



150 years of humanitarian action
**Council of Delegates of the International
Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement**
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COUNCIL OF DELEGATES

OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

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STRATEGY FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

“New Strategy for the Movement”

BACKGROUND REPORT

**Document prepared by
The Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent**

Geneva, October 2013

Background

By the Council of Delegates in 2013 the Strategy for the Movement has been in operation for 12 years, and the updated version for 8. For the future, the Strategy must either be extensively updated, or it must be replaced.

At the Council of Delegates in 2013, Resolution CD/11/R3¹ called on the incoming Standing Commission

- “2.3. To update, in close cooperation with all components of the Movement, the open ended actions of the present Strategy, in order to implement them and consequently report to the 2013 Council. This effort should focus on coordinated and efficient Movement level cooperation, to strengthen the Movement's image and performance in agreed key areas, in order to deliver upon our mission for the most vulnerable. It should also take into account trends in the internal and external working environments.”

The new Standing Commission dealt with this issue at several meetings and decided that, rather than create a special mechanism for this, it would deal with the matter itself.

It also determined that the current Strategy for the Movement has been implemented, although there are certain actions that are ongoing by nature, or incomplete for other reasons, and that a replacement should incorporate those elements that remain, be a much shorter document, be developed as a rolling plan for consideration by each Council of Delegates and focus on strategic issues before the Movement.

Taking into account the various reviews and evaluations of the Strategy for the Movement, the Standing Commission reviewed proposals for a replacement developed by its Secretariat, and which has been subjected to informal consultations with a number of National Societies and others with experience of Movement matters. A proposed new strategic instrument is annexed to this brief report.

A possible replacement for the Strategy for the Movement

The evaluation of the Strategy for the Movement undertaken between 2009 and 2011 noted that

“significant progress was recorded in the fields of capacity building, Movement fora, response to emergencies, areas involving auxiliary role and effective communication. *Less impressive results* were registered on integrity issues and links with the private sector. External trends and best practices attracted the *least interest*, or were not addressed.”

In developing and strategic tool, the Standing Commission has based its thinking – in addition to what is noted above – on several considerations:

- I. The Movement has a confederal structure. One characteristic of such structures is that they derive some of their successes from its management, structure and rules,

¹ http://www.standcom.ch/download/cod_2011/cod_2011_resolutions/item_3/CD11_R3_SfM_EN.pdf

but as much as or more from values, processes, and relationships: namely, what we all believe in, how we work together, and how we relate to one another.

- II. That it is important to preserve continuity from past strategies
- III. That the new instruments should supplement and build on strategies developed by components of the Movement – the ICRC, the International Federation, and National Societies.
- IV. The overarching importance of the Fundamental Principles in underpinning all strategies and plans for all components of the Movement
- V. Placing emphasis on the value of shared approaches rather than common objectives
- VI. The need to change strategic directions in line with the rapidly changing environment in which components of the Movement work – on their own, with one another, or with external partners.
- VII. The importance of establishing an overarching new Strategy that incorporates thinking developed in other importance processes such as the work on a framework for Movement co-operation, the continuing work to improve Movement Fora, the international branding initiative and the increasing attention being paid to understanding the Fundamental Principles.
- VIII. Confidence in the capacity of all components of the Movement to make use of a strategic instrument they have adopted, and their willingness to share experience of its implementation at the next Council of Delegates

With that as background, the Standing Commission proposes to the Council of Delegates to approve the attached prototype replacement² for the Strategy for the Movement, as the starting point for Standing Commission consultations with National Societies with a view to adopt a new Strategy at the Council meeting scheduled for 2015.

² Its precise layout and “decoration” remains to be developed – the version attached is originally a small brochure.

New directions for the Movement

Humanity is the Future



Reaching out

- ☐ Working together
- ☐ Working with others

Table of Contents

The Fundamental Principles	3
Our Goals	4
Foreword	5
From the old to the new	6
Working together	7
Working with others	8
Learning and Renewal	8

Foreword

Celebrating 150 years of humanitarian action, the Movement can look back on – and be proud of – its many achievements.

Nevertheless, the world is changing, rapidly and profoundly, and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement faces serious challenges:

- Beneficiaries are better informed and better educated: better able to express their needs and interests
- Increasing, more coherent and better organised competition at the international level and the domestic with greater success than the Movement in attracting funding support
- Closer scrutiny and more demanding expectations of States, and the public
- Need to be, and perceived to be, efficient
- Preserving the Movement's convening power and its unique bond with States.
- Effective partnerships externally
- Working well together internally

We have several strategic instruments. National Societies' own plans. The International Federation's Strategy 2020 and the ICRC's Strategy for 2011-2014. All these give us a sense of direction, and a shared platform for action.

