

Annual report



Human resources (HR) management strategy

Appeal No. MAA00034

14/04/2009

This report covers the period 01/01/2008 to
31/12/2008



The Managing People Workshop trains future managers from National Societies and the International Federation.
International Federation

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: 2008 was a major year of transition with HR staff, resources and responsibilities being successfully transferred to the seven zone offices. This leaves the department in good shape to support the new operating model, to improve the management of local and international staff based in the field, and to uncover new talent in the organization. 2008 also saw major progress made in the international managers programme both in the conduct of assessment centres to identify candidates for international manager posts (more than 80 candidates were assessed over two four-day assessment sessions), and in the successful design and running of the international managers learning journey for 16 managers and high potential staff. The human resources seminar event involving HR professionals from the International Federation in Geneva and the field was the largest and most successful gathering of professional HR staff held to date in the Movement. It helped shape common priorities and workplans and build the networking and professional capacities of the HR population.

Financial situation: The total 2008 budget is CHF 736,952 (USD 701,859 or EUR 491,301), of which 78 per cent covered. Expenditure overall was 78 per cent.

[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 78 international managers attended assessment centres. A record number (around 70) of professional HR staff from throughout the Movement attended the human resources seminar held in September. Eighteen international managers attended an effectiveness learning journey which is a year programme with coaching to enhance managerial effectiveness. Two national staff members have been 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, and a second meeting of this group hosted by the ICRC in September 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 roll out HR systems to facilitate decentralized HR functions in the crucial areas of performance management and recruitment.
- A benchmarking exercise to ensure that salaries and benefits remain competitive was carried out. Particular focus was given to professionalizing the system of recruiting and remunerating national staff and making their contribution to be recognized as a valued group of the Federation workforce.
- The placement of professional Federation HR staff in the zones opens the opportunity to improve HR capacity-building support for National Society HR staff. Examples of increased collaboration between zones and National Societies were shared at the annual HR seminar.

Progress towards outcomes

Effective HR management at the zone level

Outcome(s)/Expected result(s)

The human resources department expected each zone to have a resourced and operational HR function by the end of 2008. HR information systems to allow activities such as performance management, management personnel data, absence management and e-recruitment were expected to be successfully rolled out to the field.

Achievements

Six HR manager appointments were made, and a transition manager with both HR and administration responsibilities was recruited for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, where the zone office is yet to be determined. All appointees went through an intensive induction and training at the secretariat in Geneva. A forum for global HR management to maintain coherence in the different zones was established, and every six weeks a global teleconference meeting is held to monitor global goals and standards. Two global HR managers meetings were held in May and in September to enhance processes to coordinate HR work in a new international context, as well as to improve these managers' professional skills in the context of the needs of the Movement. The performance management and recruitment systems have been rolled out.

Constraints or Challenges

The final decision for the location of the MENA office has meant that recruitment for this post has been delayed. The transition manager will leave in a few months, and it is still not clear where the zone will be based. Therefore it has been difficult to resolve the recruitment of a regular HR manager post. Unfortunately, the America's HR manager resigned during the course of the year, and support for this zone had to be managed from the Geneva secretariat. This means that there needs to be a mechanism to sustain the HR activities being set up at the zone, to decrease the dependency on the Geneva secretariat.

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

Assessments were carried out in May and October, and the number of assessed field managers increased from 76 to 150. Eighteen managers from the field and Geneva secretariat embarked on a one-year long international manager learning journey. This new programme was highly rated, and impact is measured through the progress of learning contracts signed with line managers before starting the programme, and through organized coaching sessions.

Constraints or Challenges

- Incorporating the high volume of learning from the pilot international manager programme held in November 2007 proved more time and resource consuming than initially envisaged, but as a result, the quality of the product delivered in August 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.
- A rotation plan to get candidates in the places we need them the most is difficult to implement in the current framework of staff rules and regulations

The World of Red Cross and Red Crescent (WORC) and the International Mobilization and Preparation for Action (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 was done based on user feedback. The product is now in use for new National Society and Federation staff. The official launch will be on 8 May 2009. The development of IMPACT is almost finalized and a first group of IMPACT trainers met in November. Four IMPACT courses are scheduled for the beginning of 2009.

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. This platform is now being developed.

HRSAG

Outcome(s)/Expected result(s)

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

Achievements

No HRSAG meetings were held during the year.

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. Until now, there were other pressing priorities and it was not possible to get this group constituted by him. However, there is commitment from him to make HR more strategic in the future.

Working in partnership

The human resource department continues to work very closely with its HR counterparts in National Societies 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.

The major partnership event, the HR seminar held in mid-September, was attended by a record 70 participants, notably from National Societies in the developing world. The agenda provided 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

was the first time Federation field-based HR staff worked 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

During 2009, the final transition of responsibilities from the Geneva secretariat to the zones will take place, and the department will focus on delivering improved field management effectiveness through high quality, local HR support to line managers. Robust systems for reward, grading and performance management will be put in place. The department will open the international managers learning journey to another group of managers, and conduct assessments of around 40 more staff to fill the “pool” of acceptable candidates for field management positions. This will enable the rotation policy to be fully implemented. 2009 will see the new induction (WORC) and international delegate preparedness (IMPACT) programmes fully launched. HR will build on the development of shared Movement HR priorities and workplans at the strategic and operational levels through active engagement with the HRSAG and attendees at the annual HR seminar.

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>Global Agenda Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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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