China is one of the world’s mega economies that is embarking on increased geopolitical influence across Asia, Africa and Europe. China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a global development strategy aimed at linking over 100 participating countries and international organizations through major infrastructure, trade and development, and has opened new pathways for bilateral and multilateral collaboration with potential large impact on the humanitarian and development landscape at country, regional and global levels.

The Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) has an opportunity to position itself as a strategic leader in humanitarian diplomacy through the Belt Road Initiative and beyond. With its connections to resources and supporters from the corporate philanthropy and government agencies in China, the RCSC has the potential to use its influence and capabilities to promote greater mobilization of resources and knowledge for the benefit of other National Societies across the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.
Yet this fast-growing mega economy is not without its social and own development challenges. While China is aiming to eliminate national poverty by 2020, at least 30.5 million of China’s rural population still live under the national poverty line. Non-Communicable Diseases are causing major negative impact on the health of China’s ageing population. China is also a highly disaster-prone country. More than half of China’s population is estimated to live in areas vulnerable to floods, tropical cyclones, earthquakes and drought. This includes over 70 per cent of China’s densely populated cities.

With a population of over 1.4 billion people in China, the RCSC also offers unique and unprecedented high impact scalability across all of its programmes, with significant return on investment and high potential for cross-learning opportunities. The contribution of China to technology scalability is a crucial learning journey for developing innovative use and application of technology solutions at large. The RCSC has 33 branches and over 90,000 grass roots units stretching across mainland China, Hong Kong and Macau as well as one of the largest volunteer bases worldwide.

Over the next two years, the IFRC will seek partners and facilitate collaboration to enable the RCSC to maximise its potential access and capabilities to become a leading partner of choice in China and beyond while addressing persisting vulnerabilities, disaster risks and development gaps through intensified and targeted resilience-building interventions.
AREAS OF FOCUS

AREA OF FOCUS
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION
DRR

AREA OF FOCUS
LIVELIHOODS AND BASIC NEEDS

AREA OF FOCUS
HEALTH

STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

• STRENGTHEN CAPACITIES OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY
• ENSURE EFFECTIVE INTERNATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT
• INFLUENCE OTHERS AS LEADING STRATEGIC PARTNER
• ENSURE A STRONG IFRC
AREA OF FOCUS

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

China is highly prone to frequent meteorological, geological and marine disasters. These disasters affect enormous numbers of people, with fatalities and damage to livelihoods reaching some of the largest numbers worldwide.

More than two-thirds of China’s land mass is at risk of floods. Tropical cyclones frequently batter the eastern and southern coastline. Destructive earthquakes measuring a Richter scale magnitude of 5 or more have struck all provinces of China including autonomous regions and municipalities. Droughts cause major damage in the north, north-east and north-west of the country. China’s mountainous and plateau areas, covering almost 70 per cent of China’s total land mass, are at risk of landslides, mudflows and cliff collapses. Forest fires, insect plagues and extreme weather events also cause significant damages.

Community-based resilience and disaster preparedness is thus at the core of the RCSC's programme work. Developing an Emergency Response Unit (ERU) base camp and Emergency Response Teams (ERT) with tools and specific training for a Water ERT is needed to strengthen China’s disaster risk reduction strategy in China or overseas. An Integrated Community Resilience and Development (ICRD) project will be piloted in Mianzhu in China’s south-west to boost community resilience in response to predominant meteorological and geological hazards.

The RCSC will advocate for the adoption of the International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) in China and hold a disaster preparedness workshop in collaboration with the IFRC Country Cluster Support Team (CCST) and the IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office (IFRC APRO) to further enhance the engagement with universities, academia, and government for expanding knowledge, understanding, and practice of DRR while building the confidence and skills of its staff to use the Emergency Response Framework and IFRC Response System Tools.

