Final Evaluation report

Haven Rescue Home in Kenya



Authors: Kjartan Due Nielsen, Sunna Liv Stefánsdóttir,
Bisharo Ali Hussein, Vigdís Lea Birgisdóttir

2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents **2**
List of Figures **3**
List of Tables **3**
Abbreviations **4**
Executive summary **5**
1 Evaluation framework and approach **9**
1.1 Purpose, objectives, scope and framework of the evaluation 9
1.2 Evaluation organization, approach and methods 11
1.3 Ethical considerations and limitations 13
2 Background context **15**
2.1 Kenya country context 15
2.2 Iceland's international development cooperation policy 18
3 Project description **21**
3.1 The haven rescue home concept 21
3.2 The haven rescue home premises 22
4 Evaluation findings **25**
4.1 Relevance 26
4.1.1 Alignment with Government of Iceland policies, priorities and plans and thematic cross-cutting issues 26
4.1.2 Alignment with Government of Kenya policies and plans 26
4.1.3 Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 28
4.1.4 Alignment with the CSO mission 29
4.1.5 Summary of evaluation assessment of project relevance 30
4.2 Coherence 30
4.2.1 Coherence with local stakeholders and other actors 31
4.2.2 Coherence with other MFA funded projects in Kenya 32
4.2.3 Partnership with MFA 32
4.2.4 Summary of evaluation assessment of project coherence 32
4.3 Efficiency 33
4.3.1 Adaptation to COVID-19 33
4.3.2 Achievement within planned timeframe & budget and with sufficient inputs mobilized 33
4.3.3 Accountability in resource allocation and utilization 36
4.3.4 Summary of evaluation assessment of project efficiency 36
4.4 Effectiveness 37
4.4.1 Intended results 37
4.4.2 Results of workshops and key interviews 37
4.4.3 Achieved outputs in number of admissions to HRH 39
4.4.4 Achieved outcomes and success stories 40
4.4.5 Summary of evaluation assessment of project effectiveness 42
4.5 Sustainability 43
4.5.1 Innovativeness 43
4.5.2 Project ownership of local stakeholders and beneficiaries 43
4.5.3 Project sustainability trajectory 44
4.5.4 Sustainability benefits towards beneficiaries 45
4.5.5 Summary of evaluation assessment of project sustainability 46
4.6 Impact 46
4.6.1 Potential for higher-level long-term effects 46
4.6.2 Summary of evaluation assessment of project impact 46
4.7 Evaluation Summary 47
5 Recommendations **49**

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria 10
Figure 2 The RBM results chain. 11
Figure 3 Bilateral ODA by Sector for Kenya, 2020-2021 average. 16
Figure 4 UN Women gender data gaps and country performance in Kenya vs Africa. 17
Figure 5 Iceland's ODA as a share of GNI, from 2009 to 2023 19
Figure 6 Haven Rescue Home, Nairobi, Kenya 22
Figure 7 Black gate in front of the Haven Rescue Home 23
Figure 8 Anna Þóra Baldursdóttir with several of the young girls and children. 35
Figure 9 Admission and exits of young girls, from HRH. 40
Figure 10 The children playing at Haven Rescue Home. 45

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 UNDP rating system. 25
Table 2 Assessment of project relevance. 30
Table 3 Assessment of project coherence. 32
Table 4 Proposal cost estimation versus final costs. 34
Table 5 Assessment of project efficiency. 36
Table 6 Admissions and exits from HRH. 40
Table 7 Assessment of project effectiveness. 42
Table 8 Assessment of project sustainability. 46
Table 9 Assessment of project impact. 47
Table 10 Summary of evaluation ratings across the different criteria. 47

ABBREVIATIONS

HRH	HAVEN RESCUE HOME CHARITY
CSO	CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION
MFA	ICELAND'S MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
TOR	TERMS OF REFERENCE
KCPE	KENYA CERTIFICATE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION
KCSE	KENYA CERFICICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION
UNDP	UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
SDGS	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
RBM	RESULTS-BASED MANAGEMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Haven Rescue Home (HRH) is an Icelandic civil society organisation (CSO) that was established in 2015 as a charity in Kenya with the primary mission of providing shelter, accommodation, care and protection to teenage mothers and their infants, as well as to pregnant teenagers. HRH has run a home with the same name, for these young mothers, since 2017. The CSO plays a vital role as an Icelandic support network, raising donations, and organizing fundraisers to sustain the mission of HRH. In addition to immediate support, HRH is dedicated to reintegrating the young girls into the education system, thereby challenging cultural norms that often limit women to traditional roles such as homemaking and child-rearing. For many young girls in Kenya, early motherhood has resulted in poverty, due to their inability to complete their education and secure stable employment. HRH collaborates closely with local children's services, and all admissions to the home are facilitated through this partnership. Since its establishment HRH has sheltered 75 pregnant young girls and teenage mothers. The founder of the home is not solely an administrator but a resident, actively engaged in the daily operations of the home. The HRH team comprises a social worker, an assistant psychologist, two teachers, four support staff, a gardener, and a part-time psychologist.

An external evaluation was conducted at HRH, to objectively assess the results from Iceland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) efforts in supporting the CSO in Kenya. The project implementation period under evaluation is from the beginning of 2021 until the end of 2023 with the evaluation field work taking place in October 2023. The assignment is carried out by a project team from the engineering consultancy company Verkís and a local subcontractor with experience in humanitarian and developmental projects. This report presents the findings of the evaluation and is commissioned by the MFA.

Evaluation conclusions

The findings are structured on the evaluation questions in the Terms of reference (ToR) that are based on the six OECD-DAC criteria for evaluation, in addition to three thematic criteria from the MFA. To give rating for the evaluation of the performance of different criteria, a rating system is used, ranging from Highly Unsatisfactory (HU) to Highly Satisfactory (HS), with ratings: Satisfactory (S), Adequate (S) and Unsatisfactory (U) in between.

Project Relevance was, according to the evaluators, in compliance with all factors and most beyond original scope of expectations, with an overall assessment of **Highly Satisfactory**. HRH is in clear alignment with relevant policy frameworks and plans, the Constitution of Kenya and the Government of Kenya plans and policies, intended SDGs and the CSO mission. HRH exceeds expectations through its multidimensional effects and expected alignment with SDGs.

Project Coherence was, according to the evaluators, in compliance and in line or mostly in line with the original scope of expectation, with an overall assessment of **Adequate to Satisfactory**. HRH is in satisfactory alignment with an official stakeholder partner that fits the aims of HRH and gives valuable and suitable partnership cross-benefits. The coherence with other MFA funded projects was evaluated to be adequate, as the collaboration is not driven by HRH.

Project Efficiency was, according to the evaluators, in compliance with the most important factors, despite weakness in some parts, with an overall assessment of **Satisfactory**. The project was greatly affected by COVID-19, but slowly resumed to full capacity in the first year under assessment (2021). HRH effectively adapted to difficult situations that affected unsatisfactory compliance to planned timeframe and budget with the ability to secure additional co-funding. Continuous funding to sustain day-to-day operations is also important and considered for the evaluation. Accountability in resource allocation and utilization was evaluated to be satisfactory, with HRH's simple and transparent management structure.

Project Effectiveness was, according to the evaluators, in compliance with all factors and some beyond original scope of expectation, with an overall assessment of **Satisfactory**. Achieved outputs are evaluated to be satisfactory with an evident trust between HRH and the social services, and the achieved outcomes are apparent through the short to mid-term impact and success stories and evaluated to be highly satisfactory.

Project Sustainability was, according to the evaluators, in compliance and mostly in line with scope of expectation, despite weakness in some parts, with an overall assessment of **Adequate**. There are many similar initiatives, but HRH does have a different approach compared to the norm which gives certain innovativeness. The benefits of the project can be seen through the short to medium-term impact the home has already had on the lives of these young girls and their children and although the founder of HRH has some positive ideas on how to develop the HRH project, the sustainability trajectory is currently lacking. Currently there is no ownership from local stakeholders outside of HRH, but ownership commitment is given through welcoming input from both beneficiaries and staff members.

The evaluation of the **Project Impact** was non-applicable due to the limited time in which the HRH development efforts have been ongoing.

Recommendations

To the Haven Rescue Home:

- To establish communication between homes in the region to facilitate mutual learning and support. There are several homes in Kenya with comparable goals, some with different approaches, while others may encounter challenges like those faced by HRH.
- Based on the workshops with the girls, their concerns should be evaluated and addressed as is possible.

- To write a logical framework (logframe) for HRH, a matrix designed to highlight the objectives, outputs and outcomes for the project and the means to measure how they will be evaluated or measured. It helps to focus the main areas of the project.
- It is highly recommended to provide outcome-based statistical information to identify medium- and long-term effects. Statistical outcome-based information is crucial to evaluate effectiveness and could be beneficial when trying to access donor funding. This information can easily be accessed through simple surveys, demonstrating differences in answers from the initiating phase and at the project's end, when the girls leave the home. These surveys could include questions regarding their mental health and general well-being, whether they finished their studies and if they have or are pursuing higher education, if they are business owners and their employment status. These surveys could, for example, be given through shared groups on social media. This information could demonstrate how HRH is affecting the lives of young girls and pregnant teenagers receiving support from the home.
- Decide how the project sustainability trajectory should be and follow through. This could be through suggested greater self-sufficiency with cultivation of the purchased land and being aware of outside policy changes towards children's homes and finding the right mitigation approach for sustainability. Also importantly, by having in mind how the founder, who the project greatly relies on, can be replaced in case of need – to ensure the continuity of the project.

To Iceland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs:

The only recommendation for the MFA is regarding the application process for the CSO grant applications and support during the project duration. Is it possible to simplify the application process for CSOs that are first time applicants, by providing clearer guidance such as additional explanations or presentations. Also aiding successful applicants throughout the project, as well as periodic check-ins to determine if further assistance is required.


3rd WORLD MARCH
FOR PEACE AND NONVIOLENCE

1 EVALUATION FRAMEWORK AND APPROACH

Haven Rescue Home (HRH) is an Icelandic civil society organisation (CSO) that was established in 2015 as a charity in Kenya with the primary mission of providing shelter, accommodation, care and protection to teenage mothers and their infants, as well as to pregnant teenagers. An **external evaluation was conducted of the Haven Rescue Home**, to objectively assess the results from **Iceland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) efforts in supporting the CSO in Kenya**. The project implementation period under evaluation is **from 2021 to 2023** with the evaluation field work taking place in October 2023. The assignment is carried out by a project team from the engineering consultancy company Verkís and a local subcontractor with experience in humanitarian and developmental projects. This report presents the findings of the evaluation and is commissioned by the MFA.

1.1 PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND FRAMEWORK OF THE EVALUATION

The **purpose of the evaluation is primarily to assess, to learn and to improve**. It is meant to provide thoughtful independent analysis of progress made, current status of the project and use findings, lessons learned and recommendations to strengthen implementation efforts, as well as providing assessment for future similar interventions and replication. The objectives are to identify potential strengths and weaknesses of the project; to ascertain the extent to which the stated objectives and outputs have been achieved; to determine if operations are transparent and in line with good practices; and to provide evidence-based advice on how best to proceed, through re-alignment and/or consolidating gains in the current implementation strategy. Stakeholders were various people connected to HRH, both representatives and past and current project beneficiaries. MFA's support requires the project to adhere to the primary goal of Iceland's policy in development cooperation which is to reduce poverty and hunger and promote general well-being based on human rights, gender equality and sustainable development.

