



One humanity:

Safety and dignity for migrants

September 2016

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Saving lives, changing minds.

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest volunteer-based humanitarian network. With our 190 member National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies worldwide, we are in every community reaching 160.7 million people annually through long-term services and development programmes, as well as 110 million people through disaster response and early recovery programmes. We act before, during and after disasters and health emergencies to meet the needs and improve the lives of vulnerable people. We do so with impartiality as to nationality, race, gender, religious beliefs, class and political opinions.

Guided by *Strategy 2020* – our collective plan of action to tackle the major humanitarian and development challenges of this decade – we are committed to saving lives and changing minds.

Our strength lies in our volunteer network, our community-based expertise and our independence and neutrality. We work to improve humanitarian standards, as partners in development, and in response to disasters. We persuade decision-makers to act at all times in the interests of vulnerable people. The result: we enable healthy and safe communities, reduce vulnerabilities, strengthen resilience and foster a culture of peace around the world.

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Key Principles of the IFRC Policy on Migration (2009)

1. Focus on the needs and vulnerabilities of migrants
2. Include migrants in humanitarian programming
3. Support the aspirations of migrants
4. Recognize the rights of migrants
5. Link assistance, protection and humanitarian advocacy for migrants
6. Build partnerships for migrants
7. Work along the migratory trails
8. Assist migrants in return
9. Respond to the displacement of populations
10. Alleviate migratory pressures on communities of origin

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Introduction

Today, and every day, hundreds of thousands of migrants¹ will risk exploitation and abuse, violence, deprivation and discrimination. Shocking numbers of migrants – particularly, but certainly not only, among those headed to Europe – are paying for their hopes for a better future with their lives. Many are left with physical and mental scars or detained or pushed back from border crossings. Upon arrival, they face unprecedented challenges in integrating in their new societies, in part due to a hardening of attitudes, policies and a public discourse dominated by fear.

There is a great deal of room for principled debate about the best approaches to migration. However, there can be no doubt about the principle of humanity. Regardless of their legal status, all migrants are human beings and we owe them our best efforts to safeguard their safety, dignity and well-being. States are bound by clear rules of international human rights and refugee law (and in armed conflict, international humanitarian law) regarding the treatment of migrants and refugees, including the principle of non-refoulement. In many places, however, we are falling short of ensuring the protection migrants are entitled to.

At the time of writing, the United Nations' "High-Level Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Migrants and Refugees" was poised to adopt a declaration ("the Draft Declaration") reaffirming some critical points of well-established international law as well as setting out commitments toward a more humane approach to migration. The meeting was also expected to launch a process of negotiation on a "Global Compact on Refugees" ("the Refugees Compact") and a "Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration" ("the Migration Compact").

We are encouraged by these developments. They may prove the starting point for a more substantial global governance framework for migration, with a sense of shared humanity at its centre. The Migration Compact aims at developing alternatives to irregular movements that could contribute to saving lives. The Refugees Compact is an opportunity to fill in one of the most glaring gaps in the global framework for refugee protection – that is, the lack of clear obligations regarding the sharing of responsibilities for the support and protection of refugees. Most importantly, we must change the current grim dynamics on the ground, where migrants are increasingly treated as a threat and as a burden.

National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, stand ready to assist and support states to make this possible. National Societies already provide a wide range of humanitarian services to vulnerable migrants, reaching approximately 1 million persons globally last year.

This pamphlet sets out the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (IFRC) calls for action related to the implementation of the good intentions of the Draft Declaration and recommends critical issues to be urgently addressed in the future compacts and processes that will follow. It also describes some of the activities and initiatives of National Societies and the IFRC that may be scaled up to meet this challenge. Consistent with our humanitarian mandate and experience, our emphasis is on the safety and dignity of migrants (including asylum seekers and refugees) across the migratory trail, sharing responsibility for refugees, and on measures designed to promote integration and reduce xenophobia.

