

Australian Red Cross – Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Partnership 2019–2024

Mid-term Review





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4 Mid-term Review Summary

Focusing on Asia and the Pacific, Australian Red Cross' international program works with Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies to strengthen the resilience of local communities and increase their capacity to prepare for, anticipate, respond to and recover from disasters and crises. The program focuses on National Society institutional strengthening; on resourcing National Societies to work with public authorities, communities and other relevant stakeholders to better understand and manage disaster risk; and on supporting National Society engagement in humanitarian diplomacy' at local, national and regional levels. The 2019–2024 program is the foundation of the current AUD50 Million Partnership between Australian Red Cross and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

The primary delivery mechanism for the program is a series of long-term partnerships between Australian Red Cross and nine National Societies in Fiji, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

At the program mid-point, there is demonstrable progress across a range of partner capacities and program priorities.

At an **organisational level**, partner National Societies are developing and moving forward their own strategies, strengthening their institutional constitutions, and enhancing their financial management and information technology architecture. Regional networks such as the Pacific Finance Managers' Network are having a positive impact on the accountability mechanisms of partner National Societies, evidenced by the completion of 16 financial audits in 2022.

The mid-term review found all nine partner National Societies aspire to having a stronger financial footing. What this might look like will differ from organisation to organisation, but the review also found all National Societies enjoy impressive levels of public trust among their various constituencies.

The *Core Costs and Financial Sustainability Initiative* is a centrepiece of the Program's focus on organisational strengthening and commitment to locally led humanitarian action. The economic

impacts of COVID-19 have been felt acutely by partner National Societies, but this has also increased understanding regarding the criticality of organisational financial stability. In 2022, 11 Pacific National Societies developed realistic resource mobilisation plans integrated within their operational plans. These plans outline income figures from the previous three years, with clear and achievable projected income, costs, and net profit.

14 National Societies across the Pacific and Asia are now participating in the initiative. Pleasingly, 2022 also saw an interest from American Red Cross to become a contributor in 2023, and there is growing interest from European National Societies with regards how the initiative might be adapted to their own partnerships in contexts like the Ukraine crisis.

At a **programming level**, the program is supporting partners' disaster preparedness work from reviewing prepositioned stock, strengthening procurement and supply chain management systems and practice, conducting lessons-learned exercises and scenario planning, and strengthening information management. More partner National Societies are considering cash and voucher assistance as part of their approach to preparedness and response, although this still has some way to go in the Pacific. The program is also working with partners to shift investment and focus to acting before disasters and crises occur and increasing understanding and capability to take anticipatory action.

All nine National Societies received praise from a wide range of stakeholders for the speed and comprehensive nature of their disaster response activities, primarily based on their organisational strengths including: privileged access to government, trust, extensive reach, and a strong volunteer network. Eight of the nine partner National Societies have high level ongoing presence in their respective national disaster management structures and the significant role that partner National Societies have played in their country's preparation and response to the COVID-19 pandemic was a highlight of the review findings.

The review concluded that a strong response must

reflect effective preparedness, and any gaps in the response must also reflect gaps in preparedness. A consistently cited challenge for all National Societies was volunteer management, including volunteer recruitment and retention, capacity building, and work health and safety. These issues require ongoing attention in the remainder of the program given the invaluable and crucial role of volunteers for any National Society.

At an **influencing level**, program investments in disaster policy and legal frameworks are designed to assist partners to develop a stronger voice and engage their public authorities through their auxiliary role. As noted above, the mid-term review found all National Societies enjoy impressive levels of trust. They are well placed to leverage this for improved humanitarian outcomes. However, there are also some challenges in this area of the program.

A desk-based humanitarian diplomacy scoping review was undertaken in 2022 to identify gaps and help guide a systematic approach and plan for needs going forward. The review identified a range of regional and local humanitarian diplomacy themes and priorities including climate change, international humanitarian law and National Society auxiliary status. A range of barriers were also identified, including variable understandings of the term (e.g., specific cultural meanings and significance), capacity, skills and experience, thematic focus, and the need for technical support. These findings will be verified with National Society partners individually and regionally in 2023 and form the basis for Australian Red Cross and IFRC regional and National Society humanitarian diplomacy support over the remainder of the program.

A body of **research** has been undertaken to date, strengthening the evidence base on localisation. Work has begun on the development of a **localisation lab** to help test strategies and approaches designed to promote greater local humanitarian leadership. The lab will also consolidate, build upon and disseminate the lessons arising through this Partnership program.

The program's focus on **protection, gender and inclusion** is designed to support partner National Societies to embed the core concepts

of dignity, access, participation and safety as articulated in the IFRC Minimum Standards on Protection, Gender and Inclusion throughout all aspects of disaster preparedness, mitigation and response. The mid-term review found all National Societies recognise the importance of inclusive programming that effectively safeguards the dignity, access, participation and safety of all persons – and also acknowledge there needs to be further improvement in their practice. The review recommended the program increase emphasis on promoting collaboration between National Societies and local specialist organisations, which is well noted. In addition to strengthening practice itself, supporting partners to monitor and document their inclusive practice also needs to be strengthened given the consistent challenges the program has faced in tracking behaviour change.

The program is continuing to build on localising safeguarding approaches through embedding Australian Red Cross' reporting framework, which respects partners' experience and the advantages and challenges that exist within their individual contexts. The framework incorporates community-focused outcomes that speak to culturally embedded safeguarding practices.

The Australian Red Cross-DFAT 2019-2024 Partnership program is on track at its mid-point.

Understandably, there are areas for improvement. There are also many areas of progress that can be further harnessed in the remaining program timeframe.

6 Executive Summary

The Australian Red Cross International Program has an overarching goal to achieve stronger, more resilient communities with increased capacity to prepare for, anticipate, respond to and recover from disasters and crises, with a geographic focus on Asia and the Pacific. An important contributor to this goal is the series of long term, strategic partnerships between Australian Red Cross and nine other National Societies in Fiji, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

The current program design covers the period between 2019 and 2024 and focuses on delivering three End of Program Outcomes: National Society institutional strengthening, National Societies working more effectively with key stakeholders to better manage disaster risk, and National Societies more effectively engaging in humanitarian diplomacy.

In 2022, as part of ongoing learning and program improvement, Australian Red Cross and DFAT commissioned local consultants to undertake mid-term reviews of each of the nine country programs. This synthesis report captures the perspectives of selected stakeholders at this point in the program through the lens of the nine country program reviews, which provided 'snapshots' of program progress and identified both strengths and areas for improvement.

The synthesis report identifies recurrent themes across the reports under each of the three End of Program Outcomes. Under the institutional strengthening outcome key findings relate to financial sustainability and the inter-related issues of trust, identity, and visibility. The reviews find that the Red Cross Red Crescent brand enjoys high levels of trust among public authorities, and that levels of trust are higher among other disaster management stakeholders where the National Society role is clear, well known and accepted. National Societies are widely recognised for their constructive relationships with their respective authorities.

National Societies have opportunities to build on two other existing strengths that are widely recognised among their stakeholders and allies: their nationwide reach and their extensive volunteer network. There is strong evidence in the country reports that these perceived strengths need reinforcing and that one approach that some National Societies

are already committed to, and trialling, is to better empower local branch structures.

An important contributor to the levels of trust that National Societies enjoy is the perception that they respond rapidly to emergencies. Informants related this to National Society disaster prevention and preparedness activities. However, praise for the speed of National Societies' disaster response is balanced by concerns raised by informants about the extent to which the responses address protection, gender and inclusion. This range of concerns relate both to National Societies' structures, policies and expected practices, and to the content of their programs. This observation is by no means new and may require new approaches to leadership and accountability.

Perhaps unsurprisingly most of the country reports include commentary on the National Societies' COVID-19 prevention, preparedness, and response work. Without this work the situation with regards to COVID-19 in each country would have almost certainly been worse, and National Societies' leadership and staff, and their supporters including Australian Red Cross, should be proud. The ability to pivot to meet this new threat was an extraordinary demonstration of organisational ability, and consideration should be given to how this may be applied to other challenges.

The program also anticipates that National Societies engage locally, regionally, and internationally to influence the extent to which humanitarian action is locally led, inclusive and accountable. The country reports demonstrate that all National Societies are engaged in relevant forums at local and national levels, although providing comparatively little evidence that this engagement is effective or that this End of Program Outcome is on track. The Mongolia country report provides an interesting frame of analysis for the effectiveness of policy influence which may indicate the range of data that it is possible and useful to collect.

It is instructive that, in the view of their staff, the National Society in Timor-Leste (Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste) had difficulty establishing credibility in forums discussing disaster management in Timor-Leste, which are more usually attended by international stakeholders. This underlines



the importance of international stakeholders consciously 'ensuring space' for local participants. What is missing from the reports is the evidence of the work by Australian Red Cross to both amplify the voices of, and to 'ensure space'. This is not necessarily because it's not happening but does emphasise the 'invisibility' of Australian Red Cross' own work in the performance assessment framework, reducing opportunities to document this.

The strength of the partner relationship with Australian Red Cross is evidenced by partner National Societies' willingness to engage in constructive dialogue. There is universal appreciation of the strategic nature of the partnership and of the commitment by Australian Red Cross to support partner National Society core costs. The flexibility that Australian Red Cross offers its partners is welcomed, albeit some partners would prefer further flexibility still, particularly with regards to financial reporting. There is some polarisation of views about the primarily virtual nature of the relationship, with two National Societies preferring in-country delegate presence. However most National Societies note the advantages of the virtual relationship, while also wanting a complementary increase in face-to-face engagement.

At this mid-term point of the current Partnership, DFAT and Australian Red Cross also felt it was important to take time to reflect on their partnering relationship and how DFAT and Australian Red Cross are working towards their strategic partnership principles, the extent to which these remain relevant and to identify any actions required to support the Partnership as it moves into the next two years. The outcomes of this discussion, and the revised set of Partnership Principles are included at Annex 1 of this report.

Finally, the program's performance assessment framework remains broadly relevant, although

it is recommended that it is revisited, and its current indicators reviewed for relevance and utility. It is also proposed that the framework better consider the work of Australian Red Cross, potentially shifting the dialogue with the National Society partners and the nature of the assessment process from 'of/by' to 'with'. It may also be worthwhile considering how to better track the causal relationship between the End of Program Outcomes, which focus on National Society strengthening, and the Program Goal which focuses on community resilience. This program is a demonstration of how strategic rather than programmatic partner relationships can look, and the performance assessment framework must find ways of measuring the extent to which it is making a difference.

As with any review of this nature, there were limitations. Timing, availability of key stakeholders, variability across the country reports, and the qualitative methodology all presented challenges. The country reports and this synthesis do not provide a comprehensive analysis of all activities or achievements of country programs, but only those that informants chose to highlight.

Those constraints notwithstanding, what are most important in both the country reports and this synthesis, are the matters and ideas raised. It is hoped that the mid-term review will be exactly that, and not refer to a report, but to a process that is led by and engaged with by the real experts on this program – the leaders and practitioners in Australian Red Cross, DFAT, the partner National Societies and other key stakeholders. It is hoped that this and other reports will be just some of the inputs that contribute to refining the remainder of this program and seeding ideas for how the Partnership can continue to evolve.

8 Recommendations

This list of recommendations is deliberately not tied to the End of Program Outcomes here in the Executive Summary, although they are in the body of the report. The recommendations are also not directed to individual National Societies. The intent of this synthesis report is to stimulate consideration by Australian Red Cross, DFAT and partner National Societies of the relevance of all recommendations to all the country programs. It is hoped that this comprehensive approach will maximise opportunities for learning, change and improvement.

Recommendation 1

Australian Red Cross engages with partner National Societies to develop relevant and appropriate strategies for establishing and clearly communicating partner National Society identity to their stakeholders. Trust and Identity are inextricably linked.

Recommendation 2

Australian Red Cross works with interested partner National Societies to identify and leverage marketing and communications expertise from local specialist organisations, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement including Australian Red Cross, and other external sources to support exploration of how national promotion of the organisation may be a contributor to effective resource mobilisation and to financial sustainability.

Recommendation 3

Australian Red Cross continues to engage with partner National Societies to identify and support sustainable and locally appropriate opportunities for decentralisation and increased capacity, leadership, and autonomy at branch levels.

Recommendation 4

Australian Red Cross supports partner National Societies to shift the emphasis from measuring 'capacity strengthening' activities to measuring 'observable action', possibly engaging local specialist organisations to independently assess and report on National Society progress.

Recommendation 5

Australian Red Cross supports partner National Societies to strengthen their volunteer recruitment and management systems and approaches, including with enhanced staff capacity and with technical support drawing on Australian Red Cross' own volunteer management journey, and through partnerships with other local actors.

Recommendation 6

Australian Red Cross supports partner National Societies to track the extent to which improvements in their policies and processes are contributing to inclusive disaster management, including in protection, gender and inclusion.





Recommendation 7

Australian Red Cross considers approaches to supporting partner National Society senior management teams to include a member who has inclusion and diversity as a significant part of their portfolio of responsibilities.

Recommendation 8

Australian Red Cross supports partner National Societies to continuously assess the efficacy of their disaster preparedness planning processes and their disaster preparedness plans.

Recommendation 9

Australian Red Cross subject matter experts encourage partner National Societies, wherever possible, to seek advice and training from and collaborate with local subject matter specialists and their organisations.

Recommendation 10

Australian Red Cross supports partner National Societies to ensure stocks of household items more appropriately meet the needs of target communities through developing and utilising current, accurate and better disaggregated data sets and facilitating community feedback on the appropriateness of supplied items.

Recommendation 11

Australian Red Cross supports partner National Societies to leverage their auxiliary status and work with their governments, clusters and other stakeholders to develop an agreed range of household item packages that meet the needs of all members of disaster affected communities.

Recommendation 12

Australian Red Cross continues to work with the IFRC, other participating ('global north') National Societies and other stakeholders in national, regional and international forums to 'ensure space' for local participants, and to ensure that National Societies are sufficiently resourced to take proper advantage of that space.

Recommendation 13

Australian Red Cross creates opportunities for dialogue with National Societies and their stakeholders, for example an annual conference, to discuss how Australian Red Cross Society can best engage and provide strategic support on external trends, policy engagement and organisational positioning at national, regional and international levels.

