

strategy2020

... saving lives, changing minds

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**You are invited to send comments on this draft
by 31 August 2009 to Strategy2020@ifrc.org**

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Reader's guide to Strategy 2020

This document is prepared by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to move forward in tackling the major challenges that confront humanity in the next decade.

Strategy 2020 builds on the progress achieved under Strategy 2010 and is based within the provisions of the Constitution of the International Federation and the policies established by its General Assembly. It presents key concepts to guide Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies in formulating their own strategic plans in the context of the specific needs and vulnerabilities that concern them. It provides direction to the Secretariat in setting its operational priorities in support of National Societies. It is also the basis for updating, harmonising and, where needed, developing new implementation tools and cooperation frameworks.

Strategy 2020 is guided by the Strategy of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and has been devised through extensive consultation within the Movement and with our external partners. It is outlined here in three chapters.

Chapter 1 describes **who we are** and highlights the International Federation's mandate and comparative advantage, reflects on the experiences and lessons of Strategy 2010, projects global trends, and presents our Vision.

Chapter 2 sets out **what we do** to help vulnerable people and to tackle the underlying causes of their vulnerability, by progressing three strategic aims to achieve stated impacts.

Chapter 3 describes **how we work** to deliver this strategy through three enabling actions, each of which is associated with specific impacts.

Strategy 2020 is a dynamic process that is responsive to changing circumstances. In supporting its systematic uptake and implementation in National Societies, the International Federation will also report biennially on progress at the General Assembly. A mid-term review will be conducted in 2015, and a final review in 2019.

Our Fundamental Principles

Humanity. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect human life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all people.

Impartiality. It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality. In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence. The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary Service. It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity. There can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

To underpin our Fundamental Principles, shared values guide our work:

- **People**: we build the capacities of people and communities to work in solidarity to find sustainable solutions for their most pressing needs and vulnerabilities.
- **Integrity**: we work in accordance with our Fundamental Principles in an open, transparent and accountable manner.
- **Partnership**: we are a component of the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and, guided by its statutes, co-operate with governments, and with other organisations in line with the Fundamental Principles, without compromising our emblems and the independence, impartiality, and neutrality they represent.
- **Diversity**: we celebrate the diversity of the communities we work with and of our volunteers, members and staff, based on non-discrimination and our principles of unity and universality.
- **Leadership**: we show leadership and strive for excellence in our work, drawing attention to the rights, needs and vulnerabilities of communities and the factors that underlie them.
- **Enterprise**: we draw inspiration from our shared history and tradition, but are equally committed to finding innovative, lasting solutions to problems that threaten human well-being and dignity in a changing world.

WHO WE ARE

Our place in the world

The Red Cross Red Crescent is present all over the world, not just physically in towns, villages, and neighbourhoods but also in the minds and hearts of people. We are widely perceived as a “public good”: available to everyone and everywhere, to prevent and reduce human suffering. All that we do and say is inspired by our **Fundamental Principles** of *humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality*. These are underpinned by shared values, relating to *people, integrity, partnership, diversity, leadership, and enterprise*, that guide how we work.

The **red cross, red crescent, and red crystal emblems** are universally recognized, trusted, and legally protected symbols of our presence. Our work is carried out by a respected network of tens of millions of **volunteers and members** in communities everywhere. They are organised into **Red Cross or Red Crescent National Societies** that are given special status by national laws to function as privileged **auxiliary partners** in the humanitarian service of their own public authorities.

National Societies come together globally in the **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)** to represent our shared beliefs and joint efforts, knowing that the chances of improving the lives of vulnerable people are increasingly influenced by the globalising forces of an interconnected and interdependent world. Headquartered in Geneva which is the location of our Secretariat, the International Federation is guided by our *Constitution* and governed by the *General Assembly* of all recognised National Societies that decides on our policies and the rules and obligations of membership. This convenes every two years and elects a *Governing Board* to oversee our work in between General Assembly meetings.

The International Federation is a component of the **International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement** which also includes National Societies and the **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)**. The **Statutes and Strategy of the Movement** aim to strengthen cooperation and coherence between components, enhance their shared identity, and lift their combined effectiveness and efficiency in service of humankind. Every two years, the *Council of Delegates* brings the Movement together to consider common action and advocacy. The *International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent* is held every four years to bring the Movement alongside the world's states signatory to the Geneva Conventions to adopt resolutions on major humanitarian issues.

Towards 2020: Doing more, doing better, reaching further

Strategy 2010 set out the International Federation's strategic directions for the new Millennium. This centred on the mission “*to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilising the power of humanity*” and focused on four core areas: promotion of the Movement's Fundamental Principles; disaster response; disaster preparedness; and health and care in the community. A mid-term review in 2005 led to a detailed guide on achieving a stronger “*Federation of the Future*” including a more focused *Global Agenda* and a *Framework for Action* to reform organisational capacity and performance.

