

Organisational Capacity Assessment
&
Certification Process
Evaluation

15 October 2019

Acronyms and abbreviations

BOCA	Branch Organisational Capacity Assessment
CCST	Country Cluster Support Teams
CNE	National Emergency Commission (Costa Rica)
CO	Country Offices
CRCS	Costa Rican Red Cross Society
CSD	Case Study Development
EMT	Evaluation Management Team
ET	Evaluation Team
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
KI	Key Informant
KII	Key Informant Interview
LRC	Lebanese Red Cross
MRCS	Myanmar Red Cross Society
NS/NSs	National Society/National Societies
NSD	National Society Development
NSIA	National Society Investment Alliance
OCAC	Organisational Capacity Assessment & Certification
OD	Organisational Development
PER	Preparedness for Effective Response
PNS	Partner National Society/Partner National Societies
PSK	Policy, Strategy and Knowledge
RCRC	Red Cross and Red Crescent
RRI	Regional Resilience Initiative
SAF	Safer Access Framework
SAT	Self-Assessment Tool
STAR	System for Transformation and Results
ToR	Terms of Reference

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Executive Summary

As part of the adoption of its 10-year strategy, Strategy 2020, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) agreed to develop an independently validated Federation-wide peer review mechanism. This mechanism, the Organisational Capacity Assessment & Certification (OCAC) was deemed vital for the success of Strategy 2020 - in particular, the Strategy's Enabling Action 1 ("to build strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies") as it identifies opportunities for improvement which are expected to result in Societies *doing more, doing better and reaching further*.

The general objective of the OCAC process is twofold: first, to enable National Societies to assess their own organisational capacity, performance and relevance in their country so as to determine opportunities for self-development; and second, to ensure that all National Societies commit and comply with a comprehensive set of organisational minimal standards and thus to protect/improve the performance of the overall Federation network.

The development of OCAC began in 2010, in which the IFRC drew on experiences from the voluntary, public, and business sectors in relation to self, peer, and third party evaluations, including within the Red Cross Red Crescent network. The aim was to identify expectations of the functioning and impact of a modern organisation, and to establish benchmarks against which all National Societies could be assessed. In 2015 the IFRC Governing Board approved the minimum standard benchmarks considered valid for all 191-member Societies, thereby defining an organisational culture for the network at large.

The benefits for a National Society undergoing OCAC are that it provides precision and focus in its efforts to become a strong and sustainable service provider. In this regard, the OCAC framework supports National Societies to better tackle existing and future vulnerability in the communities they serve. While supporting individual National Society's with their National Society Development (NSD) needs, OCAC has also allowed the IFRC to obtain a picture of its network-wide strengths and areas of improvement. This information is used not only to inform how best the IFRC as a whole can better support National Societies at a technical level, but has allowed strategic decisions to be made relating to overall NSD support.

To date, more than 120 National Societies have conducted an OCAC capacity self-assessment (Phase I) with some of those Societies having done so more than once. Four out of those Societies have met the minimum standards and qualified for the Phase II (impact peer review stage), and three of them (Macedonia, Georgia and Costa Rica) have been certified by the IFRC Governing Board for a period of five years.

The IFRC and its Secretariat is currently redefining its orientation and strategies, notably through the development of Strategy 2030 and the rethinking of the IFRC Secretariat's National Society Development strategy. Such initiatives highlight both the importance of NSD for the network, as well as the need to better understand how the OCAC process can be improved for the future and to support Strategy 2030. To this end, in June 2019 the IFRC National Society Development, Support and Coordination Unit, within the Policy, Strategy and Knowledge Department commissioned an independent evaluation of the OCAC process.

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the OCAC process, and to identify the extent to which it has supported National Society efforts to become strong and sustainable service providers. The evaluation also aimed to provide key lessons and recommendations to improve the process itself, strengthen the support provided before, during and after the OCAC process, and improve coherence with other NSD initiatives.

An evaluation team consisting of three people (an independent external consultant, the Secretary General of the Tanzanian Red Cross Society, and the Deputy Secretary General of the Georgian Red Cross Society) were appointed to carry out the evaluation. An IFRC evaluation management team supported, managed and oversaw the evaluation process to ensure it upheld the IFRC Framework for Evaluation standards.

The evaluation took place between June and September 2019, and allowed all National Societies that have undergone an OCAC Phase I assessment to contribute to the evaluation findings (with a special focus on those that have conducted a self-assessment more than once) and those that have undergone a Phase II impact peer review and certification.

The evaluation method was primarily qualitative in nature with an appropriate consultative methodology designed for each stakeholder category as shown below.

Stakeholder category	Main consultation method
117 National Societies	Online survey
Focus National Societies (15)	Semi-structured interviews plus online survey
Costa Rica, Myanmar and Lebanon National Societies	Country visit Case study development
Movement and external key informants	Semi-structured interviews

An online survey was developed as a mechanism to ensure that all National Societies that have gone through the OCAC process were consulted for the evaluation. Fifty-two (52) National Societies completed the survey representing a 44 percent response rate.

A total of ninety (90) key informant interviews were conducted over the course of the evaluation. In addition to general key informant interviews, in-depth interviews were conducted with the National Societies of Uganda, Swaziland, Senegal, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Macedonia, Kyrgyzstan, Iran, Jordan and Iraq.

Field visits were undertaken in Costa Rica (16-20 July), Myanmar (25-28 August) and Lebanon (2-5 September) leading to a detailed OCAC case study for each of those National Societies. In October 2019 the evaluation team presented the main findings, conclusions, and recommendations to stakeholder audiences in Geneva and the Regions (the latter remotely).

In terms of overall findings and conclusions, the evaluation established the following:

From a *relevance* perspective, the evaluation established that the OCAC process has been highly relevant to a significant majority of National Societies (92 percent of Societies found OCAC *relevant* to their NSD requirements). The process has met the majority (87 percent) of National Societies NSD *expectations*, and the methodology employed has generally been well-suited to the majority (83 percent) of National Society needs. The main reasons for the tool’s relevancy relate to its ability to identify critical capacity strengths and weaknesses across a comprehensive range of relevant NSD areas; as well as its appropriateness in helping address NSD and change aspirations.

OCAC’s relevancy as an institution-building instrument for long-term NSD as well as a catalyst for initiating and securing change is both well established and appreciated by users. However, a significant number of National Societies felt that the tool (methodology and processes) were in need of revision if OCAC is to maintain its relevancy for the future.

From an *efficiency* perspective, most National Societies confirmed that investing in the OCAC process was a good use of National Society human and financial resources (91 percent and

94 percent respectively). This confirms OCAC's 'high and added value' status in supporting NSD aspirations. Reasons given for this mostly centred on OCAC's value in highlighting critical NSD weakness areas and compelling Societies to confront and address issues of institutional concern that otherwise might be ignored or missed.

Many National Societies felt the benefit of investing in the process far outweighed the initial investment made (95 percent of Societies reported that engaging in the process was a very good overall investment). However, the continuing decline in OCAC resourcing has negatively impacted on the IFRC's (Geneva and Regions) ability to effectively support NSD efforts and jeopardises OCAC's good reputation along with the excellent results secured to date.

In terms of *effectiveness*, the evaluation established that the vast majority of recommendations made following the self-assessment exercise (Phase I) were recognised as being important to NSD needs. While ninety-two (92) percent of Societies found the OCAC findings recommendations acceptable, 13 percent of National Societies have not acted on them. There has been less success in translating Phase I findings and recommendations into plans of action, which has been attributed to methodological/process limitations and very limited IFRC follow-up to National Societies following Phase I.

Importantly, OCAC has contributed to enabling many National Societies to both develop and implement strategy, with findings from assessments proving instrumental in supporting National Societies to develop concrete strategic plans. Eighty-seven (87) percent of National Societies reported that engaging in the OCAC process had had a positive impact on their strategic development processes.

In terms of helping National Societies assess capacity and/or performance, the *capacity* dimension has been well covered through OCAC, but concerns exist over the tool's lack of orientation to measuring service delivery or performance (during Phase I) and is an issue that a number of key informants feel should be addressed. Greater effectiveness could also be secured through ensuring better OCAC cohesion with other Movement supported development processes, namely the International Committee of the Red Cross' Safer Access Framework.

From an *impact* perspective, while most National Societies felt that OCAC had helped improve programme and service delivery, few were able to say which services or in what ways. Twenty-five (25) percent of National Societies felt the process had not helped with the delivery of programmes and services primarily because Phase I did not have this orientation. This said, the overall 'continuous improvement' aspect of the tool has enabled National Societies to chart and progress positive, meaningful and measurable impact across a range of NSD capacity attributes, that in many cases have highlighted areas of service delivery that require improvement. A current barrier to securing greater impact relates to the confidentiality of a National Society's Phase I findings, which inhibits institutional learning and prevents greater operational synergies.

From a *sustainability* perspective, the majority of National Societies felt that the changes secured through the OCAC process were considered sustainable, but these related mostly to structural issues (aspects of policy or legal status) rather than any additional secured financial resourcing (23 percent of Societies reported that changes following the process were *not* sustainable). National Societies considered the lack of secure financial resources to be the most significant barrier to their sustainability.

While many recipient National Societies *and* supporting Partner National Societies highlighted OCAC's role in enabling the provision of essential technical and financial NSD resourcing, partner support levels differ considerably across the regions and are often orientated to the supporting partners' strategic interests (e.g. projects) rather than overall NSD efforts.

In overall conclusion, National Societies confirm that the OCAC process is highly relevant and important to their ongoing National Society Development efforts. There is strong evidence to indicate that the first general OCAC objective 'to enable National Societies to assess their own organisational capacity, performance and relevance in their country so as to determine opportunities for self-development', has been *well* secured.

In terms of the second OCAC objective, 'to ensure that all National Societies commit and comply with a comprehensive set of organisational minimal standards and thus to protect/improve the performance of the overall Federation network', good progress has been made (117 out of 191 have participated in OCAC), however, after nearly 10 years and with only 3 National Societies attaining certification, there is a need to both modernise and accelerate the OCAC initiative.

This report makes eight recommendations considered essential to improving the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the OCAC process. In summary form, these are:

1. The OCAC process needs to be explicitly reframed, re-designed and expanded as a tool for supporting National Society change and development.
2. Following Recommendation 1, the OCAC process and accompanying methodology should incorporate an underlying change management strategy.
3. The IFRC Secretariat needs to re-orientate and strengthen its existing Geneva and Regional Office (including CCSTs and COs) NSD human resources to better support the OCAC process and wider National Society Development.
4. The OCAC tool, methodology and accompanying guides should be reviewed, revised and updated.
5. The IFRC Secretariat should prioritise the resourcing of the OCAC process and National Society Development in general to ensure alignment with Strategy 2030.
6. The OCAC process needs to be modified to ensure aspects of National Society service delivery are more explicitly assessed and there is an appropriate focus on National Society relevance and community engagement and accountability.
7. The certification aspect of the OCAC process should be reviewed and reformed.
8. The confidentiality aspects of the OCAC process need to be reviewed with a new focus on openly sharing National Society findings and assessment reports as a means of ensuring wider institutional synergies.

1. Introduction and background

As part of the adoption of its 10-year strategy, Strategy 2020, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) agreed to develop an independently validated Federation-wide peer review mechanism. This mechanism, the Organisational Capacity Assessment & Certification (OCAC) was deemed vital for the success of Strategy 2020 - in particular, the Strategy's Enabling Action 1 ("to build strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies") as it identifies opportunities for improvement which are expected to result in Societies *doing more, doing better and reaching further*.¹ The general objective of the OCAC process is twofold: first, to enable National Societies (NSs) to assess their own organisational capacity, performance and relevance in their country so as to determine opportunities for self-development; and second, to ensure that all NSs commit and comply with a comprehensive set of organisational minimal standards and thus to protect/improve the performance of the overall Federation network.²

The development of OCAC began in 2010, in which the IFRC drew on experiences from the voluntary, public, and business sectors in relation to self, peer, and third party evaluations, including within the Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) network. The aim was to identify expectations of the functioning and impact of a modern organisation, and to establish benchmarks against which all NSs could be assessed. In this regard, the OCAC framework supports NSs to become strong and sustainable service providers to better tackle existing and future vulnerability in the communities they serve. Between 2010 and 2011 the OCAC methodology was developed and piloted in 14 countries. In 2015 the IFRC Governing Board approved the minimum standard benchmarks considered valid for all 191-member Societies, thereby defining an organisational culture for the network at large.³

The OCAC process consists of two phases: Phase I which is a self-assessment of a NSs' capacities; and Phase II which is a peer review of the relevance for and impact on vulnerable groups in the country. A successful Phase II is followed by certification by the IFRC Governing Board. Minimum standards are set for each phase, but take into account the specific environmental and operational context of the National Society. The Phase I process acknowledges five compound organisational capacities ('core capacities') that are essential for the successful functioning of a National Society. These are the capacities to: *exist; organise; relate to others and mobilize resources; perform; and adapt and grow*. Each core capacity consists of a wide range of individual capacities and skills which are referred to as 'attributes'. The term attribute covers the various/minimum requirements and capacities that should be possessed by a NS as a prerequisite to achieving proficiency in a given core capacity. The number of attributes varies depending on the capacity under definition.

The OCAC process begins with each NS undergoing a detailed self-assessment which reveals the NS's strengths, weaknesses, and potential within its own context. Every capacity deficit that is discovered represents an opportunity for development and growth. The tool asks a mixed group of individuals from within a NS to assess basic organisational capacities against a sliding scale of increasing organisational capacity, measured from A (weak) to E (excellent). The benchmark approved by the Governing Board is level C.⁴ On this basis, the NS is able to define a tailor-made organisational development and capacity building plan which also serves

¹ IFRC Strategy 2020.

² Source: Building Strong National Societies. OCAC Brief v10 May 2014.

³ The 2009 Nairobi General Assembly's decision 14.2 requested "the Secretary General to develop an independently validated Federation-wide peer review mechanism to accredit and rate National Societies for approval by the Governing Board".

⁴ In cases where a NS is unable for reasons outside of its control to reach level C despite best efforts e.g. due to government intervention, level of country development, security etc., the benchmark on a specific attribute(s) can be lowered.

as a tool to coordinate the organisational development (OD) support from interested stakeholders.

Phase II - the peer review process - looks beyond a NS's *capacities*, and focusses on how the Society uses its capacities to perform within its specific context. The process asks a National Society to convince its peers that it has reached a high level of achievement on four performance dimensions: (1) the level of internal cohesion in the Society; (2) the relevance of the services it delivers within its environment; (3) a proven commitment to continuously improve the quality of those services; and (4) a credible effort to bring those services to scale.

To date, more than 120 NSs have conducted an OCAC capacity self-assessment (Phase I) with some of those Societies having done so more than once.⁵ Four out of those Societies have met the minimum standards and qualified for the Phase II (impact peer review), and three of them (Macedonia, Georgia and Costa Rica) have been certified by the IFRC Governing Board for a period of five years. The benefits for a NS undergoing OCAC are that it provides precision and focus in its efforts to become a strong and sustainable service provider.

While supporting individual NSs with their National Society Development (NSD) needs, OCAC has also allowed the IFRC to obtain a picture of its network-wide strengths and areas of improvement. This information is used not only to inform how best the IFRC as a whole can better support NSs at a technical level, but has allowed strategic decisions to be made relating to overall NSD support. The IFRC and its Secretariat is currently redefining its orientation and strategies, notably through the development of Strategy 2030 and the rethinking of the IFRC Secretariat's NSD strategy. Such initiatives highlight both the importance of NSD for the network, as well as the need for an evaluation of the OCAC process to determine how it can be improved for the future and to support Strategy 2030.

2. Purpose and scope of the evaluation

In June 2019 the IFRC NS Development, Support and Coordination Unit, within the Policy, Strategy and Knowledge (PSK) Department commissioned an independent evaluation of the OCAC process. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the OCAC process, and to identify the extent to which it has supported NSs efforts to become strong and sustainable service providers.⁶ The evaluation would also provide key lessons and recommendations to improve the process itself, strengthen the support provided before, during and after the OCAC process, and improve coherence with other NSD initiatives. The evaluation allowed all NSs that have undergone an OCAC Phase I assessment to contribute to the evaluation findings (with a special focus on those that have conducted a self-assessment more than once) and those that have undergone a Phase II impact peer review and certification.

An evaluation team (ET) consisting of three people⁷ not directly involved in the development and roll-out of the OCAC process were appointed to carry out the evaluation. An IFRC evaluation management team (EMT) supported, managed and oversaw the evaluation process to ensure it upheld the IFRC Framework for Evaluation standards. The evaluation findings will be used by the IFRC, presented to the Working Group on Strong National Societies and Volunteering and to the IFRC Governing Board, and shared more widely within the wider IFRC (Secretariat and NSs) and with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The evaluation took place between June and September 2019.

⁵ See Annex A for a list of NSs that have engaged in the OCAC process.

⁶ The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluation can be found at Annex B.

⁷ Including an independent external consultant as team leader.

3. Evaluation method

The evaluation method was primarily qualitative in nature.⁸ The main approaches used were semi-structured interviews (face to face and via telecon) and a global online survey. Field visits were conducted in Costa Rica, Myanmar and Lebanon leading to case study development (CSD) of those National Societies. The outline method and approach to the evaluation comprised the following key stages:

Inception Report (IR): an IR was developed to outline the overall methodology and approach to the evaluation. The IR included an evaluation matrix, draft field tools/survey design, and a case study development template. Interview protocols, question guides, recording templates, and coding matrices were also developed as part of the inception process. The IR was approved by the EMT in June 2019.

Literature review: a desktop study exercise was conducted to assist with the development of the IR and was ongoing throughout the duration of the evaluation. Key literature references may be found at Annex C.

Stakeholder mapping exercise: a stakeholder mapping exercise was undertaken to identify key informant (KI) categories, following which an appropriate consultative methodology was designed as shown below.

Stakeholder category	Main consultation method
117 National Societies	Online survey
15 National Societies ⁹	Semi-structured interviews plus online survey
Costa Rica, Myanmar and Lebanon National Societies	Country visit Case study development
Movement and external key informants	Semi-structured interviews

Online survey: an online survey was developed as a mechanism to ensure that all NSs that have gone through the OCAC process were consulted for the evaluation. The survey was translated into four languages (French, Spanish, Russian and Arabic) and piloted with one African NS during the inception phase. The survey was launched to 117 NSs via the five Regional Offices (ROs) on 16 April 2019 and remained open until 8 September 2019.¹⁰ Survey results were only available to the Evaluation Team Leader. A total of 52 NS (44%) completed the survey - considered a good response rate¹¹ - and indicates that answers provided are both representative and generalisable.

Semi-structured interviews: semi-structured interviews (face-to-face and via telecom) were conducted in adherence with the Evaluation Matrix. All KIs were assured of confidentiality and advised that neither they nor their NS would be identified in the report. A total of 90 KI interviews were conducted over the course of the evaluation, the full list of which is contained at Annex D. In addition to general KIs, in-depth interviews were conducted with the NSs of Uganda, Swaziland, Senegal, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Macedonia, Kyrgyzstan, Iran, Jordan and Iraq.

⁸ With the exception of Question 3.6 in which a primary quantitative approach was used.
⁹ The initial target list comprised NS of *Uganda, Swaziland, Senegal, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Macedonia, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus, Iran, Jordan, Qatar, El Salvador, Uruguay and Jamaica. Iraq* was added later. NSs that responded to interview requests are shown in italics.
¹⁰ The survey deadline was extended several times with ROs following up with NSs on late responses.
¹¹ The average response rate for online surveys is estimated at 29%.

Field visits: The ET visited three countries - Costa Rica 16-20 July; Myanmar 25-28 August; and Lebanon 2-5 September.¹² The purpose of the field visits was to obtain detailed data for the case studies (see below).

Case study development: three case studies were developed using a descriptive case study methodology and format.¹³ The studies may be found at Annexes E (Costa Rica), F (Myanmar), and G (Lebanon). Permission was sought from the NSs to use the data obtained in an open, non-confidential manner for the report. All case studies once fully drafted were submitted to the relevant NS NSD Focal Points for validation. In this regard, the case studies are considered to be accurate reflections of how each NS has engaged in the OCAC process.

Data collection, assembly and analysis: data collection, assembly and analysis were framed by the agreed evaluation criteria - Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability; adhering to Movement Frameworks for Evaluations and other best practice approaches.

Debriefing presentation: In October 2019 the ET Team Leader provided a presentation of findings, conclusions, and recommendations to the EMT plus other stakeholders (including a number on line).

Evaluation limitations: an IR risk analysis identified a number of risks to securing the evaluation objectives along with mitigating measures as shown in the table below:

Risk	Mitigation measure identified	Outcome
A low survey return rate from NSs will significantly reduce the quantity and quality of data available for the evaluation.	The EMT will send an invitation to all stakeholders to partake in the survey with a timely completion request. RO NSD Focal Points (FPs) will follow up with National Societies.	The IFRC communication protocols severely delayed the launch of the survey. NSs were informed of the survey at different times, some very late in the evaluation process.
IFRC/NSs unable to schedule country visits within the 10-day allocated time window.	More time is allocated to undertake field trips (it is preferable that country visits flow sequentially) or take place after the bulk of the data gathering has taken place and report drafting is underway.	The Costa Rica and Myanmar field visits went ahead as planned. The Iraq visit was abandoned due to visa difficulties. Lebanon was selected late in the process resulting in only the TL visiting. It was not possible to arrange sequential country visits.
Fully completed stakeholder matrices are essential for ensuring interviews are undertaken in a timely way.	Rescheduling of key tasks and milestones.	Identification of KIs from the 15 NS selected took considerably longer than expected. This had a significant knock-on effect on evaluation timing and ability to interview key informants.

