Russia is the world’s largest country stretching from the Baltic Sea in the west to the Pacific Ocean in the east, spanning eleven time zones. With the seventh highest population of all countries, Russia is home to over 146 million people and over 200 ethnic groups. Regarded as one of the most heterogeneous countries in the world, Russia has considerable variations in population distribution, ethnic composition, cultures and socio-economic contexts.

Russia plays an increasingly important political and economic role in global and regional development. The Russian government aspires to become one of the top international development and humanitarian assistance donors. There are substantial opportunities for donors and partnerships in Russia which address key humanitarian and development issues both within the country, in the region and globally. The philanthropic giving potential of the population in Russia is significant and is on the rise. Russia and Belarus traditionally host the main bodies of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), established to coordinate inter-state social, political and economic relations between the countries of the former Soviet Union. These institutions include: Inter-parliamentary Assembly of CIS based in St. Petersburg; Secretariat of CIS based in Minsk; and the Secretariat of the Collective Security Treaty Organization.
based in Moscow. Russia also hosts significant international events and fora such as the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, BRICS conferences, university forums and think tanks. The IFRC Country Cluster office in Russia will continue to build on existing and develop new strategic partnerships addressing important humanitarian issues in the areas of migration, health, trans-border cooperation in disasters. Opportunities to mobilize support within Russia for Red Cross Red Crescent Movement work in the international humanitarian arena will be developed and nurtured.

The Russian Red Cross is the oldest humanitarian organization in the country, founded in 1867 and composed of 84 regional branches and 983 local branches. Some regions of Russia are the size of large European countries such as Sweden or Spain, therefore to meet the needs the scale of the Russian Red Cross’ branch operations would need to be comparable to those of an entire National Society in other contexts.

The IFRC Country Cluster of Russia, Moldova and Belarus is based in Moscow and the team works closely with the Russian Red Cross providing technical support and resources in key priority areas.

This plan aims to support vulnerable people with basic food and essential items, access to appropriate health services with particular focus on migrants, on people living with TB and HIV, and to develop a strategy for support to older people. In parallel, IFRC will support with a major modernization of the Russian Red Cross with the aim to establish it as the lead humanitarian organization in the country. The purpose of reforming and modernization of the Russian Red Cross is to evolve and to increase its positive impact on the lives of vulnerable people. The gap between the Russian Red Cross capacity and the demands the country context is putting on the National Society is significant. To address this gap the Russian Red Cross launched a change process which will promote the adoption of the Red Cross Law and will include expanding resource mobilization activities, consolidating the legal base, strengthening human resources management, improving evidence-based programming capabilities and raising the profile of the organization. There is enormous potential for resource mobilization in the country, and Russian Red Cross will build on its already highly successful emergency fundraising to develop income generation for longer term domestic programmes and international disaster response. The Russian Red Cross will seek to significantly expand its volunteer base with a focus on youth, to strengthen disaster preparedness infrastructure which is critical to saving lives, protecting livelihoods, and strengthening recovery and to ensure a meaningful presence underpinned by domestic fundraising across this vast country. IFRC will accompany the process, providing representation, technical support, dialogue and coordination with other actors including the ICRC.
# Areas of Focus

## Livelihoods and Basic Needs

200 people will receive vouchers for essential food and non-food items.

## Health

1,200 people will benefit from health programmes and services.

## Migration

3,200 displaced people and migrants will be supported.

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## Strategies for Implementation

- Strengthen National Society Capacities
- Influence others as leading strategic partners
- Ensure a Strong IFRC
AREA OF FOCUS

LIVELIHOODS AND BASIC NEEDS

Since 2014, more than 1 million displaced people have moved to Russia from Ukraine, approximately 20 per cent of whom continue to have unregulated status and therefore cannot find permanent and well-paid employment. Most displaced people from Ukraine reside in inappropriate living conditions with limited sanitary facilities due to lack of funds to rent better apartments. This is especially harmful for older people, families with small children and people with disabilities as they lack access to protection, social benefits, pensions, health services and rehabilitation. Inadequate living conditions increase further people’s vulnerability and put already weak health at even greater risk.

Regulation and requirements for receiving legal status is very complicated in Russia. It takes two months to obtain temporary residence, at least eight months to receive residence permit and up to two years for citizenship. Some CHF 300-400 per person is required to pay for necessary documentation including legal services, notarial certification, medical certification. Some displaced people from Ukraine, especially families with children, cannot afford to pay so much as they do not have legal jobs and have other urgent expenditures, such as rent, health, and food.

