



# Istanbul and beyond

Perspectives and pledges of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on the occasion of the World Humanitarian Summit



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## The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement) encompasses the world's 190 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

In a complex, turbulent and politicized humanitarian landscape, the Movement is a unique global humanitarian network that serves to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. It is a torchbearer for a relevant, effective humanitarian response to the multifaceted needs of people suffering the effects of armed conflicts, natural disasters and other crises.

With humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence as the bedrock of its unity and universality, the Movement consistently demonstrates the application of its Fundamental Principles on the ground. Harnessing the strength of its relations with States and of its vast community-based volunteer networks embodying the principle of voluntary service, the Movement works optimally across its local, national, regional and international levels.

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# Introduction

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For more than 150 years, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (the Movement) has been driven by the power of humanity. From building food security among drought-affected people in Kenya to caring for the elderly in Australia, from treating the sick and the wounded in Yemen to searching for victims of the 2015 earthquakes in Nepal, we work to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Our model of action – grounded in our Fundamental Principles, our community-based volunteers, our specific relationship with Governments in the humanitarian field, our proximity to the people we work with, and our global networks of solidarity – has brought protection and assistance to millions of people in crisis.

However, like many of our humanitarian partners, we find ourselves at a moment of reflection. We are confronted with armed conflicts that are increasingly complex in nature, longer in duration and wider in their regional and global impact. Disasters are becoming increasingly severe, driven in part by climate change and compounded by rising population growth and density. The number of persons displaced by these



and similar crises is higher than any time since World War II and many migrants face extreme dangers and hardships along their journey. Meanwhile, some 60 per cent of the world's preventable maternal deaths and 53 per cent of under-five deaths are concentrated in settings of conflict, disaster and displacement. Recent outbreaks of Ebola and Zika virus disease have pointed to significant limits in the global capacity to contain and control health emergencies.

The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS or Summit) has prompted a global conversation on humanitarian action. For us, it has provided an important opportunity to consider our strengths and weaknesses in the face of today's rapidly growing and changing humanitarian needs. In his report for the Summit, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon has identified critical challenges to the humanitarian sector and beyond, and issued calls for action across a range of areas that resonate with the Movement. These include calls for defending and reaffirming core humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law; increasing investment in resilience and local humanitarian capacity; and taking major steps to address the mounting humanitarian needs of migrants and displaced persons.

This report provides the perspective and experience of the Movement on these important questions, as well as on some other issues – such as volunteer safety and health services in crisis – that should be high on the humanitarian agenda. It also sets out our pledges and calls to action, many of which are drawn from Resolutions recently adopted at the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, held in Geneva in December 2015. That unique forum, convened every four years, brings the Movement together with the State Parties to the Geneva Conventions and humanitarian partners to undertake engagements and set joint directions to improve the lives of people in need. Our pledges on the occasion of the Summit are made (or respectively recalled) with the understanding that they do not bind us to any UN-led reporting and monitoring mechanism. The Movement will privilege its existing mechanisms, in particular the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, to report on progress achieved.

On the eve of the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference, the Movement adopted a “Message to the World Humanitarian Summit,” which sets out four areas of particular concern for the debates in Istanbul (and which will serve as the organizing principles of this report):

- Protect the dignity of every human being and improve humanitarian access to those in need;
- Affirm the complementarity of local, national and international action;
- Take the long view of people's needs; and
- Recognize and enable different humanitarian systems.







# 1. Protect the dignity of every human being and improve humanitarian access to those in need

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The dignity of every human being is at the centre of the principle of humanity. Respecting human dignity means that we must be ready, and we must be allowed, to provide protection and support when people are in need. We do this on the basis of needs, without any other discrimination, with the aim that, as urged by Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, no one is left behind.

## A. Maintaining a principled approach to realize access and proximity

Access and proximity to people in need are essential to effective humanitarian action. A true understanding of how best to meet people's diverse needs comes from being close to the reality of people's lives. Proximity can also contribute to greater accountability to people in need.

For the Movement, the shared humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence have been crucial to achieving such access and proximity. They have proven to be the best way to maintain trust with relevant authorities and local communities, demonstrating that our action is guided exclusively by an objective assessment of humanitarian needs. In addition, the Movement has embraced three additional principles specific to its own model – voluntary service, unity, and universality. Taken together, these seven principles form the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, whose 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated last year.

On the occasion of that anniversary, the Movement undertook a series of dialogues on the experience of applying the Fundamental Principles. These conversations revealed that the Principles require a constant and continuous effort and can sometimes be very challenging to consistently follow. For instance, in some circumstances, actions that would seem required by one principle (such as the restraint required by the principle of neutrality) may appear to be in contradiction to what would seem required by another (such as the urge to action spurred by the principle of humanity). It is important therefore to always carefully balance these principles, to use them as an ethical compass and an operational framework guiding our action in a way that is tailored to the specific contexts we operate in. Nevertheless, their ongoing relevance to our work was unequivocally affirmed.

It is important to recognize that not all actors driven by solidarity and a humane spirit to help people in need necessarily align their efforts under humanitarian principles. Family members, neighbours, local authorities, civil society groups, faith-based groups, diaspora members, corporations and many other spontaneous and formal responders have always mobilized to respond to human suffering. Many actors operate in support of varied objectives, be they political, social or economic. Within this welcome diversity, it remains critical to recognize the particular place of neutral, independent and impartial humanitarian organizations – actors that abstain from activities that might be seen as political or antagonistic by part of the population.

In this context, the World Humanitarian Summit offers a further opportunity to reaffirm the particular place of humanitarian principles and the respect for all those who help people in need.

### What we pledge to do:

- We pledge to continue, and further institutionalize, the active dialogue and sharing of experience within the Movement about our application of the Fundamental Principles and challenges experienced in putting them into practice.
- We pledge to continue the active dialogue with external humanitarian partners and States on the value and importance of shared humanitarian principles.

### What we call for:

- We call on humanitarian actors committed to apply humanitarian principles to similarly equip their staff with the necessary policy guidance and training to enable them to apply the principles consistently and in a context-sensitive manner.
- We call on donors to ensure that any funding conditions they impose do not negatively affect the ability of humanitarian actors to assess needs and develop programmes independently.
- We call on States to demonstrate respect for the humanitarian principles by creating the necessary enabling environment – including allowing engagement with all parties to armed conflicts – to ensure an impartial response.

## B. Upholding the norms that protect people in war

The current state of human suffering, and of humanitarian needs caused by armed conflict around the world, would be far lower if international humanitarian law (IHL) and other humanitarian norms were properly implemented before the outbreak of these situations, and once they occur. The main problem, however, is the widespread flouting of these rules. Establishing the means to ensure greater respect for IHL in armed conflict is one of the most pressing humanitarian challenges.

This is further illustrated by developments and trends in the context of contemporary armed conflict, including the geographic expanse of conflicts; the multiplication of parties to them; outright rejection of IHL by a number of actors; warfare in densely

populated urban areas with weapon systems that were originally designed for use in open battlefields; or political and military agendas surrounding humanitarian access and assistance.

The strong calls, echoed in a number of places, for a recommitment by States to respecting the rules of IHL that they have already agreed upon is as welcome as it is necessary. A political recommitment to respect these rules is of essential importance in order to reaffirm the basic humanitarian consensus inherent in the universally ratified 1949 Geneva Conventions. It is also essential to remind all States, even if they are not party to an armed conflict, of their obligation to ensure respect for IHL, notably to bring their influence to bear upon parties to conflicts to prevent and address IHL violations.

