Remote Missions during COVID 19 Operation
Report Synthesis

Background: Given public health related measures, travel restrictions, organizational and governmental measures introduced with the onset of COVID-19, operations could not continue without planning for new risk considerations. Remote missions were not the main modality used by the IFRC surge system nor by other humanitarian organizations prior to 2020 but were required to be used for the COVID-19 response. This report **extracts the challenges and opportunities of remote missions and using the lessons learned, recommends ways to optimize IFRC's surge system, building a more effective and efficient way to support requests with remote missions**.

Findings:

Most respondents have had more than 10 international deployments (physical deployment), and the remote mission modality was **new for 95%** of individuals.

More **than 80% of Rapid Response personnel** interviewed felt they **met the strategic objectives** of the deployment. There were concerns over the lack of capacity to monitor accountability and standards.

There is the requirement for **specific skills and competencies** to optimize working remotely for both Rapid Response personnel and line managers.

Line managers were considered **strong for 75%** of respondents. The performance of the Rapid Response personnel was more effective when coordination and communication mechanisms were well set up, work plans were established, and progress was monitored.

Remote support missions **require specialized support service considerations** from administration, finance, travel arrangement, staff health and HR.

Remote deployments can, but do not always, **contribute towards localization objectives.**

Challenges:

Top 3 Challenges Identified:
1. Relationship building
2. Understanding local context and tasks
3. Ability to support counterpart
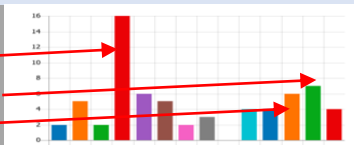
Recommendations:

Ensure requests for support **considers the appropriateness for the role profile to be remote** or in-country using key considerations (including expected competencies and ToRs).

Promote having a strong national counterparts in place for most remote mission role profiles.

Ensure ToR, job descriptions and/or work plan documents **are written specifically** with remote deployment in mind.

Ensure role profiles being proposed for remote deployments, and line managers who will **supervise remote HR have the experience and competencies to perform the role.**

Increase and **wider dissemination** of available **online working tools**, software and training. Identify a centralized database to host these tools.

Ensure **admin, finance, HR and IT are providing the necessary support** in terms of learning and orientation to Rapid Response personnel during peace time.

Create **guidance for coaching, mentoring and shadowing missions** with remote missions in mind.

Increase IFRC's capacity and ability to **effectively coordinate remotely**.

Considerations:

INDIVIDUAL

Main Competencies highlighted: movement context, coordination, teamwork, communication, and motivation

IT (remote working tools) skills are strongly required

Rapid response and line manager relationship is key for the success of the mission

INSTITUTIONAL

Mobilization cycle and pre-deployment requirements

HR policies clearly consider financial incentive

Timeframes

More structured briefing training and guidance

Duty of care

TECHNOLOGICAL

Suitable technology should be provided

Microsoft Teams is the recommended coordination platform and provides all necessary coordination add-ons needed