



INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY

DANISH RED CROSS
2015-21

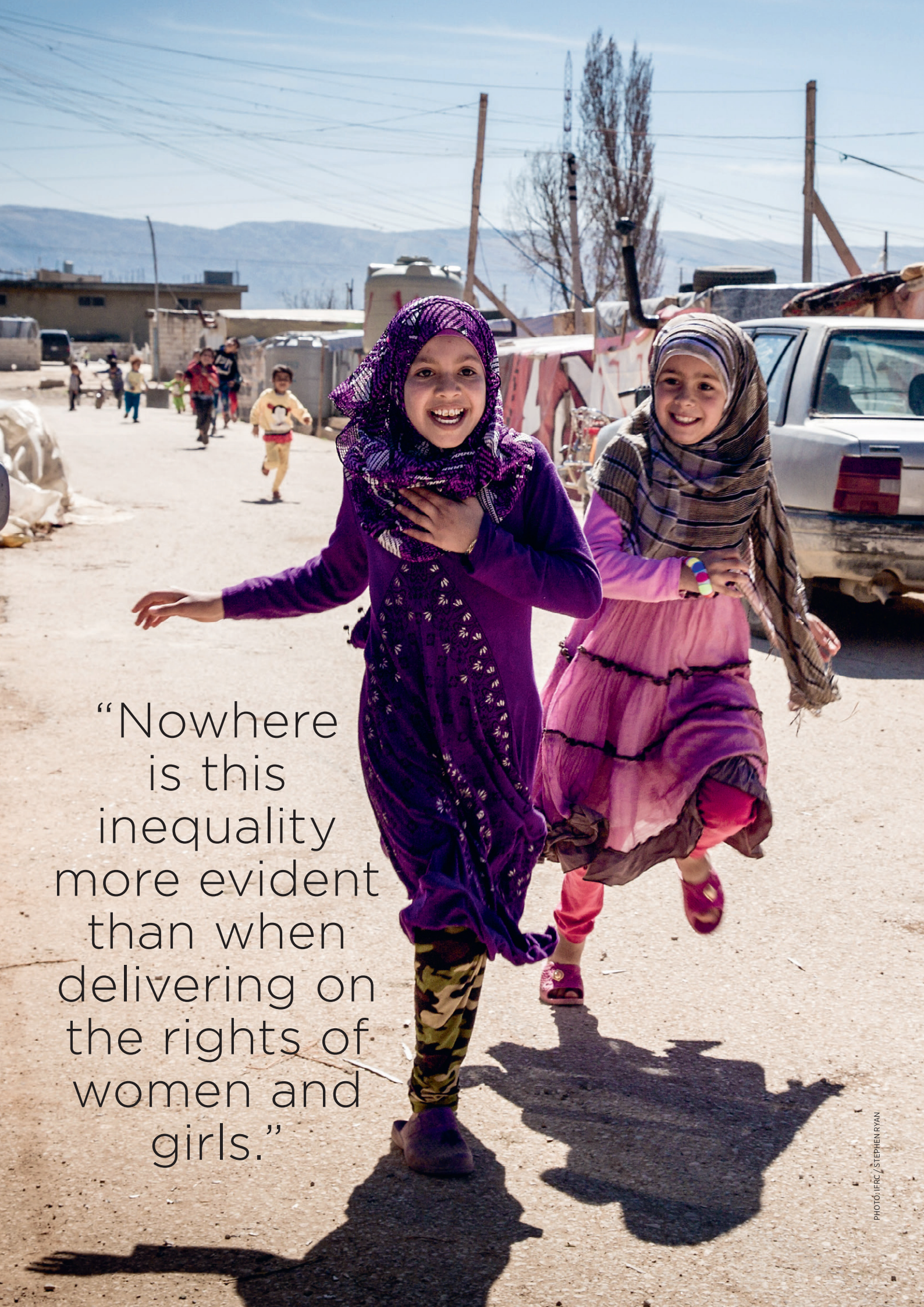
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STRATEGY UPDATE

A mid-term review of the Danish Red Cross (DRC) International Strategy was undertaken over 2017-18 and has resulted in some minor updates to this Strategy. Changes include:

- In late 2018, the General Assembly of DRC approved a new Manifesto, which replaces the former DRC Vision. The Manifesto guides DRC engagement nationally and internationally, working towards a society and a world bound by a spirit of humanity and community through creating a popular movement for humanity. This is reflected in the strategy update.
- Extension of the Strategy until 2021. This supports greater alignment of DRC planning processes with external timeframes, such as the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Strategic Partnership and IFRC's strategy process.
- A greater emphasis on migration in the Strategy. Separate Strategic Guidance on migration has also been developed.
- An updated version of the world map indicating where DRC supports operations.
- Some minor revisions to the wording of Global Goals 1.3 (Healthy lives) and 3.3 (Safer lives), and to commitments under Strategic Ambitions 3 and 4.



“Nowhere is this inequality more evident than when delivering on the rights of women and girls.”

ANTICIPATING THE FUTURE

In 2021 the world will look different from today. Change is happening at an accelerating pace, and the world is increasingly globalised and interconnected. During the last Danish Red Cross (DRC) strategic period (2011-2014), the world witnessed major unpredictable changes such as the Arab Spring, the unfolding crisis in Ukraine, and growing numbers of people displaced globally. Social media and new technologies increasingly influence our lives and the humanitarian environment, and people are more informed and better connected than ever before.

With help and inspiration from Movement partners, researchers, volunteers and colleagues, DRC has analysed the global context and current trends with a view to anticipate the future and better direct our international engagement, with the aim of delivering humanitarian action that inspires and promotes human dignity, resilience and social cohesion. From this analysis, we identify the following key humanitarian challenges that will inform our future focus: expanding young and urban populations, rising inequality, changing risks, increasingly complex conflict patterns, and greater and more complex migration.

Young and urban populations

The global population will reach 8 billion in 2025, leading to intensified demands for natural resources. This population growth will be uneven and largely transpire in the poorest and most fragile countries, further exacerbating conflict and tension. Many developing and fragile countries will also have an increasingly young population, and challenges of mass unemployment will fuel large-scale population movements. In addition to those forcibly displaced, migration will be a key livelihood strategy for millions of people, and remittances will continue to surpass official development assistance in many countries.

Today more than half of the world's population lives in cities, and this is projected to grow to 70% by 2050. Throughout the last decade, humanitarian needs have shifted significantly from rural to urban settings, and with one billion people currently residing in informal settlements, poverty has become an increasingly urban phenomenon.

Growing inequality

Evidence on progress made towards the Millennium Development Goals has shown that positive developments over past decades have occurred against a backdrop of growing inequality. Slow and unequal progress has been observed in countries where the government has a weak capacity to carry out basic governance functions and create constructive relations with society: the so-called fragile states. Nowhere is this inequality more evident than when delivering on the rights of women and girls. Realising gender equality is a goal in itself – as reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals – and represents significant potential for accelerating human development.