Recommendation 14

Australian Red Cross engages with partner National Societies to develop a better understanding of mutual expectations under End of Program Outcome Three, and how best to manage associated accountabilities.

Recommendation 15

Australian Red Cross uses adapted disaster response quality indicators to inform its measurement of success in the disaster preparedness work it is supporting its partner National Societies to undertake.



List of Acronyms

COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DFAT	Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
PAF	Performance Assessment Framework
UN	United Nations

Introduction

Focusing on Asia and the Pacific, Australian Red Cross' international program works with Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies to strengthen the resilience of local communities and increase their capacity to prepare for, anticipate, respond to and recover from disasters and crises. To deliver this goal the program focuses on National Society institutional strengthening; on resourcing National Societies to work with public authorities, communities and other relevant stakeholders to better understand and manage disaster risk; and on supporting National Society engagement in humanitarian diplomacy² at local, national and regional levels.

The primary delivery mechanism for the program is a series of long-term partnerships between Australian Red Cross and nine National Societies in Fiji, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, and Vanuatu. The program also contributes to and draws on global and regional learning and exchange through the partnership, and the brokering and technical assistance and influencing role played by Australian Red Cross.

The current program design covers the period from 2019 to 2024 and is the foundation of the current AUD50 Million Partnership between Australian Red Cross and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). As part of the ongoing process of program learning and review, Australian Red Cross and DFAT commissioned a mid-term review of the Partnership. The review, managed by Australian Red Cross, engaged local consultants to undertake mid-term reviews of the in-country collaboration with each of the above partner National Societies and with key national and local stakeholders. Guidelines for the country review process and

lines of enquiry were designed by Australian Red Cross to encourage some standardisation of approaches to the mid-term reviews across all countries. Data collection was largely carried out in October/November 2022 and initial findings shared with Australian Red Cross and its partner National Societies before country level reports were finalised by the consultants. These reviews provided 'snapshots' of the current programs, identifying program strengths and areas for improvement.

This report is a synthesis of those country level mid-term reviews and debrief sessions, as well as a focus group discussion with staff of The International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Pacific regional office.

This synthesis report uses the anticipated End of Program Outcomes as section headings. It does not summarise each country report but rather identifies recurrent themes across them, many of which are also reflected in the performance assessment framework. It then uses evidence within each of the country reports and IFRC Pacific focus group discussion to inform the themes. The document then draws recommendations from these themes. These recommendations are those of the author and intended as conversation starters between program stakeholders that could inform any adjustments to the remainder of this program. It is important to note that the emergent themes in this document are only one way of 'cutting the cake' and are written to be debated and challenged by program stakeholders.

The use of the performance assessment framework to structure the report has also highlighted the strengths and potential areas of improvement for the Framework itself, which are discussed later in this synthesis report.

Goal Stronger, more resilient communities with increased capacity to prepare for, anticipate, respond to and recover from disasters and crises (Asia Pacific)

OUTCOME 1

National Societies are more sustainable humanitarian actors and have the trust of their public authorities and communities.

OUTCOME 2

National Societies are delivering effective and inclusive disaster risk management.

OUTCOME 3

The Movement is influencing policy and practice that enhance locally-led, and inclusive, accountable humanitarian action.

12 Scope of the review



The mid-term review focuses on the DFAT–Australian Red Cross Partnership and the collaboration with the nine National Societies within this program. The review did not include a detailed grant level evaluation of individual emergency responses delivered by any of the nine National Societies involved in the Partnership during the mid-term review period. However, it does aim to explore the extent to which the Partnership has supported the nine National Societies to strengthen their capacity to prepare for and, where relevant, respond to disasters and crises, and identify any lessons for the remainder of the Partnership period.

The review does not focus on any other programs that DFAT is supporting in any of the countries, even where the National Society is involved in those programs (for example, programs supported by in-country DFAT Posts such as the *Siap Siaga* program among others in Indonesia and direct collaboration between the DFAT Post and Mongolia Red Cross in Mongolia).

The primary data that informs this synthesis was collected by in-country consultants in each of the nine countries, through national and community level consultations with a series of key stakeholders. These included National Society staff and volunteers at national and sub-national levels, government representatives, UN agencies, civil society organisations, community members and IFRC representatives. There was also a self-conducted focus group discussion with IFRC

Pacific staff. The review was qualitative and sought perspectives from the different stakeholders on a series of themes aligned with the three Partnership End of Program Outcomes. All findings have been triangulated to the extent possible. The country reviews provided ‘snapshots’ of the current programs, identifying program strengths and areas for improvement. None of the reviews provided commentary on changes since the commencement of the program.

The review also explored the level of satisfaction among the nine National Society partners with Australian Red Cross’ partnership approach and program model. And finally, DFAT and Australian Red Cross revisited the principles that underpin the Partnership to ensure they remain relevant and to agree any necessary adjustments.

The mid-term review synthesis report captures the perspectives of selected stakeholders at this point in the program. It is not a comprehensive analysis of everything that is happening at country level through the program, nor of every component of the program at its different levels. The work that Australian Red Cross is conducting, brokering, enabling at regional and global levels, for example, is not captured here but has been well documented through other review processes such as regular six month and annual reports, case studies, research studies etc. This synthesis report complements those other reports and assessments and captures and analyses a point in time reflection by the selected stakeholders.

Limitations of the review



Timing

Finalisation of the country reports was significantly delayed. In some instances, this was due to challenges in identifying and contracting local consultants; in others to long delays in completing data analysis and developing the reports following data collection. Drafts were originally expected to be completed by the end of September whereas the last of the draft country reports was received from the consultant in mid-November. This had implications on opportunities for consultation and feedback, the comparative analysis of reports and on deadlines. It also meant that the development of this report was an iterative process over four months.

Country Report Content

The content of country reports varies considerably. This reflects the relatively short time that they had to complete their fieldwork with a reasonable sample of respondents, the availability of identified interviewees and their willingness to engage with the mid-term review, and the extent to which consultants were able to transform their data into a coherent and comprehensive narrative.

Interviewees

Interviewees were identified jointly by Australian Red Cross and each of the partner National Societies, based on each of the operating

contexts. However, as noted above, not all identified interviewees were available, which undoubtedly limited discussion of certain topics and, consequently, associated findings in some aspects of the program coverage.

Data

Most data for the country reports, and this synthesis, is qualitative in nature. At its most basic level this means that it is hard to qualify issues raised on a spectrum of rarely/sometimes/ often. For some issues this does not matter – once is too often. However, for other matters, such as the extent to which pre-positioned household items are not fully meeting the needs of a diverse community, the extent to which this is happening is important.

Those constraints notwithstanding, what are most important in both the country reports and this synthesis, are the matters and ideas raised. It is hoped that the mid-term review will be exactly that, and not refer to a report, but to a process that is led by and engaged with by the real experts on this program – the leaders and practitioners in Australian Red Cross, the partner National Societies and other key stakeholders. It is hoped that this and other reports will be just some of the inputs that contribute to refining the remainder of this program.

14 End of Program Outcome One

National Societies are more sustainable humanitarian actors and have the trust of their public authorities and communities

End of Program Outcome One has an expectation that the National Societies partnering with Australian Red Cross will be operating in accordance with the Red Cross Red Crescent Fundamental Principles³ and Movement resolutions, and with relevant national legislation. There is an expectation that National Societies will have transparent governance processes, a diverse revenue base, and will through policies and actions, safeguard the dignity, access, participation, and safety of all persons.

In this context the review has considered National Society visibility and trust and also the visibility and trust of the Red Cross Red Crescent brand. It is crucial to their ability to deliver programs that National Societies have visibility and trust among the communities they are serving. However, a broader level of visibility and trust is also important when the public are deciding where to donate, and donors are deciding where to invest. This is closely tied to National Society identity – the extent to which National Societies define themselves or allow others to define them.

Finally, this section examines financial sustainability. It is worthwhile noting that in the country reports the terms financial sustainability, financial diversification and financial independence are used by the different National Societies interchangeably across the program.

Trust

Trust in the Red Cross Red Crescent brand is high, and the statutory role of National Societies as ‘auxiliary to public authorities’, supplementing or substituting government humanitarian services, establishes them as having a special relationship with their respective governments. The country-level reviews found a strong level of trust between each of the nine National Societies and their respective public authorities.

Given the internal organisational challenges it has faced over the last several years, Papua New Guinea Red Cross would be most likely to have suffered a drop in brand trust. Instead, stakeholders hang on to their perceptions of what Papua New Guinea Red Cross used to be and could be in the future. One Non-Government Organisation (NGO) representative said:

‘...the welfare of the victims has always been the priority of the Society; basic relief supplies always reach the affected communities even before funding relief arrives’.

In other countries brand trust is much more closely tied to the current work of the National Societies. In Vanuatu, for example, trust of Vanuatu Red Cross among national level public authorities and NGOs is high to the extent that the government delegates leadership responsibility to them. However, among the Vanuatu Civil Society Organisations⁴ and communities who were interviewed for the mid-term review there is a lower appreciation of the ‘auxiliary to public authorities’ role that Vanuatu Red Cross enjoys. Civil Society Organisations have limited and sporadic engagement with the National Society and a limited understanding of its role. Communities and some provincial level public authorities were similarly unaware of the role of the National Society and had expectations that Vanuatu Red Cross would be engaging with them beyond what they are currently doing. Similarly in both Timor-Leste and Myanmar a recommendation from the mid-term review is to better inform both branch-level staff, volunteers and community about the Fundamental Principles



so that internal and external stakeholders have a better appreciation of the National Society's way of working, including its auxiliary status.

In Mongolia, trust of Mongolia Red Cross is unequivocal. Public authorities and community members praised the commitment of the National Society's volunteers, and the importance of the volunteer labour force during the COVID-19 pandemic when Ministry of Health personnel were overwhelmed. In both Mongolia and in Vanuatu the reputation of the National Society was strongly linked to individual leaders, including at a provincial level.

Indonesian Red Cross (Palang Merah Indonesia, PMI) is trusted at all levels for its ability to respond effectively to disasters, however respondents to the review from both within and outside the organisation voiced concern about whether its proximity to political actors compromised the perception of its neutrality. And in Myanmar it was noted by an external stakeholder that the level of support to the conflict affected population in areas held by the authorities was more than that provided to other areas, although a National Society informant noted that security issues, concerns for the safety of volunteers, and concerns about maintaining humanitarian space across the country hampered the National Society's ability to respond effectively in areas not controlled by the authorities. An Australian Red Cross staff member noted that these challenges also apply to areas that are controlled by the authorities. The reality is that humanitarian access in Myanmar is extremely complex.

While all the National Societies are recognised by their respective key stakeholders as having a role in disaster response, community engagement is largely discussed in the context of program delivery. The Mongolia country report is alone in discussing community awareness of the wider Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. For other country reports, the discussion of visibility is strikingly lacking.

Identity

All stakeholders and National Societies participating in this review have views on what the role of the National Society in their country could and should be, and for many stakeholders the expectations of that role are quite expansive.

In Papua New Guinea, multiple respondents from government, NGOs and the UN offered different versions of the same narrative: that the National Society should be a lead humanitarian organisation, however its lack of presence in recent times has meant that others have occupied spaces it once held. Nevertheless, respondents also were strongly supportive of Papua New Guinea Red Cross taking up its previous roles, albeit the context being far more competitive than before. In Vanuatu, provincial level respondents, including Chief representatives in Tanna, were similarly concerned that 'new' actors, particularly international NGOs, were occupying programming space that previously 'belonged' to Vanuatu Red Cross. Additionally, the Vanuatu mid-term review revealed a contrast between the National Society's internal clarity of purpose, linked to a deep understanding and appreciation of their new strategic plan, and the lack of clarity about the National Society's identity and purpose expressed by external stakeholders including the Director of the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO). The review recommends Vanuatu Red Cross makes renewed efforts to clearly communicate its strategic plan to external stakeholders.

IFRC respondents observed that with the auxiliary role, the associated relationships and expectations can end up with National Societies being pulled into areas of work that do not align with their core strategies. They felt there may be an opportunity for National Societies to establish a more systematic approach to these myriad requests. In contrast to this, a donor representative said of Vanuatu Red Cross:

"I often see them say no to projects and funding because it's not part of who they are or their core business, and they don't want to expand beyond the sustainable model... I think this is quite possibly a strength."

Myanmar Red Cross is similarly clear about its mandate, tying it back to the Red Cross Red Crescent Fundamental Principles and its auxiliary role in the provision of humanitarian services. While other National Societies are not so explicit in delineating their roles as Vanuatu and Myanmar Red Cross Societies, each one emphasised the importance of their auxiliary role and their mandate to act in circumstances of humanitarian crisis. IFRC respondents noted the example of Solomon Islands Red Cross action during recent civil unrest in which National Society personnel responded under the protection of the Red Cross emblem. They also noted that a unique National Society mandate is often less clear in other types of emergencies or disasters, leading to a more contested space and the risk that the National Society is treated by government and donors as 'just another' NGO. IFRC respondents also noted that the COVID-19 pandemic response highlighted that National Societies need to have relationships across government, not just with the disaster management authorities.

Most National Societies mentioned the legislation that articulates their role (their establishing legislation). Three of the National Societies' Acts are either under review or a review is recommended: the Vanuatu National Society Act is currently under review; in Solomon Islands the Act is proposed for review; and in Papua New Guinea, the local consultants who conducted the country review recommended that the Act is reviewed in light of proposed legislative amendments to the Papua New Guinea Companies Act, the Associations Incorporation Act and several anticipated tax law amendments. Interestingly, in Timor-Leste, the National Society is, under legislation, permitted to declare a disaster which gives it a special level of proactivity in the disaster management space. However, INGO and NGO informants noted that the wording of the legislation was inconsistent with the language and terms used by disaster management stakeholders, which could lead to confusion.

Recommendation 1

Australian Red Cross engages with partner National Societies to develop relevant and appropriate strategies for establishing and clearly communicating partner National Society identity to their stakeholders. Trust and Identity are inextricably linked.

Visibility

While all the National Societies are recognised by their respective key stakeholders as having a role in disaster response, community engagement is largely discussed in the context of program delivery. However, the Mongolia country report is alone in discussing the extent to which the National Society recognises that visibility is not just about program delivery – visibility is a key aspect of the National Society's strategic approach to marketing and communication, and national visibility is critical to effective resource mobilisation.

