strategy2020

# SAVING LIVES CHANGING MINDS

International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

↘
We welcome your support in realizing Strategy 2020. Suggestions and enquiries to **strategy2020@ifrc.org**







International Federation of Red Cross
and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva, 2010

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P.O. Box 372
CH-1211 Geneva 19
Switzerland
Telephone: +41 22 730 4222
Telefax: +41 22 733 0395
E-mail: secretariat@ifrc.org
Web site: http://www.ifrc.org

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# INTRODUCING *STRATEGY 2020*

< *From left to right, top to bottom: Gerald Czech / Austrian Red Cross; Till Mayer/IFRC; Marko Kokic/ICRC; Ben Hondik*

THIS strategy voices the collective determination of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to move forward in tackling the major challenges that will confront humanity in the next decade.

It consolidates previous policies and strategies in presenting updated core concepts to guide National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in formulating their own mission statements and 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, harmonizing and developing new implementation tools and cooperation frameworks.

*Strategy 2020* builds on the progress achieved under *Strategy 2010* and is based on the provisions of the Constitution of the IFRC and the policies established by its General Assembly. It is guided by the statutes and strategy of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and has been developed through extensive consultation within the Movement and with our external partners.

The elements of *Strategy 2020*, outlined here in three chapters, form a holistic and interconnected framework.

> **Chapter 1** describes who we are and highlights the IFRC's mandate and comparative advantage. It 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* provides the basis for the strategic plans of National Societies. This is a dynamic framework that is responsive to differing contexts and changing circumstances. It invites all our members, volunteers, staff and supporters to engage with creativity and innovation in giving practical effect to this strategy, and thereby make the difference that matters. In supporting the systematic implementation of *Strategy 2020*, the IFRC will report biennially on progress at the General Assembly. A mid-term review will be carried out in 2015 and a final review in 2019.**

# OUR FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

**Humanity**

**Impartiality**

**Neutrality**

**Independence**

**Voluntary service**

**Unity**

**Universality**

# OUR VALUES

**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 a transparent and accountable manner.

**Partnership:** As members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and, guided by its statutes, we cooperate with governments, and with other organizations in line with the Fundamental Principles, without compromising our emblems and the independence, impartiality and neutrality that they represent.

Marko Kokic/ICRC

**Diversity:** We respect the diversity of the communities we work with and of our volunteers, members and staff, based on non-discrimination and our principles of impartiality, 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.

**Innovation:** We draw inspiration from our shared history and tradition, but are equally committed to finding creative, sustainable solutions to problems that threaten human well-being and dignity in a changing world.

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# WHO WE ARE

## Our place in the world

THE ideals of the Movement are represented all over the world, not just through the visible impact of our work in countless towns, villages and neighbourhoods, but also by influencing hearts and minds. We are widely perceived as a 'public good' – available to everyone, everywhere, to prevent and reduce human suffering. All that we do and say is inspired by the Fundamental Principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality. These principles are underpinned by shared values – relating to people, integrity, partnership, diversity, leadership and innovation – 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**. They are organized through their **National Red Cross** or **Red Crescent Societies** that have special status by national laws to function as auxiliary **partners** enjoying a specific and distinctive partnership 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 globalizing forces of an interconnected and interdependent world. With a secretariat in Geneva and five zones worldwide, the IFRC is guided by its constitution and governed by a General Assembly of National Societies that decides on its policies, and the rules and obligations of membership. This convenes every two years and elects a president and a Governing Board to oversee our work in between General Assembly meetings.

The IFRC is a component of the **International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement**, which includes the **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)**. The **statutes** and **strategy of the Movement** define specific roles, strengthen cooperation and coherence between components, enhance their shared identity, and elevate their combined effectiveness and efficiency in the service of mankind. Every two years, the Council of Delegates brings together the Movement to consider common action and advocacy. Every four years, the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent brings together the Movement and the world's states party to the Geneva Conventions to deliberate on major humanitarian issues.

## Towards 2020: doing more, doing better, reaching further

*Strategy 2010* set out the IFRC's strategic directions for the new millennium. This centred on the mission "to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity" and focused on four core areas: promotion of the Movement's Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values; 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

José Manuel Jiménez/IFRC

Action to reform organizational 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 modernized our organization, broadened our participation, expanded our volunteer networks, strengthened our accountability and extended our partnerships. We have shown that the diversity of the IFRC is of great practical value in reaching more people with a wider range of services. These have included humanitarian assistance 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 from *Strategy 2010* to *Strategy 2020*, we are resolved to do more, to do it better and to reach further. We will achieve this through:

- a streamlined inclusive strategy to guide the overall work of the IFRC including both 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
- enhanced focus on our development activities alongside our well-known disaster assistance efforts
- striving for equality in our organization and work, namely by ensuring that there is no gender-based or other discrimination in our policies and practices, and enabling greater participation by vulnerable people
- better ways of working together so that all our 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 adhering to our Fundamental Principles
- a harmonized 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 fulfils 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** when it is necessary to adapt to the challenges and opportunities presented by a fast-changing world. Recent decades have provided hope. Democracy is more widespread, standards of health

and education have improved, and advances in science and technology have combined with human ingenuity. The result has been greater creativity, productive enterprise and a more widely shared social consciousness, helping to lift millions out of poverty. However, such progress has been uneven and existing regional inequalities and projected global trends threaten to reverse hard-won progress.