Changing risks

Climate change, population growth, and rapid and unplanned urbanisation, amongst other factors place more people at risk of crisis. Natural and climate related disasters such as droughts, floods and extreme temperatures are increasingly common. With an augmented convergence between natural disasters and displacement, this complexity poses mounting challenges to effective humanitarian response.

Global trends also point to new health challenges. These include rising inequality in access to health services, emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, and a growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, heart disease and cancers. Today, nearly 80% of NCD-related deaths occur in low and middle-income countries, where health systems are often ill-equipped to tackle this emerging disease burden.

Complex conflict patterns

Whilst the number of conflicts between states has decreased in recent decades, the number of internal conflicts has risen. Armed groups are more fragmented and are often not under state control or a unified command structure. This leads to new challenges in relation to protection, upholding international humanitarian law (IHL) and securing access to beneficiaries. Both the proliferation of humanitarian actors – who may not always act in accordance with the humanitarian principles, such as neutrality and impartiality – and the changing nature of civil/military relations have implications for the perception and acceptance of humanitarian actors at large. The safety and security of humanitarian staff and volunteers is a growing concern.

Migration

In recent years the world has witnessed a rapid increase in migration, which is both a result of and giving rise to, some of the most significant challenges of the 21st century. Between 2000 and 2015 the number of migrants grew by 41 percent, reaching 244 million people globally, of whom 65.6 million were forcibly displaced. Large-scale movements of migrants typically include a mix of people moving due to reasons including political instability, armed conflict, persecution, human rights violations, climate change, natural disasters, poverty, demographic pressures, and lack of economic prospects amongst others. When referring to migrants, we therefore refer to a broad definition of migrants, including migrants in irregular situations without legal status, asylum seekers and refugees.

Recent large-scale movements of migrants have highlighted the vulnerabilities and potential risks faced, particularly by those who embark on long and often dangerous journeys. For many, suffering may be exacerbated by a lack of protection and high need for humanitarian assistance. Beyond immediate and acute needs, vulnerable migrants increasingly require support to recover from displacement and realise sustainable, durable solutions. For DRC, addressing migration means addressing root causes of human suffering, providing life-saving services and responding to basic needs of the most vulnerable, advocating for needs and rights, and enhancing access to longer-term support.

Our Response

The International Strategy 2015-2021 presents both continuations and significant changes from the former strategy. The new Strategy brings to the forefront a focus on life-saving interventions and resilience building in fragile situations. It sets clear goals and provides operational flexibility, as it focuses on the change we want to deliver, rather than the activities we do. The Strategy focuses on humanitarian engagement

and diverges from a rigid distinction between development and relief interventions. It also emphasises DRC added value and encourages innovation and new types of partnerships. This Strategy is a product of a comprehensive participatory process and covers the entire DRC international engagement: bilateral and multilateral action, as well as DRC volunteers, local branches and governance contributions.

In the coming strategic period, DRC commits to increase and strengthen **HUMANITARIAN IMPACT**, and to inspire and act for **HUMAN DIGNITY, RESILIENCE** and **SOCIAL COHESION**. Our response to increasing complex risks and challenges is a pathway towards change that involves:

- Strengthening bilateral and multilateral response capacity
- Building resilient communities
- Empowering civil societies and building Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) National Societies with strong youth and volunteer engagement
- Ensuring protection, and promoting social cohesion and psychosocial wellbeing
- Strengthening Danish humanitarian engagement
- Continuously strengthening how we work: through partnerships and voluntary action, applying a rights-based approach, undertaking humanitarian diplomacy, mainstreaming protection, gender and inclusion, and integrating innovative ways of cooperation within and outside the Movement

This Strategy presents the DRC comprehensive response to anticipated humanitarian challenges for the period 2015-2021 and supports the work towards the ambitions in the DRC Manifesto:

ALWAYS PRESENT

Denmark and the rest of the world are in flux. Too many people are affected by conflict, natural disaster, persecution, inequality and loneliness.

We will work towards a society and a world bound by a spirit of humanity and community.

The Danish Red Cross will always be present and will respond to the humanitarian needs that we encounter.

We want to be the movement that turns humanity into everyone's concern in Denmark.

WHO WE ARE

DRC is part of the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, which is the world's largest humanitarian network with 11 million volunteers in 191 countries. Humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality are the seven Fundamental Principles that bond together all National Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). In Denmark 34,000 volunteers are engaged in Red Cross activities.

Preceding this Strategy, DRC underwent a change process – Danish Red Cross in Action – which resulted in greater branch and volunteer involvement in operational and strategic decision making. At a national level, the main areas of our engagement relate to building resilience of socially marginalised groups and individuals such as families of detainees, asylum-seekers, refugees, undocumented migrants, and poor and single-headed households. As an example, DRC runs health facilities for undocumented migrants thus ensuring their right to basic health services.

At an international level, as a National Society member of IFRC, DRC is guided by IFRC Strategy 2020, which focuses on individual and community resilience and capacity, disaster response and early recovery, building stronger National Societies, and pro-

THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

191 Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, founded by domestic legislation and mandated to be permanent auxiliaries to their states in the provision of humanitarian assistance.

ICRC - The International Committee of the Red Cross

- Swiss-based impartial, neutral and independent organisation with the mission 'to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance.'

IFRC – The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

- A global humanitarian organisation comprising 191 member Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies.
- Coordinates international assistance following disasters in non-conflict situations.
- Provides support to National Society development.

DRC is represented in IFRC's governance, through the Governing Board, for the period 2017-21.

moting a more diverse, tolerant and peaceful world. DRC is also guided by the IFRC Global Strategy on Migration 2018-2022. With the implementation of this International Strategy, DRC will also contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015.

Due to its global and nationwide presence and capacity, the RCRC Movement is in a unique position to create humanitarian impact and assist people faced with poverty, conflict, disaster and displacement. With a 150-year long history, the Movement continuously needs to adapt to effectively meet the humanitarian realities and challenges of tomorrow. These challenges relate to improving internal and external coordination, continuously promoting accountability and integrity, and ensuring consistent access to those affected by crises.