4. Main Findings

The following section of the report presents the main findings arising through the evaluation. To facilitate report structure and aid reader friendliness, the ToR evaluation questions are used as sub-section headings. Detailed findings from the country visits may be found in the individual case studies. As a visual and sensemaking aid, charts and figures relevant to the evaluation areas of focus and questions are included in the main report body. Charts are

¹² Lebanon was selected at short notice to replace Iraq due to difficulties in obtaining visas for the latter country.

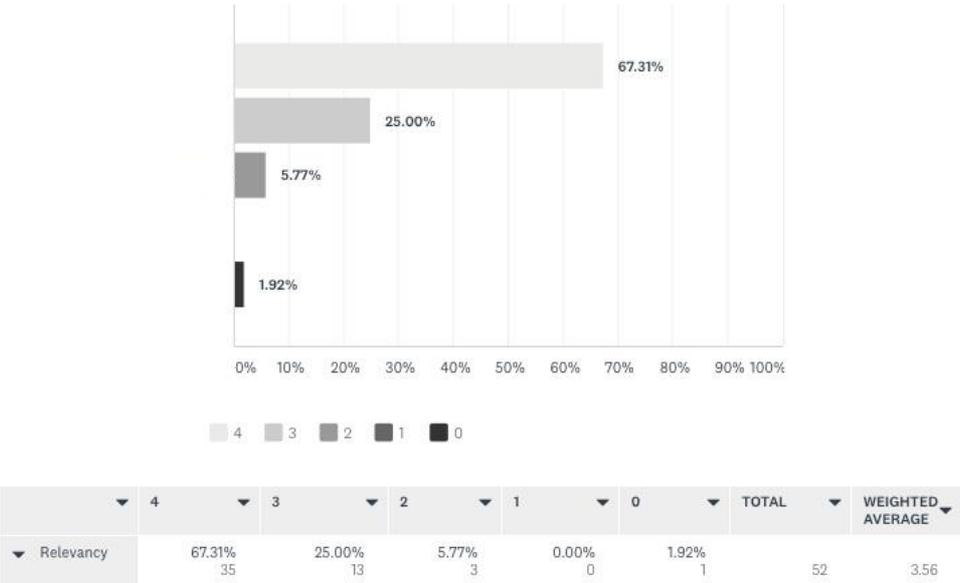
¹³ See: World Bank. (undated). Case Study evaluations. Washington, D.C.

derived from the online survey and reflect the views of 52/117 National Societies. Overall analysis is derived from the triangulation of methods and approaches described in Section 3. The rating scale accompanying each chart is: 4 = strongly agree, 3 = agree, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree, 0 = not relevant.

4.1 Relevance

4.1.1 Was OCAC a useful process for National Societies, and relevant to their needs and expectations?

Figure 1: Relevancy of the OCAC process to National Societies



As figure 1 illustrates, a significant majority of NSs strongly agreed (67%) and agreed (25%) that the OCAC process was *relevant* to their needs. The main reasons given for the tool’s relevancy related to: (i) its ability to identify critical capacity strengths and weaknesses across a comprehensive range of relevant NSD areas; and (ii) its appropriateness in helping address a NS’s development and change aspirations, whether proactive (i.e. planned development) or reactive (i.e. responding to crisis) in nature. Other relevancy factors included the tools ability to reinforce ‘global NS cohesion’ by requiring all NSs to use the same assessment criteria and be measured against the same standards.¹⁴ Illustrative examples of why some NSs found the tool specifically relevant are given below:

“My NS was just recovering from a crisis when the OCAC process was undertaken. this process helped my NS come up with action points that formed the basis of the recovery period”.

“OCAC was one of the triggering factors in initiating a major reform process. It establishes a consensus for the first time among the leadership of the NS that there is a major deficit in terms of organizational capacities, and contributed towards creating a sense of urgency for much needed change”.

The above examples further underscore the process’ relevancy as an institution-building instrument for long-term NSD, as well as a catalyst for initiating and securing change. The process was also considered highly relevant for the inclusive way it enabled branches (volunteers and staff) to contribute to the self-assessment of the NS’s weaknesses and

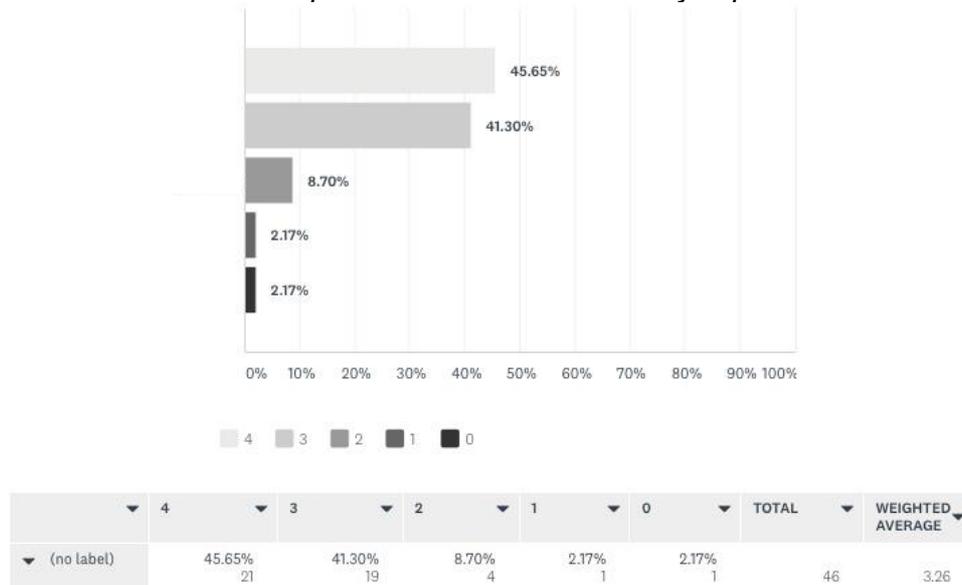
¹⁴ In this sense the tool has had a great ‘levelling’ quality.

strengths in a meaningful and informed way through increased volunteer/staff participation.¹⁵ The following comment makes this clear:

“The OCAC allowed for an open and honest discussions across all the stakeholders of the NS and eventually allowed for us to identify of strengths and weakness and work in building on them”.

However, a number of NSs commented that in hindsight they would have likely assembled a different team to conduct the self-assessment: for example, involving more volunteers, leadership and governance¹⁶; and using dedicated finance staff to assess the financial attributes as a separate process to the main approach. In terms of whether the OCAC process met NS expectations, figure 2 below shows some 87% of NSs agreed that their expectations were largely met.

Figure 2: Extent to which OCAC process met National Society expectations



An illustrative (and representative) example of why one European NS found this to be the case is provided below, and further supports the earlier assertion of the tool’s relevancy to NS growth and development, as well as the benefits of its inclusive, participatory approach:

“The OCAC process met our NSD expectations . . . we were in the process of developing new Strategic Plan (2012-2016) and we needed to identify not only the needs, but also our strengths, weaknesses and gaps along with available and potential resources, to define priorities against the emerging needs and trends not only local, but also global ones, to make analysis and incorporate them in the Strategic Plan. The OCAC findings and recommendations were effectively used for this purpose. . . . the OCAC process enhanced better understanding of the NS leadership, staff, volunteers and members about the existing capacities according to five core organisational capacities, identified deficits and through discussions and reaching consensus to define priorities and translate them into the decisions of the leadership for further development and growth”.

Some KIs felt that better guidance on when to undertake the process would be useful, for example, being prepared to suspend or pause the OCAC process should a crisis within the

¹⁵ Unexpected outcomes of this process include capacity improvements among volunteers and staff, and serving as a useful induction process and organisational benchmark for new, often incoming leadership (Presidents, Secretary Generals).

¹⁶ The types of participant, as well as the numbers, varied considerably among National Societies, with some NSs reporting small numbers of process participants, while one NS reported involving 50 people.

country occur; but beyond this point KIs were highly satisfied with the relevancy of the tool to their National Society.

4.1.2 Was OCAC adopted by and relevant to all types of NSs (size, type of services, context, structure etc.)? How did perceptions of the tool vary amongst different NSs and, if so, why?

A detailed analysis of this inquiry area was limited by the fact that the IFRC does not hold consolidated data relating to the size, type of services, context, and structure of its member National Societies.¹⁷ This limitation notwithstanding, the evaluation established that most NSs were generally satisfied with the strategic rationale and design of the OCAC instrument as a means to enable self-development and organisational growth, with clear indications that the process was *broadly* relevant to *all types* of National Society.

Exceptions to this assertion tended to relate to NSs that found the attribute indicators either too subjective or not relevant to them; along with the impossibility of attaining a next level due to specific contextual factors (e.g. the means description was not attainable); and/or the impossibility of maintaining the minimum standard once reached.¹⁸ Interestingly, these observations were mostly made by western/northern NSs, and while this categorisation does not necessarily reflect a NS's size, type of services, context, structure etc., it may reflect how a NS views the tool i.e. as a flexible one to be used alongside other processes (change approaches as well as Movement tools), or as a rigid one that requires strict adherence to meeting set standards.¹⁹ These varying perceptions suggest that there is merit in ROs - or more specifically Country Offices (COs) and/or Country Cluster Support Teams (CCSTs) - more systematically tailoring and contextualising the tool to meet the needs and expectations of the NSs that they support.

4.1.3 Was the methodology used within OCAC (phased approach, assessment tools, level of minimum standards, certification, validation of results) a suitable one and appreciated by the users?

The multiple dimensions of this inquiry line formed a substantive part of the evaluation. Issues relating to the overall methodology, assessment tools, level of minimum standards, phased approach, certification, and result validation are considered in turn below.

4.1.3.1 Overall methodology

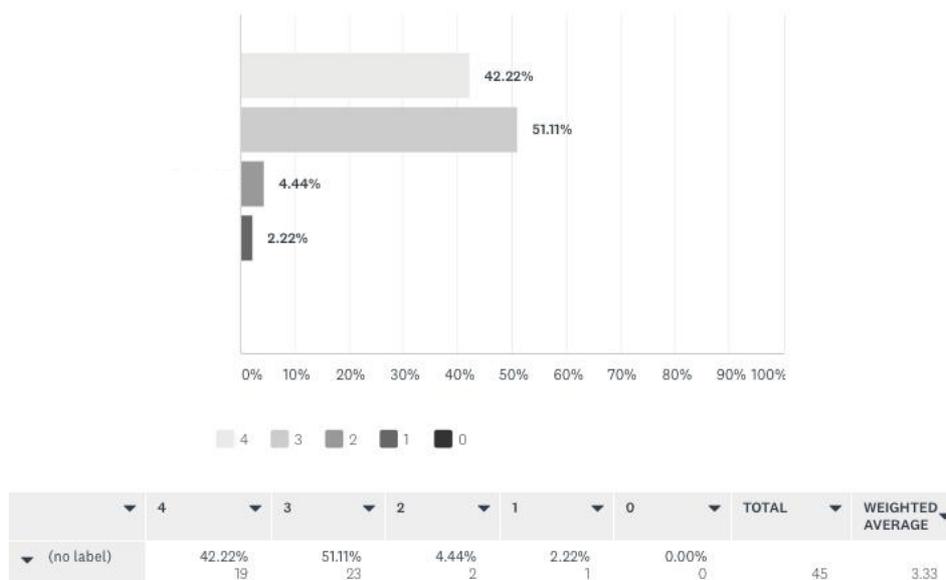
As figure 3 below illustrates, the vast majority (93%) of key informants felt the OCAC methodology was well-suited to their NS's needs.

¹⁷ Although select data on number of volunteers and staff, income/expenditures, number of branches etc. is available on the Federation Databank and Reporting system: <http://data.ifrc.org/fdrs/>

¹⁸ Examples given primarily related to attributes of Financial Resource Mobilisation, particularly Business Continuity and Working Capital.

¹⁹ This may reflect a country's Uncertainty Avoidance. Countries exhibiting high Uncertainty Avoidance tend to have a preference and need for rules. For example, Denmark as a country has a very low Uncertainty Avoidance, whereas Bangladesh has a high one. Issues of tool cultural relevancy surfaced on a number of occasions during the evaluation and is considered in further sections of the report.

Figure 3: Extent to which OCAC methodology was well-suited to a National Society's needs



Many KIs valued the tool's methodology for its 'reflectively analytical improvement orientated' approach, with one informant summarising this for many:

"It has huge value in forcing the organisation to have a conversation with itself across multiple levels and themes and taking the NS through different lenses of understanding".

This 'lens' analogy was used extensively by KIs when explaining the usefulness of OCAC, with one NS noting how the tool was not just an 'eye opener' for NSs, but had also provided a common NSD narrative for use by all NSs regardless of their particular circumstances or context. A number of NS KIs also commented positively on the level and quality of support provided by the OCAC trained facilitators, and how they had greatly helped NSs to better understand both the methodology and the process aspects of the tool. The main concerns raised by KIs regarding the methodology related to an overall lack of clarity about the process *per se* i.e. its overall purpose, objective and goals;²⁰ a need for better clarity on what NSs needed to do to start the process; a need for more effective communication from GVA/ROs post Phase I; and the *extensive* time taken between the self-assessment and peer review stages (which can take many years).

One of the most frequent comments relating to methodology concerned the way the tool was presented i.e. as one of 'measurement and certification' rather than as one for facilitating change,²¹ with many KIs pointing out that while the tool is very useful for organisational diagnosis, it is at this point that "the work really begins". This led to suggestions that OCAC should be explicitly reframed as a 'change process' (and given a *dynamic* orientation rather than a *static* one) if it is to retain its relevancy for the future²², as well as ensure that the IFRC's global NSD agenda was linked to other membership holistic change processes rather than being perceived as isolated from other programmes and services.

The above findings lead to Recommendations 1 and 2 in Section 6 of the report.

²⁰ For example, was it a methodology for obtaining certification or one of ongoing NSD.

²¹ A significant majority of KIs felt that the tool should be seen as one of change rather than assessment.

²² The tool's originators commented that this focus on development/change through assessment was the original intention, however, it has become clear that over the years the measurement and certification aspects have come to dominate the process.

In close association with the 'change' comments above, a number of KIs felt the methodology lacked effective follow-up tools²³ to help support NSs in developing their initial action plans stemming from post-Phase I findings and recommendations.²⁴ Other methodological limitations included a lack of process change advisers who could support NSs with transformational change until they developed sufficient momentum/capacity to carry the process forward themselves. This finding leads to Recommendation 3 in Section 6 of the report.

4.1.3.2 Assessment tools and the level of minimum standards

The OCAC Phase I – self-assessment tool (SAT) is the NSs self-assessment part of the OCAC process and is intended to capture a NSs strengths and weaknesses in relation to a wide range of organisational capacities. KIs reported that the SAT was the most useful aspect of the OCAC process, with both NSs and OCAC facilitators appreciating how it aided analytical depth of a broad and relevant range of institutional capacities; and specifically the way it helped diagnose structural issues, highlighted financial realities, and pointed to necessary change that the NS, including branches, needed to undertake (even though it forced many “to confront and accept weaknesses”).²⁵

In terms of SAT improvement, most NSs and OCAC facilitators felt that the attribute range (A-E) and their accompanying descriptions required updating. Reasons given for this related to NSs finding it difficult to 'locate' themselves within the range provided and what was actually meant by the wording of some descriptions. One European NS expands on this concern:

“The wording of attributes did not always lend itself to consistent interpretation, with some attributes ranging from being specific to very broad. The focus of the wording is on the existence of policies and systems rather than their effectiveness. Although to achieve the benchmark rating in the self-assessment discussion, consistency of use was also required. While some attributes were easily scored at face value, others were much more nuanced. The wording is also trying to be relevant to all NS around the world, with varying levels of resource and capacity so some of the wording was not ambitious enough or relevant for us”.

The concern over attribute appropriateness was not limited to wording. It was clear from the country visits and select KI responses that a number of attributes were felt to be culturally 'western' in origin and did not reflect how 'eastern' organisations were structured or operate.²⁶ Other KIs felt that in places the tool lacked coherency. These comments centred on what was perceived to be a disjointed approach to compiling the range of attribute indicators (as opposed to technical units developing attributes in a holistic/whole-tool way), which has resulted in the lack of a coherent focal range expected of a wide institutional lens. It is ironic to think that in

²³ One RO reported having to develop its own action plan template as this aspect was not part of the global process, which further illustrates the tool's limitations in supporting the change process.

²⁴ To some extent this has already been attempted by the Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO) which promoted the idea of an accompanying 'toolbox' aligned to each attribute area in response to NSs who needed a way of moving forward with an issue they had become 'stuck'. The toolbox included model guidelines in areas such as human resource development, finance development, volunteering development etc.

²⁵ The ET were often surprised by how many NSs reported being comfortable with, and accepting of, the reality and often 'negative' rating results of the Phase I process.

²⁶ This is likely because of the body of literature that the tool's originators drew on when developing the tool and is a common criticism/limitation of cross/multi-cultural organisational development processes. This view extended to aspects of the methodology, for example, the consensus and consultative approach to assessment that is advocated by the tool. A more multi-national team of tool developers may have produced a more pan-cultural tool, but even then, there will be critics.

an attempt to create a comprehensive tool, its developers may have inadvertently over-developed it, and reflects the view of some KIs that a 'leaner' set of attributes is called for.²⁷

Many KIs felt a particular limitation of the SAT was its focus on *management capacity* rather than *service delivery*, with individuals from both NSs and the IFRC suggesting the tool needed to be broadened to account for this dimension as a means of meaningfully assessing NS performance. One unintended consequence of the *management* focus has led to a perception of NSs aiming for the 'perfect bureaucracy', which several KIs pointed out is not the way in which NSs can necessarily operate given their varying contexts.

In terms of service delivery, it is important to note that the tool was initially designed to capture this analysis primarily by leading a NS through a process of reflecting on various services *through successive attribute progression*. This was to be accompanied by organisational dialogue, thus helping a NS determine extent to which its services met the needs and expectations of target communities. Indeed, the OCAC Facilitators Guide contains ample references to 'service' within attribute introductions, indicators and means that would support this assertion. However, the majority of references to 'service' are to be found in indicators 'C' and above, which implies a need to meet most minimum standards²⁸ before reflection on service delivery begins. This important issue is considered further in Section 4.1.3.4.

In terms of attaining the minimum standards, some KIs felt that even more 'advanced' NSs have little chance of reaching some of them, which makes the important 'service dialogue' aspect referred to above even less likely to occur. This concern with attaining minimum standards has caused a number of NSs to cease active involvement in the OCAC process simply because they feel there is no chance of obtaining certification²⁹, and reflects the view of many facilitators who feel that as a product OCAC has not been 'sold' particularly well (further supporting Recommendation 1).

The OCAC self-assessment guide for facilitators provides guidance to facilitators supporting NSs through the Phase I self-assessment process. The guide contains sections on *inter alia*: facilitating the self-assessment workshop; reporting on self-assessment findings; and the important and substantive section related to rating capacity, attributes and indicators. While OCAC facilitators greatly appreciated the guide's analytical depth, many lamented the fact that it had not been updated over the years, commenting that in its current form it did not provide sufficient guidance for effectively supporting the OCAC process and particularly the required change dimension referred to earlier (which further supports Recommendation 1).³⁰ Other specific points included insufficient guidance for peer-reviewers conducting the process and insufficient information about 'what happens next'. These findings lead to Recommendation 4 in Section 6 of the report.

4.1.3.3 Phased approach – Phase I

In addition to the phased approach aspect of the tool, this section considers how OCAC, as a process, was introduced to National Societies. In terms of the initial 2011/12 roll-out period, many KIs felt that the purpose and process of OCAC could have been better explained to National Societies. NSs were reported to be unclear as to the purpose of OCAC or what was involved, with many KIs citing a need for better information about the goal for each phase,

²⁷ The comprehensive list of institutional capacities plus the accompanying detailed descriptions as explanatory level notes has become complicated for users to understand, as evidenced by NSs views on its lack of clarity.

²⁸ And embark on Phase II in which the relevance of the services a NS delivers within its environment is considered.

²⁹ These views do not suggest the tool has not been useful for those NSs, but highlights issues with the progression nature of the tool from Phase I to Phase II.

³⁰ Some KIs suggested that the guidance notes should be updated along the lines of the Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change (YABC) toolkit.

clarifying when a phase starts and finishes (e.g. attaining all 'C' attributes for example), and the process for passing the next phase. This lack of clarity has contributed to a number of NSs viewing OCAC very much as a linear process - starting with self-assessment and ending with certification - which has had implications for both how the tool is perceived as well as how it has come to be used by National Societies. Some NSs have made the decision not to proceed to Phase II as they do not see any added value in continuing to go through the process.