OUTCOME

1 ADVOCACY WORKSHOP ON INTERNATIONAL DISASTER RESPONSE LAW PROGRAMME IN CHINA

10 COMMUNITIES CONDUCT ESTABLISH COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS

2,500,000 PEOPLE REACHED THROUGH ICRD AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PROGRAMMES

COMMUNITIES IN HIGH RISK AREAS ARE PREPARED FOR AND ABLE TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY TO DISASTERS
The government of China’s commitment to alleviating poverty by 2020 is an ambitious target that will require active involvement of the RCSC. Building community resilience against future disasters and crises—and subsequent poverty—is one the clear programmatic priority that the RCSC will continue focusing on. The RCSC will pilot cash transfer programmes with some of the most vulnerable communities and encourage communities to manage their livelihoods and recovery needs instead of relying on distribution of aid. Through cash intervention training, RCSC branches will be better prepared for using cash in emergency and recovery contexts and able to apply their knowledge on community cash programming in all relevant contexts. This will further open the way for exploring innovative solution such as application of virtual currency to cash interventions and use of Chinese information technology platforms and media.
Non-Communicable Diseases are fast becoming the single main cause of death in China. In the next ten years, the WHO predicts 80 million deaths in China will be attributable to chronic health problems with a 50 per cent increase in deaths caused by diabetes. Deaths from infectious diseases, maternal and prenatal conditions and nutritional deficiencies are also predicted to rise.

The RCSC is well-positioned to respond effectively and extensively to this looming national health crisis. By mobilizing its extensive network of branches, grass roots units and volunteer base, the RCSC will translate, contextualize and disseminate the IFRC Non-Communicable Disease and Control Module across 15 provinces. To address the increasingly large ageing population and their specific health needs, the RCSC will also host a national workshop to plan the dissemination and implementation of the IFRC Healthy Ageing Care volunteer manual across China.

By improving its flagship first-aid training to meet international accreditation standards, the RCSC will campaign for a rapid and large-scale uptake of its first aid courses, enabling a higher number of people in China to have access to internationally recognized first aid certification. This will build upon the two-year expansion encompassing approximately 3.5 million people already trained in first aid through the existing RCSC programme, incorporating 1 million in ‘Volunteers on Wheels’ and 9.5 million in the three provincial branches supported by the IFRC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The RCSC and its branches provide preventative health support to communities across China</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCSC branches receive updated and translated NCD and Healthy Ageing manuals for dissemination</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People to be trained in first aid with IFRC support</td>
<td>3,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCSC branches accredited to issue internationally recognized first-aid certifications</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People targeted in total (catchment in three branches for two years)</td>
<td>9,500,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SOCIETY CAPACITIES

The 2017 renewal of the Red Cross Law has cemented the RCSC as the leading humanitarian organization in China. With such an extensive network of branches, grass roots units and volunteer base, the potential scalability for the RCSC’s programmes to reach large numbers of people across geographical distances in China is unrivalled.

The RCSC will continue to build the size and reach of its volunteer base through the following key youth and volunteer priority areas;

1. Volunteering
2. Virtual volunteering
3. Humanitarian education

By further pursuing the objectives of the Volunteers on Wheels flagship project, one million volunteers nation-wide will receive bicycles to assist them in reaching more isolated and vulnerable populations in China. This project is in support of the One Billion Coalition for Resilience and has potential to expand internationally, particularly to participating countries in China’s Belt Road Initiative.

Another strategic priority for the RCSC is to boost its youth membership by exploring new modes of engagement including through social media and virtual volunteering. In a bid to boost its youth engagement, the RCSC will run a series of humanitarian education programmes such as Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change (YABC) to promote a culture of non-violence and peace and to advocate for solutions in tackling unprecedented challenges such as...
the accelerated effects of climate change. Participating in these programmes will give young people the opportunity to expand their knowledge about community-led resilience and emergency response as well as skills-based education on school safety, psycho-social support and first aid. The RCSC will develop a suite of case studies to showcase its successful delivery of these programmes, and to pitch for additional funding and human resources to support ongoing innovation in humanitarian education through the establishment of the Red Cross International Academy.

