



# Red Cross Red Crescent Forum (RC<sup>2</sup> Forum)

Inspiration for action



**Power of humanity**  
Red Cross Red Crescent Forum (RC<sup>2</sup> Forum)

9 November 2017, Turkey



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# Executive summary

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On 9 November 2017, the RC<sup>2</sup> Forum brought an original experience to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Statutory Meetings in Antalya (Turkey). The day-long event gathered over 700 Movement representatives and senior leaders in a series of innovative and dynamic panels, workshops and artistic performances.



# Executive summary

Hosting worldwide experts, the RC<sup>2</sup> Forum highlighted key topics, trends and challenges that may shape tomorrow and define the Movement's activities and identity. The topics were identified during six engagement sessions, which brought together 78 National Societies for consultations in 2017.

The morning explored topics under the rubric of **“Societal Shifts”**, such as new forms of violence, digitalization, trust, demography and youth, taking a broad perspective and looking beyond the lens of the Movement. External speakers and National Societies provided insights on these different topics, focusing on how swiftly society is changing and the need to adapt our action accordingly. Named **“The Way We Work”**, the afternoon sessions focused on exploring the tools and concepts available to help modernize the Movement's action: from innovative financing and cash assistance to inclusion, diversity and integrity.

National Societies discussed their innovative projects to inspire their peers and encourage mutual learning. In addition, experts from non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and the private sector contributed their perspectives and knowledge.

With over 15 sessions using various methodologies and formats, the RC<sup>2</sup> Forum provided an opportunity for the Movement to reflect on its agility and readiness in a rapidly changing world.

In the two years until the next International Conference, outreach and engagement will be broadened to include States, communities, international organizations and experts, in addition to Movement components. This dialogue will contribute to the development of a concept for the 33<sup>rd</sup> International Conference.



# Executive summary

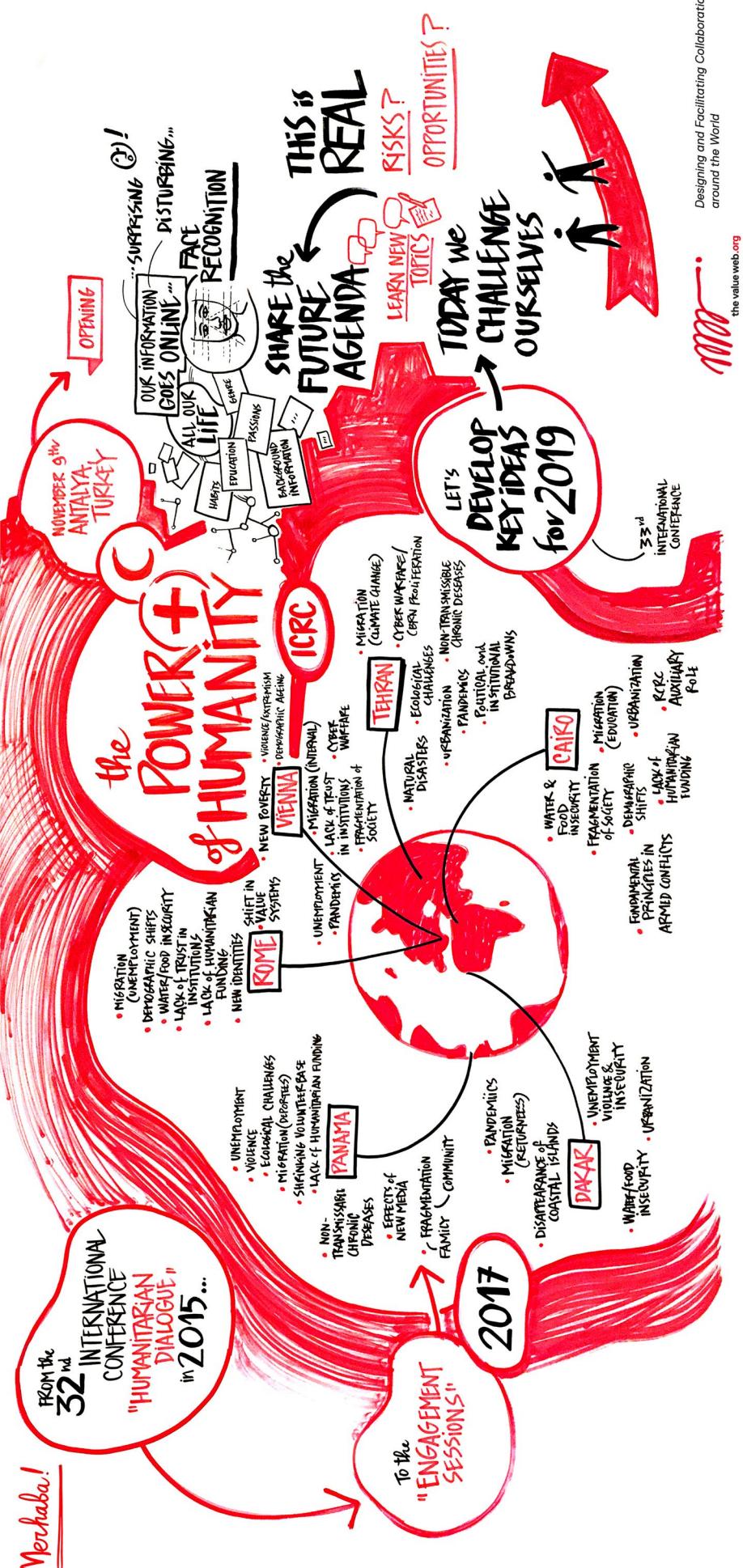
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## Engagement sessions