1. Consistent with the IFRC's 2009 Policy on Migration, the term "migrant" in this pamphlet will be used broadly to cover all persons who leave or flee their habitual residences to go to new places to seek opportunities and better prospects – including labour seekers as well as asylum seekers and refugees among others. This is not meant to denigrate legal differences among categories of persons but rather to emphasize their common humanity.

1. Safety and dignity across the migratory trail

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A. The unacceptable dangers facing today's migrants

Migrants must no longer be left to die. Regardless of the procedural mechanisms states utilize to manage their migration intake, or the ways in which smugglers and traffickers cynically abuse the potential of official rescue, there can be no death penalty merely for the act of seeking a better life. The Draft Declaration seems to acknowledge this; we must move without delay to make it a reality.

Much more can be done to save migrants facing death at sea, for example in the Mediterranean, where according to recorded figures 3,770 died last year and over 2,850 drowned or were recorded as missing in the first six months of 2016, or in the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea, which claimed 550 lives.² Far less information is available about the numbers of people that perish crossing the world's deserts.³ Migrants from Central and South America face death along desert routes linking Mexico to the United States, whether from exposure, thirst, or predation by gangs, smugglers and traffickers. Migrants in many parts of the world are being stuffed like freight into the trunks of cars or the backs of trucks, dying horribly of asphyxiation or accidents.

Death is not the only unacceptable danger facing vulnerable migrants. On migratory routes around the world, some face extortion, assault, and extreme deprivation. A study recently undertaken by the British Red Cross of migrant risks along the central Mediterranean route revealed a litany of abuse. "The people we spoke to almost all had a story that included being beaten, abused, exploited and detained or imprisoned," it notes.

This was particularly true in the numerous lawless areas they encounter, "where militias, armed groups or criminals operate with impunity. Many will be imprisoned at some stage by groups that will hold them for ransom or subject them to forced labour. Some of them will be trafficked into labour or sex work; some will be raped, killed or will simply die due to lack of food, water or medical care. Areas such as Libya's southern border are so dangerous that governments and aid organisations are absent, powerless to help."

In 2011, the state parties to the Geneva Conventions and the Red Cross and Red Crescent adopted a unanimous resolution calling on states "to ensure that their national procedures at international borders, especially those that might result in denial of access to international protection, deportation or interdiction of persons, include adequate safeguards to protect the dignity and ensure the safety of all migrants."⁴ It is more urgent than ever to put this into practice.

B. Scaling up rescue, relief and protection

The Draft Declaration states that "we are determined, first and foremost, to save lives." As a start, it is time to scale up our efforts in rescue and relief for migrants. Investment in search and rescue in the Mediterranean has varied widely over the last several years, in part due to concern about the "pull factor" for smugglers deliber-

2. IOM, *Fatal Journeys Volume 2: Identification and Tracing of Dead and Missing Migrants* (2016).

3. More information also available at MMS, 27 June 2016. *Forgotten fatalities: the number of migrant deaths before reaching the Mediterranean.* <http://www.regionalmms.org/FeatureForgottenFatalities.html>

4. "Migration: Ensuring Access, Dignity, and Respect for Diversity and Social Inclusion," Resolution 3, 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (2011). http://rcrcconference.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2015/03/R3_Migration_EN.pdf



Austrian Red Cross/Markus Hechenberger

IFRC response in the Mediterranean and neighbouring regions



In 2015, the IFRC launched the *Response Plan to address the humanitarian needs of migrants in the Mediterranean and neighbouring regions*. The Response Plan aims to deliver on the objectives set out in the IFRC’s Policy on Migration, and recalled by States in Resolution 3 adopted at the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in 2011. The three main areas of response, which have been identified through undertaking mapping in 25 countries that form part of the plan, are: assistance, protection, and public awareness. Each operational area also includes a distinct advocacy element, to engage states, international organizations, civil society and the public in support of the Movement’s humanitarian work.



