The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region has witnessed numerous natural and man-made disasters in the last decade, which created some of the world’s worst humanitarian crises, shattering lives and upending livelihoods. They have driven large-scale displacement and migration that has left millions in precarious situations and in need of safe water, sanitation, nutrition and health care. In the conflict zones of Syria, Iraq, Yemen, occupied Palestinian territories and Libya, National Societies are among the only actors with significant access to vulnerable people. Likewise, National Societies in neighbouring countries are the first to provide services to the huge migrant populations living in host communities and camps that stretch host-country services to their limits. MENA countries play an important role as origin and transit countries in Mediterranean migration, with National Societies playing a highly visible role in support of this vulnerable population. Simultaneously, earthquakes and floods have hit various countries in MENA, leading to an additional burden on the National Societies.
This document outlines the work of the IFRC MENA Regional Office in Beirut, Lebanon. The office supports 17 National Societies in MENA: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen—through its country and country cluster offices.

To help achieve and measure results, in 2020, IFRC programs will prioritize 3 countries: Iraq, Syria and Yemen which combine high numbers of vulnerable people with conditions that are conducive to programming. The IFRC will continue to play a prominent role in contributing to enhance a trusted partnership platform and in responding to disasters and crises. The overall approach takes a focus on climate-smart, socially inclusive, integrated programming, including mainstreaming gender and diversity, community engagement and accountability. Furthermore, disaster response capacity enhancement—institutional disaster preparedness—support will be an integral part of the programming approach. The IFRC Regional Office in MENA supports the National Societies of the region in cooperation with the ICRC and Participating National Societies.
Movement Footprint

Given the vast array of vulnerable people in the region, there is a strong Movement presence active on the ground. The 17 National Societies in MENA are diverse with different roles, capacities and potential. The expanding role of some MENA countries and National Societies as global donors creates possibilities for asserting their role in the Federation and on the world stage.

The IFRC has offices in 10 of the 17 countries, two of which are multi-country cluster offices supporting North Africa and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) National Societies. IFRC country presence is supported by technical experts concentrated in the IFRC MENA Regional Office. Additional technical expertise is also available from IFRC’s Geneva Headquarters, and globally throughout the network of IFRC offices and member National Societies. IFRC provides member services equally to all MENA national societies.

A significant number of other National Societies—Australian Red Cross, Canadian Red Cross, Iraqi Red Crescent, Netherlands Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, German Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross, Japanese Red Cross, Austrian Red Cross, French Red Cross, Danish Red Cross, British Red Cross, Qatari Red Crescent, Swiss Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross, American Red Cross, Belgian Red Cross—work in the region, supporting local National Societies in their priorities.

The prevalence of protracted conflict in the region emphasizes the role of ICRC in the Movement presence and action. ICRC focuses on Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and oPt, with additional activities in Egypt, Iran and Kuwait.

In recent years, ICRC has provided financial support to IFRC programmes and operations in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Lebanon and Jordan.

The 2019 Council of Delegates resolution on Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC 2.0) provides an added impetus for closer collaboration and in recent years, MENA Regional Office has worked closely with ICRC on 4 areas of mutual priority: harmonized National Society development, communications, resource mobilization and Movement-wide reporting. MENA innovations in this area included the "One Movement Appeal" for Yemen Cholera crisis and the Movement wide reporting mechanism for the Syria Crisis.
AREAS OF FOCUS

10,000
PEOPLE TO BE MADE RESILIENT AGAINST DISASTERS.

2
NATIONAL SOCIETIES

8
NATIONAL SOCIETIES

17
NATIONAL SOCIETIES

4
NATIONAL SOCIETIES

4
NATIONAL SOCIETIES

- DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (DRR)
- SHELTER
- LIVELIHOODS AND BASIC NEEDS
- HEALTH
- WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)
- PROTECTION, GENDER AND INCLUSION
- MIGRATION

NATIONAL SOCIETIES
10,000
PEOPLE TO BE MADE RESILIENT AGAINST DISASTERS.
STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- Strengthen National Society Capacities
- Ensure Effective International Disaster Management
- Influence Others as Leading Strategic Partners
- Ensure a Strong IFRC
AREA OF FOCUS

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND CLIMATE ACTION

The MENA region is exposed to a growing number of hazards that affect stability and growth in the region. According to the INFORM Global Risk Index for mid-2019, which is made up of three dimensions: hazards and exposure, vulnerability and lack of coping capacity, Syria, Iraq and Yemen are among the 12 countries with the highest overall risk, when compared globally. Conflict in the region has inflicted great damage to human lives and physical infrastructure resulting in millions of people killed or displaced. Urban areas have been particularly affected by the conflict, and cities are facing significant service delivery pressure due to physical damage and the influx of a high number of displaced people.