KIs that had experienced Phase I valued the process for its structured approach to organisational diagnosis, proactive analytical nature, and suitability for engaging branch staff and volunteers in a meaningful way, thus ensuring whole NS engagement and contribution. One Americas NS makes this pan-NS dimension clear:

“The OCAC process gives the base of the pyramid [volunteers] a voice and allows them to present the realities of the issues as they see it from the local level. The volunteers have direct contact with the local communities and this makes it a more bottom-up approach . . . it allowed the regions to express their real feelings to the NS leadership. Success for us was how people participated in the process as a team.”

In terms of engaging in measures to strengthen capacities, this was not always a straightforward process for National Societies. Even when plans of action were developed (by no means always the case) staff resistance to change was a commonly cited challenge, which was often attributed to uncertainty about emergent organisational/hierarchical structures and the impact this might have on individuals' positions.³¹

Another key challenge faced by NSs through the phased approach was having the available human resources, time and funding to effectively address some of the identified improvement areas. This constraint caused some NSs to 'slow down' their OCAC-related progress aspirations simply because they could not afford the 'development versus service delivery' trade-off when it came to apportioning resources - no matter how important NSD was perceived to be. Another concern for NSs with the phased approach related to addressing NSD issues in a coherent way rather than sporadically, which tended to happen when there was no effective follow-up by the ROs or Geneva. This concern is voiced by one NS KI and reflects the views of many National Societies:

“The self-assessment largely met our expectations, and the workshop itself was a very successful event and well facilitated, but we would have expected some kind of follow-up/post Phase I conversation with IFRC”.

An associated concern that relates to both the requirement for OCAC support and meaningful resourcing (see below) concerns securing facilitators with the right type of profile and deep knowledge of OD, NSD, capacity building and change management skills.³² These findings leads to Recommendation 5 in Section 6 of the report and further support Recommendations 1 and 2.

The lack of IFRC 'follow-up' for the Phase I was one of the most commented on aspects of the whole OCAC process, with many KIs (IFRC, PNS and NS alike) expressing frustration with the decline in available support to National Societies. ROs in particular noted how this had “seriously impacted on how NSs have been able to engage in the OCAC process”, causing some NSs to return to 'business as usual' that was not always positive in character.³³ For many

³¹ One NS reported that resistance was overcome as people realised the 'inclusive' nature of the OCAC process and the fact that the process, if implemented correctly, accounted for their views and opinions.

³² Some OCAC facilitators were deemed to be 'too junior' by NS leadership and senior management.

³³ In recent years, ROs reported only being able to follow-up on monitoring or progress, not wider NSD support.

KIs, this situation was directly attributed to a decline in overall OCAC funding over recent years, which is made clear in the following statement:

IFRC's humanitarian business model over the years has created a range of systemic issues around the NSD agenda that arise from a central dichotomy. The resourcing of a Secretariat from predominantly programme funds has focussed attention on supporting short-term capacity building inputs to achieve short-term humanitarian impact pressures from donors as opposed to longer-term institutional strengthening work.³⁴

This issue is directly related to the future of global NSD and the role OCAC plays in ensuring NSs continue to develop and grow as per Strategy 2030 expectations.³⁵ This finding leads to Recommendation 5 in Section 6 of the report.

4.1.3.4 Phased approach – Phase II

National Societies that have succeeded in passing the initial Phase I self-assessment embark on Phase II - the peer review process that looks beyond a NS's *capacities*, and focusses on how the Society uses its capacities to perform within its specific context. In evaluating the Phase II approach, it is important to note that only four out of 117 NSs have qualified for it, and while it is incumbent on a NS to meet the minimum standards, this also may provide an indication that the overall process is not particularly efficient or well-suited to ensuring NSs secure certification in a *timely way* (and raises questions over the validity of certification as discussed further in Section 4.1.3.5 below).

Key informants that had been Phase II reviewers felt better guidance on process preparation, what the process involved, and what happens next was needed. Even experienced reviewers reportedly found it difficult to support NSs through the process as they did not quite understand what their role was. Other KIs felt that the review aspect (in some cases within 3-days) was too rushed, and that the peer-review report needed to be produced quicker (NSs can wait some 2-3 months for the report).³⁶ A number of KIs reported a need for a better link between the self-assessment and peer review phases, with several suggesting merging elements of Phase I and II, so that strategic effectiveness and having processes and systems in place were considered together rather than being seen as separate elements; a finding that supports removing the distinction between Phase I and Phase II as detailed in Recommendation 1.

There is, however, a valid counter argument regarding maintaining two distinctive phases, which needs to be considered in making any decision regarding the future structure of the OCAC process/tool. These include:

- Starting with a self-assessment allows the participating NS to keep the discussions internal, and only allows those NSs that are ready to be subjected to an external review/assessment to proceed to the next phase.
- Merging phase I and II would make the assessment longer (beyond the 3 days currently allocated for Phase I).
- Given the diversity of NS services, a review of services potentially requires a different methodology than the capacity assessment (Phase I). Merging both phases would either need to have one methodology for assessments of both the capacity and the services, or have one larger assessment with two very different types of methodologies.

³⁴ IFRC. (2019). National Society Development: Strengthening our last mile impact - A revitalized National Society Development Strategy. NSD Unit GVA. 30.1.2019.

³⁵ Given the Movement's interest in improving accountability processes (explicit in S2030) it is important to consider the (re-) inclusion of indicators that allow for direct assessment of NS accountability.

³⁶ The extensive country context aspect of the report was thought to be redundant and unnecessary.

In themselves, they are not reasons for maintaining the distinction between Phase I and Phase II, but help provide decision makers with a clear picture of key issues and potential challenges that will need to be addressed.

Other KI suggestions for Phase II improvement related to having peer reviewers who understand the ‘business and context’ of the NSs under review, which suggests peer reviewers from within the region would be most suitable for this function. Using this intra-regional modality (which already exists) provides opportunity for more effective cross-NS learning, as transferring learning between similar contexts is often more relevant than transferring learning across differing ones.³⁷ While not a specific recommendation, there is opportunity to explore peer-to-peer support mechanism similar to the those used in the IFRC’s Regional Resilience Initiative (RRI) to support NSs through the OCAC process assessments as well as the follow-up stages and other NSD initiatives.³⁸ A regional-wide peer-to-peer support cooperation and subsequent sharing of knowledge, learning and technical skills will likely result in stronger implementation of NSD work within National Societies.

Analysing aspects of service delivery: to begin with, it is important to state that Phase I was never intended to assess a NSs services in the way it assesses capacity attributes.³⁹ Nonetheless, issue of service delivery incorporation was raised multiple times by KIs across the regions, with many commenting that the tool’s ‘one size fits all’ approach was lacking for this omission; and a call for OCAC to contain a more structured approach to service delivery analysis. The following (representative) comments make this clear:

“If OCAC had real value, we feel it should have an emphasis on the effectiveness and quality of the services that the NS is delivering”. (European NS)

“If the tool had included NSs service delivery aspect, it would have brought more concrete results in terms of new programmes and different ways of working . . . we neglected the service delivery aspect and that was the weakness of the tool”. (Regional Office)

This is clearly a complex issue and a range of factors need to be considered if attempting service assessment through a redesign of the OCAC process. One key factor relates to the fact that there is no such thing as a ‘constant service quality’ and the fact that NS service performance differs over time. However, it is perfectly possible for example to assess the mandate (foundation and auxiliary role) of a NS to obtain a picture of its operational needs leading to an assessment of capacity in key areas (although the ‘snapshot’ nature of OCAC is not particularly well-suited to measuring performance in dynamic settings). These findings lead to Recommendation 6 in Section 6 of the report.

4.1.3.5 Certification

The purpose of certification is outlined in the 2013 NSD Framework: “The process of National Society Certification is an incentive for National Society development; National Societies achieving objective external certification through the OCAC process will demonstrate the excellence and relevance of their humanitarian work as well as the organizational processes that enable this, through an externally validated process. Such validation of their humanitarian credentials may be of value for National Societies in accessing further resources”. (p.29)

³⁷ Moreover, Phase II peer reviewers were believed to ‘learn just as much as those that were being assessed’.

³⁸ The IFRC Regional Resilience Initiative (RRI) was a 4-year endeavour funded by the Canadian Government and the Canadian Red Cross. The Initiative supported eleven NS in Southeast Asia with the overarching goal of reducing the impact of natural disasters on vulnerable communities.

³⁹ The NSD Framework 2013 outlines the importance of “analysis of the organization and its environment through a review of the organization’s mandate, vision, mission and positioning in its environment in relation to the needs of vulnerable people, and the gaps in service delivery by the National Society and other actors”.

The aspect of certification has come in for both praise and criticism.⁴⁰ Positively, some NSs and OCAC facilitators felt working towards and ultimately receiving certification was an important measure of having attained the highest standards. Others viewed certification as a source of NS pride and important for staff and volunteer motivation. A number of NSs saw the certificate as having 'sales value', especially among external partners and an aid for resource mobilisation.⁴¹ Others questioned the value of certification in a changing NS context, as the following observation makes clear:

"As for certification . . . things could change in the country context or the NS leadership could change . . . there are NSs that totally dropped from very good capacity to very weak capacity . . . how can we continue certification if everything changes in the National Society".

Several unexpected outcomes of having a certified process include: a rush for NSs to become certified in a race against peers, which has led to some NSs seeing certification as a goal in itself along with some recording 'highly unrealistic' self-assessment ratings; RO NSD Teams pressured by demanding NS Presidents and SGs; some NSs assuming that they will be rewarded by the IFRC once attainment has been secured; and NSs that have attained the certificate feeling 'isolated' as they grapple with a perception (perhaps misguided) that others see the NS as no longer needing any support from Movement partners. These varying opinions highlight a deeper issue related to whether the OCAC process is a certification exercise or a change tool - an important point as it has implications for how the tool needs to be presented and marketed in the future. These findings lead to Recommendation 7 in Section 6 of this report.

4.1.3.6 *Validation of results*

From an evaluative perspective, the requirements outlined in the Phase II process suggests a considerable time investment for peer-reviewers: the analytical inquiry areas and subsequent evaluative questions are deep, investigative ones, which in the ET's experience would take an experienced evaluation team several weeks of work. However, in practice, the OCAC peer-review teams undertake this work within a relatively short country visit supplemented by 'a few days' reading and preparation work. There is opportunity for improving this aspect of the process through Recommendations 1 and 2 (and by focusing less on the extensive country context aspect of the report).

4.1.3.7 *Confidentiality*

The issue of confidentiality is an important aspect of the OCAC process and is made clear to participants at the outset.⁴² It is understood that providing confidentiality assurances was a necessary consideration to ensure the OCAC process received initial NS and IFRC support,⁴³ however, many KIs believe issues of confidentiality are now preventing opportunities for leveraging learning for wider institutional synergies, as well as inhibiting the targeting of effective funding support from Movement partners.⁴⁴ The following representative KI observation makes this clear:

⁴⁰ So far only 4 NSs have been certified, and some certifications will soon expire.

⁴¹ There is little evidence however to indicate that certification has directly led to securing more resources from external partners, which reflects the scepticism of some that certification "holds little weight in the wider sector". Besides, OCAC is not particularly well known outside of the Movement. One KI suggested IFRC should better promote the value of certification among external partners.

⁴² OCAC - Preparatory phase guide v1.1.

⁴³ It was reported that without the assurance of confidentiality NSs would have never backed the initiative and OCAC would have unlikely existed today.

⁴⁴ It is important to note that while OCAC facilitators and the IFRC cannot share the results and findings report, NSs can and often do.

“There is a huge barrier of sharing the OCAC outcomes with partners, the NS should be as open as possible, because the partners are there to support and this is an opportunity to change the conversation/dialogue with those partners, who support disaster management, health and the NS can offer to include capacity building in the programmes in order to support organizational change processes. There could be more encouragement how to use the OCAC outcomes to have the dialogue with PNSs and external partners”.

One example of how confidentiality negatively impacts the OCAC process was highlighted in a recent Real Time Evaluation, in which confidentiality issues meant the evaluation team had no access to the NS’s OCAC findings report.⁴⁵ A few KIs felt NSs had a right to maintain confidentiality of OCAC findings, expressing the view that it was up to them with whom they shared the results, but these views were in the minority. What can be said is that the process of absolute confidentiality and restricting the sharing of NSs OCAC documentation is in need to review⁴⁶, and is a finding that leads to Recommendation 8 in Section 6 of the report.

4.1.3.8 *Additional learning*

The ET identified three additional learning points not covered in previous sections that are noteworthy.

1. IFRC Secretariat accountability for the OCAC process. Currently, due to the largely devolved level of responsibility and budget to ROs, OCAC responsible individuals in Geneva have very limited control over how the process is implemented within the regions and thus among National Societies. Moreover, Geneva NSD funds are allocated on a quarterly basis, which does not permit long-range planning and further inhibits effective support to the regions. However, it is felt the solution does not lie in Geneva exerting more control, but rather in making the ROs specifically accountable for ensuring the OCAC process is efficiently and effectively implemented within their respective regions. This finding further supports Recommendation 3.
2. How data generated through the OCAC process is used for institutional learning (aside from the confidentiality issue raised earlier). Currently, OCAC findings are not shared across technical teams, which is a missed opportunity for organisational learning. And while the approach adopted in the Americas of using OCAC regional data for data management/visualisation⁴⁷ has proved to be a useful analysis tool for illustrating NS development and helping NSs identify their priorities and analyse progress against targets as defined in NSD strategic plans, the approach has not been consistently adopted by all regions.⁴⁸ This finding further supports Recommendation 3 on greater RO accountability, and Recommendation 8 on sharing learning. It is positive, however, to see that some NS, with IFRC support, are undertaking the initiative to address the mapping of capacity gaps within their own country contexts⁴⁹, with examples of these potentially serving as useful models for other NSs regardless of region.
3. The lack of a joined-up IFRC Secretariat approach to OCAC. It was felt by some NSD KIs that the OCAC process is perceived primarily as a PSK tool and as such does not ‘speak well’ to other IFRC divisions such as Programmes and Operations. Indeed, it was reported that there is a level of internal ‘tool’ competition within the Secretariat,

⁴⁵ The ET conducting this evaluation were afforded very little access to NS OCAC finding reports.

⁴⁶ The topic was discussed at the 39th Session of the Governing Board Working Group on Strong National Societies and Volunteering (Geneva 29 April 2019). The issue is considered further in Section 4.2.3.

⁴⁷ See for example: *Análisis del Proceso OCAC en América. Desde su implementación hasta el 2018*. May 2019.

⁴⁸ Only the Americas were able to provide the Evaluation Team with data management of this type.

⁴⁹ For example, the Nepal RC has developed a tool that gathers and maps the results and recommendations for key NSD and programmatic capacity building areas derived from multiple self-assessment tools and processes against the OCAC attributes.

with some divisions promoting other Movement assessment tools to OCAC. This suggests that a better way of working together needs to be found e.g. Geneva divisions and/or regional NSD/PSK units communicating the relevance and importance of OCAC to compatriot RO divisions.

4.2. Efficiency

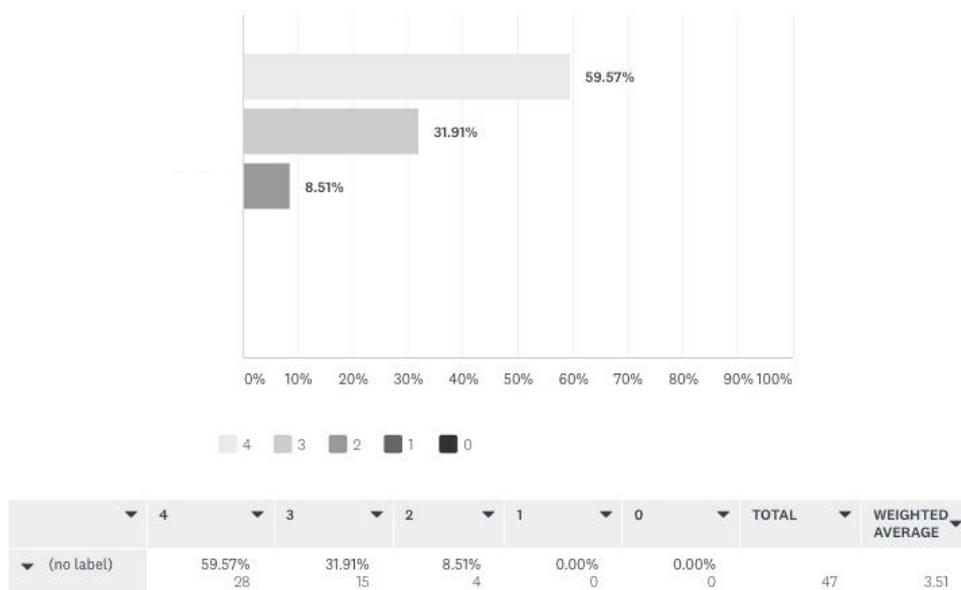
4.2.1 Was the outcome of using OCAC proportionate to the resources invested in it?

In helping determine the answer to this question, the evaluation looked at three main resourcing dimensions: NSs, the ROs, and Geneva; and considered a range of factors that included the extent to which there were adequate inputs (financial, technical and material) and how they were used to achieve outputs and outcomes.⁵⁰

National Society resourcing

As figures 4 and 5 below illustrate, more than 59% of NSs strongly agreed and 32% agreed that the OCAC process was a good use of *human resources*; with 47% of NSs equally strongly agreeing and agreeing that the process was a good use of *financial resources*.

Figure 4: Extent to which investing in the OCAC process was a good use of a National Society human resources



The following comments are representative of why NSs feel their investment was worthwhile:

“The reputational and development cost the NS would’ve lost had it not undergone the OCAC would’ve been exorbitant and almost irredeemable. The investment in OCAC was one that the outcome far exceeds the initial investment”.

“It was worth the effort and cost of bringing a cross section of the National Society together to take a critical look and assess the things taken for granted or the procrastination in fixing things, because we are so busy implementing programs and providing services, this was a reality check”.

⁵⁰ It is important to record that there is no IFRC historical resource allocation database that illustrates financial, technical and material resource inputs and how they were used. Due to the overlapping nature of evaluation ToR question 2c, Section 4.2.1. also covers elements of this question.

Figure 5: Extent to which investing in the OCAC process was a good use of a National Society financial resources

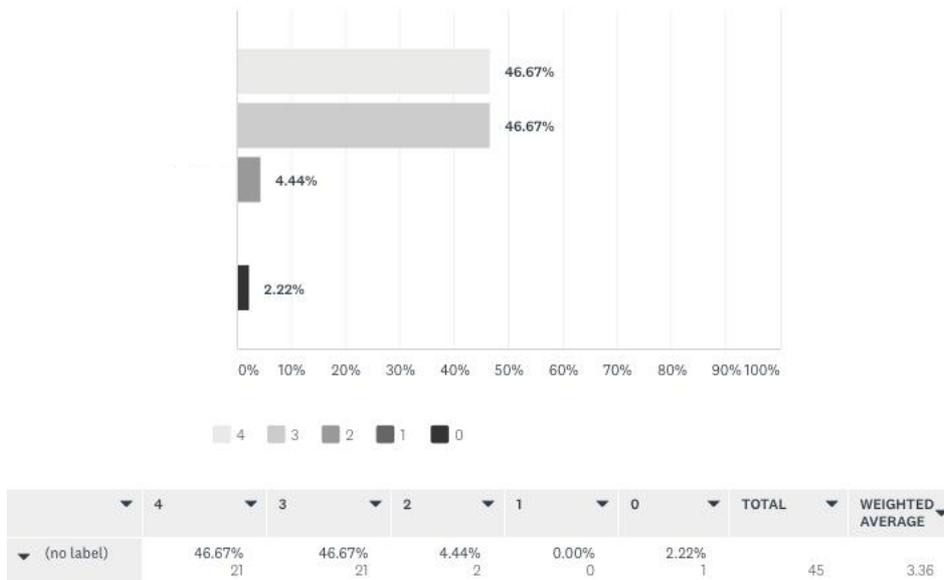
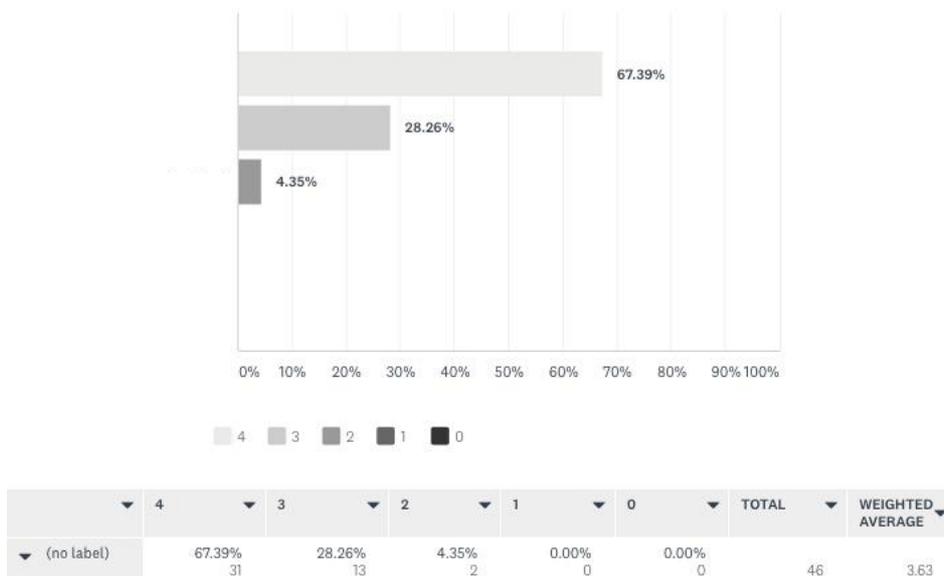


Figure 6 below consolidates many perceptions on resourcing efficiency by illustrating the full extent to which NSs saw OCAC as an *overall* good investment for their NS, which at a combined (strongly agree and agree) 95% well illustrates the value of the process to National Societies.