The intended evaluation scope was for the timeframe from the beginning of 2021 to the end of year 2022. However, as the evaluation took place at the end of year 2023 the evaluation team determined to include 2023 in the evaluation. This offered a more comprehensive insight into the operations and its development since the outset of HRH's grant application to MFA in 2021. This will be the first external evaluation of HRH. The **Terms of Reference (ToR) for the assignment establishes the overall framework for the evaluation**, its participatory approach, suggested methodologies, deliverables, and timeline. The evaluation has been undertaken in accordance with the specifications of the ToR, as well as adhering to Iceland's evaluation policy for international development cooperation[1] and the OECD-DAC quality standards[2] and evaluation criteria[3], as appropriate. The ToR establishes a set of **evaluation questions that form the framework for the research and analysis**

[1] Iceland's Evaluation policy in international development cooperation for 2020-2030
[2] OECD-DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluations
[3] OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria

undertaken and presented in this report. Those questions are detailed in the chapter presenting the findings and are **based on the six OECD-DAC criteria for evaluation** (Figure 11). The MFA added three additional criteria in the ToR and the evaluation team then also added additional questions when relevant.



Figure 1 *OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria*

The criteria used in the evaluation:

Relevance assesses to what extent the project has been relevant in development context for the needs, policies and priorities of the Government of Kenya and Iceland and its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Coherence assesses how well the project fits with other development efforts in the areas where the project is active and with other Icelandic funded projects in Kenya, whether there are duplications of efforts and if synergies are maximized.

Efficiency assesses how efficiently the project resources have been used and the extent to which the project delivers results in an economic and timely way.

Effectiveness assesses the extent to which the project has achieved its objectives and intended results (outputs and outcomes).

Sustainability explores to what extent are the benefits of the project likely to continue and be maintained if donor funding for the project would been withdrawn or the project would end.

Impact explores whether the project has generated or is expected to generate significant higher-level and long-term effects (positive or negative, intended or not) for stakeholders, beneficiaries, and the community.

The **three criteria from the MFA** assess the thematic cross-cutting issues of gender equality, human rights, and the environmental considerations in addition to implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and innovation.

In the development context it is customary to use a **results-based management (RBM) framework**. RBM is a life-cycle approach to management that integrates strategy, people, resources, processes, and measurements **to improve decision making, transparency, and accountability**. The approach focuses on achieving outcomes, implementing performance measurement, learning, and adapting, as well as reporting performance Figure 22 displays such a framework. When assessing different criteria in the findings chapter, the RBM model was considered.

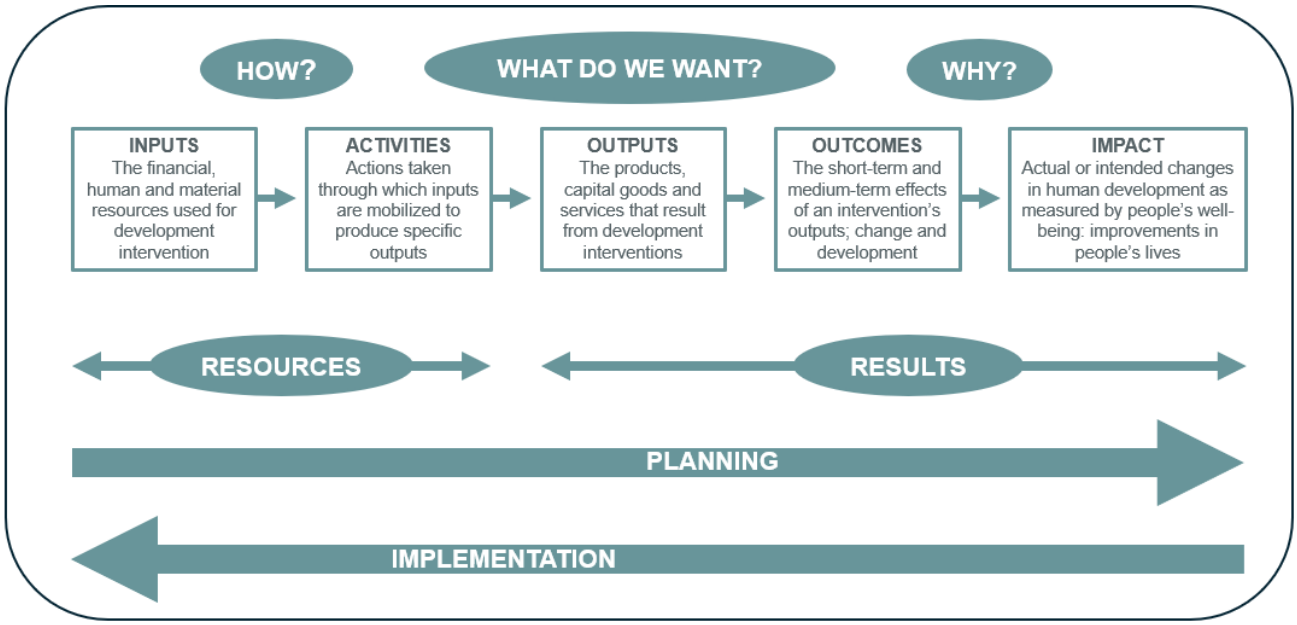


Figure 2 *The RBM results chain[4].*

1.2 EVALUATION ORGANIZATION, APPROACH AND METHODS

The evaluation team comprised of employees from the engineering consultancy company Verkís and a local subcontractor in Kenya. Leading the team was *Kjartan Due Nielsen*, innovation manager at Verkís with a background in environmental engineering, innovation, business development and project management and with previous involvement in global NGO/CSO work. Other members of the Verkís team were *Vigdís Lea Birgisdóttir*, project manager with background in sociology, project management, safety analysis and audits and *Sunna Liv Stefánsdóttir*, chemical engineer with background in diverse innovation projects. The local subcontractor was *Bisharo Ali Hussein*, policy, monitoring and evaluation manager with background in humanitarian and developmental projects. The field work was accomplished by *Kjartan* and *Bisharo*. The evaluation team recognizes the **importance of a participatory and consultative process and therefore the general approach was to consider the evaluation as a cooperation**, for the benefit of the beneficiary, the donor and the evaluators.

The evaluation of HRH was **part of a bigger evaluation plan by the MFA** to evaluate three different CSOs in Kenya that have received funding from MFA in recent years, and to cluster the field work of

[4] Development blog: Marion is thinking

those separate evaluations in one trip to obtain efficiencies. **The overall fieldtrip in Kenya to visit and evaluate the three different CSOs took place from October 13th to 20th.**

In essence, only one day was used for the evaluation of HRH and during the field work the evaluators visited the HRH home, conducted a workshop and visited the local social services with *Anna Þóra Baldursdóttir*, the founder and leading person of the Haven Rescue Home. However, two workshops with former beneficiaries (not living in HRH anymore) were set up by *Bisharo* prior to the field trip.

The evaluation **combined the field work site visits with desktop review and debriefing meetings**. The evaluators applied analysis with project beneficiaries and key actors in the project implementation process, together with mixed methods for data research. By **using multiple methods and triangulating data from different sources**, findings will provide more relevant and reliable answers to the evaluation questions. To lay the groundwork for the methodological approach and means of data collection, an evaluation matrix was developed before the field work and reviewed and approved by the MFA. Part of the planning was also to assess the risk (risk matrix), stakeholder mapping, scheduling the field work agenda and planning of the assignment in general, and was presented in an inception report.

The evaluation draws on a range of data sources e.g. the MFA, HRH, project beneficiaries and stakeholder partners and quantitative and qualitative data collection methods such as:

Documentation review. Grant applications, project and action plans as well as annual implementation reviews and project monitoring and evaluation reports. Consolidation of secondary data. Analysis of routine data and statistics generated by HRH and stakeholder partners.

Key informant interviews. With representative of the local office of the social services in Kenya working with HRH and with key personnel at HRH.

Focus group discussions. During the field work, the team held workshops with the beneficiaries of HRH. Workshops were conducted with girls who had previously stayed at the rescue home, those who received support outside the shelter at different life stages, and current residents.

Other data collection. Visual evidence was collected as needed and if possible, i.e. taking pictures during field work; sometimes pictures say more than words. Also, observations, participatory or non-participatory were conducted.

The field work enabled the evaluators to have on-site visits, conduct detailed data collection research and observational reviews and to meet project beneficiaries, key actors in the project implementation process and other stakeholders. When conducting focus group discussions with the beneficiaries of HRH and other staff of HRH, *Anna* was not present. When conducting the focus group discussions with the current residents, *Kjartan* started with the group but then *Bisharo* offered to continue on individual basis, so the girls could feel more at ease if needed. The evaluators had prepared questionnaires for the meetings but adopted the approach best suited in each case, dropping, adjusting or adding questions as needed to get the best insight into the project.

1.3 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with the ethical considerations set out in the ToR and in Iceland's policy for evaluations, as well as Verkís's own guidelines and code of conduct. The process including the collection of information and engagement with participants was governed by these ethical principles:

Anonymity and confidentiality: Informed consent is ensured. Personal information and data of the participants in the evaluation is protected and kept confidential. The rights of those who provide information must be respected, ensuring their anonymity and confidentiality.

Sensitivity to cultural and contextual differences: The evaluation methods are adapted to ensure they are culturally sensitive and avoid imposing the researchers' values or biases on the participants.

Human rights principles and participatory methodology: Ensuring non-discrimination and involving as possible the affected individuals and communities, ensuring their participation, empowerment, and ownership of the evaluation process.

Gender and equality considerations: Assessment of whether the intervention has promoted gender equal rights and opportunities for all individuals, including marginalised and vulnerable groups.

Do no harm: The tasks in this evaluation were conducted in a safe and respectful manner, without causing any harm or re-traumatization. The team aimed to minimize any potential harm or negative consequences to participants during the evaluation process.

Additional principles are set forth in the ToR: Accountability, integrity, independence, incidents, validation of information and intellectual property.

Limitations for the evaluation were mainly twofold, data-related shortcomings and time, which are both well-known restrictions of development evaluations. Trying to mitigate partial data shortage during the intensive field work the evaluation team collected relevant data after the site visit, i.e. survey data sheets and follow up interviews. The condensed schedule of the field work, with two other CSOs being evaluated during the same field trip, may have impacted the possible depth of the evaluation.



2 BACKGROUND CONTEXT

2.1 KENYA COUNTRY CONTEXT

Kenya, located in East Africa, boasts a diverse landscape that includes coastal plains, the Great Rift Valley, and highland plateaus. Covering an area of 580.000 km^2, it is bordered by the Indian Ocean to the southeast, Tanzania to the south, Uganda to the west, South Sudan to the northwest, Ethiopia to the north, and Somalia to the east. With a population exceeding 50 million people, Kenya is a melting pot of ethnicities, including the Kikuyu, Luo, Luhya, Maasai, and many others, contributing to a rich cultural tapestry. Kenya is a presidential representative democratic republic, with the President serving as both the head of state and head of government. The country has a multi-party system, with the National Assembly and Senate serving as the legislative branch of government. The government is divided into national and 47 county governments.

The Republic of Kenya is vast geographically with a diverse socio economic and cultural landscape. Kenya has experienced notable growth, driven by sectors such as agriculture, services, and technology. Nairobi, the capital, has emerged as a regional hub for finance and technology but economic disparities persist, with efforts directed towards inclusive growth and sustainable development. The country has also faced social challenges, including issues related to healthcare, poverty, and gender equality. Initiatives are ongoing to address these concerns and promote social development. Kenya has a vibrant cultural scene, with traditional dances, music, and festivals reflecting the nation's diversity. The country's environment is characterized by a mix of ecosystems, from savannahs and forests to arid regions. Kenya is renowned for its biodiversity, hosting iconic wildlife in national parks and reserves, including the Maasai Mara and Amboseli. However, environmental challenges such as deforestation and wildlife conservation persist. Religion plays a significant role in the lives of Kenyans, with the majority of the population practicing Christianity. Religious leaders hold great influence and are actively involved in local and national political and development initiatives. Religious leaders are perceived as credible voices when it comes to shaping public opinion on education, poverty alleviation, gender equality, and sustainable development. Collaborative efforts between religious leaders, government institutions, and civil society organizations have been instrumental in addressing pressing socio-economic issues. Kenya's geographical diversity, cultural richness, educational developments, and economic progress contribute to its dynamic identity on the African continent.