The interplay of climate change, population density, conflict, and water scarcity has intensified the risk of natural disasters such as drought, flooding and earthquakes in the region. Over the last 30 years, these phenomena have affected approximately 40 million people in MENA countries and have cost their economies about USD 20 billion.

Building on commitments made by IFRC and member National Societies, the IFRC MENA Regional Office will continue to conceptualize, develop and roll-out “Disaster risk reduction in Fragile and Complex Settings” approach, which will be jointly implemented with National Societies and closely coordinated with other Movement partners. The following activities will be prioritized for 2020 and beyond:

- Promote nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based, climate smart, and risk-informed DRR programming and green response approaches across contexts and all thematic areas
- Engage in an anticipatory approach with a focus on forecast based action and forecast based financing to support National Societies in the development of early action protocols prepare National Societies to scale-up humanitarian anticipation in MENA.
- Coordinate and support learning and knowledge sharing in MENA both internally and externally

OUTCOME

COMMUNITIES IN HIGH RISK AREAS ARE PREPARED FOR AND ABLE TO RESPOND TO DISASTERS

COMMUNITIES IN DISASTER AND CRISIS AFFECTED AREAS ADOPT CLIMATE RISK INFORMED AND ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE VALUES AND PRACTICES
Shelter is an essential survival need during emergency and an opportunity for livelihood recovery, building community resilience and ultimately, vulnerability reduction in MENA. The current context, which is dominated by protracted crises, adds complexity to the shelter programming environment due to protection related elements.

The IFRC provides technical support to National Societies in shelter and settlements when requested. IFRC ensures that shelter needs in emergencies are addressed and that mitigation actions and future preparedness measures are taken. Shelter will be also considered in forecast-based financing and early action protocols in MENA. The IFRC MENA Regional Office will provide technical support to National Societies seeking to enhance their shelter technical capacity. Consequently, the IFRC MENA Regional Office will:

- Provide technical assistance to National Societies and operations, including support to the development of sector strategy, monitoring and evaluation, and documentation and dissemination of good practices related to shelter.
- Scoping study on shelter related priorities of MENA National Societies to inform required technical support to enhance the shelter programming capacity in the region.

Communities in disaster and crisis affected areas restore and strengthen their safety, well-being and longer-term recovery through shelter and settlement solutions.

Technical support, guidance and awareness raising in safe shelter design and settlement planning and improved building techniques are provided to affected households.
AREA OF FOCUS

LIVELIHOODS AND BASIC NEEDS

Food insecurity, according to the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), has increased. The recent upturn in hunger and food insecurity in the region seems to be nearly exclusively due to increases in conflicts. However, other countries in the region not affected by conflict also show relatively elevated levels of food insecurity. Among the food security challenges facing the region, undernourishment, poverty, low agricultural productivity under scarce natural resources and food import dependency will remain central up to and beyond 2030. The region is considered as the most water-stressed region on Earth by far. In fact, 12 out of the top 17 most water stressed countries listed by World Resources Institute (WRI) are in the dry MENA region.

The IFRC objective is to enhance National Societies’ capacity to tackle emergency food insecurity and chronic hunger through relevant actions across the 4 pillars (food availability, access, use/utilization and stability), while supporting individuals and households to protect, restore, strengthen and diversify their livelihoods during and after disaster, and be better prepared to cope with future shocks and stresses.

During the first months of 2020 the IFRC MENA Regional Office will engage with National Societies to define the Livelihoods Roadmap for the region. The road map will ensure that work in livelihoods will be evidence-based and in accordance with the demands and needs of National Societies. Considering the current context, the IFRC MENA Regional Office will support National Societies livelihoods initiatives from a “protection” perspective. This will maximise the impact of activities, ensure a do-no-harm approach and contribute to suitability of planned interventions.

- Provide technical and strategic guidance to MENA National Societies on livelihoods and protection-based feasibility studies and consultations.
- Support and amplify innovative approaches in National Societies livelihoods programme design.

OUTCOME

COMMUNITIES, ESPECIALLY IN DISASTER AND CRISIS AFFECTED AREAS, RESTORE AND STRENGTHEN THEIR LIVELIHOODS

220,000 SWISS FRANCS FUNDING REQUIREMENT
In the past decades, the MENA Region has achieved substantial progress in improving the health of its population. However, the region is still facing a dual burden of disease: communicable and non-communicable. Since the adoption of the MDGs and SDGs, the MENA region made progress in tackling communicable diseases, that led to a reduction in child mortality, improving maternal health, decreasing rates of communicable diseases. This led to a demographic transition characterized by increasing birth rates and life expectancy, thus adding more challenges to existing health systems to address the needs of the population. Additionally, instability and protracted crises increased the burden on already weak health systems which are unable to cope with the massive wave of refugees and destroyed infrastructures.