In 2017 six engagement sessions took place around the world with the objective of identifying major emerging issues, trends and key concerns for the future, while sparking substantive conversations on the potential agenda of the upcoming International Conference. The meetings, which took place in Panama City, Rome, Cairo, Vienna, Tehran and Dakar, gathered 78 National Societies and IFRC and ICRC representatives in brainstorming

sessions held over one and a half days. A diversity of current and future concerns were identified, ranging from job insecurity and climate change to the impact of social media and cyberterrorism. The exercise demonstrated that Movement components are increasingly exposed to new issues emerging in a rapidly evolving world and that steps need to be taken to adapt to these changes.





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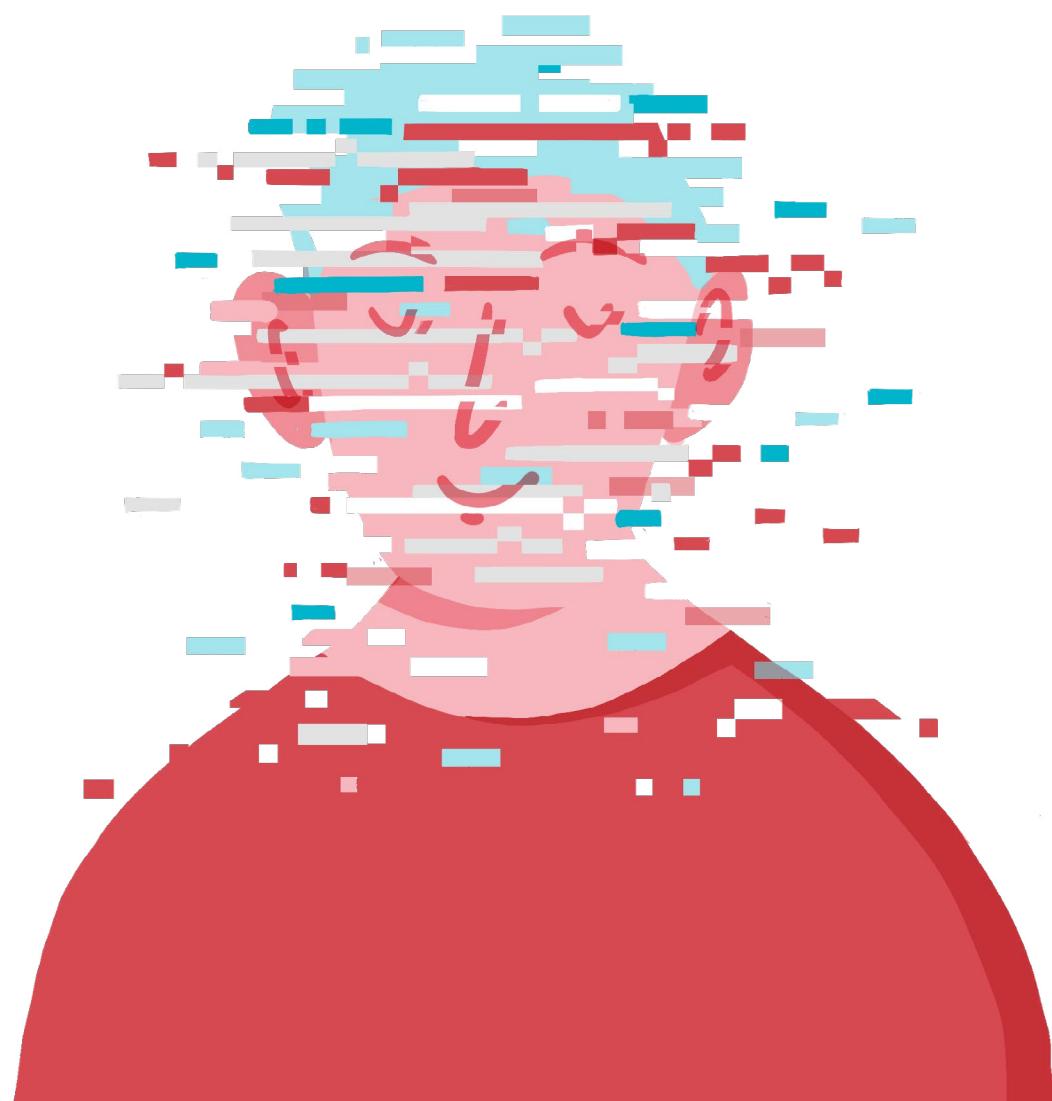
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# The RC<sup>2</sup> Forum

The RC<sup>2</sup> Forum opened with an artistic performance, “**Deep Blue Dream - reloaded**”, led by performers Lauren Huret and Hunter Longe. In this live play, the protagonists, a computer (Deep Blue) and the audience (Movement participants and observers), become aware of how deeply exposed they are to each other and how privacy is stripped away. The objective of the performance was to experience the intricate relationship between modern technology and the individual, and the impact it has not only on privacy and fundamental rights, but also on the Movement’s humanitarian action.



# Societal shifts

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The first part of the RC<sup>2</sup> Forum was dedicated to discussing major emerging or shifting societal issues. Each of them shed light on the profound transformations occurring in society as a result of economic and political changes and intensified by rapid developments in technology and communication.



## Societal shifts

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### Technology, digitalization and the future of our society

This session featured specialists from CERN, the Global Public Policy Institute and PersonalData. IO who were invited to discuss the impact that new technologies and digitalization have on society. Among the key issues raised were data privacy, cybersecurity, accuracy of information and the “fake news” phenomenon. Participants also discussed the existence of a digital divide within the Movement, observing that National Societies have varying levels of digital literacy and access to technology, which poses considerable limitations to their work.

The challenge of managing and digesting the overload of information was also a concern discussed during the session. The discussion also highlighted the need to embrace the opportunities presented by new technologies, focusing in particular on how technology can help improve efficiency and reduce the distance between the Movement components and the people it serves. Through the smart use of technologies, Movement components have the opportunity to position themselves as a source of life-saving, useful and timely information – “information as aid”.

**Options for action** were raised, including preparing Movement components to meet increasing demands for transparency and accountability; ensuring that the development and implementation of data protection is prioritized; raising awareness on data privacy and developing platforms to exchange experiences; exploring how humanitarian principles can be considered in the development and use of future technologies; and investing in developing partnerships with external experts.