For other country reports, the discussion of national visibility is strikingly lacking.

Recommendation 2

Australian Red Cross works with interested partner National Societies to identify and leverage marketing and communications expertise from local specialist organisations, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement including Australian Red Cross, and other external sources to support exploration of how national promotion of the organisation may be a contributor to effective resource mobilisation and to financial sustainability.

Nation-wide Reach

Apart from auxiliary status, the other distinct identities that National Societies have is their nation-wide reach and their volunteer network. These were both consistently mentioned as strengths, which National Societies can leverage to amplify their voice at national decision-making forums.

IFRC respondents in the Pacific observed that the national reach and local presence of some of the Pacific National Societies meant that they were able to provide invaluable support to their respective Ministries of Health in areas such as surveillance and contact tracing as well as providing real-time data during the COVID-19 pandemic, including getting public health messaging out to communities at a time when movement was severely restricted

A critical factor to this success was the extent to which the National Societies are engaged in broad-scale local programming, of which Fiji, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands National Societies were cited as excellent examples. In Indonesia NGOs are explicit about wanting to leverage the National Society's country-wide presence, and along with NGOs in most other countries, are keen to have closer operational collaboration with their National Society.

However, in some countries, the operational reach of the National Society in times of emergencies is limited by the respective government's National Disaster Management Office. In Vanuatu for example, the NDMO has allocated specific geographic areas to Red Cross and to NGOs, meaning Vanuatu Red Cross is not able to respond to all emergencies in all locations. This may be at odds with the auxiliary role of the National Society, and a change to the arrangement may be in the best interests of both government and the National Society.

There are other constraints to the reach that National Societies have. The IFRC Pacific group observed that National Societies may tend to work with familiar communities or communities more accessible to the National Society network, and with formal rather than informal communities that, without an existing authority structure, are

harder to engage with. This notion that National Societies have 'preferred' communities was supported by evidence in the Fiji country report that refers to 'Red Cross communities', and the Timor-Leste report notes the National Society only has volunteers in communities where it has or has previously had programs.

In Mongolia at a district (soum) level the National Society presence is weak. Representation is provided by the head of the district assembly, a political position with a relatively high turnover for whom the Mongolian Red Cross role fills a small and unpaid fraction of the workload. This contributes to poor understanding of the National Society, and there are no National Society volunteers at the soum level. However, this situation changes at the provincial (aimag) level at which there is volunteering and a strong National Society presence. In Tonga, both internal and external informants suggested that the National Society should give greater emphasis to branch development in the more remote divisions (provinces) of Eua, Ha'apai and Vava'u.

National Societies have ambitions to strengthen both their reach and the capacity of their branches. Vanuatu Red Cross' plan to decentralise and further strengthen their branch network and the capacity of their branch offices is widely praised, both internally and externally, although the review pointed out that branch offices already have both human resource and financial constraints, and that branch expansion and strengthening will be costly. IFRC informants mentioned that Fiji Red Cross' work towards decentralisation has made them a more effective organisation and Timor-Leste Red Cross (Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste, CVTL) highlighted its ambitions to expand its branch network to better reach more remote communities. The country report for Mongolia proposes that strengthening National Society presence at the district level is a major opportunity to increase visibility, volunteering, and donations.

Advantages in having nation-wide reach are maximised with effective coordination between the branches, district and/or provincial offices and headquarters. In all National Societies this was identified as an area that needs strengthening.

Remoteness, poor telecommunication networks, lack of equipment, staff and volunteer capacity, organisational culture and lack of systems all contribute to this. Informants in multiple National Societies provided evidence that strengthening capacity at the branch level was much needed.

In Indonesia it was suggested that program implementation should be more localised, with headquarters having a monitoring and support role. However, both internal and external informants observed that the capacity of National Society branches is variable across the country and that branches are poorly equipped. National Society informants suggested that internal systems are becoming increasingly bureaucratic, and that financial reporting in particular is poorly understood and implemented. Informants at the national level noted that they struggle to meet financial reporting obligations as a result of poor information flow from provincial and district level offices to the headquarters. This issue is not isolated to Indonesia and was raised in different ways by all the National Societies.

Branch level respondents in Fiji, said they felt neglected by headquarters staff due to a lack of regular visits and in Solomon Islands respondents said that communication between branches and headquarters only occurs when initiated by headquarters. Mongolian Red Cross mentioned challenges with information flow in both directions – provincial branches did not always feel fully informed of headquarter plans that affected them, and headquarters spoke of delays in regular reporting from district levels. This was in part at least attributed to the absence of an organisation-wide and standardised reporting and feedback system.

Recommendation 3

Australian Red Cross continues to engage with partner National Societies to identify and support sustainable and locally appropriate opportunities for decentralisation and increased capacity, leadership, and autonomy at branch levels.

Volunteer Network

Volunteers are an acknowledged importance in the Red Cross Red Crescent Fundamental Principles, to Red Cross Red Crescent identity, and to effective disaster preparedness and response. Nevertheless, volunteer management continues to be a challenge for all National Societies, including volunteer recruitment and retention, capacity building, and work health and safety.

Volunteer recruitment and retention is mentioned as a particular challenge in all countries, especially in relation to younger volunteers. In Vanuatu Red Cross volunteers receive lower remuneration rates than those volunteering for government or for the UN. Furthermore, as economic conditions deteriorate in the country, current and potential volunteers are increasingly being lost to seasonal worker programs. This was also raised as an issue in the Fiji country report with volunteers lost to both seasonal worker programs and to other organisations. Seasonal worker programs are also seen as taking able-bodied young people away from community during the disaster season, when they are most needed. IFRC Pacific respondents raised the challenge of NGOs recruiting key local Red Cross leaders during an emergency response in Fiji, leaving the National Society short of leadership. However, in Vanuatu a donor informant observed that recruitment of National Society volunteers by other non-government and government agencies can have positive results as it extends the National Society's sphere of influence.

In Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji, volunteers raised issues of work health and safety, although in Fiji the situation was acknowledged as having improved significantly. Furthermore, other informants noted that some of Fiji Red Cross' hesitancy in deploying for the COVID-19 response was due to concerns for the health and safety of the volunteers and staff, and their families. A Solomon Islands volunteer said that volunteers should be considered a high-risk group in disasters, and several respondents mentioned that in a disaster, volunteers also have family responsibilities. Several reports speak of the stressful environments and high workloads that volunteers experience, in part due to the reduction in size of the volunteer work force as

well as the compounding disasters and crises all the countries have faced over the last three years. Respondents in both Fiji and Tonga suggested that volunteers should receive psychosocial support. The importance of the availability of safe shelter for staff and volunteers during emergencies was raised in both Vanuatu and Fiji.

Several stakeholders suggested that the National Society in Vanuatu review its volunteer program and associated policies to ensure that the program stays relevant and attractive. Similar concerns were raised about volunteering programs in other National Societies. Informants in Fiji, Mongolia and Myanmar were most vocal about staff, volunteer and community capacity strengthening being either too repetitive or lacking relevance. This is both in the context of the changing nature of disasters, for example training curricula for disasters having been put together for cyclones but now climate change and pandemics are what are uppermost in people's minds; that disaster risk may differ in different parts of a country, for example in Myanmar where only some provinces are earthquake-prone; and also, in the context of the need for specific skill sets, including as a result of requests from ministerial bodies.

In Mongolia there was a suggestion that the selection of training participants become far more intentional and focused on young people, including young professionals and in Fiji there is a suggestion that volunteer recruitment adds a focus on professionals. While volunteer training is expensive, in Vanuatu stakeholders at both the provincial and national level noted that the National Society has not yet explored the option of training partnerships with other actors, an option that was also proposed in Solomon Islands. Solomon Islands Department of Health already acknowledges its responsibility for training National Society volunteers for health-related emergencies.

IFRC Pacific informants emphasised that capacity building does not always lead to change – systems and processes need to be open to innovation – a significant challenge to traditional leadership styles, especially working in multi-organisational contexts. The Mongolia country report raised similar concerns – that training does not necessarily lead to behaviour change and

training outcomes and impact need to be better monitored.

Recommendation 4

Australian Red Cross supports partner National Societies to shift the emphasis from measuring 'capacity strengthening' activities to measuring 'observable action', possibly engaging local specialist organisations to independently assess and report on National Society progress.

In Myanmar, volunteer management was identified as an area for National Society capacity strengthening from Australian Red Cross and in Vanuatu, several stakeholders at both national and provincial levels suggested that the National Society review its volunteer policies and program and focus on promoting the program and strengthening volunteer capacity.

While volunteer networks are what stakeholders see and value, maintaining the volunteer network would not be possible without dedicated staff at branch, provincial and headquarter level. Fiji, Mongolia, Tonga and Vanuatu respondents all spoke of staff workload, and many of the findings that relate to volunteers here also relate to staff. Staff remuneration was raised as being of concern. One informant in Mongolia stated: *"With great inflation of recent years, there is a danger that mid-level Red Cross staff can turn into vulnerable social groups themselves"*.⁵

In Mongolia there is a strong push from volunteer organisations to establish national legislation to better recognise the important contribution of volunteers and to regularise volunteer conditions, and Mongolian Red Cross has supported this effort. Mention of a national strategic approach to volunteering is absent from other country reports so it is unclear as to whether there are coordinated national approaches to volunteering in other countries. However, the presence of systemic challenges to volunteering, whether it is 'poaching' of volunteers by NGOs during times of

crisis, or loss of volunteers to Australia and New Zealand's labour programs, suggests that a national or regional coordinated approach to volunteering may be warranted.

Recommendation 5

Australian Red Cross supports partner National Societies to strengthen their volunteer recruitment and management systems and approaches, including with enhanced staff capacity and with technical support drawing on Australian Red Cross' own volunteer management journey, and through partnerships with other local actors.

Financial Sustainability

All National Societies highlighted financial sustainability as a priority, and all National Societies except Indonesian Red Cross stated that they believed that their activities were being constrained by lack of funds. This included National Societies who have struggled in recent years to acquit the funds they currently receive. Indonesian Red Cross acknowledged that its ability to access donor funding was limited by its reporting capability and identified financial reporting and acquittal as an area that needs improvement.

Most National Societies saw financial sustainability in the context of generating funds locally through business opportunities, donations, and memberships. No National Society discussed the risks associated with business ventures and Myanmar, Mongolia, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, and Solomon Islands Red Cross Societies are already generating income with locally owned businesses as well as other activities e.g. renting out meeting rooms.

Somewhat impressively Myanmar Red Cross ran off a list of its income generation activities which included: online donations, donation boxes, a methylated spirit factory, rental fees and a printing shop, hiring of office space, meeting venues

and accommodation, donations from local and corporate partners, commercial first aid courses, running a small factory producing purified water and manufacturing oral rehydration salts. Nevertheless 90% of funds are still sourced externally.

No National Society discussed financial sustainability in the context of their donor/partner portfolios and only Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea raised the possibility of exploring receiving funding from their own governments. Indonesia Red Cross said it is already receiving limited government funding.

Membership is seen in Mongolia as a significant opportunity for revenue raising, and although some types of membership are reducing in numbers, Mongolia Red Cross has some high-value membership options that are becoming increasingly popular. Papua New Guinea informants and Solomon Islands Red Cross branch level informants also suggested that increasing membership numbers could be a way for the National Societies to raise funds. In Mongolia, current members who were interviewed, although supportive of membership fees, would like greater transparency about how their membership fees are used.

Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and Tonga National Societies all asked for technical support from Australian Red Cross for resource mobilisation. Papua New Guinea broadened this request to support for marketing and fundraising.

Prioritising Protection, Gender and Inclusion in the National Society

The Red Cross Red Crescent Fundamental Principles of Humanity and Impartiality are not achievable without inclusive programming, which in turn can only be driven by strongly principled policies and practices. Protection, gender and inclusion under this outcome relates to these inclusion and diversity policies and practices.

The review did not explicitly explore the extent to which National Society policies are gender sensitive or inclusive nor the diversity of National Society personnel who are delivering humanitarian services, including disaster preparedness and response activities. Rather it focused on internal

and external perceptions of how the National Societies consider the needs of individuals and groups when preparing for and responding to disasters and crises. Many of the National Societies have roles that include protection, gender and inclusion in their portfolios, however the country reports did not provide commentary on the seniority of those roles, the proportion of time that they are able to allocate to their protection, gender and inclusion responsibilities, or the influence that they enjoy.

Considering the broad spectrum of community needs is noted as a particular strength of Fiji Red Cross, who are reported to access data on the elderly, women and persons with disabilities from specialist government departments, and encourage other actors to do the same. However, the extent to which this data influences National Society policies and practices is contested in the country report. Across the National Societies, where it is mentioned, there is a general recognition that there is patchy awareness/prioritization of the differentiated needs of individuals and groups who are most likely to be impacted by disasters. Indonesia and Solomon Islands reports both mention that National Societies need to do further work on protection, gender and inclusion; Tonga stakeholders mention the need for systems to prioritise disaggregated data to better inform responses.

Myanmar is recognised for its inclusive programming, however capacity strengthening, especially at a branch level, including facilitating access to appropriate medical services, is required to address gender-based violence and strengthen protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

In Vanuatu, in-community conflict was raised as a potential future area of focus for the National Society and the Solomon Islands country report mentioned conflict affected communities as an existing area of work. Both Vanuatu and Solomon Islands mentioned conflict resolution and working in conflict situations as areas for future capacity strengthening for National Society staff and volunteers.

Strengthening institutional capacity in protection, gender and inclusion is challenging counter-cultural work, especially in a multi-stakeholder Disaster Management context.

Recommendation 6

Australian Red Cross supports partner National Societies to track the extent to which improvements in their policies and processes are contributing to inclusive disaster management, including in protection, gender and inclusion.

Australian Red Cross has been a strong advocate for increased diversity and inclusion in the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. In order to raise the profile of organisational inclusion and diversity and protection, gender and inclusion, and based on the experience of other organisations, including Australian Red Cross, it is suggested that Australian Red Cross consider how best to support partner National Societies to include in their senior management teams a member who has responsibility for these issues as a significant part of their portfolio. Their role in the senior management team would include guiding the development and implementation of relevant policies and processes, identifying linkages and dependencies with other organisational areas, and securing budgetary commitment to inclusion and diversity and protection, gender and inclusion initiatives.