In Nairobi and most regions of the country, **there are several challenges, particularly for low-income communities in urban slums and rural communities**. These challenges include gender inequalities, human rights violations, conflict, poor public service delivery and extreme poverty. Poverty remains a pressing issue in Kenya. Limited economic opportunities, inadequate access to basic services, and a lack of infrastructure perpetuate the cycle of poverty. Efforts are being made to promote sustainable development, with a focus on creating job opportunities, improving infrastructure, and providing essential services like healthcare and clean water.

Kenya's education system is ranked 7th in Africa with 54.4 points with a 78.7% literacy rate, according to Business Insider Africa[5]. According to the 2021 edition of the World Education Forum, Kenya's education system is the strongest on the African continent. In terms of education, Kenya has made strides with a system that includes early childhood education and then follows an 8-4-4 structure, comprising eight years of primary education, four years of secondary education, and four years of tertiary education. Primary education is compulsory and typically begins at around age six and includes both public and private schools. While public schools are more prevalent and cater to the majority of students, private schools offer alternative options, often with different educational philosophies or approaches. The curriculum covers a wide range of subjects, including languages (English and Kiswahili), mathematics, science, social studies, religious education, creative arts, physical education, and life skills. The Government of Kenya has implemented various initiatives to improve the quality of primary education, including curriculum reforms, teacher training programs, infrastructure development projects, and efforts to enhance educational equity and inclusivity. The introduction of the competency-based curriculum (CBC) aims to equip learners with practical skills. The primary education system is characterized by standardized examinations administered by the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC). The Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) is the primary examination taken at the end of the eighth year of primary education. Performance in the KCPE examination determines placement in secondary schools. The secondary education system is organized into two phases of two years each. At the end of the fourth year, students take the KNEC exams, which lead to the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). The purpose of this examination is to apply for university admissions and training at other institutions of higher education in the fields of technology.

Efforts have been made to increase access to primary education in Kenya, resulting in a significant improvement in enrolment rates over the years. Free primary education was introduced in 2003 to remove financial barriers and increase access to education for all children. The quality of education in a country is closely linked to its economic status and overall well-being, with marginalized poor rural communities falling behind the main cities and more populous areas. The education system faces several challenges including underfinancing of the public education system leaving many young people behind. **Overall, while significant progress has been made in expanding access to education, ongoing efforts are needed** to address challenges related to inadequate infrastructure, shortage of qualified teachers, overcrowded classrooms and social cultural norms that prevent many children, especially girls, from acquiring education. In Kenya, the **education sector is granted 5% of the total bilateral ODA support** from donor countries according to statistics from OECD[6], see figure 3.

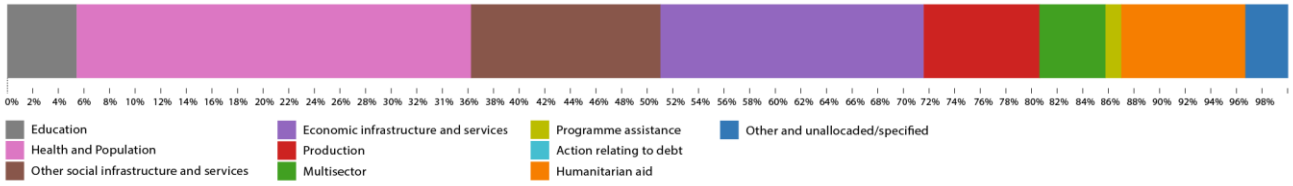


Figure 3 *Bilateral ODA by Sector for Kenya, 2020-2021 average.*

[5] Top 10 countries with the best education system in Africa - Business Insider Africa
[6] Aid at a glance, charts - OECD

Gender equality is a crucial aspect of sustainable development, and Kenya has made commendable progress in this regard, as can be seen in figure 4 showing comparison of the gender data gaps and country performance in Kenya versus the average region score for Africa[7]. However, challenges persist, primarily due to cultural norms and societal expectations. Cultural norms and social expectations often prioritize boys' education over girls', leading to higher dropout rates among female students. In many communities, girls are expected to prioritize household duties and early marriage over education, limiting their potential and perpetuating gender inequality.

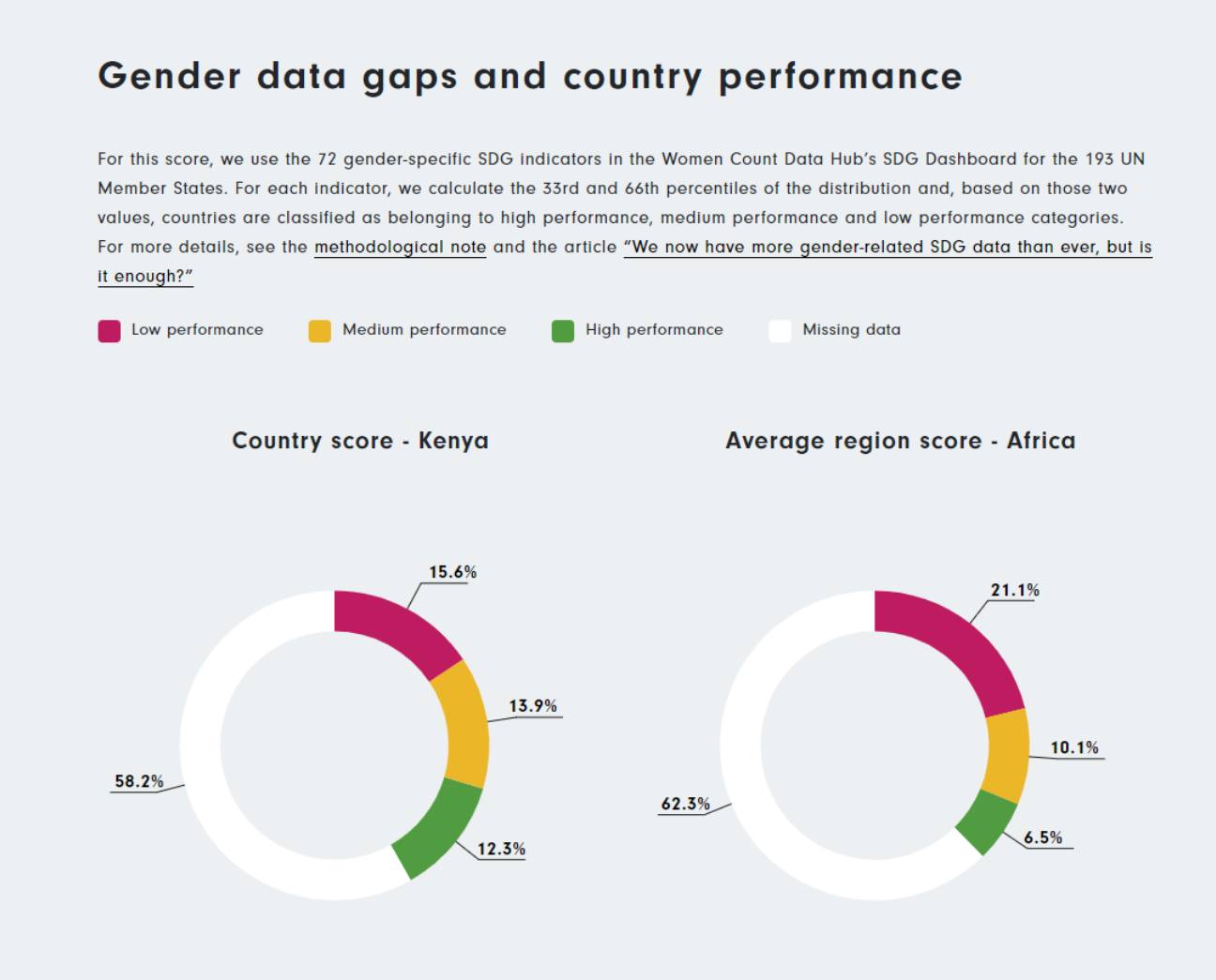


Figure 4 *UN Women gender data gaps and country performance in Kenya vs Africa.*

Teenage pregnancy in Kenya is becoming an alarming issue, prompting the government and development agencies to invest resources to revert the situation. In 2022, Kenya recorded 15% teenage pregnancy rate, driven by challenges such as low education and poverty. According to reports, four out of ten teenage girls between the ages 15 to 19 years that lacked education were pregnant, compared to the 5% with more than secondary education. Additionally, 21% aged 15 to 19 in lower wealth quantile were pregnant compared to 8% in the highest wealth quantile (UNFPA Kenya report, Jan. 2023, KDHS 2022 report).

[7] UN Women. The Women Count Data Hub

There have been widespread concerns about the exploitation of children in Kenya's orphanages and children's homes and Kenya has planned to phase out privately owned children's homes and orphanages since the 2022 Children's Act was passed. The law recommended placing children without families in alternative care such as guardianship, foster care placement and adoption to curb the abuse and trafficking of children[8]. The 10-year National Care Reform Strategy plans to phase out children's homes and orphanages with the goal of having children back in families and under community-based care. **Currently there are 45.000-50.000 children living in about 855 private charitable children's institutions and others living in government-run institutions**[9].

In 2009, the Federation of Women Lawyers - Kenya and the Centre for Reproductive Rights- USA filed a complaint with the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights concerning systematic violation of women's reproductive health rights in Kenyan health facilities. This prompted the Commission to launch a comprehensive inquiry into the extent of violations of reproductive health rights in Kenya. This was in line with its mandate, to conduct investigations into any complaint on the violation of human rights in the country. The aim of the inquiry was to assess the scale and nature of violations of sexual and reproductive health rights, as well as recommend appropriate remedies.

2.2 ICELAND'S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION POLICY

MFA's cooperation with CSOs in international development cooperation is guided by Iceland's policy for international development cooperation[10] and the Civil Society Organization Cooperation Strategy[11] to ensure efficient and effective collaboration, and by the rules of the Development Cooperation Fund[12] and rules on funding to CSOs in development cooperation[13]. The policy supports the vision of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals[14] (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement[15] and defines CSOs as important partners in development cooperation. It should be noted that a new cooperation policy for 2024-2028 was adopted by the Icelandic Parliament at the end of December 2023. However, as the evaluation scope is until 2023, it adheres to the previous policy.

The **overall goal of Iceland's international development cooperation policy** is “Reducing poverty and hunger and promoting improved livelihoods, underpinned by human rights, gender equality and sustainable development” (in line with SDGs 1 and 2). The policy outlines two main overall aims:

> **The construction of social infrastructure and peace efforts** via enhancement of basic services and strengthening of institutions in order to improve living standards and increase opportunities for those who live in poverty and inequality (cf. SDGs no. 3, 4, 5, 6 and 16).
>
> **The protection of the earth and sustainable use of natural resources** via increasing the resilience of societies and enhancing economic growth on the basis of equality and sustainable use of natural resources, in addition to taking measures against climate change (cf. SDGs no. 7, 8, 13, 14 and 15).

[8] BBC: Kenya to ban private children's homes over trafficking fears
[9] Kenya news agency: Plans to phase out children's homes and orphanages start
[10] Iceland's policy for international development cooperation for 2019-2023
[11] Civil Society Organization Cooperation Strategy in international development cooperation
[12] Iceland's Development Cooperation Fund
[13] Rules on funding to CSOs in development cooperation
[14] Iceland's implementation of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development
[15] The Paris Agreement - UN Climate Change

Iceland works together with many different partners for its development efforts and directs its **contributions towards selected partner countries and regional programmes through bilateral cooperation, multilateral organisations, private sector collaboration and cooperation with CSOs**. Iceland conducted an evaluation of its CSO strategy[16] in 2021 and as a result of the evaluation, the MFA adopted in the beginning of the year 2022 framework agreements with four of the largest Icelandic CSOs. The smaller CSOs like the **Haven Rescue Home, have access to annual calls for proposals through the MFA grant scheme for CSOs**.

Iceland contributed 93 million USD to official development assistance (ODA) in 2022, representing **0.34% of gross national income (GNI)**. That is an increase from 2021 when it was 0,28% of GNI and is the highest share of GNI since 2009, see figure 5. Preliminary data for 2023 indicates 0,36% of GNI. Iceland is committed to 0,7% of ODA/GNI as an international commitment and aims to increase its contributions steadily in coming years, reaching 0,48% by 2028 and the 0,7% goal by 2035. **CSOs received approximately 6% of ODA for a total of 4,6 million USD in 2022**, with most of that amount (85%) disbursed through framework agreements.