In constructing our strategy for 2020, we have looked back and built on what has been achieved over the past decade. We have modernised our organisation, broadened our participation, expanded our volunteer networks, strengthened our accountability, and extended our partnerships. We have shown that the diversity of the International Federation is of great practical value in reaching more people with a bigger range of services. These have included humanitarian relief and protection during disasters and crises. We are also active in providing social support and enabling communities to achieve better health and reduced vulnerabilities. In short, we have demonstrated our comparative advantage to undertake direct voluntary action at community level in many different ways, while giving voice to the concerns and interests of vulnerable people in key decision-making forums.

At the same time, we have identified the need to improve in several areas. Thus, in moving forward from *Strategy 2010 to Strategy 2020*, we are resolved to do more and better through:

- ⇒ ensuring a streamlined inclusive strategy to guide the overall work of the International Federation including the domestic *and* international activities of all National Societies.
- ⇒ greater substantiation of the auxiliary role of National Societies alongside their sustainable development as well-resourced, led and managed independent entities with a strong and diverse base of members, volunteers and other supporters.
- ⇒ equal recognition and appreciation of our development activities as we enjoy for our disaster assistance efforts.
- ⇒ better ways of working together so that all Red Cross Red Crescent capacities are deployed to best effect in expanding our services to the most needy and vulnerable people; this will be accompanied by greater openness and flexibility in partnerships and collaboration with others outside the Movement;
- ⇒ speaking up and speaking out more on the side of vulnerable and disadvantaged people while, of course, adhering to our Fundamental Principles.
- ⇒ a Federation-wide approach to planning, performance management and accountability;
- ⇒ Federation-wide governance arrangements that provide fuller oversight and consistent support for National Societies in line with the Constitution.
- ⇒ a right-sized, more focused, and well-managed Secretariat that discharges its core membership support functions closer to National Societies, with impartiality, professionalism, and accountability.

Renewing our vision for a changing world

In moving forward *to do more and better*, we must also *work differently* where that is necessary to adapt to the challenges and opportunities presented by a fast-changing world. Recent decades have provided hope as democratic norms have deepened, health and education levels have improved, and advances in science and technology have combined with human ingenuity. The result has been greater creativity, productive enterprise, and more widely shared social consciousness. These have helped to lift millions out of poverty. But prevailing and projected global trends threaten to reverse hard-won progress.

Globalisation i.e. our increased interconnectedness and interdependence is here to stay. But its benefits are not fairly shared and the shock of the 2009 financial and economic crisis has profound long-term consequences that add to disaffection born from growing inequalities. This is magnified by the background of disadvantage and discrimination that is spawned by the interaction of changing demographic patterns including a rising proportion of older people, unplanned urbanisation, high levels of violence including among young people,

involuntary migration pressures, shifting burdens of disease with non-communicable conditions becoming as prominent as the familiar infections, degradation of the environment, and insecurity of access to food, water, and natural resources. Meanwhile, more and bigger disasters are inflicting greater damage, loss, and dislocation. Over everything looms climate change which is set to alter profoundly the way we live, and how we seek and share further economic growth. These trends are likely to expand vulnerability on a large scale by heightening and creating new patterns of marginalisation, impoverishment and insecurity.

Such complex and inter-connected challenges require a transformation in mind-sets and attitudes to influence and change the way we live and how we relate to each other and to the planet we share. This includes the opportunities opened up by a historic shift in the international order towards a more multi-polar configuration of nations and transnational networks of non-state actors. For the International Federation, that means continued realignment with the changing nature of communities and their needs, and to evolving patterns of volunteering. We shall build new capacities, promote innovation in social mobilisation, and harness new knowledge and advances in communications and technology. This will enable us to operate on the much bigger scale necessary to meet the needs and vulnerabilities that we should tackle, given our overall size, reach, and potential.

The vision of the International Federation is articulated accordingly and guides the working mission statements of National Societies and the Secretariat.

Vision of the International Federation

To inspire, encourage, facilitate, and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

Article 4 (General object), Constitution of the International Federation (2007)

WHAT WE DO

We will consolidate the directions initiated and gains achieved under Strategy 2010 by focusing our vision on three mutually-reinforcing strategic aims for 2020. Our first strategic aim recognises our well known role and renews the commitment to be the leading actor in humanitarian action. Our second and third strategic aims build on established service strengths and resolve to do more to promote human development by preventing and reducing the underlying causes of vulnerability.

Strategic Aims 2020

- 1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and prepare for and recover from disasters and crises**
- 2. Enable healthy and safer living**
- 3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence**

The added value of Strategy 2020

Guided by the basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled, and informed by the local contexts of the diverse communities where we work. Strategy 2020 is designed to ultimately benefit our beneficiaries and other stakeholders who look to the Red Cross Red Crescent to help build a more humane, dignified, and peaceful world:

- ✓ National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies will do more and better in working with people who are especially vulnerable in ways that are adaptable and relevant to local needs. They will have stronger capacities and more sustainable resourcing. Their members, volunteers, and other supporters will be more active participants as they will be better motivated, organised, and supported. They will be more effective auxiliaries to their national authorities and more reliable partners to other humanitarian and development actors.
- ✓ The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies working collectively and supported by the Secretariat will be more cohesive while respecting our internal diversity. We will be more efficient in deploying our collective capacities to help wherever and whenever this is most needed in situations of greatest vulnerability. We will be more efficient in our working arrangements and more persuasive in advocating on behalf of the rights and needs of vulnerable people.
- ✓ The International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement will gain from stronger National Society partners and a more effective Federation Secretariat which, along with the ICRC, promotes and practices the Fundamental Principles and values that are our common bedrock.