The Coping Strategy Index survey conducted in 2017–2018 showed that many displaced people are forced to use several coping strategies at least once per week to provide food for their families, such as “rely on less preferred and less expensive food” (90 per cent of respondents), “limit portion size in mealtimes” (70 per cent), “restrict consumption by adults in order for small children to eat” (50 per cent).

“This is the choice for my family—we either give food to our children or we spend this money to receive the status. The choice for me is obvious.”

Interview with displaced person from Ukraine, 2018
Through this plan, vulnerable displaced people will be provided with vouchers to procure basic essentials such as food, hygiene items, bed linen and clothes. The voucher programme will be implemented in four regions of Belgorod, Lipetsk, Voronezh and Volgograd, where there are developed and well-functioning markets, with all necessary food and non-food commodities available and accessible. Vouchers will form part of a comprehensive support to the most vulnerable displaced people along with provision of access to basic health services (including life-saving HIV treatment) and legal and social consultancy.

The IFRC and Russian Red Cross have several years’ experience in delivering voucher programmes in these regions, and will build on existing learning and expertise to ensure that basic needs are met. Key activities are:

1. Beneficiary selection based on needs and vulnerability
2. Distribution of vouchers to beneficiaries
3. Post distribution monitoring to improve future effectiveness and efficiency

“I had such an overwhelming feeling of being totally unprotected and exposed literally until yesterday. We only had 500 roubles (CHF 7) left for me, my husband and our two children to live by for the next 20 days before my husband’s pay day. We were so lucky to receive a voucher for food and other stuff from the Red Cross just at the right time when we were at the lowest point and knew we would have nothing to eat next week.”

Interview with displaced person from Ukraine, 2018

**Outcome**

**Communities restore and strengthen their livelihoods**

**Number of people reached with vouchers for basic needs**

200
According to the Ministry of Health of Russia, the number of people living with HIV at the end of 2017 reached 631,000, while the Federal AIDS Centre estimates that this total exceeds one million, with only a third of people receiving antiretroviral therapy. HIV prevalence more than doubled between 2007 and 2017, and there is a risk that the epidemic may get out of control by 2020 if urgent measures are not taken. Stigma and discrimination towards people living with HIV and key populations remain high. New legislation is placing further restrictions on same-sex relationships, sex work and drug use, which could further prevent key populations from accessing HIV services. Prevention programmes are under threat as international support for HIV response decreases and domestic funding for HIV prevention is not keeping pace with the needs.

Russia is among the 30 highest multidrug-resistant tuberculosis burden countries in the world, and is in the top 20 by estimated absolute number, with 70,832 new cases identified in 2017. Health vulnerabilities are compounded by increasing rates of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (27 per cent of total TB cases) and TB/HIV co-infection (20 per cent of total TB cases).

Population ageing is one of the greatest social challenges in Eastern Europe and increasing numbers of older people in Russia require support to enjoy a healthy, active and dignified retirement. 14 per cent of Russia’s population of 146 million people are people over the age of 65, and the number of people over retirement age exceeds the number of children under 16. In the global ranking of quality of life of older people Russia ranks 65th out of 96 countries.

In 2019, IFRC will support the Russian Red Cross to provide healthcare support in regions with high numbers of displaced people from Ukraine including through provision of insurance certificates and life-saving HIV treatment.

The capacity of the National Society in community-based health and first aid approaches will be strengthened and a healthy lifestyle training module implemented for both community volunteers and facilitators, and training materials will address priority health needs by using IFRC tools adapted to the local context.

IFRC will support the Russian Red Cross to conduct quantitative and qualitative participatory research to understand the experiences of older people, including barriers to accessing health and social services. The research will be a basis for revising and developing empowerment-focused programmes which are responsive to older people’s needs and capacities. The findings will inform policy and service delivery recommendations and provide an evidence base for advocacy among decision-makers.
IFRC will work closely with the Russian Red Cross to review and expand the Russian Red Cross role in prevention of TB and HIV and reducing stigma and discrimination among key population groups. Special focus will be given to establishing a dialogue and partnerships with communities of people living with HIV, TB and key populations, including migrants. IFRC will support the Russian Red Cross in developing key advocacy messages aimed to reduce stigma and discrimination towards people with HIV and TB and facilitate advocacy activities (round tables, press-conferences, public events) at a regional level.