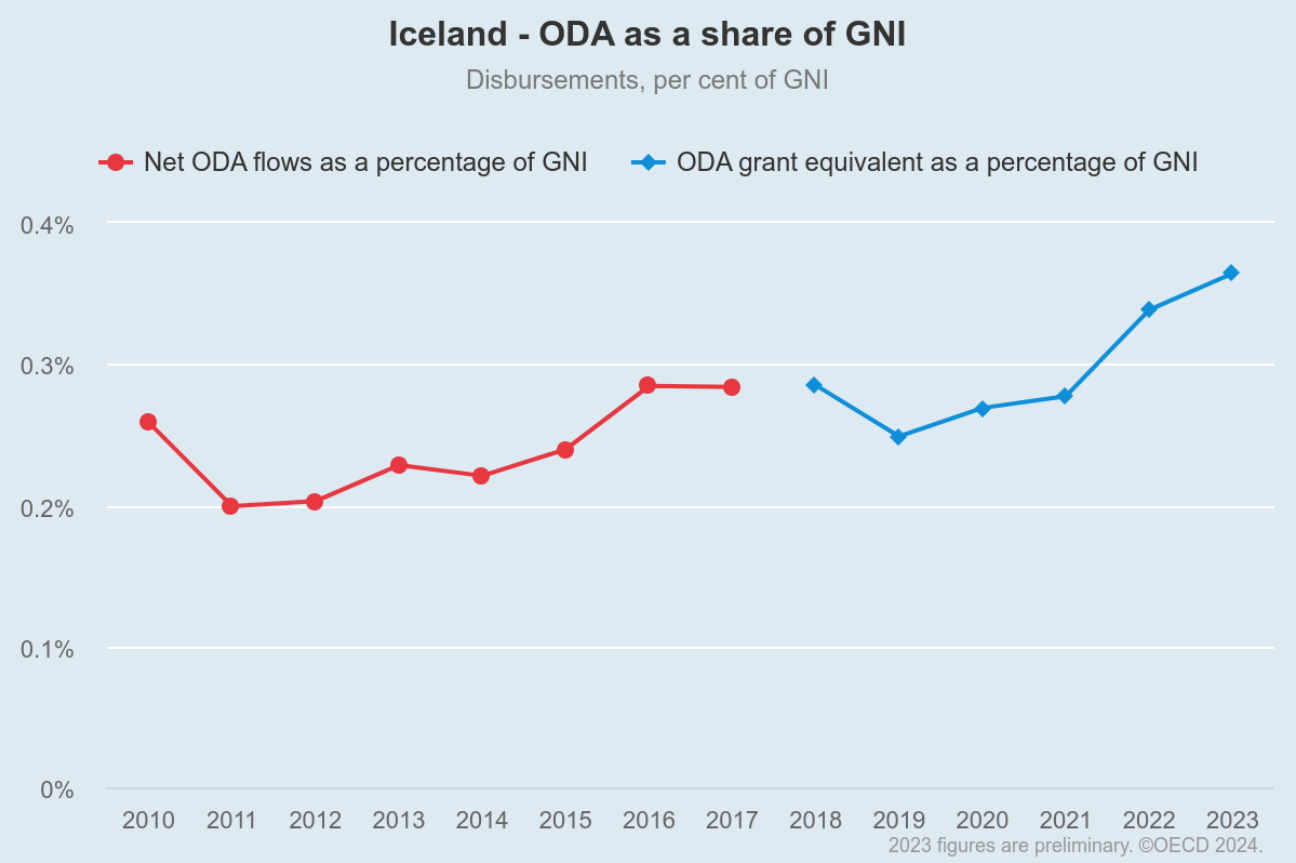


Figure 5 *Iceland's ODA as a share of GNI, from 2009 to 2023*[17]

[16] Evaluation of the Icelandic CSO strategy, 2021
[17] Iceland's Development cooperation profile - OECDiLibrary



3 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 THE HAVEN RESCUE HOME CONCEPT

Haven Rescue Home (HRH) is an Icelandic civil society organisation (CSO) that was established in 2015 as a charity in Kenya with the **primary mission of providing shelter, accommodation, care and protection to teenage mothers and their infants, as well as to pregnant teenagers**[18]. HRH has run a home with the same name, for these young mothers, since 2017. The CSO plays a vital role as an Icelandic support network, raising donations, and organizing fundraisers to sustain the mission of HRH. HRH distinguishes itself from many other children's homes in the area by assisting both the young mothers and their children, i.e. with a kindergarten in the premises, while other children's homes are often overcrowded with abandoned children of young mothers or the children of young mothers are separated from them. Majority of the girls are between the ages of 15 to 17 with some being as young as 12 years old and a few older than 18 years old. These young girls are therefore children themselves, at least legally, until they are 18 years old. HRH is supposed to discharge the girls when they turn 18, but some do not have a safe home to go to and therefore stay at the home until they are up to 21 years old.

The founder *Anna Þóra Baldursdóttir* was inspired to establish the Haven Rescue Home in 2015 after volunteering at a children-home in Kenya. Recognizing the need to address the underlying causes of child abandonment, *Anna* was inspired to create a home that prioritized support and well-being of these vulnerable young girls. HRH is solely operating from its singular house in the suburbs of Nairobi in Kiambu county. The home welcomed its first young resident in May 2017.

Anna Þóra Baldursdóttir:
"I first went to Kenya in 2013 as a volunteer in a home for abandoned infants. I wanted to open a similar home myself, better equipped and with better care for the children. After living in the country for some time, I realized I had to dig deeper and work with the root of the problem. That is, making sure the children are not abandoned in the first place. I then decided to establish a home for girls 18 years and younger who are pregnant or have young children."

Kenya has over 45,000 children confined to children's homes[19], public and private. Admissions to HRH come through local services, and for that reason HRH works closely with those services. Since its inception in 2017, HRH has sheltered 75 girls. In addition to being the administrator, *Anna* is also a full-time resident at the home and therefore is deeply involved in the daily activities of HRH. The team includes a social worker, an assistant psychologist, two teachers, four support staff, a gardener, and a part-time psychologist.

[18] Haven Home: Styrktarfélag HRH
[19] Africa: Kenya | Hope and Homes for Children



Figure 6 *Haven Rescue Home, Nairobi, Kenya*

In addition to providing immediate support, the aim of HRH is to assist the girls so they can attend school and acquire education, thereby challenging cultural norms that often limit women to traditional roles of homemaking and child-rearing. For many young girls in Kenya, early motherhood has resulted in poverty due to their inability to complete education and secure stable employment. They are frequently looked down upon by society for their circumstances, which are, more often than not, the consequence of either being abandoned by a partner or family, or sexual violence. There is a common misconception in many Kenyan societies that once teenagers get pregnant, they should discontinue from school to start families. By enhancing the confidence of the girls and providing them with a second chance to acquire education after giving birth, it increases their likelihood of gaining employment or initiating their own income generating activities thereby reducing poverty.

3.2 THE HAVEN RESCUE HOME PREMISES

The boldly written sign “Haven Rescue Home” on a black gate in front of the home attracts attention when arriving at the house, see figure 7. The house has a front yard, which features a spacious playing ground and a small vegetable garden near the gate as well as banana trees. Near the gate there is a two-story apartment building; where the ground floor apartment is used as a class for the day care children while the top one is used as a guest house. The main house, centrally located on the premises, includes a two-storey apartment. The ground floor has a sitting and dining area, a kitchen and a food storage. The office and the kindergarten classroom are also positioned on this side of the building. The sleeping area for the young girls with children under one year old is upstairs, comprising three small bedrooms with attached toilets and a bathroom. The other girls sleep in a big

bedroom, with a section of the room designed as a clothing storage area. At the rear of the main house, there are two additional bungalow houses with one occupied by *Anna* while the other one is designated for the property caretaker. Within the garden, there is a chicken coop that can accommodate up to 50 chickens, as well as a doghouse.



Figure 7 *Black gate in front of the Haven Rescue Home*


KCW
198Q

4 EVALUATION FINDINGS

The following sections describe the field work visits, and present data analysis and findings based on data collected in the evaluation. The findings are structured on the evaluation questions in the ToR that are based on the six OECD-DAC criteria for evaluation, in addition to three thematic criteria from the MFA. Some additional questions were suggested from the evaluation team, and they are presented in the corresponding subchapters. It should be noted that evaluators may not have been able to fully answer all the evaluation questions in detail due to constraints, such as funding, time, and limited access to data. To give rating to the evaluation performance of the different criteria, a rating system is used, see table 1. The rating system is based on the UNDP rating system[20] and Verkís's internal audits approach. Overall ratings for each of the criteria are summarized in conclusions in the next chapter.

Table 1 *UNDP rating system.*

	Level of ratings	Definition
HS	**Highly Satisfactory**	In compliance with the principles with high standards for performance (succeeded beyond original scope of expectation)
S	**Satisfactory**	In compliance with the principles (in line with original scope of expectation)
A	**Adequate**	In compliance but with some small concerns (mostly in line with the original scope of expectation)
U	**Unsatisfactory**	In compliance but with weakness in some parts (part failure of original scope of expectation)
HU	**Highly Unsatisfactory**	Not in compliance (has failed to meet the original scope of expectation)

[20] UNDP rating system

4.1 RELEVANCE

The relevance dimension addresses the core question of whether the intervention is doing the right things. To what extent has the project been relevant within its development context in addressing the needs, policies and priorities of the Government of Kenya and Iceland and how well does it align with the Sustainable Development Goals?

The associated evaluation questions from ToR are to what extent the objectives of the project align with the (1) Government of Iceland policies, priorities and plans, (2) Government of Kenya (including local government/county) plans, (3) SDGs, and (4) the mission of the CSO?

The terms of reference are also stipulated to address Iceland's cross-cutting issues of gender equality, human rights and the environment in development initiatives, and to what extent they have been addressed in the project.

4.1.1 ALIGNMENT WITH GOVERNMENT OF ICELAND POLICIES, PRIORITIES AND PLANS AND THEMATIC CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The objectives of HRH are clearly in line with Iceland's development cooperation policies and strategies (overview in chapter 2.2). The Government of Iceland's priorities to address poverty, achieve human rights, gender equality and sustainable development are met through the HRH project and the evaluation team has also verified that the HRH project does consider the cross-cutting issues of gender, human rights and the environment. For the Haven Rescue Home, the focus is on providing shelter, accommodation, care and protection to teenage mothers with their children and pregnant teenagers. Additionally, HRH supports these young mothers in accessing education, thereby enhancing their future employment prospects. HRH's role in supporting pregnant teenagers and young girls with children, is acknowledged by Kenya's children services. **The recognition underscores HRH's significant contribution to advancing human rights**, particularly among vulnerable populations in Kenya. The collaboration with children services not only reinforces the alignment with the MFA's objectives but also contributes to the broader efforts to promote human rights and sustainable development. Regarding environmental sustainability, the home cultivates different types of crops and animals on the property.

4.1.2 ALIGNMENT WITH GOVERNMENT OF KENYA POLICIES AND PLANS

The primary focus of the Haven Rescue Home (HRH) is to create safer homes for adolescent girls aged 11 to 17. Therefore, **the work of the home addresses critical human rights issues**. When a minor is impregnated, it threatens their right to “access basic education” as provided under Constitution of Kenya (2010). **Sexual and reproductive health is a fundamental human right** as well as human development issue that states are obliged to uphold. This right is enshrined in various international and regional human rights instruments, as well as national laws and policies. Kenya, as a state party to various international and regional human rights instruments, is committed to guarantee the right to sexual and reproductive health.

