



United for Humanity

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

3–4 December 2026, Geneva

Principled and accountable use of information and communication technologies in humanitarian action

DRAFT ZERO RESOLUTION

June 2026

EN

CD/26/DRX.X
Original: English
Draft

Document prepared by
the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent
Societies, American Red Cross, Australian Red Cross, British Red Cross, Icelandic Red Cross, Lebanese Red
Cross, Netherlands Red Cross, Kenya Red Cross Society and Swedish Red Cross

DRAFT ZERO RESOLUTION

Principled and accountable use of information and communication technologies in humanitarian action

The Council of Delegates,

understanding that the world is becoming more digitized; that information and communication technologies (ICTs) encompass multiple concepts, systems and processes; and that digital technology has permeated all aspects of life and work,

recognizing that ICTs are evolving at a rapid pace; that advances in emerging and disruptive technologies – such as artificial intelligence, social media, biotechnology, surveillance and space technologies – are fundamentally reshaping how people, organizations, and States work, transact, collaborate, and engage with one another; and that governance and regulatory frameworks are fragmented,

emphasizing that ICTs are essential for efficient and effective humanitarian operations, presenting opportunities to improve service delivery speed and efficiency, increase aid effectiveness, enhance capabilities, and create new avenues for two-way communication and transparency in the fulfilment of humanitarian mandates,

reaffirming that, to ensure respect for individuals' rights and dignity, the creation, deployment and use of ICTs by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) and its components must be guided by the Movement's Fundamental Principles, humanitarian mission and commitment to do no harm, and by international law,

affirming that ICT initiatives must be intentional and built on the needs, contexts and perspectives of people and communities, and that lived experience, localization and knowledge transfer should be prioritized,

recognizing that trust is a core operational enabler; that humanitarian response is rooted in the expectation that the Movement is available to support people affected by disasters, crises, and armed conflicts and other situations of violence; that this expectation extends to ICTs, including in situations where digital infrastructure might be disrupted; and that the misuse or misperception of ICTs may undermine the access, acceptance and safety of humanitarian actors,

acknowledging that the level of digital maturity varies across the Movement and across countries and contexts, including with regard to digital infrastructure, connectivity, data storage, cybersecurity, domestic and international legal frameworks, resourcing and funding; that these variations should be recognized and taken into account; and that equality of access to ICT solutions and processes is in the shared interest of all,

highlighting that the use of ICTs may have unintended impacts that could undermine the ability of the Movement to fulfil its aims and humanitarian mandate; that this is particularly true of emerging technologies, where the risks can be less predictable and therefore harder to swiftly mitigate; and that risks include the exacerbation of inequalities, data loss and mishandling, and surveillance and protection risks stemming from digital exclusion and bias,

emphasizing that humanitarian organizations are committed, under core humanitarian accountability standards, to continuously researching, monitoring and evaluating the outcomes and impact of their operations, including their use of current and future ICTs,

recalling the Movement's commitment to safeguarding the dignity and rights of individuals affected by armed conflicts and other emergencies in its use of ICTs, as enshrined in previous resolutions, including (i) Resolution 1 of the 2019 Council of Delegates, "[Movement-wide commitments for community engagement and accountability](#)"; (ii) Resolution 12 of the 2022 Council of Delegates, "[Safeguarding humanitarian data](#)"; (iii) Resolution 4 of the 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (International Conference), "[Restoring Family Links while respecting privacy, including as it relates to personal data protection](#)"; and (iv) Resolution 2 of the 34th International Conference, "[Protecting civilians and other protected persons and objects against the potential human cost of ICT activities during armed conflict](#)",

recognizing that because ICTs may not be explicitly designed to integrate humanitarian needs and vulnerabilities, there is a need to adapt current approaches to technology research, design, development and adoption in order to embed principled and accountable use of ICTs in the process, highlighting, in particular, the critical importance of responsible technology design, delivery and use; data-sharing and privacy principles; collaboration on cyber risks; and the sustainability and affordability of digital solutions,

respecting that existing widely accepted frameworks and practices in technical areas, such as humanitarian accountability, cybersecurity, software standards, data protection and procurement, can guide principled and accountable use of ICTs, including with regard to data collection and processing and the downstream impacts of their use, noting, in particular, laws and Movement practices reflecting the importance of data privacy and protection,

understanding that determining the appropriate digital solution involves complex choices; that the goals of simplifying the digital ecosystem, reducing dependency on a small number of providers, and enhancing data governance, processing and security are in tension; and that building and maintaining appropriate interoperable ICT solutions within the Movement, including open source, may afford greater transparency, adaptability and control, strengthen accountability, and allow humanitarian principles to be embedded directly into the design and operation of digital services,