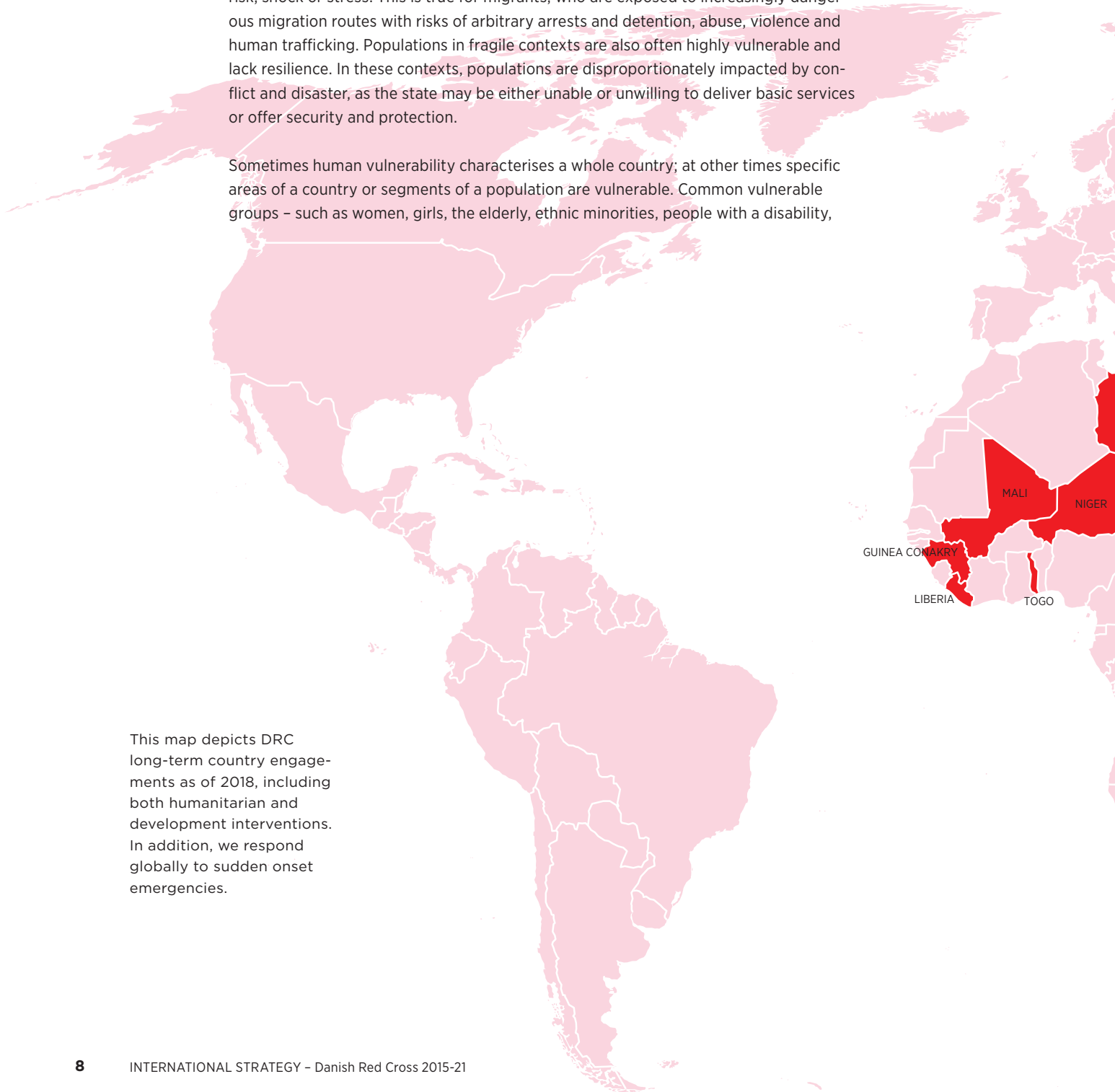
Our aim is to make a significant contribution towards a relevant, legitimate and effective Movement through open, and where necessary, critical dialogue, as well as through active partnerships with National Societies, and multilaterally with IFRC and ICRC. We will also promote cross sector cooperation, coordination and programming with the Movement to harness resources and complementary expertise.

WHERE WE WORK

DRC prioritises working in fragile contexts and countries where human vulnerability is high, and where DRC adds clear value to humanitarian action, partners and change processes.

Human vulnerability is most often linked to poverty, but also arises when people are isolated, displaced, insecure, discriminated against, and without capacity to cope with risk, shock or stress. This is true for migrants, who are exposed to increasingly dangerous migration routes with risks of arbitrary arrests and detention, abuse, violence and human trafficking. Populations in fragile contexts are also often highly vulnerable and lack resilience. In these contexts, populations are disproportionately impacted by conflict and disaster, as the state may be either unable or unwilling to deliver basic services or offer security and protection.

Sometimes human vulnerability characterises a whole country; at other times specific areas of a country or segments of a population are vulnerable. Common vulnerable groups – such as women, girls, the elderly, ethnic minorities, people with a disability,



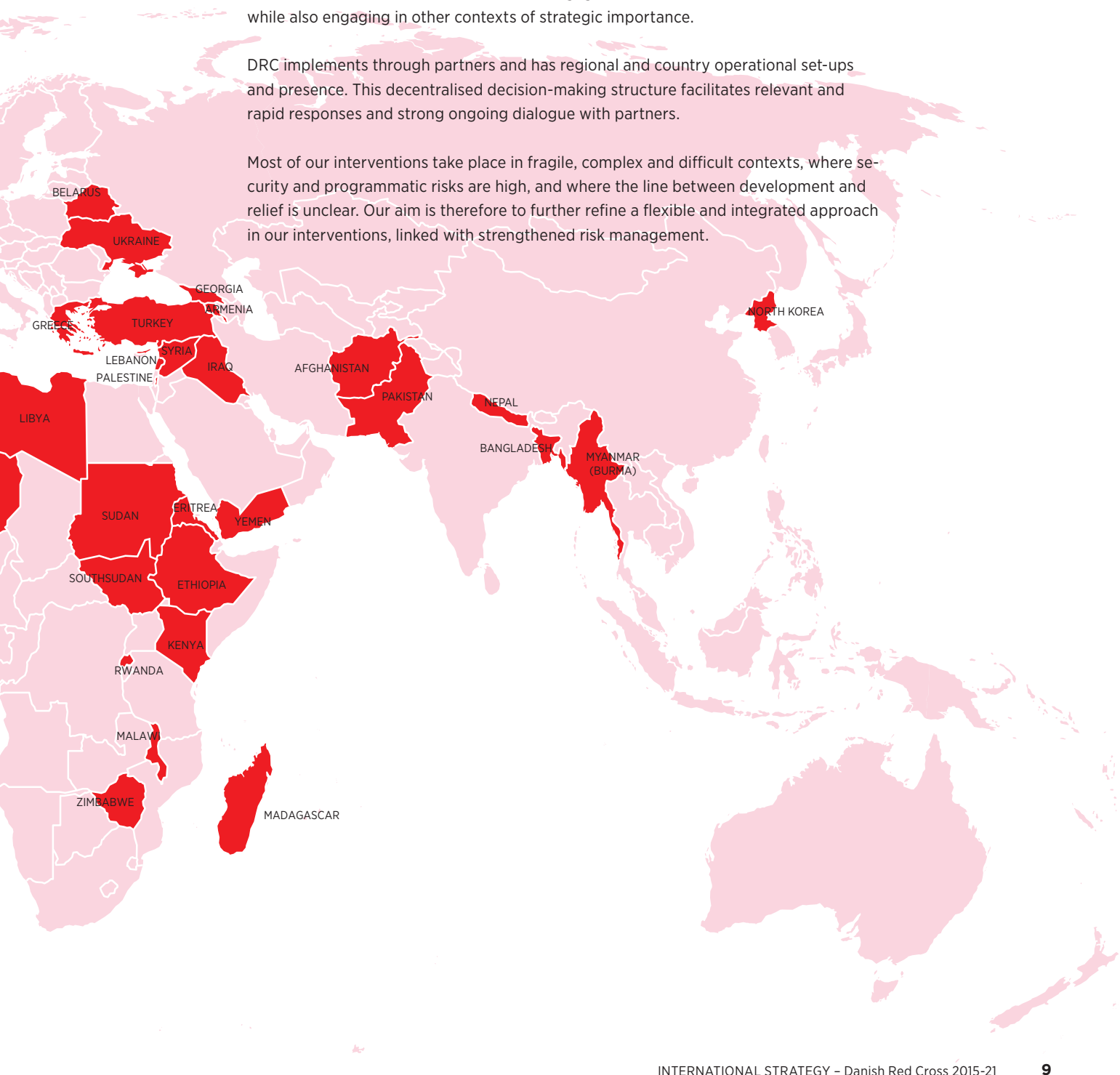
This map depicts DRC long-term country engagements as of 2018, including both humanitarian and development interventions. In addition, we respond globally to sudden onset emergencies.