Recommendation 7

Australian Red Cross considers approaches to supporting partner National Society senior management teams to include a member who has inclusion and diversity as a significant part of their portfolio of responsibilities.

22 End of Program Outcome Two

National Societies are delivering effective and inclusive disaster risk management

All nine National Societies receive praise from a wide range of stakeholders for the speed and comprehensive nature of their disaster response activities, primarily based on the National Society strengths discussed above under End of Program Outcome 1: privileged access to government, trust, extensive reach, and a strong volunteer network.

It is a reasonable conclusion that a strong response must reflect effective preparedness, and any gaps in the response must also reflect gaps in preparedness. This is particularly evident in the extent to which National Societies are able to balance geographic reach with program quality, including, for most National Societies, the extent to which they are able to meet the diverse needs of the disaster affected population, and to address issues within community that are exacerbated by disaster, for example family and domestic violence and sexual exploitation and abuse. This links directly to preparedness planning, including effectively managing the National Societies' key asset: its human resources, both staff and volunteers.

Planning and Information Sharing

All the partner National Societies except Papua New Guinea Red Cross have high level ongoing presence in their respective national disaster management structures. Some are engaged in multiple committees and task forces such as Myanmar Red Cross, which is a member of the National Disaster Management Committee and task force, and the Technical Supervisory Committee and Disaster Risk Reduction working group. It is also co-chair of the Emergency Response and Preparedness working group and assists in Emergency Operating Centres for Disasters. At branch level, Myanmar Red Cross is the secretary of the Search and Rescue Committee, and a member of the Transportation of Patients Committee, the Data Collection Team, the Distribution of Supportive Materials Team, and the Distribution of News and Communication Team.

Most reports note that National Societies participate in the cluster system without documenting the detail of that membership.

The Tonga report is an exception, noting that the National Society, as well as being a member of National Emergency Management Committee, is a member of the WASH, Shelter and Protection clusters and the Vanuatu report mentions the IFRC co-leadership of the shelter cluster there. No country report mentions that National Societies are cluster leads.

However high-level planning does not always translate realistically to community level planning or action. This was reflected in Mongolia, Myanmar, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, although Solomon Islands Red Cross noted that their planning process starts with community level consultation. The Myanmar country report noted the difficulty headquarters has in engaging some branches in disaster planning, especially if they are rarely impacted by disasters, and also notes that preparedness in government held areas is of a higher order than in non-government held areas. One UN informant suggested that the National Society should be more proactive in developing relationships with de-facto authorities although Australian Red Cross and Myanmar Red Cross staff noted the difficult safety and security issues associated with this work and the importance of maintaining and being seen to always maintain neutrality and independence. In Mongolia, district level informants said that planning usually does not include logistics or related costs and the report states euphemistically that *"disaster response plans are good on paper, but on the ground ... execution is complicated"*. In Papua New Guinea Red Cross, the internal planning process is highlighted as needing strengthening.

However, plans are not ends in themselves, and the planning process can place significant administrative burden on organisations. What is missing in country reports is an analysis of the extent to which perceived gaps in planning lead to gaps in disaster response. While beyond the scope of this report, there may be opportunity for Australian Red Cross to influence both the timeliness and content of real time evaluations of disasters that could provide this data.



Recommendation 8

Australian Red Cross supports partner National Societies to continuously assess the efficacy of their disaster preparedness planning processes and their disaster preparedness plans.

In Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea, a lack of coverage in urban areas was raised and in Mongolia urban homelessness, internal migration from rural to urban areas, and increased numbers of refugees were noted as emerging phenomena.

There is a perception among many non-government stakeholders that National Societies could collaborate more effectively. In Indonesia non-government stakeholders wanted to leverage the National Society's local presence and participation in local clusters, primarily to enhance their own effectiveness⁶, while in Mongolia, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu, respondents suggested greater collaboration could increase the effectiveness of the National Society. The view expressed in the Fiji country report is representative of the perspectives of stakeholders across the nine partner National Societies:

"... there is opportunity to create partnerships and multi-collaborative initiatives with ... CSOs, Government Ministries, INGOs and NGOs for the provision [of] financial support, technical support and material resources, or direct implementation of preparedness and response activities."

In Vanuatu the most consistent feedback from external and internal stakeholders was that the National Society could better coordinate with other actors in the disaster management space, including better communication of the

organisation's strategic plan. Feedback from the National Society Secretary General, however, is that Vanuatu Red Cross has good partnerships with relevant organisations, if somewhat limited in scope and depth by lack of staff⁷. One donor agency noted that the assessment forms used by the National Society is different to that used by the National Disaster Management Office, and this causes problems for data entry. An issue raised in Solomon Islands was that the National Society should partner more with subject matter specialist organisations to deliver training to staff and volunteers in (for example) disaster preparedness and child protection. Both the Fiji and Vanuatu country report mention local organisations with technical specialities, including the Vanuatu and the Fiji People Living with Disability Associations, the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, the Vanuatu Women's Centre and Rainbow Fiji.

This report extends that notion to recommend that Australian Red Cross subject matter specialists should work in a way that encourages National Society engagement with local specialist organisations, supporting local relationships and capacity, and reducing the dependence on international organisations, including Australian Red Cross.

Recommendation 9

Australian Red Cross subject matter experts encourage partner National Societies, wherever possible, to seek advice and training from and collaborate with local subject matter specialists and their organisations.

Relief Items

Pre-positioning of stock enables National Societies to respond quickly. Several country reports stated that the National Society response was quicker than those of government and NGOs, and that the National Societies are relied on by government as first responders with household items. IFRC Pacific respondents highlighted the importance of Fiji prepositioned stock in particular but also noted that the quantity of pre-positioned stock is often a function of available storage space, rather than any strategic analysis of what's required. They also made the point that storage requirements increase as gender and diversity is increasingly considered in planning of pre-positioned stock. Multiple National Societies are requesting support for increasing or improving storage and warehousing space for pre-positioned stock.

While the sometimes-poor quality (Tonga) and inadequate transparency (Mongolia) of Red Cross needs assessments were raised it was not linked to response speed. However, in Mongolia, Tonga, Vanuatu and Fiji local respondents said that household items were not always appropriate to community needs. Vanuatu Red Cross branch and headquarters staff noted the generic nature of the National Society's household Item kits and said that this impacted on their ability to meet the needs of some groups. In Mongolia, Tonga and Fiji this was attributed to the quality of available survey data, poor stock control, and poor communications. For example, in Tonga stakeholders had concerns about the quality and durability of products and the need for specific items such as sanitary pads, women's clothes and diapers. In Mongolia men complained about receiving packs that included sanitary pads, which suggests the need for more/ continued community-level sensitisation about, and potentially different distribution strategies of, items such as dignity kits. In Fiji during the response to COVID-19 which was led by the Department of Health, branch level staff and volunteers were not permitted to collect data on age or sex, thus limiting any ability to provide tailored support to affected populations. Fiji Red Cross also raised the challenge of timely procurement of resources by IFRC as a barrier to an effective disaster response.

Recommendation 10

Australian Red Cross supports partner National Societies to ensure stocks of household items more appropriately meet the needs of target communities through developing and utilising current, accurate and better disaggregated data sets and facilitating community feedback on the appropriateness of supplied items.

In Vanuatu, disaster responders are allocated different regions in which to deliver their response, and, because there is no agreement on the content of household item relief packages, this has created some disparity and dissatisfaction among disaster affected communities. The Fiji country report also said that there were differences in household item packs provided by disaster responders.

Recommendation 11

Australian Red Cross supports partner National Societies to leverage their auxiliary status and work with their governments, clusters and other stakeholders to develop an agreed range of household item packages that meet the needs of all members of disaster affected communities.

Cash programming was only referred to as having been trialled in Vanuatu, although Australian Red Cross staff note that trials have also taken place in Fiji and Tonga, and the Papua New Guinea country report recommends that it be trialled there. Cash programming also forms part of Mongolia Red Cross' and Indonesia Red Cross' suite of disaster response options. The Indonesia country report strongly recommends the expansion of the Indonesian Red Cross cash programming approach, observing that many disaster-affected communities have most of the household items they need. An NGO informant observed:

“Traditionally, organisations force the people to take what is given without giving them a choice of the things they need. Cash and Voucher Assistance gives that flexibility to the affected people to make their own choices”

Volunteers and Their Role in Disaster Preparedness

Volunteers are a key resource for National Societies’ ability to support disaster preparedness in their communities and a significant portion of every country mid-term review report is dedicated to volunteers.

As well as playing a crucial role in National Society disaster preparedness programs and emergency responses, volunteers provide essential support to other organisations especially short-staffed government departments. The Department of Health in Mongolia, for example said that without Red Cross volunteers it would not have been possible to get COVID-19 messaging to people who do not have TV or access to social media. Solomon Islands Department of Health notes that some young volunteers are almost as good as health department staff, and their important contribution to the pandemic preparedness and response in Solomon Islands is covered below in this synthesis report. In Vanuatu, a donor highlighted the importance of National Society volunteers to the success of provincial level programming by the Australian Humanitarian Partnership (AHP)⁸. It was unclear from the report whether this was the result of a formal partnership between the National Society and the AHP, or if the AHP simply took advantage of local volunteer presence.

COVID-19

Almost all country reports document the significant role that partner National Societies have played in their country’s preparation and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The scope of National Society activities benefited a large proportion of their community, and they should be justifiably proud.

In Solomon Islands over 150 National Society volunteers participated in Ministry of Health and Medical Services and National Disaster

Management Office coordinated preparedness and response activities. This included vulnerability assessments, provision of relief supplies, preparedness trainings across the country, addressing vaccination hesitancy and providing administrative support.



In Vanuatu the National Society participated in joint VRCS–government COVID-19 preparedness and response planning, activation of an Emergency Operations Centre and support to the COVID-19 hotline. Additionally, 90 volunteers were trained in and worked on client registration at vaccination and testing sites, conducting swab tests, supporting the establishment and operation of Community Isolation Centres, and addressing vaccination hesitancy and vaccination uptake.

Mongolia Red Cross Society preparedness activities included awareness raising across all 21 provinces and the nine districts that make up the national Capital, reaching approximately 2.9M people (87% of the total population). Volunteers were mobilised to support contact tracing, testing, screening and vaccinations, and providing psychosocial support – benefitting over 400,000 people and Personal Protective Equipment and water, sanitation and health supplies were distributed to 112 health facilities, reaching over 500,000 people. Additionally, food and household items were distributed to over 170,000 people.

In Timor-Leste, the National Society mapped local epidemic threats and existing capacity to inform epidemic preparedness and response planning across all 13 branches. Myanmar Red Cross Society volunteers continue to work with the Ministry of Health to provide support to quarantine services, psychosocial support, patient transport and



CONTENTS LIST

30 Pcs	- Sanitary Pads	2 Pcs	- T Shirts
2 Pcs	- Body Soap	2 Pcs	- Comb
1 Pc	- Tooth Paste	1 Pc	- Torch + Batteries
1 Pc	- Toothbrush	2 Pcs	- Womens Underwear
2 Pcs	- Sulu	1 Pair	- Flip Flop
1 Pc	- Bath Towel	1 Pc	- Reusable Bag
1 Pc	- Sulu+Ra	1 Pc	- Bucket

vaccination. Similarly in Indonesia, National Society volunteers provided patient transport and support to communities to access vaccination services.

The Fiji country report focuses less on the role that the National Society in the COVID-19 response, and instead uses the pandemic preparedness and response as a point of comparison with the more usual preparedness and response mechanisms. In the view of respondents, the pandemic preparedness and response, led by the Department of Health and Medical Services (DHMS) was less well coordinated and with less timely access to data and information than disaster responses led by the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO). Informants proposed that in the future, pandemic responses may be better led by DHMA but using the NDMO mechanisms and model.

Inclusive Disaster Risk Management

All National Societies recognise the importance of inclusive programming that effectively safeguards the dignity, access, participation and safety of all persons and also acknowledge that there needs to be further improvement in their practice. In Indonesia, non-government organisation informants highlighted the gap between National Society intent and their practice. In Fiji, it was noted that the National Society compiles good data from a range of sources including from branches. Informants noted the efforts that Fiji Red Cross went to in order to ensure that relief packs include consideration of people living with a disability, although the country report still recommends that gender, disability and social inclusion need to be more effectively incorporated into its activities and programs. There is a perception among some Vanuatu Red Cross stakeholders that the National Society is not yet prioritising protection, gender and inclusion, and evidence from informants interviewed about relief supplies suggests that distribution of household items during responses does not address the needs of a diverse community. Australian Red Cross staff noted, however, that relief supplies meet IFRC standards, and that Vanuatu Red Cross has had a significant and long-term commitment to protection, gender and inclusion.

Concerns about the National Society's capacity to respond to gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse, particularly in their ability to provide referral pathways, is explicitly raised in the Myanmar mid-term review. This was contextualised by Australian Red Cross staff who note the safe referral pathways for victims of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment are exceptionally hard to provide in Myanmar. And while Vanuatu and Solomon Islands also both raised the issue of in-community conflict and violence as a potential area of future focus, no other mid-term review raised gender-based violence or prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment as forming part of the National Societies' preparedness or response, although increases in both gender-based violence and sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment in the context of disasters is well documented⁹.

Further, while Solomon Islands Red Cross is applauded for its effectiveness in disaster response, stakeholders note that gaps remained in terms of planning to include pregnant women, the elderly, children, and other groups in the communities that Solomon Islands Red Cross is working with.

Recommendation 4 (also applies here)

Australian Red Cross supports partner National Societies to shift the emphasis from measuring 'capacity strengthening' activities to measuring 'observable action', possibly engaging local specialist organisations to independently assess and report on National Society progress.

28 End of Program Outcome Three

The Movement is influencing policy and practice that enhance locally led, inclusive and accountable humanitarian action

When compared to end of Program Outcomes One and Two, coverage of End of Program Outcome Three in the nine country reports, both in terms of evidence and discussion, is sparse. The reports are inconclusive as to the extent to which progress toward this outcome is on track. There is evidence that the majority of National Societies are participating in relevant forums. There is less evidence that this participation is necessarily focused on or resulting in policy and practice change, although the Mongolia report in particular provides evidence on the extent to which National Society proposals are recognised in policies and communiques and may provide a good example of what data collection is possible under this End of Program Outcome.