Figure 6: Extent to which investing in the OCAC process was a good overall investment



In some cases, NS investments in OCAC were considerable, with one reporting seconding a full time person for a year as a project manager to manage the OCAC process on behalf of the National Society. However, few NSs reported making any significant direct financial investment in the process itself, which indicates that the majority of any subsequent financial investment was, as intended by OCAC, in core NS areas. This is aptly illustrated in the following example from one of the NSs that has attained certification:

“There was no financial investment made specifically in the OCAC follow-up process/implementation of the recommendations included in the Plan of Action; however, we managed to get support from our local and international partners, the Movement partners among them, to continue the process and raise funds for implementation of recommendations within the core areas of NS, e.g. resource mobilization and communication, volunteering and youth development, strengthening safety and security of staff and volunteers during operational activities, etc”.

What the above also serves to illustrate is the extent to which some NSs were able to positively leverage OCAC to secure resources from supporting partners. However, not all partner support examples shared with the ET were positive, with some KIs suggesting that the approach has led to some Partner National Societies (PNSs) ‘cherry picking’ areas of a NS that they want to support, a process that does not always lead to the NS becoming a better implementer.⁵¹

Regional Offices and Geneva resourcing⁵²

In terms of Geneva staffing⁵³ to support OCAC, KIs involved in the process’ early development stage (2010-2012) felt that the initial human⁵⁴ and financial resourcing was both appropriate and adequate⁵⁵, with appropriate decisions being made concerning the number of staff members needed, where they should be located, and the level of competences required for the work. In this regard, there is nothing to indicate that more investment at GVA level would have resulted in a more efficient, effective and overall better outcome of the OCAC process.

As OCAC developed (post-2012), a pool of regional facilitators was created to support the tool’s global roll-out and ensure NSs received effective support. Some regions were reportedly able to appoint strong OCAC facilitators and manage the process with a fair degree of autonomy (thus requiring minimal support from the Geneva team), whereas other regions were required higher levels of Geneva technical support.⁵⁶ This latter scenario was mostly attributed to a lack of available regional OCAC focal points with necessary OD skills⁵⁷, which consequently placed unrealistic expectations and resource burdens on the Geneva NSD team as the long-term implications of providing follow up support to some 75% of NSs aiming for certification became clear.⁵⁸

Regional offices actively engaged in the OCAC process reported that between 2012-2016 there were sufficient resources to support all levels of the initiative, which extended to ensuring that thematic (e.g. health, disaster management etc.) programmes and/or projects were able to integrate OCAC related actions into activities. Regional level budgets, comprising contributions from the RO, PNSs and other partners were readily available, and used for

⁵¹ Which may also be interpreted as a better implementer of PNS projects, not of the NSs own (longer-term, domestically resourced) services.

⁵² The Regional Offices and Geneva NSD Unit are reported on together in this section due to their interconnectedness within the OCAC process.

⁵³ Including decisions concerning the number of staff members needed, where, when, with what competences, at what levels, and at the required availability.

⁵⁴ The original OCAC team consisted of three people. It is important to note that the human resources in Geneva to lead on the OCAC initiative has been significantly reduced: from 2 full time people 3-4 years ago, to a part time role today.

⁵⁵ In 2013 the balance changed when the OCAC team merged with the OD team to become the Performance Development Unit; a merger that resulted in the OCAC team becoming larger than needed.

⁵⁶ Some OCAC FPs did not have appropriate OD skills or regional language skills.

⁵⁷ And in some cases, relevant language skills.

⁵⁸ It had also been assumed that all NS engaging in the OCAC process would reach Phase II within five years.

training of facilitators, hosting of workshops etc.⁵⁹ However, ROs reported that the continuing decline in Geneva's OCAC resourcing has negatively impacted on their ability to effectively support NSs today. This view was supported by past and present Geneva -based KIs closely involved with OCAC, and was also a frustration shared by NSs that were anticipating support from ROs, with many NS commenting on the time it took to learn if resources were available to support their NSD requests.

The inconsistent approach adopted by ROs to resourcing the OCAC process has come in for criticism. While some regions have prioritised NSD work and have subsequently provided core funding (or secured PNS funding) to ensure OCAC facilitation; other regions have adopted a more mixed approach, which is characterised by uncertain/limited funding and the limited capacity of OCAC appointed focal points. Furthermore, the rotation or short-term appointment of regional OCAC facilitators, often due to short-term funding, has significantly affected process continuity and resulted in Geneva repeating inductions and briefings for incoming facilitators. This misalignment in capacity resourcing has been attributed to the short-term nature of funding, often via PNSs, and the provision of staff that do not necessarily have the right capacity balance: factors that place additional pressure on Geneva NSD as they attempt to fill the capacity vacuum from their own resources.

The ROs approach to providing adequate and relevant staffing⁶⁰ in support of OCAC is mixed. Some regions have supported and human resourced the OCAC process well, whereas others have a more chequered history. This has resulted in regional disparity rather than a global initiative of consistency. The inconsistent regional approach, accompanied by an ongoing lack of follow-up due to resourcing limitations is beginning to reflect negatively on ROs, simply as NSs look to them for OCAC-related support and no longer see it forthcoming. Consider the following comment from an Americas NS:

“Due to the fact that the tool was applied 7 years ago in the case of our National Society and after its application, no follow-up or accompaniment was received from the facilitators⁶¹ of the same, some recommendations were implemented but others were pending to be executed. Today, the panorama of the National Society has changed, which means that the current priorities are probably different from those in force at that time”.

Situations like this are unfortunate (but not uncommon⁶²) not just from a reputation perspective, but also an efficiency and lost opportunity perspective: not least as ROs have a degree of resourcing control for regional OCAC work whereas Geneva do not.⁶³ From the evidence available, the ET believe that more regional-focused resources aimed at NS follow-up, and supporting them to conduct relevant workshops etc., would have resulted in a more efficient, effective and overall better outcome of the OCAC process.

In searching for answers to this resourcing conundrum beyond just the usual budgetary-related comments, a number of KIs felt that it was a lack of 'real awareness' among the IFRC Secretariat leadership around NSD that had contributed to a declining OCAC resource

⁵⁹ However, overall it should be noted that RO contributions were very limited. PNS support was sought when the OCAC budget (handled by Geneva) was not sufficient and limited to few OCAC activities. The training of facilitators was always funded by Geneva.

⁶⁰ Including decisions concerning the number of staff members needed, where, when, with what competences, at what levels, and at the required availability.

⁶¹ This denotes a misunderstanding of whom should provide OCAC assessment follow-up. From a Geneva perspective, it is clear that follow-up should be provided by COs or CCSTs (with the support of RO) but not OCAC facilitators.

⁶² A near identical comment was made by a MENA NS.

⁶³ This behooves ROs to reflect carefully on these perceptions and their potential for negative reputational and efficiency impact.

allocation; which in part stemmed from a lack of leadership understanding about the importance of IFRC's role in supporting NSs in OD/NSD processes. Addressing both of these issues is important and supports Recommendation 1, particularly the aspect of IFRC Secretariat leadership championing the future OCAC process.

4.2.2. Did the NSs get all the necessary information and support to prepare for, conduct and follow-up on their OCAC assessment and how could support be improved for each phase?

Overall, NSs were very satisfied with the OCAC-related support provided by IFRC Geneva and the ROs, particularly the Phase I self-assessment and associated preparation aspects. While no KIs identified any missing aspects of support, a number of NSs felt that the level of support had steadily reduced over time. According to some RO KIs, this has now caused a 'back log' of NSs waiting for Phase I facilitation, with some of those considered most in need of support waiting up to twelve months. Associated PNS and ICRC OCAC support for NSs tended to vary from region to region, as well as from country to country within the same region. In this respect, not all support has been equitably targeted or delivered. In terms of improving support for each of the phases, three opportunities where greater resources could have made a potential difference have been identified:

- The first relates to the establishment of more OCAC facilitators at the regional level. This would have contributed to a more effective and systematic RO implementation of OCAC and an improved ability to more directly support NSs from within a region (thus relying less on Geneva to fulfil this role). While acknowledging that some ROs are highly capable of supporting the OCAC process, it is believed that such an approach would have helped regions that have faced implementing challenges. This finding supports Recommendation 5.
- The second relates to enabling regional NSD Focal Points to engage in collective peer learning opportunities. For example, gathering together with the NSD Geneva Team to engage in Action Learning⁶⁴ type processes that are particularly suited to organisational problem solving needs.⁶⁵ It is believed this resourcing would have contributed to: a more systematic and consistent approach to rolling-out and supporting OCAC (at least from a knowledge management/learning perspective); the collective setting and maintaining of quality standards; wider institutional learning initiatives; and overall betterment of the OCAC process. This finding supports Recommendations 5 and 8.
- The third relates to having a dedicated fund to support NSs that score particularly low in the Phase I self-assessment. This could have contributed to a more considered allocation of resources (both technical and financial), thus ensuring resource availability was automatically targeted to where it was needed most. In future, such an allocation could be made following receipt of a NS's plan that details how it aims to address identified Phase I deficiencies. This finding supports Recommendation 5.

A more pertinent question (within the scope of this evaluation), however, is perhaps 'how could support have been improved for the entire OCAC process rather than just the various phases?' Interestingly, the answer may lie not in more resourcing, but in more 'championship' of OCAC by the IFRC Secretariat leadership.⁶⁶ This assertion supports Recommendation 1.

⁶⁴ Action Learning (AL) is an approach to solving real-life work based problems. The approach has been used widely in the UK in both academic environments and industry. The AL process brings peers together for reflective learning in a supportive environment. It stimulates transformation, helping individuals and organisations achieve goals such as leadership development, building management skills and confidence, and ensuring greater productivity and performance.

⁶⁵ An invitation that could extend to other NSs interested and experienced in AL, of which there are several.

⁶⁶ While initial leadership support had been reportedly high in the early years, support for OCAC was felt to have waned more recently.

4.2.3. How are OCAC findings accessed and used to inform organisational learning?

A key limitation in how OCAC findings are accessed and used to inform organisational learning relates to the issue of confidentiality as discussed earlier in Section 4.1.3.7. One KI makes this clear and the negative impact on organisational learning from an NSD perspective:

“As the OCAC results were mainly confidential it was difficult to confirm that support was in line with the OCAC recommendations and how this led to NS development . . . but to get the OCAC reports from NSs to see the progress from 2012 in terms of implementation of the OCAC outcomes was very difficult; therefore, it is difficult to analyse to what extent the OCAC has contributed to NSD”.⁶⁷

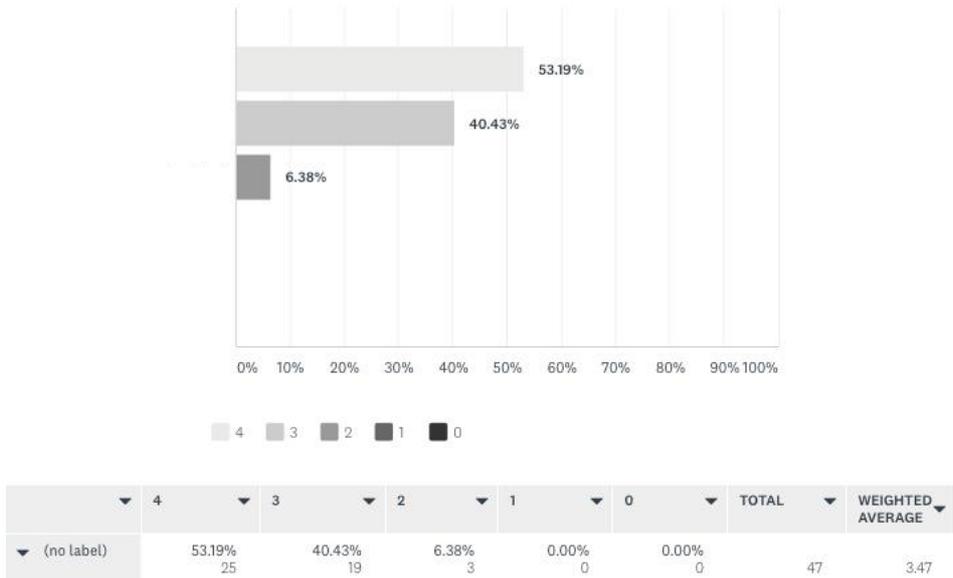
It is understood that the recent Working Group on Strong National Societies and Volunteering⁶⁸ approved the ‘proposed voluntary disclosure’ of OCAC assessment results and findings with the aim of allowing the IFRC to make better use of OCAC information. While this is a step in the right direction it is unclear how this will work in practice and how many NSs will proactively disclose the data they hold. This finding supports Recommendation 8.

4.3. Effectiveness

4.3.1 Was there buy-in across the NSs to address the recommendations proposed by the OCAC findings report?

As figures 7 illustrates more than 53% percent of NSs strongly agreed 40% agreed that the recommendations proposed by the OCAC findings report were acceptable to their National Society.

Figure 7: Acceptance of recommendations proposed by the OCAC findings report



Overall, there was a strong consensus among NS as to the value of the finding report recommendations and the subsequent level of ‘buy-in’. The following comments are representative examples of how a number of NSs responded to this buy-in question:

⁶⁷ It is important to add here that one reason why it is challenging to track progress in many NSs relates to a lack of NS wide reporting mechanism (outside funded projects), and for some, the issue of OCAC confidentiality has become a convenient excuse for this limitation.

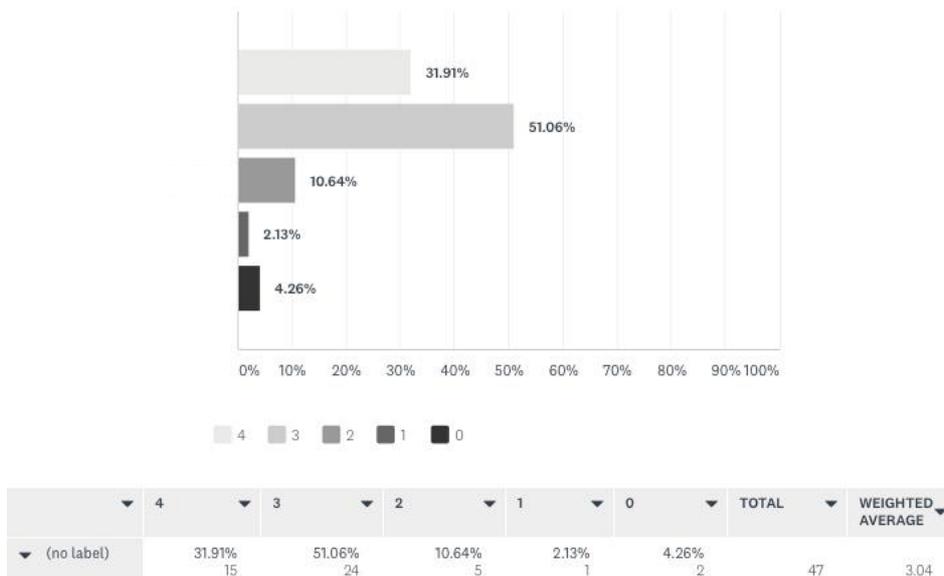
⁶⁸ 39th Session of the Governing Board, Geneva, 29 April 2019.

“The recommendations following the OCAC self-assessment exercise were accepted by our NS and fully supported. The OCAC findings and recommendations reflected in the report was shared with the partners for information exchange and attracted support from them”. (European NS)

“The recommendations made were highly accepted because they were reached by consensus throughout the OCAC process. The recommendations . . . are used as a road map of NSD”. (African NS)

While the above examples are reflective of buy-in levels, they also positively shed light on how recommendations have been used to leverage partner support (example 1), and how they have supported NSD strategy development (example 2). A number of other NSs noted how recommendations, even after a number of years, were still relevant, with some reporting having self-updated them to adapt to today’s reality. Importantly, these examples help illustrate that the OCAC process - principally through the development of the findings report and accompanying recommendations – can and does kick-start *change* (which makes implementing Recommendation 1 easier providing it is systemised). Kick-starting change however requires at least three supporting actions which are not always a given. These include: the timely generation of the findings report; action by the NS; and in many cases support from the IFRC. Furthermore, buy-in to address OCAC findings recommendations does not automatically translate into action, as figure 8 below helps illustrate (some 13% of NSs reported no action on recommendations, with 4% indicating the recommendations were not relevant).

Figure 8: Action on recommendations proposed by the OCAC findings report



Many NSs report that recommendation implementation is an ongoing process and subject to many challenges that include *inter alia*: staff resistance to change; NSs having to generate their own recommendations due to delays in receiving the report from IFRC⁶⁹; and NS frustration with their own internal decision-making processes that delay both the acceptance and implementation of recommendations. However, perhaps one of the most important concerns raised with the OCAC findings report is the way in which it can become ‘disjointed’ from wider NSD/OD analysis and approaches. The following comments from a European NS makes this clear:

⁶⁹ One NS claimed “the official findings of the OCAC were not reported to us until one year later”.

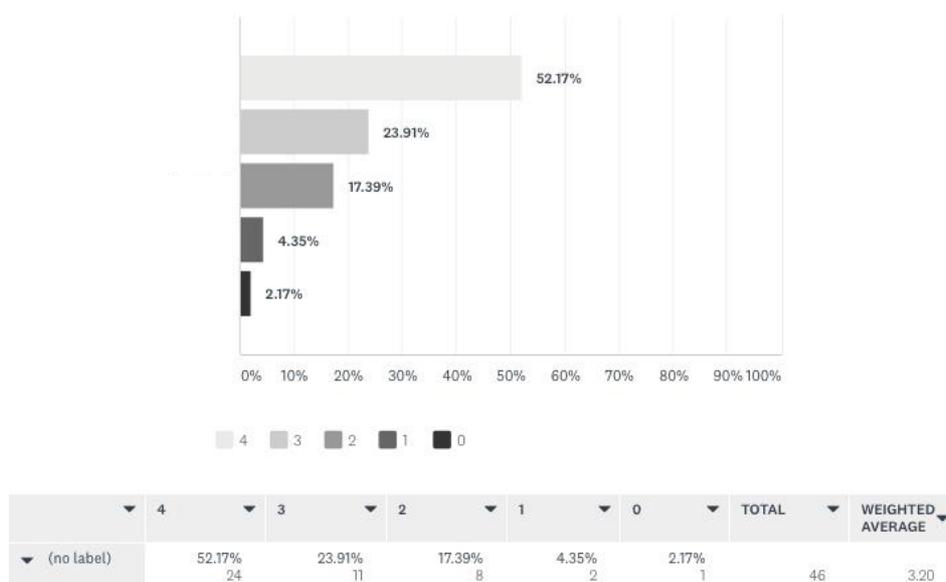
“We focused on key areas of improvement, rather than sticking rigidly to the recommendations in the report. But in most areas/actions were already being looked at. It’s important that the process does not create investment or action in an area simply to meet the OCAC criteria, without improving organisational effectiveness. Rather than accepting all of the recommendations arising from the process, we could have spent more time prioritising the recommendations that would have had the greatest impact to achieve our wider strategic plans and priorities, to save time and resource. We could have better defined how we wanted to assess our progress against the priority areas we wanted to address, by being more specific and clearer about what we wanted to achieve, particularly where the issue required longer term cultural and behaviour change. We also found that it can take longer than the two-year timeframe from Phase 1 to respond to all the findings in a way that adds value”.

The above insight helps to remind readers of OCAC’s contribution to change processes as well as its potential limitations alongside and within wider NSD/OD processes.

4.3.2. Has engagement in OCAC furthered NSs’ ownership of their own development strategy and implementation?

A number of NS KIs reported positively as to how the OCAC process had helped inform their NS’s strategic planning process and/or ultimately contributed to the development of a strategic plan, whether that process was already underway or due for a review in the near future. Figure 9 below helps illustrate the usefulness of OCAC to NSs in helping develop and implement their strategies (more than 76% strongly agreeing/agreeing).

Figure 9: Usefulness of OCAC in helping develop and implement strategy



One specific example of how a NS used the OCAC findings to further support their own development efforts is nicely illustrated in the Costa Rica Red Cross case study and summarised in the box below.

The Costa Rica Red Cross used the OCAC findings to deepen partnerships with municipalities across the country as well as develop new external partnerships with the private sector. The enhanced municipality partnerships allowed the NS to become more deeply embedded within communities to the extent that alongside the municipality and the fire brigade, the NS is now considered to be one of the three pillars of a resilient

community.⁷⁰ The increase in private sector partnerships, for example, with a producer of bottled water, has provided the NS with a strategic supplier for its relief operations.