### In institutions we trust?

The discussion on decreasing trust in institutions was introduced by the Pakistan Red Crescent and five external speakers representing Edelman London, the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Integrity Action, Leo Burnett and the University of St. Gallen. According to Edelman’s trust barometer, 2017 was the year of “trust in crisis”, with confidence in governments, media, NGOs and business at an all-time low. As aid becomes increasingly politicized and militaries and other actors acquire a larger role in humanitarian operations, the Movement is likely to be affected by this loss of trust.



## Societal shifts

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Participants emphasized that without trust the Movement's action will be questioned and it will become more difficult to operate on the ground. At the same time, they recognized that the Movement has assets that it could use to leverage this trend: its volunteer base, its proximity to affected communities and the delivery of principled humanitarian action.

Participants and experts discussed some **options for action**, including developing a more local and people-centred approach; strengthening internal and external communication; engaging communities in project development, implementation and monitoring; adopting measures to build trust within the Movement; and recognizing that trust is a key factor in ensuring that the Movement remains volunteer-based.

Trust was a key point that resonated throughout the discussions, confirming that its decline is a major concern for the Movement.

## How do we cope? Emerging violent trends affecting society

This session, led by the Austrian, Colombian and French Red National Societies and an expert from *The Sentinel Project*, focused on the effects of shifting patterns of violence on society and on humanitarian work.

The Austrian Red Cross discussed how youth radicalization, religious extremism and xenophobia are growing threats that undermine social values and contribute to the fragmentation of communities. Technology, in the form of social media, was identified as one factor enabling the spread of radical ideologies. Developing initiatives to educate communities and to manage and use new communications technologies effectively was identified as a need not only for organizations working specifically on preventing conflict and violence, but for humanitarian actors more generally.



## Societal shifts

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For the Colombian Red Cross, urban violence has humanitarian consequences that require targeted and sustained interventions that address its increasing prevalence in the community, particularly among youth. How to effectively address this type of violence was the focus of their contribution as they shared the results of their analysis and the responses they have developed, which include urban populations as part of the solution.

The French Red Cross highlighted their concern about the increase in terrorist attacks and the effect that declaring a state of emergency has on operations. They shared their reflections on how the raising number of violent attacks in France had prompted them to develop new responses to assist people affected by them. They also reflected on the need to maintain a balance between the role of National Societies as auxiliaries to the authorities and

their role as advocates of the Fundamental Principles; on how to maintain their independence and impartiality while ensuring the safety of their volunteers; and on how to preserve the trust of the communities they serve. The session concluded with a presentation by *The Sentinel Project* of one of their key initiatives which aims to prevent violence by countering misinformation and fake news through information management.

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Several **options for action** were identified, including partnering with other organizations to better understand the causes of emerging forms of violence; mapping out existing expertise and responses within the Movement; creating more opportunities to share knowledge; and investing in humanitarian diplomacy activities to influence public policy.

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## Societal shifts

Another morning session, led by the *Global Humanitarian Lab*, focused on disruptive demographic shifts and how strategic foresight can help identify future challenges and solutions. This interactive session explored scenarios based on potential population changes, their impact and how communities and organizations can be better prepared.

