsebagabo Jean Baptiste	Advisor	KOTWIBAICA	Nyagatare	0783851407
Kayitesi Antoinette	President	Imboni	Nyagatare	-
Ntanganda Theogene	Secretary	Imboni	Nyagatare	-
Nsezeye Denis	Advisor	Imboni	Nyagatare	-
Kagoyire Ancilla	Treasurer	Imboni	Nyagatare	-
Musomabaganwa Peter	Advisor	Imboni	Nyagatare	-
Mukambayiza Velarie	Advisor	Imboni	Nyagatare	-
Muyango Peter	Vice President	Imboni	Nyagatare	-
Mugiraneza Else	Advisor	Imboni	Nyagatare	-
Batamuliza Ancilla	President	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	
Nyakamwe Alexandre	Auditor	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	
Havugimana Mannaseh	Auditor	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	
Gashumba Emmanuel	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Ndyanabangi John	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Tibasasa M Godance	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Bazirushaka Juvenus	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Umwanzenumwe Gaspard	Treasurer	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Dusabeyezu Bernard	Advisor	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Uwimana Yakobo	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Mukulizehe Fabien	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Nyirantashya	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Nejoburiho Lauren	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Mukahoheli	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-

Rutatomba Alex	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Mukabaranga Belancilla	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Nyangoma Liberatha	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Uwamahoro Angelique	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Mukamana Adeline	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Ntambabazi Gatarina	Advisor	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Uwantege Claudine	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Mukakalisa Anne Marie	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Nyirakamana	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Bagirinanusha	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Mukarukwere Collette	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-
Nyiraruggo Beatrice	Member	KODEPUATA	Nyagatare	-