

COMMISSION III — 12 December 2019

Trust in humanitarian action

Context

Trust is the foundation of humanitarian action. Access, support, and respect for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's mission depends on the trust of the people and communities we serve, of the relevant authorities, and of the general public.

Trust in humanitarian action is on the agenda of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent due to the declining trust in institutions and governments, an increase in public scrutiny, and calls for stronger integrity and accountability. This commission will explore how the components of the Movement can work together with States to maintain and strengthen trust in principled humanitarian action. It will provide a platform to have an open and honest discussion about the respective responsibilities of Movement actors and States, the resulting expectations, and how to achieve a balance between mitigating the risks that are inherent to humanitarian action and the need to share residual risks.

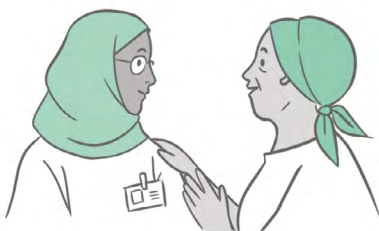
Overall objective and expected outcomes

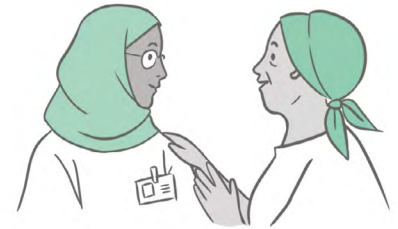
1. Create a common understanding about why trust is so important to humanitarian action.
2. Bring clarity about the respective responsibilities of Movement actors and States in maintaining trust in principled humanitarian action, including in terms of risk mitigation and risk sharing.
3. Underline the fact that everyone can and must make a collective difference and highlight concrete actions to strengthen trust.

Format

This commission will consist of an opening plenary and reconvening plenary, where the topics from previous commissions will be connected to the issue of trust. Between these two plenaries, there will be three spotlight sessions on the following topics:

- **Trust through community engagement and accountability:
What fundamental changes are needed?**
- **Integrity and risk sharing**
- **Creating a conducive environment for principled humanitarian action**





TRUST THROUGH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY: WHAT FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES ARE NEEDED?

Date and time: Thursday 12 December, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Objective

Community engagement and accountability (CEA) is increasingly recognized as an essential priority – one that is pivotal to operational excellence, building acceptance and trust, and contributing to long-term community resilience. It ensures that local actors and communities are equal partners in humanitarian action and that programmes and operations are informed by the voices of the most vulnerable.

While significant efforts have been undertaken to ensure that Movement actors commit to strengthening and improving community engagement and accountability, fundamental changes are still necessary to increase the participation of the people we serve and ensure greater accountability to them.

The objectives of this spotlight session are to create a shared understanding of the interdependence of trust and community engagement and accountability, to share what constitutes successful community engagement and the impact it can have, and to identify what actions and steps are necessary from States and the Movement to enhance CEA.

Key Questions to be discussed

1. What does successful community engagement look like?
2. What is the responsibility of Movement actors and States?
3. What can be done to help make the impact of the Council of Delegates resolution and the Movement-wide commitments for community engagement and accountability immediate and positive?
4. How can we enable and inspire youth, volunteers, and local communities to take action?

Supporting resources

- [Resolution on Movement-wide commitments for community engagement and accountability](#)
- [Movement-Wide Commitments for Community Engagement and Accountability, background document](#)



INTEGRITY AND RISK SHARING

Date and time: Thursday 12 December, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Objective

The components of the Movement must demonstrate the highest standards of integrity, as unethical behaviour can greatly erode the public's trust in humanitarian action, including with the communities that the Movement serves. The Movement is responsible for ensuring service delivery in accordance with the Fundamental Principles, the Code of Conduct and comprehensive statutory, regulatory and policy framework requirements, as these are the foundation of principled humanitarian action.

Donors also have a role to play by incentivizing and supporting integrity-related processes and mechanisms, and at the same time ensuring that their compliance requirements do not result in a transfer of risk whereby an organization's ability to deliver principled humanitarian action is hampered.

The objectives of the session are to:

- demonstrate what is being done by Movement components and other humanitarian actors to live up to high integrity standards
- identify connections and tension points in the way integrity is practised by humanitarian actors by discussing and understanding the different perspectives and risks
- to begin a dialogue on what needs to be done together to strengthen integrity and manage compliance requirements, while enabling principled humanitarian action.

Key Questions to be discussed

1. What are Movement components and other humanitarian organizations doing to ensure and demonstrate integrity?
2. What are the tension points between integrity-related compliance requirements and the ability of National Societies and other humanitarian organizations to deliver a principled humanitarian response?
3. How can States and Movement components work together to demonstrate compliance with integrity requirements while maintaining space for impartial humanitarian action?

Supporting resources

- [Council of Delegates integrity statement](#)
- [Strategy 2030, chapter on ensuring trust and accountability](#)



CREATING A CONDUCTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR PRINCIPLED HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Date and time: Thursday 12 December, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Objective

Trust requires principled and effective humanitarian action. Principled and effective humanitarian action requires a conducive environment; and State practice can hinder or support this conducive environment. The session will seek to explore how to build this conducive environment at the global, national, and local levels, and specifically to:

- clarify the indispensable role of States in creating a conducive environment for effective principled humanitarian action through the necessary legal, policy and operational measures, including vis-à-vis their National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, with whom they have a special relationship
- highlight key challenges, such as how certain measures taken by States (laws, policies, actions, discourse, etc. at the local, national and global levels) can undermine this conducive environment, and give examples of their impact at the local level
- showcase specific examples of good practice which have overcome these challenges and which promote this conducive environment
- explore ways of working together to collectively address such challenges, in the spirit of responsibility and risk sharing.

Key Questions to be discussed

1. What is meant by a “conductive environment”?
2. How can States either enable or hinder this conducive environment? What is the impact of such measures for principled humanitarian action?
3. How can States and Movement components work together to overcome challenges and promote a conducive environment?

Supporting resources

- [World Disaster Report 2018](#)