

Annual report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Migration

MAA00037

13 April 2010

This report covers the period 1 January to 31 December 2009.



General Assembly and Council of Delegates Nairobi/Kenya (18 to 25 November 2009). Migration was one of the main issues discussed at both meetings. **IFRC**

In brief

The focus of the migration programme is on (i) the development of a global Federation policy on migration, (ii) humanitarian advocacy to anchor and reinforce the policy, and (iii) programme support to implement the policy.

Migration was one of the main issues discussed at the 2007 Red Cross and Red Crescent statutory meetings. Decisions were respectively taken by the 16th General Assembly, the Council of Delegates, and the 30th International Conference, that as part of the Global Agenda, assisting vulnerable migrants is an important aspect of implementing Strategy 2010. The General Assembly called for the development of a global Federation policy on migration, underlining that it also should benefit from the input of the ICRC. The Council of Delegates welcomed the decision of the General Assembly, and requested the IFRC to report at its next session, in November 2009, on the policy.

In its declaration "Together for Humanity", the 30th International Conference laid out an encompassing and inclusive concept of migration as a humanitarian challenge, and insisted on a response by National Societies to the needs of migrants "*irrespective of their (legal) status*". Contrary to the concerns expressed in the 2007 statutory meetings, there is a growing risk that governments focus more and more exclusively on curbing migration, including by reducing to a minimum any assistance to irregular migrants, or even simply by outlawing assistance to them.

Therefore, underlying the IFRC's global programme on migration is the need for a joint approach to Red Cross Red Crescent activities to support all migrants in difficult situations, without any prejudice as to the category to which they may belong. To formulate this approach under a global policy on migration, and then to ensure its implementation, is an ambitious strategic undertaking.

Programme summary:

A Reference Group on Migration was established by the Governing Board in May 2008, consisting of 16 National Society experts and the ICRC. The board tasked the group with the development of a Federation policy on migration, with the support of a special representative on migration and a small team at the secretariat. The group held its first discussions on 24 September 2008. A first formal draft of the policy was established, and then reworked at a meeting of the Reference Group on Migration on 9 and 10 February 2009.

The resulting second draft was shared with all National Societies, as well as Federation zone offices. Around 30 National Societies provided substantive feedback. In parallel, the special representative undertook field visits to check the policy against the operational realities on the ground. A third draft incorporating the feedback received from National Societies was discussed, amended and endorsed by the Reference Group on Migration on 31 March 2009. The final policy on Migration was approved by the Governing Board in its session of May 2009.

The Governing Board underlined the need for the IFRC to embark, without delay, on policy implementation. It requested that the Reference Group on Migration be maintained as an advisory and steering body, and the group met in Paris on 20 and 21 July 2009, for follow-up.

The 17th General Assembly of November 2009 in Nairobi endorsed the policy on migration. It also was discussed and welcomed by the Council of Delegates.

The core budget on migration covers core activities related to the development, statutory processing, dissemination and promotion of the policy on migration, as well as support to strategic planning for policy implementation through Federation zone offices.

The migration programme, on the other hand, was intended to fund capacity building, programme support and Movement-wide coordination on migration.

Financial situation: The total 2009 budget is CHF 424,424 (USD 408,890 or EUR 285,289), of which CHF 105,111 (25 per cent) covered during the reporting period (including opening balance). Overall expenditure during the reporting period was CHF 105,111 (25 per cent) of the budget.

Resource mobilization was hindered as National Societies were informed, in the course of 2009, that within the future structure of the secretariat, the migration function would be integrated within the development division, i.e. that the existing office of the special representative on migration would disappear in 2010. Moreover, there was a broad consensus between National Societies that the engagement of the IFRC in matters of migration was of a statutory and strategic nature, and therefore should be covered in its entirety through the IFRC's core budget rather than through voluntary programme support.

At the end of March 2009, the migration office concentrated its work mainly on its core functions, i.e. those directly related to the policy and its implementation. The tasks that were to be covered through the programme budget were to be decentralized to the zone offices.

With an appeal coverage of only 9 per cent, by the end of 2009, a deficit of 40,563 remained under the migration programme, due to costs linked to the work of the senior programme support officer under the Migration Office.

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

Context

Migration is, of course, one of the primary basic phenomena accompanying humanity since its very beginnings, and has always been both, a source of new opportunities and perspectives for the migrants and their hosts and a source of distress and humanitarian needs. However, the number of migrants worldwide continues to grow as the world population grows, and competition for resources and is thus mounting. Globally, therefore, migrants are increasingly perceived as a competition over scarce resources and as a threat to stability.