Globalization, i.e. the world's increased interconnectedness and interdependence, is here to stay. However, its benefits are not fairly shared and the shocks of periodic financial and economic crises can have profound long-term consequences that exacerbate the disaffection arising from growing inequalities. The situation is made worse by the disadvantage and discrimination that arises from the interaction of changing demographic patterns including an ageing population and unplanned urbanization. Related factors include high levels of violence – particularly among young people – forced migration, 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. Climate change is set to alter profoundly the way we live, and how we seek and share further economic growth. These trends are likely to increase vulnerability on a large scale by heightening and creating new patterns of marginalization, impoverishment and insecurity.

Such complex and interconnected challenges require a change in mind-sets and attitudes, as well as changes in the way we live and how we relate to each other and to the planet we all share. These challenges include the opportunities opened up by a historic shift in the international political order towards a more multi-polar configuration of nations and transnational networks of non-state actors. For the IFRC, this means continued realignment with the changing nature of communities and their needs, and evolving patterns of volunteering. We will build new capacities, promote innovation in social mobilization, and harness new knowledge and advances in communications and technology. This will enable us to operate on the much greater scale that is necessary to meet the needs and vulnerabilities that we should tackle, given our overall size, reach and potential.

The vision of the IFRC is articulated accordingly and guides the particular mission statements of National Societies and the secretariat.

## VISION OF THE IFRC

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 (2007)*

IFRC

# WHAT WE DO

WE have consolidated the direction and progress that were initiated under *Strategy 2010* by focusing our vision on three mutually reinforcing aims for the next decade. The first strategic aim recognizes our well-known role and renews the commitment to be the world's leading actor in humanitarian action. The second and third strategic aims build on established service strengths and resolve to do more to promote development by preventing and reducing the underlying causes of vulnerability.

All our work is inspired by the humanitarian ideals reflected in our Fundamental Principles and values and, at the same time, advances development. For us, development means that everyone is able to achieve their full potential, and lead productive and creative lives with dignity according to their needs and choices, whilst fulfilling their obligations and realizing their rights. Achieving this requires a shift in attitude and a change of mind-set about the way that we live our lives. It also requires building appropriate social and institutional capacities. It is imperative that development is sustainable through the responsible use of resources so that current needs can be met without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.

## STRATEGIC AIMS 2020

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises
2. Enable healthy and safe living
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

# THE BENEFITS OF *STRATEGY 2020*

Informed by the local needs and vulnerabilities of the diverse communities where we work, and guided by the rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled, *Strategy 2020* is designed to ultimately benefit all who look to us to help to build a more humane, dignified and peaceful world.

> National Societies will be able to do more and better in working with vulnerable people in ways that are adaptable and relevant to local needs. They will have greater capacity and more sustainable resourcing. Their members, volunteers and other supporters will be more active participants as they will be better motivated, organized and supported. They will be more effective auxiliaries to their national authorities and more reliable partners to other humanitarian and development actors

> National Societies working collectively and supported by their 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 needs and rights of vulnerable people

> The Movement will benefit from stronger National Society partners and a more effective secretariat which, together with the ICRC, promotes and practises the Fundamental Principles and values that are our common foundation

# STRATEGIC AIM 1

## SAVE LIVES, PROTECT LIVELIHOODS, AND STRENGTHEN RECOVERY FROM DISASTERS AND CRISES

A disaster is a serious disruption of the functioning of a community through widespread losses and disruption that exceed its capacity to cope using its own resources. During disasters, due to natural and human-made hazards, or in crises that arise from violent conflicts, the immediate imperative is to save lives, reduce suffering, damage and losses, and to protect, comfort and support affected people. A disaster or crisis may arise as a sudden emergency or it may be slow onset. In either case, it is our basic obligation to be well prepared to use all effective means to help, according to the different needs of men, women and children – wherever and whenever this is needed.

### Preparing and responding to disasters and crises

Following a disaster or in a crisis situation, humanitarian assistance and protection must be appropriate to the requirements that have been identified through timely and specific assessments. Any humanitarian assistance must be sensitive to gender, age and other socio-economic considerations, as well as being proportionate to the magnitude of the situation. Assistance must be provided first to the most vulnerable people and delivered in a way that respects their dignity.

Being an integral part of communities allows us a continuous understanding of their needs, vulnerabilities and capacities. Systematic disaster and crisis management starts with preparedness for early action by trained and organized volunteers. It also includes maintaining and pre-positioning contingency stocks of essential supplies, and optimizing logistics and communications. Reliable early warning systems are instrumental in saving the maximum number of lives, and protecting assets and livelihoods. Additionally, our disaster and crisis response includes providing essential healthcare, food and nutrition, and water and sanitation. We help restore family links where these have been disrupted. We also lead the coordination of emergency shelter provision, as part of the agreed division of labour within the humanitarian assistance system.