refugees, displaced populations, and migrants on the move – often do not enjoy the same protection, rights, opportunities or access to services as the mainstream population.

In 2018, three quarters of the 58 states labelled as fragile by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are found in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa. Coupled with a commitment to ensure value for money, DRC focuses the bulk of our international engagement in Africa and the Middle East, while also engaging in other contexts of strategic importance.

DRC implements through partners and has regional and country operational set-ups and presence. This decentralised decision-making structure facilitates relevant and rapid responses and strong ongoing dialogue with partners.

Most of our interventions take place in fragile, complex and difficult contexts, where security and programmatic risks are high, and where the line between development and relief is unclear. Our aim is therefore to further refine a flexible and integrated approach in our interventions, linked with strengthened risk management.



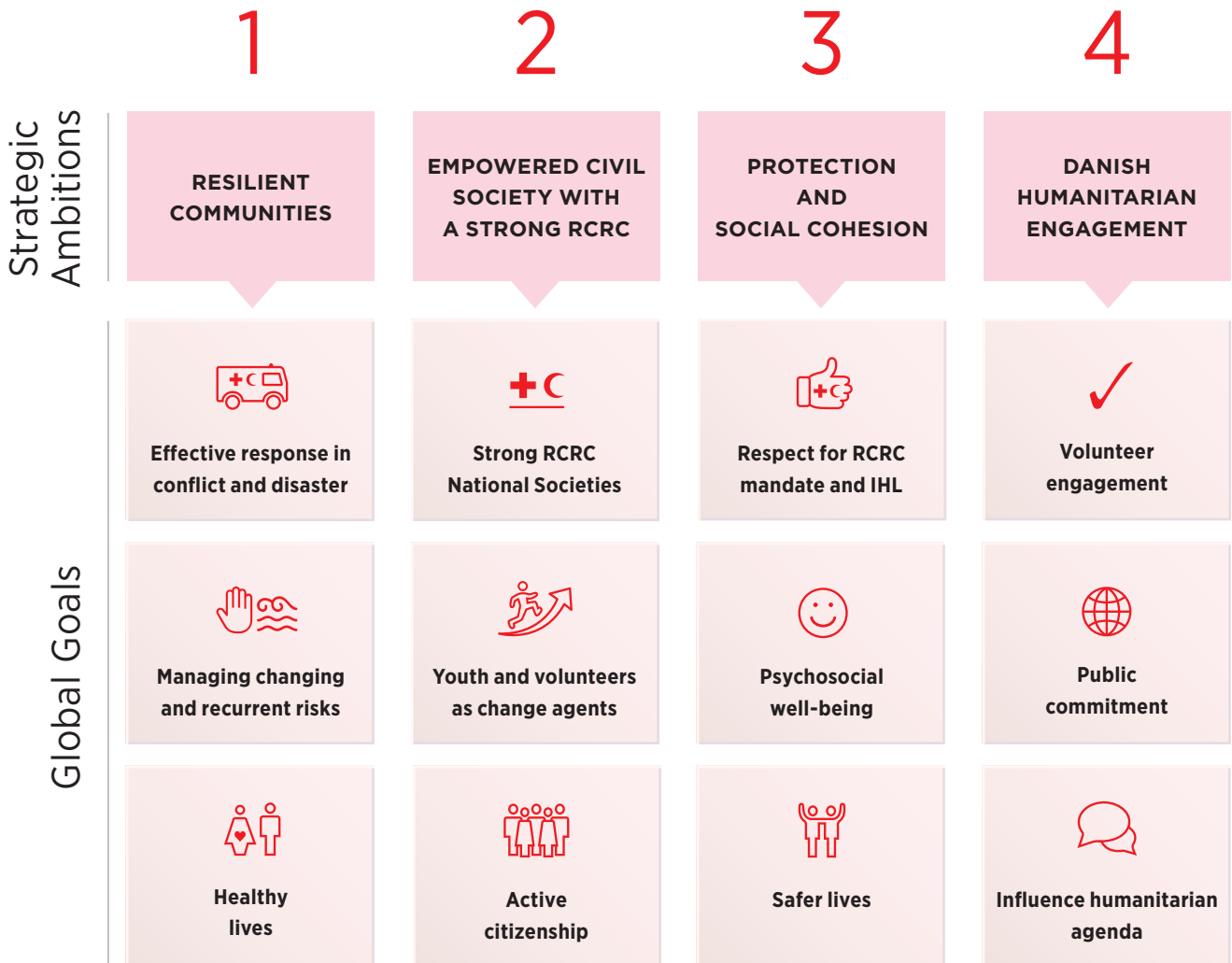
WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

DRC international engagement takes its point of departure in the DRC Manifesto and its ambition to: *work towards a society and a world bound by a spirit of humanity and community.* Internationally and through partnerships, DRC will:

INCREASE and STRENGTHEN HUMANITARIAN IMPACT, INSPIRE and ACT for HUMAN DIGNITY, RESILIENCE and SOCIAL COHESION in contexts of POVERTY, CONFLICT and DISASTER.

