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Annual report

Global Logistics Service

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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**This report covers the
period 1/01/2011 to
31/12/2011**

Photo: Building materials are delivered for a transitional housing project as part of the Haiti earthquake operation. June 2011, IFRC



In brief

Programme outcome

The 2011 plan of the Global Logistics Service (GLS) is designed to support strategic aim 1 of the IFRC's *Strategy 2020* to "Save lives, protect livelihoods, and prepare for and recover from disasters and crises". More specifically, it supports enabling action 1 of *Strategy 2020*, to "build strong National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies", and enabling action 3 to "function effectively as the IFRC".

Programme summary

In 2011, the Global Logistics Service embarked on the implementation of Logistics 2015, its five-year strategic plan that supports the delivery of the IFRC's *Strategy 2020*. Logistics 2015 focuses on three objectives, namely to:

1. support the enhancement of National Society logistics capacity
2. increase the IFRC's logistics capacity to deliver logistics services for preparedness and operational activities
3. provide agreed logistics services to pre-selected humanitarian agencies

The IFRC's Global Logistics Service benefits from a worldwide network that includes a headquarters-based logistics service in Geneva, zonal logistics units (ZLUs) – located in Panama, Kuala Lumpur and Beirut – a logistics unit and global fleet service in Dubai and warehouse bases in Las Palmas and Nairobi. The development of the existing logistics capacity and services to deliver the set objectives is managed through the implementation of six discrete projects, namely:

1. Management and communication
2. Logistics HR development
3. Sustainable funding
4. Legal status
5. Supply chain management systems
6. Infrastructure, assets and resources

The strategy and its implementation projects are being carried out in five phases starting in January 2011 and ending by December 2012. All projects have assigned project managers and allocated funding; deliverables have been agreed upon and matched to timescales. A robust planning and tracking mechanism for each project, as well as a communication plan, have also been established. The six projects are being implemented by teams comprising members of the IFRC's logistics teams or technical staff, National Society members and, where required, external experts.

With the implementation of Logistics 2015, the GLS will be able to ensure that the IFRC – as a global network of National Societies – has access and control of a competent, efficient and effective logistics service to carry out its humanitarian assistance activities and achieve the goals outlined in *Strategy 2020*.

Financial situation

The total 2011 budget is CHF 4,865,239, of which CHF 4,205,228 (86 per cent) covered during the reporting period (including opening balance). Overall expenditure during the reporting period was CHF 2,157,341 (44 per cent) of the budget. It should be noted that this budget reflects funding for longer than 12 month activities (such as ECHO funding earmarked for 24 months), which explains the low rate of spending.

[Click here to go directly to the financial report.](#)

No. of people we have reached

It is estimated that, on average, 150 million people are reached directly or indirectly every year through the programmes and services delivered by the Red Cross Red Crescent network of National Societies. Close to 18.3 million people benefited directly or indirectly from secretariat-supported or National Society-supported interventions during the reporting period (source: DMIS).

Our partners

The Global Logistics Service currently works with a number of partners on a range of projects as outlined below.

Humanitarian Procurement Centre

ECHO has accredited the IFRC as a Humanitarian Procurement Centre (HPC), which means that the Global Logistics Service can extend pre-selected logistics services to humanitarian third parties, beyond the traditional support provided to National Societies.

ICRC

The GLS has a continuous strategic cooperation with the ICRC's logistics service. Where appropriate, both organizations collaborate on operational programmes and implement joint projects in areas of common interest. Activities include revising the emergency items catalogue, working on quality assurance framework, jointly establishing supplier framework agreements and maintaining suppliers' social responsibility track records, among others. Regular meetings are

held with ICRC to share information and agree on common approaches to current and future activities.

Logistics cluster

The GLS attends the global logistics cluster meetings and contributes to operational coordination mechanisms during emergency operations.

Fleet Forum

The Fleet Forum brings together numerous humanitarian organizations – the IFRC, UN agencies and NGOs – and provides a platform for humanitarian actors, donors, commercial companies and academia to meet annually to review and discuss best practices in fleet management. The IFRC's Global Logistics Service is a founding member of the Fleet Forum and a member of the Fleet Forum Board. The 2012 Fleet Forum Annual Conference will be hosted by the IFRC at the secretariat in Geneva.