Appropriate laws are crucial to ensure the speed and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance. Therefore, we emphasize the importance of national legal preparedness and international legal cooperation through the development and promotion of disaster laws, principles and rules. These seek to reduce operational barriers and strengthen the role of communities to ensure that relief and recovery measures are carried out efficiently in a manner respectful of the dignity and rights of affected people. We also promote pre-disaster cooperation arrangements that facilitate and regulate international assistance in order to enhance preparedness measures and increase the appropriateness and predictability of provision.

### Recovering from disasters and crises

The impact of a disaster or crisis can be reduced if the situation is stabilized as quickly as possible. This allows people to start rebuilding their lives and communities. Depending on the specific requirements, our recovery assistance aims to prevent further damage and loss, repair essential services, protect health, provide psychosocial support, restore livelihoods, and enhance food security. Recovery is carried out in such a way so as to rebuild more inclusive societies and reduce vulnerability to future disasters. Thus, recovering communities are made safer than before.

### Our disaster management system

As they are closest to the communities at risk of disasters and crises, building local and national response capacities is a primary responsibility of National Societies. However, we know that major disasters and crises can sometimes overwhelm even those who are best prepared. That is why National Societies have committed to support each other and have built up emergency response capabilities to do so. The secretariat has a constitutional obligation "to organize, coordinate and direct international relief action" as a core service to members of the IFRC. 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 global, regional, national and local capabilities. This gives us the confidence to handle the expected worldwide increase in the number and magnitude of major disasters. The ICRC and the IFRC work together concurrently to maintain substantial capacities to protect and assist people affected by armed conflict and violence.

American Red Cross

## EXPECTED IMPACT FROM STRATEGIC AIM 1

- Effective preparedness capacities for appropriate and timely response to disasters and crises
- Reduced deaths, losses, damage and other detrimental consequences of disasters and crises
- Improved restoration of community functioning after disasters and crises.

# STRATEGIC AIM 2

## ENABLE HEALTHY AND SAFE LIVING

Our specific contribution to sustainable development is through strengthening community resilience. This is the ability to adapt and cope with recurrent or prolonged disasters and crises, as well as with wider socio-economic changes, which enables people to protect and build on the development gains that have already been made.

We strengthen community resilience by helping people to be as healthy as possible and to prevent or reduce risks where they can, so that they may enjoy better and safer living that is also respectful of the environment. Community resilience is important for rich and poor people alike, particularly in the face of global threats such as climate change, economic crises and pandemics. Adapting ways of living to a changing world also requires us to advocate for supportive public policies, influence psychological and social attitudes, and reach out to help all those who are most vulnerable because they have the least means to cope.

### Better health

Good health – the state of physical, mental and social well-being – enables us to enjoy our human rights in fuller measure. Our health activities are intended to reduce individual and community vulnerability. Increased life expectancy, changing birth rate patterns, persistent gender inequalities, together with social, economic and personal behavioural trends, have all contributed to a significant change in disease patterns. Overall, these patterns are shifting towards non-communicable conditions. By 2020, the leading worldwide causes of death, disease and disability are expected to be heart disease and stroke, depression, road traffic crashes, 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 diminish but remain significant in lower-income countries. In addition, new viruses and other disease organisms with the potential to cause epidemics and pandemics will continue to occur. Our specific priorities for action are guided, therefore, by locally prevalent health patterns, within an overall approach as follows:

David Bebber/The Times

- We seek to expand the access that people in under-served communities have to primary and public health services, including during emergencies. We support health authorities by promoting basic skills in first aid, and using proven prevention techniques to tackle vector-borne and other communicable conditions. Tackling HIV and tuberculosis is our continuing priority along with focused efforts on malaria, immunizations, epidemic and pandemic preparedness, reproductive health and child care. We also promote voluntary non-remunerated blood donation, and advocate for the safe provision of blood and blood products. By dealing promptly with health emergencies and enabling early treatment of common problems such as malnutrition and maternal and perinatal complications, serious secondary consequences are reduced
- We support improved healthcare to enhance treatment benefits for the most vulnerable people through nutritional, educational and other complementary input, as well as psychosocial support. This includes

an integrated health system with services that are more accessible, gender and age sensitive, and also better connected at both primary and hospital level in order to meet the health needs of the communities they serve

> We encourage action on the underlying social, behavioural and environmental factors that determine good health. This action includes influencing public policies and social mobilization to act specifically on the local factors that have the greatest potential to reduce preventable death, disease, injury and disability. These local factors can include health education, greater access to potable water and sanitation, better personal hygiene, reduced exposure to communicable conditions, a balanced diet and exercise, tackling smoking, alcohol and other substance abuse, managing stress, countering prejudice against stigmatizing conditions such as HIV and tuberculosis, promoting safer sexual and reproductive behaviour, and improving safety at work, home and on the road. This also means breaking intergenerational cycles of neglect and deprivation that prevent many people from benefiting from health-enhancing opportunities and achieving their full human potential.

## Reducing disaster risk

Disaster risks are the chances of a disaster occurring that will have potentially harmful effects on lives, assets and livelihoods, arising from community exposure and vulnerability to natural and human-made hazards. We encourage comprehensive community action to eliminate disaster risks where possible and to reduce the occurrence and impact of disasters where primary prevention is not feasible.