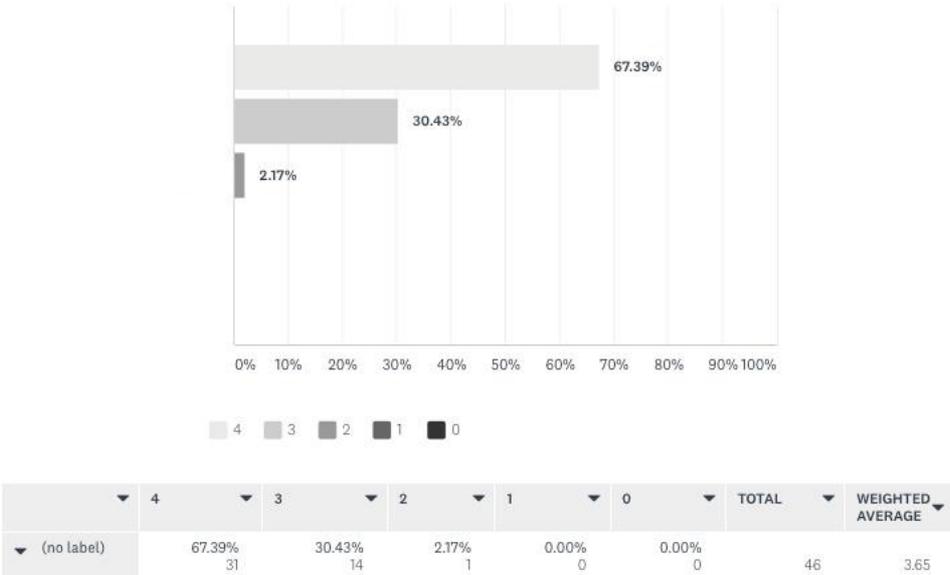
The example above notwithstanding, some 22% of respondents indicated that engaging in the OCAC process has not helped them to develop or implement strategy. Reasons for this have been previously reported and include: the static diagnostic nature of the tool; the disjointed nature of Phases I and II; and the lack of IFRC follow-up support to help develop NS strategy.

4.3.3. Did the OCAC process reach its stated objectives i.e. for NSs to assess their capacity and performance in self-development and ensuring that all NSs comply with minimum standards?

The general objective of the OCAC process is twofold: first, to enable NSs to assess their own organisational capacity, performance and relevance in their country so as to determine opportunities for self-development; and second, to ensure that all NSs commit and comply with a comprehensive set of organisational minimal standards and thus to protect/improve the performance of the overall Federation network.⁷¹

In terms of the first objective, figure 10 below illustrates that more than 67% of NSs strongly agreed and 30% agreed that the OCAC process helped their NS to assess their capacity and performance in self-development.

Figure 10: OCAC value to NS assessment of capacity and performance in self-development



The reasons given for this positive rating was the tool’s ability to identify organisational strengths and weaknesses, with one Americas NS summarising this for many:

“The objective of this tool allows a self-evaluation of institutional capacity to reach collective consensus. In this sense, we believe that the tool has helped to make one of the many possible diagnoses of the institutional capacity. Additionally, it has allowed us to visualize a route of change under the lines of the Movement”.

⁷⁰ The fact that a proportion of municipality taxation (1.5 percent derived from inhabitants) is used to fund CRS branches contributes significantly to sustainability not least as it allows for the permanent hiring of staff.

⁷¹ Source: Building Strong National Societies. OCAC Brief v10 May 2014.

Interestingly, analysis of KI responses reveal that most comments were in relation to *capacity* assessment rather than *performance*, which is perhaps illustrative of concerns raised earlier that the tool lacks a service delivery assessment aspect.⁷²

In terms of the second objective, IFRC delivering on ensuring that all NSs comply with minimum standards, a detailed analysis⁷³ of the OCAC self-assessment results across all the five regional zones (Africa, Americas, Asia Pacific, Europe and MENA) was undertaken. Due to the extensive data sets and supporting charts, it is not possible to present this data in this report, however, readers are specifically directed to Volume 1 - accompaniment to this report, that contains the detailed analysis related to capacity attributes per region. However, in summary, global analysis reveals that while NSs comply with the minimum standards in a majority of capacity attributes relating to: Exist, Organise, and Relate and Mobilise; many score well below the minimum standards in other critical areas, which can be broadly summarised⁷⁴ as follows:

- In the Exist category: governing board, policies, integrity framework, and reputational risk management.
- In the Organise category: abuse of power prevention, staffing structure and job satisfaction, safety management, filing and archives, insurance, roles and responsibilities of HQs and branches particularly of NS leadership.
- In the Relate and Mobilise category: volunteering development and youth engagement, resource capacities, business continuity, and unrestricted income and fundraising.

Analysis also shows that the vast majority of NSs face key challenges in: developing performance capacity, specifically in analysing and mapping available and potential resources; strategic thinking and taking action for development and growth; and strengthening transparency, accountability, and ensuring quality management of programme and services.

4.4 Impact

4.4.1 Has OCAC supported enhanced delivery of programmes and services?

While most KIs believed that the process had supported their NS to improve delivery of its programmes and services, few were able to give exact or precise examples as to which services had improved or in what ways (which provides an indication of the complexity of this issue as discussed earlier in Section 4.1.3.4 and further supports the ET's view that a simple adaptation of the tool might not be the solution). This limitation aside, the following comment from a European NS nicely illustrates how the OCAC process has positively contributed to service delivery and programme improvement in a multi-dimensional way:

“[OCAC] supported the NS to improve service delivery and implementation of its programmes to a more organized and systematized manner. Also, it enabled better communication with beneficiaries, as well as strengthened accountability and transparency towards partners and donors”.

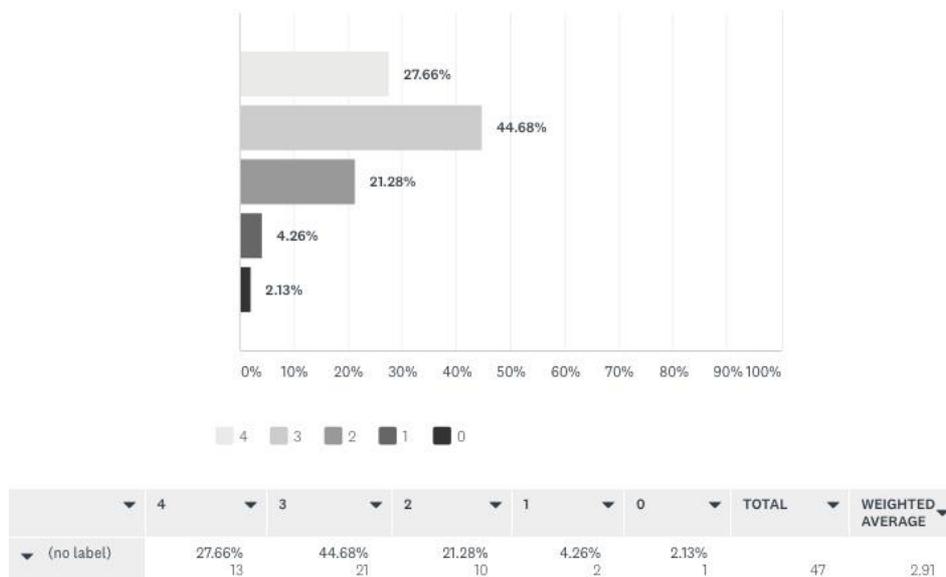
Figure 11 below illustrates the extent to which NSs felt OCAC had supported enhanced delivery of programmes and services, with some 28% of NSs strongly agreeing and 45% agreeing that the process had secured this objective.

⁷² Acknowledging that Phase II contains this dimension, but only 4 NSs have reached this stage.

⁷³ See Volume 1 - accompaniment to this report containing detailed analysis related to capacity attributes per region.

⁷⁴ For illustrative purposes only. Readers are directed to Volume 1 for the detailed analysis.

Figure 11: Extent to which OCAC has supported enhanced delivery of programmes and services



While there were few negative points related to the tool’s support for delivery of programmes and services, that fact that NSs were sometimes vague in their improvement perspective (e.g. “improvements in about 70ish percent of services”) or found that it was too early to say what improvements have been made, indicates a disconnect between the tool and assessment of programmes and service delivery. As one Americas NS highlighted “Although the tool has contributed to the strengthening of the National Society, it is not specifically oriented to services and programmes”.

4.4.2 Did OCAC lead to any unexpected results/changes?

In terms of any unexpected results/changes, the majority of NSs expressing a view indicated that change had largely been positive. Similar to Section 4.4.1, many NS KIs found it difficult to give exact or precise examples as to the positive impact that had occurred. Nonetheless, many pointed to the overall ‘continuous improvement’ that the process had enabled, with three notable change examples being:

- i. the way in which the process had led to a greater level of accountability among NS leadership to implement policies and procedures that are more in alignment with good practice approaches;
- ii. the process of highlighting deficits or weakness that allowed opportunities to be identified; and,
- iii. the ‘democratisation’ effect OCAC had on NSs by creating an environment in which branch staff have been empowered to challenge leadership over certain perceptions.

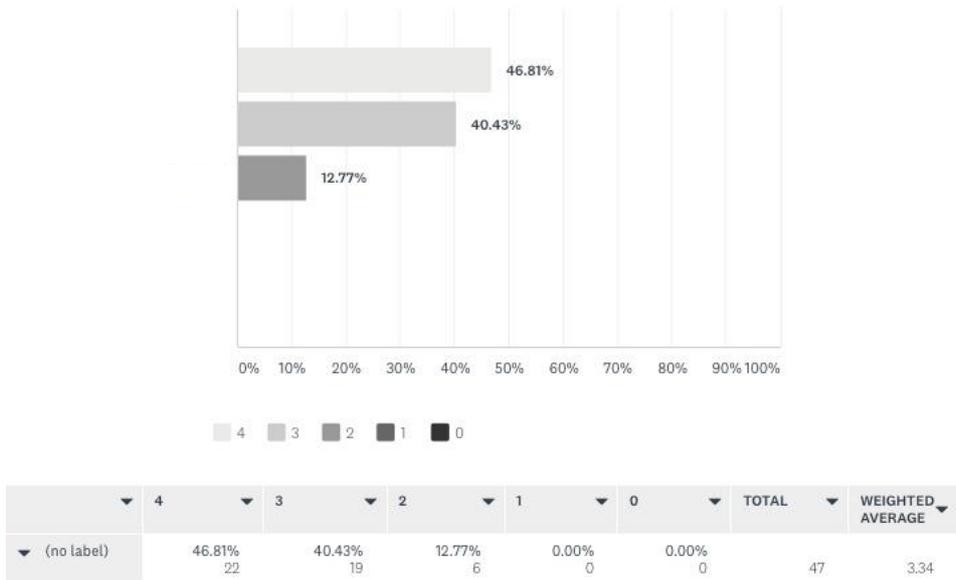
One insightful example (which further supports assertions made in 4.4.1) obtained through a country visit related to how OCAC positively contributed to the *relevant* development of the NS at various levels, for example, the resultant changes secured by the branches interviewed specifically met their local development needs (e.g. improved communication with local emergency commissions; local fundraising innovations; improved local emergency response plans), whereas the changes highlighted by the headquarters were entirely appropriate for a national dimension.

4.4.3 How well did OCAC link with wider NS development processes (e.g. strategic planning) and did it have an impact on those processes?

Most NS KIs were highly complementary about the important role OCAC played, in full or in part, in supporting aspects of NS strategy development and implementation, as well as supporting change processes that were nascent or already underway (see further Section 4.3.2). One African NS makes the connection clear:

Once they pass OCAC Phase I process, NSs have a clear picture of problems, strengths and weaknesses. With that, they have a basis from which they can undertake strategic planning . . . our new strategic plan was inspired by the OCAC process.

Figure 12 below illustrates the extent to which NSs felt that OCAC had had a *positive* impact on the strategic development processes of their NS, with more than 47% of NSs strongly agreeing and 40% agreeing with this assertion.



The following additional comment from one European NS is illustrative (and representative) of the extent to which many NSs found the OCAC process useful for informing overall organisational strategy and the results this ultimately secured:

“The OCAC process helped our NS to advance the overall strategy of the organization, as well as to develop strategies in specific priority areas (Disaster Management, Health and Care, Organizational Development, Communication and Public Relations) and follow the implementation process; also, to focus on the quality management that led to significant benefits for the entire organization (HQ and branches) and beneficiaries we serve through various services”.

Many KIs noted how the OCAC process had specifically helped ‘inform’ strategy by highlighting what was already taking place within the NS, and then highlighting areas of strategic importance that required improvement (akin to a traditional SWOT analysis that would normally be undertaken as part of a strategic planning process). In many cases, highlighting the gaps and areas for improvement allowed NSs to develop strategic directions or objectives that were subsequently used in strategic plans or existing change processes. This finding clearly reflects the utility of OCAC in relation to supporting strategy or change processes, and is reflective of the true value of the tool in informing strategic planning. Indeed, a number of KIs felt that undertaking OCAC Phase I should be a prerequisite for any NS engaged in a strategic planning process (see Recommendation 4.5).

4.4.4 How well has the delivery of OCAC complemented other IFRC or Movement supported development processes?

In opening this section, it is worth noting that a number of NSs are using a range of different assessment tools alongside OCAC. In the main, these include the Branch Organisational Capacity Assessment (BOCA), the Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) approach, and the Safer Access Framework (SAF) all of which are reviewed below. The System for Transformation and Results (STAR)⁷⁵ is also considered. The aim of this section is not to lay out the criteria for using the various assessment tools⁷⁶, but rather to highlight complementarity/duplication with the OCAC process, and where there is potential for harmonisation.

Branch Organisational Capacity Assessment

BOCA is a self-assessment tool that captures the strengths and weaknesses of a branch in relation to a wide range of the organisational capacities. The tool provides an in-depth view of a branch's strengths and weaknesses, and allows them to assess their current capacity to deliver services to initiate or strengthen their overall development. In many respects, BOCA is the branch version of the OCAC tool. Branches prioritize the most important issues (capacity deficiencies) to improve on. This prioritization feeds into the formulation of a capacity development plan, focusing on concrete ways to strengthen branch performance.

A significant number of KIs (IFRC and NS) reported that NSs had used the BOCA tool to inform the OCAC process and vice versa. Indeed, the somewhat symbiotic relationship between the two was regarded as a natural fit: one where it did not really matter which process/tool was used first. As highlighted in the Costa Rican NS case study, the complementarity between using OCAC and BOCA alongside each other, as well as to inform each other, is a well-established approach used by many National Societies. One NS likened BOCA to the base of OCAC, in which a clearer picture of branches was developed to inform overall institutional diagnosis. In this regard, it can be said that OCAC has highly complemented another IFRC supported development process. The learning that can be derived from this example is that the two tools should be used alongside each other whenever the opportunity presents. Interestingly, in this context, one KI suggested that more use was being made of BOCA by NSs because of its ability to account for local needs, thus reflecting the need to capture the service delivery aspects of the NS as reported earlier.

Safer Access Framework

The SAF allows a NS to further its understanding of what it takes to increase and or maintain its acceptance, security and access to communities and people in need by understanding the operational context and assessing strengths and challenges in relation to eight elements of safer access. The SAF-NSD complementarity is outlined in a joint IFRC-ICRC letter, which highlights the links between the two frameworks, as well as how SAF links with the OCAC process.⁷⁷

NSs operating in more fragile or challenging security/safety contexts tended to report more use of the SAF alongside OCAC than those in more stable contexts, noting how the SAF gap assessment added to the OCAC process. This suggests process complementarity is to a large degree context specific, and while not particularly surprising, further highlights the relevance and applicability of using OCAC alongside other Movement development processes. However,

⁷⁵ STAR was developed to produce data signatures for six performance drivers, capacities that were predictive of a national society's overall composite organizational development effectiveness score. American Red Cross. (2012). The STAR Users' Handbook. System for Transformation and Results.

⁷⁶ This is already very well done in the IFRC's own Overview of Key Assessment Tools. Section 4.4.4 draws on the Overview document for key definitions.

⁷⁷ See further: IFRC ICRC joint letter on NSD and SAF, 15 April 2014.

this was not always the case, as one MENA NS notes: “The Movement has many tools that overlap with the OCAC, so the [NS name] declined to participate in other assessments that were too similar to avoid falling into the over-assessment trap”.

Other NSs operating in fragile contexts also felt that there was some ‘duplication’⁷⁸ between SAF and OCAC, which resulted in the unnecessary production of separate NSD plans. One African NS summarised the OCAC-SAF relationship succinctly as follows:

“The OCAC is the master of all other tools because is very comprehensive, it looks at the organization holistically. Some of the tools could be consolidated into one, because they overlap. In a conflict context, the complementarity of OCAC to SAF is very clear”.

This indicates that while OCAC has complemented the SAF and vice versa, a level of duplication exists which causes users to question the efficiency of adopting both approaches. The learning here suggests that it is appropriate for ICRC and IFRC to enter discussions on the better synergetic application of OCAC and SAF as a means of increasing Movement tool efficiency and effectiveness. See further Recommendation 4.3 in Section 6 of the report.

*Preparedness for Effective Response*⁷⁹

PER enables NS to measure, analyse and plan their preparedness for response capacity. It is a cyclical approach to systematically assess, measure, and analyse the strengths and weaknesses of its response system leading to a work-plan aimed at strengthening response capacity. Similar to OCAC, the PER is a self-assessment method. Whereas PER has a simulation, operational, and post-operation assessment methods test⁸⁰, the OCAC process does not. PER is further designed to empower the NS to become more creative and innovative in disaster management actions and to contribute to coordination of national and global response systems.

KIs expressing a view on complementarity between OCAC and PER felt that the range of PER attributes “were mostly covered through OCAC”, but when combined were useful in looking at the preparedness aspect of a NS in a more holistic way. Indeed, the IFRC’s own analysis suggests “The PER’s common approach complements the IFRC’s Organisational Capacity Assessment and Certification”.⁸¹ Most KIs (and the ET) agreed with this assertion. The learning that can be derived here is that the two tools should be used alongside each other whenever the *context* is relevant.

Other assessment tools

While not a significant aspect of the evaluation, the ET for comparative quality analysis purposes considered one other assessment type tool⁸² - the System for Transformation and Results (STAR).⁸³ STAR was developed (with support from the American Red Cross) to produce data signatures for six performance drivers, capacities that were predictive of a NS’s overall composite organisational development effectiveness score. NSs that had used the tool

⁷⁸ In parts, duplication has been intentional. The SAF adopted/adapted OCAC elements deliberately, so as not to duplicate standards for NSs. This allows NSs to use their OCAC or SAF results when conducting the other assessment.

⁷⁹ Including the Well-Prepared NS (WPNS) self-assessment, and simulation, operational, and post-operation (DRCE) assessment methods.

⁸⁰ To provide external evidence-based information on a NS disaster response system, process and practice.

⁸¹ IFRC. Grand Bargain Annual Self-Reporting, Geneva. 2018.

⁸² The Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS) on Quality and Accountability were not assessed as part of this evaluation but comparison details can be found in the IFRC Overview of Key Assessment Tools.

⁸³ See: American Red Cross. (2012). The STAR Users’ Handbook. System for Transformation and Results.

reported many similarities with the OCAC process and overall felt the two tools were could be usefully combined with STAR supporting post-Phase I planning activities.

In summary, KIs felt that the OCAC process was more comprehensive in its holistic perspective of a NS, while the BOCA focus is appropriately and complementary orientated to branch level. The PER and SAF approaches/assessments were considered to have a more specific focus on thematic areas, but were still considered to be complementary with OCAC (accepting that there were crossover elements). While there is broad complementary between the listed tools and OCAC, KIs gave the impression that OCAC was the 'meta tool' amongst them. However, a key problem is that while NSs use the tools, they do so in parallel with limited joint analysis of the outcomes that each produces.

Analysis indicates there is clear opportunity for tool consolidation and streamlining, which would lead to greater efficiencies. Furthermore, as users were not always clear about the tools' relation to and with each other: this suggests there is opportunity for clarification on their application and use. A key learning, given the potential for tool cross-over, is to undertake further research on this topic, beginning perhaps by asking NSs to develop a matrix of the assessment tools that they use (or are considering using), and to analyse how they can help inform and support each other within the country context: this data could then be used by the IFRC for meta-analysis.

4.5. Sustainability

4.5.1 Did National Societies learn anything new from undergoing an OCAC process?

Positively, several NSs were complimentary of how the process shed light on aspects of NS performance that were working well (in addition to weaknesses), which provides an appropriate 'appreciative inquiry' balance to the 'problem inquiry' dimension of the tool. Examples here included: how well one NS felt it was communicating with its external audiences (an attribute not previously well recognised or acknowledged); one noting how the consultative Phase I self-assessment workshop had built the capacity of volunteers and branch staff; while another came to appreciate the synergetic 'value add' of its work with an accompanying awareness that the NS often delivers 'more than it thinks it has'.

Such perceptions described above of course need to be moderated against the self-assessment dimension of the tool, but nonetheless indicate the additional learning that NSs are able to develop through appropriate reflection on the findings generated from the process. There were few "Aha" moments reported, however, a number of NSs were 'surprised' as to the extent to which they were underperforming in relation to some attribute indicators.

