



Our world. Your move.

31st International Conference of the Red Cross Red Crescent
Geneva, 28 November–1 December – **For humanity**



31st International Conference of the RCRC

APPROVED WORKSHOPS

On 21 September 2011, the Standing Commission has approved the following list of workshops:

1. Protection for victims of armed conflicts – how can a gender perspective on IHL make a difference?
2. Ensuring adequate and timely humanitarian response to migrants' needs and vulnerabilities – the challenges of access
3. Best Practices in Strengthening Child Protection
4. Using new technology to addressing the problem of insecurity of access to and provision of Health Care in Conflict and Other Situations of Violence
5. National Societies Preparedness and Response to Armed Conflict and Other Situations of Violence
6. Humanitarian consequences of climate change
7. Strengthening partnerships to tackle humanitarian challenges

You can find more information on each of these workshops in the following pages.

WORKSHOP 1

PROTECTION FOR VICTIMS OF ARMED CONFLICTS – HOW CAN A GENDER PERSPECTIVE ON IHL MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

- I. **Organizer(s):** Swedish Government and Swedish Red Cross, in partnership with other Governments and National Societies (tbc)
- II. **Issue(s) to be presented and discussed / links with the objectives of the Conference**

Armed conflicts, natural disasters, and related crisis situations have profoundly different impact on women and girls, boys and men. They face different risks and thus are victimized in different ways. Essential to effective humanitarian response is to consider the different needs and capacities as well as the fact that power relations affect the abilities to access support. International humanitarian law (IHL) limits the effects of armed conflict on humanitarian grounds. How would a gender perspective on IHL enhance the protection during armed conflicts? What do gender roles in society mean for the content and application of the law? Women as combatants and perpetrators, sexualisation of interrogation, sexual violence against men, post conflict reintegration are examples of challenges that would benefit from a gender perspective. As the largest humanitarian forum the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent has a responsibility to ensure that gender perspectives are effectively taken into account.

III. **Guiding questions for discussion**

1. What do the gender roles in society mean for the content and application of international humanitarian law?
2. Do fathers with small children need special protection?
3. Do female combatants have the same protection under the Geneva Conventions as male combatants?

WORKSHOP 2

ENSURING ADEQUATE AND TIMELY HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO MIGRANTS' NEEDS AND VULNERABILITIES – THE CHALLENGES OF ACCESS

- I. **Organizer(s):** Swedish Red Cross, Swiss Red Cross, Austrian Red Cross (in cooperation with IFRC, ICRC) with participation of the Mexican RC and the Indonesian RC. The workshop and outline has also been discussed and consulted with the Global Migration Reference Group (The group includes Australia RC, Austria RC, British RC, Canada RC, Cote d'Ivoire RC, Ghana RC, Philippines RC, Somalia RC, Sudanese RC, Swedish RC, Swiss RC).
- II. **Issue(s) to be presented and discussed / links with the objectives of the Conference**

Problem statement to be addressed:

Access to humanitarian assistance and protection for persons in need, as well as access for humanitarian actors to persons in need is a prerequisite for any effective humanitarian action. Problems of access may affect vulnerable groups and the 30th International Conference expressed particular concern about *"migrants, irrespective of their status"*, as they *"may live outside conventional health, social and legal systems and for a variety of reasons may not have access to processes which guarantee respect for their fundamental rights"*. Migrants indeed often encounter difficulties, or may even be denied access to available humanitarian services and protection regimes.

Roles of States and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies:

States have the primary responsibility to address the needs and protect the dignity of all people under their jurisdiction. They shall promote and ensure respect for human rights and access to humanitarian services. In situations where States themselves are unable or unwilling to respond according to their international legal obligations, humanitarian organisations have an important complementary function. As auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, the Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies enjoy a specific and distinctive partnership with their governments, which includes responding to the humanitarian needs of migrants. As such, they may also remind States of their responsibilities and, where necessary, complement or substitute public authorities in providing adequate humanitarian services to vulnerable migrants.

Additionally, in line with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, in particular those of neutrality, humanity and independence, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies must always be able to deliver their humanitarian services to the most vulnerable without discrimination as to nationality, ethnicity, religious belief, political opinions, social background or other similar criteria. Only needs shall guide their priorities. To faithfully fulfill these obligations the National Societies must be able to act independently, and must be granted access to the people they seek to assist.

The Objectives of the workshop are:

- To raise awareness with regard to the situation of vulnerable migrants who are lacking access to humanitarian assistance and to protection and to analyse the reasons for this lack of access.
- To present and discuss concrete examples of situations in which vulnerable migrants do not have access to humanitarian assistance and to protection measures and to show good examples of work already carried out by the components of the RC/RC Movement with the aim to enhance access for vulnerable migrants and thereby improve their situation.