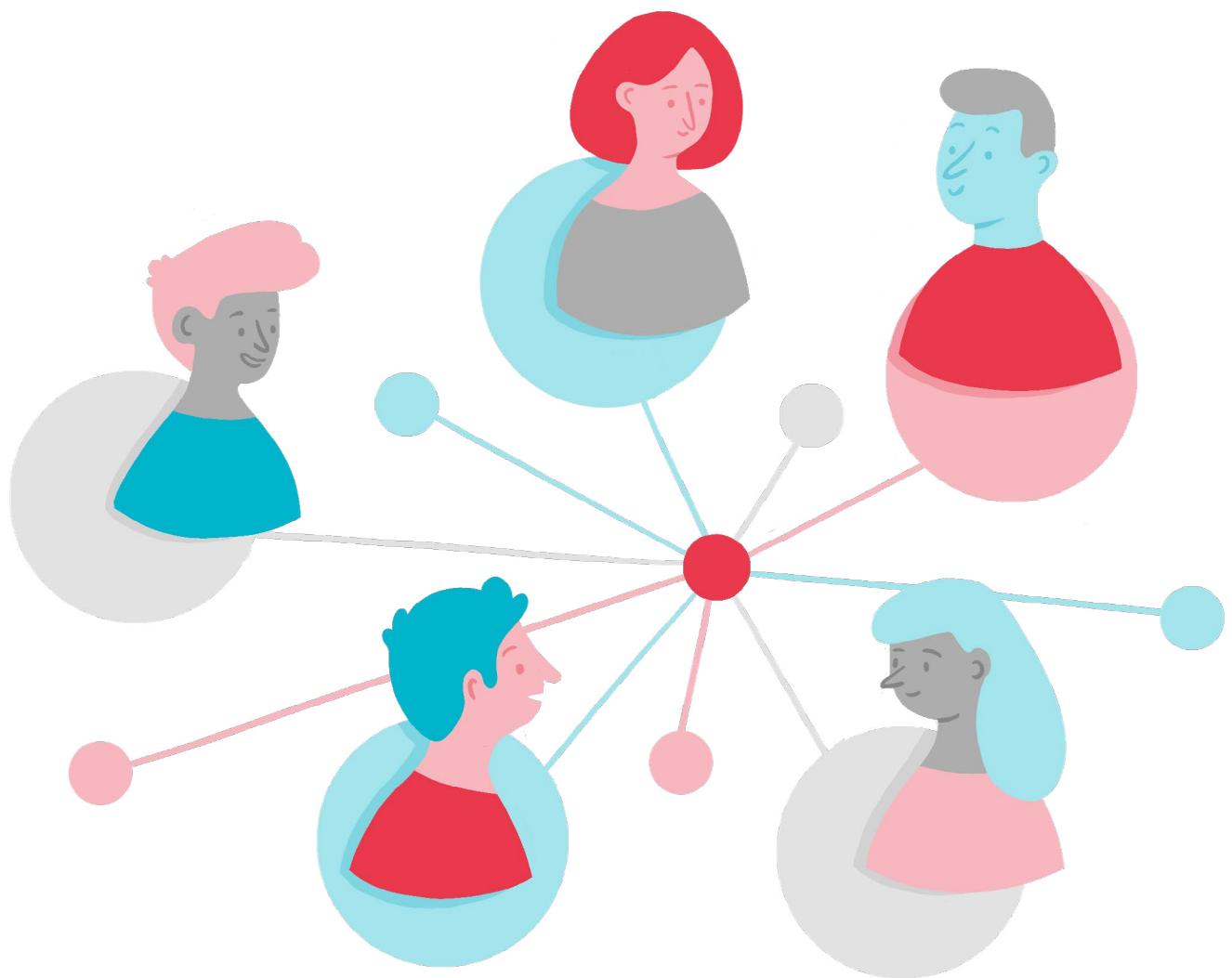
In addition, a session led by *PeaceFirst* on global youth and culture change discussed the role that youth have in generating social change, the need to scale up youth involvement in the Movement and how to leverage new technologies to encourage global interconnectedness.

Lastly, Portuguese Red Cross Youth presented the “EuropAlien” project, a strategy board game designed to develop social and personal skills and promote positive change, and Newcastle University led a hands-on workshop where participants created suitcases for an imaginary future.



# www: the Way We Work

The Forum's afternoon sessions focused on exploring innovative methodologies and tools to improve humanitarian action.



## **www: the Way we Work**

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### **What is the future of humanitarian financing?**

The session consisted of a panel discussion among private sector actors (Facebook and the co-creator of the ICRC Humanitarian Impact Bond), NGO experts (*Disperse* and *AID.Tech*) and the Kazakh Red Crescent. The panel discussion was followed by exchanges with the participants.