Ensuring greater respect for IHL requires decisive actions on a number of themes, many of which were addressed by various International Conferences of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. These include: strengthening compliance with IHL; strengthening IHL provisions protecting persons deprived of their liberty; ensuring that populations in need receive timely and unimpeded humanitarian assistance; ensuring greater protection for the delivery of health care; preventing and addressing the high human cost related to the use and proliferation of certain types of weapons; and enhancing the specific protection afforded to certain categories of persons, including women and children.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has a long tradition of working with States and others on matters related to respect for IHL. Practically, on the ground, the ICRC negotiates agreements based on IHL on a daily basis. These could range from getting an agreement from parties to armed conflicts on the delivery of humanitarian assistance, to having these parties let the ICRC run programmes that ensure impartial medical care to all wounded people, including people associated with the other party to a conflict, or by convincing weapon bearers to let ambulances through checkpoints or spare hospitals from attack. All such instances show that it is possible to influence parties to armed conflicts to take concrete measures to spare victims of armed conflict, in line with IHL.

The ICRC and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are also engaged extensively in dissemination and training on IHL. They also promote adherence by States to IHL treaties; work on national legislation



and cooperate with governments to ensure respect for IHL; convene events with relevant actors on the implementation of IHL; and undertake training sessions and seminars.

As a Movement, our starting point is that IHL continues to be important and relevant for regulating the conduct of parties to armed conflicts, both international and non-international, and providing protection and assistance for the victims of armed conflicts.

#### What we pledge to do:

- We pledge to spare no efforts in the implementation of IHL-related resolutions adopted by the International Conference, in particular the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference in 2015 and the Council of Delegates. This includes, *inter alia*:
  - the willingness by the ICRC, together with the Government of Switzerland, to co-facilitate the continuation of an inclusive, State-driven intergovernmental process to find agreement on features and functions of a potential forum of States on IHL, in accordance with Resolution 2 of the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference.
  - the willingness by the ICRC to facilitate further in-depth work of States to strengthen IHL protecting

persons deprived of their liberty in relation to armed conflict, in particular in relation to non-international armed conflict, in accordance with Resolution 1 of that Conference.

- the intensification of efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence in armed conflicts, in accordance with Resolution 3 of that Conference.
- We pledge to continue to support parties to armed conflicts to put IHL into practice, as an integral part of our humanitarian responses, in accordance with our respective mandates deriving from the Geneva Conventions and the Movement's Statutes.

#### What we call for:

- We call on all stakeholders to remind States and all parties to armed conflicts of their obligations under IHL. A political recommitment to respect these rules is of essential importance in order to reaffirm the basic humanitarian consensus inherent in the universally ratified 1949 Geneva Conventions.
- In this context, we remind States of the resolutions of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to which they have consented, and we strongly encourage them to spare no efforts to implement them.





Charlotte Hyst/ Belgian Red Cross

- We call on all stakeholders to share positive experiences, for example by humanitarian organizations, civil society and the media, to demonstrate instances where IHL is respected to show that, despite recurrent violations, this body of law does make a difference.

### **C. Protecting and assisting all vulnerable migrants and internally displaced persons**

Migration is set to be one of the defining features of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. People migrate for many reasons, often in combination, ranging from armed conflicts, persecution and poverty to the hope for a better future or to be reunited with their family. Many people who are forced to flee their homes face significant danger and hardship and this is also sometimes the case for those who choose to leave. This is especially true for people with particular vulnerabilities, such as children, women, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

We are increasingly alarmed by the inadequacy of existing measures to address these humanitarian concerns, and practices that prevent people from

travelling and reaching their destination. In many countries, heightened border control restrictions and poor reception conditions are gravely and unnecessarily affecting the security, well-being and dignity of migrants. Safe and effective legal avenues to access international protection are increasingly restricted, while the principle of non-refoulement is increasingly flouted. Open stigmatization and xenophobia are feeding community violence against migrants in many countries.

The Movement works along migratory routes around the world to support migrants in need. National Societies' work to build resilience in vulnerable communities can help reduce pressures that may lead to forced migration. All along the routes, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the ICRC, and National Societies seek to provide essential services, information and protection. When migrants reach their destinations, they provide them with news of their loved ones, help with integration, and support through messages to combat xenophobia.

To provide this support, it is essential that we have access to migrants during all stages of their journey.



A commitment to guarantee and facilitate such access was affirmed by States at the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> International Conferences of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

The Movement is committed to addressing the protection, safety and dignity of all migrants in need, irrespective of their legal status. At the same time, the various legal frameworks applicable to migrants (including refugees and asylum seekers) must remain an important consideration. Such frameworks play a crucial role in ensuring that migrants receive the protection they are entitled to under applicable international law and, accordingly, we promote their full implementation. In this respect, however, we recognize the uneven burden among States in supporting and hosting refugees and asylum seekers and support the call of Mr. Ban Ki-Moon for States to develop a more comprehensive and equitable system for sharing this responsibility.

We also support Mr. Ban Ki-Moon's goal to substantially reduce the ballooning numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs). However, care must be taken to avoid responses to internal displacement that impede the ability of persons to seek asylum abroad. Solutions primarily motivated by the goal of reducing migratory flows may lead to perverse consequences for the well-being of the persons involved. In addition, the nexus between internal displacement and migration is not automatic. The specific predicament of IDPs should be recognized and addressed in its own right.

This goal must be met both through resolving the situation of people who are already displaced – which means providing them effective access to durable solutions – as well as through preventing new displacement. While long-term solutions in disaster settings often call for development-oriented approaches, humanitarians can make a difference for people already displaced through a greater investment in shelter and settlement solutions. Since 2007, the Movement has assisted more than 22 million affected persons with shelter, settlement and shelter-related non-food items. We have also advanced enabling approaches such as participatory awareness of safe shelter and settlement, the provision of cash for shelter complemented by local technical assistance, and promoting recognition of diverse forms of tenure.

With regard to prevention – a central aspect in the Movement's approach to internal displacement – efforts to reduce or eliminate the causes of displacement should be part of any effective strategic

response. Promoting greater respect for IHL by all States and parties to armed conflict, as well as other important legal frameworks, is a key step to avoiding conflict-induced displacement. Assisting communities at risk by restoring essential services disrupted by the conflict and building their resilience can also help people to avoid displacement. In the context of disasters, prevention requires much more effective legal and institutional measures to implement realistic urban planning and building codes, as recommended by the Checklist on Law and Disaster Risk Reduction adopted at the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

#### **What we pledge to do:**

- We pledge to continue our efforts to provide assistance and protection to all vulnerable people who migrate, without discrimination.
- We pledge to continue to work to reduce community-level violence, stigmatization, and xenophobia against people who migrate.

#### **What we call for:**

- We call on States to reaffirm their commitment to international refugee law, international human rights law IHL and other applicable legal frameworks as key to ensure safety and dignity for migrants and displaced people.
- We call on States, consistent with their obligations, to grant migrants appropriate international protection as well as necessary assistance and services (such as family reunification), including by allowing access to humanitarian organizations.
- We call on States to implement resettlement as a means for responsibility-sharing and as an expression of solidarity with countries that are hosting large numbers of refugees.
- We call on States to fulfil their primary responsibility to prevent displacement, provide protection and assistance to IDPs within their jurisdiction, and find durable solutions for them in their countries.
- We call on States and parties to armed conflict to respect and ensure respect for IHL, including the rules aimed at sparing civilians from the effects of hostilities and the express prohibition of forced displacement in armed conflict.