The Russian Red Cross has significant experience in both psychosocial support and first aid. IFRC will provide technical expertise and resources to support the Russian Red Cross in strengthening their psychosocial support service in emergencies, and to ensure that all health and care programmes have a strong and well-articulated social inclusion component. Key activities include:

1. Provision of health services to displaced people from Ukraine
2. Provision of access to anti-retroviral therapy and diagnostics
3. Comprehensive assessment of older people’s needs and access to health care services
4. Piloting of integrated approach to healthcare support for older people
5. Training in community-based health and first aid, first aid in emergencies, and psychosocial support in emergencies
6. Advocacy events on first aid in emergencies
7. Advocacy on TB and HIV prevention among key populations

**Outcome**

**Vulnerable People’s Health and Dignity Are Improved Through Increased Access to Appropriate Health Services**

**Number of People Reached with Health Programmes and Services**

1,400

**Number of People Trained in First Aid**

200
It is estimated that there are approximately 10 million migrants in Russia, approximately 1 million of which reside in the Moscow region. The majority are labour migrants from Central Asia, and 1 million people have been displaced to Russia from Ukraine. According to a joint Russian Red Cross and IFRC survey, only 7 per cent of migrants have medical insurance certificates and as result, only 17 per cent apply for health services with the majority only doing so in emergency cases. The incidence of TB among migrants is worrying and more than half of migrants responding to the survey have never been tested for HIV. People living with HIV and TB face social exclusion due to their legal status, stigmatization and lack of financial resources. They have limited access to the national health system and are therefore denied access to adequate diagnosis and treatment, putting their life and health in jeopardy. Migrants have low awareness of health and legal issues and lack information on how to access services and organizations which can support.

In 2019, the IFRC will support the Russian Red Cross to develop a migration strategy through engaging with the established National Society working group on migration and bringing in regional and global expertise. The IFRC and the Russian Red Cross will provide medical, psychosocial and legal support for the most vulnerable migrants and displaced people. They will raise awareness among migrants of their rights and duties focusing on access to healthcare, legal status and employment.
IFRC will support the Russian Red Cross in activities focused on social adaptation and integration of migrants, including information dissemination through the portal redpuzzle.ru, social and legal counselling, establishment of referral pathways and a network of partner and assistance organizations and creation of a database.

Together IFRC and Russian Red Cross will advocate on the humanitarian needs of migrants, aiming to improve migration legislation and access to services in Russia and the wider region. Russian Red Cross will disseminate information to displaced people about institutions, organizations and services specifically targeting migrants in Russia.

Key activities include:

1. Provision of legal and social consultancy support to the most vulnerable displaced people from Ukraine
2. Provision of psychosocial support to displaced people from Ukraine
3. Training on psychosocial support for staff and volunteers
4. Cooperation with CIS Inter-Parliamentarian Assembly on improvements to legislation on migration
5. Strengthening the Russia and Central Asia Regional Migration Network
6. Advocacy events on migrant’s rights and needs
7. Development and dissemination of evidence-based materials on migration

NUMBER OF PEOPLE REACHED WITH HEALTH PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES

NUMBER OF PEOPLE REACHED WITH AWARENESS RAISING CAMPAIGNS

MIGRANTS AND DISPLACED PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL INFORMATION AND SERVICES INCLUDING HEALTHCARE AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE
STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SOCIETY CAPACITIES

The organizational assessment (OCAC) conducted by the IFRC established that the Russian Red Cross has good achievements in programming areas such as health, disaster management, migration, and other core humanitarian services and in well-functioning partnerships with governmental structures and other stakeholders. Nonetheless, the National Society still faces challenges and critical deficits identified during the OCAC self-assessment process are identity/image, legal base, communication, human resources, and resource mobilization.

Based on these findings, the Russian Red Cross has developed a comprehensive change strategy to modernize and reform the National Society to increase its positive impact on the lives of vulnerable people. The goal of the change strategy is to “ensure sustainable development of the Russian Red Cross and enhance its role as a major national humanitarian player and strong National Society through comprehensive and consistent capacity building for better programmes and service delivery to the most vulnerable”. The objectives are:

1. To intensify and expand resource mobilization activities
2. To consolidate legal base and improve organizational capacities
3. To strengthen HR management and development process
4. To improve evidence-based programming capabilities
5. To improve communication, raise profile and visibility
National Society income is scarce with no stable reserves that would guarantee operations in the long term. The gap between the Russian Red Cross capacity and needs in the country is therefore significant and it is essential to address this imbalance and build a stronger supporter base for a more sustainable income. There is enormous potential for domestic resource mobilization in Russia, particularly from individuals, companies, foundations and the government. Through expert support from the IFRC and partners, the Russian Red Cross will develop robust analysis and strategies to leverage the many opportunities for domestic fundraising, focusing on the development and implementation of regular giving programmes.