Against the backdrop of a changing financial and technological landscape, participants exchanged ideas on the new financing methods and tools that are available to the humanitarian world and discussed the need to develop partnerships with private sector and other actors to capitalize on their strengths and expertise. *AID.Tech*, for example, explained how the use of blockchain, a software platform for digital assets, in the humanitarian space could help streamline financial transactions by enabling real-time tracking and ensuring greater transparency. The creation of the ICRC's first Humanitarian Impact Bond was also highlighted as a bold step towards increasing the capacity of the organization to raise funds in the long-term using a traditional investment model.

These contributions from external experts emphasized the need for humanitarian financing structures to become closer to the investor market, to reduce costly "small deals", to use outside expertise and to invest in agile collaboration models.

The Kazakh Red Crescent (KRC) shared their insights on how they have been working to transform from "recipients of aid" to "donors". By adapting a new business model and adopting innovative and collaborative methods, they aim to become a more efficient and financially independent National Society. The KRC emphasized, however, that to achieve this, a commitment to invest resources and to establish partnerships with other actors was paramount.

At the end of the session, it was concluded that the changing financial landscape and the development of new fundraising methods present an opportunity for the Movement to review the way it does business and ensure its financial viability.

## **www: the Way we Work**

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Participants discussed **options for action**, including looking beyond current models and collaboration arrangements; actively seeking to partner with those that possess the right skillsets and expertise; adopting more horizontal models of cooperation; investing in knowledge sharing and best practices; and improving management, transparency and compliance rates.

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### **Smart aid**

The Swedish and Swiss National Societies, the IFRC and the ICRC led a roundtable on sustainable aid. The objectives of the roundtable were to identify the key sustainability issues that should be acted on, looking to the future, and to engage the Movement to work more strategically on sustainable development. The concept was approached in its broadest sense, integrating ecological, social and economic perspectives, to ensure that it contributes to the long-term success of the organization. The discussions highlighted how diversity, equality, transparency, integrity, accountability and environmental responsibility need to be discussed in conjunction with each other and not

just as separate issues. Participants called for a new way of working that supports National Societies becoming less dependent on external sources, having a strong legal base, reflecting the diversity of the people they represent and contributing to preserving the environment.

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Some **options for action** identified included ensuring greater integrity and accountability; enhancing trust within the Movement and with other actors; strengthening leadership; and developing strong partnerships. To that end, participants proposed that a Framework for Sustainable Aid and a corresponding plan of action be developed.

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### **From small to big data**

This session was led by the Spanish and Dutch National Societies and the IFRC, with the participation of an external expert from *UN Global Pulse*. Internet, social media and other technological developments have allowed people to access information on a scale never seen before.



## **www: the Way we Work**

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For the humanitarian world, advances on the way data is gathered and analysed present an opportunity to develop better, faster and more efficient responses. At the same time, greater data access and availability means that users have a responsibility to safeguard the privacy of data owners and to develop measures against misuse.

While the Movement has unparalleled access to information, one of the key challenges identified in this session was the significant gap there seems to be between National Societies in terms of data access and data literacy. Participants highlighted inefficiencies in the way that data is collected in the field, the lack of collaboration and common platforms and the limited resources allocated for the acquisition of appropriate technological tools.

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They highlighted **options for action** to be further discussed, such as identifying partnerships across the Movement and with external stakeholders; capitalizing on existing tools and knowledge; and exploring how to repurpose data sets for humanitarian use.

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### **“Missing Maps” – putting people on the map**

In a demonstration of data in practice, Missing Maps ran a workshop on how to use crowd-sourced information for mapping under-represented areas of the world and how to engage digital volunteers. The session illustrated the continuous need to chart vulnerable areas to achieve better and faster responses.

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The **options for action** identified included more engagement of volunteers in information gathering and mapping and the scaling up of partnerships.