This overall purpose is informed by the seven RCRC Fundamental Principles. It guides our strategic direction and the way we work. To achieve this purpose, DRC will pursue four Strategic Ambitions. The first three of these relate to our international engagement with partners in contexts of fragility and human vulnerability, while the fourth is concerned with promoting humanitarian engagement in the Danish context. Each Strategic Ambition has three supporting Global Goals. Most of our partnerships and interventions will contribute towards several Strategic Ambitions and Global Goals depending on the specific context.

STRATEGIC AMBITIONS AND GLOBAL GOALS



1

Strategic Ambition

RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

DRC Commitments

Global Goals



Effective response in conflict and disaster

- DRC will increase and strengthen our bilateral and multilateral response capacity.
- More people affected by crisis will be reached with a timely, relevant, quality response.
- More partners will apply innovative methods in disaster recovery and response.



Managing changing and recurrent risks

- More people, households and communities will be able to anticipate and prepare for new and recurrent shocks and stresses.
- More communities will have climate-smart risk reduction measures in place.
- More partners will contribute to strengthened urban resilience.



Healthy lives

- More vulnerable people will access quality reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health information and services.
- More vulnerable people will access improved water and sanitation solutions.
- More partners will address non-communicable diseases as a priority.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Resilience is the ability to anticipate, reduce the impact of, cope with, and recover from the effects of disaster, crisis and underlying vulnerabilities. In a world where risk and disease patterns are rapidly changing, the need for enhancing the resilience of individuals and communities is growing.

DRC focuses on developing key community resilience characteristics so that people and communities are knowledgeable and healthy, possess the ability to assess and manage risks, and have relationships with external actors to better voice their needs to those that have the responsibility and duty to provide basic services and protection. When conflict or disaster strike, preparedness and an effective response are essential to save and protect lives, reduce harmful impact, and recover.

In many of the fragile contexts where DRC and partners operate, the state is either not able, or willing, to fulfil its obligations towards its citizens. The auxiliary role of RCRC National Societies provides a special status, obligation and opportunity to fill gaps and, for a limited period, provide services where the state fails to do so.

THE CHANGE WE WILL DELIVER



Effective response in conflict and disaster

DRC contributes to disaster response at scale, reaching hundreds of thousands of people affected by conflict and disaster through the global network of volunteers and multilateral partnerships within the RCRC Movement. Through stand-by Emergency Response Units (ERU) and the Emergency Delegate Roster, DRC deploys expertise and quality supplies to disaster affected areas in cooperation with IFRC, ICRC and relevant National Societies within a short timeframe.

DRC will increase the contribution to humanitarian impact by implementing more trigger-based action (such as through forecast-based financing), identifying flexible ways of applying ERU competencies, developing new response tools and modalities that target beneficiaries directly, integrating appropriate new technologies, and strengthening coordination among partners.

Bilaterally, both DRC local presence and long-term partnerships with National Societies provide vital knowledge of the context and the national partner's capacity. DRC is therefore well positioned to support our partners in emergency preparedness, effective response, and recovery after a disaster or conflict. This will include cash-based mechanisms, support to essential health services, and psychosocial interventions amongst others. DRC will also expand its focus on supporting host communities in crisis situations, and along the migratory trail.

DRC information management and digitalisation expertise will be further developed to increase and improve assessments, mapping tools, and communication and accountability to beneficiaries. DRC will deepen its strategic cooperation with ICRC in line with our strong focus on fragile contexts, particularly in situations of conflict and violence. We will also build on our partnership with ICRC in the increasing number of contexts characterised by convergence between disaster and conflict.

In response situations, DRC will continue to be a flexible partner. Together with our partners and Movement stakeholders, we will assess needs, identify priorities and competencies of the National Society, and establish a relevant response and cooperation modality for effective implementation. DRC will ensure quality and accountability in its humanitarian operations through certification against the Core Humanitarian Standard.

DRC COMMITMENTS

- DRC will increase and strengthen our bilateral and multilateral response capacity
- More people affected by crisis will be reached with a timely, relevant, quality response
- More partners will apply innovative methods in disaster, recovery and response



Managing changing and recurrent risks

DRC COMMITMENTS

- More people, households and communities will be able to anticipate and prepare for new and recurrent shocks and stresses
- More communities will have climate-smart risk reduction measures in place
- More partners will contribute to strengthened urban resilience

Global trends such as climate change, urbanisation, population growth, deepening inequalities, increasingly complex migration patterns, and more protracted crises lead to intensified protection needs, and greater numbers of people affected by disasters, conflict and displacement requiring humanitarian assistance.

Community capacity to identify and manage risks is vital to reduce vulnerabilities and thereby protect lives. Investing in disaster risk reduction will save more lives at less cost, as communities become more resilient, prevent escalation of further conflicts, and limit their need for humanitarian assistance in the event of crisis.

DRC promotes disaster management planning and capacity building of RCRC National Society partners, which ensures that disaster preparedness, contingency plans and forecast based action such as early warning systems are coordinated across all levels from national and sub-national levels, to communities in disaster-prone areas. At the community level (rural and urban), disaster preparedness is supported by both broader risk reduction and humanitarian diplomacy efforts aimed at encouraging local authorities to provide adequate risk management support. To account for changing risk patterns, DRC will promote climate-smart interventions i.e. planned in anticipation of more extreme events.



Healthy lives

DRC COMMITMENTS

- More vulnerable people will access quality reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health information and services
- More vulnerable people will access improved water and sanitation solutions
- More partners will address non-communicable diseases as a priority

Health is a central aspect of resilience and a prerequisite for communities' ability to recover from hazards, disaster or conflict.

In many of the countries where DRC works, vulnerable people – especially women and children – still die prematurely from common communicable diseases such as diarrhoea and maternal conditions. At the same time, sudden disease outbreaks (for example Ebola) and non-communicable diseases pose an increasing threat to the health of vulnerable communities.

Building on our long-standing experience in community-based health, DRC will continue to drive change that enables people in vulnerable contexts to be healthier. We will focus on prevention of common communicable and non-communicable diseases; promote better reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health; and promote access to health services along migratory trails.

DRC will approach health risks holistically. This involves addressing the underlying determinants of health – such as social norms, behaviours and environmental constraints – that limit equal access to health services. This will be combined with strengthening people's capacity to voice demands through local and national level humanitarian diplomacy. DRC will address health and disaster risks jointly when relevant and promote healthy lives across the resilience continuum: from relief and recovery, to development and preparedness.

A young child with dark skin and short hair stands in a dusty, outdoor environment. The child is wearing a bright green, sleeveless dress with a patterned white and green border. They are holding a large, green, circular plate or lid in front of their chest. The child's expression is neutral and they are looking directly at the camera. The background is a dry, reddish-brown dirt ground with some sparse green vegetation.