Disaster risk reduction starts by working with communities to map the most significant locally prevalent hazards and to understand 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 those of men. Practical strategies include spreading awareness of a 'culture of safety' and promoting psychosocial attitudes that favour it. We also advocate for laws, government policies and incentives for risk reduction measures. At the same time, we can ensure that development programmes do not generate new hazards or that these are adequately mitigated. Furthermore, environmental and physical infrastructural improvements can be made to protect assets and maintain services in the event of disaster.

Long-term nutrition and food security is promoted where needed, through strengthening livelihoods, and increasing and diversifying food availability and accessibility for the most vulnerable people.

## Tackling climate change

A major driver of disaster risk is extreme weather events and environmental degradation, both of which have been linked to climate change. Recognizing that our understanding of the extent and impact of climate change will continue to evolve, we contribute to measures for adaptation – actions to reduce the vulnerability of communities to modified environments – and mitigation – environment-friendly behaviours that also reduce the extent of global warming which causes climate change.

Our climate change adaptation work is through scaling up disaster risk reduction measures and strengthening traditional methods of coping with disasters that are relevant in particular environmental contexts. We also contribute to mitigating the progression of climate change through advocacy and social mobilization to promote sustainable community development that optimizes communities' carbon footprints. This means 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 exemplify this through the way we conduct our own business throughout the IFRC.

## EXPECTED IMPACT FROM STRATEGIC AIM 2

- Better personal and community health, and more inclusive public health systems
- Reduced exposure and vulnerability to natural and human-made hazards
- Greater public adoption of environmentally sustainable living.

# STRATEGIC AIM 3

## PROMOTE SOCIAL INCLUSION AND A CULTURE OF NON-VIOLENCE AND PEACE

The most prevalent vulnerabilities arise not only from disasters and diseases but also from complex factors such as grievances that are born from deprivation and unfairness, marginalization that is rooted in inequality, alienation and injustice, or despair that comes from loneliness, ignorance and poverty. All too often, these are expressed through violence against oneself and others, and may be magnified into wider conflict within and between communities and nations.

All communities have groups of people – often hidden – who are unable to enjoy the general benefits that are accessible to mainstream society. Such people may be neglected, marginalized or excluded for many reasons such as social or economic disadvantage, their employment status, a lack of access to information, knowledge or modern communication tools, or perhaps due to public attitudes that stigmatize or discriminate against them. Such disadvantaged groups include women and girls, who are at risk because of their gender; older people; those with HIV or certain diseases and disabilities; children and young people in difficulty such as orphans, child labourers or those on the street; people who have been trafficked or displaced; refugees and other migrants; people of particular sexual orientation; members of minority groups; those subjected to harmful cultural practices; and countless others deprived of their human rights. Many of them may live in circumstances where they are subjected to violence, abuse and exploitation.

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

### Promoting the practical application of the Fundamental Principles

We advocate for a wider understanding and fuller, practical application of our Fundamental Principles. In the context of our mandate, we promote social inclusion through all our activities and services. We promote behavioural skills to communicate, mediate and diffuse tensions in a peaceful manner. We actively counter social prejudice, and encourage 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 and pre-empting violent conflict.

We start with ourselves. In functioning according to our Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values, the

Rikki Zulkarnaeni/FRC

British Red Cross

Ben Hondik

Spanish Red Cross

composition and working of National Societies reflects the diversity of their catchment populations including representation from vulnerable groups. We strive for equality at all levels in our organization and in all our work, ensuring that there is no gender-based or other discrimination in the allocation of resources and benefits, nor in participation and access to services and decision-making roles.

We use the same approach beyond our own organization to promote intercultural dialogue and harmony within and between communities. National Societies partner with their governments to disseminate and implement international humanitarian law encouraged and supported by the ICRC and the IFRC. We fulfil these tasks through education and training that are tailored to the needs of specific audiences. We provide protection when needed and make psychosocial interventions that influence attitudes towards violence in certain settings. Urban settings are a particular focus for attention. Our efforts include building capabilities to identify public policies and practices that exclude and alienate, and the communication and advocacy skills to address them through dialogue and diplomacy.

## Enabling better integration for disadvantaged people

We work proactively in a number of ways to change social attitudes and reduce the isolation and neglect experienced by disadvantaged people.

> We tackle stigma and discrimination through the way that we carry out all our work. This includes

the design of our disaster management, health and social services to ensure that they tackle prejudice and harmful attitudes and practices through education, advocacy and social mobilization. We provide an environment in which people who are marginalized and stigmatized feel welcome and safe, and where they are given an effective role in participating in our work

- We help to develop and maintain the autonomy and well-being of those made vulnerable by their disadvantage. This includes practical help with basic needs and psychosocial support, as well as protection and assistance for those affected by abuse and exploitation. Elderly people are a special focus for our attention
- 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 within mainstream society. For example, we tackle migrants' vulnerabilities by addressing the underlying causes of forced migration, providing help to vulnerable migrants who are in need of assistance and protection, reducing the risks that they face along their migratory routes, empowering them in their search for long-lasting and appropriate solutions, and promoting wider understanding of migrants' rights and their social inclusion within host communities
- We advocate for disadvantaged groups to have greater access to publicly available services. This includes promoting respect for the specific human rights conventions relating to disadvantaged people, and facilitating access to more open and adaptable health and social security services.