Solomon Islands Red Cross is also noted to have contributed to the development of a number of national disaster instruments including, for example, the Public Health Emergency Act and the COVID-19 Standard Operating Procedures.

Similarly, the Indonesia country report notes Indonesia Red Cross as having influence at the national, provincial and district levels, contributing to policy formulation and discussion on displacement, protection, planning, COVID-19, and zoonotic disease outbreaks. Fiji, Myanmar, and Timor-Leste noted progress on International Disaster Law and IFRC Pacific respondents highlighted the negotiations taking place to extend import arrangements under Fiji disaster law to include preparedness as well as response. Fiji Red Cross confirmed its ambitions to have more influence on the international disaster response mechanism to better define the roles and responsibilities of actors.

There is opportunity for National Society branches to contribute more to policy and budget discussions. The Vanuatu report notes the influence of individuals at this level:

“VRCS has a strong and active presence They are recognised for their volunteers, and strong influence and participation in humanitarian coordination mechanisms. This is in large part due to the leadership and effectiveness of the

Senior Branch Officer [and her ability] to manage operations and coordinate with other partners.”

Mongolia also notes significant opportunity for influence at a district level, although, as discussed above, this will require a change in approach to district level leadership.

The auxiliary role gets the National Society a seat at many high-level disaster management tables. A quote from a UN staffer talking about Mongolia Red Cross sums up the experience of most National Societies:

“MRCS is an integral part of Working Groups on disaster prevention, planning, management, recovery. It is in all possible cluster groups and very much active. MRCS is maybe the only non-state player [at this] level.” (UNFAO Mongolia).

Other humanitarian actors also either refer to the auxiliary status or observe the National Society's special relationship with government. However, the understanding of what that special relationship means, and whether this is an opportunity of not, differs between stakeholders.

In Vanuatu, among CBOs interviewed, there is a lack of understanding of the role of Red Cross: *“[Red Cross] is more powerful than VANGO”* (the Vanuatu Association of Non-Government Organisations). There is a view that Vanuatu Red Cross should be advocating to government on behalf of NGOs. Stakeholders in Indonesia have similar expectations of Indonesian Red Cross.

In Papua New Guinea the view from multiple stakeholders is that the National Society should be providing leadership to the NGO sector and similarly in the Solomon Islands there is an expectation that the National Society will work with government to coordinate the sector.

In Fiji, the government's National Disaster Management Office board has both Fiji Red Cross Society and the Fiji Council of Social Services (the peak body for NGOs) as members. Having both organisations on the board sends a clear message that they both have important and different roles in disaster response. It is notable that the Fiji midterm review report is one of the few

country reports in which NGO informants are not documented as expecting Fiji Red Cross to have a responsibility to them in the disaster management structure.

An issue raised by Timor-Leste Red Cross is noteworthy and highlights the challenges local actors often encounter when stepping into frontline influencing roles:

'It took time for Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste officers to assume leadership credibility when it comes to discussing and negotiating strategic issues with international entities and organisations, a function that usually is assumed by international partners and donors'

The implication in the statement is that Timor-Leste Red Cross felt they were not afforded credibility because the organisation is something other than an international partner and donor. Perceived or real, such attitudes are an indicator of some of the systemic barriers to achieving

locally led humanitarian action. It is not sufficient for National Societies (or any local organisation) to want to contribute to national and international policy dialogue – they need to feel respected by those already at the table, and their contributions welcomed and celebrated.

Recommendation 12

Australian Red Cross continues to work with the IFRC, other participating ('global north') National Societies and other stakeholders in national, regional and international forums to 'ensure space' for local participants, and to ensure that National Societies are sufficiently resourced to take proper advantage of that space.



30 Partner Relations with Australian Red Cross

The partnership relationship with Australian Red Cross is universally appreciated by National Society partners. The partnership brings to life many aspects of the agenda for locally led humanitarian action and fares well against the Humanitarian Advisory Group's measurement framework¹⁰. The shift in funding model from project to program, and the accompanying flexibility, is appreciated by all partners. Myanmar and Mongolia Red Cross note the positive impact that this model has had on their strength as a National Society. Some Pacific National Societies still struggle with reporting requirements and the timing of funding tranches.

The technical support from Australian Red Cross had been widely appreciated. Indonesia Red Cross has identified resource mobilisation as a gap in their support to date, and Timor-Leste Red Cross wants support with financial management and to expand the network of blood donors nationally¹¹. Australian Red Cross recently supported Mongolia Red Cross to undertake the IFRC Organisational Capacity Assessment and Certification, with some areas for improvement.

One impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the development of effective virtual working arrangements and National Societies were appreciative of this way of working – in particular the accompanying speed of decision making. The Solomon Islands Secretary General also talked of his staff stepping up and the National Society fulfilling a role of national importance in COVID preparedness and response in the absence of support from in-country international staff.

However, this does not detract from the importance of in-person contact and Solomon Islands, Tonga and Mongolia all spoke of the value of country visits. This value included the benefits to some trainings, and to enhance the contextual understanding of Australian Red Cross staff. However, Solomon Islands challenged the assumption that training should only be conducted by a visiting technical expert and proposed that trainees should also be able to travel to Australia. Mongolia Red Cross also raised the possibility of visiting Australia to share knowledge, participate in drills and understand Australia's approach to disaster management.

Myanmar and Indonesia went further, suggesting that Australian Red Cross should resume a permanent in-country presence. In both cases National Society respondents felt that an in-country delegate would be more effective for some tasks than the current remote relationship.

What was missing in the reports was any indication that the partners understood the contribution that Australian Red Cross makes to creating an enabling environment for the partner National Societies to operate in, including its direct support to the IFRC. It may be that creating greater awareness among partners about the work of the International Programs and Movement Relations Department and its various stakeholders, and the Australian Red Cross Society as a whole, could bring a greater level of transparency and mutual understanding to the partnership.

Recommendation 13

Australian Red Cross creates opportunities for dialogue with National Societies and their stakeholders, for example an annual conference, to discuss how Australian Red Cross Society can best engage and provide strategic support on external trends, policy engagement and organisational positioning at national, regional and international levels.

Observations on the Performance Assessment Framework

The current performance assessment framework (PAF) is attached as Annex 2. The mid-term review is a convenient time to revisit the PAF, particularly as this review used the PAF as a guiding structure.

Overall, the PAF retains its relevance as a tool to measure the extent to which the program is likely to achieve its End of Program Outcomes. However, it is recommended that the indicators are revisited to determine their relevance, and whether it is realistically possible to collect data against all of the indicators. It is also suggested that consideration is given to editing the wording to the indicators to better measure change rather than absolutes, and that there is then some overarching assessment of whether this rate of change is sufficient.

In the opinion of the author this program supports both *prevention*, which incorporates disaster risk management and associated risk mitigation, reduction, and infrastructure improvement, and *preparedness*, including understanding hazard exposures, vulnerabilities and triggers, community awareness and warning systems, collaboration, information sharing and agency inter-operability. It is suggested that the PAF is reworded to better reflect this.

The PAF also focuses on the contribution that the nine partner National Societies make towards achieving the End of Program Outcomes and Goal and is largely silent on the contribution made by Australian Red Cross. This seems particularly so in End of Program Outcome Three, which essentially endeavours to create an enabling environment in which the partner National Societies can operate. A shift in the PAF to also represent the activities of Australian Red Cross could significantly change the nature of the PAF from an assessment 'of/by' to an assessment 'with' – and signal a clear intent to measure the progress of all 10 partners (11 if the IFRC is included) to deliver against the Program Goal.

Recommendation 14

Australian Red Cross engages with partner National Societies to develop a better understanding of mutual expectations under End of Program Outcome Three, and how best to manage associated accountabilities.

What the PAF does not do is consider the extent to which the End of Program Outcomes are still relevant, and likely to support communities to achieve the Program Goal, particularly as the Program Goal focuses on changes in community whilst all the End of Program Outcomes relate to National Society performance. It may be worth actively seeking case studies that illustrate 'instances of impact' where goal-level change is being experienced by communities during the life of the program and for which there is some level of measurable program contribution.

The ultimate measure of successful disaster preparedness is successful disaster response. The PAF needs to consider what 'good looks like' with regards to disaster response under each End of Program Outcome, acknowledging that measurement will be through secondary data.

Recommendation 15

Australian Red Cross uses adapted disaster response quality indicators to inform its measurement of success in the disaster preparedness work it is supporting its partner National Societies to undertake.



Conclusion

The breadth and depth of preparedness and response work undertaken by Australian Red Cross' nine National Society partners is undoubtedly impressive, and their ability to 'pivot' to address the COVID-19 pandemic is a tribute to their staff and volunteers and in particular to their leadership. The evidence presented in the mid-term reviews suggests that their countries' experiences of the pandemic and other compounding disasters would have been significantly worse without them.

However, as should be expected, there are always opportunities, on reflection, to do things better. Data collection and management, staff and volunteer management, and protection, gender and inclusion both within the National Societies and in their programming, stand out as areas that would benefit from further focus. However, progress needs to be measured and celebrated and so these priority areas would benefit from a continuous quality improvement approach that is monitored and valued by senior management.

All nine National Societies aspire to having a firmer financial footing. What this might look like will differ from organisation to organisation. However, it appears from this review that all National Societies enjoy impressive levels of public trust; the question remains as to how best to leverage this.

And finally, Australian Red Cross has played a critical role in shifting its model of support to encourage National Societies to step forward and assume greater leadership. Australian Red Cross should, together with its partners, shine more light on this work as a model of locally led action for others to follow, and the PAF may well be the instrument through which this can happen.

Annex 1: Review of DFAT–Australian Red Cross Partnership Principles

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Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

“Global presence – Local footprint”

DFAT – Australian Red Cross Partnership
Partnership Dialogue and Principles Review 2022

The Partnership

As part of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, Australian Red Cross (ARC) is one of Australia's most trusted and effective partners in disaster preparedness and response, and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and ARC have enjoyed a longstanding partnership that continues to adapt to shifts in the global humanitarian and development context.

The current five-year \$50 million Partnership (2019 – 2024) enables DFAT and ARC to capitalise on ARC's position as part of the largest humanitarian network in the world to support Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies to:

- become more sustainable humanitarian actors and have the trust of their public authorities and communities;
- deliver effective and inclusive disaster risk management; and
- contribute to the Movement by influencing policy and practice that enhances locally led, inclusive and accountable humanitarian action.

The Partnership also focuses on the intersection of humanitarian response with cross-cutting humanitarian priorities, such as protection, gender and inclusion, disaster preparedness, climate resilience and anticipatory action. Multi-year funding support from DFAT is also complemented by supplementary funding in response to sudden onset humanitarian crises.

The Partnership is governed by a Partnership Head Agreement, and a set of mutually developed principles (See Current Principles below) inform how DFAT and ARC manage their day to day working arrangements and decision making.

The Process

Now at the midterm of the current Partnership, DFAT and ARC felt it was important to take time to reflect on the partnering relationship and how DFAT and ARC are working towards their strategic partnership principles, the extent to which these remain relevant and to identify any actions required to support the Partnership as it moves into the next two years.

The partnership dialogue was held at a face-to-face meeting in Melbourne on November 24th, 2022, attended by four DFAT and six ARC staff and facilitated by an independent Partnership Broker.

The Headline Message

- The focus on working within a principle led partnering approach articulated within the current Partnership design, has created the space for ARC and DFAT to focus more strategically on shared objectives, respond to contextual changes and focus work programmatically toward long term outcomes.
- Together DFAT and ARC were able to articulate a strong rationale for the Partnership and provide examples of how working within a partnering approach delivered value for each other.
- The dialogue surfaced clear and tangible evidence of how DFAT and ARC were working to the principles and that these were mutually reinforcing.
- Throughout the dialogue, communications were open, and there was a sense of goodwill and trust strongly evident.
- No 'sticky issues' emerged in the dialogue and all present felt that the partnering mechanism enabled DFAT and ARC to discuss and resolve issues as they emerged.

Proposed Actions

The Partnership dialogue resolved that the current principles had set a clear framework for establishing the Partnership and expected ways of working. Now that these are established it was agreed they could be simplified into a more concise set of principles and ways of working. A set of revised principles based on the discussions is provided below.

Key Messages

The following provides detail of the key points, evidence and analysis that emerged from the partnership dialogue process.

This analysis is that of the key ARC and DFAT team members involved in the Partnership and

What is one thing that the Partnership cannot do without?

Commitment
Public funding
Great relationship
Trust
Local leadership
Open communication

agreement was reached on each key message meaning that this provides a shared reflection of the Partnership, notwithstanding the fact that different team members in each organisation may place different priority on certain ideas depending on their role.

There were no dissenting views shared in the meeting and no 'sticky issues' emerged.

Opening Remarks

"Global presence – Local footprint"

The DFAT – ARC Partnership is a critically important relationship that assists DFAT to expand its reach and engage with local humanitarian actors that support relevant and coherent humanitarian response. It supports ARC to fulfil its mandate and responsibility as part of a global Movement through support for local actors.

The 2019 – 2024 Partnership represented a key shift in the long-standing relationship between DFAT and ARC centred around a flexible Partnership Design underpinned by an intentional partnering approach that aims to deepen strategic engagement and enable a stronger focus on long term programmatic and policy approaches to shared humanitarian priorities.

Purpose of the Partnership

The dialogue explored what working within a partnership approach delivered beyond the programmatic intent of the Partnership Design. DFAT and ARC agreed that that the Partnership:

- Enables response to humanitarian issues – mobilising a global presence and local footprint
- Enables us to focus on *"what we want to do together, the process of how we do things, not just the things we do"*
- Establishes new ways of working with partners in the Indo Pacific
- Demonstrates and supports local leadership in the humanitarian space
- Demystifies a complex global Movement – *"the relationship with ARC is empowering and helps to make connections with the wider Movement"*
- Supports long term engagement, and shifts the focus from projectised activities to the end game (outcomes)
- Addresses complexity by providing a mechanism through which DFAT and ARC can proactively anticipate emerging issues and work together on how to address them
- Creates legitimacy by demonstrating Australian and host government endorsement for the work of ARC and the wider Movement
- Provides a gateway into host governments and enables DFAT and ARC to understand and work within the political economy of partner nations as well as the Australian policy contexts
- Prepositions DFAT, ARC and the wider Movement to be able to respond to humanitarian need quickly and efficiently
- Upholds the principles of humanitarian action and adherence to international standards and treaties.