4.5.2 Were the changes within the NS, following the OCAC process, sustainable?

As previously noted in this report, adequate and reliable resourcing of NSD initiatives is a fundamental aspect of helping NSs secure sustainability. The implications of under-resourcing the OCAC process on a NSs sustainability aspirations are made clear by an Americas NS (underling added for emphasis):

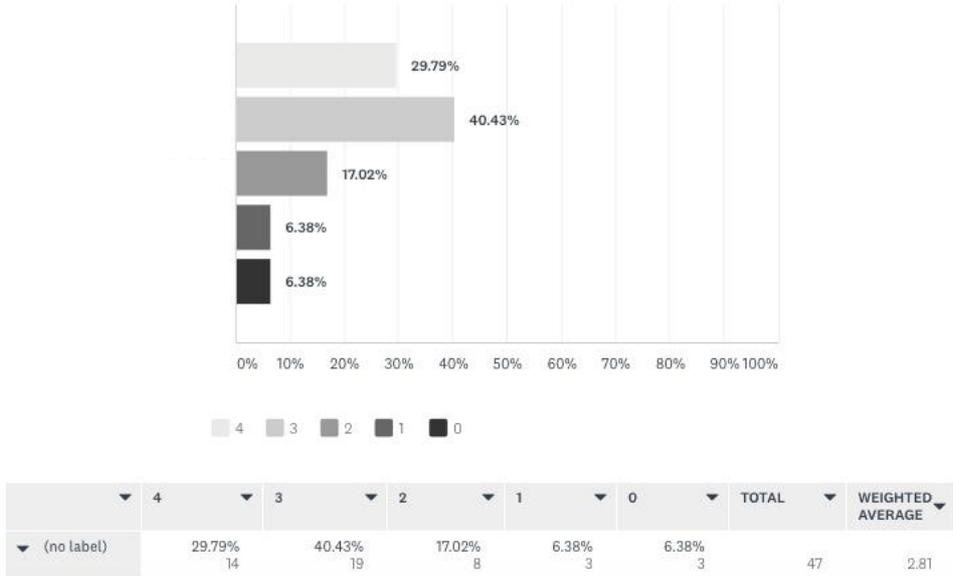
"Although the results generated by the tool were very precise, we had difficulty in implementing all the recommended improvements since we did not have the financial resources available to carry them out. That is why a weak sustainability strategy was identified after the application of the OCAC surveys. More technical and financial support is required to ensure the continuity of this strategy".

On a positive and insightful note, some KIs felt that OCAC had enabled NSs to look at what they can do for themselves *without* donor support, for example, by reflecting on how they can leverage their auxiliary role for enhanced local resource mobilisation, government support, as well as accessing local human social capital. Concrete examples here included exploring how

government or credible local audit firms could partner the NS to support clearing audit backlogs and engaging in constructive dialogue with government to manage long overdue debts. Other KIs felt the OCAC process had contributed to a level of NS sustainability by assigning responsibility to key individuals for ensuring that institutional changes were implemented. But beyond this, KIs were not particularly encouraged in the current resourcing climate despite their best efforts to plan for future NSD initiatives.

Figure 13 below illustrates the extent to which NSs felt that changes secured through the OCAC were sustainable, with more than 30% (of NSs strongly agreeing and 40% agreeing with this assertion. However, some 23% reported that changes following the process were not sustainable.

Figure 13: Extent to which NSs felt that changes secured through the OCAC were sustainable



While figure 13 shows that a majority of NSs believed that changes secured through OCAC were sustainable, it has to be acknowledged that this status is never guaranteed. One African NS highlights the complexity of this issue:

“Sustainability will actually depend on a number of other factors e.g. the NS Governance and Management succession planning. These two organs drive the sustainability agenda. The extent of buy-in by members, volunteers and staff in order to sustain the changes secured through OCAC process over a long period of time. The extent to which the positive changes are disseminated to the membership, in particular, the youth who can embrace the changes and take them forward”.

4.5.3 To what extent have OCAC results informed other external NSD support and has it led to additional support for NSD efforts?

Few KIs were able to cite any examples where the OCAC results had informed other external NSD support or led to additional support for NSD efforts other than from select Partner National Societies. Understandably, the support provided differed considerably on a country-by-country basis and was often orientated to the supporting partners’ in-country and strategic interests (often driven by back donors). This is not particularly surprising given that many external partners are likely to privilege support to operations and programming above NSD initiatives; and that ICRC and select PNS’ already provide a degree of well-focused and highly appreciated NSD support across the regions (albeit somewhat unstrategic at times). This said, the ET were appreciative of the many recipient NSs and supporting PNSs that highlighted OCAC’s role (although not an exclusive one) in the provision of essential technical and

financial NSD resourcing. However, despite these successes, it appears that looking outside of the Movement in an attempt to improve NS sustainability prospects has a long way to go. Perhaps one unanticipated change resulting from the OCAC process which has contributed to a broader level of sustainability is the way in which staff from one NS have used their OCAC experience to support other NSs engaging in the process, and through this approach shared and transferred learning between NSs in a way that enables the recipient NS to actively adopt good practice.⁸⁴

5. Conclusion

The evaluation conclusion is presented below under the following criteria sub-headings: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

Relevance

From a *relevance* perspective, the evaluation established that the OCAC process has been highly relevant to a significant majority of National Societies (92 percent of Societies found OCAC *relevant* to their NSD requirements).⁸⁵ The process has met the majority (87 percent) of National Societies NSD *expectations*, and the methodology employed has generally been well-suited to the majority (83 percent) of National Society needs. The main reasons for the tool's relevancy relate to its ability to identify critical capacity strengths and weaknesses across a comprehensive range of relevant NSD areas; as well as its appropriateness in helping address NSD and change aspirations. OCAC's relevancy as an institution-building instrument for long-term NSD as well as a catalyst for initiating and securing change is both well established and appreciated by users. However, a significant number of National Societies felt that the tool (methodology and processes) were in need of revision if OCAC is to maintain its relevancy for the future.

Efficiency

From an *efficiency* perspective, most National Societies confirmed that investing in the OCAC process was a good use of National Society human and financial resources (91 percent and 94 percent respectively). This confirms OCAC's 'high and added value' status in supporting NSD aspirations. Reasons given for this mostly centred on OCAC's value in highlighting critical NSD weakness areas and 'forcing' Societies to confront and address issues of institutional concern that otherwise might be ignored or missed. Many National Societies felt the benefit of investing in the process far outweighed the initial investment made (95 percent of Societies reported that engaging in the process was a *very good* overall investment). However, the continuing decline in OCAC resourcing has negatively impacted on the IFRC's (Geneva and Regions) ability to effectively support NSD efforts and jeopardises OCAC's good reputation along with the excellent results secured to date.

Effectiveness

In terms of *effectiveness*, the evaluation established that the vast majority of recommendations made following the self-assessment exercise (Phase I) were recognised as being important to NSD needs. While ninety-two (92) percent of Societies found the OCAC findings recommendations acceptable, 13 percent of National Societies had not acted on them. There has been less success in translating Phase I findings and recommendations into plans of action, which has been attributed to methodological/process limitations, and very limited IFRC follow-up to National Societies following Phase I. Importantly, OCAC has contributed to enabling many National Societies to both develop and implement strategy, with findings from assessments proving instrumental in supporting National Societies to develop concrete

⁸⁴ For example, the way in which CRCS staff have shared knowledge of how OCAC and BOCA can be used to inform strategic planning in a structured way with NSs in Cuba, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

⁸⁵ Throughout, strongly agree and agree ratings are combined to be able to declare 'a significant majority'.

strategic plans. Eighty-seven (87) percent of National Societies reported that engaging in the OCAC process had had a positive impact on their strategic development processes.

In terms of helping National Societies assess capacity and/or performance, the *capacity* dimension has been well covered through OCAC, but concerns exist over the tool's lack of orientation to measuring service delivery or performance (during Phase I) and is an issue that a number of key informants feel should be addressed. Greater effectiveness could also be secured through ensuring better OCAC cohesion with other Movement supported development processes, namely the International Committee of the Red Cross' Safer Access Framework.

Impact

From an *impact* perspective, while most National Societies felt that OCAC had helped improve programme and service delivery, few were able to say which services or in what ways. Twenty-five (25) percent of National Societies felt the process had not helped with the delivery of programmes and services primarily because Phase I did not have this orientation. This said, the overall 'continuous improvement' aspect of the tool has enabled National Societies to chart and progress positive, meaningful and measurable impact across a range of NSD capacity attributes, that in many cases have highlighted areas of service delivery that require improvement. A current barrier to securing greater impact relates to the confidentiality of a National Society's Phase I findings, which inhibits institutional learning and prevents greater operational synergies.

Sustainability

From a *sustainability* perspective, the majority of National Societies felt that the changes secured through the OCAC process were considered sustainable, but these related mostly to structural issues (aspects of policy or legal status) rather than any additional secured financial resourcing (23 percent of Societies reported that changes following the process were *not* sustainable). National Societies considered the lack of secure financial resources to be the most significant barrier to their sustainability. While many recipient National Societies *and* supporting Partner National Societies highlighted OCAC's role in enabling the provision of essential technical and financial NSD resourcing, partner support levels differ considerably across the regions and are often orientated to the supporting partners' strategic interests (e.g. projects) rather than overall NSD efforts.

In overall conclusion, National Societies confirm that the OCAC process is highly relevant and important to their ongoing National Society Development efforts. There is strong evidence to indicate that the first general OCAC objective 'to enable National Societies to assess their own organisational capacity, performance and relevance in their country so as to determine opportunities for self-development', has been *well* secured.

In terms of the second OCAC objective, 'to ensure that all National Societies commit and comply with a comprehensive set of organisational minimal standards and thus to protect/improve the performance of the overall Federation network', good progress has been made (117 out of 191 have participated in OCAC), however, after nearly 10 years and with only 3 National Societies attaining certification, there is a need to both modernise and accelerate the OCAC initiative.

This report makes eight recommendations which are detailed in Section 6 below.

6. Recommendations

This section details the key recommendations (and sub-recommendations) arising from the Findings (4) and other sections of the report in order of appearance. The recommendations include a rationale, priority rating, suggested timeframe and responsible person/unit i.e. the entity that has the responsibility for ensuring the recommendation is enacted. These will need to be finalised in discussions with relevant IFRC individuals. Following accepted practice, all recommendations leave room for fine-tuning in terms of final wording and the implementation approach to be adopted by implementers and users.

No.	Recommendation	Rationale (and sub recommendation where relevant)	Action
1	The OCAC process needs to be explicitly reframed, re-designed and expanded as a tool for supporting National Society change and development	<p>This recommendation is made as a means of improving relevancy. Refer to findings in Section 4.1.1 to 4.1.3.1.</p> <p>This reframing is necessary to affect a shift away from NSs seeing the process as one of leading to an award as an end in itself i.e. towards certification. A key advantage in this reframing is that the process could then be viewed and used as one to support ongoing organisational development with NSs undertaking as many OCAC assessment exercises without the need to engage in the Phase II process and/or seek certification. The OCAC acronym could be retained by revising the title to <i>Organisational Capacity Assessment and Change</i> process. (See further Recommendation 4 for suggestions to improve the methodology.)</p> <p>Within this reframing process, IFRC Secretariat leadership should clearly articulate a vision for how the IFRC will move the OCAC process forward to its next level (Generation II). This should involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. an expression of the importance of OCAC to the IFRC (and ICRC) ii. explicit IFRC leadership commitment to the process iii. an outline vision of how the process will be used in future (clarifying the roles of GVA and the ROs – see Recommendation 2) iv. the aspirations for the IFRC from using the process v. how it will be resourced, and 	<p>Priority: Important.</p> <p>Time frame: Within 12 months of IFRC's acceptance of this report.</p> <p>Responsible persons:⁸⁶</p>

⁸⁶ These field in the matrix are pending input from the Evaluation Management Team.

No.	Recommendation	Rationale (and sub recommendation where relevant)	Action
		vi. the main changes between the original OCAC process and the revised (Generation II) version.	
2	Following Recommendation 1, OCAC process and accompanying methodology should incorporate an underlying change management strategy	<p>This recommendation is made as a means of improving efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. Refer to findings in Section 4.1.1 to 4.1.3.1.</p> <p>To ensure the future OCAC process fully embodies the notion of supporting NSD change, aspects of a suitable change management strategy (e.g. Kotter's 8-Step Change Model⁸⁷) should be identified and used as an overarching approach to support the entire process.⁸⁸ A supporting dimension of this approach is for the IFRC to appoint suitably qualified change/OD advisers who can support NSs through the necessary NSD transformational processes.</p> <p>This requires appointing more senior, experienced individuals to facilitate and assess the OCAC process (within NSD Geneva and/or ROs). These individuals should possess strong skills in OD, NSD, change management and capacity building. They may be identified from both within and outside⁸⁹ the Movement. This does not preclude more junior people from engaging in the process as these individuals could usefully be mentored by the more experienced facilitators/assessors.</p>	<p>Priority: Opportunity for learning.</p> <p>Time frame: Beginning within 6 months of this report being accepted.</p> <p>Responsible persons:</p>
3	The IFRC Secretariat needs to re-orientate and strengthen its existing Geneva and Regional Office (including CCSTs and COs) NSD human resources to	<p>This recommendation is made as a means of improving relevancy, efficiency and effectiveness. Refer to findings in Section 4.1.3.1.</p> <p>In enacting this recommendation IFRC need to clarify who does what within the OCAC process and redefine the various roles and responsibilities of the IFRC in GVA, IFRC ROs and NSs. The thrust in</p>	<p>Priority: Critical.</p> <p>Time frame: Beginning within 6 months of IFRC's acceptance of this report.</p>

⁸⁷ See: <https://www.kotterinc.com/8-steps-process-for-leading-change/>

⁸⁸ An idea that may extend to all NSD work.

⁸⁹ Accepting the fact that externally appointed individuals would need to have a strong Movement background.

No.	Recommendation	Rationale (and sub recommendation where relevant)	Action
	better support the OCAC process and wider National Society Development	<p>this recommendation is towards NSs taking more ownership for the OCAC process, particularly in relation to sourcing and securing their own resources (both human and financial) - to the extent that they able - for engaging in the process and linking more effectively with the supporting IFRC Regional Offices.⁹⁰ This shift would ideally lead to IFRC GVA being seen as the knowledge hub for OCAC rather than a resourcing one, which given the devolved nature of funding responsibly to the ROs makes sense.⁹¹</p> <p>Specifically, there is a need to re-orientate the role of the IFRC Secretariat and NSD Team; the role of the ROs (specifically CCSTs and COs); and the roles of the NSs themselves. There should be more direct strategizing between the CCSTs/COs, and the NSs that they support (drawing on the NSD GVA Team to provide knowledge and technical support as and when required). The ROs should also take responsibility for compiling data within their regions that relate to NSD trends, NS strengths and weaknesses, and determining and strategizing how best to leverage potential NS peer-to-peer support for the OCAC process. This information should be fed to the NSD GVA Team to aid with global trend analysis and development.</p> <p>In terms of the NSD GVA Team role, this role should be primarily concerned with OCAC process and tool development/alignment; quality control; providing knowledge and technical support to the ROs (not directly to the NSs unless exceptional circumstances dictate); and undertaking global trend analysis and development as a means of ensuring a joined-up Federation-wide approach to implementing OCAC.</p>	Responsible persons:

⁹⁰ However, a degree of latitude must be allowed for within this approach with GVA potentially holding a contingency budget that would enable NSs that wish to engage with the OCAC process, but cannot secure adequate funding.

⁹¹ Accepting that there are counter arguments to this which include: needing to have a strong RO leading on OCAC implementation; ensuring the reallocation of funding across Regions based on demand; and ensuring NS are afforded resources based on global priorities, not RO resources.

No.	Recommendation	Rationale (and sub recommendation where relevant)	Action
4	The OCAC tool, methodology and accompanying guides should be reviewed, revised and updated	<p>This recommendation is made as a means of improving relevancy, efficiency and effectiveness. Refer to findings in Section 4.1.3.2. This recommendation is comprised of five key elements:</p> <p>4.1. The methodology should contain an option of combining Phases I and II for NSs that would prefer and benefit from that option. In all cases, the guidelines should require the development of a plan of action for the Phase I findings and recommendation, including a progress monitoring plan to be done immediately or very soon after the Phase I assessment is completed.</p> <p>4.2. Issues related to gender and diversity, youth, compliance, integrity, protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), accountability, corruption, sexual violence and harassment, and transparency should be incorporated into the tool.</p> <p>4.3. The methodology should contain an option and accompanying process for undertaking a joint OCAC-SAF assessment to help facilitate a more systematic, joined-up and effective assessment approach (perhaps as a separate module within the process methodology). This aspect of the methodology should be developed in conjunction with ICRC.</p> <p>4.4. The OCAC tool and process needs to be better professionalised and packaged. The manual should contain detailed examples of how to complete the various sections with examples of narrative text; and contain hyperlinks to relevant supporting change/development documents for example. The tool needs to be reoriented to one that helps NS leaders use it for development dialogue, identify issues that the NS wants to talk about and be linked to the 7 distinct areas of transformation and 5 global challenges identified in the Strategy 2030 development process.</p> <p>4.5. The tool needs to be updated and broadened to account for the preparations that a NS needs to undertake before engaging in the OCAC process as well as being promoted as a 'recommended' tool for a NS's pre-strategic planning work.</p>	<p>Priority: Important.</p> <p>Time frame: Within 12 months of IFRC's acceptance of this report.</p> <p>Responsible persons:</p>

No.	Recommendation	Rationale (and sub recommendation where relevant)	Action
		4.6. There are multiple options for methodology development that include for example: having a smaller number of attributes; attributes that relate to the capacities a NS needs/does not need ⁹² ; relating attributes to outcomes and not processes etc. However, this discussion needs to be taken by those responsible for the tool's ongoing development.	
5	The IFRC Secretariat should prioritise the resourcing of the OCAC process and National Society Development in general to ensure alignment with Strategy 2030	<p>This recommendation is made as a means of improving relevancy, effectiveness and sustainability. Refer to findings in Section 4.1.3.3.</p> <p>If OCAC is to have a meaningful role to play in ensuring NSs continue to develop and grow as per Strategy 2030 expectations, there needs to be a clearer approach and prioritisation method to resourcing both the process itself as well as NSs that need support as a result of the OCAC process. There are clear indications that some of the 'weaker' NSs need support and funds should be ring-fenced from existing sources. One example could be to use the National Society Investment Alliance (NSIA) fund⁹³ and the Capacity Building Fund (CBF) to help kick-start regions that are falling behind with NSD initiatives (but not limiting resourcing to these pools). The outcomes of OCAC assessments should be used as a discussion point for partners to help support NSs in a structured way, and that these prioritised NSs are connected to peer NSs with relevant competencies and experience.</p>	<p>Priority: Critical.</p> <p>Time frame: Within 6 months of this report being accepted.</p> <p>Responsible person:</p>
6	The OCAC process needs to be modified to ensure aspects of National Society service delivery are more explicitly assessed and there is an appropriate focus on National Society	<p>This recommendation is made as a means of improving relevancy and effectiveness. Refer to findings in Section 4.1.3.4.</p> <p>This recommendation does not imply that the self-assessment tool needs to contain service dimension attributes, but rather that the OCAC process - as the Movement's holistic NSD tool – needs within its Phase I methodology to account for service delivery. This may be a separate tool</p>	<p>Priority: Important.</p> <p>Time frame: Within 12 months of IFRC accepting this report.</p> <p>Responsible person:</p>

⁹² Potentially a role for the CCSTs/COs.

⁹³ See: <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/national-society-investment-alliance/nsia-how-it-works/>

No.	Recommendation	Rationale (and sub recommendation where relevant)	Action
	relevance and community engagement and accountability	within the process, distinct from the self-assessment tool, but importantly undertaken during the Phase I stage. Within this approach, there is a strong argument to start the process in the communities and work backwards towards the NS so as to ensure there is an appropriate focus on community engagement and accountability. It is suggested that key IFRC NSD staff determine how this may be done.	
7	The certification aspect of the OCAC process should be reviewed and reformed	<p>This recommendation is made as a means of improving relevancy. Refer to findings in Section 4.1.3.5.</p> <p>Some NSs view certification as a positive aspect of the OCAC process, while others see it as a product with limited value. There is also doubt as to its professed resourcing capabilities, which raises expectations among NSs that cannot necessarily be fulfilled. Such a division of opinion lessens the overall currency of the certificate, and raises the concern that the IFRC has a product that is not valued equally by all members. There are at least three options to consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revise the award criterion: award certification based on the NS plan developed following Phase I that commits the NS to monitored development rather than attaining minimum standards (which is clearly highly problematic for a number of NSs that are unable to meet minimum standards for 'technical' reasons). This would change the emphasis of the certification award from attainment to progression. 2. Revoke the certification aspect of OCAC: while abandoning the certification process could be a potentially contentious issue for those that have been awarded it, only 3 NSs have attained it to date, and makes rescinding it potentially easier. 3. Introduce categories of progression for certification e.g. 25% of Phase I attributes met – category 1 NS; 25-50% of Phase I attributes met – category 2 NS etc. This would potentially help eliminate the contention raised in point 2 above as NSs already having secured certification could be awarded 'category 4' for example. 	<p>Priority: Opportunity for learning.</p> <p>Time frame: Within 12 months of IFRC accepting this report.</p> <p>Responsible person:</p>

No.	Recommendation	Rationale (and sub recommendation where relevant)	Action
8	The confidentiality aspects of the OCAC process need to be reviewed with a new focus on openly sharing National Society findings and assessment reports as a means of ensuring wider institutional synergies	<p>This recommendation is made as a means of improving relevancy and effectiveness. Refer to findings in Section 4.1.3.7.</p> <p>The lack of sharing OCAC generated findings is inhibiting effective institutional learning and is negatively impacting the IFRC's ability to create wider institutional synergies. A much more open approach to sharing of summarised reports needs to be agreed upon. One option could be to require a NS that wants future NSD partner support to indicate this on the self-assessment, which make explicit – and automatically triggers - a 'willingness to share' the findings report.</p> <p>The IFRC has potential to access a great deal of data that has been collected across a range of attributes, and while there has been some meta-analysis of data⁹⁴, it has mostly focused on reporting of composite NS minimum organisational standard attainment (and correlation between country wealth NS capacity) rather than deep insights into NSs NSD functioning (that may be obtained through cross-case study comparative analysis for example).</p> <p>This data should be used to inform strategic NSD support across the regions, and be used to help inform other Movement work such as Field Assessment Coordination Teams (FACT). Associated aspects of this recommendation relate to: producing evidenced-based impact case studies as a means of contributing to organisational learning; providing opportunities for exchange of best practices and peer learning; publication of best NSD practices; and an online platform of best practices, NSD change/development tools etc.</p>	<p>Priority: Important.</p> <p>Time frame: Within 6 months of IFRC accepting this report.</p> <p>Responsible person:</p>

⁹⁴ IFRC. (2017). OCAC Findings Report. Geneva.