Cooperation with the logistics academic community and commercial companies

The GLS maintains links with a number of academic institutions that offer logistics within their curriculum and/or are actively involved in researching new practices and innovative approaches in the field of humanitarian logistics. A close relationship is maintained with the INSEAD Business School on the development of case studies, the BI Norwegian Business School and Lund University, Fritz Institute, MIT, among others. Partnerships are being developed with Airbus and Coca Cola.

Context

It is widely reported that the frequency, intensity and impact of disasters are increasing year by year and the number of people affected by disasters is growing. Humanitarian activities in risk reduction, disaster preparedness and the provision of assistance – at international, national and community level – need to be adapted if they are to remain effective and relevant.

Over the recent years the GLS has sought information from external entities such as donors, commercial entities, military groups and other humanitarian agencies, and the resulting information arising from numerous meetings, surveys and a number of research papers has been collated and analysed. Around 20 billion US dollars is spent on delivering humanitarian aid each year, with logistics activities accounting for 60 to 80 per cent of this. The results of the research reflect the importance of this expenditure and suggest there will be three main external forces that will have a significant impact on humanitarian logistics activities in the near future.

- Donors will consolidate their funding of logistics to create efficiencies and inculcate coordination. It is anticipated that there will only be two or three main supply chains that all actors will have access to in the future, possibly operated by the donors themselves.
- Governments will use military and civil defence logistics assets for both operational reasons and as means of securing funding to keep and train such capabilities.
- Commercial companies will continue to enter the market, attracted by the public relations benefits, lucrative profit margins for customized services and commercial leverage of their own businesses.

There is also need for greater innovation and more inclusive ways of delivering assistance, with a strong focus on accountability, good partnership and enhanced coordination.

In response to this changing environment, the Global Logistics Service has designed Logistics 2015, its five-year strategic plan that outlines what the IFRC's logistics service will do to ensure that the Red Cross Red Crescent continues to have access to a competent, efficient and effective logistics capacity in order to meet its planned goals in the future, whilst being able to adhere to our fundamental principles.

Progress towards outcomes

In 2011, the work of the GLS focused on achieving the three strategic objectives of Logistics 2015. They are:

Objective 1: to support the enhancement of National Society logistics capacity, to help strengthen National Societies and to articulate the global capacity and effectiveness of the IFRC's logistics.

Objective 2: to increase the IFRC's logistics capacity to deliver logistics services for preparedness and operational activities, connecting National Society assets where possible, and making this self-sustaining by promoting the effective functioning of the IFRC.

Objective 3: to provide agreed logistics services to pre-selected agencies to help ensure the sustainability and relevance of the supply chain, and therefore help protect the IFRC's ability to maintain its neutrality and voice in humanitarian diplomacy.

The Logistics 2015 six development projects and all ongoing activities implemented in 2011, contributed to the achievement of these three strategic objectives. The information below lists each of the six projects with the objectives, achievements and constraints encountered during the reporting period.

Project A: Management and Communication

Objective: Create a management platform to support the implementation of Logistics 2015 and to ensure business continuity. Design and implement a comprehensive communication plan ensuring that Logistics 2015 activities are effectively promoted and disseminated to key stakeholders.

Achievements

The foundation of an overall management structure was established in early 2011, in order to implement Logistics 2015. The Logistics 2015 project groups were formed consisting of *Senior Management Steering Group* chaired by the Secretary General, the *Project Steering Group* chaired by the Head of GLS and the *Project Management Team* chaired by the Project Coordinator. A regular meeting format (quarterly, monthly and fortnightly in respective order) was established. A robust planning and tracking mechanism for each project, as well as a communication plan and a consolidated weekly progress report was created.

The Logistics 2015 strategy document was produced in five languages – English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Russian – and disseminated globally within the IFRC and in National Societies.