Jakob Dall/Danish Red Cross

## EXPECTED IMPACT FROM STRATEGIC AIM 3

- Greater public support for the Fundamental Principles and reduced stigma and discrimination
- Lower levels of violence and more peaceful reconciliation of social differences
- Fuller integration of disadvantaged people into their communities.

Jakob Dall/Danish Red Cross

# HOW WE WORK

HOW do we deliver our strategic aims? As the overarching consideration is to mitigate avoidable suffering and vulnerabilities using all effective means, we seek to organize ourselves effectively and efficiently through three key enabling actions. The first enabling action emphasizes the primacy of strong National Societies as the foundation for all that we do. The second enabling action is directed at strengthening the coherence and impact of our collective voice. The third enabling action is intended to deploy the whole range of IFRC capacities so as to maximize access and deliver the best results possible for the people we want to reach.

## ENABLING ACTIONS TO DELIVER STRATEGIC AIMS

1. Build strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
2. Pursue humanitarian diplomacy to prevent and reduce vulnerability in a globalized world
3. Function effectively as the IFRC.

Marko Kokic/ICRC

Fredrik Barkenhammar / German Red Cross

# ENABLING ACTION 1
# BUILD STRONG NATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

To be recognized as a National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society, and to uphold that status, the conditions stipulated in the Statutes of the Movement must be met. The National Society must adhere to those statutes and keep its own statutes up to date. It must be constituted as the sole National Society and extend its activities across the entire territory of an independent state where the First Geneva Convention of 1949 is in force. It must be duly recognized by its government on the basis of the Geneva Conventions and in 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 international humanitarian law. Its activities must be carried out under the authorized name and emblem by voluntary members and staff, who are recruited without discrimination.

## 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. National Societies define the core characteristics for their effectiveness, including good leadership with clarity on the respective roles of governance and management, and effective internal communication arrangements. They also

take responsibility for the protection of their own integrity and for sustaining their organizational development, service delivery and advocacy capacities. National Societies aspire to meet their own organizational structure costs through their own efforts, enterprise and partnerships, and by the sound and transparent management of available resources.

Each National Society is responsible, within its own context, for planning the scope and size of the services it can deliver on a reliable basis, including specific delivery targets. These are underpinned by necessary information collection and analysis, and monitoring and reporting systems that demonstrate accountability. Each National Society defines its own strategic plan based on its analysis of the needs, vulnerabilities and rights of its target populations. The strategic plan also identifies the service gaps expected to be filled by National Society activities, 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 organized branches or units with members and volunteers who have agreed to abide by the Fundamental Principles and the statutes of their National Society. When setting any additional membership criteria, such as the payment of a membership fee, a National Society recognizes that it must not discriminate and must remain open to all. Members have the opportunity to be elected themselves or to elect others to office and to hold accountable the National Society's governance.

National Societies attract their members, volunteers and staff from diverse backgrounds that reflect the communities where they work and without consideration of gender, ethnicity, sexual preference, class, religion or political opinions. Through governance and management, members, volunteers and staff are able to participate meaningfully in relevant decision-making processes. National Societies provide a safe workplace, and protect and promote the physical and psychosocial well-being of all who work with them.

National Societies value a learning culture and participate actively in the affairs of the IFRC to share their knowledge, expertise and resources with other National Societies. National Society education and training strategies are established accordingly and they subscribe to an independently validated, Federation-wide peer review mechanism to accredit well-functioning National Societies.

## Youth action

A special focus on young people is a crucial investment, not only for today but also for the future. The safety and protection of young people in vulnerable circumstances must be addressed, taking into account their age- and gender-specific needs.

In their multiple roles as contributors – and acknowledging their skills as innovators, inter-cultural ambassadors and peer-to-peer facilitators – young people are educated, enabled and empowered to be active in leading and participating in voluntary activities and in the governance, management and services of their National Societies. To this end, we use non-formal approaches as well as specific training and skills development. These are underpinned by dedicated youth networks and structures. We also encourage young people to continue membership as adults. Young people bring much-needed skills when working alongside the increasing numbers of older people in a spirit of mutual respect. This is crucial to the intergenerational transfer of experience that is vital to both progress and stability in society.

## 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, which can only be sustained through their own leadership and ownership of the process. For us, 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, capacity exists. This capacity can be mobilized and organized into National Society services to reach people who are particularly vulnerable. Therefore, building the capacity of local branches and units is vital as they form 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 many different ways beyond the places where they live or work to the networks of common interest within which they spend most time, including 'virtual communities' across the internet. We

are promoting new ways to reach these non-traditional communities through social mobilization and communication.

Voluntary service is at the heart of community-building. Volunteering promotes trust and reciprocity. It encourages people to be responsible citizens and provides them with an environment where they can learn the duties of democratic involvement. Volunteering within National Societies is carried out by people who are committed to the fundamental principles and motivated by their own free will without the expectation of material or financial gain. Our volunteers serve vulnerable people, and work towards a more humane and peaceful world. They contribute their time and skills regularly or occasionally in the delivery of services, in resource mobilization, administrative, governance or advisory functions. National Societies are committed to improve quality, standards, capacities and volunteer retention by creating a welcoming and socially inclusive environment. This environment means providing volunteers with training, supervision, regular evaluation and recognition; development opportunities that include designing and improving the work in which they are involved; insurance protection, equipment and psychosocial support; and a supporting local structure relevant to the tasks that they carry out.

