

## 2022 Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

### WORKSHOP

## Increased local action: Investing in sustainable and strong National Societies

### OUTLINE

---

#### Context

Strong, independent, self-sustained and trusted local organizations are key to supporting community resilience, providing life-saving humanitarian action and contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In an interconnected world, the scale, quality and effectiveness of our collective local action is, however, directly linked to the capacity of all components of the Movement, including National Societies and their branch network, to be fit for purpose.

The continuous development and transformation of National Societies to achieve this is the essence of National Society Development (NSD) work.

**The role of National Societies as auxiliaries** to the public authorities in the humanitarian field is a unique area of comparative strength in the humanitarian ecosystem, with most National Societies reporting strong communication and coordination with their public authorities, coupled with a good understanding of their neutrality and independence. At the same time, the COVID-19 experience saw growing demands from government authorities for National Societies to act in support of their operations and in response to humanitarian crises – in most cases, without any substantive investment in capacity enhancement. Supporting National Societies in their engagement with their national authorities about their role (especially in complex emergencies compounded by the effects of climate change, pandemics and/or armed conflict or large-scale internal strife) and negotiating the necessary investment in capacity enhancement is a key priority for the overall sustainability of the network of National Societies.

The 2019 Council of Delegates approved the new **Guidance for National Society Statutes** and committed all National Societies to **revising their statutory** or constitutional base frameworks within a period of five years (i.e. by the end of 2024). The IFRC and the ICRC have been working on developing new tools and approaches, including the establishment of a pool of specialists to support National Societies that require support in their revision process. Now, nearly halfway through this timeline, there is a need to further support this process in order to ensure that all National Societies have had the chance to adapt their statutes in line with the new standards and with evolving realities in their respective contexts.

Supporting National Societies in ensuring their **financial sustainability** at national and branch level, with a special focus on strengthening their capacity to generate sustained income by leveraging existing assets, ensuring strong financial management capacities and developing

their comparative advantage in service provision, is another key priority for a sustainable network of National Societies. The recent developments spearheaded by the IFRC in areas of financial sustainability (for example, establishing the first Community of Practice on Financial Development and developing a financial sustainability dashboard) need to be further expanded and consolidated. The experience of the Movement Virtual Fundraising Hub and the National Society Investment Alliance and the recent development of the IFRC resource mobilization strategy are cornerstones on which to build better support for National Societies and effective peer support and learning.

The full potential for peer support across the Movement has yet to be deployed. The 2019 IFRC **NSD Compact**, endorsed by the ICRC, sets four collective commitments to ensure the alignment of all NSD support to the identified priorities of National Societies. While steady progress has been made, more needs to be done to avoid inefficiencies and duplications in overall NSD support (which includes support from non-Movement actors, such as UN agencies) and ensure the predictability and quality of such support.

### Overall objective and expected outcomes of the workshop

To identify concrete avenues to strengthen the overall sustainability of each National Society, focusing on the auxiliary role, the legal base (with special attention to statutes) and financial sustainability and leveraging the complementarity, expertise and support of the Movement<sup>1</sup> components for the delivery of enhanced, principled and impactful services by National Societies to their communities.

### Key questions

The session will be jointly moderated by the IFRC and the ICRC and will build on concrete case studies to stimulate discussion by the participants on the following key questions:

1. How can National Societies be effectively supported in strengthening their auxiliary role in the humanitarian field in accordance with the Fundamental Principles?
2. How can National Societies be effectively supported in reviewing and revising their statutes?
3. How can the financial sustainability of National Societies be further strengthened?
4. What needs to be done differently to maximize our collective efforts on NSD support?

### Supporting documents

- *IFRC NSD Policy (2022 Draft)*
- [IFRC NSD Framework \(2013, rev 2020\)](#)
- [IFRC NSD Compact](#)
- [The auxiliary role, IFRC](#)
- [Guidance for National Society Statutes](#)
- *Background support on “[The Fundamental Principles in Action](#)”, 32nd International Conference*

---

<sup>1</sup> **National Societies** are the owners of their own development.

The **IFRC** has the mandate, responsibility and know-how to support the development of National Societies and their capacity to deliver relevant services.

The **ICRC** has a complementary mandate in building capacities with National Societies to prepare for and respond to armed conflict and to preserve and strengthen principled humanitarian action in all contexts.