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Long Term Planning Framework Uruguayan Red Cross 2012-2015

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

*Branch strengthening
workshop, Cerro Largo
branch. Source:
Uruguayan Red Cross*



1. Americas Zone Mission

The mission of the Americas Zone is to support Americas National Societies to increase humanitarian and development standards, helping them to remain relevant within their country and sustainable and accountable for their actions, guided by the implementation of *Strategy 2020*.

2. National Society Mission

The Uruguayan Red Cross' mission is to provide humanitarian relief, prevent and reduce suffering with total impartiality, without distinction of race, nationality, class, religion or political creed, improving the lives of the most vulnerable people mobilizing the power of humanity.

3. Introduction

Uruguayan Red Cross Framework

The Zone plan covers the period 2012–2015. The country-level plan covers the period corresponding to the validity of the Uruguayan Red Cross operational plan 2011–2012, which will be monitored every six months.

Context and needs of the country

The Oriental Republic of Uruguay is among the Latin American countries with the best economic, political and social indicators. The Uruguayan economy is the result of a combination of natural resources of the country, with a highly literate population, a diversified business structure and a

strong state presence. In recent years the software industry has shown important dynamism, reflecting a constant growth of exports.

Despite the crises that have affected the country in the last two decades, Uruguay registers one of the lowest levels of poverty in Latin America, with a poverty level of 19.4 per cent and extreme poverty of 1.7 per cent¹.

Life expectancy for the Uruguayan population is one of the highest in Latin America, with 73.07 years for men and 79.46 years for women. It also has a health profile of a developed country, where the main causes of death are cardiovascular diseases, cancer and road accidents. The population is ageing, which makes the elderly a social sector with increasing vulnerability. Social indicators show, in general terms, a positive picture. However, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) variable of inequality in the Human Development Index indicates that in 2010 the country fell 2 points, positioning itself in 52nd place (below Argentina).

At the political level, the country has managed to consolidate its democracy. A political detainee from the time of the military dictatorship, Pepe Mujica, is the current President of the country. Uruguay has the lowest level of perceived corruption in the continent.

Vulnerability to natural disasters is closely linked with the recurrent floods that occur in the La Plata river basin. According to the UNDP, Uruguay faces the challenge of reducing the adverse impact of external events and reducing vulnerability to climate change and the degradation of natural resources.

Focus of the 2012 plan based on key priorities

The Uruguayan Red Cross has established two major lines of work for 2012. These have been agreed within the National Society, the branches and the regional representation. They are as follows:

- I. Organizational Development
- II. Strengthening health and risk management and disaster management programmes

Purpose and outcomes that the secretariat seeks to achieve at the end of the programme

The main aim of the Federation secretariat is to support Uruguayan Red Cross in order to contribute to the development of its capacities, so it can be stable, consistent and effective in a world that is continually evolving, to improve its response and provision of services to vulnerable populations.

The outcome that are sought by this plan are as follows:

Outcome 1: Promote the professionalization and modernization of the National Society, through strengthening the management body.

Outcome 2: Promote the development of the territorial network, with stronger and better-prepared branches.

¹ www.cbasico.fmed.edu.uy

Outcome 3: Contribute to strengthening the health, risk management, communication and volunteering national programmes.

Outcome 4: Promote *resource mobilization* as a strategic process based on the effective management of the organization.

Outcome 5: Promote the dissemination of humanitarian norms, particularly of the institution's Principles and Values, within and outside the National Society.

Target groups and/or target populations

The Uruguayan Red Cross focuses its work on the populations in situations of vulnerability in urban, periurban and rural areas, in particular work with children and the elderly.

The regional representation will focus its work on strengthening the capacities of the technical staff, both remunerated and volunteers in the headquarters and branches. At the same time, cooperation will be carried out with governmental and non-governmental institutions, business and academic sectors and all those partners that strengthen the positioning and role of the National Society.

Context/Background of the National Society Priorities

The Uruguayan Red Cross has a long history. It was founded in 1897 and the main actions have focused on the areas of health and response to recurrent disasters. The character of its work has mainly been assistentialist. In terms of its functioning, some challenges identified in a study at the beginning of the 1990's are still relevant today, such as: the centralization of leadership, limited development of branches, lack of young volunteers, lack of a global strategic vision shared by the entire National Society and the lack of a professional team to manage the institution.