## D. Accountability to those we serve

We recognize that we cannot be effective without the participation of those we serve and without being accountable to them. Sharing information, listening carefully to affected communities and involving them in decision-making improves the quality and effectiveness of services delivered and ultimately contributes towards fostering more resilient communities. Providing people the opportunity to voice their opinions enhances their sense of well-being, helps them adapt to the challenges they face, and better enables them to take an active role in their own recovery.

Humanitarian organizations have, in recent years, stepped up efforts to engage with communities that are affected by crisis. There are many examples of good practice to build on. But research shows that, as a sector, we consistently fall short of our aspirations. In fact, evaluations of major responses to date routinely identify lack of communication with affected communities as a key weakness.

The Movement is committed to improving its effectiveness and building greater accountability in programme delivery through a more systematic and coordinated approach towards engaging with com-

munities, and sustaining two-way communication and dialogue for the development of community-driven solutions. We recognize that building safe and resilient communities requires better active listening skills and providing different groups of people with information to access services and resources, enabling them to participate in and ultimately lead their own recovery.

### What we pledge to do:

- We pledge to work in a more coordinated approach to establish and sustain two-way communication with people and communities, including setting up feedback loop mechanisms with a strong data and information analysis system.
- We pledge to develop local capacity to process community feedback in 'real-time' and at scale, and feed the information back to interventions that are tailored to specific needs.

### What we call for:

- We call on humanitarian actors to continue to share best practice in the participation of, and accountability to, affected communities in situations of humanitarian crisis.



## E. Including everyone in humanitarian response

Wars and disasters do not affect women, men, boys, girls, people of different ages, people with disabilities and those with other diversity characteristics in the same way. For example, in conflicts, men are often those most frequently wounded, arrested or missing. These men's families may be left without a breadwinner. During crises, women may be forced to take on new roles within their households; they may have to start working outside of the home and take responsibility for their household and its security. In families where the main breadwinner has been lost, children may be forced to work from a very young age. During the acute phase of a crisis, when people may be forced to flee, children, the elderly and people with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to being left behind.

The recognition that individuals are affected differently by crises according to their gender, age, disability and other diversity characteristics means that, in order to reach all vulnerable people effectively and in a fair, non-discriminatory and equitable manner, a humanitarian response must be sensitive to these characteristics. In order to respond to needs effectively, it is necessary to understand not who is most vulnerable, but who is vulnerable to which particular risks at which particular time. We also recognize that individuals are agents of their own protection and livelihood, and not only beneficiaries or victims. By considering the specific vulnerabilities of a person as well as his or her own capacity to cope with the effects of a conflict or disaster, we can ensure that our response achieves the greatest impact.

The Movement ensures the integration of gender, age, disability and diversity into its humanitarian response through a framework of four areas of focus: dignity, access, participation, and do no harm. In 2015, the Movement adopted a new Strategic Framework on Disability Inclusion, through which we seek to: implement a disability inclusive approach; challenge the barriers that prevent people with disabilities from accessing our services and programmes; and endeavour to change mindsets and behaviours to those of acceptance and respect. Further to our own Strategic Framework, we have engaged proactively in the drafting of the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action and welcome the launch of this initiative at the World Humanitarian Summit.



### What we pledge to do:

- We pledge to mainstream gender, age, disability and diversity throughout our operational response, including by fully implementing our Minimum Standard Commitments on Gender and Diversity in Emergency Programming, and will sign the Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities.
- We pledge to reinforce National Societies' capacities on gender, age, disability and diversity issues.
- We pledge to undertake research on how disaster risk management law and policy addresses gender.
- We pledge to work towards having all components of the Movement adopt a disability-inclusive approach.

### What we call for:

- We call on all humanitarian actors to integrate gender, age, disability and diversity into their programme design, implementation and monitoring.



## **F. Preventing and reducing the risk of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and addressing the needs of victims/survivors.**

Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is universally present during crises as well as during peacetime. However, during armed conflicts, disasters and other emergencies, the incidence of SGBV increases significantly. During armed conflict, rape and other forms of sexual violence have been used systematically, with extreme brutality. In addition, during armed conflict, disasters and other emergencies, factors such as the weakening of community and institutional protection mechanisms, disruption of services and community life, destruction of infrastructure, separation of families or displacement, among others, as well as structural gender inequalities, contribute to an increased risk and impact of SGBV. While women and girls are disproportionately affected, anyone – including men and boys – can be a victim/survivor of SGBV, and factors such as age, disability, deprivation of liberty, displacement, religion, ethnicity, race or nationality, among others, may increase the risk.

As recognized in a dedicated resolution of the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference, in order to adequately address this humanitarian concern, approaches are required that effectively work to prevent and reduce the risk of SGBV and that respond to the needs of victims/survivors in a comprehensive and multidisciplinary manner. In accordance with its mandate, the ICRC addresses a specific aspect of these issues by focusing on sexual violence in situations of armed conflict. The IFRC, and individual National Societies, take a broader approach to gender-based violence, and also engage in violence prevention in the context of natural disasters.

### **What we pledge to do:**

- We pledge to scale up our efforts to contribute to the prevention of SGBV including by promoting international humanitarian law and other relevant legal frameworks.
- We pledge to support exposed communities to strengthen their resilience by reducing their risk of exposure to threats and to harmful coping strategies.

- We pledge to respond to the needs of victims/survivors of SGBV in a comprehensive and multidisciplinary way.
- We pledge to continue conducting research on SGBV in disasters.

### **What we call for:**

- We call on States in accordance with Resolution 3 of the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference, and humanitarian actors to continue their efforts to prevent and respond to SGBV, to ensure that all victims/survivors have safe access to services, and that any activities related to SGBV are conducted in line with the principle of ‘do no harm’.

## **G. Supporting volunteers and ensuring their safety**

Volunteers are the backbone of the Movement. Often themselves directly affected by the crises to which they are called upon to respond and facing danger and hardship, they embody the principle of humanity. They deliver diverse services, help strengthen community resilience, promote social cohesion, engage in civic processes and advocate fiercely on behalf of vulnerable people. They ensure that we remain rooted in the communities we serve, that we are informed, guided and governed by them. Voluntary service is one of our seven Fundamental Principles.

We are committed to supporting our volunteers and giving them the tools and resources they need to meet the high demands and expectations that we – and our supporters – place on them. This requires both appropriate volunteer management systems and a protective and enabling environment for volunteering to function and grow. Volunteers are, however, too often under-valued and receive inadequate support and protection during and after their time volunteering.

Recognizing some of these gaps, we are seeking to strengthen our ability to work in sensitive and insecure contexts and to increase the scale and scope of volunteer service delivery, both in today’s world and with a view towards the future. We are working with Governments and other partners to improve the safety and security of humanitarian volunteers, as set out by a Resolution of the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference, and to ensure that National Societies include adequate provisions defining the status, as well as





the rights and duties, of volunteers in their policies. We are also working with Governments, private sector, academia and other humanitarian organizations to better research, share knowledge, good practices, training opportunities and approaches to collectively increase investment and support to volunteers.