“When conflict or disaster strike, preparedness and an effective response are essential to save and protect lives.”

2

Strategic Ambition

EMPOWERED CIVIL SOCIETY WITH A STRONG RCRC

DRC Commitments

Global Goals



Strong RCRC National Societies

- More partners will document influence on local/national government policy.
- Partners will have improved core capacities.
- Partners' local branches have strengthened capacity and outreach.



Youth and volunteers as change agents

- More volunteers will act as change agents, identifying and responding to needs in their local environment.
- More partners will have youth participating in decision-making processes at all levels of management, governance and service delivery.



Active citizenship

- More community groups have improved capacity to address problems and bring about change
- More local communities will engage systematically with local authorities and other decision-makers

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

A strong RCRC National Society is an essential part of an empowered civil society. RCRC National Societies are national institutions founded by domestic legislation and mandated to be permanent auxiliaries to their states in the provision of humanitarian assistance.

An empowered civil society is a goal in and of itself and is also an important catalyst towards sustainable solutions in the difficult contexts where DRC operates. An empowered civil society is important in bringing about positive and legitimate change, as it channels people's needs, aspirations and demands to formal and informal decision-making processes. It contributes to human dignity, resilience and social cohesion, promotes participation, and gives voice to marginalised populations in decisions and processes affecting their lives.

An empowered civil society starts with active citizens, who participate in community life and seek to influence decisions affecting them. As national organisations with long-standing experience of mobilising youth and volunteers, the RCRC humanitarian network is well placed to facilitate the engagement of citizens in wider decision-making and development processes. DRC will support partners to become stronger actors in their respective civil societies and domestic contexts.

THE CHANGE WE WILL DELIVER



Strong RCRC National Societies

DRC supports the development of our bilateral RCRC partners at national and branch levels in their goal to become strong actors in their societies. This is based on the IFRC definition of a strong National Society as 'an organisation that consistently delivers, through volunteers and staff, relevant country wide services to vulnerable people sustained for as long as needed AND that contributes to the strength of IFRC and the Movement' – with services understood as both direct services to vulnerable people, and activities such as humanitarian diplomacy.

Areas of support fall within all five core capacities highlighted by the IFRC Organisational Capacity Assessment Certification process. DRC will prioritise support to branch development, humanitarian diplomacy, volunteer management systems, and promotion of accountability initiatives. We will also support larger change processes such as strategic planning, including working with National Societies to develop strategies around migration. In cases where the humanitarian imperative prevails, and the focus is on providing immediate life-saving assistance, DRC will seek to prevent potential long-term harm to the organisational culture and structures of partners.

DRC COMMITMENTS

- More partners will document influence on local/national government policy
- Partners will have improved core capacities
- Partners' local branches have strengthened capacity and outreach



Youth and volunteers as change agents

Volunteers are at the core of the RCRC humanitarian network and fulfil a crucial role as catalysts for change in their communities. With our partners, DRC builds, maintains, and inspires volunteerism, while acknowledging the trends and developments at all levels in society that motivate the RCRC Movement to be relevant for the volunteers of tomorrow.

DRC COMMITMENTS

- More volunteers will act as change agents, identifying and responding to needs in their local environment
- More partners will have youth participating in decision-making processes at all levels of management, governance and service delivery

What has worked in the past might not work in the future. In a constantly changing society, volunteering will also change. DRC will support our partners to develop, refine and adjust volunteer management tools, approaches, and systems to ensure that the RCRC Movement remains relevant and attractive from a volunteer perspective. Volunteers will be enabled to act as agents of change in community development and society more broadly. We will also promote volunteers to take a more prominent role at all levels of their organisations, including within governance structures, and explore the use of new technologies in engaging with youth audiences.

Youth engagement is another important priority. Youth are a key force in the RCRC Movement, accounting for approximately 50% of volunteers. Youth are important local, national and global change agents with the potential to inspire and influence positive change in others. We want to promote opportunities for young people, particularly girls, so they can participate fully in the making of decisions that shape their lives and support them as leaders. To achieve this, we will support partners in empowering youth, and creating enabling environments for youth participation. Drawing on the significant experience of Danish Red Cross Youth, we will apply peer-to-peer approaches in engaging with youth audiences.



Active citizenship

DRC COMMITMENTS

- More community groups have improved capacity to address problems and bring about change
- More local communities will engage systematically with local authorities and other decision-makers

DRC will support bottom-up efforts to engage and organise people in decisions affecting them. We understand active citizens as those involved in addressing community problems, bringing about change or resisting unwanted change. This requires empowerment and action – such as gaining access to relevant information, acquiring relevant skills, participating in making decisions, planning and acting individually or collectively, and leading by example. Active citizenship often involves joining forces with others around a common interest – for example in self-help groups, women clubs, migrant communities, or health committees. This improves a community's organisational fabric and creates a stronger platform to solve problems and engage and advocate with relevant decision-makers. DRC wants to engage the most marginalised groups to promote community activities that contribute to equal opportunities for men and women, and to strengthen social cohesion.

“Recent large-scale movements of migrants have highlighted the vulnerabilities and potential risks faced.”



3

Strategic Ambition

PROTECTION AND SOCIAL COHESION

DRC Commitments

Global Goals



Respect for RCRC mandate and IHL

- Partners capacity to identify, address and influence respect for IHL will be strengthened and supported
- Local decision-makers will be aware of the mandate and justification for principled humanitarian action



Psychosocial well-being

- Partners' capacity to promote psychosocial wellbeing will be strengthened
- Affected populations will experience an improved sense of psychosocial wellbeing



Safer lives

- Partners' capacity to support communities in identifying protection risks and designing people-centred responses will be strengthened
- Communities will have improved protection mechanisms in place to mitigate harmful acts and violence

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Protection is a core focus of the RCRC. DRC protection activities aim to prevent or mitigate violence and promote the safety, security and dignity of people affected by armed conflict and violence in line with relevant international law, particularly International Humanitarian Law (IHL). Although states and armed actors bear the primary responsibility to respect and protect people under their authority, they are not always able or willing to do so. Impartial humanitarian actors therefore have a mandate to support affected communities in ensuring their safety and security, particularly when authorities fail.

THE CHANGE WE WILL DELIVER

Realising protection and social cohesion requires access to affected populations and respect for the mandate and the work of the RCRC. To be a humanitarian worker is increasingly dangerous, and every day our volunteers and partners struggle to main-

tain impartiality, independence and neutrality. Humanitarian action is becoming more politicised and our ability to reach vulnerable populations is threatened. We face this threat to principled humanitarian action when working in war zones and conflict areas, and increasingly our humanitarian mandate is questioned when we work to protect marginalised groups such as migrants and ethnic minorities.

