

Outcome

Africa Regional Partnership Meeting of the IFRC, 20 January 2017, in Nairobi

Participants of the IFRC Africa Regional Partnership, meeting from 18 to 20 January 2017, in Nairobi, to explore how to transform the way the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement Partners collaborate in Africa, to ensure mutual support and complementarity;

Guided by the following objectives:

- to deepen our common understanding of humanitarian and development trends and the capacity of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to respond;
- to develop our ability to work at greater scale and efficiency through coalitions and partnerships; and
- to understand the support required from the IFRC secretariat, as well as the opportunity for Movement partners to share leadership in responding to key trends and plans.

Acknowledging diversity as an asset of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in Africa and recognizing the interdependence among Movement partners;

Committed to building and nurturing an effective partnership, participants in this meeting, agree to base their collaboration on the following commitments:

- ❑ **Responsive to Trends** – Our plans and actions must be responsive to the most significant trends effecting our work in Africa. The most significant trends include higher expectations among partners, vulnerable people, zero tolerance for any lapse in integrity, a paradigm shift in how humanitarian and development financing and new opportunities from changing technology and a policy shift towards localizing aid.
- ❑ **National Society Development** – National Society (NS) development is the cornerstone of all that we do. It is only through NS Development that the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement can sustain its learning and support to vulnerable populations. National Societies need to be further supported in order to enable them to position themselves as auxiliary to their governments; and as trusted partners – to major donors. This could be done through dissemination of existing suitable materials to support NS in this process (such as the IFRC guide on the auxiliary role of NS) and through the development of required materials, if it is felt that gaps exist (such as “marketing” or promotional tools demonstrating the value added of the Movement). The IFRC, in its capacity as the secretariat, will play a central role in the implementation of this process.
- ❑ **African National Societies Driving Strategic Decisions and Operations** – The most successful coalitions in Africa have come when African National Societies have driven decision making and operations. When African NS take responsibility for success and failure they become empowered to lead change. Local capacity is one of the main assets to enhance and on which to build.

- **Shared Leadership** – Shared leadership groups will be formed to ensure a collective approach to regional issues such as the Lake Chad Drought, based on comprehensive “whole of movement” plans. Shared Leadership entails a collaborative and inclusive approach to burden, technical leadership and mutual support. Partners are committed to creating shared leadership groups in eight key areas of work: National Society Development, Disaster Management, Population Movement, Lake Chad, Drought in Southern Africa, Drought in East Africa, Migration and Health Emergencies. In addition, the spirit of shared leadership will be upheld in accordance with resolution one (1) of the 2015 Council of Delegates (Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation or SMCC).
- **Trust and Respect** – Trust is not earned in a single meeting or a single act. Trust must be earned overtime, and nurtured by all partners, in a mutually respectful manner. Partnership and effective coalitions require mutual trust and respect. Irrespective of the number of staff or the size of an organizational budget, all members of coalitions must actively demonstrate respect for each other's mandates, obligations and independence and recognize each other's constraints and commitments. Engendering trust and demonstrating respect compels each organization to share feedback, plans and intention in the most open way possible.
- **Complementarity** – The diversity of the Movement in Africa is an asset if we build on our comparative advantages and complement each other's contributions. It is essential for all partners to report bi-lateral and multilateral activities to ensure a current mapping of resources available to support the Movement profile and to facilitate complementary action at scale in Africa.
- **Longer-term thematic funding** – Historically, the IFRC resourcing architecture has been based on short-term, project-based funding. With this approach, several challenges have been observed. First, it has occasioned high personnel turnover, thereby losing institutional memory. Second, the funds are tightly earmarked and does not allow for flexibility. Third, a project-based approach creates a heavy burden of reporting, yet the regional office has limited human resources. Fourth, this type of short-term funding architecture creates a fragmented and piecemeal execution of programmes, which has proved to be ineffective. Other challenges associated with a short-term method include: multiple approaches to the same partners, small, high reputational risks stemming from lack of coordination and limited ability to invest in National Society development.

There is a need for a shift to longer-term thematic funding, which will enable the IFRC to have a greater impact, in a sustainable manner and operate in a more federated way. Also, a longer-term approach will allow the region to have regular and more predictable resources. It will ease the burden of reporting and allow the shifting of resources to areas where the need is much bigger, in a more flexible way. Ultimately, based on our results-based matrix we shall achieve greater accountability and transparency.

- **Integrity** – The Africa Region has renewed its efforts to strengthen governance and integrity frameworks. During a meeting that brought together leaders of African Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies in Nairobi, Kenya, from 13 to 15 December 2016, participants unanimously renewed their commitment to be transparent, to be accountable and to learn from past mistakes so as to improve the impact of our humanitarian work in Africa.

- **Transparency and Accountability** – Transparency and accountability are achieved through dialogue (on equal footing), with an emphasis on early consultations and early sharing of information. It is essential to define and disseminate standards, particularly for National Society Development, and to set common measures of success. Communications of results, including financial transparency, increase the level of trust and accountability among organizations.
- **Building on Decisions** – A lot of work and consultation has taken place to define a road map for the IFRC in Africa, key areas of work and terms of reference for shared leadership group. This work forms an essential set of reference material that provides direction and guidance to inform decisions, resource allocations and behaviour about where, how and with whom to collaborate.