We attach particular importance to promoting volunteering by youth and ensuring that the voice of youth is represented in all levels of decision-making. Young people are a unique group with specific needs. They are often at the forefront of our service delivery and they often interact directly with the most vulnerable people. They are the experts on what happens on the ground and humanitarian actors should make use of such knowledge more often. For this reason, we welcome the *Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action* and look forward to working with our partners to ensure youth are meaningfully engaged in humanitarian action.

#### What we pledge to do:

- We pledge to work with States and partners to support the development of social policies, laws and practices that provide an enabling environment for volunteering.

- We pledge to provide our volunteers with the best safety-related information, guidance, training, protective equipment, psychosocial support and insurance within our means.
- We pledge to promote public understanding and acceptance of the role of humanitarian volunteers and work with Governments to implement measures to protect volunteer safety and security.
- We pledge to ensure that the voice of youth is represented in all levels of decision-making, including by working with partners to implement the *Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action*.

#### What we call for:

- We call on States to review relevant national laws and policies to ensure that they are supportive of volunteering and adequate to promote the safety and protection of volunteers;
- We call on all organizations deploying volunteers to take all necessary steps to promote their safety.
- We call on States to promote volunteering by adopting measures to encourage citizens' engagement and integrating volunteer capacity into domestic emergency response plans at all levels.





## 2. Affirming the complementarity of local, national and international action

By leveraging the complementary roles and strengths of local, national, and international humanitarian actors, we extend our reach and the effectiveness of our collective action. This complementarity is inherent in the Movement's local to global network, its emphasis on global solidarity and its modes of action. While evidently easier to achieve within the confines of a single movement, we believe that this approach – which values distinct but reinforcing action by responders at different levels – can also be beneficial for the humanitarian sector as a whole.

At the same time, we recognize that local actors have been oddly neglected in the humanitarian sector. While international support is required in some contexts (particularly where polarized contexts render principled humanitarian response dangerous for local actors), local responders are often in the strongest position to deliver rapid, culturally appropriate and sustainable humanitarian assistance to their communities. Investment in their capacity and support for their leadership in humanitarian action has, however, been very limited. The WHS presents an opportunity to address both of these issues.

### A. Realizing complementarity: the example of the Movement

From its origin, the Movement has involved a partnership among international and national actors. The Movement does not go in and out of crisis areas. It has a permanent presence, globally and locally. Only through cooperation and coordination among all Movement components, capitalizing on their combined strength, are we able to achieve our collective goals.

Mutually supportive mandates are the foundation of the Movement's complementarity: National Societies are auxiliaries of their Governments in the humanitarian field. They work to prevent the spread of disease and to promote health and social welfare. They provide emergency relief in armed conflict, natural disasters and other emergencies. The ICRC, with its specific mandate set out in the Geneva Conventions, works to ensure protection and assistance for victims of armed conflict and internal strife, and facilitates the operational coordination of the Movement's response. Through dialogue and training it promotes respect for international humanitarian law, often in partnership with National Societies. The IFRC, as the membership organization of the National Societies, works to strengthen the capacity of its members, facilitates their collective advocacy or humanitarian diplomacy, and ensures effective operational coordination in natural disasters and other non-conflict emergencies.

It is not despite, but rather because of these separate but interlocking roles that we extend our reach and collective impact – as well as our agility to respond to increasingly complex and diverse humanitarian emergencies. Our shared history – more than 150 years of Red Cross and Red Crescent action – and our Fundamental Principles further reinforce the combined strength of our Movement. But of course the Movement is

not immune to the tensions, misunderstandings and frictions that can hamper alignment among partners. We have found that this requires clear procedures as well as dialogue and practical measures, all of which must be regularly updated. Most recently, we adopted a two-year Plan of Action to strengthen coordination and cooperation within the Movement, to better leverage the complementarity of the different components for the benefit of affected communities.

### What we pledge to do:

- We pledge to implement the Plan of Action adopted to strengthen coordination and cooperation within the Movement to better leverage the complementary strengths of the different Movement components.

### What we call for:

- We call on all stakeholders to recognize and build the complementary roles of local, national and international actors to meet the needs of affected people across the full range and diversity of humanitarian emergencies.

## B. A strong role for national actors, in particular, National Societies

Local actors, National Societies among them, carry numerous advantages in humanitarian action. They (1) have a strong understanding of local risks, vulnerabilities, needs, culture and political realities; (2) deliver rapid response, in light of maximum proximity to their own communities; (3) benefit from significant acceptance, trust and access to affected people; (4) promote substantial consistency, learning and engagement of communities in coping with crises, over time, since they are with their communities before, during, and after crises hit them; and (5) are in an ideal position to link preparedness and response efforts with more holistic approaches to disaster risk reduction and resilience. As described in the 2015 *World Disasters Report*, the intention to promote a strong role for local actors has been repeatedly voiced in international policy-making bodies, such as the Economic and Social Council and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. However, this is an area where the gap between rhetoric and reality is prominent.



Benoit Matsha Carpentier/IFRC



In practice, we often see international humanitarian actors holding dominant positions, even when it is evident that domestic actors would be well placed to play a central role in a humanitarian response. Moreover, only a negligible proportion of international humanitarian funding is channelled to local actors on terms fully respecting their potential for leadership (rather than hiring them as subcontractors of international organizations). Redressing this will certainly not be without challenges, in light of widely varied capacities among local actors and pressures on donors to monitor and ensure accountability for humanitarian funding. Solutions will depend on long-term investments to strengthen local capacity rather than quick fixes.

Along these lines, on the occasion of the World Humanitarian Summit, the IFRC and ICRC together with interested Governments are seeking to jointly launch a new National Society investment Fund, that will couple material investment in operational and functional capacity with tailor-made technical assistance, designed to enable each involved National Society to develop, innovate and grow along the path it has set for itself.

In addition to sustained investment, there is a need for changing attitudes and expectations as to the role played by local actors in humanitarian operations. Like other domestic actors, National Societies often find themselves sidelined by the influx of foreign agencies in cases where there is an international response. Many implementing partnership agreements continue to define domestic actors, including National Societies, merely as sub-contractors. Instead of investing in these organizations prior to disasters and enabling them to build their organizations, much of current capacity-building support is focused on increasing response capacity in the immediate term. The Movement fully endorses a central role for national actors in humanitarian action and efforts to support and build the capacity of national and local actors to assume this role.

#### **What we pledge to do:**

- We pledge to significantly scale up the efforts of National Societies to grow capacities, as required, in order to take a more central role in future responses and to be sustainable and relevant national organizations.
- We pledge to support National Societies in their engagement with international partners external

to the Movement, including in the context of international coordination processes.

#### **What we call for:**

- We call on donors to support the new National Society investment Fund and other efforts targeted to strengthen and increase the long-term sustainability of local actors.
- We call on donors to substantially increase the global proportion of international funding accessible to local actors on terms that enable them to play central roles in humanitarian responses in their countries.
- We call on all parties to enable principled local and national actors, including National Societies, to deliver principled humanitarian response without hindrance, including in situations of armed conflict.



### 3. Taking the long view of people's needs

As humanitarians, we are increasingly called to address long-term needs. Our experience shows that disasters and armed conflicts are long-term experiences for people and play out in vulnerabilities before, during, and after any major crisis. Protracted conflict, chronic crisis, extreme climate vulnerability and extended situations of displacement require a long view from affected States, humanitarian organizations and their donors. It is, therefore, important to prioritize forms of investment that meet humanitarian needs and protect development gains by increasing individual, community and national resilience. This shift towards greater focus on resilience requires active support and investment that is predictable, sustained and flexible. It will also require us to adapt to changing contexts, in particular urban settings, and be much more innovative in the way we seek to reduce, prepare for, and respond to disasters and crises.