Planning meetings were held in all five zones and follow up work conducted to finalize a technical discussion platform. Close to 30 briefings were conducted to present the Logistics 2015 to a wide range of key stakeholders, including the RCRC network (IFRC, ICRC, NS), technical stakeholder groups (disaster management working group, DM coordinators meeting), the IFRC finance commission, the Global Fund, WFP, ECHO, DFID, UNICEF, as well as corporate partners such as Lufthansa, and Airbus; academic circles and conferences.

GLS engaged a specialist company to lead the process of developing an effective communications approach, in line with the strategic objectives of Logistics 2015. Within the scope of this project, two meetings were organized – respectively with internal and external stakeholder groups – to identify the GLS marketing needs and environment. The output of the project will recommend a marketing plan for GLS to better promote its services to internal and external service users.

GLS communicated regular updates to stakeholders at the end of each implementation stage. In 2011 three updates were issued.

The logistics web content was revised on FedNet (the Federation intranet). New logistics pages were created for the public web (www.ifrc.org/logistics).

Project B: Logistics HR development

Objective: Develop a logistics human resource strategy that meets the needs of the GLS in delivering Logistics 2015. The strategy will cover recruitment, retention, development and monitoring of logistics human resources.

Achievements

The GLS developed a plan of action to implement a logistics human resources strategy that supports the delivery of the Logistics 2015 objectives. This logistics human resources framework reflects the specificities of the GLS in terms of its operational and management objectives, full self-sustainability and external customer business development objectives. The approach to logistics human resources has been acknowledged by the IFRC as an organizational priority and has been incorporated into the institutional HR business processes improvement initiatives (BPITs).

In order to augment the global logistics capacity and reinforce the current infrastructure, new logistics positions were established in zone offices in Africa and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Project C: Sustainable funding

Objective: Develop the optimal and most automated financial management system for managing budgets, income and expenses, invoices and reports relating to global logistics service operations and its provision to internal and external service requesters.

Achievements

During the reporting period, the project analysed the organization's logistics income and expenditure over the past ten years with a focus on spending related to logistics and supply chain activities at global, regional and country level. The project also developed an overview of income and expenditure relating to annual, emergency and bilateral activities. This research data was then used to review the GLS sustainability system – cost recovery mechanism. Proposal on a revised cost recovery system and service fees was completed. The project is ready to be integrated into the supply chain management systems project in 2012.

The outcome of this project will be an optimized financial system that will align all logistics services, including cost-recovery mechanisms, logistics budget management, invoicing and reporting for global logistics service operations, and services to internal and external customers. The goal is real-time access to financial information related to logistics services. This will enable managers to react more quickly, operate more efficiently, improve functionality and reduce risks by

integration of systems. It will also result in a more robust audit trail and greater control over logistics financial transactions.

Project D: Legal status

Objective: Evaluate and recommend legal risk management and legal status issues relating to new or enhanced logistics services, to be delivered under Logistics 2015.

Achievements

During the reporting period, the project conducted a scoping of relevant legal issues and a thorough review of interlinks between the six project components of Logistics 2015. Issues such as the scope and scale of future logistics services, prospective countries for logistics activities, engagement with third parties, among others, have been looked into and clarified. Based on this input, two sub-components of the project were shaped, namely:

1. Internal legal review project
2. Legal status project

The outcome of the internal review project has been a mapping of existing services and related documentation, an analysis of gaps, and the revision or creation of new risk management tools. The legal status project studied the IFRC legal status needs, an IFRC legal status strengthening strategy and information-gathering on legal status. Based on the review and assessment, an executive summary of the legal project findings was produced.

Project E: Supply chain management systems

Objective: Develop supply chain management systems to manage the delivery and measure the impact of logistics services in support of Logistics 2015. Assess existing systems and future needs, plan and implement logistics systems that fill the identified gaps.

Achievements

In support of the aims of Logistics 2015, a thorough review of the existing IFRC logistics information systems was undertaken during the period May-August 2011. The assessment was conducted in collaboration with supply chain experts in the commercial sector, who have extensive experience in supply chain optimization and an in-depth knowledge of the various applications and innovations currently being used in the commercial environment. In addition, the review looked at best practices and lessons learnt both from the humanitarian, military and commercial supply chain operators. As part of the review and analysis process, a project steering committee was established with a group of interested National Societies, who were directly involved in the definition of systems requirements. The Request for Proposal for the new system was issued in December 2011.