Strategic Aim 1: Save lives, protect livelihoods, and prepare for and recover from disasters and crises

A *disaster* occurs when there is serious disruption of the functioning of a community causing harmful effects that exceed its coping capacity. During disasters due to natural and man-made hazards or in *crises* that arise from violent conflicts, the immediate imperative is to save lives, reduce damage and losses, and to protect, comfort, and support survivors. A disaster or crisis may arise as a sudden emergency or have slow onset. In either case, it is our basic obligation to be prepared to use all effective means to help affected persons, wherever and whenever this is needed.

Preparing and responding to disasters and crises

Following a disaster or in crisis situations, saving lives is the imperative along with measures to limit damage and losses, and hence reduce vulnerability. Humanitarian assistance must be appropriate to the requirements that are identified through specific assessments, proportionate to the size of the crisis, provided first to the people who are most vulnerable, and given in a way that respects their dignity.

Systematic disaster and crisis management starts with preparedness for early action through trained and organised volunteers, maintaining contingency stocks of essential supplies, and ensuring efficient logistics. Also instrumental in saving most lives and protecting assets and livelihoods are reliable systems for the early warning of an impending disaster or crisis. In addition, we help restore family links where these have been disrupted, and have agreed to a specific focus on emergency shelter provision, as part of the division of labour within the humanitarian assistance system.

Appropriate laws are crucial to ensure the speed and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance. Therefore, we emphasise national legal preparedness and international legal cooperation through developing and promoting disaster laws that reduce operational barriers and strengthen the role of communities to ensure that relief and recovery measures (including, for example, quarantines, evacuations, and burials) are carried out in a manner respectful of the dignity and rights of affected people. Pre-disaster cooperation arrangements to facilitate and regulate international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance are also promoted to enhance predictability and preparedness.

Recovering from disasters and crises

The impact of disasters and crises can be reduced if the situation is stabilised as quickly as possible so that people can rebuild their lives and communities. Depending on the specific requirements, our recovery assistance is directed at preventing further damage and loss, repairing or restoring essential services, protecting health, bringing psychosocial support, and restoring livelihoods. Recovery actions must be conducted in a way that reduces vulnerability to future disasters so that recovering communities are made safer than before.

The Red Cross Red Crescent disaster management system

As they are closest to the communities at risk of disasters, building local and national response capacities is the primary responsibility of all National Societies. But we know that major disasters and crises can sometimes overwhelm even the best prepared capacities. That is why solidarity among National Societies to lend an urgent helping hand

is a hallmark of our International Federation. Its Secretariat has the constitutional obligation “to organise, coordinate, and direct international relief action” as a core service to members. Drawing on the complementary capacities of National Societies, we ensure that effective tools and reliable surge capacities are always available, in a seamless arrangement that connects the global to regional, national and local. This gives us the confidence to handle the expected worldwide increase in the number and magnitude of major disasters. Concurrently, the International Federation and ICRC work together to maintain significant capacities to protect and assist people affected by armed conflict and violence.

Expected impact from Strategic Aim 1:

- ✓ **Effective standby capacities for appropriate and timely response to disasters and crises**
- ✓ **Reduced deaths, losses, damage, and other harmful consequences of disasters and crises**
- ✓ **Improved restoration of community functioning after disasters and crises**

Strategic Aim 2: Enable healthy and safer living

Sustainable development that allows all to achieve their full human potential and lead productive creative lives in dignity according to their rights and choices requires responsible resource use that meets current human requirements without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.

Our specific contribution to sustainable development is through bolstering community resilience. This is the ability to adapt and cope better with recurrent or prolonged disasters and crises, and so enabling people to protect and build further on the development gains that have been made. We can do that by helping people to be healthy and prevent or reduce risks where they can, thereby enjoying better and safer living that is also respectful of the environment. This matters to rich and poor alike in the face of global threats such as from climate change and pandemics. Adapting ways of living to a changing world also requires us to advocate for supportive public policies, influence psychosocial attitudes, and reach out to help those who are most vulnerable because they have the fewest means to cope.

Strengthening health

Good health – the state of physical, mental, and social well-being – is a crucial resource for everyday life and pre-requisite for the realisation of our full human potential. Our health promotion efforts are intended to reduce vulnerability, both individual and community. A major consequence of longevity, changing birth rate patterns, and social and personal behaviour trends is a significant change in future health status. Overall, this

is shifting towards non-communicable conditions: by 2020, the leading worldwide causes of death, disease, and disability will be heart disease and stroke, depression, road traffic accidents, trauma from violence and conflicts, and respiratory disease, along with perinatal and maternal complications, tuberculosis, HIV infection, and diarrhoeal disease. Malaria and other communicable diseases will reduce but remain significant in lower income countries. In addition new viruses and other disease causing organisms with the potential to cause epidemics and pandemics will continue to arise. Specific priorities for action are, therefore, guided by locally prevalent health patterns, within an overall approach as follows:

- First, we seek to expand access for under-served communities to primary and public health services including during emergencies. We do this by promoting basic competency in first aid and using proven prevention techniques to tackle vector-borne and other communicable conditions, especially malaria, HIV, and tuberculosis, immunisations, epidemic and pandemic preparedness, reproductive health and child care, and access to safe blood. This includes dealing promptly with *health emergencies* and extends to the early treatment of common problems such as nutritional deficiencies and maternal and perinatal complications, neglect of which can have serious secondary consequences.
- Second, we support improved care to enhance treatment benefits for the most vulnerable people including through nutritional, educational, and other complementary inputs, as well as psychosocial support. This includes more accessible and gender-sensitive services at both primary and hospital level so that they are better connected with each other in meeting the health needs of the communities they serve.
- Third, we encourage action on the underlying social and environmental behavioural factors that determine good health. The specific actions depend on the local factors that have the greatest potential to reduce preventable death, disease, injury, and disability. These can include health education, greater access to potable water and sanitation, balanced diet and exercise, tackling smoking, alcohol, and other substance abuse, managing stress, countering prejudice against stigmatising conditions such as HIV and tuberculosis, promoting safer sexual and reproductive behaviour, and improving safety at work, home, and on the road.

Reducing disaster risk

Disaster *risks* are the potential harmful consequences arising from community *exposure* and *vulnerability* to natural and human-made *hazards*. We encourage volunteer-led community action to eliminate disaster risks where possible and to reduce their occurrence and impact where primary prevention is not feasible.

Disaster risk reduction starts by working with communities to map the most significant locally-prevalent natural and human-made hazards and understanding the patterns of vulnerability to them. From this, communities can devise local ways to manage hazards and reduce exposure and vulnerability. We pay special attention to women and children as their needs and coping methods often differ from men. Practical strategies include spreading awareness and knowledge to build a “culture of safety”, ensuring that development programmes do not generate new hazards or that these are adequately mitigated, and encouraging environmental and physical infrastructural improvements to protect assets and maintain services in the event of disaster.

Emphasis on long-term food security is promoted where needed, through increasing and diversifying food availability and access for the most vulnerable people.

Addressing climate change

A major driver of disaster risk is extreme weather events and environmental degradation both of which have been linked to climate change. Recognising that our understanding of the extent and impact of climate change will continue to evolve, we shall contribute to measures for adaptation (i.e. behaviour changes to reduce the vulnerability of communities to modified environments) and mitigation (i.e. environment-friendly behaviour patterns that also reduce the extent of global warming which causes climate change).

Our adaptation to climate change is through scaling up disaster risk reduction measures and strengthening traditional methods of coping with disaster consequences that are relevant in particular environmental contexts. We can also contribute to mitigating the progression of climate change by social mobilization to promote sustainable ways of community development that optimise their “carbon footprint” i.e. using energy more efficiently to reduce the impact of the way we live on the environment in terms of the production of greenhouse gases. We will exemplify this through the way we conduct our own business within the International Federation.

Expected impact from Strategic Aim 2:

- ✓ **Improved personal and community health status, and inclusive public health systems**
- ✓ **Reduced exposure and vulnerability to natural and human-made hazards**
- ✓ **Greater public support for environmentally sustainable living**

Strategic Aim 3: Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence.

The most prevalent vulnerabilities arise not just from disasters and diseases but also complex factors such as *grievance* born from deprivation and unfairness, *marginalisation* rooted in alienation and injustice, or *despair* that comes from loneliness, ignorance and poverty. Only too often, these are expressed through violence within communities and may be magnified into wider conflict between communities and nations.

All communities have groups of people – often hidden - who are unable to enjoy the general benefits that are available to the mainstream of society. They may be neglected or marginalised for many reasons due to their own social or economic disadvantage, employment status, access to information, knowledge and modern communication tools, or due to public attitudes that stigmatise or discriminate against them. Such disadvantaged groups may include, for example, older people or those with particular diseases or disabilities, orphans and vulnerable children, people who have been

trafficked or displaced, refugees and other migrants, members of minority groups or those of particular cultural practices or behavioural choices, women and girls at risk because of their gender, and others deprived of their basic human rights. Many of them may live in circumstances where they are subject to violence, abuse, and exploitation.

In addition, economic and political disparities among communities and between nations and regions, including from ownership and access to resources, is a potent source of tension and insecurity. The challenge of sustainable growth and development is to ensure that further imbalances are not created, and that the benefits of progress and prosperity are distributed in a way that reduces inequalities.

Promoting respect for differences

In the context of our mandate, we define our role in terms of promoting social inclusion through the example set by all our activities and services. We do this by actively countering social prejudice and encouraging tolerance and respect for the many different perspectives that are to be expected in a diverse world. That includes advocacy on the adoption of non-violent approaches to bridging these differences. This is underpinned by reaching out proactively to people who are most neglected or isolated and enabling them to integrate better into wider society.

We start with ourselves. In functioning according to our Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values, the composition and working of National Societies seeks to reflect the diversity of their catchment populations. We strive for gender equality in our organisation and in our work i.e. ensuring that there is no sex-based discrimination in the allocation of resources and benefits or in participation and access to services and decision-making roles.