In partnership with the China Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), Red Cross Academy will become the home of humanitarian innovation and learning in the region. The Academy will become the focal point for research, policy and education on humanitarian issues and will fosters links with other organizations from the not-for-profit and non-government sector, as well as think tanks and other research institutions.
STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION
INFLUENCE OTHERS AS LEADING STRATEGIC PARTNER

With the undoubted rise of China’s influence and role in supporting developing countries with aid and regional development, the RCSC is uniquely positioned to play a prominent role in humanitarian diplomacy and partnership development. Now more than ever, the RCSC needs to demonstrate to the government of China the value of working with the National Society and to foster a collaboration ‘platform’ for South-South cooperation and expanded principled humanitarian action. This collaboration platform, led by the IFRC, will leverage the One Billion Coalition for Resilience as a strategic vehicle to connect the RCSC and other Movement partners on priority initiatives including Volunteers on Wheels and the Red Cross International Academy.

There is a clear opportunity for the RCSC to assert and share its expertise on humanitarian and development issues, including emergency response, resilience programming and International Disaster Response Law and forge multilateral strategic partnerships with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Emergency Management Ministry (EMM) and the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA). To strengthen strategic relations with the government of China, the RCSC will develop a China engagement strategy and policy paper on the Belt and Road Initiative with support from the IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office and Movement partners. This strategy and policy paper will propose increased regional collaboration between the RCSC and other participating countries to help shape humanitarian and resilience-building as priorities for the Belt and Road Initiative.

The RCSC has also a potential pivotal role in supporting other National Societies, to facilitate access to support from China’s corporate and philanthropy sectors, and to provide strategic links and mobilization of resources through the China South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund (SSCAF) and Belt and Road Initiative.
While this new opportunity for the RCSC to extend its work beyond China is far-reaching, it highlights the urgent need to update its institutional policies, systems and standards to be internationally relevant and applicable. Under the guidance of the IFRC and Movement partners, the RCSC aims to foster stronger connections to global policies, partners and resources. In this backdrop, by keeping strong humanitarian dialogue with China, further potentials for materializing high impact multilateral supports may not be far reaching.

Improving the RCSC’s emergency communications and media outreach strategies will help reinforce the reputation of the RCSC as a contextually aware, people-driven and relevant organization in China. Social media engagement is key to amplifying RCSC engagement with young people, foster advocacy initiatives and improve the IFRC’s digital footprint in China. Proactive as well as reactive media relations are also crucial and need to be intensified to generate greater visibility for the RCSC’s work in disaster preparedness and emergency response to natural and man-made disasters. None of this can be performed without a strong network of communication experts in the RCSC and the IFRC who are well-connected and informed.

A strategic partnership with a leading media outlet in China, such as Xinhua News Agency or China Daily, would assist in increasing visibility through media channels. To improve interactions with media, particularly during emergencies, the IFRC proposes to develop an emergency media training module and work with journalists to share interview techniques, strategies for better information sharing and reinforcement of IFRC key messages.

**Outcome**

**The programmatic reach of the IFRC and the RCSC and principled humanitarian action are expanded through the Belt and Road Initiative.**
STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

ENSURE A STRONG IFRC

IFRC will reinforce its institutional commitment to:

1. **Compliance with highest accountability standards** to all relevant stakeholders through a wide-scoped framework and tools that include code of conduct, principle and rules for humanitarian assistance, audited reports of expenditures and a wide-ranging monitoring and evaluation methodologies.

2. **Amenability to key management performance indicators**, a results-based approach for all work outlined in long-term plans and emergency operations. All activities via IFRC are monitored through a detailed measurement system with indicators at different levels to track performance.

3. **Full adherence to IFRC’s Fraud and Corruption Prevention and Control policy** and facilitate effective risk management and the development of a culture of transparency as part of a robust framework that contributes to sound management practices.

4. **Strict concession to IFRC’s Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse policy** that ensures every necessary step is taken to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse by IFRC Personnel and to respond adequately to those incidents it cannot prevent. The policy prioritises the well-being of the survivor and accountability and integrity of IFRC’s engagement with members of local communities.

5. **Highest commitment to ensuring a safe working environment** and effective human resource management towards greater diversity and gender equality.

OUTCOME

THE IFRC ENHANCES ITS EFFECTIVENESS, CREDIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY
Contact information of the IFRC Country office, for partners who wish to find out more

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