



Power of humanity

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

19-23 June 2022, Geneva

SUMMARY REPORT ON WORKSHOP

Virtual Fundraising Hub 2.0 – A commitment to growth

Date and time: Wednesday, 3 March 2022 09:00–10:30 (CET): English, Arabic, Russian
17:00–18:30 (CET): English, French, Spanish

Chair/facilitator/moderator: Bernt Apeland, Secretary-General of the Norwegian Red Cross

Speakers/panellists/presenters: Bernt Apeland (Norwegian RC), Katie Sams (ICRC), Nena Stoiljkovic (IFRC)

Executive summary

In 2017, the Council of Delegates adopted Resolution 2, “Movement-wide principles for resource mobilization” (CD/R2/17), with the aim of increasing the income of components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) and meeting growing humanitarian needs by maximizing the Movement’s fundraising potential. One of its primary goals is to work together to support the development of the fundraising capacity of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies). However, the past four years have brought a number of changes for Movement resource mobilization: the global COVID-19 outbreak underscored the need to explore more technological and digital-based ways of attracting supporters, and although the Movement has managed to attract income to support its response to the pandemic, peer organizations have nevertheless grown at a faster rate over the past five years.¹ Movement components therefore needed to reconvene to explore ways to build on the progress made and fast-track their fundraising development in order to complete the much-needed transformation in fundraising. At the workshop, a three-year strategic plan for the Virtual Fundraising Hub (Hub) was proposed which had been initially discussed at a retreat of the Movement Principles for Resource Mobilization Steering Committee (Steering Committee) and was set within the context of the Movement-wide vision, goals and principles for resource mobilization. Feedback was gathered on the plan, which the Steering Committee members will further develop with the goal of establishing a consensus on tangible landmarks towards which Movement components will be working by implementing the principles.

General observations and key highlights

1. Opening – Bernt Apeland

In 2017, the Council of Delegates adopted the Movement-wide Principles for Resource Mobilization (principles) in response to the Movement increasingly lagging behind other humanitarian actors in fundraising.

¹ Source: International Fundraising Leadership Forum, peer review, 2020.

1.1 The vision and principles

Through the resolution, we committed to fundraising with the aim of being leaders in local and global resource mobilization for humanitarian work; mobilizing the power of humanity, particularly during emergencies, enabling partners and supporters to provide help to those most in need; and ensuring individual and collective financial sustainability in a spirit of solidarity and good partnership, thus recognizing that the Movement is stronger together than the sum of its parts. In order to maximize our potential we must build capacity and competency within the whole network and commit to investing in fundraising growth.

1.2. The Virtual Fundraising Hub

The Hub is one of the deliverables of Resolution 2. The Hub's mission is to transform Movement fundraising to meet increasing humanitarian needs. It aims to drive fundraising excellence through (1) a fundraising centre of excellence, (2) the digital fundraising platform, (3) data analysis and (4) the Fundraising Investment Fund. This 2017 initiative was brought forward by a Steering Committee made up of National Societies.

2. Celebrating success – Katie Sams

The existence of the Hub and its Steering Committee is a great achievement: it provides a much-needed platform where all Movement components come together to discuss topics related to resource mobilization. The breadth and reach of our actions worldwide are unparalleled; powered by our complementary mandates and universally recognized Movement brand. These strengths remain under-leveraged in our collective resource mobilization efforts. By increasing our engagement and fundraising, while improving our operational impact, the Movement has the potential to position itself as the global go-to network for partners.

2.1. Reporting on progress

We have been in two phases: (1) from 2017 to 2019 setting up the Hub, and (2) from 2019 to today further consolidating the Hub's structure. In 2019 we submitted the first progress report on the principles and in 2022 the second.

2.2. Extraordinary circumstances: COVID-19

COVID-19 has been a defining moment for the Movement; it has enabled us to strengthen our focus on digital fundraising, through the Movement's new digital fundraising platform, iRaiser. COVID-19 has also made it even more important for National Societies to achieve financial sustainability. Examples of Movement engagement during COVID-19 have included the global Coca-Cola campaign, the regional DirecTV campaign, and donations from the Johnson & Johnson Foundation for COVID-19 activities.

2.3. Workstream progress: Learning and networks

Progress: created an Emergency Fundraising Guidance Tool, developed a fundraising strategy and a market study template, held a successful virtual International Fundraising Skillshare.

Next steps: develop a roadmap for the "centre driving fundraising excellence", identify a chair to lead the workstream, procure a new platform for working, begin planning the 2023 fundraising skillshare, and develop a roster of fundraising experts to support our work.

2.4. Workstream progress: Global digital fundraising

Progress: produced the iRaiser platform and rolled it out to 16 National Societies, appointed a project manager, continued the promotion and reporting process, and launched several corporate employee giving campaigns.