Building on this response plan, a *European Framework for Migration* has been developed to show the collective action of the Europe-wide Red Cross Red Crescent in assisting migrants from their entry into Europe to final destination countries, and to highlight how individual National Societies contribute to that collective action. The European Framework serves to demonstrate adherence to Red Cross Red Crescent policies and commitments using case studies and stories that evidence success and good practice. The European Framework also highlights the unique offer of the Movement to assist national government and local authorities based on their auxiliary status and maintaining its independence, with the needs and rights of migrants as central to its humanitarian mandate.



Protecting migrant workers and the victims of human trafficking globally

The Rights of Migrants in Action is a 45-month project, administered by the IFRC and co-funded by the EU DG-DEVCO, to promote and protect the human rights of migrants in targeted countries around the world, migration corridors and regions through a Red Cross Red Crescent globally coordinated civil society action, with a specific focus on migrant workers and victims of human trafficking. The project supports the Red Cross Red Crescent’s mission to reduce risks, build community and individual resilience and improve the lives of migrants throughout their journey.



ately putting migrants to sea in unseaworthy craft in order to invite rescue. However, when rescue efforts were reduced, deaths rose dramatically.⁵

For their part, with support from the IFRC, the Italian Red Cross began cooperating with the Migrant Offshore Aid Station (MOAS) in post-rescue efforts in the Mediterranean in August of this year – and have already helped hundreds of people. Other humanitarian organizations are also actively supporting rescue efforts, and their ships must be guaranteed safe access to carry out their work. However, private efforts of this sort will never match the capacity of naval and coast guard forces and these latter must be put consistently to the service of saving human lives.

We must also be more fully prepared to provide for the humanitarian needs of migrants. This duty applies to states across the migratory journey – from origin to transit to destination. National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are ready to add their support.

For example, in their response to the 2015 Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea crisis, the Bangladesh Red Crescent, Indonesian Red Cross, Malaysian Red Crescent, and Thai Red Cross collaborated to provide immediate assistance to migrants, ranging from field kitchens to shelter, medical care and restoring family links. Across Europe, National Societies have provided critical relief at harbours, land and sea borders, airports, train stations and hazardous crossing points. For instance, the Hellenic Red Cross has provided services ranging from food, water and hygiene kits, registration of unaccompanied minors, basic health care and psychosocial support and access to information services, including through a well-established hotline. Likewise, the Italian Red Cross operates “Safe Points” that give information and basic support to all migrants regardless of their status. Services include legal information and advice, information on rights, first aid, basic health care, and referrals to other available assistance.

5. *Ibid.*



Protecting the rights of detainees

Through its Immigration Detention Monitoring Program, the **Australian Red Cross** conducts regular independent monitoring visits to immigration facilities across Australia. In line with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, monitoring services and assistance are offered to all people in detention regardless of the reason for their detention or the way they have arrived in Australia.

The draft High-Level Meeting Declaration commits states to cooperate in “vigorously combat[ing] human trafficking and people smuggling”. These efforts should also extend to cooperating in addressing the more general risks of abuse in these high-danger zones. More generally, law enforcement efforts must set as their first priority the prevention of death, injury and abuse of vulnerable migrants at the hands of criminals – prior to turning to other interests in the interdiction of irregular migrants.

In support of these efforts, the IFRC hopes to see a Migration Compact that sets out, at a minimum, an operational ambition to dramatically and permanently reduce the annual toll of death, victimization and hardship among migrants across their journeys. The Migration Compact should include not only a clear articulation of responsibilities, but also concrete ways in which states will work together and with civil society, the private sector, the United Nations and other partners to reach concrete targets.

C. Respecting the right to seek asylum

The Draft Declaration reaffirms states’ commitments to show respect for the institution of asylum and the right to seek and enjoy asylum. Consistent with these good intentions, the IFRC calls on states to urgently revise laws, policies and law enforcement approaches that are not consistent with these international norms, or block effective access to them. Unfortunately, many are far out of compliance and the last few years have witnessed an alarming backsliding trend.

