

Mid-Year report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Human Resource (HR) Management Strategy

Appeal No. MAA00034

10 August 2010

This report covers the period 1 January to 30 June 2010.



Delegates in a Danish Red Cross base camp canteen in Haiti. IFRC

In brief

Programme outcome: The overall outcome is an HR strategy that impacts positively on the performance of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to realize Strategy 2020 by attracting and retaining resourceful, skilled and experience staff through innovative HR systems and practices. These practices will be fair, inclusive and transparent; and will facilitate the shift in organizational mindset “*to do more, do better and reach further*”.

Programme(s) summary: Following the earthquake early this year in Haiti, efforts of the HR community including National Societies have been focused on this operation.

The HR global team met at the end of June and one of the main issues discussed and agreed upon was a common HR strategic framework in line with Strategy 2020. This strategy was presented to the global senior management meeting held in early July, and it is expected that this proposal will be approved by the new senior management team as soon as possible.

Following the adoption of the new staff rules at the General Assembly in November 2009, the process to align the staff regulations was launched in April. A staff regulations working group comprising of staff and management representatives has been commissioned to look into this project, and it is expected that new regulations will be ready for implementation at the beginning of 2011.

The main HR information system (SAP) was evaluated at the end of last year, and recommendations have been followed up.

A new job classification tender was placed, and is under consideration. In the meantime, an interim measure to review all the job descriptions in Haiti has been commissioned, and it is hoped that this project will help to clarify the classification problems experienced in this big operation.

The learning platform, launched in October 2009, is providing a unique 24/7 set of learning opportunities for secretariat staff and National Society staff and volunteers.

Financial situation: The total 2010 budget is CHF 342,193 (USD 315,318 or EUR 258,313), of which CHF 318,339 (93 per cent) covered during the reporting period (including opening balance). Overall expenditure during the reporting period was CHF 77,903 (23 per cent) of the budget. In the second half of the year, spending will increase to cover events such as the human resources seminar and the manager's effectiveness learning journey. It is expected that the HR team will be on target in using all the funds received in 2010.

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

Context

The year started with the disaster in Haiti where an earthquake affected over two million people, including staff and volunteers of the Haitian National Red Cross Society. The earthquake compounded the already very difficult humanitarian conditions in the country. The Federation HR community channelled their efforts into this operation, and 21 Emergency Response Units (ERUs) and delegates, staff and volunteers originating from some 59 Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies were mobilized to support this operation. Currently there are 400 delegates and 1,800 National Staff employed by the secretariat and National Societies in Haiti.

The secretariat has been in the process of aligning to Strategy 2020 and the priorities of the new Governing Board. The "Moving Forward Together" process, which was designed to right size the secretariat in Geneva and in the field, has now been concluded, and a new senior management team started on 1 July. In this context where HR is expected to facilitate the change management, and support a major disaster in Haiti, HR approach and systems must remain adaptable, effective, and efficient to cope with these organizational challenges.

Progress towards outcomes

Outcome 1

HR strategy that impacts positively on the performance of the Movement.

Achievements

The HR global team met at the end of June, and one of the main issues discussed and agreed upon was a common HR strategic framework in line with Strategy 2020. This strategy was presented to the global senior management meeting held in early July, and it is expected that this proposal will be approved by the new senior management team as soon as possible.

About 15 National Societies who deploy international delegates met with the IFRC and the ICRC in Vienna in May and discussed common strategic HR matters, specifically lessons learnt on the Haiti operation. A Haiti working group comprising six National Societies and the secretariat has now been established to put together a common strategy to resolve HR challenges faced by this operation.

As planned, the newsletter for the first half of the year was compiled and circulated to improve communication on HR developments.

Outcome 2

Delivering resourceful, skilled and experienced staff in line with organizational needs.

Achievements

HR-supported management to write new descriptions for the senior management positions following a decision to align the Federation management structure to Strategy 2020 and to the new Governing Board priorities. The revised competency framework was utilized, and an external hiring agency was utilized to recruit these senior positions.

Outcome 3

Creating robust and innovative HR systems and practices which are fair, inclusive and transparent.

Achievements

Following the adoption of the new staff rules at the General Assembly in November 2009, the process to align the staff regulations was launched in April. A staff regulations working group comprising of staff and management representatives has been commissioned to look into this project. It is expected that new regulations will be ready for implementation at the beginning of 2011. This project will include a new talent management approach which involves rotation of people to where we need them most.

SAP was evaluated at the end of last year and the recommendations have now been followed up. A project to ensure that employee data is captured at source in the zones is underway, and an organization management module will soon be implemented.

A tender to select a new job classification methodology was placed and is under consideration. In the meantime, an interim measure review of all the job descriptions of the positions in Haiti has been commissioned and it is hoped that this project will help to clarify the classification problems experienced in this big operation.