#### A. Strengthening community resilience

As rightly urged by Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, the humanitarian sector can no longer simply respond to crises but must also, within the limitations of humanitarian principles, contribute what it can to substantially reduce humanitarian need. Supporting communities to become more resilient to future shocks is central to this approach.

Resilience can and must be built at various levels, from the individual to the community, from the locality to the nation. It is multi-faceted, drawing on social cohesion, a healthy natural environment, economy and community, knowledge and education, solid infrastructure and social services, as well as specific disaster risk management activities. It is more a process than an end state, and one that must be owned and driven by communities themselves.

As such, it is very clear that no one organization – or the humanitarian sector at large – acting alone can provide the full support necessary to ensure that all communities reach their greatest potential for resilience. We must work in partnership and in a connected way. We must also work on a much more ambitious scale than we have in the past if we hope to address today's trends towards uncontrollable and spiralling humanitarian need.

As affirmed by the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, our central vehicle for building those partnerships and achieving that scale is the One Billion Coalition for Resilience (1BC) convened and facilitated by the IFRC.





The goal of the 1BC is that, by 2025, we will mobilize one billion people to take action to strengthen their resilience. The 1BC is based on the belief that, given the right support, vulnerable groups everywhere will work together and care for their own and for others. It is conceived as a network of coalitions and tools connecting individuals, communities, organizations, business and Governments to build on, strengthen and expand existing initiatives for community resilience. Individuals and institutions that are members of the 1BC will be supported by tools to connect to one another, to kick-start initiatives, and to benefit from the networks and expertise of others.

The 1BC is built upon five platforms: a digital ecosystem for public engagement; a business continuity platform; a civil society organizations partnership platform; an advocacy platform, and an operations platform. These platforms will facilitate the necessary connections, information and tool sharing, and provide the foundation for us to collectively engage one billion people. By mobilizing the potential of our collective networks, our ability to work at scale, and coordinating our shared resources, we will work towards a world where people are safer, healthier and can thrive, even in the face of adversity.

#### **What we pledge to do:**

- ✦ We pledge to work with partners to build up the One Billion Coalition for Resilience with the goal of supporting one billion people to take action to strengthen their resilience by 2025.

#### **What we call for:**

- We call on all actors working to support resilience to unite their efforts, connecting their networks and providing mutual support.
- We call on all actors working to support resilience to engage communities and their local leaders to achieve lasting impact. At-risk communities and local actors must be key drivers of change and their voices must be at the core of decision-making processes that draw on local knowledge, capacities and ongoing feedback mechanisms.
- We call on States to build the legal and institutional environment for risk-informed laws, policies and practices, and integrate disaster risk reduction into national poverty reduction strategies, sustainable development plans and climate change adaptation plans.

- We call on donors to achieve the goal for one per cent of overseas development aid to be allocated for disaster risk reduction and ensure that sufficient funds are allocated to the most vulnerable countries and communities.

## **B. Supporting people in protracted conflict**

Many millions of people are experiencing armed conflict for large periods of their lives. We are assisting people in places where they have seen violence and conflict for 40 of the past 60 years. The increased duration of conflict and other complex crises, and their far-reaching consequences, has long been challenging the assumption that humanitarian response to conflict and violence can ethically or effectively be short-term in nature.

This is especially true for chronic or low-intensity conflict areas, where the context may change overnight and violence may flare up, causing immediate suffering and creating new needs. These new needs often add to already fragile situations that see people impoverished and vulnerable, and where gains are quickly undone by new violence. Over time, the cumulative impact of long-term conflicts and violence, which degrade essential services and make coping mechanisms less effective, can gravely exacerbate the humanitarian consequences of even low-intensity situations. Such situations present enormous challenges, and not only for humanitarian organizations. Heightened security risks drive away Government and development actors, which are indispensable in providing longer-term sustainable services.

As a consequence, humanitarian actors have had to adjust their approaches in order to carry out activities that combine life-saving assistance and longer-term responses that support people's livelihoods, rebuild essential infrastructure, and create safer environments. For example, in cities such as Aleppo or Kabul, in addition to the delivery of emergency medical care or food parcels, the ICRC has worked to keep sophisticated and inter-connected municipal and even national systems, such as energy, water, and sewage systems, running and meeting the needs of hundreds of thousands of people. By investing in critical infrastructure and skilled human resources, the ICRC helps to prevent reversal of development gains. In line with the Movement's complementary approach, the ICRC often cooperates extensively with





the National Society whose volunteers are an indispensable force for carrying out both immediate relief actions and long-term strategies for resilience.

There is no question that this combined approach to meeting both immediate and holistic needs is a more responsible and cost-effective way to work, but it is not without challenges. In particular, in many situations, we are confronted with competing needs and a limited budget. Further, it can be difficult to find the right partners where insecurity and the lack of predictable funding impede other humanitarian, development or investment organizations from ensuring their own presence and it is not always possible to work directly with them in a principled way.

#### **What we pledge to do:**

- We pledge to continue to mount context-specific responses in relation to protracted and chronic conflicts by addressing immediate needs from a long-term perspective, to the extent possible.
- We pledge to adapt programme planning and implementation processes to better reflect our combined approach, notably by improving evaluation and reporting on the qualitative outcomes of our work rather than outputs.

#### **What we call for:**

- We call on donors to offer multi-year financing in the context of protracted conflicts in order to match the long-term investment made by humanitarian actors.
- We welcome the efforts of international financial institutions and development actors to increase development investments in these contexts, as the continuation of basic services and infrastructure is a critical element of reducing the effects of conflict and mass displacement. We call on States and development actors to ensure that the most vulnerable have access to critical services and are appropriately targeted by these interventions.

### **C. Ensuring health for all, especially in crises**

Pandemics, epidemics and other global health threats are emerging at worrying levels and frequency. The recent Ebola epidemic for example, with approximately 30,000 cases and more than 11,000 deaths, highlighted the shortcomings of existing national and international systems for surveillance and response. It also, and most importantly, brought to the forefront the key role local health workers and

volunteers play in ensuring that households have access to health services, referral and follow up within their own communities. They are well placed to assist communities to identify local solutions to critical health problems in complex settings, contributing to local and community resilience. Such approaches cover the resilience continuum from preparedness, response, and recovery to long-term development.

Moreover, adequate access to basic health care and life-saving commodities and services is still distant for many individuals, households and communities.

2011, the Movement and other international and national professional health organizations have worked, as part of the initiative entitled “health care in danger,” to raise awareness of the issue of violence against patients, health care workers, facilities and transport. This initiative aims to prevent violence, to ensure safe access to and for the delivery of health care through the implementation of practical measures and customized operational responses at national and local levels in armed conflict and other emergencies.



Although much progress was made in the past decade in achieving health-related Millennium Development Goals, far too many communities have been left behind and the health divide has widened in many parts of the world.

In many areas of armed conflict, access to health care is in danger as parties to conflict have transformed hospitals and clinics into combat zones. In Afghanistan, for example, the ICRC registered in 2015 a 50 per cent increase of incidents against health staff and facilities, compared to the previous year. That means one incident every three days, without considering how many incidents go unreported. In an effort to stop this phenomenon, since

Beyond these security-related constraints, moreover, are self-imposed restraints by many donors that avoid the risks inherent in funding basic health care interventions, from vaccination to maternal care, in areas of protracted conflicts. In light of the stunning concentration of global mortality in these contexts, however, this approach fails to appreciate the significant risk of inaction.