As living trends continue to change how people volunteer, including more informal and non-institutionalized ways, the IFRC advocates for legal, social and economic policies that encourage and value volunteering more strongly in society.

Tom Van Cakenberghe/ornasia/IFRC

## EXPECTED IMPACT FROM ENABLING ACTION 1

- Expanded sustainable national and local capacities of National Societies
- A stronger culture of voluntary service, and greater youth leadership and participation in National Society and community affairs
- Scaled-up and sustained National Society services for the most vulnerable people.

# ENABLING ACTION 2
# PURSUE HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY TO PREVENT AND REDUCE VULNERABILITY IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

Our humanitarian diplomacy is concerned with persuading decision-makers and opinion leaders to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people, and with full respect for our Fundamental Principles.

Humanitarian diplomacy is a multi-directional effort that highlights the needs and rights of vulnerable people, whilst striving to give them a strong voice in all negotiation processes. We seek to prevent and reduce vulnerability by using appropriately the auxiliary role of National Societies in order to achieve greater access to people in need, and by drawing attention to the causes and potential consequences of emerging or re-emerging vulnerability. We promote the image of the Movement through our worldwide network of informed representatives who can project our work more widely. This is complemented by strong external partnerships and a diversified and expanded resource base.

## Auxiliary status: a specific and distinctive partnership between states and National Societies

Governments have the primary responsibility to address the vulnerabilities that exist in their countries, and the main auxiliary role of National Societies is to supplement them in the fulfilment of that responsibility. This recognizes that there are times, when circumstances dictate, that an independent body, accepted by all parties, is required in order to reach vulnerable communities, who may only be accessible in this way. The auxiliary role creates its own neutral and impartial humanitarian space, and allows access to beneficiaries by deploying Red Cross Red Crescent capacities that can operate freely, without hindrance, to serve vulnerable people according to their needs.

With the above in mind, National Societies create and strengthen relations with their public authorities – ensuring they are balanced and based on trust – by continuing to update any necessary revisions to the legal base of their status as auxiliaries. This specific and distinctive partnership is pursued through dialogue, trust, cooperation, mutual understanding and respect, thus allowing the most sensitive humanitarian questions to be raised in a confidential, constructive and independent manner. The auxiliary partnership gives National Societies a privileged seat in decision-making forums with governments, and a meaningful share of resources that are available for humanitarian action.

The auxiliary partnership includes:

- National Society participation in the implementation of the state's obligations on the basis of international law and the resolutions of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent; and cooperation in related tasks, such as health and social services, disaster management, and restoring family links
- The National Society's right to dialogue with the public authorities at all levels on matters within its competence. This includes consultation of the National Society on major humanitarian issues, and its participation and resourcing for domestic and international disaster relief and preparedness, and in health, social and other competent fields
- Creation by the state of an enabling environment for the National Society, including through appropriate legislation on its status, the use of the emblem, resourcing that is linked only to humanitarian motives, and other support that facilitates effective National Society functioning, for example, on voluntary service, tax and customs status
- Authorization of the National Society to assist the regular medical service of its armed forces and employment of National Society personnel within that framework, in accordance with the First Geneva Convention of 1949.

National Societies exercise initiative on tackling humanitarian needs where they have the means to do so. In their auxiliary role, they also have a duty to consider se-

American Red Cross

IFRC

Layton Thompson/British Red Cross

riously any request from their public authorities to carry out humanitarian activities within their mandate. States must refrain from requesting National Societies to act in conflict with the Fundamental Principles or the statutes of the Movement or its missions. National Societies have a duty to decline any such request and public authorities need to respect such decisions by National Societies. The state must also 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.

## Advocacy and communication

At local, national, regional and global levels, our collective voice is used to draw attention to the assistance and protection needs of vulnerable people. We also urge action to address the underlying causes of their suffering, and to prevent or reduce future vulnerabilities, conflicts and crises by providing early warning on emerging issues. We advocate for national legislation, development plans and disaster management strategies that are relevant and effective for vulnerable people, who should be able to express their needs, realize their rights, and make greater use of improved public services and expanded social safety nets.

The credibility of our advocacy work is underpinned by a well-informed and networked IFRC that connects all National Societies to ensure a consistent voice on our shared objectives. We take advantage of modern communications skills and technologies to influence decision-makers and opinion-formers, and to deepen public support for common humani-

tarian ideals. We do this by leading campaigns on specific themes and reaching out to all, particularly the younger generation. Within the IFRC, we use strong information-sharing platforms to share knowledge, promote innovation and create organizational cohesion – a common sense of belonging and engagement that extends from the global level to both national and branch levels. By using Federation-wide online collaboration tools, our volunteers, members and staff increase their effectiveness and benefit from extended social ties, whilst having quick access to state of the art expertise. A strong communications-minded culture builds the capacity of National Societies by allowing them to be seen, heard, utilized and, ultimately, better resourced to help people in need.