emphasizing the inherent role of dialogue and engagement in the technology space, such as between Movement components and technology providers, social innovation companies or research and academic institutions, or among Movement components,

recognizing that a life-cycle management approach to ICTs may reduce harms to people and the planet; *noting* that ICT supply chains – from extraction and use to disposal – may significantly contribute to environmental damage, climate change and pollution, and that this may contradict or undermine the Movement's work in other areas aimed at addressing such ills; and *acknowledging* the Movement's commitments to reducing harms and encouraging the use of ICTs that reflect a commitment to sustainability,

1. *calls upon* the Movement to acknowledge the integral role of ICTs in efficient and effective humanitarian operations, and the need to centre international law and the Movement's Fundamental Principles, humanitarian mission and commitment to do no harm, as well as the needs of communities and widely accepted frameworks and practices, and to increase the quality and efficiency of the Movement's activities and impact in the creation, deployment and use of ICTs;

2. *encourages* the Movement to develop practical guidance on assessing and mitigating risks of harm to affected communities and the humanitarian sector from intentional misuse or unintended consequences of ICTs, or from lawful or unlawful third-party access to data, and to focus on ICT solutions that can help alleviate the suffering of affected people, enhance their agency and resilience, and complement face-to-face interactions;
3. *urges* Movement components to be intentional and responsible about exploring emerging and disruptive ICTs and developing digital governance and oversight mechanisms;
4. *affirms* that decision-making for neutral, impartial and independent ICT development, adoption and deployment is complex, requiring a balanced and responsible approach that considers existing local solutions and laws, bespoke development, community capacity, resource constraints, situational urgency, open-source approaches, collaborative potential, linguistic capacity, availability, scalability and sustainability;
5. *commits* Movement components to utilizing, within the scope of their respective mandates, capacities and operational needs and contexts, those technology design and deployment practices that centre community needs and decision-making and to build feedback mechanisms and consult affected people, users and other stakeholders to help select solutions, whether analogue or digital, which enable safe, equitable, inclusive and accessible delivery of assistance and services;
6. *calls upon* the Movement, while recognizing that the level of digital maturity varies across National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to invest in awareness-raising, guidance, training and capacity-building programmes and unified minimum standards; to leverage existing learning platforms to ensure that staff, volunteers, and operating partners are guided by ethical and responsible approaches to the use of ICTs in support of humanitarian action, paying particular attention to the areas of digital risks, data protection, and cybersecurity; and to foster a culture of responsibility;
7. *also calls upon* the Movement to put in place appropriate and effective policies, procedures and measures to minimize the attendant risks; facilitate information-sharing and learning; prepare for and respond to critical incidents such as data breaches, particularly where they impact operations involving multiple Movement components; and build accountability, transparency and support for those impacted;
8. *encourages* Movement components to apply inclusive monitoring, evaluation, and community engagement and accountability practices to technology initiatives, including the sharing of good practices and lessons learned, particularly when the application of ICTs fails to meet the objectives sought or results in risks to affected people;
9. *calls upon* Movement components to work with technology developers, engaging in dialogue and urging that their practices, policies and standards take into account humanitarian concerns, prioritize access to affordable technology and protect people in situations of vulnerability, and to highlight the specific risks and opportunities pertaining to the deployment of ICTs in humanitarian settings;
10. *proposes* that the Movement foster a collective and collaborative approach to improving procurement of and investment in ICTs, by developing and promoting guidance on digital independence, data protection, environmental impacts, cybersecurity, sustainability, legal risks, and ethical practices, and that it leverage open-source technologies, fostering collaboration at the operational level and soliciting voluntary contributions;

11. *invites* Movement components to leverage relationships with technology stakeholders, including governments, universities and the private sector, to promote their understanding of humanitarian responsibilities towards communities and set requirements reflecting humanitarian imperatives and priorities;
12. *encourages* the Movement to align with partners to champion the responsible creation and use of artificial intelligence and other technologies, solutions and tools related to machine learning that is human-centred and incorporates guardrails that reflect the principled and accountable use of ICTs in humanitarian action;
13. *proposes* the creation of a multidisciplinary, globally representative working group to generate discussion, guide research, provide advice and insights and address challenges, alongside existing collaboration and coordination mechanisms, for the principled and accountable use of ICTs, to take forward the actions from this resolution and to report progress to the Council of Delegates.