TOWARDS HEALTHY AND SAFE LIVING

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Saving lives, changing minds.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
WHO WE ARE

The Global Health Team of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) consists of the Geneva health team, five zone health coordinators, regional health coordinators and global reference centres. The team acts globally in a coordinated and integrated way by defining global strategies, approaches and standards and ensuring appropriate technical support, quality assurance, guidance and services to National Societies.

The team has a global lead and local reach through member National Societies in nearly every country in the world. This allows us to efficiently scale up and pull together resources and expertise to support health programmes worldwide. At national level, our strength lies in our volunteer network, our community-based expertise, our capacity to tailor the health response to local needs, as well as our contribution to the formal health systems (e.g. blood systems, ambulances, hospitals).

Guided by Strategy 2020 – our collective plan of action to tackle the major humanitarian and development challenges of this decade – we are committed to increase the scale and quality of health activities that reduce individual and community vulnerability, strengthen community resilience and address health inequities.

Improving equitable access to affordable healthcare, as well as the availability of prevention, treatment, care, and support is our core mandate. The IFRC is committed to universal coverage in order to address health inequities. Universal access to health constitutes a fundamental right and is an urgent public health priority.

We use a community-based health and first-aid approach to improve maternal, newborn and child health, prepare communities for epidemics and pandemics and address water and sanitation challenges, including during emergencies. We tackle major diseases like HIV, tuberculosis and malaria, as well as noncommunicable diseases. Whether delivering home-based care, immunizations, or promoting health services, volunteers make an important contribution to reducing inequitable access to care in their communities.

The global IFRC priorities for 2012 to 2020 include building the capacity of National Societies and leveraging this unique network to improve global health. Improving the quality and scale of our programmes will require a shift to a holistic approach to health and resilience, engaging with our partners in research and innovations. It also requires strengthening of global communication and advocacy efforts, and finally, promoting a long term multi-sectoral approach to address the social determinants of health.
The Global Health Team strives to deliver quality support and services to promote health equity and build resilient individuals, communities and nations. Addressing health inequities includes addressing the social determinants of health and well being.

Addressing the social determinants of health and well being

The IFRC Global Health Team will deliver Strategy 2020

- developing a holistic approach to health and resilience
- building, consolidating and maintaining network of experts
- focusing on communication for social and behaviour change
- improving knowledge management
- using innovative and evidence-based programming, and
- Having strategic approach to global advocacy.

Resilient individual
A healthy person, enabled to make healthy choices and living in a supportive and healthy environment

Resilient community
Communities that are informed and empowered, able to prepare for and deal with health challenges within a fair and caring health environment and benefit fully from the formal health system

Resilient nation
A country whose efficient national health system is based on fair health policies and strategies granting equitable access to basic health to all its citizens

Resilient globe
A world that addresses global health problems in an equitable way within a supportive health environment
The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world’s largest volunteer-based humanitarian network, reaching 150 million people each year through our 187 member National Societies. Together, 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.

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.