With the development of the strategic plan 2007–2010, focused on working more with the vulnerable population in the country from a development perspective, it was expected that the modernization process would be accelerated and that the National Society would institutionalize a culture of planning and management, which to date has not been possible. In 2008 a new process of professionalization and modernization of the National Society started, which did not bring the expected results. At the beginning of 2010, the professionalization of the National Society was taken up again, through an institutional strengthening project, with the hiring of three technical consultants to work in the area of management. In only a few months, this team managed to establish, together with branches, a work plan for 2011–2012. This shows that there is a potential for the development of the National Society and that if this is benefited from, it can give good results. This action plan will be revised in December 2011 and aims to establish the basis to develop a new strategic plan.

The National Society has lived through a period of institutional instability, which brought it close to an integrity crisis. In June 2011, new elections were held, bringing the National Society a new governing team, which intends to continue strengthening the areas established in the action plan 2011–2012. This new stage requires close and systematic support to allow for small achievements that will give back trust, credibility and visibility to the organization, and with this, it will gain greater support from the population and more solid motivation from its branches and volunteers.

The Americas Zone will apply a complementary approach to strengthening National Society headquarters and territorial branch networks, while fostering greater specialization within key programme areas. This strategy introduces thematic focus areas for integrated programming, as well as strategic support areas that will contribute towards modernization of National Societies in their way of operating. The Americas Zone has identified the following core external trends, although it is recognized that these may not be relevant for all National Societies (Annex 1):

- Urban Risk
- Migration
- Violence
- Climate change

The Uruguayan Red Cross has taken into consideration two of the general external trends mentioned above. Urban risk, as the majority of the Uruguayan population live in cities, particularly in the capital, and the National Society works with vulnerable populations in urban and periurban areas. It has also incorporated climate change within its strategic area of risk management and disaster management.

The National Society has identified two areas of action that respond to trends or existing vulnerabilities in the country, these are:

- In the area of health, the Uruguayan Red Cross works with mobile health units with the aim of reaching sectors where the health service is deficient. It also has a nursing school that trains professionals to strengthen the quality of assistance to the population.
- The National Society works with elderly people, an age group that is expanding, as in other countries in the region. For this, the National Society carries out its special handicrafts programme.

The Uruguayan Red Cross needs to immediately address the organizational difficulties that have arisen in recent years (internal context). Its new leadership is aware of this challenge. As a result it has decided to prioritize issues such as: leadership, participation of youth, volunteering, accountability, resource mobilization and, in addition, risk management linked to institutional integrity.

Concurrently, in order to respond to external trends, National Societies need to update and modernize their way of operating by addressing **internal pressures** related to the areas of National Society **leadership, integrity, accountability, performance, volunteers** and **resource mobilization** (Annex 2).

4. How we will work-Business Lines

Business Line I: HUMANITARIAN STANDARDS

Areas of Concentration

Principles and Values, policies, research studies, humanitarian trends.

National Society Approach

The experience of the Uruguayan Red Cross in recent years has generated a gap in terms of the application and use of the Principles and humanitarian norms. The development of the country requires a more updated view of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's Principles and Values. As a result it is necessary to strengthen these areas on the inside and fulfil the National Society's responsibility in its auxiliary role to public authorities more effectively, which will allow for greater influence on decision makers' agendas from different levels and instances.

The above will also allow the National Society to be better prepared to incorporate new humanitarian trends and respond to the task of humanitarian diplomacy, which is the responsibility of the National Society to carry out at all times.

To complement the above and as a preventative internal action to guarantee the integrity of the National Society, the Uruguayan Red Cross has identified the need to have a code of conduct that is known by all human resources and abided by all actions carried out in the institution's name.

Deliverables and Outputs

1. Support the dissemination, understanding and application of the Fundamental Principles both inside and outside of the National Society.
2. Promote the progressive incorporation of humanitarian trends in the National Society's work.
3. Initiate processes to be part of the Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC) initiative.

Business Line II: DISASTER AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Areas of Concentration

Health and risk management and disaster management.