There is no health without mental health – yet mental health care and psychosocial support is often under-resourced, stigmatized and, where available, highly institutionalized and lacking community focus. We see a particular, growing need to address the psychological consequences of armed conflicts and

violence. The latter is linked to populations enduring protracted conflicts, extreme violence, displacement, disappearances of loved ones, etc. It is also a matter of supporting the helpers (volunteers and staff working in harsh environments).

#### **What we pledge to do:**

- ✚ We pledge to continue our initiative to protect patients, health care workers, facilities and transport, and ensure access for all to life-saving health interventions, as formulated in resolution 4 adopted at the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference.
- ✚ We pledge to strengthen the use of a variety of risk communication and health promotion approaches to reach, influence, enable and engage different segments of the affected communities as well as our partners to promote and sustain behaviour and social change actions and enable greater community ownership of any community health initiative.
- ✚ We pledge to innovate using locally informed intelligence in our community-based health approaches to provide life-saving interventions and promote healthy skills and practices in places with acute or protracted crises.
- ✚ We pledge to document, study and share effective delivery strategies in places of acute or protracted crises.
- ✚ We pledge to develop capacities and ensure opportunities for financial and technical resources to strengthen the health care continuum – from community through to national level.
- ✚ We pledge to strengthen community-based mental health and psychosocial support programmes and take action to address discrimination and the protection needs of people with mental health disorders.

#### **What we call for:**

- As a matter of priority, we call on States and all relevant stakeholders to implement a range of measures that seek to protect wounded and sick persons and health care services in armed conflict and other emergency situations in accordance with IHL and national legislation.
- We call on donors to sustain risk communication and community engagement preparedness initiatives, including through the long-term empowerment and capacity development of local actors.
- We call on all relevant stakeholders to support the vital role of community health volunteers/workers in ensuring that households have access to

health services, referral and follow up, including in such support opportunities for training and increased financial and technical resources.

- We call on all relevant stakeholders to link health services with community outreach, which is so crucial for saving lives and goes hand in hand with safety of volunteers, community health workers, staff and people.
- We call on all relevant stakeholders to strengthen health responses to respond to crisis, while maintaining the provision of essential services to non-affected populations.
- We call on donors and humanitarian organizations to increase investment in mental health and psychosocial support programmes, including research into interventions that prove effective in challenging settings.

## **D. Helping people in urban settings**

Currently, more than half of the world's population lives in urban areas; by 2050, this number is expected to increase to 70 per cent. This rapid and often unplanned urbanization has led to a fundamental shift in challenges faced by humanitarian actors in responding to crisis in those contexts, whether in situations of armed conflict or natural disaster. Cities are complex systems that require humanitarian actors to adopt very different approaches from those more traditionally used in urban areas. The interplay with other global challenges such as climate change and environmental degradation, and displacement and migration, further contribute to an increase in the scale, complexity, and impact of humanitarian crises in urban settings.

Many contemporary armed conflicts are unconventional internal and asymmetric conflicts, with warfare taking place in densely populated urban areas. Urban warfare puts large numbers of civilians at risk and has severe consequences for essential infrastructure and services. The use of explosive weapons having wide-area effects only compounds such consequences. Whether it results from conflict or natural disasters, the destruction of road and public transport networks, water and sanitation systems and marketplaces has the potential to affect many more people now that areas are becoming more densely populated. This means that traditional humanitarian approaches with a primary focus on the provision of the most basic services, mostly implemented in camps, are not appropriate in urban settings. Humanitarian responders will have to develop





approaches that support or strengthen existing systems while continuing to respond to urgent needs.

As a Movement, we continue working towards increasing our expertise in responding to crises in urban settings. We will continue to strengthen both our policy and operational understanding of what is needed in such contexts. Highlighting urban risks through the World Disasters Report in 2010, the IFRC and many National Societies have since been working on understanding the urban aspects of disaster risk reduction and management. The ICRC has equally devoted resources to better understand how to provide services in these settings as summarized in its recent research report “Urban Services During Protracted Armed Conflict”. The report provides lessons learned that can help the Movement and other humanitarian actors to improve their operational practice in such contexts.

As the challenges that are seen in urban settings exceed the knowledge and capacity of any single actor or organization, the step to create an Urban Expert Group during the WHS preparations is seen as a welcome one in order to ensure that urban issues do get the attention they need at the Summit. These preparations initiated the Global Alliance for Urban Crises (the Alliance), which will be formally launched at a

Special Session during the WHS. The Alliance brings together a diversity of entities comprising humanitarian agencies, built environment professional institutes and, critically, municipality representatives to work together on informing both policy and operational practices. The Alliance will have to prove itself to be a contributor in developing strategies and tools for more effective and appropriate responses in urban humanitarian crises. The aim is to work in partnership to achieve common outcomes, improving effectiveness and helping to break down traditional silos.

#### **What we pledge to do:**

- We pledge to further develop and tailor our own risk reduction and emergency management approaches to take into account the particularities of urban settings, and continue to strengthen our logistical and technical capacity to meet the challenges of these complex environments.
- We pledge to cooperate with others to support building urban preparedness and resilience in the face of crises, including through the Global Alliance for Urban Crises and the Urban Crisis Charter, to which the IFRC is a member and the ICRC an observer.
- While maintaining our response to urgent needs, we pledge to support the maintenance, resilience

and continuity of large-scale water, sewerage and energy infrastructure and services in cities affected by armed conflict.

#### **What we call for:**

- We call on humanitarian and other partners to support the efforts of and coordinate with the Global Alliance for Urban Crisis and/or sign the Urban Crisis Charter.
- We call on parties to armed conflict to avoid the use of explosive weapons having wide-area effects in populated areas.
- We call on donors and international financial institutions to increase their own investments into urban areas affected by armed conflict and fragility to enable resilient services for all.

### **E. Needs-driven innovation**

Our world is changing at an unprecedented speed and, along with it, the nature and scale of natural and technological disasters. Humanitarian challenges are set to further intensify, threatening hard-fought achievements in human development throughout the world. In this new interdependent, interconnected and fast-paced reality, we need to innovate to be relevant to the changing nature of conflict and natural disasters, and live up to the expectations of those affected by them. Innovation can help us be more effective, efficient and respond more appropriately to the needs of people we work to assist and protect.

The Movement fosters innovation driven by the needs of people affected by crises – we neither innovate for the sake of innovation, nor are we solely driven by the potential advantages of new technology. We identify and support the tremendous assets and capacities that exist within communities. We search for what is already working before designing new solutions. We approach innovation as much as to enable those affected to respond to crises, as to improve our own efficiency and impact.

Every innovative initiative we foster is driven by our Fundamental Principles. This means we focus on human-centred solutions for those we assist and protect, regardless of gender, age, nationality, ethnicity, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. Innovation should not, in the end, negatively affect humanitarian action nor do more harm than good.

Through the Global Humanitarian Lab, initiated by the ICRC and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and joined by the IFRC, Médecins Sans Frontières and World Food Programme along with the Governments of Switzerland and Australia, we will mobilize and bring together the collaborative energies of innovators, whether refugee entrepreneurs, computer scientists, or digital volunteers, to ideate, design, test, and implement solutions – from 3D printer solutions to new operational models and ways of doing business.