## Cooperation and resource-sharing

As a key pillar of the international humanitarian community and the development assistance system, we are committed to making a reliable and predictable contribution – one that matches our size and reach – towards meeting the needs of vulnerable people. In doing so, we are equally committed to greater consistency in our global, regional and in-country cooperation with partners, including those in the United Nations system (where the IFRC has permanent observer status), international financial institutions, regional groupings, non-governmental and civil society groups, professional networks and academic bodies, as well as in the private sector. Our commitment includes a willingness to lead when we are best able to do so. We seek to work in strong complementarity and coordination with others who subscribe to shared standards of good practice. In working together, we expect our partners to acknowledge our distinctive place nationally and in the international system, and to respect our mandate and independence of action. We also seek to promote international cooperation frameworks and systems that will improve the fairness, harmonization, quality and accountability of international assistance, as well as the further development of international law that is relevant to our work.

Helping others in need is among the most basic and noble of human instincts, and we are widely recognized as being the best placed to achieve this. In our partnerships with individual and other donors, we place emphasis on community action that contributes directly towards meeting the needs of vulnerable people through long-term results-oriented arrangements where resources can be shared. Our corporate partnerships – which may be at global, national or local level – are guided by the Fundamental Principles and clear ethical criteria that emphasize 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, governmental, and partner support, and more resources for addressing vulnerabilities
- Stronger recognition of community perspectives in the international humanitarian and development system and cooperation arrangements.

# ENABLING ACTION 3
# FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY AS THE IFRC

We are an international federation made up of National Societies of equal status and, as a whole, we are stronger than the sum of our individual parts. Collectively, we are responsible for progressing the objectives to which we are committed in this strategy. We know that we must maintain vigilance and dynamism in the context of the challenges and opportunities of a rapidly changing world. We do this by continuing to modernize our working methods, in the most appropriate and efficient ways, according to 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 a code of conduct that emphasizes respect for vulnerable people, and sensitivity to diversity, culture and equality. We practice integrity in the way that we give and receive help, and accept individual and collective responsibility within the Movement. We welcome cooperation with external partners in accordance with our Fundamental Principles.

## Cooperation within the Movement

The Movement is committed to expanding its overall contribution to meeting humanitarian needs. The practical means for doing this is through improving our coordination mechanisms, tools and training. These build on the complementary mandates of the Movement's components to achieve closer cooperation, quality and efficiency, and the better development of National Societies.

The Statutes of the Movement identify the respective roles of its components. These are complemented by the *Agreement on the organization of the international activities of the components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement* – the Seville Agreement of 1997 – and its Supplementary Measures adopted in 2005. This defines the established roles and temporary leadership responsibilities in relation to the organization 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 IFRC acts as lead agency in situations of natural or technological disasters, and other emergency and disaster situations in peace time (or where peace has been largely restored) where the resources required exceed those of the National Society of the affected country. The IFRC also has the lead role in the coordination of international development support to National Societies. The ICRC has the lead role in technical and legal assistance to prepare National Societies for activities in case of armed conflict, and to support them in promoting 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 IFRC or ICRC, whichever the case may be, as and when it has the operational capacity to do so.

The 'lead' functions identified above are not exclusive but rather a coordinated division of labour that is inclusive of all Movement components in all circumstances. National Societies are gaining in strength and are assuming a progressively greater leadership role. The Seville Agreement will be reviewed accordingly.

## Working together in partnerships and alliances

National Societies welcome support from their Movement partners in long-term partnerships that are based on their strategic plans. These partnerships are led by the National Society concerned and encourage efficient collaboration through a set of practical rules for harmonization; including shared approaches to conducting needs analysis; 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. National Society partners align themselves to the systems and procedures of the National Society concerned, recognizing that this promotes their development and increases cooperation effectiveness and impact. Partners are expected to contribute towards the core operating costs of the National Society concerned so as to strengthen its long-term capacity.

The imperative to tackle major but avoidable suffering is a Federation-wide obligation. Thus, in circumstances where serious needs and vulnerabilities arise that have not been foreseen, the National Society concerned may request special operational alliances to provide additional resources that go beyond what is locally available. This should allow the IFRC to collectively scale up in order to tackle the particular challenge. Alliance modalities are tailored to the needs of the situation and the deployed capacities of the National Society concerned and those of the collaborating allies from within and outside the Movement. Global alliances are formed at inter-country level – usually coordinated by the IFRC's secretariat – to establish standards and norms on particular topics, project our collective voice through representing and advocating the Red Cross Red Crescent's position, and mobilize global commitments and resources for a specified cause. The secretariat may be invited to help the National Societies concerned to manage their partnerships and alliances when this is needed because of local capacity constraints.