In particular, international law requires arrangements that are conducive – and certainly not deliberately obstructive – to the right of asylum seekers to bring their claims and seek protection from persecution at home. Seeking asylum must not be deemed an unlawful act and any restrictions of liberty for persons exercising this right need to be provided for in law, carefully circumscribed and subject to prompt review. Detention should only be used as a measure of last resort, when no other alternatives are feasible. Children (including those without their parents) should not be detained in immigration detention facilities. There are various ways for governments to address irregular migration– other than through detention – that take due account of their security concerns as well as the particular circumstances of the individual concerned.

D. Building resilience and self-reliance

Alongside these efforts to aid and protect, states, civil society and international organizations should also focus on building resilience as a means to address the dangers facing migrants. The IFRC is encouraged to see that the Draft Declaration acknowledges the value of this innovative approach but it also sees that a great deal of work lies ahead in making it reality.

For its part, the IFRC begins by supporting communities at the point of origin to become stronger and more resilient. National Red Cross and Red

The Palestine Red Crescent Society is

encouraging the use of community committees, comprising small groups of migrants nominated to work with service providers to address key needs and improve the quality of services delivered.

Committees are sector-based, with representations for health, WASH, nutrition, etc. In Lebanon, the Palestine Red Crescent Society – Lebanese branch meets these committee representatives weekly to discuss the state of needs and services within settlements and works with them to find solutions to issues raised. This leads to regular and detailed information on issues facing refugees being shared with service providers.

Crescent Societies, in collaboration with key partners, strengthen resilience by supporting communities to identify and address their risks and vulnerabilities as well as identifying solutions that can reduce the impact of recurrent and preventable threats and contribute to alleviating the pressures that may lead people to migrate involuntarily.

As asserted in the Draft Declaration, the IFRC also recognises that communities that host large numbers of refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants are also often in need of support, and that building their resilience must therefore also be supported. A more inclusive and comprehensive approach, that takes into account the needs of all vulnerable people, should be promoted, so that everyone is treated with human dignity.

Most importantly, the resilience of even the most vulnerable migrants themselves can be more effectively strengthened. In 2016, the IFRC commissioned a global study of “Smart practices that enhance resilience of migrants,”⁶ examining the vulnerabilities and needs of migrants during each phase of their journey and describing more than 50 smart practices from every region that can help them to overcome the external shocks to which they are exposed.

The study found significant variation between various steps of the migrants’ journeys as to the degree to which they would be likely to require external support and when they can more easily address issues with their own capabilities. Needs for support are most common at borders, in migrant camps and upon arrival in the destination country. When migrants have more opportunities to rely on their own capabilities there is still a need for support but to a lesser extent. This is most likely for long-term stays and return. Each step of the trail has some common needs, but the pattern is influenced by each migrant’s intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics.

Among the most powerful tools for strengthening the resilience of migrants is accurate, trusted, and reliable information. Many migrants make their decisions about whether to migrate and how to travel on the basis of alarmingly few sources of information and advice,⁷ easily falling prey to false hopes and the lies of smugglers and traffickers, and missing available services and support.

Countering such misinformation requires building trust and an approach grounded in migrants’ own well-being rather than deterrence. States and organizations across the migratory paths must invest in providing such information and enhancing engagement strategies. They should also support the efforts of civil society organizations, particularly neutral humanitarian organizations, that can bring a uniquely trusted voice and a strong field presence.

6. A summary of the study is available at http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/migration/Smart-practices-summary-report_EN.pdf. A searchable and continuously updated database of these practices is now available online at www.ifrc.org/smartpractices

7. Before the Boat: Understanding the Migrant Journey, Jacob Townsend and Christel Oomen. Migration Policy Institute (2015) (www.migrationpolicy.org/research/boat-understanding-migrant-journey)