This trend is compounded by recent short-term developments: The unfavourable economic environment since the end of 2008, combined with existing policies worldwide to restrict and even reduce (im)migration. Thus, not only the long-term pressures but also the acute pressure on migrants, in particular on undocumented or irregular migrant, are growing, and their humanitarian needs and vulnerabilities are rapidly mounting.

Therefore, an encompassing engagement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement on migration, as called for by the 30th International Conference in 2007, is more than ever one of the very principal humanitarian imperatives for National Societies.

However, the growing hostility towards migrants in many countries, hostility that is often fuelled by economic crisis, render it also increasingly difficult for many National Societies to embark on activities for migrants, or to broaden their involvement to include migrants irrespective of their legal status. This is why the new and encompassing engagement on migration is also one of the primary strategic challenges for the IFRC.

The IFRC will have a central role in supporting and strengthening a common understanding of the humanitarian dimensions of migration, a sense of shared responsibility and solidarity between National Societies all along the migratory trails, and modes of cooperation and support between them that are coherent and robust. The IFRC will be able to assume this role only if there is a clear consensus between its membership and its secretariat on how to pursue the strategic initiative on behalf of migrants.

Progress towards outcomes

Outcomes

Development of the Policy on Migration

Outcome	Comments
Final draft of the policy on migration is prepared, under the guidance of the Reference Group on Migration, and taking into account input from all interested National Societies as well as relevant secretariat instances. Draft is presented to the Governing Board for approval.	Drafting of the policy began with a meeting of the Reference Group on Migration in September 2008. A second meeting was held in February 2009. The process involved consultations internal to the secretariat, as well as personal visits of the special representative to a number of National Societies in order to obtain their support. Draft two was shared with the heads of zone offices to obtain their comments. All 186 National Societies were also given the opportunity to provide feedback on draft two.

	<p>Feedback was integrated into the third draft of the policy. The third draft was amended and approved in a teleconference of the Reference Group on Migration in March 2009.</p> <p>The final and fourth version of the policy on Migration was approved by the Governing Board in May 2009.</p>
<p>Movement-wide migration network is established and active, integrating existing competencies and platforms.</p>	<p>In 2009, a number of regional meetings hosted by various National Societies have taken place. The migration office has used these opportunities to deliver presentations on the new policy.</p> <p>At the next meeting of the Reference Group on Migration (July 2009), the group will explore the way forward in developing a system of bilateral cooperation among National Societies for capacity transfer and best practice sharing.</p>
<p>Supplementary guidance on issues related to migration is developed and agreed, using the migration network as a basis for expertise and advice.</p>	<p>At the meeting of the Reference Group on Migration in July 2009, the group identified and prioritized issues and topics for supplementary guidance in support of the policy.</p>

Advocacy on Migration

Outcome	Comments
<p>International advocacy on migration reflects the operational reality and concerns of National Societies.</p>	<p>The special representative to date has undertaken numerous field visits to National Societies in various regions in order to ensure that the policy as well as public statements and Red Cross Red Crescent positions are directly linked to the realities which National Societies encounter in their work with, and for, migrants.</p>
<p>Specific advocacy messages to governmental donors and counterparts, on the invisible humanitarian aspects of migration, are developed and articulated in cooperation with zone offices and National Societies.</p>	<p>Speaking notes relating to specific policy issues have been developed, for the use of the migration team in multilateral and bilateral discussions.</p> <p>Over the months to come, more advocacy messages will be developed, based on the priority issues identified by the Reference Group on Migration at its meeting in July 2009.</p>

<p>Partnership agreements are concluded with inter-governmental institutions, such as UNHCR and IOM, profiling the humanitarian role of the Movement.</p>	<p>To date, the migration office has been present in various meetings and has had informal discussions, as well as delivered formal presentations on the humanitarian role of the movement in assisting vulnerable migrants.</p> <p>Once the implementation of the Federation policy on migration has progressed with zone offices and key National Societies, the contacts with main external partners will be intensified to explore a common understanding with them on cooperation related to assistance to irregular migrants, and on humanitarian work in situations of mixed migration.</p> <p>Preliminary contacts with key inter-governmental partners during 2009 indicate that a common understanding might be needed first and foremost on the humanitarian responsibilities that must be shared, rather than questions of division of labour and mandates.</p>
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Providing Programme Support on Migration