Annex A: National Society OCAC process status

The Table below shows the NS that have undertaken Phase I of the OCAC process since 2011.

* indicates a NS has undertaken Phase I more than once.

2011 (14 NS)			
Ethiopia	Ireland	Mali	Tunisia
Georgia	Italy	Niger	Turkmenistan
Guinea Bissau	Lithuania	Senegal	
Guinea Conakry	Macedonia	Togo	
2012 (22 NS)			
Belarus	Colombia	Myanmar	Slovenia
Benin	Costa Rica	Nigeria	Tajikistan
Burkina Faso	Fiji	Peru	Ukraine
Burundi	Guatemala	Poland	Uzbekistan
Chile	Kazakhstan	Romania	
China (National & 8 branch assessments)	Kyrgyzstan	Russia (3 branch assessments)	
2013 (15 NS)			
Afghanistan	El Salvador	Qatar	Papua New Guinea
Belize	Honduras	Latvia	Russia (3 branches + national)
Bolivia	Iraq	Madagascar	Zambia
Gambia	Japan	Malawi	
2014 (23 NS)			
Antigua	Ethiopia	Malta	Solomon Islands
Armenia	Ivory Coast	Mongolia	Timor Leste
Bahrain	Jamaica	Namibia	Vanuatu
Bangladesh	Jordan	Nepal	Venezuela
Cook Islands	Lebanon	New Zealand	Vietnam
Dominican Republic	Liberia	Nicaragua	
2015 (17 NS)			
Albania	Iran	Malaysia	Sweden
Argentina	Kiribati	Norway	Switzerland
Barbados	Korea, Democratic Republic of	Pakistan	
Costa Rica*	Lao PDR	Samoa	
Finland	Lesotho	South Sudan	
2016 (12 NS)			
Australia	Indonesia	Panama	Trinidad & Tobago
Denmark	Mongolia*	Paraguay	Uganda
Guatemala*	Netherlands	Peru*	United Kingdom
2017 (13 NS)			
Burundi*	Ecuador	Senegal*	Uruguay
Burkina Faso*	Ghana	Suriname	
Costa Rica*	Libya	Swaziland	
DRC	St Lucia	Tanzania	
2018 (15 NS)			
Bahamas	Hungary	Mongolia*	Palau
Bangladesh*	Indonesia*	Mozambique	Sao Tomé
Dominica	Liberia*	St Kitts and Nevis	Sierra Leone

El Salvador*	Micronesia	St Vincent & the Grenadines	
2019 (9 NS at time of report)			
Cameroon	Jamaica*	Niger*	
Dominican Republic*	Honduras*	Somalia	
Haiti	Nicaragua	Turkey	

Annex B: Terms of Reference

Organisational Capacity Assessment & Certification Process (OCAC)

Evaluation Terms of Reference **SUMMARY**

Purpose

The evaluation will assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the Organisational Capacity Assessment & Certification (OCAC) process, to identify the extent to which it has supported NS efforts to become strong and sustainable service providers. It will also provide key lessons and recommendations to improve the process itself, strengthen the support provided before, during and after the OCAC process, and improve coherence with other National Society Development (NSD) initiatives.

Commissioner

This evaluation has been commissioned by the National Society Development, Support and Coordination unit, within the Policy, Strategy and Knowledge (PSK) Department, IFRC, Geneva.

Audience

The findings of this evaluation will be used by the IFRC, presented to the Working Group on Strong National Societies and Volunteering and to the IFRC Governing Board, and shared more widely within the wider IFRC (Secretariat and National Societies) and with the ICRC. The findings of this evaluation will particularly be used by the National Society Development, Support and Coordination unit, the Regional NSD delegates and PSK managers, Country Office/Country Cluster Heads and NSD delegates in individual countries and regions, and by the National Societies involved in OCAC and in NSD.

Review team

An independent evaluator supported by 2 evaluation practitioners drawn from the IFRC membership.

Duration of consultancy

Up to 36 days (including approximately 10 days in the field)

Estimated dates of consultancy

June - September 2019

BACKGROUND

As part of the adoption of its 10-year strategy, Strategy 2020, the IFRC agreed to develop an “independently validated Federation-wide peer review mechanism”. This mechanism, the Organisational Capacity Assessment & Certification (OCAC) was deemed vital for the success of Strategy 2020 - in particular, the Strategy’s Enabling Action 1 (“to build strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies”) as it identifies opportunities for improvement which are expected to result in Societies *doing more, doing better and reaching further*.

The overall goal of the OCAC process is to provide precision and focus in National Societies' efforts to become strong and sustainable service providers. The OCAC objectives are to:

- enable National Societies to assess their organisational capacity, performance and relevance in their own country to determine opportunities for self-development;
- ensure that all National Societies commit and comply with a comprehensive set of organisational minimal standards and thus protect/improve the performance of the overall Federation network.

OCAC has been designed as a phased process, setting minimum standards to be achieved for each of its two assessment phases, and to qualify for progression to the next phase and finally for certification, as laid out below.

- a. A self-assessment of a National Society's capacities;
- b. A peer review assessing the Society's impact in the country;
- c. An IFRC Governing Board certification of Societies that have successfully met the minimum standards set for each of the two previous phases.

Developed in 2010, the process was first piloted in 2011 and was formally adopted by the IFRC Governing Board in 2014/2015 - the process was adopted in 2014, and the minimum standards, as set out in both OCAC phases, were approved in 2015. By doing so, the IFRC formally adopted benchmarks that are valid for all 191-member Societies, thereby defining an organisational culture for the network at large.

To date, 117 National Societies have conducted a capacity self-assessment⁹⁵ (phase one) with some of those Societies having done so more than once. Three out of those Societies have met the minimum standards and qualified for the phase two (impact peer review). All three of them have successfully done that, and subsequently been certified by the IFRC Governing Board for a period of five years.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The IFRC and its Secretariat is currently redefining its orientation and strategies, notably through the development of Strategy 2030 and the rethinking of the IFRC Secretariat's National Society Development (NSD) strategy. Such initiatives highlight that the development of National Societies is still a key area for the network, and that it is a timely moment to rethink how support for NSD is provided, including through OCAC.

Also, after almost 10 years since its start and with more than 60% of the IFRC's membership having undergone at least one OCAC assessment, it is also timely to hold an evaluation of the OCAC process, to help assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the process, as well as identify any intended and unintended effects.

The OCAC evaluation will allow all NSs that have undergone an OCAC assessment to contribute to this evaluation through an online survey, with a special focus on those that have conducted the OCAC capacity self-assessment more than once and those that have undergone an OCAC impact peer review and certification. It will examine the process in more detail in about 15 National Societies, by way of key informant interviews and in-country visits to three of these Societies. This evaluation will also consider the role of different partners supporting NSs in their development, including the IFRC Secretariat and other Movement and non-Movement partners, and include them in the evaluation surveys and interviews as appropriate.

⁹⁵ As of March 2019.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology will adhere to the [IFRC Framework for Evaluations](#)⁹⁶, with particular attention to ensure that the evaluation approaches uphold the standards for evaluation planning, management and utilization.

The specific evaluation methodology will be detailed in close consultation between the external consultant, the IFRC management team and the evaluation commissioners. This will be outlined in an inception report to be drawn up by the consultant and will draw on the following methods:

On-line survey sent to key leaders and OCAC focal point in all NSs participating in OCAC. A separate survey could be sent to partners supporting NSs in their development efforts.

Desktop review of key background documents, including individual NS OCAC reports⁹⁷, the 2018 global OCAC report highlighting key learnings, British Red Cross Society's OCAC learning review, the Asia/Pacific OCAC learning forum report, the draft OCAC facilitators' guide and the Belarus Red Cross monitoring report, among others. The team will also consider a small sample of reports/evaluations from organisational assessment conducted by other actors in the sector, to draw learning from organisations working with similar systems.

Key informant and decision-maker interviews, including:

- Key stakeholders, particularly the leadership of selected NSs undergoing or having undergone the OCAC process. A minimum of 10 National Societies will be included in such interviews, ensuring that all Regions are covered (minimum of 2 NS per Region).
- Participants in NS OCAC assessment workshops, ensuring diverse perspectives are reflected (branches representatives, youth, etc.),
- Organisational Development experts and OCAC focal points in each Region,
- IFRC Secretariat staff, from both the Headquarters and field level, including Country Office / Country Cluster Heads and NSD staff, Regional NSD and PSK staff, and the Geneva NSD unit,
- Other Movement partners, with a focus on in-country PNS and ICRC representatives.

Field visits, including interviews with key stakeholders (leadership, participants to the OCAC self-assessment workshop and peer review, branch representatives etc.) of the selected 3 NSs visited. These visits could involve holding a short workshop with key stakeholders from the NS, the IFRC Country Office / Country Cluster and other Movement partners, during which the preliminary feedback from NS stakeholders could be presented and discussed.

AREAS OF FOCUS AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation will follow five evaluation criteria outlined at the outset and reiterated here (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability) and the evaluation team will consider the following questions as guidance to give directions for their lines of enquiry. The questions are indicative, not exhaustive and are expected to be further elaborated by the consultant in the inception report.

1. **Relevance**

- a. Was OCAC a useful process for NSs, and relevant to their needs and expectations?

⁹⁶ <http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/monitoring/IFRC-Framework-for-Evaluation.pdf>

⁹⁷ In order to respect the confidentiality of results granted to all participating NS, OCAC results and findings reports will be anonymised.

- b. Was OCAC adopted by and relevant to all types of NSs (size, type of services, context, structure etc.)? How did perceptions of the tool vary amongst different NSs and, if so, why?
- c. Was the methodology used within OCAC (phased approach, assessment tools, level of minimum standards, certification, validation of results) a suitable one and appreciated by the users?

2. Efficiency

- a. Was the outcome of using OCAC proportionate to the resources invested in it?
- b. Did the NSs get all the necessary information and support to prepare for, conduct and follow-up on their OCAC assessment? How could that support be improved for each of the phases?
- c. Were enough resources allocated to the overall roll-out and management of the OCAC process? How efficiently was it managed and were all necessary steps put in place to provide efficient support to the process (e.g. OCAC phase one roll-out by a pool of facilitators)?
- d. How are OCAC findings accessed and used to inform organisational learning?

3. Effectiveness

- a. Was there buy-in across the NSs to address the recommendations proposed by the OCAC findings report?
- b. Has engagement in OCAC furthered NSs' ownership of their own development strategy and implementation? And if so, how have NSs used the OCAC findings to further support their own development efforts?
- c. Did the OCAC process reach its stated objectives, e.g. for NSs to assess their capacity and performance in self-development? And did the IFRC deliver on ensuring that all NSs comply with minimum standards?

4. Impact

- a. Has OCAC supported enhanced delivery of programmes and services?
- b. Did OCAC lead to any unexpected results/changes? If so, what were they? Have they positively or negatively impacted the development of the National Society?
- c. How well did OCAC link with wider NS development processes (e.g. strategic planning)? And did it have an impact on those processes?
- d. How well has the delivery of OCAC complemented other IFRC or Movement supported development processes (e.g. BOCA, PER, SAF)? What can be learned from these different approaches?

5. Sustainability

- a. Did the NS learn anything new from undergoing an OCAC process, and if so, what?
- b. Were the changes within the NS, following the OCAC process, sustainable? And if so, why?
- c. To what extent have OCAC results informed other external NSD support? Has it led to additional support for NSD efforts?

DELIVERABLES

Inception Report

The inception report will be a scoping exercise for the evaluation and will include the proposed methodologies, data collection and reporting plans, with draft data collection tools, such as interview guides, the support needed from the IFRC, a timeframe with dates for deliverables, and the travel and logistical arrangements for the team (if missions to NSs are part of the methodology). The team or consultant will have an initial briefing meeting with the

commissioning unit, to understand the requirements of the evaluation, and with the NSD team and a small group of initial key informants to help elaborate the Inception Report.

Debriefing presentation

The team or consultant will have a short debriefing meeting with the commissioning unit and management team at the end of the evaluation research process and before commencing the draft report, to discuss the initial findings and to clarify any outstanding points of enquiry or address any gaps, challenges or misunderstandings in the evaluation process. This will help the team to consolidate their own thinking before starting on the report.

Draft report

A draft report should be submitted by the consultant within two weeks of the debriefing for review and comment by the IFRC. It should address the stated purpose and evaluative questions in this ToR. The specific report content can vary, but at a minimum it should include a description of the methods and limitations, and key findings, conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations. An executive summary should provide a succinct and clear overview of the report, highlighting key findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.

Final report

The final report will contain a short executive summary (no more than 1,000 words) and a main body of the report (no more than 10,000 words) covering the background of the evaluation, a description of the evaluation methods and limitations, findings, conclusions, lessons learned, clear recommendations. Recommendations should be specific and feasible. The report should also contain appropriate appendices, including a copy of the ToR, cited resources or bibliography, a list of those interviewed and any other relevant materials. The final RTE report will be submitted one week after receipt of the consolidated feedback on the draft report from IFRC.

Evaluation summary document or presentation

In addition, the team would be asked to produce a short document to communicate the key lessons and recommendations, in a short and easily accessible format, such as a short, visually interesting report or presentation. This will be done to improve the communication of the results to the widest possible audience. This should not be a re-write of the executive summary, but is expected to utilize data visualization to effectively convey information. In addition, the evaluation team is asked to provide a short case study for each of the NSs visited, to provide more detail on their OCAC experience and the key lessons they learned. This could be accompanied by short video shots or elements of the interviews with these NSs, or videos of short clips / quotations. This must be with the agreement of the interviewees and their NS.

Lessons learning workshop

Following the finalisation and agreement of the final report, the consultant will present findings and recommendations from the evaluation to key IFRC and other stakeholders in Geneva and on line to colleagues in the regions and at national level. This presentation will be followed by a discussion that will explore measures to be taken to address the findings and recommendations identified in the evaluation, and to identify concrete next steps to be taken (including by when and by whom) and the further support needed. All products arising from the evaluation will be owned by the IFRC. The evaluators will not be allowed, without prior authorization in writing, to present any of the analytical results as his / her own work or to make use of the evaluation results for private publication purposes.

EVALUATION MANAGEMENT

An **evaluation team** will be appointed to carry out the evaluation. It will consist of three people not directly involved in the development and roll-out of the OCAC process, as follows:

- a. An external evaluation team leader (consultant) will provide external expertise, as well as an independent, objective perspective for the exercise. S/he will be responsible for oversight of the planning, data collection and analysis, and will be the primary author of the evaluation report and other written deliverables listed below.
- b. Two NS representatives coming from NSs that have undergone an OCAC assessment, ensuring they represent different types of NS (region, size etc.) from across the IFRC's membership. They will support and inform the planning, data collection, analysis, and preparation of the deliverables for this evaluation.

There will also be an **evaluation management team**, who will support, manage and oversee the process of the evaluation (e.g. supporting with the contacts for the evaluators, the logistics, the quality assurance) and who will guide the evaluators and evaluation process to ensure it upholds the standards of the IFRC Framework for Evaluation. This evaluation management team will be made up of a three people, as follows:

- a. One representative of the NSD team who has not been involved in the OCAC process,
- b. One member of the IFRC PMER team used to managing evaluations
- c. One representative from a NS.

EVALUATION QUALITY AND ETHICAL STANDARDS

The evaluators should take all reasonable steps to ensure that the evaluation is designed and conducted to respect and protect the rights and welfare of the people and communities involved and to ensure that the evaluation is technically accurate and reliable, is conducted in a transparent and impartial manner, and contributes to organizational learning and accountability. Therefore, the evaluation team should adhere to the evaluation standards and applicable practices outlined in the IFRC Framework for Evaluation.

The IFRC evaluation standards are:

1. **Utility:** Evaluations must be useful and used.
2. **Feasibility:** Evaluations must be realistic, diplomatic, and managed in a sensible, cost effective manner.
3. **Ethics & Legality:** Evaluations must be conducted in an ethical and legal manner, with particular regard for the welfare of those involved in and affected by the evaluation.
4. **Impartiality & Independence:** Evaluations should be impartial, providing a comprehensive and unbiased assessment that takes into account the views of all stakeholders.
5. **Transparency:** Evaluation activities should reflect an attitude of openness and transparency.
6. **Accuracy:** Evaluations should be technical accurate, providing sufficient information about the data collection, analysis, and interpretation methods so that its worth or merit can be determined.
7. **Participation:** Stakeholders should be consulted and meaningfully involved in the evaluation process when feasible and appropriate.
8. **Collaboration:** Collaboration between key operating partners in the evaluation process improves the legitimacy and utility of the evaluation.

It is also expected that the evaluation will respect the seven Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent: 1) humanity, 2) impartiality, 3) neutrality, 4) independence, 5) voluntary service, 6) unity, and 7) universality. Further information can be obtained about these Principles at:

www.ifrc.org/what/values/principles/index.asp

Annex C: Key References

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Annex D: Key Informants

Name	Position	Organisation/Location
Md. Rafiqul Islam	Deputy Secretary General	Bangladesh Red Crescent Society
Lucy Morris	Senior National Society Development and Partnership Adviser	British Red Cross
Catherine Marie Martin	Supra Regional Movement Cooperation Coordinator -Asia Pacific	ICRC, Kuala Lumpur
Natia Loladze	Chair of IFRC Gov Board WG on NS	President of the Georgia Red Cross Society
Jagan Chapagain	Under Secretary General Programmes and Services	IFRC, Geneva
Xavier Castellanos	Regional Director	IFRC, Asia Pacific
Elkhan Rahimov	Acting Regional Director	IFRC, Europe
Luntan Bayarmaa	Head of Country Cluster	IFRC, Central Asia
Branimir Knezevic (Branko)	OD Coordinator	Former IFRC staff / Red Cross of Serbia
Naomi Akamatsu	NSD Advisor	IFRC, Geneva
Magdalena Stefanska	OCAC Trainer	Polish Red Cross
Rika Ueno	Former APRO NSD team	Japanese Red Cross
Sabina Ibraimova	Deputy Secretary General	Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan
Marat Kachkynbekov	Consultant	Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzstan
Sasho Taleski	NSD HQ staff	Red Cross of North Macedonia
Suzana T. Paunovska	Secretary of the Skopje City Red Cross	Red Cross of North Macedonia
Luong Thi Hong Thuy	Director of investment and resource mobilization	Vietnam Red Cross
Jemilah Mahmood	USG Partnerships	IFRC, Geneva
Cecile Aptel	Director Policy, Strategy and Knowledge	IFRC, Geneva
Roger Fischli	OCAC Coordinator, National Society Development	IFRC, Geneva
Giorgio Ferrario	Acting Head, NSD Team	IFRC, Geneva
Roger Bracke	former Head of NSD Team	former Geneva
Ian Steed	former Senior Officer NSD Team	former Geneva
William Parra	NSD Coordinator	IFRC, Americas
John Gwynn	former NSD APRO	IFRC APRO
Lorenzo Violante Ruiz	Head - Policy, Strategy and Knowledge	IFRC Panama
Glauco Quesada	Presidente	Costa Rican RC
Alejandra Mora	Jefe de Planificación	Costa Rican RC
Idalberto González	Gerente General	Costa Rican RC
Walter Zárate	Subgerente	Costa Rican RC