#### **What we pledge to do:**

- We pledge to foster dialogue and participation of communities in grassroots innovation and to support community-led innovation.
- We pledge to build an eco-system of value-driven partners to design and deliver all aspects of innovation, from assessing needs to final adoption.
- We pledge to find new approaches to make our own process of innovation more timely, cost effective and collaborative.

#### **What we call for:**

- We call on all relevant stakeholders to increase collaboration across the sector in sharing successes and failures in innovation in humanitarian action
- We call on donors to provide funding that is flexible enough to allow for innovation and failure.









## 4. Recognizing and enabling different humanitarian systems

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Calls have rightly been made to improve coordination and information sharing, reduce duplication and identify cost savings in the humanitarian sector. Progress can and must be made in these areas. In this regard, the Grand Bargain process, launched pursuant to the recommendations of the UN's High Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing, and in which the ICRC and the IFRC are involved, seeks to make the financial resources spent on humanitarian action more flexible, efficient, transparent, and effective. Moreover, cooperation in international humanitarian operations can be greatly improved through more effective laws, rules and mechanisms for managing international assistance. As we implement new solutions, however, it is important not to lose sight of the diversity of the humanitarian sector and the important advantages it brings to its effectiveness.

### A. Working better together within a diverse humanitarian eco-system

From the Movement's perspective, there is no single "humanitarian system". Instead, there is a diverse eco-system in which numerous actors cohabit, each with their distinctiveness and modalities. In this context, top-down, one-size-fits-all approaches are bound to fail. As discussed above, the complementarity of the local, national and international components of the Movement has demonstrably been one of its strengths. Other aspects of our distinctiveness, such as our community-based volunteers, the privileged auxiliary relationship of National Societies with their Governments in the humanitarian field, our specific history and mandates and our Fundamental Principles, also present advantages in meeting humanitarian needs. However, we also face our own constraints and limitations where other response systems, such as the United Nations, NGO consortia or regional organizations, may present complementary advantages.

This diversity and complementarity must be nurtured and respected. This means that solutions to some of the gaps in the sector should not rely on overly centralized approaches. We are concerned that some of the suggestions that have been aired in the lead up to the World Humanitarian Summit (for instance calling for "one leadership" in the sector, or insisting that all needs assessments be undertaken jointly by all actors) lean in this direction.

This does not mean that humanitarian assistance should be chaotic and that coordination and sharing cannot be improved. National Societies, the IFRC and ICRC will continue to engage with other humanitarian actors, including UN agencies, NGOs and other humanitarian actors, and coordinate with them. For instance, the ICRC and the IFRC have long been participating in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee as standing invitees and are determined to continue to do so. The IFRC plays an active role as Co-Convenor of the Global Shelter Cluster, together with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Components of the Movement are regularly engaging with UN-led coordination mechanisms at country-level, although the ICRC has decided that it could not be a formal member of the cluster system as it could affect its independence and, in specific contexts, perceptions of its neutrality.

## B. Accelerating progress in the facilitation and regulation of international disaster response

Another important way to improving cooperation while also respecting the advantages of diversity is ensuring a clear rulebook for international disaster response. The increased frequency and impact of natural disasters and their humanitarian consequences have set the stage for ever greater use of international support in response, including in countries with little prior experience of international assistance. There is ample evidence that a lack of clear rules for the facilitation and regulation of international disaster response (“international disaster response law” or IDRL) often leads to unnecessary restrictions and delays in relief, as well as gaps in coordination and quality. It impedes the ability of domestic authorities to sit in the driver’s seat in response operations in their own countries. The absence of a legal framework is also one of the barriers to better trust and complementarity between international and national efforts in major relief operations.

For more than a decade, the IFRC and National Societies have been working with States to promote more

effective rules and procedures for the management of international disaster assistance. Following extensive research and documentation, in 2007, the 30<sup>th</sup> International Conference adopted the “Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance” (also known as the IDRL Guidelines) as voluntary guidance for the development of national laws and rules. Since that time, National Societies have carried out formal technical assistance projects in more than 50 countries, resulting in new laws or regulations in more than 20 countries to date. Nevertheless, many countries still lack clear laws on this issue, including a number that have recently experienced major disasters, and a global 2015 survey showed that regulatory issues remain an important barrier to effective relief.

Given this reality, see the need for a number of steps. One of them to continue to support States at their request to analyse their existing laws in relation to all the elements that are relevant in disaster response. Another, as requested by the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference, is to continue consultations on further options to accelerate progress, including the possibility of strengthening global and/or regional legal frameworks. The importance of solid IDRL stood out clearly



Madeline Wilson/IFRC

in all of the regional consultations preparatory to the WHS, especially as it has emphasised the central role of disaster-affected States in the coordination, facilitation and oversight of international relief. The Movement stands ready to provide support and advice, as needed and requested by States seeking to do this.

#### What we pledge to do:

- We pledge to continue to offer advice and assistance to States, as needed, to develop effective rules and procedures for managing international disaster assistance (IDRL).
- We pledge to foster dialogue on further options to accelerate progress in resolving regulatory problems in international disaster response operations, including country-level efforts as well as the potential for further strengthening global and/or regional legal frameworks.

#### What we call for:

- We call on States to ensure that they have the laws, rules, procedures and institutional arrangements in place to facilitate and regulate international disaster response.
- We call on States and humanitarian partners to also consider whether strengthening regional or global frameworks can improve cooperation in international disaster response.

### C. Improving humanitarian financing

There has never been a wider gap between the level of global humanitarian needs and resources available to meet them. In this context, reform of the current humanitarian financing architecture is gaining new momentum. It is not only the quantity but also the quality of existing financing that needs to improve in order to ensure greater effectiveness of humanitarian assistance and protection. Changes need to demonstrably lead to improved services and support for vulnerable communities and people.

Protracted humanitarian action in long-term conflict situations and/or because of seasonally recurrent disasters, presents challenges in current models of humanitarian financing. It requires greater synergies between humanitarian and development approaches, recognizing that what counts is that responses are adapted to people's evolving needs and that financing facilitates this. Clear visibility on future and



Sebastian Noel Niepoort/IFRC

multi-year funding is equally needed. Obstacles can also appear in the form of short-term fragmented funding, lack of harmonization in donor reporting requirements, earmarking, high transaction costs and lack of access to financing for local actors.

In the context of the Grand Bargain discussions, we have heard donors' interest in seeing humanitarian organizations reduce management costs, reduce duplication of efforts and increase transparency in the use of humanitarian funds, as well as finding ways to pass additional funds to national and local actors. As a Movement, we have started developing more efficient and cost-saving practices and are willing to go further. For example, in favour of efforts to exchange information and lessons learned that can improve efficiency and lower costs, we are working to establish joint Red Cross and Red Crescent needs assessments. We are willing to explore the possibility of reporting to International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standards, bearing in mind that it is likely to challenge the existing capacity of some members of the Movement. As discussed above, we are also ready to increase our efforts to promote investment in National Societies' capacities and leadership, including through the new National Society Investment Fund.

We believe that cash will almost always be less costly to deliver, provide greater choice and dignity to the affected communities, and create more opportunities for transparency. For the Movement, cash transfers are a powerful means of covering the wide range of needs of the affected communities in emergency



situations or to support livelihoods and contribute to economic recovery.