Beyond our own organisation, we promote intercultural dialogue, harmony within and between communities, and advocate for a wider understanding of our Fundamental Principles. National Societies are responsible for the dissemination and implementation of international humanitarian law in their countries, encouraged and backed-up by the ICRC and the International Federation. We do this through education and training that are tailored to the needs of specific audiences, protection support when warranted by circumstances, and psychosocial interventions that are practically useful in addressing current challenges including the specific factors that cause violence in particular settings. This includes building capabilities to recognise public policies and practices that exclude and alienate, and the communication and interaction skills to address them through dialogue and diplomacy.

Enabling better integration for disadvantaged people

We seek to reduce the isolation and neglect of disadvantaged people in several ways:

- First, we tackle stigma and discrimination through the way we do all our work. This includes the design of our disaster management, health, and social services to ensure that they counter prejudiced and harmful attitudes and practices through education, advocacy, and social mobilisation. The Red Cross Red Crescent provides a space where people who are marginalised and stigmatised feel welcome and safe, and where they are given an effective role in participating in our work
- Second, we help to maintain the autonomy and well-being of those made vulnerable by their disadvantage. This includes practical help with basic needs and psychosocial

support, including for elderly people, as well as protection and assistance for survivors of abuse and exploitation.

- Third, we nurture the development of livelihoods and good citizenship skills that enable disadvantaged groups to function better in society. This includes practical measures to improve their ability to interact effectively with the mainstream of society. For example, we tackle migrants' vulnerabilities by addressing the pressures behind migration, providing help to vulnerable migrants in need of assistance and protection, reducing the risks that are forced on to them along the migratory route, empowering them in their search for durable solutions, and promoting wider understanding of migrants' rights and their social inclusion within host communities.
- Fourth, we advocate for and facilitate greater access by disadvantaged groups to public services that are generally available. This includes, for example, more open and responsive education, health, and social security services.

Expected impact from Strategic Aim 3:

- ✓ **Reduced intolerance, stigma and discrimination**
- ✓ **Reduced violence and the more peaceful reconciliation of divisions within society**
- ✓ **Fuller integration of disadvantaged people into their communities.**

HOW WE WORK

How do we deliver on our strategic aims? As the overarching consideration is to mitigate avoidable suffering and vulnerabilities using all effective means at our disposal, we seek to organise ourselves efficiently with three key enabling actions in mind. The first enabling action emphasises the primacy of strong national Red Cross Red Crescent capacities as the foundation for all that we do. The second enabling action is directed at strengthening the coherence and impact of our collective voice. Our third enabling action is intended to deploy the wide range of International Federation capacities according to their respective comparative advantages so as to maximise access and deliver the best results for our beneficiaries.

Enabling actions to deliver Strategic Aims

1. **Build strong National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies**
2. **Pursue humanitarian diplomacy to prevent and reduce vulnerability**
3. **Function effectively as the International Federation**

Enabling Action 1: Build strong National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies

To be recognised as a National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society, the conditions stipulated in the Statutes of the Movement must be met. It must be constituted as the sole National Society and extend its activities across the territory of an independent State where the *Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field* is in force. It must be duly recognized by government on the basis of the Geneva Conventions and of national legislation as an autonomous voluntary aid society, auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field. It must respect and be guided by the Fundamental Principles and the principles of international humanitarian law. It must keep its own statutes up to date by reviewing them at least every ten years.

Well-functioning National Societies

National Societies seek to excel in what they do and are committed to sustainable growth because they wish to do more for vulnerable people. They have defined the core characteristics for their effectiveness. These include ensuring good leadership with clarity on the respective roles of governance and management, and taking responsibility for their own sustainable organisational development and service delivery capacities. National Societies aspire to meet their own organisational structure costs through their own efforts, enterprise, and partnerships, and by the sound and transparent management of available

resources. They participate actively in the affairs of the International Federation to share their knowledge, expertise, and resources with other National Societies.

Each National Society is responsible, in its own context, for planning the scope and size of the services it can deliver on a reliable basis including the specific delivery targets towards which it is aiming. These are underpinned by necessary planning, information collection and analysis, and monitoring and reporting systems that demonstrate accountability for results. Each National Society defines its own Strategic Plan that is based on its analysis of the rights, needs and vulnerabilities of its key populations of concern. The Strategic Plan also identifies the gaps expected to be filled by Red Cross Red Crescent action taking into account the capacities and resources that can be attained and sustained.

At the heart of a strong National Society is its nationwide network of locally organised branches or units with members who are registered as having agreed to abide by the Fundamental Principles and the Statutes of their National Society. A National Society may indicate additional criteria for membership – such as the payment of a membership fee, based on its own circumstances, but always respecting the principle of impartiality. Members have the opportunity to be elected themselves or to elect and hold accountable the governance of the National Society.

National Societies recruit their members, volunteers, and staff from diverse backgrounds reflecting the communities where they work and without consideration of gender, race, sexual preference, class, religion or political opinions. National Societies value a learning culture that enables members and volunteers meaningful participation in decision-making processes. National Societies provide a safe workplace, and protect and promote the physical and psychosocial wellbeing of all who work with them. .