Karla Henry	Directora de Movilización de Recursos	Costa Rican RC
Jason Sánchez	Director de Juventud	Costa Rican RC
Victor Solano	Presidente Región 03	Costa Rican RC
Tatiana Sánchez	Directora de Formación Profesional	Costa Rican RC
Patricia Solórzano	Coordinadora de Voluntariado	Costa Rican RC
Luis Conyan		Costa Rican RC
Elieth Moraga		Costa Rican RC
Andrés Chaves		Costa Rican RC
Ligia Trejos		Costa Rican RC
Gerald Jiménez		Costa Rican RC
Rosario Masís		Costa Rican RC
Dyanne Marengo	Consejo Nacional	Costa Rican RC
Horacio Bogantes	Alcade	Municipalidad San Antonio de Belén
Alexander Solís	Presidente CNE y Protempore de	CEPRENAC
Gerardo Oviedo	Alcade	Municipalidad Santa Ana
Committee members	Comité de Santa Ana	Costa Rica
Committee members	Comité de Alajuela	Costa Rica
Committee members	Comité de Cartago	Costa Rica
Directores DINAGER	DINAGER	Costa Rican RC
Shahina Bahar	former Americas NSD Coord. for Costa R. and British RC	former Americas
Anna Hoybe	Senior Advisor	Danish Red Cross
Alex M. Torres	Head, North Pacific Sub-Office	IFRC, APRO
Leila Touqan	OCAC evaluation focal point (JRC board member)	Jordan Red Crescent
Heather Corrie	NSD Advisor	IFRC Geneva
Manish A. Tewani	Country Representative	American Red Cross, Myanmar
U Khin Mg Hla	Secretary General	Myanmar Red Cross Society
Dr Nyo Nyo Wint	Deputy Secretary General	Myanmar Red Cross Society
Dr Lynn Lynn Thet	Director, OD	Myanmar Red Cross Society
Daw Khin Khin Shein	Director, FASS	Myanmar Red Cross Society
Professor Mya Thu	President	Myanmar Red Cross Society
Kim Bawi	Executive Committee Member	Myanmar Red Cross Society
Daw Thin Thin Aung	Director, Finance	Myanmar Red Cross Society
Dr Tun Aung Shwe	Deputy Director, Football United	University of New South Wales, Myanmar
Paul Keen	Cooperation Coordinator	ICRC Myanmar
Dr Nay Htet Lin	Deputy Director, Health	Myanmar Red Cross Society
Andreas Fabricius	Country Manager	Danish Red Cross, Myanmar
Helena Mazarro	Humanitarian Affairs Officer	UNOCHA, Myanmar
Surein Peiris	Former Africa NSD Coordinator	IFRC (Head Somali Delegation)
Dr. Michael Charles	Head of Cluster South Africa	IFRC, South Africa
Stefano Cordello	Head of Country Libya	IFRC, Libya
Ernest Maruza	Youth & Volunteering Officer	IFRC, Africa region
Balthar Bacinoni	Director OD and HD	Burundi Red Cross Society
Mme. Happy Dlamini	President	Swaziland Red Cross Society

Elliot Jele	Program Manager	Swaziland Red Cross Society
Alex Mugyisa	PMER	Uganda Red Cross Society
Bayla Barry	Service Coordinator	Senegalese Red Cross Society
Hassan Esfandiar	Dep. Dir. General, International Communications	Iranian Red Crescent
John Entwistle	Deputy Regional Director (acting)	IFRC, MENA
Davood Pourkhanali	Head of Regional NSD, MENA	IFRC, MENA
Marwan Alawar	Director of Disaster Management Sector	Lebanese Red Cross
Cristhian Cortez	Head of Country Office	IFRC, Lebanon
Nabij Jabr	Under Secretary General	Lebanese Red Cross
Jean-Marc Le Coq	NSD Coordinator	ICRC, Geneva
Georges Ketanneh	Secretary General	Lebanese Red Cross
Abdallah Zogheib	EMS Director	Lebanese Red Cross
Rana Kabalan	Head of MENA	Norwegian Red Cross
Sayed Hashem	Regional Director	IFRC, MENA
Sanja Drljević	Movement Cooperation Coordinator	ICRC, Lebanon
Atta MM Durrani	Netherlands RC Representative	NLRC, Lebanon
Dr. Tara B. Rashid	NSD Focal Point	Iraqi Red Crescent
Virginie Troit	Director, Directrice Générale	French Red Cross

Annex E: Costa Rica Red Cross Case Study

Costa Rican Red Cross

Context and motivation for OCAC:

The Costa Rican Red Cross' (CRCS) motivation for engaging in the OCAC process stemmed, in part, from an institutional crisis that centred on the NS's financing modality and a recognition that the operating model of the past 30 years was no longer fit for purpose. The various organisational levels (HQ to branch) did not communicate or function well together. In 2012, a report commissioned by the Costa Rican government signalled a 'need for change' in the NS and a shift toward a more accountable business model. Acknowledging the need for institutional reform and financial restructuring, the NS embarked on various change processes, which included initiating a leadership transition process and commencing the OCAC process in 2012.

The NS' OCAC work:

The CRCS' OCAC process involved four assessments (2012/2013, 2015, 2016 and 2017) involving all local, regional and national levels in a structured process aimed at instigating progressive, incremental change across the National Society. The 1st (2012/2013) assessment was mostly a 'tick box' exercise that did not lead to any significant change. However, the 2nd OCAC process was used as a "genuine tool for organisational diagnosis", leading to a realisation that the NS needed more efficient management processes and a new identity (vision and mission). The process culminated in the NS receiving the OCAC certification award on 26 June 2018, making it only the third worldwide to receive the award. From a process perspective, CRCS has used OCAC to inform, support and complement other change management, evaluation and improvement processes (namely BOCA). These processes allowed the NS to incorporate OCAC analysis and learning within the framework of its 2017-2020 Strategic Development Plan (PED), and specifically as a means addressing needed change in relation to: ensuring NS unity; developing a coherent vision of the NS and its commitment to upholding the Fundamental Principles; and continuous organisational improvement within a shared a single mission.

Relevance including Leadership support for OCAC:

The OCAC process has been highly relevant to the Costa Rican Red Cross. Its adoption and application during a period of institutional instability and change was timely. As the CRCS President noted, the OCAC tool's relevancy rests in its contribution to "Ensuring the integrity of the National Society and guaranteeing respect for the Fundamental Principles and values". Specifically, the tool enabled governance and management to engage in a structured dissemination of the NS' vision, values, policies and expected results from the OCAC process to the 'whole National Society'. The tool's relevance was also reinforced to governance and management in its application for increasing the capacity of the NS to mobilise resources, specifically in the way it has allowed the CRCS to "Build favourable, official and effective partnerships and dialogues with stakeholders to strengthen relationships with important partners, which could lead to new opportunities for mobilizing resources and continue promoting our mandate."

Efficiency plus resource attribution to OCAC:

Proper resource allocation was a key factor in ensuring the CRCS's OCAC process was able to deliver on intended results. Priorities within the NS were changed to cover those that emerged through the OCAC process (and in effect served as a diagnostic tool to build NS direction). CRCS considered the process 'costly' mostly due to the NS' size and cost of engaging all levels in a meaningful consultation process. However, the resultant benefits have proved to be of "great value" for the National Society.

Effectiveness and progress secured:

While not the only change tool used by the NS to support its development in recent years, the CRCS believe that engaging in the OCAC process significantly contributed to the NS' development through a linear process of: identifying NSD activities that need to be carried out; providing a framework that enabled the successful implementation of those activities; and allowing for the ongoing review of progress made in working towards commonly identified goals. The CRCS' continuous review of weaknesses and strengths made evident through the OCAC reports reinforced that both the analysis and decision making processes supported by the OCAC process were valid and strategic in nature. This analysis and knowledge were used effectively to inform the NS's strategic planning process, and led to the 2017-2020 PED and the supporting Plan of Action.

Impact and what changed as a result of OCAC:

The NS report that the impact of the OCAC process has been highly positive. The process has had institutional wide impact, particularly related to governance, organisational development and leadership. The process has been strongly linked to the CRCS Strategic Development Plan (PED) and BOCA processes undertaken in 2016 and 2018. The NS believes OCAC has also led to a culture of 'continuous improvement', which results from a constant evaluation of its management processes. One of the most significant impacts has been "unifying the multiple levels of the National Society" whereas previously there had been limited structure and communication from Board to Branch levels. One of the most impactful aspects of OCAC on the CRCS is that it has led to Governance's meaningful contribution to National Society development.

Sustainability plus external collaboration/partner support in the OCAC process:

The NS consider the strategic planning process and the resultant PED as its main sustainability 'framework'. However, within this framework, acknowledge the part played by OCAC and how the process provided it with "a starting point for understanding deficiencies and/or weaknesses; and based on that knowledge, to develop and work on actions that helped reinforce and close the gaps". The NS believes the changes made are sustainable due to three key elements. The first, is linkage with the Fundamental Principles and Strategy 2020. The second, is that the process leveraged the BOCA carried out by all the Auxiliary Committees and the National Congress 2016 (which inputted into the 2017-2020 PED). And third, in coordination with the IFRC Panama Office, engagement in the Capacity Building Fund (CBF) Project that provided funding to improve attributes classified 'C' following the 2017 OCAC Phase I assessment.

The main lessons derived from the case include:

- A key success factor related to using the OCAC process alongside BOCA, and then feeding the results and learning into the NS' strategic planning framework.
- The process of monitoring progress against the different OCAC attributes and organisational structures was key to continually driving improvement and ensuring ongoing NS development. This involved not seeing certification as an end in itself, but rather as a step in the process of continual improvement.
- OCAC made the NS realise that the process of quality management is a permanent activity rather than an occasional or isolated process.
- Meaningfully involving the volunteer base in the OCAC process was essential for ensuring the required change was both accepting and subsequently implemented. This meant management listening to volunteers and allowing the volunteers to be active participants in the evaluation/assessment process.

Annex F: Myanmar Red Cross Case Study

The Myanmar Red Cross

Context and motivation for OCAC:

The Myanmar Red Cross' (MRCS) motivation for engaging in the OCAC process stemmed from learning during *and* following Operation Nargis⁹⁸, in which the NS realised that its overall response performance could have been better. With Movement support, the MRCS came to appreciate the extent to which it needed to develop, viewing this (and the prospect of embarking on the OCAC process) as an opportunity for overall institutional improvement rather than a crisis situation that held negative connotations. In this regard, the NS began its OCAC journey with a highly positive outlook.

The NS' OCAC work:

MRCS conducted its first OCAC Phase I self-assessment in December 2012 with facilitation support from the NSD Unit in Geneva, which in effect set the benchmark attribute indicators for the National Society. In December 2014, the NS undertook a 2nd Phase I process, drawing on expertise within its own Organizational Development (OD) Department. This process primarily focused on tracking the progress made between the 1st and 2nd Phase I exercises, and identifying key areas for improvement. In December 2016, the NS conducted a 3rd Phase I involving some 30 MRCS participants (volunteers, executive committee (EC) members, HQ staff and branches). In January 2019, a 4th Phase I was undertaken, involving 50 participants comprising EC members, HQ staff, and representatives from state/region Red Cross supervisory committees. Progressing findings and recommendations from the various Phase I exercises has mostly been the responsibility of the OD Working Group (attended by PNSs), and has centred on comparing the OCAC ratings over the years. This has involved honest reflection as to why more progress in securing key capacity attribute benchmarks has not been made. With some irony, reasons given for this relate to partners (PNSs and select United Nations Agencies) requiring MRCS "to focus on daily programme and project tasks to ensure project accomplishment rather than NSD issues". This aside, learning from the OCAC process has positively translated into the development of the MRCS Strategic Plan 2016-2020.

Relevance including Leadership support for OCAC:

Leadership support signalled the importance of the OCAC process to the National Society. Importantly, MRCS leadership viewed OCAC as a step in the process of continual organisational improvement rather than as a means of securing certification. In this regard, NS leadership greatly appreciated the 'opportunity' generation aspects the OCAC process led to. While KIs confirmed the relevancy of the overall OCAC methodology and process to the NS, the majority of Phase I workshop participants were reported to have found the self-assessment attribute rating system confusing. Reasons for this related to the requirement to translate definitions – that were not always translatable - into Myanmar language. Others felt the scoring system was too quantitative in nature, not sufficiently objective, and arbitrary; whereas others found the Phase I process too time consuming. A further limitation related to the fact that not all MRCS participants had experience of the consultative, dialogue driven methodology central to the OCAC process, with some finding it a challenge to share thoughts in an open and honest way, especially in the presence of leadership. Nonetheless, the self-assessment consultative nature of the process, with all its different opinions, helped the NS reach a consensus in relation to the rating contributions.

⁹⁸ Cyclone Nargis struck Myanmar on 2 and 3 May 2008, devastating the Ayeyarwady and Yangon regions. Official figures state that 84,500 people were killed and 53,800 missing. The UN estimated that 2.4 million people were affected.

Efficiency plus resource attribution to OCAC:

Overall, MRCS feels its investment in the OCAC process has been very worthwhile, not least in raising awareness of NS strengths and weaknesses, and helping to resolve issues of concern. MRCS is very reliant on Movement partners for all types of resourcing and has not seen the OCAC process yielding any new or alternative resourcing opportunities outside of this traditional support frame. While the NS reports sharing OCAC results (and an associated three-year plan of action) with Movement partners, not all planned actions have received support (citing funding and technical support limitations). This said, Movement partners⁹⁹ in recent years have provided the NS with a range of NSD support in branch, finance and PMER development, including provision of funding support for a f/t MRCS PMER manager.¹⁰⁰ Wherever possible, partners try to ensure that other areas of NS support (e.g. PER, DRESI) are linked to the OCAC process.

Effectiveness and progress secured:

The NS has an effective 'progress' monitoring system in place that clearly charts attribute improvement (or in some cases regression) between the 1st OCAC process and the final one conducted in January 2019. However, a key weakness in this process is that the results from the various Phase I processes have not been effectively translated into strong plan of action or effective monitoring of that plan. Indeed, analysis of the various OCAC assessment reports reveals a simple charting of results over time rather than an indication of what needs to change and why. MRCS recognises it needs to invest more in progressing OCAC findings, but feels Movement partner support is essential for this, but ironically noting "To get this support we have to respect their objectives", which suggests a donor driven rather than NS led agenda. A further revealing limitation that stems from weak PMER is that the NS does not "know whether or not PNS' supported programmes and projects actually support NSD issues".

Impact and what changed as a result of OCAC:

MRCS reports that OCAC's impact on the NS has been highly positive with results being used to inform the new strategic planning process currently underway. The main improvement changes resulting from the OCAC process for the NS include: a better understanding of the need to measure NSD progress; an appreciation that effective dialogue can contribute to better understanding the NS's strengths and weaknesses; and the contribution the process has made to the MRCS's Red Ready initiative. However, the NS have not objectively seen any major service delivery improvements as a result of OCAC.

Sustainability plus external collaboration/partner support in the OCAC process:

Through enabling the NS to identify the root cause of many problems, and having addressed many of those, the solutions secured to date are considered to be sustainable. Significantly, due to branch participation in the OCAC process, there is a better realisation on their part that HQ cannot just provide automatic funding to branches, and that resources are limited and need to be targeted. While select partner support in the past has been overall positive, the limited follow-up from the IFRC (and in some cases PNSs) is delaying overall NSD progress. MRCS acknowledge they have some way to go to ensure a successful Phase II process and at this stage are content with making continual NSD improvements.

The main lessons derived from the case include:

- Staff turnover rate meant there was often limited continuity of OCAC understanding from one Phase I process to the next.
- Monitoring progress against the different OCAC attributes is key to ensuring ongoing NSD, but plans have to be developed and implemented.

⁹⁹ Most notably, but not exclusively from American Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross and German Red Cross.

¹⁰⁰ Norwegian Red Cross will contribute to NSD support later in 2019.

- It may be beneficial to discuss some attribute areas (e.g. finance) in smaller, knowledge-dedicated groups so as to make the Phase I process more meaningful for the majority of participants.

Annex G: Lebanese Red Cross Case Study

The Lebanese Red Cross

Context and motivation for OCAC:

The Lebanese Red Cross' (LRC) motivation for engaging in the OCAC process was in part triggered by a unanimous acknowledgement within the National Society of the need for institutional change. These developments coincided with a major influx of refugees into Lebanon as a result of the Syria crisis, which caused LRC's budget to grow substantially resulting in a challenged financial system and subsequent donor concerns. The change process began in 2013 with the appointment of a Secretary General (the first time the NS had had this position in twenty years) and was followed in early 2014 by Phase I of the OCAC process that highlighted significant institutional weaknesses. As a main contributing driver to the change process, the Under Secretary General (senior focal point and lead coordinator of the OD process) set about scoping opportunities for enacting institutional reform. Building on this momentum, in January 2014, the NS engaged in its 1st (and only one to date) OCAC Phase I process using the NS's 2013 Strategic Framework as a key input. The OCAC findings and recommendations report was produced in April 2014, which led to the production of the LRC's Development Programme in July of the same year.

The NS' OCAC work:

The LRC's review of the OCAC capacity attributes was undertaken by the group of 14 participants representing broad LRC participation. The process resulted in some 72 identified deficiencies (A or B ratings), thus highlighting considerable opportunities and areas for NSD improvement. A major concern highlighted through the OCAC process related to resource mobilization, in which the NS recognised it was not optimising the many options that existed for supporting major NSD improvements. Consequently, the NS's Development Programme (informed by the OCAC process) focused on a need to: (i) strengthen core services in EMS, BTS, and Medico-Social Services (MS); (ii) scale-up Disaster Management Services (DMS); (iii) invest in key organisational capacities - finance, procurement, volunteering and human resources; and (iv) build crisis response capacity. And highlights that the entire organisational capacities aspect of LRC's strategy was based on OCAC results. The remaining three emergent priorities emanating from the Phase I process were: *Identity, Communication and Structure*. In terms of Identity, participants felt LRC had an "unclear identity" and one that was primarily based on a 'few big activities' namely Emergency Management Services (EMS) and Blood Transfusion Services (BTS), which were not reflective of the full extent of services provided by the National Society. Analysis of Communication revealed a disunified LRC – "not an organization that speaks as one, or thinks and acts as one". Furthermore, LRC was structured in a way that privileged 'form over function', meaning its human resource structure was not well-suited to managing operations effectively.

Relevance including Leadership support for OCAC:

LRC found the OCAC Phase I process highly relevant to its needs. Importantly in the context of Lebanon, most Phase I participants were able to agree on the same issues, which meant the NS was able "to mobilize a sufficient critical mass to implement the massive change that was required". A key message from workshop participants to leadership "was the need to understand and accept that there has to be a VAST change process" in the National Society; and that "things cannot continue as they are today". This collective 'on message' signals the willingness of participants to speak their minds in an open and honest way. However, sensitive to the fact that change can be a difficult process for some, and will inevitably challenge existing 'power bases', a strong communication approach that focused on building trust and understanding was put in place by those driving the process.

Efficiency plus resource attribution to OCAC:

LRC confirm that its investment in the OCAC process has been extremely worthwhile. Much of this investment is channelled through the NS's Strategic Plan 2019-2023, and specifically through Objective 11 that sets the goal of "strengthening of organizational capacities . . . to provide relevant, quality and sustainable services at a national scale": the specific targets of which are that LRC successfully completes a second OCAC Phase I exercise and initiates Phase 2 (anticipated to take place sometime in 2021). In the context of LRC, Movement partner support has been enviable and key to helping the NS progress its NSD initiatives. The following partners were highlighted by the LRC for forming "the bedrock of NSD support": German Red Cross (EMS and human resource development); Norwegian Red Cross (MSD, finance resource development and branch development); Spanish Red Cross (volunteer development); Swiss Red Cross (BTS); Danish Red Cross (branch development); and the British Red Cross along with ICRC (CASH programming and logistics support), as well as ICRC which has provided considerable support to EMS, DM and OD.

Effectiveness and progress secured:

In terms of the progress secured through OCAC, the LRC confirms that engagement in the Phase I process has significantly helped it to progress towards a 'well-functioning National Society'. This has been secured through honest recognition of weaknesses and a willingness to effect institutional change at all levels. Key contributing success factors have been: leadership's willingness to drive the change process forward and acting as 'champions of change'; an appreciation and understanding the complex country context, and ensuring that approaches are acceptable to the NS's multiple stakeholders; and engaging in constructive 'public relations' exercises with external partners (primarily government authorities and agencies). This emphasis on change is a key feature of the NS's progressive attitude to the OCAC process.

Impact and what changed as a result of OCAC:

The impact of OCAC on the NS has been significant. Leadership cite 'sea changes' in shifting from: personal focused work to work of an institutional focus; individual work styles to a culture of teamwork; fractured approaches to programming and operations to joined-up ones; and short-term planning thinking to longer-term planning modalities. Importantly, as a result of OCAC (as well as Movement partner support) the LRC feels it working towards a culture of 'standards and quality' that permeate throughout the organisation, and which are understood and accepted by all concerned.

Sustainability plus external collaboration/partner support in the OCAC process:

Despite the significant progress the NS has secured through its own development initiatives as well as a result of the OCAC process, it does not consider its achievements to be particularly sustainable due to the limited availability of local funding sources. In part, this is an acknowledgment of the key role that Movement partners play in supporting the NS (as highlighted above), as well as the financial contributions they make to ensure aspects of the LRC's current operational and NSD work can continue.

The main lessons derived from the case include:

- Heterogenous and representative OCAC group of participants helped to develop a clear and accurate picture of the LRC's current challenges.
- Strong NS leadership accompanied by a clear long-term OD plan was vital to ensuring the OCAC process has been a success to date.
- Documenting and emphasising institutional weaknesses created a consensus for the NS to implement change.
- An inclusive, participatory and transparent change process was essential to overcome resistance to change.

- A strong 'change communication' approach was essential to ensuring cohesion and consensus across all levels of the National Society.
- The use of senior IFRC OCAC facilitators was essential for ensuring the process was taken seriously by the National Society. This gave credibility to the OCAC process with the LRC greatly appreciating the experience, quality and respectful authority that the IFRC facilitator brought to the process.