Furthermore, the Constitution of Kenya guarantees the **right to health care, including reproductive health**. It further stipulates that no one shall be denied emergency medical treatment and mandates

the State to provide appropriate social security to individuals who are unable to support themselves and their dependents. Article 43(1) (a), (2) and (3) and Article 53 recognizes the right of children to be protected from abuse, neglect and harmful cultural practices. The government has also developed numerous policies and established various institutions dedicated to promoting and protecting the sexual and reproductive health rights of Kenyans. Consequently, Kenya is obligated to work towards the fulfilment of this right in accordance with these international and domestic standards. Despite these extensive efforts, violations of sexual and reproductive health rights remain widespread throughout the country. Other policies which exist include:

1. The 2003 adolescent reproductive health and development policy.
2. The contraceptive policy and strategy 2002-2006.
3. The national reproductive health policy enhancing reproductive health status for all Kenyans October 2007.
4. National Road map for accelerating the attainment for MGDs related to maternal and newborn health in Kenya August 2010.

The Constitution of Kenya[21] and the Government of Kenya is committed to provide quality education, training, science, and technology to all Kenyans. Article 43 (f) and 53 (i) of the Constitution provide for the right to education and the right to free and compulsory basic education for all. In addition to fulfilling these education rights, the Government of Kenya developed the National Education sector strategic plan for 2018-2022[22] that spells out policy priorities, programmes and strategies for the sector. Other policies which exist include:

Basic Education Act of 2013. Provides the legal framework for the provision of basic education in Kenya. It emphasizes the right to free and compulsory basic education and sets out the structure of the education system.

Free primary education. The Government of Kenya has a policy of providing free and compulsory primary education for all Kenyan children. This policy aims to ensure that financial barriers do not hinder access to basic education; the focus is on allocation of resources to improve infrastructure and teachers' employment.

In connection with Kenya's long-term national planning strategy, officially known as Kenya Vision 2030[23] HRH aligns with their social strategy that aims to invest in the people of Kenya. The alignment is especially with the policy for Gender, Youth and Vulnerable Groups (target 5.6) with the aim of equality regardless of gender and improving livelihoods for vulnerable groups and the policy regarding Equity and Poverty Elimination (target 5.7), by reducing people living in poverty[24]. In addition, HRH also aligns with policy on Education and Training (target 5.1) where the overall goal is to reduce illiteracy by increasing access to education, improving transition rate from primary to secondary schools and raising the quality and relevance of education and policy regarding Enhanced Equity and Wealth Creation Opportunities for the Poor (target 3.3) with the aim of minimizing poverty and aiding vulnerable groups.

[21] The Constitution of Kenya
[22] National Education Sector Strategic Plan for 2018-2022 by the Government of Kenya
[23] Kenya Vision by the Government of Kenya
[24] Kenya Vision 2030

New government reform called the **National Care Reform Strategy for Children** has come into effect and will be transitioning within the next 10 years. The main objective of the reform is to reduce reliance on institutional care, prevent separation of children, and strengthen family and community-based care[25]. The reform is in alignment with the Constitution, the Children Act, 2022 and the Bottom-Up Agenda[26]. Direct quote from the National Care Reform Strategy for Children in Kenya can be seen below[27].

> "The strategy, developed with support of UNICEF and a multi sectoral care reform core team, under the leadership of the National Council for Children's Services, seeks to guide national steps towards prevention and family strengthening, robust alternative family care, and tracing, reintegration and transitioning from institutional care to family and community-based care for all children in need of care and protection. It sets out areas of focus for various agencies in the sector for the next ten years and calls for collaborative effort and active coordination to achieve collective impact approach."

When fully implemented **the reform will have a direct impact on the HRH**, which will need to align and adjust to the reform and possibly explore different approaches to their core strategy and mission statement. It appears though as if **the reform is experiencing a slow initiation and has not yet impacted HRH nor will in the near future**.

4.1.3 ALIGNMENT WITH THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

HRH is committed to addressing and contributing to various SDGs, as evident from their application and substantiated by data and interviews. HRH aligns with five SDGs (1) No poverty, (2) Zero hunger, (3) Good health and well-being, (4) Quality education and (5) Gender equality. The SDGs that HRH aligns with are all connected in one way or another.

- **No Poverty.** By focusing on creating a safe space for young mothers and childbearing adolescent girls, HRH aims to break the cycle of poverty by providing educational opportunities and support for employment or income-generating activities.
- **Zero Hunger.** HRH contributes to addressing hunger indirectly by empowering young mothers and adolescent girls, thereby improving their ability to provide for themselves and their children.
- **Good Health and Well-being.** The primary goal of HRH is to ensure the well-being of young mothers and childbearing adolescent girls by creating a safe and supportive environment, which includes access to health services.
- **Quality Education.** HRH supports education by providing a second chance for girls to acquire education after giving birth, challenging the societal misconception that teenage pregnancy should lead to discontinuation of education.
- **Gender Equality.** The project actively works towards gender equality by empowering young mothers and adolescent girls, providing them with education and opportunities that may have been denied due to societal norms surrounding teenage pregnancy.

[25] Africa: Kenya | Hope and Homes for Children
[26] Kenya Celebrates Rapid Progress in National Care Reform Strategy for Children | Social Protection
[27] National Care Reform Strategy for Children in Kenya 2022-2032

The interconnectedness of these goals within the HRH project is evident. For instance, providing education to young mothers not only contributes to SDG 4, but has additionally a ripple effect on poverty reduction (SDG 1), health improvement (SDG 3), and gender equality (SDG 5). The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number four on Quality Education seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable education while promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, including vulnerable populations, people with disability, indigenous people, and refugee children.

Furthermore, the future plans of HRH indicate a commitment to align with additional SDGs, namely:

- **Clean Water and Sanitation.** HRH plans to address this goal by establishing a borehole on the acquired land, contributing to improved access to clean water.
- **Affordable and Clean Energy.** The project's intention to install solar cells on the purchased land aligns with the goal of ensuring affordable and clean energy sources.

These future initiatives demonstrate HRH's proactive approach in expanding its impact across a broader spectrum of sustainable development objectives. By addressing clean water, sanitation, and clean energy, HRH aims to contribute to environmental sustainability while continuing to empower and uplift the communities it serves.

4.1.4 ALIGNMENT WITH THE CSO MISSION

According to the **mission and policy statement for the Haven Rescue Home**, the aim is to educate young girls about topics related to childbirth, as well as providing parenting classes. By providing **a safe and nurturing home** for these young girls and their children, they are given the opportunity of a better life for them and their children. The ultimate aim for the home, is to assist the girls to meet their full potential and eventually become a valuable member of the community. The main objectives of HRH were listed with the mission and policy statement, as can be seen below. The main goal of HRH is to provide shelter, accommodation, care and protection to teenage mothers with their young children and pregnant teenagers, as well as assisting these young mothers with going back to school and therefore strengthen their potential for a future in the job market, thus aligning with the CSO mission.

The objectives of the Haven Rescue Home:

- Rescue teenage girls, pregnant or with young children. Many of whom have lived in a harsh environment.
- Provide a safe space for young mothers and their children, in a constructive environment.
- Ensure they receive proper medical attention, as well as balanced diet.
- Provide counselling services.
- Workshops for the young girls, such as crocheting, crafts, nutrition knowledge, health and cooking.

4.1.5 SUMMARY OF EVALUATION ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT RELEVANCE

Overall, the evaluation team assesses the HRH project alignment with relevance to be highly satisfactory. See further breakdown in table 2.

Table 2 *Assessment of project relevance.*

Assessment of project relevance		
Respective factors	**Assessment**	**Rating**
Alignment with Government of Iceland policies, priorities and plans and cross-cutting issues	Clear alignment to relevant policy frameworks and plans, and exceeds expectations through its multidimensional effects	Highly Satisfactory
Alignment with Government of Kenya policies and plans	Clear alignment with different policies and plans. New governmental reform, the National Care Reform Strategy for Children, will likely affect HRH in the future	Satisfactory
Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals	Alignment with intended SDGs and beyond original scope of expectation	Highly Satisfactory
Alignment with the CSO mission	Clear alignment with the CSO mission	Highly Satisfactory
Overall assessment	Compliance with all factors and most beyond original scope of expectation	**Highly Satisfactory**

4.2 COHERENCE

The coherence dimension addresses the core question of how well the intervention does fit. How well does the project fit with other development efforts in the areas where HRH is active and with other Icelandic funded projects in Kenya?

Associated evaluation questions from ToR are: Is the project aligned with stakeholder partners? To what extent are synergies ensured? Do programme activities overlap or duplicate efforts by other donors, government, or community actors in the sector and in each locality? To what extent has the MFA partnership with the HRH been successful and what are the challenges?

Due to time and cost restraints, it was not possible for evaluators to conduct research into developmental efforts by other donors, government, or community actors in the sector and in each locality, nor was it of utmost importance. By examining coherence between HRH and their local stakeholder partners and with other MFA funded projects in Kenya, described in subchapters below, the evaluators addressed the core questions pertaining to coherence. The MFA partnership with HRH is also addressed.

4.2.1 COHERENCE WITH LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS AND OTHER ACTORS

In order to ensure sustainability for HRH, positive communication with the **local social services** is vital. This is because the social services are a key partner and stakeholder since they play the administrative role of selecting and sending clients to HRH. Evaluating the coherence between HRH and the social services, it is apparent to the evaluation team that **the HRH team has built up a good and valuable partnership with their main contacts at the social services that maximise the synergies for both parties**. A key interview was made with *Rachel Karanja*, District children's officer at the National Social Services in Nairobi Kenya, during which *Rachel* spoke highly of HRH. According to the children's services, the home's management has cultivated strong relationships with key stakeholders, including social services, law enforcement officers, the chief, local police and lawyers. The home is commended for its dedication to the welfare of young mothers and their children, according to children services. Its mission extends beyond providing financial support and services, it prevents school dropouts and secures a promising future for the young girls and their children. Occasionally, children's services hold back on sending more girls to HRH in order to avoid overwhelming the home and its founder. **HRH is not merely a rescue home, it represents a community of support**. The strong partnerships forged with social services reflect a shared commitment to uplift and empower the lives of girls in need.

Regarding children's mental health challenges, HRH works with Children department and social services to provide comprehensive support services to the young girls and their children, including access to mental health care and support for their well-being where the beneficiaries receive psychosocial support service, school fees payment, provision of clothes and beddings, training on life skills and business startup support that were very impactful. The experience shows that reaching children through community outreach activities, daycare services, and providing shelter to those who need protection is vital. HRH promoted community-based initiatives that provide children with the necessary resources and information; additionally, it provided comprehensive support services to children, including access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. The young girls receive financial support in order for them to finish high school (from forms 1 to 4).

There are several children homes in the area of HRH with comparable goals and challenges but currently there is a lack of communication between the homes. According to *Anna* most of them have different perspectives and focus than HRH, but one home in particular aligns well with their approach of how to care for the girls. HRH is in contact with this children's home with a possibility of a partnership. Majority of children's homes also focus primarily on basic daily care of children, which makes HRH's difference in approach stand out by addressing the root cause and assisting the young girls at HRH in various ways, i.e. regarding education, essential life skills and by empowering them psychologically and economically. HRH assists both the young mothers and their children, i.e. with a kindergarten in the premises, which is different from many children homes which are often overcrowded with abandoned children of young mothers, or the children of young mothers are separated from them. **This different approach is somewhat innovative compared to the norm and ensures coherent fit of the MFA funding, that HRH is not just duplicating what other CSOs are already doing in the area**. This also seems to be corroborated by the local social services.

4.2.2 COHERENCE WITH OTHER MFA FUNDED PROJECTS IN KENYA

As has been mentioned before, the evaluation of HRH was part of a bigger evaluation plan by the MFA to evaluate three different CSOs in Kenya that have received funding from MFA in recent years. During this field work *Anna* met *Gunnar Stefánsson,* one of the founders and leading persons of the Smiley Charity, and *Ragnar Gunnarsson*, the general manager for the *Icelandic Lutheran Mission.* After the field work and before traveling home, *Gunnar* and **the Icelandic SC team, visited the Haven Rescue Home project and started a SC project there on the spot by donating tablets and welcoming them to the SC family**. Initially the home received access to the system and five tablets but because of huge interest the home has now received 25 tablets, and seven girls have already completed the EIAS project and bought tablets for their ownership. **This successful collaboration has inspired enthusiasm among several girls, motivating them to pursue further education**. Looking ahead, there is an opportunity for HRH to further develop this collaboration and potentially envision HRH as a library in the future. By formalizing HRH as a library and continuing its collaboration with SC, the organization could broaden its impact, provide greater access to digital resources, and foster a positive and supportive learning environment for the girls.

