

Evaluation and Social Research Policy

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the standards for how the British Red Cross (BRC) conducts and uses evaluation and social research to improve and inform decision-making as the organisation seeks to mobilise the power of humanity so that people can prepare for, respond to, and recover from crises.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all evaluation and social research activities associated with our work internationally and in the UK which are: i) commissioned or conducted by the BRC, either alone or in partnership with other organisations; and ii) related to projects, programmes and services delivering organisational change.

3. Policy Statement

Through our evaluation and social research, the BRC can use its resources well, contribute to organisational learning and accountability, and promote and celebrate our work effectively. It will do this by ensuring that evaluation and social research follow the standards of:

- 3.1. **Utility:** useful and used.
- 3.2. **Feasibility:** realistic, respectful and managed in a sensible and cost-effective manner.
- 3.3. **Ethics and Legality:** conducted in an ethical and legal manner, with regard for the welfare of those involved in, and affected by, the evaluation.
- 3.4. **Impartiality and Independence:** impartial, providing a comprehensive and unbiased assessment that considers the views of all stakeholders.
- 3.5. **Transparency:** conducted in an open and transparent manner.
- 3.6. **Accuracy:** technically accurate, providing sufficient information about the data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods so that its worth or merit can be determined.
- 3.7. **Participation:** informed by stakeholders who are consulted and meaningfully involved in the evaluation and social research process when feasible and appropriate.
- 3.8. **Accountability:** adequately documents the evaluation process and products, aligning evaluation practice with an equity approach, and with the development of recommendations that are detailed and actionable.

3.9. Impact Assessment

3.9.1. Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Self-Assessment was completed and no risks or negative impacts were identified.

3.9.2. Data Protection Impact Assessment

A Data Protection Impact Assessment was completed in May 2025 with the support of Information Governance. There are no significant privacy risks associated with this policy.

3.9.3. Environmental Sustainability Impact Assessment

No negative impact identified.

3.10. Lessons Learned from Policy Evaluation

Evaluation and social research flowcharts added to appendix for operational understanding of procedures. 'Social' Research added to Policy title for improved clarity and scope of policy. Consensus on this approach gained through consultation.

4. Responsibilities

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.

The Executive Director for UK Operations (Policy Owner) is responsible for championing this policy at leadership level and within the wider leadership team, and for ensuring that this policy allows achievement of internal standards.

Executive Directors are responsible for fostering a culture which encourages evaluations and social research within their areas of responsibility and for ensuring actions are taken to learn from the findings and implement recommendations.

The Head of Evaluation and Data Management (UK Operations; Policy Lead), together with the Senior Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL) Adviser in the International Directorate and with the support of the Policy Owner, is responsible for the development, monitoring, and review of this policy.

The Insight and Improvement Evaluation Team are responsible for providing support and advice for evaluation and social research in UK Operations.

The Policy Research team (within the Policy, Research and Advocacy team) are responsible for support and advice regarding social research as it pertains to British Red Cross advocacy goals and external influencing.

The Performance, Quality and Accountability Team are responsible for providing support and advice for evaluation and social research in the International Directorate.

The Transformation and Change Team are responsible for providing support and advice for programme and change management which spans across the organisation.

All Managers are responsible for operational implementation of, and compliance with, this policy, supporting a responsible and open culture which encourages reflection and learning in the form of evaluation and social research.

5. Governance

Associated policy document/s	• Conflict of Interest, Gifts, and Hospitalities Policy • Transparency and Accountability Policy • Information Classification Policy • Data Protection Policy • Confidentiality Policy • Data Quality Policy • Procurement Policy	
Policy(ies) superseded	Evaluation and Research Policy	
Legislation/ regulatory requirements and standards	N/A	
Equality impact assessment	No equality impact identified	
Data Protection impact assessment	No data protection impact identified	
Environmental impact assessment	No environmental impact identified	
Endorsing Authority; Endorsement date	Executive Director for UK Operations; June 2025	
Approval Authority; Approval date	ELT; June 2025	
Policy Owner	Executive Director for UK Operations	
Policy Lead	Head of Evaluation and Data Management (UK Operations)	
Date effective	June 2025	
Interim update date	N/A	
Review date	June 2028	
Version	4.0	
Keywords	insight, data collection, continuous improvement, effectiveness, outcomes, value, standards, utility, feasibility, ethics, legality, impartiality, independence, transparency, accuracy, participation, stakeholders, accountability, humanity, crises, change management, commission	
Revision history	Version	Summary of change (s)
	1.0	Original policy document noted.
	2.0	Substantive review of previous policy led by the Head of Research. UK Operations to be brought

		into the policy following organisational change within the Directorate, by March 2018.
	2.1	UK Operations added to the policy.
	3.0	Thresholds for evaluation increased from one point on publishing reports included.
	4.0	Compliance with the Policy and Procedure Framework; 'Social' Research added into Policy title for improved clarity and scope, agreed upon through consultation. Policy Research team responsibilities added.

Appendix: Definitions

Accountability: the responsibility of researchers and users to ensure Evaluation and Social Research is conducted and used ethically and legally.

Commission: to instruct an external organisation or agency to carry out a piece of research or evaluation.

Ethics: norms for conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

Feasibility: the quality of the output being possible and likely to be achieved.

Impartiality: the equal treatment of all participants, groups or stakeholders within the research or evaluation.

Independence: external research or evaluation, for which staff should not be involved or have a vested interest in the intervention being evaluated.

Social Research: the systematic investigation of issues or behaviour relevant to our work in order to collect evidence that supports our teams and the people we serve.

Standard: an accepted, consistent and agreed way of completing a task to ensure best practice.

Transparency: the provision of accessible and timely information to stakeholders and the opening up of organisational procedures, structures and processes to their assessment.