Several of the outputs identified by the Uruguayan Red Cross are linked or related to the general trends of climate change and urban risk.

National Society Approach

While the recurrence and variation of disasters is not high, the National Society recognizes that it needs to prepare itself better, particularly in the area of risk management and response at the community level, and also in areas where it could complement the country's civil protection system. Particular interest lies, in this sense, in the issues linked to new hazards or risks that emerge as the country develops.

In terms of health in emergencies, the National Society has identified the need to strengthen the area of psychosocial support in emergency situations, with the aim of receiving technical support in order to achieve the expected outputs.

Deliverables and Outputs

1. Support the strengthening of the National Society in community preparedness and risk reduction, in terms of community-based disaster preparedness and urban risk; in addition, disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change.
2. Support coordination and provide technical advice on disaster preparedness and effective and efficient response.
3. Promote the strengthening of volunteering in emergencies in order for this to be stronger and better prepared.
4. Promote the development of participative community methodologies and the use of tools.
5. Strengthen the area of health in emergencies, in psychosocial support and psychosocial first aid.
6. Support the first aid curriculum and structure.
7. Promote the capabilities of the National Society in response / early recovery, regional intervention team (RIT) training, emergency operation centre (EOC) training, participation in regional and sub-regional drills; socialization of the Regional Response Plan; the use of cash in early recovery; planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting particularly in emergency situations.

Business Line III: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Areas of Concentration

Organizational development.

National Society Approach

The new leadership in Uruguayan Red Cross is conscious of the crisis that the National Society has experienced and understands that to have an important role in the country which is changing, it needs to achieve sustainable development of its organization. As a result, it has identified organizational development as one of the priority areas of work. The development of human and structural capacities will take on additional importance. This development will ensure the basis for humanitarian programmes and actions to continue to be implemented and developed in favour of the most vulnerable groups identified by the National Society. The document "Building Strong National Societies" will be the guide for this process.

In the area of community health, the Uruguayan Red Cross is in a process of change and restructuring, and will continue working to increase capacities of health focal points in branches and in the structuring of an operational health plan that is in line with framework documents.

The strengthening of programmes will be linked to the implementation of the Community-Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA) methodology, support to strengthening capacities in issues such as: health promotion and prevention (mobile health units), first aid, voluntary blood donation, HIV and AIDS. In the area of work linked to urban risk the proposal is to initiate actions in road safety, harm reduction linked to psychoactive substances and psychosocial support. The latter will be a cross cutting area for all health activities including social services relevant to the area. The proposal is to also work progressively in violence prevention, training volunteers in the issue (gender and social violence).

One of the areas of focus in the Global Health Framework² is to develop inter-agency work; this will be strengthened through work between the National Society, the Ministry of Sanitation and other organizations that lead in these issues. In the same way, fundraising will continue with companies for the areas of road safety and first aid.

Deliverables and Outputs

1. Promote the participative development of the strategic plan 2012–2015.
2. Collaborate in achieving the development of statutes, internal rules and the code of conduct.
3. Promote the development of the national volunteering plan and development of a national volunteer database.
4. The strengthen the capacity of the National Society in the area of professional qualifications and competences for volunteers and staff at all levels: encouraging the use of the learning platform; the National Society will also participate in a leadership training for young people.
5. Provide a tool kit and materials on volunteering to the National Society.
6. Promote the development of leadership with a special emphasis on youth.
7. Strengthen the National Society's territorial network, including the development of local operational plans through participative processes.
8. Support the implementation of a health programme in line with the National Society strategic plan and create health teams in the National Society branches.
9. Promote community volunteering with training in the CBHFA tool.
10. Promote projects in psychosocial support, harm reduction (drugs) and road safety.
11. Promote strategic partnerships with institutions and/or companies to achieve objectives.

Business Line IV: HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY

Areas of Concentration

Communications (positioning and working through Red Cross networks), resource mobilization, humanitarian affairs and alliances.

