

# Programme Update



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Human resources (HR) management strategy

Appeal No. MAA00034

31/07/2008

This report covers the period 01/01/2008 to 30/06/2008.



International Federation Staff participating in a Human Resource's workshop in Afghanistan. **International Federation / June Kashio**

### In brief

**Programme purpose:** To build and consolidate a cohesive, Movement-wide human resources management strategy to support the organization's capacity to deliver at the secretariat in Geneva and in the zones.

**Programme(s) summary:** During the first half of 2008, significant progress has been made in the four programme objectives:

- To support the International Federation's decentralization initiative, HR field managers have been hired. Induction for the new managers has been carried out, and a global HR meeting was conducted in May to build a global HR team, and ensure common HR policy and standard use of procedures and processes.
- Forty-two new participants have been assessed at five assessment centres for international managers. Based on competency gaps identified at the centre and results from the managers effectiveness programme piloted last year, a new programme which comprises of a one-year learning journey has been developed.
- The World of Red Cross/Crescent (WORC), a general Movement-oriented and self-learning programme developed in 2007, was tested between January and March 2008. Fine-tuning of the course is being done based on user feedback, with the aim of having the course online and on CD by the fourth quarter of 2008. The International Mobilization and Preparation for Action programme (IMPACT) and the face-to-face revised basic

training course (BTC) are being developed as a simulation exercise lasting six days, thus moving away from presentations to a much more hands-on approach. Both WORC and IMPACT will be ready to be rolled out in January 2009.

- Further dialogue took place with a new group of National Societies that deploy international delegates in a meeting held in Iceland in January. The annual Movement human resource management seminar has been planned, and invitations issued for an event in mid-September.

**Financial situation:** The 2008 appeal for CHF 736,952 (USD 701,859 or EUR 452,951) of which 80 per cent has been covered. Expenditure overall was 39 per cent. The implementation of the managers effectiveness programme is scheduled in August, and another assessment centre will be run in October. These two activities will cover the bulk of the remaining funds.

[Click here to go directly to the attached financial report.](#)

The overall objective of the project is to improve the services provided to managers, staff and volunteers in all of our operations through improved human resource management practices. The direct target audiences are the Movement's international managers and human resources staff. This year 42 international managers attended assessment centres. A record number (around 70) of professional HR staff from throughout the Movement will attend the human resources seminar to be held in September. Eighteen international managers have been invited to start the international managers' development programme to be run in August. Two National Staff members are being sponsored to obtain Master level studies to consolidate their knowledge and skills in their areas of expertise.

**Our partners:** The HR strategy is overseen by the Human Resources Strategic Advisory Group (HRSAG) comprising selected leaders from National Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The International Federation works closely with its HR counterparts in National Societies in the development and delivery of specific initiatives. Contacts with a human resource group that has interests in deploying international delegates was reinforced through a meeting hosted by the Icelandic Red Cross Society in January this year.

## Context

A fundamental contextual change took place in the delivery of the human resource management strategy in 2008 with the roll out of the decentralized operating model. This change had the following effects:

- Increased focus on the need to recruit, place and develop high quality international managers. As a consequence, assessment centre activity has been increased, and the manager development programme rolled out;
- Shift of professional HR staff (including new hires) and responsibilities into the zone offices, providing the resources to manage local staff more effectively. In six of the seven zones, professional HR managers have been hired, their orientation and training initiated, and their work transfers from Geneva to the field put into progress;
- The opportunity to implement new HR systems to promote the further development of local and near local staff through new approaches to grading and qualifying management. The "near local" professional contract and remuneration package which includes local professional staff grade has been approved by senior management. A benchmarking exercise to ensure that salaries and benefits remain competitive has been carried out.
- The placement of professional Federation HR staff in the zones opens the opportunity to improve HR capacity-building support for National Society HR staff.

# Progress towards outcomes

## Effective HR management at the zone level

### Outcome(s)/Expected result(s)

The human resources department expects each zone to have a resourced and operational HR function by the end of 2008. Systems to enable the recruitment and development of local and “near local” professional staff will be in place by the end of 2008. HR information systems to allow activities such as performance management, management of personnel data, absence management and e-recruitment will be successfully rolled out to the field.

### Achievements

Six HR manager appointments have been made, and a transition manager with both HR and administration responsibilities has been recruited. Orientation and work transition programmes have started based on the learning from the model established in 2007 in the Americas. All appointees have undergone intensive induction and training at the secretariat in Geneva. A global HR managers event was held in May to develop processes to coordinate HR work in a new international context, as well as improve these managers’ professional skills in the context of the needs of the Movement. The contractual and grading mechanism for hiring local professional staff is in place, and a number of appointments have been made. Federation directors have approved the next steps of the “near local” professional staff project.