Social cohesion – the quality of relations within and between groups in society – is central to the prevention of conflicts and violence, particularly in fragile contexts. A socially cohesive society works towards the wellbeing of all its members, fights exclusion and marginalisation, creates a sense of belonging, and promotes trust. DRC uses our psychosocial work to strengthen people’s ability to cope with crisis and strengthen supportive and positive social mechanisms.

Reduced violence at the interpersonal and community level is a key element in promoting social cohesion and preventing abuse. Fear, anxiety, and loss of hope fuel social tensions and conflict in many of the places we work. Protection from violence is an essential part of protecting life, dignity and health.

DRC will seek to reduce the risk and extent of harm to populations from both the top down and bottom up by taking a point of departure in people’s protection concerns. This involves working to influence the behaviour of authorities towards compliance with relevant obligations and standards, as well as enhancing the capacity of individuals and communities to secure their safety and dignity and establish mechanisms to prevent or mitigate violence. We are guided by the IFRC Strategy on Violence Prevention, Response and Mitigation, the Interagency Professional Standards for Protection Work, and we work with and through the ICRC and partner National Societies to promote respect for IHL.



Respect for RCRC mandate and IHL

Respect for IHL and the humanitarian mandate is challenged by a weakened rule of law, crime, politicisation of humanitarian action, and an increasingly fragmented and polarised political and social landscape in a shrinking independent civil society space. Neutral, independent, impartial (principled) humanitarian action is under pressure, and our ability to reach people in need is increasingly put to the test.

DRC will therefore intensify cooperation with ICRC to promote respect for the RCRC mandate and IHL. In partnership with ICRC, DRC will support RCRC National Societies in their preparation for and response to armed conflict and other situations of violence. We will focus on organisational positioning and capacity building within humanitarian diplomacy for acceptance and safe access to people in need. DRC will promote an understanding of the RCRC mandate, IHL and humanitarian principles at community level, in schools and academia, with youth, and in general humanitarian diplomacy initiatives targeting duty-bearers, decision-makers and opinion leaders.

DRC COMMITMENT

- Partners capacity to identify, address and influence respect for IHL will be strengthened and supported
- Decision-makers will be aware of the mandate and justification for principled humanitarian action



Psychosocial well-being

DRC COMMITMENTS

- Partners' capacity to promote psychosocial wellbeing will be strengthened
- Affected populations will experience an improved sense of psychosocial wellbeing

The psychological and social impact of natural disasters, armed conflict, displacement or migration may be less visible than physical or material damage, but often takes far longer to recover from. Addressing psychosocial issues is a critical element in responding to such events, as well as for enhancing social cohesion and building individual and community resilience in the longer term.

DRC advocates for mental health and psychosocial support to be higher on the humanitarian agenda at the international level and adopts a community-based approach to psychosocial support focusing both on individual and community needs, and on their resources to cope and recover. Such interventions support individuals, families and communities to overcome stress reactions and adopt positive coping mechanisms. Special focus will be given to addressing the psychosocial needs of migrants on the move, who are often separated from their communities and support networks. DRC will also assist partners to provide psychosocial support to volunteers and staff acting on the frontline.



Safer lives

DRC COMMITMENTS

- Partners' capacity to support communities in identifying protection risks and designing people-centred responses will be strengthened
- Communities will have improved protection mechanisms in place to mitigate harmful acts and violence

The protection of people caught up in armed conflict and fragile situations is at the centre of all our efforts. The RCRC Movement global and local presence provides unique opportunities to encourage and inspire dialogue and mutual understanding through actively applying the spirit of our fundamental principles.

We recognise people as specialists of their own situation and agents of change in their own protection, in tandem with initiatives focused on duty-bearers. DRC will support partners in developing people-centred protection responses, using risks and threats identified by communities as a starting point. We will focus on prevention, mitigation and reduction of the risk of violence. The response required may be multi-sectoral, and we will seek to involve relevant partners to protect people when required. Focus will also be given to address the protection needs of migrants outside of communities, such as migrants on the move.

We will use our role in society to promote dialogue and cooperation between different groups of citizens – for example to prevent election violence or ethnic tensions – and assist communities in building protection mechanisms.



“People experiencing or witnessing crisis are likely to be affected psychologically.”


4

Strategic Ambition

DANISH HUMANITARIAN ENGAGEMENT

DRC Commitments

Global Goals

 Volunteer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More DRC volunteers will be engaged in international humanitarian action.
 Public commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More future humanitarians will be mobilised.• Cooperation with the private sector will be strengthened.
 Influence humanitarian agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DRC will promote more effective and timely humanitarian funding and locally-led humanitarian action• Danish and global influencers and decision-makers are aware of the need to prioritise IHL compliance and principled humanitarian action

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

As the humanitarian actor with the largest combined international and domestic engagement in Denmark, DRC will create strong support to international humanitarian action and values by engaging all departments – National, Asylum, and International – along with the extensive network of DRC local branches throughout Denmark.

In line with the ambitions laid out in the DRC Manifesto, DRC will raise public interest in humanitarian issues with the aim of mobilising future humanitarians. We will create a better understanding of underlying determinants of poverty, hunger, violence and injustice. We want to involve people from all parts of society and to provide them with the opportunity to make a meaningful humanitarian contribution.

The RCRC global presence provides a unique evidence base for humanitarian diplomacy. Drawing on the specific role and capacities of the RCRC, DRC will influence policy agendas that affect marginalised and vulnerable populations by linking local evidence and partners to decision-making forums both in Denmark and internationally.

THE CHANGE WE WILL DELIVER



Volunteer engagement

The global and nationwide network of volunteers is a key strength of the RCRC Movement's humanitarian response. DRC has a countrywide network of 206 branches and 34,000 volunteers that are dedicated to the DRC Manifesto and that are strong representatives of DRC locally. Volunteers and branches will have access to more information and will stimulate local initiatives and dialogue about DRC international humanitarian action with the aim of generating increased public awareness, commitment and financial support to our international work. DRC volunteers and branches will also strengthen the sense of interconnectedness amongst volunteers in the RCRC Movement by exploring new modalities for volunteer-to-volunteer collaboration, capacity development, innovation and cocreation initiatives, as well as dialogue and exchange across borders – for instance, in the form of new communication platforms and relation building.

DRC COMMITMENT

- More DRC volunteers and local branches will be engaged in international humanitarian action



Public commitment

Generating public support is essential to influence decision-makers and create a funding base that enables our international engagement. Mobilising resources, including new financing modalities, from both the private and public sectors provides important operational flexibility and scope for action, particularly in relation to forgotten and underfunded crises. Collaborating with the private sector – particularly in pursuing innovation and supporting corporate social responsibility – is a high priority for DRC in this strategic period.

In a competitive environment, DRC must continuously document our added value. We will prioritise strong communication with the public – using channels such as social media and school-based humanitarian education – and draw on the experience of DRC field staff who are important communicators with the Danish public and media. In line with the ambitions in the Manifesto, DRC wants to attract the attention of younger segments of the population by introducing them to the 'Rules of War' and the consequences of poverty, conflict, and disaster.