It is anticipated that further optimization of supply chain management systems will lead to significant improvements in operational response, donor and management reporting. Optimized systems will enable more dynamic and reactive stock management and planning, which should result in cost savings. It will also greatly improve the customer interface by improved process of estimates and invoicing.

Project F: Infrastructure, assets and resources

Objective: Define and establish the required infrastructure – including locations, organization and assets in five zones – to provide adequate logistics services to internal and external partners.

Achievements

During 2011, the project examined the options and recommendations for stocking and assets across the five regional zones. The final solution was agreed upon and then specified in a full project delivery plan. A forecast of the services and items that the global logistics service will be required to supply to IFRC and National Society operations in an average year was calculated for each zone using research-based modelling. This was checked and adjusted with technical experts and management teams in Geneva and each zone office.

Detailed infrastructure and resources have been specified and the optimum model for delivery has been designed. Two-year work plans for each location have been produced. Following the implementation of the four-year long-term forecasting by the PMER (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting) department, four-year forecasts for each logistics set-up have been finalized. These are based on the average year plan and an incremental roll-out in each location. The terms of reference for the creation of NS logistics capacity development tool was finalized. Initial work was completed for the development of logistics global impact and measurement reporting system. A working pilot of the system was developed and tested between September and December 2011.

Ongoing activities

Combined with development projects, the Global Logistics Service supported the delivery of Logistics 2015 strategic objectives through ongoing work and regular logistics support to operations. During 2011, the following activities were implemented:

- The focus of GLS operational support in 2011 has been on 126 operations. Total number of supported beneficiaries is close to 18.3 million.
- The GLS continued to provide capacity-building support to National Societies through basic and tailor-made logistics workshops and individual staff mentoring. Development of regional capacity was enhanced with a total of 18 workshops targeting 363 participants, including Regional Disaster Response Team, Emergency Response Unit, general logistics and warehousing, as well as tailor-made workshops designed to address National Societies' specific needs.
- The emergency items catalogue project 2011 implemented information updates and improved the online features of this tool. New cold chain items, household kits and various shelter kits were introduced and published online. Quality control documents were developed and posted on-line for four major relief items: blankets, plastic sheeting, kitchen sets and family tents. The enhancement of the catalogue on-line management system enables making information updates at any time and is a definite improvement from the past practice when such updates were possible only twice a year.
- GLS established global framework agreements for mosquito nets, Nissan and Toyota vehicles, inter-agency health kits and cholera kits and regional framework agreements for sea freight, hygiene kits, lightweight blankets, buckets, vehicle pre-delivery inspection services, conversion of cars and tyres allowing to accelerate the service delivery and meet the global and regional demand of supplies.
- The current stock holding levels have gone up, increasing the GLS global preparedness and stock capacity to respond to humanitarian needs. Several National Societies increased the volume of stock that they hold in regional logistics units as a result of their increased ability to respond quickly by using global logistics services. In particular, compared to the previous year in 2011 KL ZLU increased average monthly stock holding by 35% by adding new customers (Norwegian RC, Taiwan RC) and introducing the household kit; Panama ZLU achieved an increase in prepositioned-stock by 25 % by adding the number of service users

(Haiti DPDR , Norwegian RC, PADRU). The standard items that have shown an increase in volume are household kits, tarpaulins and tents. For Dubai LU, the increase of the stock has been 30% (new customers such as Norwegian RC, preparedness stock for MENA Civil unrest and increased VCI stock). Las Palmas has significantly increased its stock (about 60%) by increasing VCI stock and adding new items such as household kits.