National Society Approach

The National Society will have to make an important effort to re-position itself in the country and gain recognition and support and ensure its auxiliary role to the state authorities. In recent years the National Society's presence and public visibility has been reduced. Fortunately, its image is not negative, which allows for a more rapid recovery, but this will go hand in hand with proposals and actions carried out and the way in which the Uruguayan Red Cross disseminates or communicates its action. On the other hand, the National Society has the challenge of mobilizing resources to finance its activities.

One of the challenges, which need to be further systematized with special preparation, is humanitarian diplomacy or the capacity to systematically influence decision makers. This is a field where the Uruguayan Red Cross can and should work, particularly in a society such as Uruguay, where democratic and open government allow for opinions to be expressed and influence decisions.

Deliverables and Outputs

² Global Health Framework 2011-2015 - Geneva 2011

1. Support the National Society in creating partnerships with governmental and non-governmental bodies in the country.
2. Promote the development of the national communication programme through participative processes with branches.
3. Develop competencies in order to establish a resource mobilization and development unit in the National Society.

Business Line V: EFFECTIVE JOINT WORKING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Areas of Concentration

Administrative support, development of financial systems, development of human resources, development of information systems, development of the planning and evaluation department, risk management and audits, Movement cooperation.

National Society Approach

The improvement of administrative accounting systems, accountability and the modernization of digital tools are a fundamental part of organizational development. The National Society has understood that modernizing these areas is an important part of its efforts in organizational development, as these will allow for rapid and transparent accountability to donors and public opinion in general. Effective and opportune accountability will ensure continuity of future support.

To develop these capacities and competencies, the National Society proposes the promotion of horizontal cooperation amongst peers. It is expected that the Secretariat will play a coordinating role and promote the exchange of knowledge and experience between National Societies.

Deliverables and Outputs

1. Promote the establishment of administrative-accounting mechanisms and procedures within the area of finance: accompanying analysis with structure, procedures, tools and technology platforms.
2. Support the development of PMER tools and processes.
3. Provide support to reduce the digital divide.
4. Promote horizontal cooperation amongst peers.
5. Support and provide assistance to the area of human resources.

5. Potential risks, challenges and assumptions

In processes like these there are a number of challenges. The first and most important is to gain and ensure the political will for these changes. The new leadership is aware of the difficulties that the National Society has experienced and the importance of a change that will place it in a different situation.

The second, also important challenge is to focus and prioritize actions, as this will contribute to showing results and motivating cooperation, change and support.

One significant limitation and challenge is to maintain and develop the professionalization of the National Society's different programmatic departments.

With the development of an operational document with the regional representation, this will be monitored every six months in order to make opportune changes and adjustments throughout the plan.

6. Work with partners

The main permanent partners of the National Society are the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC). However, there are also Partner National Societies that have historically provided support to Uruguayan Red Cross, such as the Italian Red Cross and the Spanish Red Cross, and more recently, the Japanese Red Cross Society.

This is an area that will need to be developed creatively in order to motivate alliances with other actors, national and international, from public to private sectors.

Programme area	Sector	Partners
Health and care	Community-Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA)	Spanish Red Cross, Luxembourg Red Cross, IFRC
	HIV	IFRC
	Voluntary non-remunerated blood donation	IFRC
	Psychosocial support	IFRC
	Harm reduction-drugs	Italian Red Cross – IFRC
Government, development and volunteering	Development of institutional capacities	Swedish Red Cross
	Government and management of volunteering	IFRC
Humanitarian principles and values	Support the development of the humanitarian principles and values programme	ICRC
	Gender	Swedish Red Cross and IFRC
Risk reduction management	Risk reduction	IFRC
	Climate change	Spanish Red Cross
	Disaster preparedness	Finnish Red Cross

7. Promoting Diversity

Within its lines of work, the Uruguayan Red Cross has incorporated gender and diversity as cross cutting areas in all institutional work carried out by the National Society.

Regarding Principles and Values, the National Society has requested support, in coordination with the ICRC, in order to disseminate these within and outside the National Society. One of the most relevant aspects is the need to analyze the applicability of the principles, likewise, work in the area involving the auxiliary role to the public authorities, in the headquarters as well as branches.

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations](#) (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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The IFRC's work is guided by *Strategy 2020* which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of nonviolence and peace.