Next steps: evaluate potential solutions for National Societies without compatible payment gateways, onboard an additional 20 National Societies, pilot the first multi-country campaign, and establish a strategy to support National Societies in digital fundraising capacities. \$

2.5. Workstream progress: Fundraising Investment Fund Progress: mapped existing Movement projects to invest in fundraising, piloted three market studies and pursued discussions to align with the National Society Investment Alliance and the Capacity Building Fund of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Next steps: follow up with pilot investment projects and establish a fundraising investment fund mechanism.

2.6. Workstream progress: Data collection and analysis

Progress: agreed to shift main KPI from the number of participating National Societies to the percentage of income represented, made data collection more timely, improved reporting, hosted regional webinars to present data, and increased participation in the more detailed individual giving data analysis (INDIGO).

Next steps: focus on large markets that do not yet consistently contribute data, collaborate and align with the Federation-wide databank and reporting system team and the National Society Development Financial Sustainability team, keep improving analysis and provide additional support on data use.

2.7. Looking ahead

A 2020 evaluation of the Hub found that progress towards goals has been slower than intended and there was a need for clearer priorities and targets. The Steering Committee seeks to restate the Movement's collective ambitions for bolstering growth and reconfirm Movement components' full commitment to implementing the principles and supporting the Hub, in order to enable us to achieve those fundraising ambitions.

3. Reimagining the future – Nena Stoiljkovic

We see opportunities for the Hub to help increase the Movement's overall market share in the humanitarian sector, and to scale-up its support to National Societies. Growth has been slower than for most other peers, and the question is whether we should have a shared target. We would like a collective commitment to growth, with all Movement components contributing. With our presence on the ground, ability to work together, and the potential to expand iRaiser to many more National Societies, we could increase our ambition for overall digital fundraising.

3.1. Future steps

Future steps include providing a structure within which Movement components will work together as well as setting tangible, quantifiable objectives for the next three years that align with the principles, contribute to their implementation and grow the Movement's fundraising market share in comparison with peers. To this end, the Steering Committee has suggested: (1) reviewing the ambitions, accomplishments and challenges so far, (2) learning from the experience of others in the sector, and (3) agreeing on the ambitions for the next three years by setting clear priorities, targets, and milestones.

3.2. Learning from experience

Amongst other things, there is currently insufficient focus on National Societies' fundraising capacity, insufficient expansion of iRaiser, and limited funds available for investment. Clear, shared ambitions are now essential to leverage the full potential of the Movement.

3.3. Proposed future priorities for the Hub

Create opportunities to leverage the potential of the Movement, including by: (1) speeding up development of a fundraising investment fund, (2) increasing focus on building up National Society fundraising capacity (3) revamping the learning and networks workstream, (4) increasing the use of iRaiser, and (5) increasing the number of National Societies willing to invest in and support these initiatives. The Hub will support this through more joint and global campaigns, by incubating partnerships with key philanthropists, by connecting more National Societies to iRaiser and by investing in National Societies' fundraising capacity. To allow the Hub to provide this support, three specific enabling objectives have been suggested: (1) setting a baseline for key targets, (2) engaging with National Society fundraising directors, (3) increasing participation in the International Fundraising Skillshare.

Key points raised

Questions and reflections from the audience

What are some examples of individual, bilateral or multilateral good practise by components of the Movement in implementing the principles?

Examples identified included the digital fundraising initiatives with Coca-Cola and development of the iRaiser platform. The American Red Cross was able to work closely with other members of the Movement during the COVID-19 crisis, and channelled millions of dollars to the Movement appeal. The Ukrainian Red Cross raised five million dollars from global donations within one week of setting up iRaiser.

What areas could we explore further to better achieve our goals?

We could investigate ways to: build a global budget and strategy and how to incorporate it into national targets, tap into the multilateral space, fundraise for joint appeals as a Movement, take advantage of opportunities for joint global campaigns on powerful stories like the Ukraine crisis, invest in establishing collaboration between fundraisers, take a joint approach to key philanthropists, explore collaborations, and find innovative funding.

What practical steps can we take to ensure Movement components achieve fundraising growth?

Identify more KPIs and tangible targets, investigate leading and lagging indicators, set up a global fundraising briefing process following instances like the Ukraine crisis, collectively create a fundraising forum to tap into for perspective, find ways to communicate what is agreed on the international level to the national and regional levels, invest in capacity-building for smaller National Societies, and invest in capacity-building for the use of iRaiser.

What strategic targets can be set for the next three years to indicate success for the Hub?

More global campaigns; stronger onboarding to the iRaiser platform; increased iRaiser search connectivity; greater investment in resource mobilization for National Society development; diversification of funds; alliances created with different companies, foundations and government; increased trust of the population; and more accountability to beneficiaries and donors.

Recommendations and next steps

- Pursue further engagement with fundraising directors
- Outline and agree on KPIs and targets for the Hub (Steering Committee)
- Develop a three-year-plan with more global campaigns, investment in resource mobilization and engagement with key philanthropists
- Continue onboarding National Societies onto the iRaiser fundraising platform