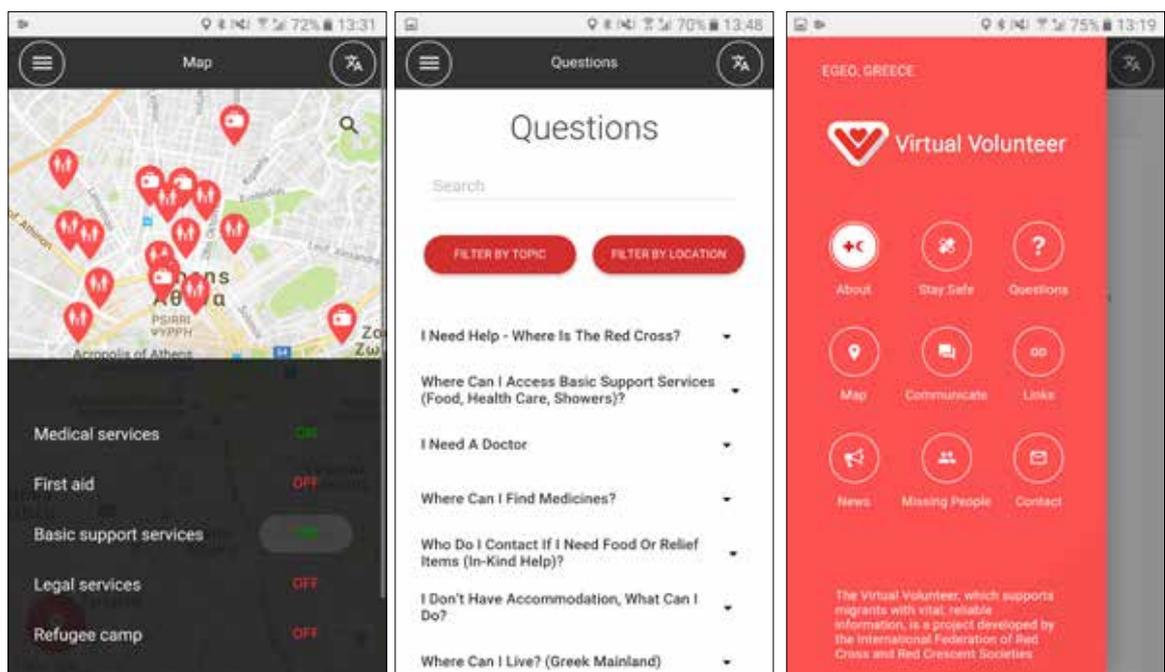
For example, the Salvadoran Red Cross, Guatemalan Red Cross, Honduran Red Cross, Mexican Red Cross and American Red Cross, together with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), have developed a set of self-protection messages to inform migrants passing through Mexico of the risks they may encounter on the way. They describe where to find support and how to take preventive measures to look after their health and well-being. The messages are distributed in the format of pocket-sized, foldout laminated pamphlets that are wear-resistant and waterproof. Messages are also distributed through radio spots broadcast in Spanish. Some 30,000 pamphlets were distributed in 2015 along migratory trails; radio spots have recently been introduced at 17 stations.

Likewise, in Asia-Pacific, where labour migration and the associated vulnerabilities remains a priority for National Societies, there has been engagement in the provision of pre-departure orientation seminars, aimed at sharing relevant and reliable information, including about the dangers of trafficking, with people planning to migrate. Red Cross programmes designed to mitigate migrants' vulnerability when they first travel have been implemented in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, and the Philippines.

Digital information and access to mobile technology is playing an enormous role in many migrants' behaviour and must also be leveraged for their well-being. States and organizations need to exploit creative ways to reach, communicate with and guide migrants on their journey to safety.

With support from IBM, the IFRC has developed an information and engagement digital platform to support migrants at times of vulnerability, the Virtual Volunteer (www.virtualvolunteer.org). The Virtual Volunteer is accessible with any connected device and allows migrants to find vital, reliable information in multiple languages to stay safe and healthy where they are and to contact the Red Cross and Red Crescent to ask

Examples of Virtual Volunteer webpages which geo-locate the user, giving access to key information such as camps in the area, legal services, safety tips, and Red Cross Red Crescent services nearby.



Bringing families back together

The “Snapshot” programme, an online and print-based project, is run by the **ICRC** and the **National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda**. Where access to the internet is limited, the initiative helps people find missing relatives by having their own photos published in booklets that are circulated by the National Societies in camps and communities.