4.2.3 PARTNERSHIP WITH MFA

The **funding provided by the MFA to HRH is crucial for sustaining the project**, but equally important is the recognition and acknowledgment that comes with receiving grants from the MFA. **For HRH there were some challenges in the application process**, as it was found to be complex, and the applicant encountered difficulties and confusion regarding the completion of the required documents, as well as lack of help during the application process. By offering specific assistance to new applicants, the collaboration could be improved greatly.

4.2.4 SUMMARY OF EVALUATION ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT COHERENCE

Overall, the evaluation team assesses the HRH project alignment with coherence to be adequate to satisfactory. See further breakdown in table 3.

Table 3 *Assessment of project coherence.*

Assessment of project coherence		
Respective factors	**Assessment**	**Rating**
Coherence with local stakeholders and other actors	Alignment with an official stakeholder partner that fits the aims of HRH and gives valuable and suitable partnership cross-benefits	Satisfactory
Coherence with other MFA funded projects	The HRH team accepted to come part of the Smiley Charity project, but the collaboration was driven by the SC team	Adequate
Partnership with MFA	N/A	N/A
Overall assessment	Compliance in line or mostly in line with original scope of expectation	**Adequate to Satisfactory**

4.3 EFFICIENCY

The efficiency dimension addresses the core question of how well the project resources have been used. Is the project delivering results in an economic and timely way and are the human and financial resources allocated sufficient and of good quality?

Associated evaluation questions from ToR are: To what extent have outputs/outcomes of the projects been achieved (1) within the planned time frame, (2) within budget and at a lower/higher cost than other similar interventions, (3) with sufficient (in terms of quantity) and adequate (in terms of quality) human/financial and inputs mobilized? Also, have the financial contributions/co-financing by the CSO to the project verifiably been made?

To give further insight on efficiency the evaluation team added the evaluation question: How does the project ensure transparency and accountability in resource allocation and utilization?

The terms of reference are also stipulated to address the implications of COVID-19, how the pandemic or other shocks affected the project and if new needs and challenges associated with shocks have been suitably addressed.

4.3.1 ADAPTATION TO COVID-19

COVID-19 prompted significant adjustments to HRH as the pandemic affected the society as a whole with restrictions imposed and society closing down. HRH did not receive new referrals of young girls from Social Services and schools were closed for long periods. During the COVID-19 pandemic, only 2 members of staff were working at the home to minimize risk of infection. The young girls were encouraged to stay with relatives during the pandemic. During this time, *Anna* went to Iceland with her young child while the two staff members and the social worker, who assisted as needed, provided support to those girls that were at the home. **The evaluation period of HRH project is 2021-2023 when the country had started slowly recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and in January 2021 the home was able to resume slowly to regular course**, due to the vaccinations and reopening of schools.

4.3.2 ACHIEVEMENT WITHIN PLANNED TIMEFRAME & BUDGET AND WITH SUFFICIENT INPUTS MOBILIZED

A grant application was made to the MFA in 2021 aimed at acquiring land, a vehicle, drilling for water and for other essential resources with the aim to achieve greater financial sustainability for the HRH project. This includes acquiring new land for cultivation, installation of a borehole for reliable water source, and the establishment of a sizable aviary for raising Ali birds. The envisioned aviary serves a dual purpose - providing a product that can be sold to generate income and supplying a sustainable source of nutrition for the residents. Consequently, greater sustainability is attained by reducing expenses on grocery shopping. By cultivating land for vegetables, fruits and poultry, it becomes possible to save on food costs and generate additional income by selling surplus produce in the market. A borehole ensures a reliable water supply while reducing water expenses, a vehicle saves both time and effort, and solar panels contribute to electricity savings. A 4 million ISK funding was granted with a 6,8 million ISK amount provided as co-funding. Detailed list of purchases (outputs) is provided in table 4.

The time progress for the main purchases:

A land: In March 2022, a contract for a 2-acre land was signed.

A vehicle: Purchased October 2021 and greatly facilitated the work of HRH.

Water borehole: Drilling for water started in November 2023, pump has yet to be put up.

Table 4 Proposal cost estimation versus final costs.

Transaction:	Estimated cost	Final cost
Purchase of land	6.000.000	12.730.000
Car for the home	1.100.000	1.100.000
Water borehole/ well	1.500.000	1.495.000
Solar cells	400.000	Not done
Chicken farm – for 1500 chickens	1.680.000	Not done
Unforeseen costs	120.000	880.000
Total	**10.800.000**	**16.205.000**

As can be seen in table 4, the final costs increased by 50% from the estimated cost applied for. The cost of the car and the water borehole were on target but the cost for the purchase of land doubled, and some unforeseen costs multiplied (although this was still a relatively low amount). The key reason for the rising cost for the purchasing of the land was that the piece of land first allocated and applied for, turned out to be lacking suitable soil for plant cultivation and thus presented unfavourable conditions for agriculture. It was therefore required to find a better piece of land, which was successful in the end but at a much higher cost. Higher unforeseen costs were mainly due to the purchase of the land. Higher costs meant it was not possible to purchase solar cells and materials for the chicken farm.

One of the challenges faced by HRH in fulfilling the grant proposal stemmed from the unforeseen complication involving an investor who had initially committed to supporting the land purchase redirected his investments elsewhere. *Anna* needed to therefore explore alternative funding sources of 5 million ISK funding from Iceland, majority coming from a company and one individual, and was able to bridge the quite extensive funding gap to purchase the land. Regarding adhering to the planned time frame, because of the unforeseen delays, HRH was late in delivering some of the main outputs of the grant application and therefore the whole project got delayed by more than 2 months. This delayed the subsequent final report to the MFA, although HRH was late to request an extension (six months after the deadline) which was swiftly accepted by the MFA. HRH has expressed a preference for greater engagement from the MFA regarding monitoring the progress of the project from the start, especially in case of first application to the CSO fund. **Even though HRH did not meet the timeline outlined in the grant application to the MFA and went above the estimated budget, HRH found a way to adapt to the situation and impressively secured additional co-funding**, thus ensuring the main outputs of the application were done and fulfilled.

The day-to-day operational expenses of HRH are sustained through the generosity of private donors from Iceland, who provide both monetary donations and thoughtful gifts. HRH receives a monthly total of 350.000 ISK from 140 individuals, and occasionally they receive other private donations. **HRH's ability to secure continuous donor funding underscores the trust and confidence donors have in its financial management and their faith in the HRH project**. The founder strategically utilizes social media, particularly Snapchat, as a dynamic fundraising tool. *Anna* has emphasized the significance of maintaining consistent Snapchat engagement, noting that regular updates, approximately 4-5 times a week, are vital to maintaining a steady inflow of funds. This collective support forms the foundation of HRH's financial stability. In addition, targeted fundraising initiatives are organized for specific needs, such as assisting girls in need of hospital input. A portion of these funds is allocated to provide essential resources, including access to gynaecologist specialists - a service that, while costly, is critical. Currently, the house has a long-term rental agreement spanning five years, providing a stable living arrangement. To enhance self-sufficiency, the residents have established a small vegetable garden and cultivated a banana tree on their premises, allowing them to supplement their sustenance.



Figure 8 *Anna Þóra Baldursdóttir with several of the young girls and children.*

The co-financing by HRH to the project has verifiably been made, based on the final report for the MFA grant, that covers the period being evaluated. The overall grant funding seems to be well used; based on the final grant report and as well on conversations and evaluations during the field work. Verified annual accounts have not been produced since 2021, for the year 2020. It must be

noted though, that full financial review of the project and the grant funding was not done by the evaluation team nor expected by the MFA. Such a review is done on an individual grant application basis when projects are assessed based on final reports and other materials, by the MFA. Rules on funding to CSOs in development cooperation regarding timely delivery of reports have been mostly adhered to, with a granted delay[28].

4.3.3 ACCOUNTABILITY IN RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND UTILIZATION

One of the problems CSOs face in Africa (and in development work in general) is making sure that the money goes to the right place. The fact that *Anna* lives by herself at the HRH home and oversees the daily management as well as the overall financial management of HRH, at same time as being the responsible person on behalf of HRH towards the MFA, ensures commitment and transparency from HRH. **This is key for financial risk management**.

HRH does not have a big management structure and nor does it need one. Besides *Anna*, *Hilda Wairimu Kinyua* is responsible for assisting *Anna* with the daily management, besides being responsible for communication with the social services on behalf of the girls. *Hilda* is also *Anna's* deputy when she is away. **This management setup ensures sufficient and adequate allocation of human and financial resources, keeping the overhead costs low and ensuring community-centric empowerment of local personnel**.

4.3.4 SUMMARY OF EVALUATION ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT EFFICIENCY

Overall, the evaluation team assesses the HRH project alignment with efficiency to be satisfactory. See further breakdown in table 5.

Table 5 *Assessment of project efficiency.*

Assessment of project efficiency		
Respective factors	**Assessment**	**Rating**
Adaptation to COVID-19	HRH was much affected during COVID but slowly resumed to full capacity after the pandemic in 2021, which is also the first year under assessment	Satisfactory
Achievement within planned timeframe and budget and with sufficient inputs mobilized	Despite unsatisfactory compliance regarding planned time frame, budget and verified recent annual accounts, the rating is adequate as HRH found a way to adapt to the situation and impressively secured additional co-funding. Continued donor funding to sustain day-to-day operations is also important	Adequate
Accountability in resource allocation and utilization	Simple, clear and transparent management structure with low overhead cost	Satisfactory
Overall assessment	Compliance with the most important factors, despite weakness in some parts	**Satisfactory**

[28] Stjórnartíðindi, reglur um styrkveitingar utanríkisráðuneytisins til félagasamtaka og fyrirtækja í þróunarsamvinnu

4.4 EFFECTIVENESS

The effectiveness dimension addresses the core question if the project is achieving its objectives. Is the project delivering intended results, in terms of outputs and outcomes? It identifies possible gaps, success factors, and bottlenecks.

Associated evaluation questions from ToR are: To what extent have planned project outputs and outcomes been achieved? What were the major factors that influenced the achievement of these outputs/outcomes?

To give further insight on efficiency the evaluation team added the evaluation questions: What are the intended outputs and outcomes of the project and how are they being measured? How has the project improved the lives of adolescent girls? What are the key success stories or case studies that demonstrate the impact/outcomes of the programme?

4.4.1 INTENDED RESULTS

HRH's grant application to the MFA in 2021 was made to secure funding for various infrastructure items in order to achieve greater sustainability for the HRH project. A detailed description of how HRH successfully attained the set goals (outputs) for the items outlined in the application is provided in the efficiency chapter. Other outputs of the HRH project are the number of admissions of girls to the home from the local social services as described below.

Possible outcomes of the project include an increased number of girls that finish school and therefore have more opportunities through education to provide for themselves and their children, as well as increase in confidence among the girls, significant improvement in their knowledge and skills and their economic independence when they grow up. It is more difficult to assess the outcomes of the project than the outputs, at least statistically, but it is partially done through the workshops with the girls, interviews with key personnel and based on success stories.