Importantly it was agreed that working in partnership established the preconditions – trust, established working relationships, knowledge of each other’s organisations, capabilities and systems – that enable flexible and responsive programming responses, particularly in complex and high-risk contexts.

Do we have a shared understanding of each principle?

Overall, ARC and DFAT felt that the Partnership principles provided an important framing for the Partnership in its early stages and set the tone for how they would work together.

While all present felt that there was a clear and shared understanding of the principles, all agreed that now that the ways of working were strongly embedded in day-to-day operations and strategy, there is scope to consolidate the principles within a more concise statement.

Can we demonstrate examples of working to the principles?

A number of tangible examples of how DFAT and ARC were working to and using the principles to support the Partnership were identified and include:

- Creation of case studies demonstrate the principle of **learning**
- COVID-19 response and approach to Myanmar demonstrate the principle of **flexibility**
- Agreement to \$0 to Tonga in the annual plan (acknowledging the ongoing humanitarian response) demonstrates **trust**
- Large number of people engaging across both organisations demonstrates the principle of **open communication**
- Moving beyond notifiable events demonstrates the value of **personal relationships** and **trust** that we are working to the same objectives and work to shared interests. This trust is also reflected in a shared acceptance of and joint management of risk.
- The recent audit demonstrates **responsiveness** and that the principles provide valuable framing

for how ARC and DFAT can address operational challenges

- The Global FlexiFund demonstrates **flexibility**
- The commitment to working through national Red Cross Red Crescent Societies demonstrates a commitment to supporting local actors to prepare and respond in line with their roles, responsibilities and contexts supports **localisation** and Movement building
- The presence of DFAT staff at the Partnership Dialogue when on official leave demonstrates the **commitment to and investment in personal relationships and the success of the Partnership.**

Is there any evidence that we have not worked to the principles?

There was strong consensus that both partners are working in line with the principles and that the principles developed at the start of the Partnership in 2019 articulated clear expectations of how DFAT and ARC would work together

DFAT’s centralised risk policy presents some challenges for both DFAT and ARC, however there was recognition that the emerging deep understanding of each other’s contexts and the established partnering relationships means that DFAT and ARC are able to navigate risk and find workable solutions.

What contribution is each partner making to the Partnership?

The two partners identified a range of contributions that each was making to support the Partnership including:

- Investing in building strong personal relationships
- Committing to understanding challenges and seeking workable solutions
- Promoting and supporting good practice – for example CVTL Double Disaster Case Study
- Flexibility – e.g. COVID-19 response
- Influencing

Decisions and Actions

There was broad agreement that the following changes to the Principles could be taken forward in developing a more concise partnering statement (see Decisions and Actions and Revised Partnership Statement below).

- Open communication was repeated across a number of the principles and could be a stand-alone principle that cut across all others.
- Principle 1 – Learning should include learning from successes and failures
- That Principle 5 regarding ensuring Executive level engagement could be rearticulated to highlight the importance of engagement at all levels of the Partnership. It was also recognised that consistency in leadership and engagement is an important factor but one that is outside of the control of the partners, especially where there is high turnover of key team members, and that the Partnership ways of working should ensure that new actors are fully inducted into the Partnership and understand the ways of working and why this are important.

- Principles 10–12 contain some overlap and could be combined or integrated within other principles.

There was a brief discussion on whether neutrality and respect for the independent mandates of each organisation should be articulated within the principles. It was agreed that this an inherent assumption in the Partnership, embedded within the Head Agreement and does not need to be reflected in the principles.

What is one word that you would use to describes the Partnership?

Progressive
 Change Trust Interesting
 Unique Impact Criticial



Current Partnership Principles

Principles for the DFAT – Australian Red Cross Strategic Partnership

In support of achieving the overall 2019–2024 program design, a key strategic partnership will be established between DFAT and Australian Red Cross. The principles that will guide this specific partnership been developed jointly and include:

1. Elevate learning around good practice from the strategic partnership to influence other DFAT and Australian Red Cross programs.
2. Maintain a shared commitment to 'staying the course' on supporting the long-term systemic change associated with the localisation agenda.
3. Maintain open communications, with key staff on both sides comfortable to pick up the phone and call colleagues.
4. Maintain an emphasis on building strong personal relationships to support the partnership.
5. Ensure consistent senior-level investment in the Partnership from both partners.
6. Both partners are proactive in presenting opportunities to each other to coordinate efforts and make strategic linkages with other stakeholders.
7. Maximise flexibility at all points in the management of the Partnership, to allow for responsiveness and agility in programming.
8. Commit to mutually reinforcing and complementary activities.
9. Commit to mutual accountability in the management of the Partnership, and provision of frank feedback to each other on partnership behaviours.
10. Cooperate on responses to challenges and difficulties at the country level.
11. Understand each other's operating environments and constraints, navigate them together, and be open to frank discussion of those constraints.
12. Ensure 'no surprises' for DFAT on the reform efforts, and Australian Red Cross regarding DFAT's limitations. If things are not going well, or challenges arise, both partners need to know early.

Revised Partnership Statement

The table shows how the previous principles have been integrated to arrive at 6 new principles in line with the recommendations of the Partnership Dialogue.

OLD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
NEW	3	1	5	6	5	2	4	1	6,5	2	2	5

The new preamble highlights old Principle 5 and reinforces the purpose.

DFAT – ARC Partnership Principles and Ways of Working “Global presence – Local footprint”

The DFAT – ARC Partnership helps us to navigate complex and changing operational and organisational contexts to progress sustainable, inclusive and locally led, humanitarian action. DFAT and ARC are committed to continuing to build a strong, mutually beneficial Partnership. The following principles inform our engagement and ways of working from operations through to the Executive levels of the Partnership. These principles also inform how we work together across the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

1. Commitment

(Integrates Principles 2 and 8)

We are committed to the purpose of the Partnership, complementary activities, and ‘staying the course’ to contribute to the long-term systemic change required to progress the localisation agenda. We will promote the Partnership internally and induct new members in order to maintain strong institutional commitment.

2. Collaboration

(Integrates Principles 11 and 6 and adds inducting new people)

We will proactively present opportunities for collaboration to each other and coordinate strategic engagement with other internal and external stakeholders. We commit to building our understanding of each other’s operating environments and constraints, and those of our wider partners and navigating these together.

3. Learning

(Principle 1)

We aim to elevate learning to influence accountable humanitarian practice and other DFAT and ARC programs. This includes a focus on understanding what works well and learning from failure or mistakes.

4. Flexibility and Responsiveness

(Principle 7)

We will maximise flexibility in all aspects of the management of the Partnership to allow for responsiveness and agility in programming, while also enabling support for localisation.

5. Communication

(Integrates Principles 3, 9, 5 and 12)

We will keep each other informed, provide frank feedback, and maintain clear lines of communication and strategic engagement at all levels.

6. Trust and Mutual Accountability

(Integrates Principles 4 and 9)

Our Partnership is based on shared goodwill and mutual accountability. We will continue to focus on building trust through nurturing strong personal relationships to support the Partnership.

40 Annex 2: Australian Red Cross International Programs Model Performance Assessment Framework

Indicator (All data to be disaggregated by sex, age, disability, location) ¹²	Methods (Data source/Tool) (how will it be measured?)	Responsibility (People) (who will measure it?)	Schedule (Frequency) (how often will it be measured?)
Program Goal: Stronger, more resilient communities with increased capacity to prepare for, anticipate, respond to and recover from disasters and crises, with a focus on Asia Pacific			
# individuals vulnerable to disaster and crisis who directly benefit from this program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner reports IFRC operational reports FDRS¹³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society program staff IFRC program staff 	Annually
Level of community confidence regarding their exposure to risk and ability to effectively respond to disasters and crises if they occur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey conducted with community members¹⁴ FGDs with community members Reflection meetings with National Societies FGDs with civil society organisations Partner reports IFRC operational reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ARC Portfolio Managers, Technical Advisors National Society program staff IFRC program staff External consultants 	Baseline, mid-term, endline
End of program outcome 1: (EOP01) National Societies are more sustainable humanitarian actors and have the trust of their public authorities and communities			
# National Societies demonstrating the will and ability to act in full accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement (no-one left behind)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society capacity assessment Reflection meetings with National Societies IFRC operational reports Interviews with IFRC staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society program staff IFRC program staff ARC Portfolio teams 	Baseline, mid-term, endline
Level of confidence and trust in National Societies by their public authorities and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey conducted with public authorities Survey conducted with community members Reflections meetings with National Societies Interviews with public authorities FGDs with community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society program staff IFRC program staff ARC Portfolio teams External consultants 	Baseline, mid-term, endline

Indicator (All data to be disaggregated by sex, age, disability, location) ¹²	Methods (Data source/Tool) (how will it be measured?)	Responsibility (People) (who will measure it?)	Schedule (Frequency) (how often will it be measured?)
Intermediate outcome 1.1: (IO 1.1) National Societies have transparent governance structures			
1.1.1 # National Societies with necessary foundational infrastructure ¹⁵ to successfully fulfil their mandate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutes, Constitutions, General Assembly minutes Strategic plans Integrity frameworks Policies Annual report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society program staff IFRC program staff ARC Portfolio teams 	Annually
1.1.2 # National Societies that meet Movement target of 'at least 50% of the leadership and governance structures are women' ¹⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual report HR statistics Council of Delegates reports IFRC HR records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IFRC program and HR staff ARC PGI Technical Lead ARC Portfolio teams 	Annually
Intermediate outcome 1.2: (IO 1.2) National Societies are implementing revenue diversification strategies to increase sustainability			
1.2.1 # National Societies implementing financial sustainability plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial sustainability plans Business development plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society SG and finance manager IFRC program staff ARC Financial Sustainability Advisor ARC Portfolio Teams 	Annually
1.2.2 % of core costs National Societies are able to cover from their own resources (disaggregated by funding source)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audited financial statements Annual report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society program staff IFRC program staff ARC Financial Sustainability Advisor ARC Portfolio Teams 	Annually

Indicator (All data to be disaggregated by sex, age, disability, location) ¹²	Methods (Data source/Tool) (how will it be measured?)	Responsibility (People) (who will measure it?)	Schedule (Frequency) (how often will it be measured?)
Intermediate outcome 1.3: (IO 1.3) National Societies' policies and actions safeguard the dignity, access, participation and safety of all persons			
1.3.1 # and % emergency needs assessments, preparedness and risk reduction plans, response plans of action and operational plans that comply with IFRC Minimum standards for Protection, Gender and Inclusion in emergencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of assessment tools/ action plans Partner reports IFRC operational reports Interviews with IFRC and NS staff Satisfaction surveys with communities^{17 18} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society program staff IFRC program staff ARC Response team ARC Technical Leads ARC Portfolio teams 	Annually
End of program outcome 2 (EPO2): National Societies are delivering effective and inclusive disaster risk management			
Level of expertise of partner National Societies in disaster risk management (disaggregated by technical area of focus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society capacity assessments Training accreditation records Reflections meetings with National Societies Interviews with public authorities FGDs with community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society HR ARC Portfolio teams ARC Technical Leads National Society program staff IFRC program staff External consultants 	Baseline, mid-term, endline
Examples of improved National Society disaster risk management practice as a result of adopting new systems, guidelines, frameworks, tools, technologies (disaggregated by technical area of focus)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society capacity assessments Partner reports IFRC operational reports Interviews with National Society staff Interviews with public authorities FGDs with community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society program staff IFRC program staff ARC Portfolio teams ARC Technical Leads ARC Response team 	Annually
# and % early warning early action mechanisms institutionalised by national and local authorities and other key actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner reports Interviews with National Societies Interviews with public authorities at national and sub-national levels National/sub-national government plans and budgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society program staff IFRC program staff ARC DRM Technical Lead ARC Portfolio teams 	Annually

Indicator (All data to be disaggregated by sex, age, disability, location) ¹²	Methods (Data source/Tool) (how will it be measured?)	Responsibility (People) (who will measure it?)	Schedule (Frequency) (how often will it be measured?)
Intermediate outcome 2.1: (IO 2.1): National Societies have the necessary resources (people, knowledge, skills, policies, systems and technologies) to lead high quality, evidence-based, inclusive disaster risk management			
2.1.1 # National Societies prepared for effective response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> preparedness and response plans and SOPs in place organisational systems established relief goods pre-positioned staff and volunteers trained (disaggregated by type of training) Minimum Standards for Protection, Gender and Inclusion in Emergencies embedded across all workplans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparedness for Effectiveness Response assessment results Workplans SOPs Stock lists Training records Partner reports IFRC operational reports Reflections meetings with National Societies Interviews with public authorities FGDs with community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society program staff IFRC program staff ARC Portfolio teams ARC Technical Leads ARC Response team 	Six monthly
2.1.2 # National Societies able to provide real time data on the humanitarian services they provide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sighting of data and information management systems Partner reports IFRC operational reports Interviews with IFRC staff Reflections meetings with National Societies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society program staff IFRC program staff ARC Portfolio teams ARC Technical Leads 	Six monthly
2.1.3 Examples of National Societies analysing and utilising data to inform their operational and response plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner reports IFRC operational reports Interviews with IFRC and National Society staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society program staff IFRC program staff ARC Portfolio teams ARC Technical Leads 	Six monthly
Intermediate outcome 2.2 (IO 2.2): Key stakeholders increase investment (human, financial) in disaster risk reduction, preparedness and anticipatory action			
2.2.1 # anticipatory action initiatives designed and implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner reports Early action protocols Reflections meetings with National Societies Interviews with public authorities and other key stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society program staff IFRC program staff ARC DRM Technical Lead ARC Portfolio teams Consultants (including Red Cross Climate Centre) 	Annually