Outcome 4

Improving performance management in line with clearly defined objectives

Achievements

The annual salary review process, which includes a performance element to it, was concluded at the secretariat in Geneva. The compliance rate of performance appraisals is high in Geneva due to the link with salaries, but remains very low in the field where this link has not been implemented. A decision has been made to host the performance management system on the learning platform to facilitate the integration of performance with development. It is expected that the end of year review will be done on this new system.

Outcome 5

Facilitating organizational change and developing/delivering a learning strategy that supports performance in today's environment

Achievements

The learning platform, launched in October 2009, is providing a unique 24/7 set of learning opportunities for secretariat staff and National Society staff and volunteers. As of 30 June, results were positive:

- All secretariat staff are licensed (more than 2,200 staff) and more than 4,700 learners from 165 countries have registered to the platform.
- More than 7,000 online courses have been taken by the users.

It is now established that staff are more and more active in looking for learning opportunities and becoming responsible of their own development. Some online courses, such as the World of Red Cross and Red Crescent (WORC), Stay Safe (security course) and the Staff Code of Conduct training have been widely appreciated, and are contributing in improving the overall performance of the organization.

Outcome 6

Enhancing and supporting human resource capacity in National Societies.

Achievements

The planning of the human resource seminar which serves as a Movement vehicle to address human resource strategic alignment, skill acquisition, standard application of policies and programmes, networking and learning from best practice has been launched. The seminar will take place from 4 to 7 October, and the road map for activities to take place between May and October has been finalized. An HR seminar planning group comprising National Societies, the secretariat and ICRC will now oversee these activities. It is expected that over 80 participants will attend, like last year.

As previously reported the HR Group for the International Deployment of delegates (HRGIDD) met in Vienna in May to discuss and follow up delegates issues affecting the three components of the Movement. The main outcome of this meeting was to resolve the challenges in Haiti, and to find a way forward on this operation.

Outcome 7

Monitoring and measuring progress by introducing a human resource reporting system based on relevant and transparent performance indicators.

Achievements

Although good progress has been made to obtain HR information, the evaluation of the SAP revealed that the overall status of this system is not satisfactory. HR needs to invest more resources into this area to get satisfactory results. A SAP consultant has now been recruited to work on this matter, and it is expected that the HR reports and analysis will improve significantly by the end of the year.

Constraints or Challenges

The recent Haiti crisis has highlighted some issues which require improvement, and have already been integrated in the new human resource strategy in the section focusing on disaster response and surge capacity, such as:

- Rapid deployment of staff and volunteers from neighbouring countries.
- Sufficient pool of multilingual staff.
- Lack of relevant expertise and competencies within the local environment.
- Ability to integrate lessons learnt from previous similar conditions.
- High turnover due to challenging living and working conditions.

Another challenging area for human resources is related to the set of programmes and activities grouped under humanitarian diplomacy. This strategic priority will require a new set of competencies and skills which will have to be identified, mapped and developed within IFRC's own pool of resources or identified within existing or new partners.

In addition, in line with strengthening country focus and the integration of staff into National Society structures, secretariat staff are already experiencing that their role is shifting from programme

management and coordination to “enabling and facilitation.” This change will require profound alignment, not only in the HR procedures and systems, but also in the competencies and skills required to make this process effective.

Working in partnership

A lot of collaboration on HR management is taking place within the Movement, as narrated in this report. Efforts are also being made by the global HR team to learn new HR trends and share best practices by attending seminars organized by private organisations and head-hunters, on strategic HR management matters. The head of HR was nominated with two other heads to attend a leadership training at the Thunderbird University in the USA, and this learning venture has now fostered a new relationship with this University.

The learning and development unit has been actively involved in sessions organized by the Geneva Learning Network where UN organizations share practices and knowledge. As was done last year, the HR seminar will invite guest speakers from other organizations who work in partnership with the IFRC, and where learning points have been identified in terms of HR in emergencies, Staff well being and talent management.

Contributing to longer-term impact

The investment in HR management capacity in the IFRC is fundamental to assure the delivery of the organization’s goals:

- A clear and well-aligned HR strategy will enable a coherent HR management approach within the IFRC.
- Improved leadership and management in the field will impact directly on service delivery to National Societies.
- Effective zone HR management will broaden the IFRC’s ability to reach out to all people in places of operation, thereby increasing diversity targets.
- The new learning and development approach will enhance the organization’s ability to retain and develop a strong professional talent base.

Looking ahead

Despite some pressure and expectation to focus on the HR challenges in Haiti, it is anticipated that most of the planned activities for 2010 will be on schedule.

How we work

All Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to:

Inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

Contact information

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