Strengthen MENA National Societies by providing technical leadership and support for full alignment with global health strategies and based on National Society priorities in the following areas:

1. Emergency health
2. Community health
3. Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)
4. WASH
5. First Aid and medical services
6. Internal coordination within the RC/RC Movement
Position National Societies as sustainable actors in health and WASH, in alignment with key agendas at global, regional and country levels (Universal Health Coverage, International Health Regulations, Global Health Security and Strategy 2030, Sustainable Development Goals, localization) by increasing advocacy, humanitarian diplomacy and partnership engagement.

Improve monitoring and evaluation of the health program in the region:

1. Update the health program service mapping of 2016
2. Promote the development of health data collection tools in consultation with other relevant partners to assure quality and unify health data.
3. Support the IFRC representatives in the monitoring and evaluation of health & WASH programs.
4. Support IFRC representatives and NSs in assessments, project and program development based on the health and WASH needs in the region and aligned with the national, regional and global strategies.
5. Encourage the establishment of regular information/data sharing platforms on the health situation with a focus on the key component and indicators in the region.

TARGETED NATIONAL SOCIETIES

VULNERABLE PEOPLE’S HEALTH AND DIGNITY ARE IMPROVED THROUGH INCREASED ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE HEALTH SERVICES
AREA OF FOCUS
WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

In the MENA Region Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) needs require both on-going operational and programming efforts from National Societies- supported and coordinated, where appropriate, from IFRC at Global, Regional, Cluster and Country Office levels. The needs and planned activities are as follows:

- **Technical and Programming support** provided to ongoing WASH needs in **countries affected by protracted complex crises** in Yemen, Iraq, Syria and to a lesser extent in countries hosting refugee or displaced populations such as Lebanon and Jordan.

- Technical support for **emergency responses** due to increasing climate change related events, continuing complex man-made disasters and WASH related epidemics.

- **Increased efforts to enable and coordinate Emergency WASH Training and capacity building** is planned for 2020 in close collaboration with emergency health efforts, to establish WASH and Emergency Health deployable Human Resources from the Region.
Preparedness for and response to WASH related epidemics especially AWD and Cholera which has a special global and regional focus in the ‘One WASH’ initiative that seeks not only to respond better to outbreaks but contribute long-term eradication in alignment with the GTFCC ‘Cholera Roadmap’. One WASH proposals, which contain both WASH and Public Health interventions, are in development in Yemen, Iraq, Syria and potentially Algeria and Libya. The Regional WASH Team will support development for projects in MENA while supporting resource mobilization. It should be noted that a Global Hub for One WASH is hosted by the MENA Regional Office for target countries in other regions especially in Africa and Asia Pacific.

Advocacy and representation of membership to enable partnerships with external partners such as UNICEF, WHO and others in the region in forums like the Cholera Platform for MENA and in closer collaboration with WHD especially in Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness and Response.

Provide Regional WASH Technical Support, Coordination and Capacity Building for National Societies in the Region

People Reached Who Are ‘At Risk’ from Cholera and AWD in the Region 1,000,000

National Societies Reached with Increased Capacity for WASH Software 6

Outcome

Increased Effective Technical Support and Coordination of WASH Activities and Capacities in the Region While Increasing the Scale of WASH Operations and Programs
AREA OF FOCUS
PROTECTION, GENDER AND INCLUSION

In all protracted crises, the adverse effects fall disproportionately on women and girls. Conflict increases the prevalence of gender-based and sexual violence and restricts the mobility of women and girls to access essential services and jobs. In times of food shortage, women and girls are the last to eat. When families lose their main breadwinner (typically a male), female members are often left in extreme poverty and destitution. When land and other property are lost in conflict, women struggle the most to regain them.

In MENA, gender inequality concerns have traditionally taken a back seat to the “larger” or “more urgent” issues of civil wars, foreign interventions, unemployment, corruption, and authoritarianism. Yet, as history has shown, the exclusion of entire segments of the population is a major barrier to social cohesion, democratic institutions, and sustainable development. To further the well-being and empowerment of women, social protection programs must increasingly target impoverished girls, widows, and female refugees/IDPs to ensure minimum standards of living for these groups. (World Bank).