The **Pakistan Red Crescent Society** established LOST Helpline 1030, with 56 trained specialists assisting migrants within Pakistan. The Helpline provides Restoring Family Links services, whereby any person can call to report their missing family member. This information is immediately matched with data of all unattended and unidentified persons reporting to the hospitals due to any accident, emergency or natural disaster.

for support. The portal locates accessible services for migrants and provides information, practical first-aid advice, useful news and access to resources (including those of partner organizations). The portal has been launched in pilot form in Greece and will extend progressively to other countries and regions.

Also critical to the well-being of migrants and their families is the ability to retain contact with each other, in an environment in which it is all too easy for persons to disappear without a trace. Reuniting people separated from their families has long been an important area of work of the Red Cross Red Crescent. Working together through the Family Links Network, the ICRC and National Societies provide a range of services to restore or maintain contact between family members and to help people find out what happened to loved ones reported missing. Through the work of the Network, 479,000 people were reconnected with their family members, and 1000 children were reunited with their family members in 2015.

To better serve migrants and their families, the Red Cross Red Crescent has adapted its services to the specific needs and challenges of restoring links across numerous borders. For example, through a new online tool, individuals who are looking for family members can post their photo onto a website called tracetheface.org or on posters displayed in various locations throughout Europe. If a family member recognizes a photo of his or her loved one, s/he can click on a link to send a message to the National Society concerned. By April 2016, there were 28 National Societies in Europe participating in the programme, and the programme will soon be extended to other regions.

The Migration Compact should support these efforts by setting out strong commitments by states to support their resilience, including through supporting the initiatives of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, international organizations such as UNHCR and IOM, and others.

E. Our calls to action

The IFRC calls on states to:

- Urgently scale up efforts at rescue, relief and protection for migrants regardless of legal status across their migratory journeys.
- Provide safe and unhindered access to humanitarian organizations providing assistance to migrants.
- Revise laws, policies and law enforcement approaches that are not consistent with the right to seek asylum and the prohibition of refoulement.
- Strengthen ways of engaging with migrants and communities in order to build their resilience and self-reliance, in particular through facilitating access to accurate and unbiased information.




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Hondureña


Cruz Roja
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2. Sharing responsibility for refugees

A. Towards a more equitable sharing of responsibility

The IFRC is strongly encouraged by the possibility of a Refugees Compact that will set strong, concrete goals for cooperating in the effort to assist refugees, in particular through greater resettlement and temporary schemes, such as temporary protection. Working together, the international community is fully capable of entirely fulfilling the promise of refugee protection. At present, however, often by accident of geography, some states are contributing far more than others to what should be a shared responsibility. Neighbours of refugee-producing countries are particularly exposed; according to UNHCR, a large majority of the refugees worldwide – around 86% - remain in their region of origin and only a relatively small proportion move onward to other regions.⁸

The situation of states hosting Syrian refugees is a good example. As the press resounds with fears of potential arrivals on Western shores, the overwhelming majority of the 4.8 million Syrian refugees remain concentrated in neighbouring countries – in particular Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey⁹. While donors undertake some of the costs of supporting refugees hosted by these countries, the host countries shoulder an unsustainable proportion of expenditure.¹⁰

The cost of supporting refugees' needs – particularly in protracted settings – would be considerably reduced if greater opportunities were provided to the refugees themselves to seek employment and education. This would not only reduce the financial burden of indefinitely supporting people in dependency, but would also restore dignity and self-worth to people in situations of protracted displacement. The IFRC is thus encouraged by the language in the Draft Declaration encouraging host countries to open their labour markets to refugees and sees this as another element that can be reinforced in the Refugees Compact.

Though not a focus of the High-Level Meeting, we must also not forget the similar ongoing need for global solidarity with regard to supporting the often forgotten humanitarian needs of internally displaced persons (IDP), who outnumber refugees globally by a factor of nearly two to one.

B. Our calls to action

The IFRC calls on states to:

- Urgently increase resettlement opportunities and complementary pathways for admission of refugees.
- Permit refugees to seek employment and education.
- Provide adequate support for the humanitarian needs and long-term solutions for IDPs.