4.4.2 RESULTS OF WORKSHOPS AND KEY INTERVIEWS

Focus group discussions were conducted with the girls as beneficiaries of HRH and with staff member *Hilda Wairimu Kinyua*, always making sure that *Anna* was not present. *Anna* was also interviewed separately and then followed up with further online interviews/discussions after the completion of the field trip. During the field work while conducting the focus group discussions with the current residents, *Kjartan* started with the group during which *Bisharo* offered to continue on an individual basis so the girls could feel more at ease if needed. The evaluators had prepared questionnaires for the meetings but adopted the approach best suited in each case, dropping, adjusting or adding questions as needed to get the best insight into the project. Prior to the field trip two workshops with former beneficiaries (not living in HRH anymore) were set up and conducted by *Bisharo*. The girls are between the ages of 11 and 17, an especially challenging age group to manage. HRH is supposed to discharge the girls when they turn 18, but some do not have a safe home to go to and therefore stay at the home until they are up to 21 years old. Many of these girls come from dangerous environments and have experienced abuse, either physical or sexual.

Main results/points from the workshop with the girls currently at HRH were:

- The HRH supports the girls through education, such as nursery schools, beauty or hair schools.
- The girls feel happy and secure when *Anna* is present. Things are handled better when *Anna* is involved. However, when she is not there, the staff's behaviour is different, girls are spoken down to and given orders. The approach varies depending on which staff members are on duty. They request the team to receive training which might change the attitude of the staff. Mistreatment by the previous house lady (social worker) at the shelter was reported. However, this was addressed after the management changed the staff.
- Some of the challenges were that most school going girls with children had a challenge on how to keep up with breastfeeding their children and at the same time commit to school fully. Some family reunions (going back home) were stressful to girls as they are not able to reintegrate well with their families.
- Some faced discrimination from their community and felt guilty as victims of abuse. Many girls, especially the teens with children, are not treated well in school by both teachers and students and are treated with shame. General community fear among the girls.

Main results/points from the workshops with girls supported from outside of the shelter were:

- The girls expressed satisfaction with the support the shelter has provided for them so far. They feel they are treated equally, and their issues are heard and addressed humanely. Some girls expressed peace of mind after facing a phase of depression.
- The girls received financial support for their education, thus they were able to finish their high school education from forms 1 to 4. Additionally, they received support for training, such as mechanical, business management and courses related to cosmetology and plumbing. Also, some girls were supported to start their own business, with some of them reporting success.
- The girls whose children are admitted in the day care also support the shelter by working there and contributing some time to the shelter activities.
- Challenges included delays in financial support, securing internship and jobs and the financial support is not enough to support businesses and pay rent. The financial support for the girls is received at the same time, therefore this can be a challenge.

Main results/points from the workshops, with girls that have moved out from the home, were:

- The shelter has provided them with food, shelter, and clothing. Fees are also a big part of support so that some can go through school. Health care and medical support are also provided.
- Some of the challenges were regarding the food provided, mentioning it was not nutritious enough if they were ill. Lack of financial support to those who fully get university/collage opportunities that require full boarding. Some girls mention that there is no follow up given to them after they have left the shelter and reside outside or are at college or university. There is mention of infection outbreak from sharing of sanitary facilities at the shelter.
- Recommendations included to work on the diet can be looked at to accommodate those affected by what is already being provided. Additionally, provision of a full sponsorship for the university/college admission.

The approach of the evaluation team:
For the evaluation team, in trying to assess and understand the operations of HRH based on the workshops with the girls, there came up some concerns regarding the safety and wellbeing of the girls under the care of HRH. Issues such as physical violence on the girls, verbal abuse by the staff and general sanitation of the home. At the same time as considering the girls' opinions and complaints, it is important to recognize that they are at a sensitive age, and it is needed to assess the context of each situation. It is also necessary to evaluate the severity of their complaints, whether they are recurring, and whether they are genuine. Input and view from staff member is also important as things er never one-sided.

Main results/points from interviews with *Anna Þóra Baldursdóttir* and *Hilda Wairimu Kinyua* were:

- **According to *Hilda***, there are some challenges in relation to the expectations of the girls. Some of the girls turn to her for support, while others prefer to seek out *Anna* or another staff member. People are different, and therefore the girls have varying preferences regarding whom they approach for help.
- **According to *Anna***, it is crucial for the girls to have a consistent experience regardless of which staff members are present. This issue may be culturally influenced, as there is a tendency in Kenya to look up to older individuals (the girls might be expected to simply accept the service provided). However, it is necessary to cultivate a different mindset among the staff - one that *Anna* is accustomed to, given her different background and experience.
- *Anna* is aware that some of the girls have complaints about *Hilda* and they are constantly working on better communication – as for all the staff. *Hilda* excels in administrative tasks and report writing and is helping the girls in their interactions with the social services.
- Part of the issue is that the staff being hired often come from within the community, which is also a positive thing, where the salary structures do not attract highly educated individuals with a different perspective. Instead, the staff typically reflect the norms of the old community they come from.

The primary bottleneck for the HRH appears to be related to communication and social skills. A lack of these skills among staff members could hinder progress and negatively impact the project. This concern was specifically highlighted by the girls, particularly in relation to *Hilda*. However, some girls do prefer seeking support from *Hilda* while others approach *Anna*, which is to be expected.

The evaluators conclude that the treatment of the girls is satisfactory, based on cumulative assessment of the girls' workshops and interviews with the staff. There are some challenges and comments from the girls that need to be considered for improvements, but as mentioned it is important to recognize that they are at a sensitive age, and it is necessary to assess the context of each situation.

4.4.3 ACHIEVED OUTPUTS IN NUMBER OF ADMISSIONS TO HRH

The main statistical information for the Haven Rescue Home, regards the number of young girls that admit to the home, as well as those who eventually leave the home. Young girls and their children, as well as pregnant girls, join the HRH through social services. The rescue home currently accommodates 11 girls and 3 boys, with additional 26 children accessing day care services,

and 22 children supported though outreach activities. Since the establishment of HRH in 2017 up until October 2023, a total of 75 young girls have sought refuge at the Haven Rescue Home. During this evaluation period, 53 girls have transitioned out of the home. The admissions and exits from the home, within the period from establishment of the home until October 2023, can be seen in table 6 and in figure 9.

Table 6 *Admissions and exits from HRH.*

Year	Admissions	Exits
2017	5	-
2018	11	5
2019	16	9
2020	3	4
2021	18	14
2022	12	13
2023	10	8

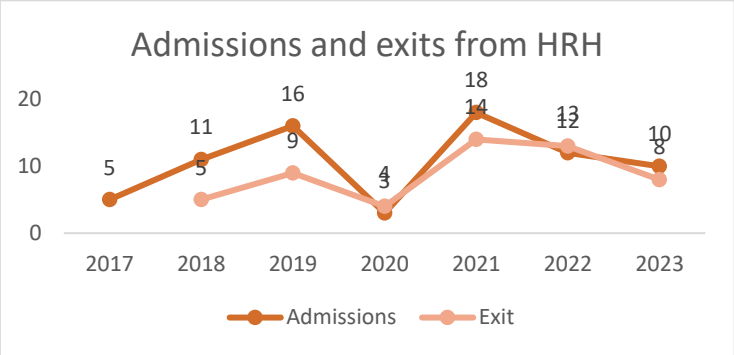


Figure 9 *Admission and exits of young girls, from HRH.*

In the year 2020, admissions of young girls were at the lowest compared to other years under evaluation, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These numbers of admissions over the years display **the trust Social Services have in HRH by continuing to send young girls to the home**. Naturally there are fluctuations in admissions, but all things considered the trust between HRH and Social Services is evident. There is a cap on how many girls can be accommodated in the home and mostly that cap is reached.

4.4.4 ACHIEVED OUTCOMES AND SUCCESS STORIES

This subchapter aims to elucidate the significant impact that the Haven Rescue Home has had on the girls that have stayed at the home. It builds on the results of the workshops and key interviews in chapter 4.4.3. and observations during the field work visit to HRH. One of the **key achievements is to address children's social and mental health challenges**, reaching children through community outreach activities, day care services and providing shelter and care for those in need of protection, at the home. But the essence of HRH lies not in just providing shelter, **it is dedicated to equipping these young girls with essential life skills**. Within the home, they learn not only to take care of themselves but also to nurture their children. The focus extends beyond basic survival skills by supporting the girls in their **formal education** and some of them are afforded **opportunities to attend courses to gain specialized skills** i.e. like in the beauty and hair industry. Moreover, there is a **focus on empowering these young girls economically**. The home has assisted some of them in establishing their own businesses, enabling them to contribute to and uplift their communities. Recognizing the importance of family, HRH also actively endeavours to **reunite the girls with their families**. For those lacking a family support system, introductions to foster homes are facilitated, ensuring a stable and nurturing environment. **Fundraising to secure additional resources not covered by the MFA budget**, such as gynaecological care for the girls, is a part of the achievements.

Part of the outcomes of the project can be seen through success stories, and out of many success stories three different ones were chosen and are in the bubbles below. The success stories demonstrate how effective the Haven Rescue Home is in improving the lives of young girls and their

children, by providing necessities needed to continue education and be able to provide for themselves and their children. **This impact is evidenced by the outcomes already achieved and based on the opportunities that have opened up for the current and former residents of the home**. Additionally, it is admirable how the home provides support and counselling even after the young girls have left. That way, the young girls will always be able to get support and improve their lives further, even after leaving the home.

Success story 1. Elizabeth Muthoni, a 24-year-old young woman, resided in Ruaka before joining the Haven Rescue Home. She is the first born, with seven younger siblings, and lived with her mother following the separation of her parents. At the age of seventeen, Elizabeth was compelled to leave her home and join HRH due to conflicts with her mother and sibling, due to her pregnancy. At that time, Elizabeth was in class 8 and had just finished KCPE.

The Haven rescue Home provided financial support, food and clothing, as well as medical support for when she delivered her child at Kiambu hospital 3 days after joining the rescue home. When her child was about 15 months old, she returned to school, enrolling from form 1. However, discontinued her studies after form 3. Later, Elizabeth was provided support to attend beauty school. Upon graduation, Elizabeth secured employment, enabling her to provide for herself and her child. Four months later, Elizabeth married a good and supportive husband. Currently, she is saving up money to open her own beauty business.

Elizabeth encourages young girls to persevere and work towards improving their lives. She also encourages former residents to maintain connections with the home, which offers continued support and counselling.

Success story 2. Eunice Wangeci, a 22-year-old woman from Karatine, is an orphan with two siblings. After her parents' demise, she was taken in by a neighbour. Prior the COVID-19 outbreak, Eunice was supported through school. Eunice gave birth to her child, at the future in laws home. However, the father of her child was unable to provide for them. Consequently, Eunice moved to Nairobi to work as a house maid. However, when her host left the country, she was compelled to seek refuge at the Haven Rescue Home. She was referred to HRH through Social Services, the Kiambu children's office. The home provided financial assistance for Eunice to continue education at a high school in Nakuru, completing form 4 levels in 2022. Driven by a desire to secure a better life for her child, she was eager to continue her studies.

Following her secondary (high school) education, the home assisted Eunice to get a job as a hairdresser and continued to support her pursuit of further education. Her dream is to become a doctor, and therefore she has started a medical training program, with the help of the home. Through this support, Eunice will be able to get a medical diploma from the Kenya medical training college.

Currently, Eunice is not a resident at HRH but lives in Githurai. Occasionally she brings her daughter to the home for day care and study camps between 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Her advice to young girls in similar circumstances is to never give up and continue pursuing their dreams.

Success story 3. Margret Wangui, a 21-year-old, from Nyandarua has three siblings and is a mother of three children. Margret is a survivor of sexual abuse by her stepfather, a traumatic experience that led her trying to conceal her pregnancy due to feelings of shame. Margret gave birth to her daughter, Naomi, in 2014.

Margret was forced, by her mother, to marry to preserve reputation, which led to a second pregnancy. After enduring a difficult marriage, she left in November 2017 and sought refuge at the Haven Rescue Home. The HRH provided support, and she was able to continue her education.

In 2018, she attended a day school and subsequently transitioned to a boarding school in 2019. During school holidays, she would return to the Haven Rescue Home. However, due to challenges she left the home and relocated to Juja. Despite this, HRH continued to provide assistance, for her to attend beauty school, as well as financial support for rent and daycare. During this period, she gave birth to her third child.