#### **What we pledge to do:**

- We pledge to promote greater financial and technical support for the capacity of National Societies, including through the new National Society Investment Fund (as described above in Section 2.B).
- We pledge to rapidly scale up our use of forecast-based financing by 1) facilitating the doubling the existing coverage of this mechanism within the Movement by 2018, and 2) exploring its integration in global disaster risk management funding tools.
- We pledge to explore ways to further reduce duplication and management costs
- We pledge to scale up the use of cash transfer programmes where appropriate, by developing a predictable cash response model that can guarantee global, regional and national capacity to deliver cash transfer programming where it is needed most.
- We pledge to seek and dedicate resources in order to actively explore the potential of the various components of the Movement to report to IATI standards.

#### **What we call for:**

- We call on donors to ensure that money invested in humanitarian assistance is “quality money”, i.e. predictable, long-term, un-earmarked, and low on unnecessary conditions and reporting requirements.
- We call on donors to ensure that a much greater proportion of international humanitarian funding is accessible by local and national responders.
- We call on donors to increase efforts to provide anticipatory funding to humanitarian actors to allow for a more effective and efficient response, and scale up practices that work, such as forecast-based financing.
- We call on all relevant stakeholders to respect the diversity and independence of humanitarian financing structures, while promoting coherence where possible between humanitarian, development and climate finance.

## Conclusion

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The World Humanitarian Summit represents a significant moment of reflection for the humanitarian sector, and more importantly, an opportunity for change. The outcome of the Summit will be an important part of a broader conversation that started in the consultation process and must extend long after the Summit itself.

The far-reaching consultation process preceding the Summit built important momentum and an expectation that we could improve. This momentum was also fed by key milestones in the development and humanitarian sectors over the past year, including the Sendai Framework for Action, the Paris Agreement, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Resolutions of the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. Through these processes, we have set new standards and agreed that we cannot tolerate the current level of unmet humanitarian need.

For the Movement, we recognize that we can do more and we can do better. This report has set out our pledges to strengthen our work in specific priority areas. Broadly, we pledge to make the most of our local, national, and international reach to reduce vulnerability and suffering. We pledge to listen to affected people and act on their concerns. And we pledge to act according to our Fundamental Principles to reach and assist those most vulnerable. We recognize, however, that we cannot meet today's spiralling needs alone. We will need the support and collaboration of Governments and our partners and we, in turn, pledge our cooperation with them.

We have applauded the ambition, and joined a number of the calls for action issued by, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon. Moreover, we have made a number of calls of our own for action in favour of the most vulnerable people, for reaffirmation and implementation of key international norms, and for critical reforms in how we approach local humanitarian action, volunteerism, gender, urban crises and protracted conflict, among others.

At the same time, we have also affirmed our strong belief in the advantages of diversity and complementarity in the humanitarian sector and in the critical and specific role of principled humanitarian action. As we embrace new approaches, these existing advantages must not be lost, and we call on all participants at the Summit to cherish and respect this diversity while making the best of our distinct comparative advantages.

By effectively working together within our evolving humanitarian eco-system, complementing each other's strengths and weaknesses, we are confident that we will be ready to step up to the challenges today and in the future.

## Selected references

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Links to the following references are accessible at [www.ifrc.org/whs](http://www.ifrc.org/whs)

### Introduction

[“International Red Cross and Red Crescent Message to the World Humanitarian Summit,”](#) Resolution 3, Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (2015).

### 1. Protect the dignity of every human being and improve humanitarian access to those in need

**From the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (2015):**

- Resolution 1: [“Strengthening international humanitarian law protecting persons deprived of their liberty”](#) (32IC/15/R1).
- Resolution 2: [“Strengthening compliance with international humanitarian law”](#) (32IC/15/R2).
- Resolution 3: [“Sexual and Gender-Based Violence: joint action on prevention and response”](#) (32IC/15/R3).
- Resolution 5: [“The safety and security of humanitarian volunteers”](#) (32IC/15/19.5).
- Joint Pledge IFRC-ICRC: [“Turning commitments into further action to implement Resolution 3 Migration: Ensuring Access, Dignity, Respect for Diversity and Social Inclusion”](#) (December 2015).
- [“Report on the work of Commission A: The Fundamental Principles in action”](#) (December 2015).
- Background report: [“The Fundamental Principles in action: a unique ethical, operational and institutional framework”](#) (October 2015).
- Background report: [“International humanitarian law and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts”](#) (October 2015).

### Other references:

- Resolution 4: [“Adoption of the Strategic Framework on Disability Inclusion by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement,”](#) Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (2015).
- Resolution 7: [“Movement statement on migration: Ensuring Collective Action to Protect and Respond to the Needs and Vulnerabilities of Migrants”](#) Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (2015).
- IFRC, [“Minimum Standard Commitments to Gender and Diversity in Emergency Programming,”](#) Pilot Version (2015).
- IFRC, [Unseen, Unheard: Gender Based Violence in Disasters](#) (2015).
- IFRC, [Global Review on Volunteering Report](#) (2015).
- IFRC and UNDP, [The Checklist on Law and Disaster Risk Reduction](#) (2015).
- Resolution 3: [“Migration: Ensuring Access, Dignity, Respect for Diversity and Social Inclusion,”](#) 31<sup>st</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (2011).
- [“IFRC Policy on Migration,”](#) 17<sup>th</sup> IFRC General Assembly (2009).
- Resolution 5: [“Movement Policy on Internal Displacement,”](#) Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (2009).



## 2. Affirming the complementarity of local, national, and international action

From the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (2015):

- Resolution 7: “[Strengthening the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement response to growing humanitarian needs](#)” (32IC/15/R7).
- Background report: “[Strengthening the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Response to Growing Humanitarian Needs](#)” (October 2015).
- [Principles and Rules for Red Cross and Red Crescent Humanitarian Assistance](#) (endorsed in Resolution 7).

Other references:

- Resolution 1: “[Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation \(SMCC\): Optimizing the Movement's Humanitarian Response](#)” (CD/15/R1).
- Resolution 11: “[Vision for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement](#)” (CD/15/R11).
- World Disasters Report 2015, “[Focus on local actors, the key to humanitarian effectiveness](#)” (2015).

## 3. Taking the long view of people's needs

From the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (2015):

- Resolution 4: “[Health Care in Danger: Continuing to protect the delivery of health care together](#)” (32IC/15/R4).

Other references:

- ICRC, “[Protecting Health Care: Key Recommendations](#)” (April 2016).
- ICRC, “[Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas](#)”, Factsheet (February 2016).
- ICRC, “[Urban Services during Protracted Conflict: A Call for a Better Approach to Assisting Affected People](#)” (September 2015).
- IFRC, “[The One Billion Coalition](#)” (2015).
- IFRC, “[Framework for Community Resilience](#)” (2014).

## 4. Recognizing and enabling different humanitarian systems

From the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (2015):

- Resolution 6: “[Strengthening Legal Frameworks for Disaster Response, Risk Reduction and First Aid](#)” (32IC/15/R6).
- Background Report: “[Strengthening Legal Frameworks for Disaster Response, Risk Reduction and First Aid](#)” (October 2015).

Other references:

- “[Joint International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Paper on the Grand Bargain](#)” (2016).
- IFRC, “[Ready or Not? Third Progress Report on the Implementation of the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance](#)” (2015).
- Resolution 4: “[Adoption of the Guidelines on the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance](#),” 30<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (2007).



# The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

**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 enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in 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 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.





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