- The GLS continued to provide logistics services to the Red Cross Red Crescent network and to external humanitarian agencies. A special project funded by ECHO, through the German Red Cross, was undertaken to supply and deliver 2,000 shelter solutions to Haiti. Overall, 2011 has been a relatively quiet year with no mega-disasters happening, which has a direct impact on the level of logistics activity.
- Under services to externals, GLS delivered services to Danish Refugee Council, WFP, United Nations Population Fund, Solidarites Internationales, UNHCR. In addition, a long-term service agreement was signed with Merlin to use the IFRC's logistics services. Similar interest in longer-term cooperation was expressed by UNICEF, MEDAIR and Oxfam; agreements are being developed to formalize these relationships. One supplier specialised in delivery of emergency food such as high energy biscuits and ready-to-use therapeutic food signed a long term agreement with IFRC in order to use GLS storage facilities to pre-position their goods for humanitarian action. This will allow quicker access by humanitarian community to this commodity and will reduce transport costs.

Constraints or Challenges

The constraints and challenges encountered during the reporting period are summarized below.

- The timely recruitment of logistics staff with the experience and skills required has been a challenge. It has meant that some key posts have remained vacant for a long period of time. The situation has been monitored and regularly followed up by the Logistics 2015 project sponsor, the head of the GLS, and interim arrangements have been put in place to ensure business continuity, but some gaps still remain in the structure.
- Logistics 2015 still needs to be continuously promoted among key stakeholders to achieve a better understanding of how logistics will be developing and delivering global services in the future, for the benefit of all service users. This includes a better understanding of logistics cost-recovery mechanisms, how they apply and the benefits of this non-profit scheme. The promotion of the strategy will be underpinned by a directive on compliance when using the logistics services during all secretariat-led operations. This will allow the service costs to be assessed and adjusted, and will further expose services to National Societies, much in the same way that the vehicle rental programme was established.
- Differing organizational priorities and limited resources made available to support from the secretariat's departments has slowed the implementation of some project activities, requiring adjustments to be made in some project plans.
- Logistics 2015 plan is a completely new way (in the humanitarian sector) of delivering logistics services to internal and external users, and operating a global logistics structure fully on cost recovery basis. Similar to any substantial change process, this requires time to achieve a common understanding of its benefits and a different mind-set across all level stakeholders – service providers, service users and donors. Whilst the objective is to provide services as close to cost-neutral as possible, it may take some time for GLS to generate the volumes required.

Working in partnership

- Internally within the Movement, partnership development and coordination is realized through the inclusion of National Societies in Logistics 2015 projects wherever possible. This is achieved through (i) the use of National Society experts in the project implementation, and (ii) by connecting National Society assets and resources to extend the global network.
- Externally, a mechanism has been put in place to ensure that relevant humanitarian agencies have access to use pre-determined logistics services of GLS.
- Following the decision made in December 2010 by the Consultative Group on the use of Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA), a dedicated working group focusing on the specifics of logistics MCDA was formed under a joint chair of the IFRC and the World Food Programme (WFP). The objective of this logistics working group is to convene logistics specialists and planners within militaries, states, humanitarian actors and multilateral entities who can together determine how best logistics MCDA assets should be configured, deployed and coordinated – based on a common understanding that the use of logistics MCDA should be needs driven and used as an enabling capability for the humanitarian community. The working group focuses only on internationally deployed logistics MCDA and, specifically, for large-scale natural disasters. Three meetings of the working group were convened in 2011.
- The GLS has finalized discussions with Airbus through the IFRC's resource mobilization department around establishment of a partnership agreement. The cooperation framework will include provision of free air flights and brokering services, knowledge sharing and staff training. The sides are deciding on a date for the official signing of the partnership agreement.
- In partnership with Contribute research group within the Norwegian Business School, a project was undertaken to establish annual global demand and response for disaster relief goods and logistics services in international humanitarian assistance. Based on a selection of 63 disasters that occurred between 2005 and 2010, more than 30,000 data inputs were collected, registered and modelled in accordance with scientific requirements. The resulting annual index gives an average estimate of the global demand for items and services required in international humanitarian response. It also provides the corresponding response provided by donors, humanitarian organizations, military forces and commercial actors, as well as gaps between demand and response. The index can be used for forecasting and it provides a basis for decision-making on support tools to be used by major stakeholders in disaster preparedness and response. The tool will have a second more complete iteration in 2012.
- The IFRC, ICRC, UNICEF and UNHCR have initiated an interagency Quality Assurance Group. This is an initiative to promote interagency collaboration in sharing information and best practices with the aim to develop synergies related to quality assurance of major relief items. Three meetings of the group were held in 2011, resulting in technical recommendations for consideration of each group member's organization in line with internal procedures and policies. In particular, the work of the group addresses: harmonization of quality control procedures; Interagency coordination regarding quality procedures; Resources and information sharing; and Innovation.