8. UNHCR, Global Trends 2015, available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/statistics/unhcrstats/576408cd7/unhcr-global-trends-2015.html>

9. UNHCR, Syria Regional Refugee Response, Inter-Agency Sharing Portal, <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php> (accessed 1 September 2016).

10. Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, Syria's refugees burden neighboring countries' economies (14 May 2014), <http://www.rcssmideast.org/en/Article/144/Syrias-refugees-burden-neighboring-countries-economies-#.V8lUT5h942x>

3. Addressing xenophobia and fostering social inclusion and integration

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**STOP
INDIFFERENCE**

**“Protect humanity:
Stop indifference”** is a global initiative designed to build solidarity and empathy for vulnerable migrants, and to call for their protection as a matter of collective responsibility. It calls on people, partners and decision-makers to **take urgent action** to guarantee their safety and protect their dignity, without discrimination, at every stage of their journey.

As part of the campaign, the IFRC is now investing in activities that particularly target saving lives and stopping suffering along the migratory trail.

The Draft Declaration expresses support for efforts to reduce xenophobia and promote integration, both critical to achieving the goals of a more humane approach to migration.

A. Addressing xenophobia

While it is legitimate to have different points of view about migration, xenophobia¹¹ – which is linked to the phenomenon of racism – must be beyond the pale. Truly xenophobic messages have now permeated the discourse in many countries and resulted in a climate of marginalization, discrimination, and rising violence against migrants, including but not limited to those in an irregular situation.

The IFRC and its members are ready to join the UN Secretary-General’s global campaign to combat xenophobia, as highlighted in the Draft Declaration. They call on all states to strongly and consistently denounce xenophobic rhetoric and acts in their countries and to take proactive steps to promote understanding and acceptance in their communities.

In response to an increase in xenophobia and racism in some communities, many National Societies are taking steps to promote enhanced cooperation with public authorities to promote respect for diversity. Programmes, campaigns, school education, volunteering activities and community engagement frameworks have been developed to enhance respect for diversity, cultural awareness, and to benefit the psychosocial and physical well-being of migrants.

B. Fostering social inclusion and integration

Over the long term, migrants can play an enormously positive role in the economies and culture of their countries of destination. To do so, however, some require initial support with integration to the new surroundings. As noted by the International Monetary Fund: *“Immigration can help reduce long-term expenditure pressures from population ageing in many recipient countries. The impact of immigration on public finances depends crucially on migrants’ ability to integrate into the labor market.”*

In this respect, the IFRC is encouraged by the intention described in the Draft Declaration for each state to develop national policies related to integration and inclusion in conjunction with relevant civil society organizations. National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies stand ready to contribute to this process, drawing on their experience conducting a wide range of activities to foster the integration of migrants into local communities. These include language courses, support in accessing housing and the labour market, and the provision of vocational training or educational support for children and youth.

11. While lacking a single agreed definition, ILO, IOM and OHCHR have described it as “attitudes, prejudices and behavior that reject, exclude and often vilify persons, based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity.” ILO, IOM, UNHCR, *International Migration, Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia* (2001), <http://www.unesco.org/most/migration/imrdx.pdf>.

Putting the face on migration

Images and perception about refugees and migrants are often formed through false or insufficient information. ProjectXchange, a programme implemented by the **Austrian Red Cross**, aims to change young people's perceptions about refugees and migrants by having them share their journey and achievements. Approximately 300 volunteers, who have either been migrants or refugees, were invited to act as "integration ambassadors" and visit schools and youth groups to share their experiences. These ambassadors share their stories, including why they came to Austria, what they do, their experiences with discrimination and xenophobia and their hopes for the future. Interactions with the audience and young people is encouraged in ProjektXchange workshops and often leads to fruitful discussions. As an additional benefit, ProjektXchange presents young migrants with "role models." These role models show that it is possible, in spite of the many difficulties of being a migrant, to integrate into Austrian society while keeping one's own identity.