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### **Future of migration**

The British, Swiss and Turkish National Societies shared their reflections on the emerging challenges of this increasingly complex humanitarian issue and current responses. Among the key challenges identified were the provision of long-term assistance, such as basic services and education; an increasingly restrictive legal environment; protection of children and vulnerable groups; and the growing link between migration and human trafficking.



## www: the Way we Work

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Participants found that to strengthen the Movement's response various **options for action** need to be explored, including increasing its advocacy/public awareness role; improving coordination among National Societies in sending, receiving and transit countries; and developing more migrant-centred policies and activities.

### Are we reaching our potential?

The Australian, Maldivian and Bulgarian National Societies, together with the IFRC, led a scenario-based session where participants were encouraged to identify ways that would enable the Movement to reach its potential and respond effectively to future migration-related challenges.

The session also served to provide National Societies with an opportunity to establish links between regional networks and

devise tactics for collaboration across borders and regions. The participants' findings corroborated those of the previous session, in particular that migrants should be given a central role in response development and that cooperation modalities need to change.

Specific **options for action** were elaborated, addressing the issues of coordination, communication, issue identification and cross-country collaboration and defining responsibilities for each Movement component. Both sessions encouraged National Societies to use their role as auxiliaries to governments to strongly advocate for respect for human dignity and humanitarian principles and action.



## **www: the Way we Work**

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### **“Piloting the perils”: an innovative simulation about changing climate risks**

The IFRC Climate Centre brought to the RC<sup>2</sup> Forum an interactive simulation game that encouraged participants to re-think the Movement’s role in preventive action and climate change. Participants were pushed out of their comfort zones to inspire them to think about how to use existing knowledge and resources (scientific data, forecasting) to address the causes and humanitarian consequences of this phenomenon.

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Participants identified several **options for action**, ranging from providing psychosocial support and having a better understanding of the humanitarian impact of the collapse of agricultural systems, to scaling forecast-based financing.

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### **Cash-based interventions and innovations in the humanitarian aid sector**

This session, led by the Turkish, British and Kenyan National Societies, introduced participants to the use of cash-based interventions for humanitarian response. The benefits

of this innovative way of delivering aid were highlighted, including ensuring dignity by empowering the people that receive assistance, stimulating local markets, fostering social cohesion, and improving transparency and accountability. Participants stressed that the Movement will have to re-think the way it delivers aid and embrace cash transfer as a viable and efficient way to support people in need.

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Several **options for action** were identified, such as seeking partnerships with banks, exploring further potential offline cash solutions, building capacity within the Movement, and sharing lessons learned on cash assistance.

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In addition to these discussions, “Taste the change”, an event that involved tasting the food of tomorrow, highlighted the need for the Movement to increase its commitment to agricultural sustainability and environmental protection.



# Beyond the RC<sup>2</sup> Forum

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The RC<sup>2</sup> Forum aimed to provide an opportunity for the exchange of experiences, knowledge and solutions to emerging issues that impact the way the Movement works.



## Beyond the RC<sup>2</sup> Forum

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The purpose of the process, including the engagement sessions that were conducted in the months prior to the event, was to provide a platform to share ideas about the challenges ahead and how the Movement needs to adapt to remain relevant. In this respect, the Forum encouraged open and horizontal dialogue among all Movement components on current and future concerns.

In the context of the Statutory Meetings, the Forum sought to provide a bridge between International Conferences and ensure continuous dialogue about upcoming humanitarian issues. The issues identified through this process

will be subject to deeper analysis throughout 2018 and 2019, which will support the development of a concept for the 33<sup>rd</sup> International Conference.

Broader outreach and engagement with National Societies, States and other stakeholders will contribute to bringing the most relevant issues to the 33<sup>rd</sup> International Conference and enhancing its role as a global humanitarian policy-making platform. By constantly broadening its vision, the Movement will be able to identify the adjustments needed to better protect and serve people affected by war, disasters and other emergencies in a neutral, impartial and independent manner.

# We welcome your feedback

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Please write to  
[conferences@rcrcconference.org](mailto:conferences@rcrcconference.org)  
if you have any questions, comments or suggestions.



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