Contributing to longer-term impact

- With the implementation of Logistics 2015, the GLS ensures that the IFRC – as a global network of National Societies – has access and control of a competent, efficient and effective logistics service to carry out its humanitarian assistance activities. It also provides access to third party humanitarian actors to professional and cost effective logistics services – ultimately facilitating and increasing the reach and capability of wider humanitarian community to assist people in need.
- The secretariat is committed to complying with the Federation-wide performance and accountability framework to deliver its accountability principles, which include explicit standard-setting, open monitoring and reporting, transparent information-sharing, meaningful beneficiary participation, effective and efficient use of resources, and systems for learning and responding to concerns and complaints. These will all be used to improve programme quality, performance and learning. The IFRC uses various tools – such as systematic evaluation, case studies and objective lesson-learning exercises – to ensure the quality of secretariat services according to globally accepted disaster management standards and to assess the impact of those activities on the lives of disaster-affected populations.
- The global logistics network is producing logistics tools and systems and is continually developing its standards and performance indicators. This allows the IFRC to further professionalize its logistics capacity and skills and remain a leader in humanitarian logistics, promoting best practices with other actors.
- As part of our aim to continually improve the assistance we provide to people affected by disasters, the IFRC is working hard to mainstream cash-transfer instruments into its operations. Our focus is on making it easier for National Societies to provide cash grants or cash-for-work programmes where appropriate, alongside the more traditional provision of relief items. The Global Logistics Service has been working as part of a cross-functional team to design and implement the necessary processes and tools, with the GLS taking the lead on the design of cash-delivery management and mechanisms. Initially, the focus has been on mechanisms that can be made available quickly using existing systems. The next step will be to develop tools that are more flexible, ensuring they are incorporated into the new supply chain systems the scoping of which is currently being finalized.
- It is anticipated that further optimization of supply chain management systems will lead to significant improvements in operational response, donor and management reporting. Optimized systems will enable more dynamic and reactive stock management and planning, which should result in cost savings.
- In an effort to minimize the environmental impact of its supply chain activities, the IFRC global fleet service developed the Clean Fleet Strategy 2011-2016. The strategy establishes the challenges, goals and activities that are needed to render the IFRC fleet more eco-friendly, thereby reducing the IFRC's carbon footprint.
- The GLS cooperates with academic institutions in logistics research and the development of case studies. Three case studies have been developed in partnership with INSEAD Business School. The first focuses on the IFRC's logistics response to the Yogyakarta earthquake, and

the other two analyse the IFRC's fleet management practices. The Yogyakarta case study has been announced as the winner of the European Foundation for Management Development's (EDMD) annual awards in the supply chain management category.

Looking ahead

The GLS will continue to implement the strategic approach outlined in Logistics 2015. By developing its global logistics capacity, the IFRC will be in position to ensure that National Societies have access to professional and cost-effective logistics services to support their activities when needs exceed their own standing capacities. As from 2012, the GLS will operate on full cost recovery basis.

The new supply chain management systems, once implemented, will lead to significant improvements in operational response, donor and management reporting. Optimized systems will enable more dynamic and reactive stock management and planning, which should result in cost savings. In addition, Federation-wide logistics reporting will show targeted logistics capacity, actual capacity, the volume of operations, as well as the effectiveness and impact of activities.

Services will continue to be offered to external agencies to ensure that more beneficiaries benefit from an efficient supply chain.

In 2012, GLS will review to identify any alignment needed and fine-tune the role it will carry out in the organisation in the future. To do this a business case will be generated that comprises a series of options, and the most appropriate of these will be determined using a comparative methodology. The Logistics 2015 strategy may then be adjusted accordingly.

Finally, the GLS will continue contributing that the IFRC can meet the overall objective of *Strategy 2020* – to **do more, do better and reach further**.

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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