### Constraints or Challenges

The final decision for the location of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) office has meant that recruitment for this post has been delayed. In addition, the post for the America’s HR manager is being re-advertised - leaving a new vacancy in the International Federation’s “pilot” zone.

## Assessment and development of field and operations managers

### Outcome(s)/Expected result(s)

By the end of this year, the pool of assessed field managers will have increased to 120 and the operations pool from 20 to 40. The one-year international manager development programme will have begun with 18 participants.

### Achievements

As a result of assessments undertaken in May, the pool of assessed field managers has already increased from 76 to 118. The international manager development programme is at an advanced stage of development, and invitations have been issued to 18 managers to attend the programme starting in August.

### Constraints or Challenges

- Incorporating the high volume of learning from the pilot international manager programme held in November 2007 has proved more time and resource consuming than initially envisaged, but as a result, the quality of the product to be delivered in August has improved considerably.
- Finding candidates for high-level positions has proven to be a challenge.
- A way of attracting candidates with vast amounts of experience to fill high-level positions is needed.

## **WORC and IMPACT**

### **Outcome(s)/Expected result(s)**

Implementation of activities for WORC and IMPACT continued in 2008. It is expected that both WORC and IMPACT will be ready to be rolled out in January 2009.

### **Achievements**

WORC was tested between January and March 2008. Fine-tuning of the course is being done based on user feedback, with the aim of having the course online and on CD by the fourth quarter of 2008. The development of IMPACT is on track, and comprises a simulation exercise lasting six days.

### **Constraints or Challenges**

WORC has taken longer than anticipated to finalize and institutionalize. The additional comments made during the testing phase has led to substantial changes and increased costs to the original product. In addition, it has been difficult to put this Movement-oriented product online since the International Federation lacks a common e-learning platform. Such a platform for the Movement will need to be developed in the future.

## **HRSAG**

### **Outcome(s)/Expected result(s)**

It is envisaged that at least one HRSAG meeting will be held this year.

### **Achievements**

There have been no HRSAG meetings so far this year, but there are plans to have one in October/November 2008.

### **Constraints or Challenges**

The HRSAG is a group of senior leaders from National Societies invited by the International Federation's Secretary General. Following the appointment of the new Secretary General, a decision will be made on how he wishes to continue with the HRSAG activity.

## **Working in partnership**

The HR strategy is overseen by the Human Resources Strategic Advisory Group. The human resource department works closely with its HR counterparts in National Societies in the development and delivery of specific initiatives.

The major partnership event planned for 2008 is the HR seminar to be held in mid-September. The event this year will be attended by a record number of participants, notably from National Societies in the developing world. The agenda will provide a forum for participants to update themselves on International Federation and ICRC HR issues; discuss key HR initiatives; actively network; and build their personal capacities. It will be the first time Federation field-based HR staff will be able to work with their National Society counterparts.

## **Contributing to longer-term impact**

The investment in human resource management capacity in the International Federation and in National Societies is fundamental to assure the delivery of all of the Movement's objectives:

- Improved leadership and management in the field will impact directly on the services received by National Societies;

- Broadening the International Federation's professional talent base to include increasing numbers of local and "near local" staff will improve the diversity, sensitivity and effectiveness of the Movement;
- Impact will build new standards of quality assurance into the training the HR department gives to those representing the organization in international operations;
- The WORC programme will provide staff, volunteers and those interested in the Movement with a single learning portal which will give users a first-hand experience of what the International Federation does, how it does it, and the skills needed to achieve the International Federation's goals.

## Looking ahead

Most of the HR department's plans are "on track" for delivery in 2008. The department needs to review and revise its objectives in three areas:

- How the HRSAG's work will continue in 2008 will be the subject of discussions with the new Secretary General. A meeting is to be held shortly.
- Ensuring that WORC and IMPACT are finalized by January 2009.
- Rolling out HR Information systems and other tools to ensure a coherent implementation of the HR strategy in all of the seven zones.

How we work	
<p>The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".</p>	<p><b>Global Agenda Goals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.</li> <li>• Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.</li> <li>• Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.</li> <li>• Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.</li> </ul>
Contact information	
<p>For further information specifically related to this report, please contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lorraine Mangwiro, Head, Human Resources, Geneva; email: <a href="mailto:lorraine.mangwiro@ifrc.org">lorraine.mangwiro@ifrc.org</a>; phone: +41 22 730 4983 ; and fax: +41 22 730 4958.</b></li> </ul>	