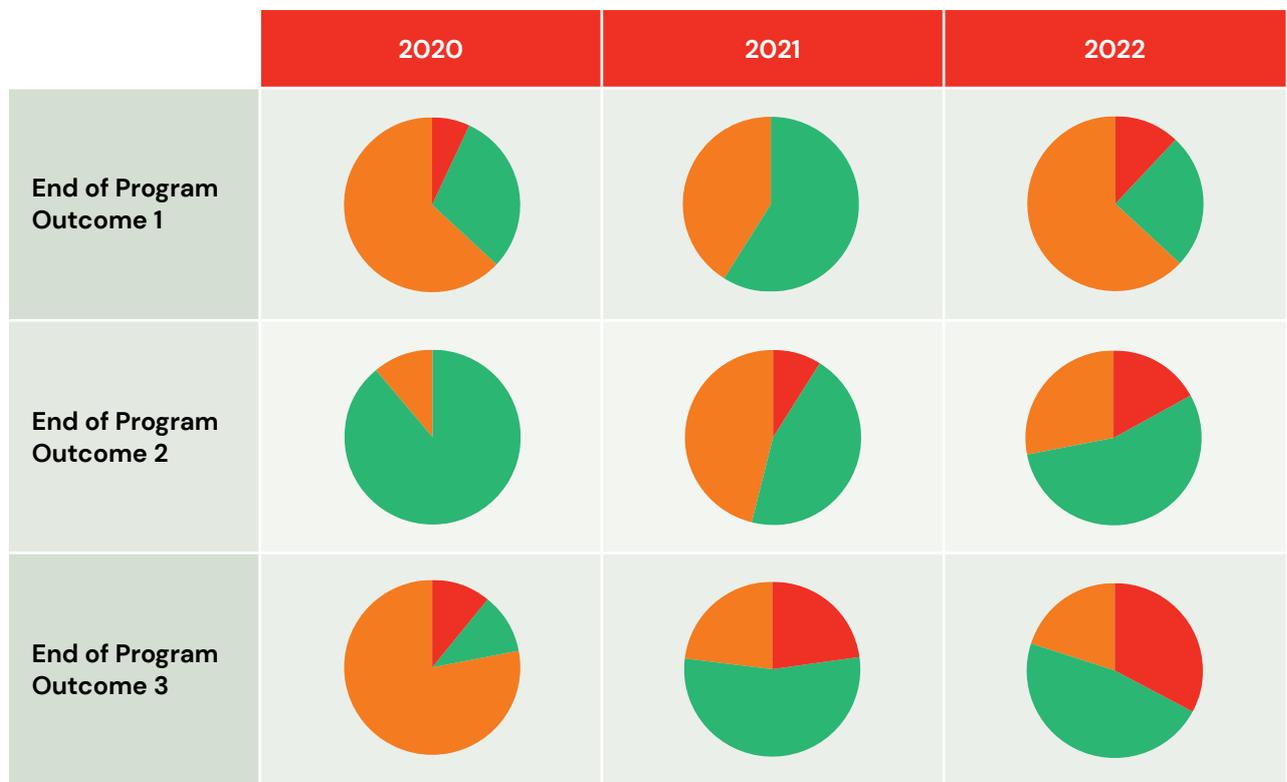
Indicator (All data to be disaggregated by sex, age, disability, location) ¹²	Methods (Data source/Tool) (how will it be measured?)	Responsibility (People) (who will measure it?)	Schedule (Frequency) (how often will it be measured?)
End of program outcome 3: (EOPO3): The Movement is influencing policy and practice that enhance locally led, inclusive and accountable humanitarian action			
# laws, policies, regulations contributed to by the Movement that protect humanitarian standards and principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner reports • Interviews with policy/ decision-makers • Reflections meetings with National Societies • Copies of laws, policies, regulations • Meeting minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Society program staff • IFRC program staff • ICRC staff • ARC Portfolio teams • ARC Technical Leads • ARC Influence and Advocacy team 	Annually
# of Australian Red Cross research reports/position papers/policy documents utilised by decision makers to inform humanitarian policy and practice (disaggregated by topic and audience)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of policies, reports, position statements • Interviews with policy/ decision-makers • Interviews with other humanitarian stakeholders (I/ANGOs, UN agencies) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARC Influence and Advocacy team • IFRC and ICRC policy staff 	Annually
Level of Australian community understanding of Australian Red Cross' international work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey with public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARC Influence and Advocacy team • ARC Engagement and Support team 	Annually
Intermediate outcome 3.1: (IO 3.1): National Societies have the knowledge and skills to influence local, national and regional humanitarian policy and practice			
3.1.1 Examples of National Societies playing a leadership role in local, national, regional, global decision-making fora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local/national/regional government plans • Meeting minutes • Action plans (including roles and responsibilities) • Interviews with policy/ decision-makers • Reflections meetings with national societies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Society program staff • IFRC and ICRC staff • ARC Portfolio teams • ARC Technical Leads • ARC Influence and Advocacy team 	Annually
3.1.2 # humanitarian tools, policies and standards developed/ strengthened/ contextualised for local use (disaggregated by type of instrument and target audience)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner reports • IFRC operational reports • Copies of tools, policies, standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Society finance and program staff • IFRC program staff • ARC Portfolio teams • ARC Technical Leads • ARC Humanitarian Diplomacy Lead 	Annually

Indicator (All data to be disaggregated by sex, age, disability, location) ¹²	Methods (Data source/Tool) (how will it be measured?)	Responsibility (People) (who will measure it?)	Schedule (Frequency) (how often will it be measured?)
Intermediate outcome 3.2: (IO 3.2): National and regional humanitarian coordination mechanisms and regulatory frameworks prioritise the role of local actors and include protection of humanitarian standards and principles			
3.2.1 # Asia Pacific National Society staff/volunteers who have passed accreditation processes for surge deployment (disaggregated by surge profile)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner reports IFRC operational reports Training reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IFRC program staff/trainers National Society HR IFRC HR IFRC Surge Desk ARC Technical Leads 	Annually
3.2.2 # and % surge requests for disaster and crisis response filled by Asia Pacific national society staff/volunteers (disaggregated by surge profile and scale/scope of response)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IFRC operational reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society HR IFRC HR IFRC Surge Desk ARC International Deployments team 	Annually
3.2.3 # strengthened locally led cluster mechanisms (disaggregated by sector)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cluster capacity assessments Partner reports IFRC operational reports Cluster meeting minutes Cluster action plans (including roles and responsibilities) Reflection meetings with National Societies Interviews with cluster members Interviews with public authorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society program staff IFRC program staff ARC Portfolio teams ARC Technical Leads 	Annually
3.2.4 Examples of requests to the Movement to review disaster related laws, policies, regulations (disaggregated by regulatory instrument and target audience)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner reports Interviews with policy/decision-makers Reflections meetings with National Societies Copies of laws, policies, regulations Meeting minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Society program staff IFRC program staff ARC Portfolio teams ARC Influence and Advocacy team ARC Technical Advisors 	Annually

46 Annex 3: Program Performance Assessment 2020-2022

The following 'traffic lights' indicate progress toward each of the three End of Program Outcomes at a whole of program level as well as at country level. Data for the country level assessments is aggregated at intermediate outcome level, while whole of program level data analysis provides a more granular perspective. Australian Red Cross uses the information at both levels to inform annual program and country level plans.

Progress towards End of Program Outcomes – Whole of Program



Progress towards End of Program Outcomes – By Country

		2020	2021	2022
Fiji	End of Program Outcome 1			
	End of Program Outcome 2			
	End of Program Outcome 3			
Indonesia	End of Program Outcome 1			
	End of Program Outcome 2			
	End of Program Outcome 3			
Mongolia	End of Program Outcome 1			
	End of Program Outcome 2			
	End of Program Outcome 3			

Key on track progressing with some delays needs attention

		2020	2021	2022
Myanmar	End of Program Outcome 1			
	End of Program Outcome 2			
	End of Program Outcome 3		N/A	
Papua New Guinea	End of Program Outcome 1			
	End of Program Outcome 2			
	End of Program Outcome 3			
Solomon Islands	End of Program Outcome 1			
	End of Program Outcome 2			
	End of Program Outcome 3			

Key on track progressing with some delays needs attention

		2020	2021	2022
Timor-Leste	End of Program Outcome 1			
	End of Program Outcome 2			
	End of Program Outcome 3			
Tonga	End of Program Outcome 1			
	End of Program Outcome 2			N/A
	End of Program Outcome 3			
Vanuatu	End of Program Outcome 1			
	End of Program Outcome 2			
	End of Program Outcome 3			

Key on track progressing with some delays needs attention

Definitions: End of Program Outcomes and Intermediate Outcomes

End of Program Outcome	Intermediate Outcomes
1. National Societies are more sustainable humanitarian actors and have the trust of their public authorities and communities	1.1 National Societies have transparent governance structures
	1.2 National Societies are implementing revenue diversification strategies to increase sustainability
	1.3 National Societies' policies and actions safeguard the dignity, access, participation, and safety of all persons
2. National Societies are delivering effective and inclusive disaster risk management	2.1 National Societies have the necessary resources (people, knowledge, skills, policies, systems, and technologies) to lead high quality, evidence-based, inclusive disaster risk management
	2.2 Key stakeholders increase investment (human, financial) in disaster risk reduction, preparedness and anticipatory action
3. The Movement is influencing policy and practice that enhance locally led, inclusive and accountable humanitarian action	3.1 National Societies have the knowledge and skills to influence local, national, and regional humanitarian policy and practice
	3.2 National and regional humanitarian coordination mechanisms and regulatory frameworks prioritise the role of local actors and include protection of humanitarian standards and principles

Annex 4: Partnership Financial Statement 2020–2022

The total value of the DFAT–Australian Red Cross Partnership 2019–2024 is AUD50 Million. The following statement shows revenue and expenditure during the period 2020–2022 across the geographic and thematic focus areas of the partnership, including the nine country programs as well as regional and global investments to support achievement of the three End of Program Outcomes.



TOTAL Revenue & Expenditure		CY2020	CY2021	CY2022	Totals
Contractual Revenue		\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$30,000,000
Opening balance		-	\$1,709,433	\$1,877,476	-
Interest on revenue		\$24,937	\$575	\$61,796	\$87,308
Total Expenditure		\$8,315,504	\$9,832,531	\$11,885,681	\$30,033,716
Thematic area		CY2020	CY2021	CY2022	Totals
Funding to support core costs		\$479,589	\$470,012	\$358,249	\$1,307,850
National Society Development		\$1,977,891	\$2,175,983	\$2,742,684	\$6,896,558
Disaster Risk Management		\$2,282,041	\$3,750,680	\$4,080,898	\$10,113,619
Protection Gender and Inclusion		\$233,928	\$193,901	\$117,796	\$545,625
Shelter and Settlements		\$642,485	\$397,188	\$771,342	\$1,811,015
Emergency Health and WASH		\$364,918	\$389,644	\$611,445	\$1,366,007
Influencing the humanitarian agenda		\$1,287,564	\$1,179,605	\$1,631,810	\$4,098,979
Contract Management		\$215,442	\$292,103	\$383,216	\$890,761
Indirect cost recovery		\$831,645	\$983,415	\$1,188,241	\$3,003,301
Total Expenditure		\$8,315,504	\$9,832,531	\$11,885,681	\$30,033,716
Region	Country	CY2020	CY2021	CY2022	Totals
Global		\$877,062	\$903,878	\$705,976	\$2,486,916
Asia Pacific		\$2,310,475	\$3,369,792	\$4,284,740	\$9,965,007
Asia	Indonesia	\$173,571	\$183,120	\$79,063	\$435,754
	Mongolia	\$284,601	\$246,171	\$446,676	\$977,448
	Myanmar	\$94,474	\$330,830	\$694,475	\$1,119,779
	Timor-Leste	\$233,610	\$354,685	\$566,625	\$1,154,920
	Asia TOTAL	\$786,256	\$1,114,806	\$1,786,839	\$3,687,901
Pacific	Fiji	\$329,638	\$574,502	\$143,222	\$1,047,362
	Pacific Region	\$2,039,501	\$1,352,163	\$1,694,232	\$5,085,896
	Papua New Guinea	\$207,182	\$292,280	\$163,795	\$663,257
	Solomon Islands	\$89,696	\$135,235	\$346,224	\$571,155
	Tonga	\$163,112	\$135,096	\$59,082	\$357,290
	Vanuatu	\$156,258	\$303,807	\$509,938	\$970,003
	Pacific TOTAL	\$2,985,387	\$2,793,084	\$2,916,493	\$8,694,964
Australia		\$1,356,324	\$1,650,971	\$2,191,633	\$5,198,928
Total Expenditure		\$8,315,504	\$9,832,531	\$11,885,681	\$30,033,716

Annex 5: Mid-term Review Interview and Focus Group Discussion Guides

The following set of interview and focus group discussion guides were used by the local consultants in each country to conduct national and community level consultations with a series of key stakeholders, jointly identified by Australian Red Cross and each of the nine National Society partners. Stakeholders included National Society staff and volunteers at national and sub-national levels, government representatives, UN agencies, civil society organisations, community members and IFRC representatives. The reviews also explored National Society staff views on the relationship between Australian Red Cross and their National Society.

Focus Group Discussion Guide – Community level consultations

1. **Do you think this community is vulnerable to disasters and crises? Why?**
Explore why respondents think yes or no; if yes, what sorts of disasters and crises?
elderly, women, people with disability etc)
When disasters or crises happen, does this community get any support? If yes, who from?
2. **If a disaster or crisis were to occur here, is this community well prepared? Why?**
Explore why respondents think yes or no; capture specifics of what they perceive to be in place and what is potentially missing
3. **Does this community have a plan of what to do to prepare for and respond to disasters? If yes, what type/s of hazards does it relate to? If yes, how was the plan developed? Who was involved?**
If group says no plan in place, do they think one is needed? If so, how do they think it should be developed? Who should be involved?
4. **Do you think the plan is adequate? If you could make any changes to it, what would they be and why?**
Are there any individuals or groups in this community who face particular vulnerability when it comes to preparing for or taking action in response to a disaster or crisis? Who? If yes, do you think their needs have been properly considered in this community's preparedness and response planning?
5. **Explore if anyone in the community is considered to face particular vulnerability in the face of disasters or crises and if so, whether and how the needs of these individuals or groups are considered in disaster preparedness and response plans and actions. Note: not looking for individual names, rather categories of people (eg**
6. **Explore if support is provided; if so, who supports and what do they provide?**
If group says no support provided, what happens at times of disaster/crisis? How does the community cope?
7. **Are you satisfied with the support this community receives when disasters or crises happen?**
Explore group satisfaction with support provided from different actors. Explore if they feel there are any major gaps in terms of support? If they identify needs that aren't being addressed, explore if they are trying to resolve this.
8. **Does [Insert national society name] Red Cross provide any support to this community? If yes, what sorts of support? Is it sufficient?**
Ask this question if it hasn't been covered in Q6 & Q7 above.
9. **Does [Insert national society name] Red Cross support this community to prepare for disasters? If yes, how?**
Explore specific ways Red Cross has engaged with the community to assist them to prepare for disasters (information sharing/awareness raising; training/workshops; participating in community meetings; developing community preparedness and response plans etc). Please get as much specific detail as possible.
Skip this question if group covers this in response to Q8

10. When disasters and crises happen in this community, does [Insert national society name] Red Cross respond? If yes, how do they respond?