Outcome	Comments
<p>Analytical database of all National Society programmes on migration is put at the disposal of National Societies and the secretariat. Enhanced capacity within the Movement to identify opportunities for regional/cross-regional cooperation and for specific capacity-building initiatives with individual National Societies.</p>	<p>A 2007 report provided a listing of National Society programmes related to migration. However, it is important to note that it was based on a questionnaire that did not clearly define the categories and types of activities, and that the return rate of the questionnaires was only around 50 per cent. As a result, the report is of very limited use. A questionnaire-based mapping-exercise is not capable of producing the qualitative information necessary for an understanding of programmatic successes and challenges of National Societies, and thus of their needs.</p> <p>The way forward would be an approach based on interviews with a select group of representative National Societies. If undertaken in a centralized manner from Geneva, this procedure requires considerable resources, which are not available due to the severe underfunding of the migration programme.</p> <p>As an alternative, interviews could be undertaken by the five zone offices, with a sample of National Societies identified by them. For this, the agreement of zone offices is a prerequisite, as is the availability of adequate resources in staff and competences at their</p>

	level.
Complementary National Society strategies for addressing migrants' needs and vulnerabilities at regional/ cross-regional level are developed.	Plans for the Geneva Migration office to organize regional consultations in zones were suspended due to the lack of funds. The priority has now been given to the role of zone offices to organize consultations in a decentralized manner, and to draw up migration strategies relevant to zones and subregions. The role of the migration function under the development division at Geneva will be limited to ensuring that zone strategies are interconnected and coherent with the global policy on migration.
Targeted assistance and protection programmes of National Societies are strengthened for the most vulnerable migrants, based on a solid vulnerability profile taking into account the transnational context.	Activity that will have to wait until a later stage in the process of implementation. The leadership and sustained engagement of zone offices will be essential.

Achievements

- The special representative on migration was appointed in July 2008. His office was staffed and fully functional in October, enabling it to carry through a complex but efficient process of drafting and consultations leading to the approval of the policy on migration by the Governing Board in May 2009. The policy, fully supported by National Societies as well as the ICRC, opens a new strategic horizon for the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.
- In parallel to the policy development process, the migration office has undertaken advocacy on the new engagement of the IFRC in matters of migration through presentations and interventions in numerous meetings and fora. These have included both internal events, organized by the IFRC or National Societies, and events with external partners (OAS, Council of Europe, EuroMed, UN, governmental agencies). Meanwhile, the engagement of the IFRC is well-known and accepted. The ground is prepared for a new strategic role of the Red Cross Red Crescent in humanitarian work with, and for migrants, irrespective of their status – in accordance with the new statutory mandate issued in 2007.
- The new Federation policy on migration is the basis for developing further policy guidance, coordinating a more systematic capacity transfer and programme support on migration, and formulating strong and agreed advocacy messages.

Contributing to longer-term impact

- Once under implementation, the policy on migration will allow National Societies to develop more comprehensive strategies to address the needs and vulnerabilities of migrants, irrespective of their status, and with special attention to unaccompanied minor migrants and the increasing number of female migrants. They will understand the importance of the dimension of migration in all humanitarian programming, be it direct and targeted programmes or general humanitarian action. In addition, they will be aware of the need to adopt a systematic diversity approach in their programming.
- Mechanisms for strategic monitoring, programme support and evaluation will have to be set up by zone offices to support National Societies. Three posts, especially dedicated to migration issues, have already been established in the Europe and West Africa zone offices, respectively. It is hoped that other zone offices will follow suit.

Looking ahead

- With an appeal coverage by the end 2009 of only 9 per cent, and the clear consensus among National Societies that the IFRC's migration programme must be covered through the core budget, it was decided by the general secretariat to phase out the migration office, and to integrate programme support on migration under its development division.
- Given the budgetary difficulties, the migration office had already since mid-2009 reduced its ambitions, and concentrated in particular on three areas: (i) provision of supplementary policy guidance; (ii) global advocacy and partnerships; and (iii) support to zone offices, where required, for mobilisation and coordination of capacity transfers.
- During the first half of 2010, the mandate of the special representative on migration – focused on the development and dissemination of the policy, the provision of supplementary policy guidance, and global advocacy on the new role of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement on migration within the Federation membership and with external partners – will be terminated. At the same time, full responsibility for policy implementation through capacity building, as well as programme support and coordination will pass to the zone offices, with the support of a focal point under the development division in Geneva.
- This streamlined approach will allow considerable budget savings, with the remaining activities at the Geneva secretariat being entirely covered under the core budget. National Societies will thus be able to focus their voluntary funding support on the migration work of zone offices and on the dedicated structures and staff at the zone level.

How we work

The IFRC's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the IFRC's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

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