- To enhance the dialogue with States in order to find ways to improve this situation and to provide all vulnerable migrants with the humanitarian assistance and protection which they need.
- To encourage pledges and to facilitate concrete partnerships and projects among the participating states and their National RC/RC Societies as auxiliaries to their public authorities in the humanitarian field with the aim to remove the remaining barriers and obstacles which impede and hamper access to humanitarian assistance and protection.

The workshop will thus create links to the main agenda discussions and further develop the topic of access, keeping in mind that it includes both access for the RC/RC Movement to all migrants and access for migrants to RC/RC humanitarian services.

III. Guiding questions for discussion

1. Do all migrants - irrespective of their legal status - have access to basic humanitarian services and to protection measures in your country?
2. If not, what are the main barriers/obstacles to access and what is/are the main reason(s) for these barriers/obstacles?
3. Which concrete measures could/should be taken to remove the existing barriers/obstacles to access for vulnerable migrants?
4. How could the National RC/RC Societies, using their specific and unique role as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, cooperate even more closely with their respective governments to achieve this aim?
5. Do you know of any good examples of how to overcome challenges of access?

WORKSHOP 3

BEST PRACTICES IN STRENGTHENING CHILD PROTECTION

- I. **Organizer:** Uganda Red Cross Society and Norwegian Red Cross Youth (tbc)
- II. **Issue(s) to be presented and discussed / links with the objectives of the Conference**

This workshop supports Objective 2.1 of the Draft 2011-2015 Action Plan for Implementing IHL, which articulates the variety of actions that States, National Societies and the ICRC shall take to enhance the protection of children in armed conflict.

Covering the three areas of **reintegration, psychosocial support** and **violence prevention in urban settings**, the workshop will provide insight into the multitude of activities and approaches promoted by National Societies in the field. The goal is not to arrive at a mere enumeration of best practices; but to generate a discussion of how these different approaches can inform each other, in order to arrive at a truly **multidisciplinary response** to the humanitarian problems affecting children in armed conflict. Whilst supporting the legal framework that aims at preventing children from being recruited and supports their reintegration if they were associated with armed forces and groups, the workshop will bring the participants beyond the law, exploring and sharing experiences in building the resilience of children, reducing their vulnerability and providing them with alternatives to risk-taking behaviour.

The workshop also aims at identifying areas of future **cooperation** between NS, the Federation, the ICRC and outside partners.

Finally, the outcomes of a global consultation and workshop on children affected by armed conflict and violence conducted in Geneva in March 2011 with 19 National Societies, the International Federation and the ICRC will be presented at this workshop.

III. **Guiding questions for discussion**

1. How can we make sure that learning within the Movement on issues related to children affected by armed conflict and violence is shared with other members of the Movement?
2. How can we strengthen the capacity of National Societies and governments to recognise and support children affected by armed conflict?
3. How can we make our collective response to protect and support children affected by armed conflict and violence more effective?

WORKSHOP 4

USING NEW TECHNOLOGY TO ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM OF INSECURITY OF ACCESS TO AND PROVISION OF HEALTH CARE IN CONFLICT AND OTHER SITUATIONS OF VIOLENCE

I. Organizer: International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

II. Issue(s) to be presented and discussed / links with the objectives of the Conference

Related to the Conference agenda item "Health Care in Danger", this workshop will generate a debate exploring the use of new technologies in addressing the problem of insecurity to health care and how technology could contribute to reaching the overall objective of improving the security of access to and provision of health care in conflict and other situations of violence.

III. Guiding questions for discussion

1. What new technology is there that can contribute towards the overall project aim?
2. What are the opportunities in using new technology?
3. What are the risks and how do we minimize these?
4. What are the dilemmas?
5. How can this be organized?

WORKSHOP 5

NATIONAL SOCIETIES PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE TO ARMED CONFLICT AND OTHER SITUATIONS OF VIOLENCE

- I. **Organizer(s):** Canadian and Colombian Red Cross Societies
- II. **Issue(s) to be presented and discussed / links with the objectives of the Conference**

This workshop explores key issues related to a 2011 Council of Delegates Resolution under the same name.

Through a panel discussion of National Societies (NS) and States from diverse contexts, some of the key challenges as highlighted in the CoD resolution on NS Preparing and Responding to Armed Conflict (AC) and Other Situations of Violence (OSV) are discussed, lessons learned are shared and debated and recommendations made.