An essential element of the strategy is to ensure there is the appropriate legal base with the Red Cross law adopted and recognised by the government. The law development process, consolidation of the legal base and improvement of organizational capacities are firmly integrated within the change strategy and are defined as key strategic objectives of the National Society reform process.

Russia’s huge territory, as well as its geographical and economic characteristics make the country prone to natural and technological disasters, with 200 to 300 events requiring a large-scale response each year. This plan aims to ensure the Russian Red Cross is ready to provide fast and effective support to affected people in the event of a medium or high impact emergency. Moscow-based national disaster response teams will be prepared, trained and equipped to arrive at disaster affected areas within hours, conduct needs assessments, provide first aid and psychological first aid, develop a response plan and if necessary undertake relief distribution and monitoring. This will be achieved by drawing on years of Red Cross Red Crescent Movement global experience, and will incorporate a thorough assessment of the emergency context, existing operating procedures, pre-disaster agreements and coordination mechanisms, resulting in the development of plans with clear change indicators and milestones. Russian Red Cross will coordinate closely with the Russian Emergency Ministry (EMERCOM) to ensure that relevant national and local agreements are in place and that the National Society response plans are complementary and add value to the efforts of the government and other organizations.

IFRC will support the Russian Red Cross to review and strengthen their existing voucher transfer programmes through mapping of suppliers, negotiation of framework agreements, piloting a data management system and ensuring a strong knowledge base of approaches, tools and mechanisms. Supporting the Russian Red Cross’ capacity in rolling out large scale voucher and cash programmes will significantly improve efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and dignity of response operations and will position the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement in Russia as partners of choice.
Despite significant attention from authorities and the general public on Red Cross Red Crescent activities, there is a lack of understanding about the unique nature of the Movement among Russian-speaking mass media. IFRC seeks to promote the Movement’s role and activities especially in the fields of migration, disaster management and health and care, with a special focus on TB and HIV.

To achieve this the IFRC Country Cluster Support Team will work closely with think-tanks, formal and informal networks and will initiate discussions on key topics of humanitarian concern. IFRC will offer Moscow or Minsk as a platform for regional or global thematic events, conferences and workshops.
In cooperation with the World Bank, academia and sector leads on issues of ageing populations, the Russian Red Cross and the IFRC will conduct a participatory research into what it is like to be an older person in Russia. This analysis will contribute to designing messages and interventions that promote greater responsiveness of policies, services and assistance to the needs and capabilities of older people.

Through this plan, IFRC will continue to develop partnerships with governmental and intergovernmental bodies including those of CIS, aiming to deliver joint activities in migration, health, trans-border cooperation in disasters, strengthen the legal status, and disseminate Red Cross Red Crescent principles and values.

Collaboration will be strengthened with Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) member states (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan) in disaster response, promotion of International Disaster Response Law, and population movement. It is expected that through the continued collaboration with CSTO a guidelines document will be produced for how to engage National Societies during emergency response operations. Greater uptake will be ensured in the CSTO organised drills and simulation exercises to test and adjust these guidelines and improve collaboration.

Red Cross Red Crescent representation and visibility in national, regional and international Russian-speaking media and social media will be significantly increased, with training and capacity building in communications and media relations for National Society staff. Round-tables, workshops, masterclasses and media presentations will be organised on different occasion such as World Red Cross Red Crescent Day, World Disaster Report, World Migrants Day, World TB day, World AIDS day.
STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

ENSURE A STRONG IFRC

IFRC reinforces its institutional commitment to:

1. Compliance with highest standards of accountability 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 wide-ranging monitoring and evaluation methodologies.

2. Amenability to key management performance indicators, and adoption of 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.

3. Full adherence to IFRC’s Fraud and Corruption Prevention and Control policy and facilitation of effective risk management, as well as 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 and Response of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse policy that ensures every necessary step is taken to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse by IFRC personnel, and adequately response to those incidents it cannot prevent. The policy prioritizes the well-being of the survivor and the 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.
Contact information of the IFRC Country office, for partners who wish to find out more

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