For 2020 the primary focus for PGI will be to reactivate the PGI network at a regional level, along with training and advocacy support. A focal point from each National Society will be identified to support PGI initiatives both through their National Society, and regionally. IFRC will facilitate the coordination of PGI initiatives with Movement Partners and stakeholders. In addition, encouraging a greater focus on gender & diversity in support of operations.

The overall objective of MENA PGI (cross cutting) program is:

Better understanding the importance of protection, gender and inclusion in all sectors throughout the program cycle by:

- Supporting National Societies to integrate PGI in their programming by establishing / reactivating the regional network and facilitating training

- Support National Societies to integrate the revised Minimum Standard Commitments on Protection, Gender and Inclusion in Emergencies, including the gender and age markers, into the design, implementation and monitoring of their operational plans and emergency plans of action to ensure programmes are well designed, have adequate PGI analysis, budget and staffing following the “do not harm” approach.

COMMUNITIES BECOME MORE PEACEFUL, SAFE AND INCLUSIVE THROUGH MEETING THE NEEDS AND RIGHTS OF THE MOST VULNERABLE
AREA OF FOCUS

MIGRATION AND DISPLACEMENT

Due to the protracted crises in the region and its surroundings, vast numbers of people have been displaced or are transiting the area. The region is seeing mixed-migration groups and a diversity of migratory routes that also put local communities under significant pressure.

The IFRC MENA will continue to support National Societies in developing national migration strategies, equipping their leadership, senior management and volunteers with a better understanding of migration, and building their capacity for the delivery of appropriate support and services to migrants (including through humanitarian service points).

The programme approach is to reinforce National Societies in strategically planning the provision of neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian assistance in support of vulnerable IDPs and migrants (including asylum seekers and refugees) according to the needs and vulnerabilities.

All activities are fully aligned with the IFRC 2018–2022 Global Strategy on Migration and the IFRC Migration Policy (2009). Below are the key activities planned for 2020:

- Support National Societies on the use of existing IFRC technical guidance on migration and displacement
- Develop a MENA Regional Framework for Migration with participation from Movement partners
- Support the development of the three sub-regional migration and displacement networks and roundtables (e.g., workshops, quarterly meetings, coordination, communication and advocacy material, etc.)

OUTCOME

COMMUNITIES SUPPORT THE NEEDS OF MIGRANTS AND THEIR FAMILIES AND THOSE ASSISTING MIGRANTS AT ALL STAGES OF MIGRATION (ORIGIN, TRANSIT AND DESTINATION)
STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SOCIETY CAPACITIES

With the increase in the number of vulnerable people in the region, National Societies need to be well prepared, adapt to changes in their environment and be well equipped to lead change.

The capacity of the Red Cross and Red Crescent to respond rapidly and effectively to crises hinges critically on its local networks of volunteers and staff. Ensuring they are adequately prepared, trained, supported and protected in their work is a shared responsibility of the Movement’s components.

The strategic priorities are:

- Provide operational support to National Societies to ensure their sustainable service delivery at the grassroots level, through their local branches.
- Enhance use of innovative means and tools for effective preparedness and response, such as CASH Programming.
- Provide support to strengthen the effectiveness of National Society leadership in the region.
- Provide support and technical guidance so that National Societies build a strong youth voice and youth engagement.
- Coordinate and provide technical support on “Preparedness for Effective Response” (PER) approach to enable National Societies to meet the needs of local communities in a suitable, effective and efficient way, ensuring that National Societies own the development process and outcomes (in the form of a plan of action).
- Enhance information management capacity both regional and National Society levels to enable the capturing, manipulation, collation, analysis and dissemination of data pertaining to operations and to populations of concern.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES ARE FACILITATED TO ENSURE THAT NATIONAL SOCIETIES HAVE THE NECESSARY LEGAL, ETHICAL AND FINANCIAL FOUNDATIONS, SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES, COMPETENCES AND CAPACITIES TO PLAN/PERFORM

NATIONAL SOCIETIES DEVELOP DEEPLY SHARED IDENTITIES AND IMPROVED INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

THE IFRC NETWORK BENEFITS FROM ITS WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE, A SHARED CULTURE OF INNOVATION, LEARNING AND BUILDING ON BEST PRACTICES
In alignment with the global surge optimisation process, MENA has been developing regional disaster response standard operating procedures (SOPs). The SOPs will outline the rapid and appropriate use of IFRC response tools and funding mechanisms including the use of the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and emergency appeals as well as the deployment of surge human resources where needed, with a focus on mobilizing resources as locally as possible and as globally as needed.