Link to Conference Themes:

- Strengthening Local Humanitarian Action and Health Care in Danger
- Protection of Volunteers
- Stronger National Societies and Partnerships

II. **Guiding questions for discussion**

1. To be effective in providing humanitarian assistance to those affected by internal armed conflict, disturbances or strife, a National Society, as auxiliary but independent from government, needs access to those affected. What concrete steps could National Societies and Governments take to ensure this access is provided, including to persons in need of humanitarian assistance, who may be associated with opposition groups or non-state armed groups?
2. What could be the role of National Societies and possible actions they could take in reducing or mitigating the possibility of armed conflict or other situations of violence? And, what is the role of NS in increasing community resilience in the face of armed conflict or other situations of violence?

WORKSHOP 6

HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES OF CLIMATE CHANGE

- I. **Organizer:** International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- II. **Issue(s) to be presented and discussed / links with the objectives of the Conference**

The humanitarian consequences of climate change were discussed at the General Assembly and International Conference in 2007 and again in three workshops at the Council of Delegates in 2009. Committed to the IC Declaration in 2007, many National Societies have started to develop programmes and actions to address rising climate risks that are increasing the need for action, often because of more frequent or more intense disasters and health emergencies. At the same time, many Governments have begun to develop strategies and programmes, often framed in National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPs). It is crucial that the adaptation planning efforts of Governments address the humanitarian consequences of climate change and in particular that they take into account existing local humanitarian capacity to contribute to adaptation (this is in line with the Conference agenda item 5.4 on “Strengthening local humanitarian action” and with the 30th IC Declaration “Together for Humanity”). At the UN Climate Change Conference in Cancun in December 2010, governments agreed to adapt the Cancun Adaptation Framework and to mobilise significant financial resources to support developing countries with their climate change actions, including adaptation.

The progress is remarkable and a stimulus to set the next steps needed, still with urgency, to address one of greatest challenges for human kind in the 21st century. To continue and build upon the process set by the 2007 International Conference Declaration, during 2011 National Societies, ICRC and the governments are invited to engage in a pledge, to be agreed at the International Conference, focused on addressing the humanitarian consequences of climate change as well as its root causes, i.e. emissions of greenhouse gases.

III. Guiding questions for discussion

1. How can we assure that the most vulnerable people will be the main focus of national adaptation strategies and priorities?
2. How can we improve our technical capacities and better support national governments to ensure that most vulnerable people are protected against the unavoidable impacts of climate change and extreme events?
3. How can we systematically link up the RC/RC National Societies with their respective governmental initiatives addressing climate change mitigation and those related to climate change adaptation, in particular National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)?

Workshop 7

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS TO TACKLE HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGES

- I. **Organizer(s):** Nepal Red Cross Society in cooperation with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- II. **Issue(s) to be presented and discussed / links with the objectives of the Conference**

Nepal is a country in transition, emerging from a 10 year conflict as a young republic after nearly 250 years as a monarchy. The ongoing peace process and the drafting of a new constitution will also define the Federal structure and power system of the country. Amidst these change, compounded by increasing urbanization, migration and environmental challenges, together with ongoing battles against poverty, inequality, and frequent natural disasters – can the country hope to make real progress against the Millennium Development Goals, and ensure a healthier, safer future for the next generation? How can the Red Cross and other partners make a meaningful contribution to these efforts?

This session explores a number of themes of the 31st International Conference to raise awareness about the humanitarian challenges faced in Nepal and the role of partnerships, particularly from the perspective of RC Movement partners, to address these challenges in a way which ensures sustainability, reduces vulnerability and creates an enabling environment for the future development of communities across the country.

III. **Questions to guide the discussions**

1. Introduction: Maintaining relevance in a changing environment (presented by NRCS)

This theme examines how Nepal Red Cross Society is adapting to the changing national context and major humanitarian challenges. Specifically it explores:

- The key political, development and humanitarian challenges in Nepal
- NRCS contribution to the evolving humanitarian challenges in Nepal
- The approach of the NRCS 6th Development Plan, key humanitarian priorities, and links to global and national strategies

2. Innovative partnerships in Nepal (presented by IFRC / ICRC / British RC)

This theme explores how innovative partnerships are making a positive contribution to addressing some of the humanitarian challenges in Nepal. In particular presentations will cover:

- IFRC: International multi-partner efforts to scale up disaster preparedness and risk reduction
- ICRC: Partnerships in a post conflict setting
- BRCS: Reflections on the role of PNS/government partnerships

3. Looking ahead – opportunities for scaling up humanitarian action through partnership (facilitated by NRCS)

Guided discussion touching on:

- What a 'good partnership' involves
- Positive partnership experiences from other countries and contexts
- Potential areas for collaboration in Nepal