The Strategy for the Movement, first adopted in 2001 and then renewed in 2005, served us well: most of it has been implemented. Those elements which have not yet been implemented will be managed by the Components of the Movement that are directly concerned.

In this document we have chosen a new approach: we have identified broad areas to pay attention to, and have organised these into the format set out on the following pages.

What each Component prioritises is a matter for its own determination. When we meet again at the Council of Delegates, we will share experiences and, together, revise the Strategy for the following two years.

National Societies, the ICRC and the International Federation have achieved much. Now we must achieve more.

Existing Strategies

The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement has agreed on many important directions for itself and for its individual components: we have much to build on:

National Societies have, increasingly, invested in their own strategic plans, drawing on and contributing to, those agreed on internationally.

The Strategic Objectives of the Strategy for the Movement were:

- Strengthening the components of the Movement
- Improving the Movement's effectiveness and efficiency through increased co-operation and coherence
- Improving the Movement's image and its relations with governments and external partners

The ICRC's strategy 2011 – 2014 "Achieving significant results for people in need" contains four Strategic Directions:

- Reinforce the ICRC's scope of action
- Strengthen the ICRC's contextualized, multidisciplinary response
- Shape the debate on legal and policy issues related to the ICRC's mission
- Optimize the ICRC's performance

Strategy 2020 of the International Federation, "Saving Lives, Changing Minds" has three Strategic Aims under the motto "Doing more, doing better. Reaching further"

- Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises
- Enable healthy and Safe living
- Promote Social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace

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 amongst 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 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 one 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.

From the Old to the New

What remains from Strategy for the Movement

An evaluation of the Strategy for the Movement undertaken in response to a decision at the Council in 2009 noted:

“significant progress was recorded in the fields of capacity building, Movement fora, response to emergencies, areas involving auxiliary role and effective communication. Less impressive results were registered on integrity issues and links with the private sector. External trends and best practices attracted the least interest, or were not addressed.”

While both integrity issues and links with the private sector are important shared concerns, as are external trends and best practices, these are already dealt with in processes unfolding outside of the Strategy or better dealt with independently of it.

The issue of Movement Fora has been handled through a Working Group of the Standing Commission, and the question of Movement Co-operation through extensive consultations between ICRC, the International Federation and National Societies.

These issues will be pursued by the Standing Commission, the ICRC and the International Federation, with National Societies, over the coming two years.

Structure of the New Directions

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has a federal structure. One characteristic of such structures is that they derive some of their successes from its management, structure and rules, but as much as or more from values, processes and relationships: namely, what we all believe in, how we work together, and how we relate to one another.

In that spirit, the present document is focusing on “Working together” in two dimensions: how Components of the Movement do this, and how we work with others: our external partners.

We are not prescriptive in saying how we work together or work with others; this will vary from time to time and from location to location.

The important thing is that the conversation is kept going and is not allowed to stop, for if that happens the machinery of co-operation can become too formal and bureaucratic.

Important processes designed to improve our co-operation; our meetings, our image and our fundraising are already underway: these must continue.

And each component of the Movement is responsible for the outcome.

Working together

We believe these issues are central to our ability to work well together, and to work effectively with external partners:

Values

- Accountability to beneficiaries, donors and one another
- Contribute to the new Millennium Development Goals
- Uphold and adhere to the Fundamental Principles
- Celebrating one another's successes

Process

- Adapt to fast changes: at home and abroad
- Quality: the beneficiaries deserve it, the donors demand.
- Learning – from experience and from one another
- Training our volunteers and staff
- Technology:
- Research: increase our knowledge
- Capacity: invest in it

Relations

- Develop a common narrative
- Move towards common appeals
- More communication and consultation between meetings
- Effective partnerships with external actors
- A clear and strong voice

Working with others

Shared Approaches to our Work

Over the coming two years, we will – each according to the specific circumstances – work on or contribute to developing methods, procedures, and mechanisms that will improve our approaches to:

- Relations with governments (auxiliary)
- The form and contents of Movement Fora
- Co-operation with one another
- Co-ordination of operations
- Collaboration towards common goals
- Humanitarian Diplomacy
- Donors
- Resource Mobilisation
- Communication and consultation between meetings
- External actors and partners

Learning and Renewal

To be successful it is necessary to learn from experience, and use that learning to make new and better informed decisions.

To that end, all Components of the Movement commit themselves to share with one another in whichever form they find appropriate and well before each Council of Delegates, their successes, frustrations, uncertainties or reasons for celebration.

At each Council of Delegates, Components of the Movement will be invited to debate and update the document as an instrument that underpins their thinking and action, over the following two years.

The existing strategies – at the national as well as the international level – contain their own objectives, indicators of progress, and reporting systems. This strategy has none of that: National Societies, ICRC and the International Federation will find their respective approaches to implement and document the results. And then they will tell one another: they will be accountable to each other.