Following the finalization of the MENA SOPs by early 2020, the IFRC will develop a robust and transparent surge roster, committed to developing humanitarian professionals, equipped (material and financial) to support quality responses. MENA regional office will fundraise for the surge roster, including surge trainings, deployment system, hardware and software. The IFRC will ensure that surge personnel are classified based on competencies and role profiles in alignment with the global surge optimisation process, and adequately provided with learning and development pathways and tier progression.

1. To maintain engagement in the surge system and ensure continued professional development of surge roster members.

2. Facilitate a range of deployments to further skills sharing and the development of a range of experience.

The surge roster will be based on core and technical competencies with surge role profiles aligned to global surge SOPs. The involvement of regional networks and advisory groups is a key to ensure ownership, commitment and active engagement from MENA National Societies.

Given the context in the region, IFRC will work closely with National Societies and Movement partners on recovery aspects in operations to support communities’ self-recovery, build resilience and address underlying risks and vulnerabilities, while alleviating suffering. This will include institutionalization of the recovery approach, improving the capacity to implement recovery and to embed in the systems and processes of the host National Societies.

MENA regional office will also work the roll-out of the newly developed global recovery roadmap together with MENA National Societies. This is in line with the IFRC Recovery Road Map workplan (2019–2022)
Key activities:

1. Institutionalizing a recovery approach and building capacity to implement recovery programming.

2. Map MENA surge human resources based on competencies and role profiles in alignment with the global surge SOPs.

3. Roll out two regional Coordination, Assessment, and Planning trainings to develop regional surge capacity.

4. Together with the Disaster Management Advisory Group, develop a protocol for MENA National Societies when releasing volunteers/staff for regional/international deployments.

OUTCOME

EFFECTIVE AND COORDINATED INTERNATIONAL DISASTER RESPONSE IS ENSURED

THE COMPLEMENTARITY AND STRENGTHS OF THE MOVEMENT ARE ENHANCED
STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

INFLUENCE OTHERS AS LEADING STRATEGIC PARTNERS

The MENA Regional Office will provide support and guidance to position the National Societies as preferred local partners vis-a-vis partners and donors, making sure that National Societies remain in the focus of humanitarian work. There are six main directions to achieve this objective:

- Participate and engage in regional fora and platforms where the future of the humanitarian sector is discussed and shaped; identify areas of mutual interest and cooperation with partners as well as new funding opportunities.

- Diversify our funding base by attracting new regional or global donors targeting higher quality funding (long term – unearmarked), including funding from emerging donors.

- Support MENA National Societies to increase their local fundraising and diversify their income sources.

- Operationalize global MoUs with non-Movement partners in MENA, such as the FAO, WHO, WFP, and engage in regional activities and/or advocacy.

- Expand partnerships with international corporations, supporting the National Societies to pursue partnerships based on the global agreements.

- Strengthen digital capacities of National Societies and thus public communication and advocacy campaigns; communication surge training, data protection on social media workshop, coaching to develop crisis communications plans.

OUTCOME

THE IFRC, TOGETHER WITH NATIONAL SOCIETIES, USES THEIR POSITION TO INFLUENCE DECISIONS AT LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS THAT AFFECT THE MOST VULNERABLE

OUTCOME

THE PROGRAMMATIC REACH OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETIES AND THE IFRC IS EXPANDED

830,000 SWISS FRANCS FUNDING REQUIREMENT
STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

ENSURE A STRONG IFRC

To ensure that IFRC MENA Region is effective, credible and accountable, specific attention will be given to the following:

- Re-enforcing compliance to ensure full accountability and transparency for all supply chain management procedures, established frameworks and standards, through: establishing tools and systems for compliance oversight and potential risks measurement and continue the dissemination (including training as needed) of IFRC procedures, policies and processes related to the global supply chain.

- Providing finance training to IFRC representatives in countries so that office & project budgets are managed in accordance with IFRC’s finance policies.

- All staff will complete the online Fraud & Corruption Training.

- Ensuring security risk assessments and providing assistance to both IFRC representatives and National Societies when they are hosting international fora, i.e. World Urban Forum, or otherwise as needed.

- Technical support and training on IT systems—digital platforms and data protection. An IT regional network will be established for MENA National Societies.

OUTCOME

THE IFRC ENHANCES ITS EFFECTIVENESS, CREDIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

A STRATEGY AND A PLAN OF ACTION, ARE DEVELOPED TO MITIGATE THE RISK OF FRAUD AND CORRUPTION WITHIN THE IFRC SECRETARIAT AND NATIONAL SOCIETIES

2,570,000 SWISS FRANCS FUNDING REQUIREMENT
Contact information of the IFRC Country office, for partners who wish to find out more

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