Explore specific disaster response support Red Cross provides (distribution of food and non-food relief items; shelter support; emergency health services; search and rescue etc). Please get as much specific detail as possible.

Skip this question if group covers this in response to Q8

11. Do you have any suggestions for [Insert national society name] Red Cross regarding their work?
12. Are there any other comments you would like to make about [Insert national society name] Red Cross and their work?

Interview Guide – consultations with Civil Society Organisations, I/NGOs, UN Agencies

- Do you think this community is vulnerable to disasters and crises? Why?

Explore why respondents think yes or no; if yes, what sorts of disasters and crises?
- If a disaster or crisis were to occur here, is this community well prepared? Why?

Explore why respondents think yes or no; capture specifics of what they perceive to be in place and what is potentially missing
- Does this community have a plan of what to do to prepare for and respond to disasters? If yes, what type/s of hazards does it relate to? If yes, how was the plan developed? Who was involved?

If group says no plan in place, do they think one is needed? If so, how do they think it should be developed? Who should be involved?
- Do you think the plan is adequate? If you could make any changes to it, what would they be and why?

Are there any individuals or groups in this community who face particular vulnerability when it comes to preparing for or taking action in response to a disaster or crisis? Who? If yes, do you think their needs have been properly considered in this community's preparedness and response planning?
- Explore if anyone in the community is considered to face particular vulnerability in the face of disasters or crises and if so, whether and how the needs of these individuals or groups are considered in disaster preparedness and response plans and actions. Note: not looking for individual names, rather categories of people (eg elderly, women, people with disability etc)
- When disasters or crises happen, does this community get any support? If yes, who from?

Explore if support is provided; if so, who supports and what do they provide?

If group says no support provided, what happens at times of disaster/crisis? How does the community cope?
- Are you satisfied with the support this community receives when disasters or crises happen?

Explore group satisfaction with support provided from different actors. Explore if they feel there are any major gaps in terms of support? If they identify needs that aren't being addressed, explore if they are trying to resolve this.
- Does [Insert national society name] Red Cross provide any support to this community? If yes, what sorts of support? Is it sufficient?

Ask this question if it hasn't been covered in Q6 & Q7 above.

9. Does [Insert national society name] Red Cross support this community to prepare for disasters? If yes, how?

Explore specific ways Red Cross has engaged with the community to assist them to prepare for disasters (information sharing/awareness raising; training/workshops; participating in community meetings; developing community preparedness and response plans etc). Please get as much specific detail as possible.

Skip this question if group covers this in response to Q8

10. When disasters and crises happen in this community, does [Insert national society name] Red Cross respond? If yes, how do they respond?

Explore specific disaster response support Red Cross provides (distribution of food and non-food relief items; shelter support; emergency health services; search and rescue etc). Please get as much specific detail as possible.

Skip this question if group covers this in response to Q8

11. Do you have any suggestions for [Insert national society name] Red Cross regarding their work?

Are there any other comments you would like to make about [Insert national society name] Red Cross and their work?

Interview Guide – consultations with National Society and IFRC representatives

1. How long have you worked with [Insert national society name] Red Cross/IFRC? How long have you been in your current role?

Brief background on the interviewee, their length of time with Red Cross/IFRC, different roles they have had with Red Cross/IFRC.

2. In your opinion, how well prepared is this country/community for disasters and crises [including health emergencies]?

Explore the respondent's perspectives on the specific disaster/crisis preparedness mechanisms in place nationally and/or locally; how well they work; any gaps

3. What is the role of [Insert national society name] Red Cross in disaster and crisis preparedness?

Explore the respondent's perspectives on the specific role of Red Cross in disaster and crisis preparedness; what exactly do they do (information sharing/awareness raising; training/workshops; participating in national/local committees and meetings; engage in coordination mechanisms and working groups; developing national/local preparedness plans etc). Please get as much specific detail as possible.

4. How effective do you think [Insert national society name] Red Cross is regarding disaster and crisis preparedness? What do you think it does well? Are there any areas where things could be improved/done differently?

Probe for respondent's perspectives about what is working well; what could be improved on; anything the national society should stop doing. Please get as much specific detail as possible to back up the opinions.

5. What is the role of [Insert national society name] Red Cross in disaster and crisis response?

Explore the respondent's perspectives on the specific role of the Red Cross in disaster and crisis response; what exactly do they do (participation in national/local coordination mechanisms; distribution of food and non-food relief items; shelter support; emergency health services; search and rescue; protection services; risk communication etc). Please get as much specific detail as possible.

6. How effective do you think [Insert national society name] Red Cross is regarding disaster and crisis response? What do you think it does well? Are there any areas where things could be improved/done differently?
Probe for respondent's perspectives about what Red Cross does well; what could be improved on; anything the national society should stop doing. Please get as much specific detail as possible to back up the opinions.
7. In your opinion, do you think the needs of all individuals and groups are properly considered in national/local disaster and crisis preparedness and response planning? Are there any individuals or groups in this country/community who face particular vulnerability? If yes, who?
Explore respondent's perspectives on whether there are any population groups who are particularly vulnerable and if so, whether and how the needs of these individuals or groups are considered in disaster/crisis preparedness and response plans and actions. Note: not looking for individual names, rather categories of people (eg elderly, women etc)
8. How effective do you think [Insert national society name] Red Cross is in considering and supporting individuals and groups who face particular vulnerability to prepare for and respond to disasters and crises? Why do you say this? Are there any areas where things could be improved/done differently?
Explore respondent's perspectives on whether and how the national society considers the needs of particularly vulnerable individuals or groups in disaster/crisis preparedness and response plans and actions. Explore how effective the respondent thinks the national society is in terms of being inclusive in its planning and implementation. Note: not looking for individual names, rather categories of people (eg elderly, women etc)
9. What does being auxiliary to government mean for [Insert national society name] Red Cross? What are the specific roles and responsibilities the national society has as an auxiliary organisation? Have these changed in any way over recent years? If so, how?
Explore how the respondent understands the auxiliary role. What specific responsibilities does being an auxiliary involve? Which ministries/public authorities does the national society engage with and how? Please get as much specific detail as possible to back up the opinions.
10. Does [Insert national society name] Red Cross engage in policy discussions/humanitarian diplomacy? If yes, who does this? If yes, what types of discussions/topics and with whom? If no, why not?
Explore respondent's perspectives on what sorts of policy discussions/issues the national society engages in; who represents them in these discussions; how effective they think their voice is; what they think they do well; anything they would change/do differently; any discussions they would like to be in but aren't? Please get as much specific detail as possible to back up the opinions.
11. How does [Insert national society name] Red Cross mobilise resources? Who are your key partners? What sorts of support do you receive from each of your partners? How sustainable do you think the national society is?
Explore where support comes from; who their partners are; what types of support they receive from each partner; do they mobilise resources locally; what are their financial sustainability plans?
12. What are you most proud of regarding [Insert national society name] Red Cross?
Explore respondent's perspectives on what makes them proud regarding their work of the Red Cross and why. Please get as much specific detail as possible to back up the opinions.
13. Where would you like to see [Insert national society name] Red Cross being in 5 years' time? What will it take to get there? What do you think are the priority issues the national society needs to work on (both internally and externally)? Why do you say this?
Explore respondent's perspectives on the key issues the national society needs to focus on and why. Please get as much specific detail as possible to back up the opinions.
Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Interview Guide – consultations with Public Authorities

1. **Can you tell me about your specific role in this ministry/agency?**
Brief background on the interviewee and their specific role to help contextualise their perceptions of Red Cross
2. **Who are the key stakeholders your ministry/agency works with in the area of disaster preparedness and response/disaster risk management?**
Please explain that when we refer to ‘disasters’ we are also thinking about slow onset disasters such as drought, or health emergencies such as the pandemic, or when disease outbreaks occur in the context of floods etc. With this question, we are looking to understand the spectrum of actors engaged in disaster preparedness and response in the country to help understand how Red Cross is positioned in this landscape
3. **How does your ministry/agency engage with [Insert national society name] Red Cross? What role do they play in disaster and crisis preparedness and response in this country?**
Explore the respondent’s perspectives on the specific role of the Red Cross in disaster and crisis preparedness and response; what exactly do they do (information sharing/ awareness raising; training/workshops; participating in national/local meetings; sitting on national/local task forces; contributing to national/local preparedness and response plans; participating in joint simulations etc). Please get as much specific detail as possible
4. **How frequently does your ministry/agency engage with [Insert national society name] Red Cross?**
Explore the strength of the relationship between Red Cross and the ministry/agency; how is Red Cross perceived by the ministry/agency; what is the ministry/agency expecting of Red Cross; are they a valued partner?
5. **Has your ministry/agency participated in any recent activities with [Insert national society name] Red Cross? If yes, what was it?**
Explore how the ministry/agency works with Red Cross; what sorts of activities they conduct together. Please get as much specific detail as possible
6. **How well do you think [Insert national society name] Red Cross considers the needs of individuals and groups who face particular vulnerability to prepare for and take action when disasters and crises occur?**
Explore the perceptions of the ministry/agency in how Red Cross thinks about and assists individuals and groups who have particular needs such as women, children, the elderly when conducting disaster preparedness and response planning and implementation
7. **Does [Insert national society name] Red Cross engage in policy and influencing discussions? If yes, what types of discussions/topics? Do you think Red Cross is an effective voice in these discussions? Why/why not?**
Explore the perceptions of the ministry/agency on what sorts of policy discussions and influencing Red Cross engages in; how effective they are; what they do well; any gaps/ missed opportunities? Please get as much specific detail as possible
8. **Does [Insert national society name] Red Cross engage in any humanitarian coordination mechanisms, such as cluster coordination working groups? If yes, which ones? Do you think Red Cross is an effective participant in these mechanisms? Why/why not?**
Explore the perceptions of the ministry/agency on what sorts of policy discussions and influencing Red Cross engages in; how effective they are; what they do well; any gaps/ missed opportunities? Please get as much specific detail as possible
9. **Do you have any suggestions for [Insert national society name] Red Cross regarding their work?**
10. **Are there any other comments you would like to make about [Insert national society name] Red Cross and their work?**

Interview Guide – consultations with National Society on partnership with Australian Red Cross

This consultation can be conducted with national society representatives as part of individual interviews or as a focus group discussion.

1. When you think about your current partnership with Australian Red Cross, what are the three things you most value about it?
2. When you think about your current partnership with Australian Red Cross, what are the three things you find most challenging about it and the way Australian Red Cross works?
3. Thinking about where you would like your national society to be in five years, what are the three top things Australian Red Cross could do to help you get there?
4. If you could change anything(s) about working with Australian Red Cross, what would you change?
5. When shifting to its current programming model, Australian Red Cross made the decision to remove our in-country offices and change to a remote-based approach. What is your experience of ARC's remote-based support? How do you think remote ways of working have impacted our partnership?
6. Based on your experience of partnering with Australian Red Cross, what is your perception of Australian Red Cross shift to a more strategic rather than project-based approach? Are there any ways in which you think Australian Red Cross needs to change to be a more strategic partner?

We are keen to explore partners' perceptions of our changed ways of working – and whether they would like to see further change.

A key aim of Australian Red Cross's current program design is to shift from project-based ways of working, to strategic partnership – meaning:

 - less focus on highly defined and prescribed pieces of work, that are often limited to specific activities, timeframes and/or geographic locations,
 - more focus on broad-based, outcomes-focused, flexible support to national societies' strategic goals, in programmatic areas where Australian Red Cross can add value

Endnotes

- 1 'Humanitarian diplomacy is persuading decision makers and opinion leaders to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people, and with full respect for fundamental humanitarian principles.' (International Federation of the Red Cross Red Crescent Societies, Humanitarian Diplomacy Policy)
- 2 'Humanitarian diplomacy is persuading decision makers and opinion leaders to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people, and with full respect for fundamental humanitarian principles.' (International Federation of the Red Cross Red Crescent Societies, Humanitarian Diplomacy Policy)
- 3 <https://www.redcross.org.au/about/fundamental-principles/>
- 4 'Civil Society Organisation' generally refers to a small, locally based and relatively informal organisation providing local services, as opposed to a 'Non-Government Organisation' that is larger, more structured and with a more extensive reach.
- 5 Interview with the NGO 'Development Solutions'
- 6 Indonesia consultants' debrief.
- 7 Personal communication between Veronica Bell and Dickinson Tevi, 1/11/2022.
- 8 <https://www.australianhumanitarianpartnership.org>
- 9 IFRC (2015) Unseen, unheard: Gender-based violence in disasters. <https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2021-08/1297700-Gender-based%20Violence%20in%20Disasters-EN.pdf>
- 10 Humanitarian Advisory Group (2019) Measuring Localisation, Framework and Tools <https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/insight/measuring-localisation-framework-and-tools/>
- 11 While not the responsibility of the Australian Red Cross International Programs Department, this is an opportunity for the Department to support the 'no wrong door' approach to partnership, and liaise with Life Blood on behalf of the Timor-Leste National Society, at least until a direct relationship is developed or an existing one sufficiently enhanced.
- 12 Note: data disaggregation applies to both quantitative and qualitative information; data collection tools and approaches will be designed and implemented to capture and analyse the perspectives of diverse participants and beneficiaries
- 13 Federation-wide Databank and Reporting System
- 14 A representative sample frame will be developed
- 15 https://australianredcross.sharepoint.com/sites/pims/nonprojects/IP-Program-Design-2019-2024/Documents/ARC_DFAT_Design_Document_June2019.pdf
- 16 <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/11/20181214-Manila-Declaration.pdf>
- 17 <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/11/20181214-Manila-Declaration.pdf>
- 18 Cumulative and disaggregated by National Society

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go to our website redcross.org.au