Commitment to communities and volunteering

Strong and cohesive communities are the foundation for practical delivery by National Societies. This acknowledges that people themselves are the most important resource for their own progress that can be sustained only by their own leadership and ownership of the process. For the Red Cross Red Crescent, communities are not targets but the starting point, and National Societies serve communities *from the inside*. In every community, regardless of how poor it is, there are capacities. These are mobilised and organised into Red Cross Red Crescent services to people who are especially vulnerable. Thus, building the capacity of local branches or units is vital as an integral part of the community and its civil society, enriching the social fabric of both.

The nature of communities is changing profoundly as people identify themselves in multiple ways beyond the places where they live to networks of common interest within which they spend most of their time, including “virtual communities” across the internet. Fresh ways of social mobilisation and communication are promoted to reach non-traditional communities. Voluntary service is at the heart of such community building. Volunteering promotes trust and reciprocity, encourages people to be responsible citizens, and schools them in the duties of democratic involvement.

Volunteering with the Red Cross Red Crescent is carried out by people committed to the Fundamental Principles. They are motivated by their own free will and without expectation of material or financial gain to serve vulnerable people and work towards a more humane and peaceful world. Volunteers contribute their time and talents regularly or occasionally in the delivery of services, and in resource mobilisation, administrative, governance or advisory functions. National Societies are committed to improve quality, standards,

capacities, and retention through creating a volunteer-friendly and socially inclusive environment. They provide volunteers with appropriate training, supervision, regular evaluation and recognition, development opportunities including through designing and improving the work in which they are involved, insurance protection, equipment, psycho-social support and a supporting local structure relevant for the tasks that they carry out.

As living trends continue to change how people volunteer including in more informal and non-institutional ways, the International Federation fosters legal, social, and economic policies that encourage and value volunteering more strongly in society.

An active youth

A special focus on young people is a crucial investment for today and tomorrow. Under circumstances of vulnerability and recognising age and gender specific needs, their special needs for protection and safety must be addressed. In their multiple roles as contributors, and acknowledging their ability as innovators and peer to peer facilitators, young people are enabled to become more active in leading and participating in voluntary activities and in the governance, management and services of their National Societies. We ensure this through training and skills development, encouraging youth networks, and by giving specific recognition to youth structures in National Societies. Our young people bring much-needed competencies in working alongside the growing generation of older people in a spirit of mutual respect. This is crucial to the inter-generational transfer of experience that is vital to both progress and stability in society.

Expected impact from Enabling Action 1:

- ✓ **Sustainable expanded national and local Red Cross Red Crescent capacities.**
- ✓ **A stronger culture of voluntary service in society, and more active youth participation in Red Cross Red Crescent and community affairs**
- ✓ **Scaled-up and sustained Red Cross Red Crescent services for people who are especially vulnerable**

Enabling Action 2: Pursue humanitarian diplomacy to prevent and reduce vulnerability

Our humanitarian diplomacy is based on the mandate of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and its Fundamental Principles. This is intended to draw stronger attention to situations that generate vulnerabilities, and to the rights and needs of vulnerable people, as well as to give them a strong voice. We seek to prevent or reduce vulnerability by using the auxiliary role of National Societies appropriately to achieve greater access to people in need, and by advocating for attention to emerging or re-emerging vulnerability. We also carry out informed representation that will promote our work widely, expand and diversify our resource base, and strengthen our external partnerships.

Auxiliary role: a balanced partnership between States and National Societies

Governments have primary responsibility to address the vulnerabilities that prevail in their countries. But there are times when political differences require an independent body that is accepted by all parties to reach vulnerable communities which may also only be accessible in this way. The auxiliary role allows neutral and impartial humanitarian access by deploying Red Cross Red Crescent capacities that can move without hindrance to design and implement services for vulnerable people according to what is needed by them.

With that in mind, National Societies create and strengthen trusted and balanced relations with governments, including by continuing to update any necessary revisions to the legal base to their auxiliaryity. This unique partnership is pursued through dialogue, trust, cooperation, mutual understanding and respect, thus allowing the most sensitive humanitarian questions to be raised in a private, constructive, and independent manner. The partnership includes

- National Society involvement in the implementation of the State's obligations on the basis of international humanitarian law and the resolutions of the International Conference of the Red Cross Red Crescent; and cooperation in related tasks, such as tracing services.
- Utilisation by the State of National Society personnel put at the disposal of the medical services of armed forces, in accordance with the First Geneva Convention and, where applicable, the First Additional Protocol.
- Consultation of the National Society on major humanitarian issues, and its participation and resourcing for disaster relief and preparedness, and in health, social, and other competent fields.
- Cooperation and resourcing of the distinct role of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in international operations.
- Creation by the State of an enabling environment for the National Society, including through appropriate legislation on the use of the emblem, resourcing that is not linked to non-humanitarian considerations, and other support that facilitates effective National Society functioning e.g. on voluntary service, tax and customs status.

In their auxiliary role, National Societies have a duty to consider seriously any request from their public authorities to carry out humanitarian activities within their mandate. At the same time, the State must not interfere in the functioning of the National Society, the selection of its activities, the appointments of its leaders, and amendments to its legal texts. States must also refrain from requesting National Societies to perform activities which are in conflict with the Fundamental Principles or the Statutes of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. National Societies have the duty to decline any such request and to request the public authorities to respect such decisions of National Societies.