Find out more on www.ifrc.org

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Annex 1

Core External Trends

EXTERNAL TRENDS

URBAN RISK: By 2020 the region comprising Latin America and the Caribbean will be 82 per cent urban. Unregulated low-income districts dominate the landscape of most Latin American cities. Poverty, inequality, political instability and lack of access to land are all contributing factors to this shift. Consequently, this shift is creating new trends in vulnerabilities such as urban violence, traffic accidents, and a diversity of environmental hazards, including poor sanitation,³ pollution of rivers and streams, and deforestation.

VIOLENCE: The Pan American Health Organization called violence in Latin America "the social pandemic of the 21st century." Social inequality and social exclusion are considered major causes of violence in Latin America and the Caribbean. Residents in socially excluded communities cannot depend on those institutions designed to protect them, and violence becomes one of the only available options to seek out justice, security and economic gain.⁶

MIGRATION: The Americas are home to 27 per cent of the World's migrants⁴. According to the International Organisation for Migration, issues such as natural disasters and climate change contribute to increased population movement with one in five migrants being a child or adolescent.⁵ Migrants who are forced to settle elsewhere are frequently subject to discrimination and lack of access to social services. It is also vital to take into account the impact that migrants have on their communities of origin as well as host communities.

CLIMATE CHANGE: Trends in climate change will continue to heavily impact Latin America and the Caribbean magnifying issues such as environmental degradation, migration pressures, food security, livelihoods and conflicts over scarce natural resources, particularly water, in addition to increased frequency and intensity of disasters and crisis.

Annex 2

Internal Pressures

INTERNAL PRESSURES

Leadership is recognized by government authorities, civil society, the corporate sector and the Red Cross constituency as a result of evidence-based information, identifying the National Societies as relevant actors in addressing vulnerabilities and needs. The leadership guides, influences and ensures better understanding of issues affecting those most in need, enabling relevant strategic decision-making, thus bringing attention to rights, needs and vulnerabilities of communities and associated underlying factors. Furthermore, leaders must guarantee that the National Society assumes its auxiliary role to the government and differentiates between the functions of governance and management.

Integrity Some National Societies require support on their internal systems to ensure that activities are being carried out in accordance with the Federation's standards and procedures as well as in a transparent and accountable manner. This also requires the capacity to develop early actions to anticipate external factors that might put at risk the image and identity of the Red Cross.

Accountability Entails active compliance with the IFRC's policies and procedures, as well as working in line with the Fundamental Principles and Values and setting and following standards so

³ Environmental Implications of Peri-urban Sprawl and the Urbanization of Secondary Cities in Latin America. Haroldo da Gama Torres; Inter-American Development Bank; Technical Notes No. IDB-TN-237.

⁴ UN DESA, Population Division (2009). *Trends in International Migrant Stock: The 2008 Revision* (United Nations database, POP/DB/MIG/Stock/Rev.2008); IOM, *World Migration Report 2010*

⁵ UN ECLAC with UNICEF, *Children and International Migration in LAC*, 2010

⁶ Inter-American Development Bank) Research Department Working Paper #613: Social Exclusion and Violence in Latin America and the Caribbean Heather Berkman October 2007

as to become a role model. It also relates to meaningful beneficiary participation, effective and efficient use of resources and transparent reporting, monitoring and evaluation practices.

Performance Capacity building of National Societies in the areas of Administration, Finance, Planning, Monitoring Evaluation and Reporting, Human Resources, Information Systems, Resource Mobilization and Logistics (especially procurement) takes into account that National Societies in the region are at different phases of development requiring different levels of support and enabling the Federation to foster peer-to-peer support and horizontal cooperation.

Volunteering Strong commitment is needed to support National Societies to scale-up and prioritize their volunteering development efforts. By increasing the participation of volunteers in the National Societies' decision-making and institutional life, volunteers will become more engaged.

Resource mobilization Most National Societies are working in middle-income countries and, as such, benefit less from international cooperation which tends to focus on countries which are classified as low-income. Nevertheless, they work in increasingly complex and challenging contexts that require attention and reflection to find new ways of mobilizing resources. National Societies must reduce financial dependency on external donors and develop core funding that guarantees that they will always be active in their own country and will act independently from donor pressures and interests.