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COUNCIL OF DELEGATES
OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS
AND RED CRESCENT
MOVEMENT

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Workshop 3

30th International Conference Declaration:
The Humanitarian Consequences of Climate Change

Concept paper

Document prepared by
the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
in consultation with the ICRC

Geneva, October 2009

WORKSHOP 3

Addressing humanitarian consequences of Climate Change.

Objective

To increase awareness on humanitarian consequences of the climate change and the role Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (Movement) is playing in meeting this challenge. The workshop will also document and explore new concrete action that parts of the Movement should take to rise up to the challenge of this century.

Rationale

It is now widely accepted that climate change is one of the major global challenges for humanity in the 21st Century. This challenge, while affecting globally, will have disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable communities. They are and will experience further the greatest impacts from climate and disaster risk, in particular the threat to lives and livelihoods of these communities. This compounded risk, driven by changing climate, will erode their resilience and undermine opportunities for sustainable development. As a result, climate change threatens to overwhelm the current capacity of the humanitarian system to respond effectively by increasing hazard exposure, vulnerabilities and response costs.

This issue was discussed at the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent (International Conference) and resulted in a resolution that called for the Movement to a) raise awareness, b) provide increased humanitarian assistance, c) reduce underlying vulnerabilities by mobilising community base of National Societies and d) increase individual and collective preparedness to meet consequences of this challenge.

Two years after this International Conference resolution, this workshop will provide an opportunity for the Movement to take stock of its progress on the commitments made and hear some examples of positive action. The workshop will also be an opportunity to inform participants on progress on the wider debate on this issue, in particular the progress of climate change negotiations. These negotiations, if successful, show possibilities for an extensive investment in the climate change adaptation.

Adaptation to climate change will need dedicated and collective effort to succeed. Adaptation is a process through which humans make themselves better able to cope with changes but with climate change the speed of change is faster and therefore it necessitates a wide range of actions and responses. The experience of the Movement so far is that disaster risk reduction (DRR) can advance adaptation action. This is essential to avoid the potentially massive increase in humanitarian need in the short-term, whilst building capacity for longer-term adaptation strategies that will reduce vulnerability and build resilience to extreme events.

Expected outcomes

After the workshop the participants will:

- Reinforce their call for action on climate change adaptation by agreeing that the time to act is now; climate change is clearly happening and the Movement must prepare for the increased number and intensity of global disasters.
- Commit to participate in national and sub-national adaptation planning and advocate for the inclusion of humanitarian needs, on behalf of the most vulnerable, as part of this planning.
- Agree that Movement's adaptation work shall build on existing risk reduction efforts and such risk reduction efforts should urgently scale up to become effective.
- Acknowledge and commit to need of new and innovative partnerships to protect vulnerable communities from the adverse impact of climate change.

Organising and co-sponsoring NS's

The secretariat of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the ICRC will organise the workshop with support from the following National Societies (NS):

- a) Mozambique, Kenya, Ghana (Africa)
- b) Colombia, Guatemala and Dominican Republic (Americas)
- c) Nepal, Philippines and Australia (Asia)
- d) Norway, Sweden and Montenegro (Europe)
- e) Yemen, Algeria and Syria (MENA)

Since there will be 3 workshops, each workshop would include maximum of 5 NS's, this will ensure fair share of the labour while ensuring regional diversity.

Each workshop will start with a Chair introduction (5-10 min) to set the context, introduce the panel and outline key issues for discussion. The NS's panel will present (5-7 min each) their own experience focusing on progress made on the commitments of International Conference 2007 resolution. NS's presentation will also compliment on experiences around four key areas of the resolution.

Chair: Each workshop will be chaired and facilitated by a Movement person.

Rapporteur: Each workshop will have a pre identified rapporteur who will record the key discussion.

Duration: Three workshops, each is two hours

List of guiding questions

- In 2007, the Movement made a commitment to meet the humanitarian challenge of climate change. How has Movement fared on its commitments? Do we have examples of positive action to meet the pledges made for this resolution?
- How has Movement components participated in climate change adaptation planning at national/regional/global level?
- What actions should Movement Strategy on climate change adaptation include?
- What kind of partnerships (national/regional/global level) should the Movement explore to improve and expand its community level action on climate change adaption?

Background documents

1. Resolution 1, International Conference, 2007.
2. Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Guide, 2007.
3. Climate Change Adaptation: Strategies for Local Impact, IFRC 2009.
4. Various case studies, IFRC 2007- 2009.
5. Addressing the humanitarian challenges of climate change, IASC 2009.