Advocacy

Working at local, national, regional and global levels, we seek attention to the assistance and protection needs of vulnerable people. We also urge action on the underlying causes of their suffering and to prevent or reduce future vulnerabilities and crises through providing early warning on emerging concerns. We advocate for national development plans and disaster management strategies to be more relevant and effective for vulnerable people who should also be able to express their needs, realise their rights, and make greater use of improved public services and expanded social safety nets.

Cooperation with others

We are committed to greater consistency in our global, regional, and in-country cooperation with partners including the United Nations system (where the International Federation has permanent observer status), international financial institutions, regional groupings, non-governmental and civil society groups, professional networks and academic bodies, and the private sector. We seek to work in strong complementarity and coordination with others that subscribe to shared standards of good practice, while expecting our partners to respect the Red Cross Red Crescent mandate and independence of action. In our partnerships with other organisations, we give emphasis to community perspectives. We also seek to promote international co-operation frameworks and systems that will improve the harmonisation, quality and accountability of international assistance.

Communications

A well-informed and well-connected Red Cross Red Crescent network is central to a dynamic International Federation. We harness modern communications skills and technology to deepen public support for common humanitarian ideals, including through campaigns on specific themes and by reaching out especially to the younger generation. Within the International Federation, we use strong information sharing platforms to share knowledge, promote innovation, and create organisational cohesion i.e. a common sense of belonging and engagement from the global to national and branch levels. Embracing Federation-wide online collaboration enhances the effectiveness of being a volunteer, member or staff by extending the social ties this brings and gaining more ready access to state-of-the art expertise.

Mobilising resources

We encourage partnerships with individuals, governments, private sector and others to contribute towards the needs of vulnerable people through long-term results-oriented resource-sharing partnerships. Our corporate partnerships which may be at global, national, or local levels, are guided by our Fundamental Principles, and clear ethical criteria that emphasise the promotion of social responsibility.

Expected impact from Enabling Action 2:

- ✓ **Greater access to help people who are vulnerable, and earlier attention to situations and causes of vulnerability**
- ✓ **Deeper public and governmental support and more resources for addressing vulnerabilities**
- ✓ **Stronger recognition of community perspectives in international cooperation arrangements**

Enabling Action 3: Function effectively as the International Federation

As an International Federation, our whole is stronger than our individual parts and we are collectively responsible for progressing the outcomes to which we are committed in this strategy. We do this by working in the way that is most appropriate and efficient in specific circumstances: either individually as the National Society in a country, or together through partnerships and alliances that share resources and capacities within the Movement. We are guided by our *Code for Good Partnership* which emphasises respect for vulnerable people, sensitivity to diversity and culture, integrity in programming, accepting individual and collective responsibility within the Movement, and welcoming principled cooperation with external partners.

Cooperation within the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement

The Movement is committed to expanding the overall Red Cross Red Crescent contribution to meeting humanitarian needs. The practical means for doing this are our set coordination mechanisms and tools, and training that builds on the complementary mandates of the Movement's components to achieve closer cooperation, quality and efficiency, and the better development of National Societies.

The Seville Agreement of 1997 and its Supplementary Measures adopted in 2005, identify the respective roles and responsibilities of each of the Movement's components, primarily in relation to the organisation of international relief operations in emergency situations and the strengthening of the Movement as a whole.

Accordingly, the ICRC acts as "lead agency" in situations of international and non-international armed conflicts, internal strife and their direct results. The International Federation acts as "lead agency" in situations of natural or technological disasters and other emergency and disaster situations in peace time which require resources exceeding those of the National Society of the affected country. The International Federation also has the "lead role" with regard to development activities and in the coordination of international development support to National Societies. The ICRC has the "lead role" in the maintenance and dissemination of the Fundamental Principles, and for promoting, developing, and disseminating international humanitarian law.

The National Society of a country maintains at all times its normal role and mandate and is always the "primary partner" of the lead agency. It may also assume the "lead agency" role by agreement with the International Federation or ICRC, as the case may be, if it has the operational capacity to meet the needs of affected people and to coordinate international relief operations in accord with the Fundamental Principles.

Working together in partnerships and alliances

National Societies welcome support from their Movement partners and other agencies in long-term partnerships that are based around the National Society Strategic Plan. These **partnerships** are led by the concerned National Society and encourage efficient joint working through a set of practical rules for harmonisation known as the "seven ones" i.e. *shared approaches to conducting needs analyses, setting objectives, defining operational strategies and populations to be served, determining the division of labour among partners, and adhering to commonly agreed resourcing, performance and accountability tracking, and shared advocacy and visibility frameworks*. Partners align themselves to the systems and procedures of the concerned National Society recognising that this

promotes their development and increases cooperation effectiveness and impact. Partners are expected to contribute towards the core operating costs of the concerned National Society so as to strengthen its long-term capacity.