Margret's passion lies in fashion design, not beauty school, and she aspires to open her own fashion shop in the future. She encourages other young girls to never give up and realize that it is possible to get second changes in life. As an example, she almost gave up on education but was motivated to persevere and successfully completed her education.

4.4.5 SUMMARY OF EVALUATION ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS

Overall, the evaluation team assesses the HRH project alignment with effectiveness to be satisfactory. See further breakdown in table 7.

Table 7 *Assessment of project effectiveness.*

Assessment of project effectiveness		
Respective factors	**Assessment**	**Rating**
Intended results	N/A	N/A
Results of workshops and key interviews	N/A	N/A
Achieved outputs in number of admissions to HRH	Trust between HRH and social services is evident, and the full capacity of the home is mostly utilized	Satisfactory
Achieved outcomes and success stories	Many outcomes already evident and robust success stories	Highly Satisfactory
Overall assessment	Compliance with all factors and some beyond original scope of expectation	**Satisfactory**

4.5 SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability dimension addresses the core question if the benefits will last. Exploring to what extent the benefits of the project are likely to continue and be maintained if donor funding for the project would been withdrawn or the project would end.

Associated evaluation questions from ToR are: To what extent will the contributions (and benefits) of project implementation continue after the project(s) end? Could any measure be taken to further ensure the sustainability of the project? Do local stakeholders and beneficiaries have ownership of the project?

The terms of reference are also stipulated to address possible innovative factors with the following evaluation questions: Have development initiatives generated any innovation for development impact? What can be done to provide stimulus and motivation for innovation to create an enabling environment in this/such collaboration?

4.5.1 INNOVATIVENESS

There are many similar initiatives to HRH already being implemented by other CSOs in the area and it is clear the HRH project is not a very innovative developmental intervention. According to *Anna*, the founder of HRH, most children homes focus only on basic daily care while HRH is taking a different approach by addressing the root cause and assisting the young girls at HRH in many different ways, i.e. regarding education, essential life skills and by empowering them psychologically and economically. HRH also assists both the young mothers and their children, i.e. with a kindergarten in the premises, which is different from many children homes which are often overcrowded with abandoned children of young mothers or the children of young mothers are separated from them. **This different approach is innovative when compared to the norm**. Although there is limited information available to determine whether HRH's method of service provision is more innovative to similar homes in the region, this seems to be corroborated by the local social services. To encourage innovation, it may be beneficial to engage beneficiaries and staff in ways that cultivate an environment conducive to the development and adoption of new approaches. Nonetheless, the **evaluators believe that certain enabling conditions are already present within the project's framework**. Collaboration between households promotes innovation, as well as the involvement of Social Services. If clear procedures were established to delineate what is effective and what is not, it would improve overall efficiency and provide a more compelling incentive for innovation.

4.5.2 PROJECT OWNERSHIP OF LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS AND BENEFICIARIES

The Social Services are a local stakeholder without having an ownership of the home, financially nor having impact on how its run. The municipality benefits from HRH's work, as a privately operated home that assists young girls and their children. The Social Services and the home maintain direct communication, due to the significant influence the Social Services have on which young girls are sent to the home. For that reason, it is crucial that the communication between the Haven Rescue Home and Social Services are excellent. The staff are entrusted with their roles without *Anna's* involvement, which provides them with opportunities and ownership commitment. The girls, as beneficiaries of the project, are given the opportunity to provide suggestions and feedback to the project. Consequently, they can indirectly influence the development of the project, thereby gaining an indirect sense of ownership of the project.

4.5.3 PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY TRAJECTORY

The HRH project relies greatly on the founder, *Anna Þóra Baldursdóttir* and it is certain that without her involvement the project would not be sustainable in the medium to long-term. The project operation management structure is weak in this regard, as there is no person currently involved in the HRH operations that could potentially step in *Anna's* role. The local employees have gained knowledge and skills necessary to run the home for short periods of time as *Anna's* deputy *Hilda* has already done in the past, but not in the long run. **The biggest reason is down to the challenges related to securing funding for the operations of the home**.

Local funding is highly unlikely, since the home is competing with numerous organizations providing similar services, even though HRH is probably slightly different from the norm. **The project's funding is therefore solely dependent on external donations and funds**. A significant portion of *Anna's* time is spent on fundraising in Iceland, including selling items and utilizing private funds from donations. The fundraising is vital for the day-to-day running of HRH. The donations are normally sufficient because of the frugal ways of living, including for *Anna* herself, but not always. Most important basic survival costs are ensured but financing to support the different services provided at the home is also required. The project would face significant challenges if the home stopped receiving funds from the MFA, even though the grants received have been limited. The funding from the MFA was not used for the daily running of HRH but to achieve greater financial sustainability for the HRH project by purchasing a 2-hectare land, water borehole, a vehicle and for other essential resources. The land is to be used to cultivate crops and animals for consumption and sale. By doing so, **greater self-sufficiency is formed by reducing food costs and generating a reliable income stream** through sales. But even though the HRH project has plans to rely less on external funds and grants for a more sustainable future, **currently the only viable option for sustaining the project longer-term is to continue receiving grants from MFA, or potentially securing international funding from wealthy individuals or organizations**.

The new governmental National Care Reform Strategy for Children will when fully implemented have a direct impact on HRH, as HRH would then not be able to receive any girls under the age of 18 as they would be put in care schemes under governmental control. But it appears the reform is experiencing a slow initiation, and it has not yet nor will impact HRH in the close future. Nevertheless, **HRH must develop concrete steps of action towards mitigating any changes from the Government of Kenya that may hinder its operations and continuity**. *Anna* has already some concrete ideas on how to react to this future external scenario **by providing similar support and accommodation for girls at a different age range, such as 18 to 25 year old pregnant women or women with children**. By doing so, the main objectives of the home are not altered, and the work could continue with a slight change in the approach of the project. One idea is to offer short courses to the young women so they can graduate with a new skill set or the ability to start their own business. According to the founder, HRH is laying the groundwork for a dual-purpose use of the plot of land that has been bought, for the immediate use of growing crops and animals and as the future possible site location for the Haven rescue home when and if the shift in focus will be towards younger women. Currently it is vital for the home to be located where it is, due to the location of schools and the social services.



Figure 10 *The children playing at Haven Rescue Home.*

4.5.4 SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS TOWARDS BENEFICIARIES

While the project sustainability trajectory for HRH might currently be uncertain, there is clear evidence of an impactful and positive developmental intervention towards individual beneficiaries. So, **although HRH's influence on society at large may not be monumental, the transformation it facilitates in the lives of the girls that seek refuge within its walls is profound and far-reaching**. Some of the girls at HRH have spent their entire lives in children's homes and find a new beginning within this supportive environment. Liberated from the rigid structures that dictate their daily routines, the young girls embark on a journey of self-discovery and independence.

The value of HRH in advancing human rights and promoting gender equality lies in its provision of services that are inaccessible to girls from disadvantaged backgrounds, including healthcare services and education. Teenage mothers, in particular, face significant stigma that impedes their access to equal opportunities. The Haven Rescue Home plays a vital role in mitigating these challenges by ensuring access to fundamental rights, such as education and healthcare to these young girls. Furthermore, HRH provides services that meet the diverse needs of the girls it serves. For instance, while some of the young girls reside at the home, others receive external support, such as medical assistance and education assistance. Additionally, several former residents at the home continue to receive support from HRH even after transitioning into adulthood. The home extends its support to families in need within the local community, an initiative that has inspired other homes to adopt similar practices. **The short to medium-term success of the project can be seen in the impact the home has had on the lives of these young girls and their children**.

4.5.5 SUMMARY OF EVALUATION ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

Overall, the evaluation team assesses the HRH project alignment with sustainability to be adequate. See further breakdown table 8.

Table 8 *Assessment of project sustainability.*

Assessment of project sustainability		
Respective factors	**Assessment**	**Rating**
Innovativeness	There are many similar initiatives, but HRH does have different approach compared to the norm which gives certain innovativeness	Adequate to Satisfactory
Project ownership of local stakeholders and beneficiaries	Input to the project from staff and beneficiaries is welcomed and gives ownership commitment. No ownership from local stakeholders outside of HRH	Adequate
Project Sustainability trajectory	Although the founder of HRH has some positive ideas on how to develop the HRH project the sustainability trajectory is currently lacking	Unsatisfactory
Sustainability benefits towards beneficiaries	The benefits of the project can be seen through the short to medium-term impact the home has already had on the lives of these young girls and their children	Satisfactory
Overall assessment	Compliance mostly in line with scope of expectation, despite weakness in some parts	**Adequate**

4.6 IMPACT

The impact dimension addresses the core question of what difference the development efforts are making in the long term. It explores whether the project has generated or is expected to generate significant higher-level and long-term effects (positive or negative, intended or not) for stakeholders, beneficiaries, and the community.

4.6.1 POTENTIAL FOR HIGHER-LEVEL LONG-TERM EFFECTS

In development context, impact refers to higher-level, long-term changes that are usually measured through tangible development results that appear over an extended period, often 10 years or more. **Due to the limited time in which the Haven Rescue Home development efforts have been ongoing, it is a little premature to assess the actual impact**. However, as discussed in the effectiveness and sustainability chapters there are indications that the project has already had some impact on an individual beneficiary's level, rather than a social level.

4.6.2 SUMMARY OF EVALUATION ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT IMPACT

Overall, the evaluation team assesses the HRH project alignment with impact to be non-applicable due to the limited time in which the HRH development efforts have been ongoing, see table 9.

Table 9 *Assessment of project impact.*

Assessment of project impact		
Respective factors	**Assessment**	**Rating**
Higher-level long-term effects	Too early to assess	N/A
Overall assessment	N/A	**N/A**

4.7 EVALUATION SUMMARY

Generally, the Haven Rescue Home received a satisfactory rating in its evaluation, excelling in several assessment factors. Summary of the results can be seen in table 10.

Table 10 *Summary of evaluation ratings across the different criteria.*

Evaluation criteria	Given rating
Relevance	**Highly Satisfactory**
Coherence	**Adequate to Satisfactory**
Efficiency	**Satisfactory**
Effectiveness	**Satisfactory**
Sustainability	**Adequate**
Impact	**N/A**



5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation of the Haven Rescue Home project in Kenya showed many positive results. The evaluation team provides the following recommendations based on the evaluation findings analysis, the conclusions and lessons learned outlined in this report in chapter 4.

To the Haven Rescue Home:

- To establish communication between homes in the region to facilitate mutual learning and support. There are several homes in Kenya with comparable goals, some with different approaches, while others may encounter challenges like those faced by HRH.
- From the workshops with the girls, concerns should be evaluated and addressed as is possible.
- To write a logical framework (logframe) for HRH, a matrix designed to highlight the objectives, outputs and outcomes for the project and the means to measure how they will be evaluated or measured. It helps to focus the main areas of the project.
- It is highly recommended to provide outcome-based statistical information to identify medium- and long-term effects. Statistical outcome-based information is crucial to evaluate effectiveness and could be beneficial when trying to access donor funding. This information can easily be accessed through simple surveys, demonstrating differences in answers from the initiating phase and at the project's end, when the girls leave the home. These surveys could include questions regarding their mental health and general well-being, whether they finished their studies and if they have or are pursuing higher education, if they are business owners and their employment status. These surveys could, for example, be given through shared groups on social media. This information could demonstrate how HRH is affecting the lives of young girls and pregnant teenagers receiving support from the home.
- Decide how the project sustainability trajectory should be and follow through. This could be through suggested greater self-sufficiency with cultivation of the purchased land and being aware of outside policy changes towards children's homes and finding the right mitigation approach for sustainability. Also importantly, by having in mind how the founder, who the project greatly relies on, can be replaced in case of need – to ensure the continuity of the project.

To Iceland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs:

The only recommendation for the MFA is regarding the application process for the CSO grant applications and support during the project duration. Is it possible to simplify the application process for CSOs that are first time applicants, by providing clearer guidance such as additional explanations or presentations. Also aiding successful applicants throughout the project, as well as periodic check-ins to determine if further assistance is required.