Talk with refugees, not about them

In its new awareness video, the **Norwegian Red Cross** lets refugees themselves play the main role. In negative, hateful internet forums, refugees are often described as cynical fortune hunters or criminals. These words are shown for what they are when read in the voices of refugees. Encouraging viewers to talk with refugees and not just about them, the goal of the Norwegian Red Cross is not only to make people think twice about posting negative comments online, but also to challenge the Norwegian people to learn about these people's stories first-hand.

Similarly, through the "Get to Know Me Campaign," the **New Zealand Red Cross** engages migrants who have successfully settled to share their stories. Profiles of New Zealanders with migrant backgrounds are featured alongside a short blurb about themselves on posters across the country. The profiles aim to foster acceptance and understanding of migrants amongst native New Zealanders by showing their similar struggles, hopes and dreams.

Youth mentoring

For example, the **Republic of Korea National Red Cross** has introduced a "Youth Mentor/Mentee Programme" where youth leaders (many of whom were trained in the Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change programme) aged 19-30 accompany young migrants aged 8-18 for mentoring and support - starting from very simple things like taking them out to the cinema and supporting them with homework. The aim is for the new migrants to connect with local communities, facilitating integration.

Incentive workers – building on migrants' skills

At migrant camps in Kenya, organizations, including the **Kenya Red Cross Society**, employ migrants as a special category of workers, known as incentive workers, to work for the organization to deliver services. Migrants with skills are employed in areas including teaching, plumbing and carpentry. Those with basic education and above are trained and work in functions including community health, hygiene promotion, auxiliary nursing, water quality monitoring, and borehole attending. Non-skilled jobs are also available.

Early Integration Programme

The **Finnish Red Cross** starts the integration process for asylum seekers once they arrive at reception centres, prior to a decision being taken on their individual cases. Asylum seekers are provided intensive Finnish classes to take them to basic proficiency. Additionally, events are held to familiarize people in the community and the asylum seekers with each other, such as football matches, community fishing and communal clearing of snow.

Healthcare for Irregular Migrants

The **Swiss Red Cross** runs health centres for undocumented migrants in Bern and Zurich. The centres provide health counselling, health insurance information, primary health care, psychiatric support and preventative care. The centres also support irregular migrants to access specialists, hospitals or dentists. Furthermore, the Swiss Red Cross has published a booklet with information on the right to health care, how to access health care and insurance, and recommendations for health practitioners on how to treat migrants who do not have health insurance.

Without prejudice to the need to expand resettlement and other opportunities for responsibility sharing for large refugee populations, it is important to foster the opportunities for refugees awaiting durable solutions to be self-reliant, so that they do not depend on assistance any more.

National Societies do this through longer-term shelter and accommodation, cash-based assistance to cover basic needs, access to impartial legal advice (when qualified to do so), information on safe practices and access to health and education services, skills training and professional competency tests to secure employment. In arrival and destination countries, assistance to resident vulnerable groups, such as the homeless and destitute, may be provided alongside that to migrants.

C. Our calls to action

The IFRC calls on states to:

- Actively address xenophobia, including taking effective measures to prevent discrimination and violence.
- Scale up efforts to support the integration and social inclusion of migrants.
- Promote enhanced cooperation with civil society to combat xenophobia and foster integration.

While migration poses important challenges, migrants are not themselves a crisis – they are human beings with rights and dignity. Around the world, migrants have made positive contributions to the vibrancy of their societies of destination.

Conclusion

The High-Level Meeting arrives at an opportune time, when the threat of a very dark “new normal” in migration policy, unmoored from key humanitarian principles and international law, has appeared on the horizon. The strong reaffirmations and excellent intentions of the Draft Declaration and the potential contributions of the Compacts may help to reverse this trend.

The IFRC and its member National Societies call on states to move without delay in the implementation of these commitments – in particular those related to saving lives and reducing the abuse, deprivation and suffering of migrants across their journeys – and to address xenophobia and integration of migrants. They stand ready to scale up their own cooperation with public authorities and other partners to achieve these goals, and to share their experience and perspective in the development of the Compacts.



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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