The imperative to tackle major but avoidable suffering is a joint Federation-wide obligation. Thus, in circumstances where serious needs and vulnerabilities arise that have not been foreseen in established plans, the concerned National Society may seek special **Operational Alliances** to bring in additional inputs that go beyond what is locally available. This should enable sufficient scale-up of the collective Red Cross Red Crescent contribution to tackling the particular challenge. Alliance modalities are tailored according on the needs of the situation and the deployed capacities of the concerned National Society and collaborating allies from within and outside the Movement. **Global Alliances** are formed at inter-country level, and usually coordinated by the Federation Secretariat, to establish standards and norms on particular topics and to mobilise global commitments and resources for a specified cause.

The Federation Secretariat may be invited to help concerned National Societies to manage their partnerships and alliances when this is needed because of local capacity constraints.

A well-functioning Secretariat

The Secretariat of the International Federation serves and connects National Societies through membership services. These are the essential support derived from the constitutionally-mandated functions of the International Federation that all National Societies are entitled to share, within the limits of available resources that are generated from the statutory membership and additional voluntary contributions of National Societies.

The Secretariat supports governance, development of National Societies and their services, coordinates and directs international relief actions, facilitates or leads alliances and partnerships on request, and conducts international humanitarian diplomacy including advocating internationally for the interests of National Societies. It also maintains the institutional memory of the International Federation, encourages systematic planning and performance monitoring, and promotes standards, norms, and common strategic frameworks. It draws on Federation-wide resources to provide these services. Red Cross Red Crescent Networks and Centres of Excellence, located within designated National Societies, are the preferred modes of sharing knowledge, expertise and resources, and generating innovation within the International Federation.

The Secretariat seeks to be lean, efficient, and organised to deliver its agreed services as close as possible to National Societies through a geographically decentralised structure. This focuses maximal resources and authority closest to delivery points while providing strong strategic oversight from headquarters in Geneva.

Responsible governance

The function of our governance – in National Societies, and as the International Federation - is to be accountable to the members who elect them in ensuring that we fulfil our overall purpose and achieve effective outcomes, while upholding our organisational values. This includes being clear on the relationship with the executive management, and ensuring that sound risk management systems are in place. While National Societies are self-governing under their own statutes, they subscribe to common standards of good governance and have established a compliance mechanism to safeguard their integrity.

Our Constitution and rules of procedure set out the governance arrangements for the International Federation, including oversight of the management of the Secretariat. We keep these arrangements under review to ensure that they serve the needs of member National Societies. We aim to streamline further the governance arrangements of the International Federation while broadening participation and bringing it closer to member National Societies.

Our accountability

We are committed to a culture of transparent accountability to our stakeholders. These are the beneficiaries that we serve, those who entrust us with resources for action, people who work within the Red Cross Red Crescent, governments, and the external partners who collaborate with us. They are entitled to see how we assess needs and vulnerabilities, set priorities and design specific interventions, monitor implementation, measure results, and assess impact.

As self-governing National Societies we are accountable to our own beneficiaries, members and other stakeholders. We also recognise that how we perform within our own National Societies reflects on the credibility and reputation of other National Societies and the International Federation, as a whole. Therefore, as we have an obligation to each other to uphold common standards, we are committed to compliance with a Federation-wide performance and accountability framework.

Our accountability principles include commitments to explicit standard setting, openness in monitoring and reporting, transparent information sharing, meaningful beneficiary participation, effective and efficient resource use, and systems for lesson learning and responding to concerns and complaints.

Our performance dimensions use gender and age specific data to assess progress in several dimensions:

- “Compliance” assesses *how suitably we function* i.e. the extent to which we adhere to our stated principles and values, and the policies and guidelines that drive our service delivery, the codes of behaviour that underpin our integrity, and the way we relate to our beneficiaries, partners, and other stakeholders.
- “Coverage” assesses *how much we do* i.e. the extent to which we meet identified needs and vulnerabilities in defined geographical areas or population groups and communities.
- “Quality” assesses *how well we do* i.e. the extent to which our services reach appropriately-set standards and norms.
- “Efficiency” assesses *how we use resources* i.e. the extent to which our services make the best possible use of the human, financial, and material inputs at our disposal.
- “Impact” assesses how much difference we make i.e. the extent and sustainability of the changes that occur within the communities where we function.

Using shared tools and data collection methods, each National Society sets its own indicators for assessing the progress of the specific services that it undertakes, compared with the baseline at the beginning of 2010. A harmonised approach to performance tracking allows the Federation-wide aggregation and communication of results from

National Societies. This enables us, as a whole, to continue to learn and project our collective achievements, thereby gaining trust and amplifying our humanitarian diplomacy efforts.

At a minimum, the Federation-wide monitoring framework will consolidate reporting from National Societies on the numbers of volunteers providing and the numbers of people reached by their services, as well as the resources expended on these services. These indicators are a proxy for *doing more and better* as they illustrate the degree of success in developing our capacities and demonstrating the quality of work that will attract resources. We shall assess the quality of our services more directly according to globally accepted standards for humanitarian and development work, including through a systematic programme of evaluations.

Expected impact from Enabling Action 3:

- ✓ **Stronger cooperation, coordination and support arrangements to deliver strategic outcomes**
- ✓ **Improved planning, performance management and accountability for International Federation activities**
- ✓ **Expanded International Federation contribution to meeting vulnerability needs at global, national, and local levels**