## A well-functioning secretariat

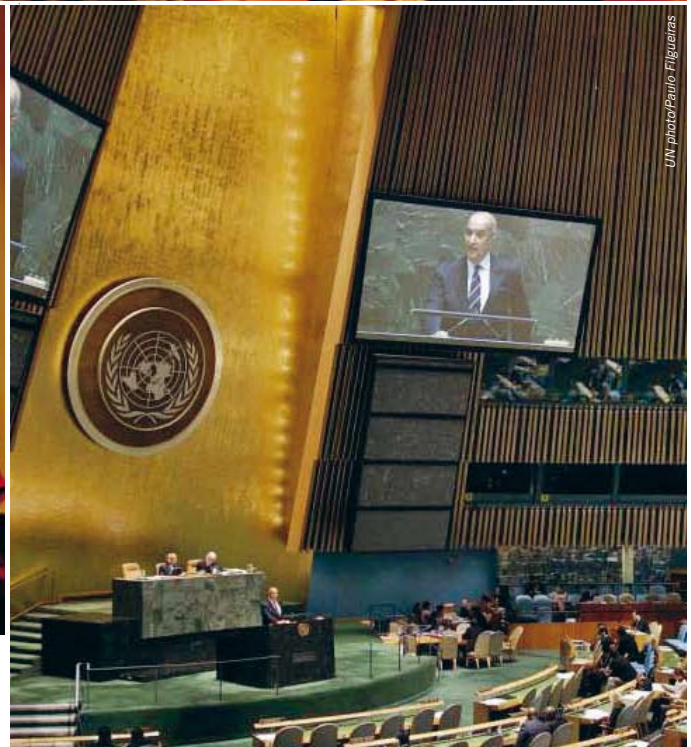
The secretariat represents the IFRC globally to protect and promote its identity and to serve the interests of National Societies. The secretariat serves and connects National Societies through membership services. These are the essential support services derived from the constitutionally mandated functions of the IFRC that all National Societies are entitled to share, within the limits of available resources, and that are generated from the statutory membership contributions of National Societies and other resources.

IFRC

Boris Heger/ICRC

Thierry Gassmann/ICRC

Thierry Gassmann/ICRC


UN photo/Paulo Filgueiras

The secretariat supports governance and the 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. As a catalyst for change and renewal, the secretariat also maintains the institutional memory of the IFRC. It encourages systematic planning, performance monitoring and reporting, and promotes standards, norms and common strategic frameworks. It draws on Federation-wide resources, networks and centres of excellence (located within designated National Societies) to provide these services and to share knowledge, expertise and innovation.

The secretariat may also be tasked to organize and manage the direct provision of services when necessitated by circumstances of major vulnerability. It may also be funded additionally to provide supplementary services when this helps National Societies achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness by strengthening coordination, sharing common services, or reducing administration costs.

The secretariat is organized to carry out its functions with efficiency, impartiality, professionalism and accountability through a geographically decentralized structure that deploys resources and authority closest to where it can best support National Societies. At the same time, there is strong strategic direction and oversight from the secretariat in Geneva so that our operational strategies are globally consistent and provide a high-quality, predictable foundation for the collective work of the IFRC.

## Responsible governance

Governance – at all levels of the IFRC – is accountable to the members who elect them. While National Societies are self-governing under their own statutes, they subscribe to common Federation-wide standards of good governance.

The principal purpose of good governance is to ensure that stated objectives are fulfilled and effective outcomes are achieved whilst obtaining good value for the resources invested, and ensuring that the organization's values and reputation are maintained. Good governance is clear on its relationship with executive management and takes a proactive, planned approach to fulfilling its resource mobilization and other responsibilities. This includes ensuring that sound risk management systems are in place, as well as compliance mechanisms to deal with complaints and to safeguard integrity. Good governance is rigorous and transparent in its decision-making, and has access to good-quality information and expert advice to help it do so.

In constituting the statutory governing bodies at different levels of the IFRC, we appoint or elect those with knowledge, skills and experience, striking a balance between continuity and renewal. We also ensure inclusivity of representation, reflecting the diversity of our members and an appropriate balance of gender and age considerations. Governance members are given the opportunity to develop their capabilities further and to evaluate their performance as individuals and groups.

Our constitution and rules of procedure set out the governance arrangements for the IFRC, 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 the governance arrangements of the IFRC whilst ensuring broad participation and closeness to member National Societies.

## Our accountability

We are committed to a culture of transparent accountability to our stakeholders. These are the people we serve, those who entrust us with resources for action, people who work within the IFRC, 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 the clients of our services, our members, volunteers and other stakeholders. We also recognize that how we perform within our own National Societies reflects on the credibility and reputation of other National Societies and the IFRC as a whole. Therefore, as we have an obligation to each other to uphold common standards, we are committed to compliance and accreditation within 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 clients, 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 operate.

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 harmonized 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 the trust of all stakeholders and amplifying our humanitarian diplomacy efforts.

As a minimum, the Federation-wide performance management and reporting framework will consolidate feedback from National Societies on key indicators: the numbers of volunteers, staff and local units providing services; the numbers of people reached by them; and the resources received and expended on these services. These indicators are a proxy for 'doing more and better and reaching further' as they illustrate the degree of success achieved in developing our capacities, and demonstrating the quality and magnitude of work that attracts enhanced resources. We also 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 IFRC activities
- Greater IFRC contribution to meeting vulnerability needs at global, national and local levels.

Nobuyuki Kobayashi/ Japanese Red Cross

NEVADA

# NOTES

# THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

## 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 life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace among all peoples.

## 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 Red Crescent society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on 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.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) promotes the humanitarian activities of National Societies among vulnerable people.

By coordinating international disaster relief and encouraging development support, it seeks to prevent and alleviate human suffering.

The IFRC, the National Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross together constitute the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

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