DRC COMMITMENTS

- More future humanitarians will be mobilised
- Cooperation with the private sector will be strengthened



Influence humanitarian agendas

DRC COMMITMENT

- DRC will promote more effective and timely humanitarian funding and locally-led humanitarian action
- Danish and global influencers and decision-makers are aware of the need to prioritise IHL compliance and principled humanitarian action

The RCRC Movement has a mandate and obligation to influence the humanitarian agenda. DRC seeks to engage decision-makers to act in the interest of vulnerable people and with respect for the humanitarian principles. We aim to ensure that current and future decision-makers are aware of humanitarian challenges and understand the relevance of IHL and the RCRC Movement in addressing these.

In addition to its dialogue with decision-makers in Denmark, DRC will maximise its influence through the global RCRC Movement and mobilizing other civil society organisations and the public. We will also support partners to leverage their unique positions as auxiliaries to governments to influence local, national and global agendas.

In our policy influencing in Denmark, the European Union, and globally, we will work to ensure space for principled humanitarian action, implementation of relevant international laws and norms, and prioritization of humanitarian assistance with a strong focus on locally-led humanitarian assistance for more effective prevention, early action and response to crisis and migration.

DRC will draw attention to sectors that are often over-looked in humanitarian crisis, such as addressing mental health and psychosocial needs arising from conflict, disasters and other emergencies, as well as prevention, treatment and care for people living with non-communicable diseases in emergencies and situations of displacement.

“Health is a central aspect of resilience and a prerequisite for communities’ ability to recover from hazards, disaster or conflict.”

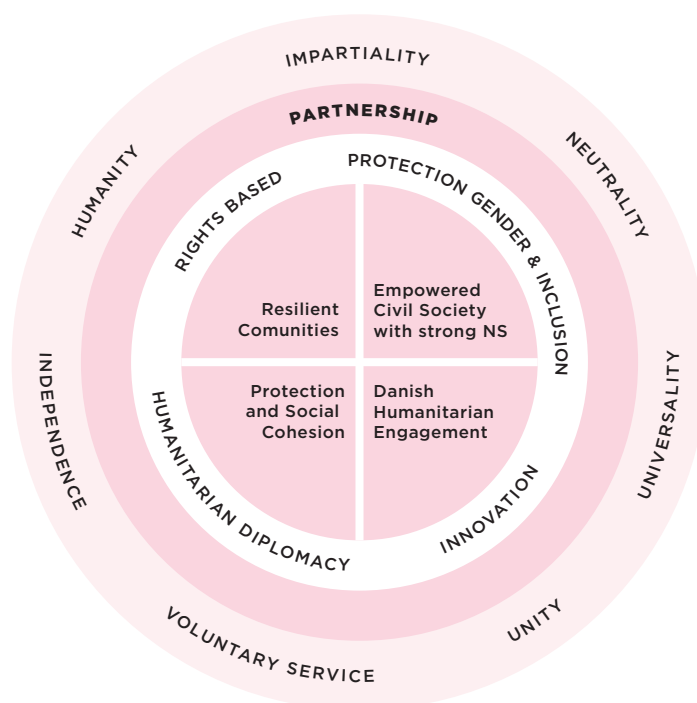


HOW WE WORK

DRC COMMITMENT

- DRC will apply a Theory of Change approach in developing country strategies

A meaningful plan that describes how we will contribute towards our identified Global Goals and Strategic Ambitions is based on the specific context of an intervention and how we think change happens in this context. A context specific Theory of Change will be our tool to effectively analyse and highlight the relevant causalities and assumptions linked to the design of interventions. For example, the analysis of a fragile context will lead to a different design than an analysis of a more stable context. Likewise, in some contexts, the RCRC National Society might experience obstruction related to humanitarian access or face pressure from its own government to compromise on the Fundamental Principles, while in other contexts such issues do not arise.



The illustration above represents the overall generic characteristics of DRC contribution to positive change: our pathway towards the achievement of our Strategic Ambitions and overall humanitarian impact in terms of human dignity, resilience and social cohesion.

The RCRC seven fundamental principles (shown in the outer circle) that inform and set the standard for everyone in the RCRC Movement, form the basis of our interventions. The next circle indicates that DRC works through both bilateral and multilateral partnerships, as well as with partners outside the RCRC Movement. The third circle shows the approaches we apply when designing programs towards our Global Goals: employing a rights-based approach, main-streaming protection, gender and inclusion, undertaking humanitarian diplomacy, and (when possible) integrating innovative technologies and co-created solutions with external partners. The centre circle quadrants depict our four Strategic Ambitions.

PARTNERSHIP

Partnership is at the core of DRC international engagement and is predominantly based on working together with other RCRC National Societies, whose mandate, presence, and nationwide access provide a unique platform for timely and relevant humanitarian action.

DRC partnership commitments go beyond the RCRC humanitarian network. The landscape of humanitarian action is constantly changing, and we need to change with it. The rapid developments in science and technology have brought in new players and new solutions. We want to forge new and additional partnerships with actors from outside the RCRC Movement, including the private sector, academia, think tanks and other civil society organisations, with the aspiration of doing more, doing better and reaching further.

DRC bilateral partnerships with other National Societies both respond to the humanitarian situation on the ground as well as our partners' and DRC priorities and capacities. Subscribing to the OECD aid effectiveness agenda, we pursue harmonisation and therefore promote coordination mechanisms including more harmonised and effective operating models among Movement partners at country level. We also prioritise alignment to partners' strategies and systems, and if these are lacking or insufficient, we will support their strengthening with a view to gradual alignment. DRC acts by the IFRC Code for Good Partnership, which promotes continuous mutual learning and development and encourages partnership-specific compliance and monitoring mechanisms.

DRC engages in partnerships both short and long-term depending on whether we respond to a short-term acute emergency or a more chronic situation. We perceive each partnership as unique and our approach is therefore flexible and adaptable to the relevant context, yet guided by the following cross-cutting values: mutual respect; National Society ownership; trust and honest dialogue; and mutual transparency and accountability and integrity. We will engage in critical dialogue and relevant action if we perceive that DRC and partner priorities are diverging, if a partner is not adhering to joint agreements or face integrity issues. DRC aims to expand our documented strategic dialogue with bilateral RCRC partners, and ensure common objectives for all long-term partnerships, with regular follow-up through the consistent use of partnership review talks.

Multilaterally, DRC will pursue a more focused collaboration with IFRC and ICRC within their respective mandates. This will involve initiatives within specific global themes and agendas, and at country level through support to emergency appeals and deployment of experts. As a member of the IFRC Governing Board we will furthermore promote a faster and more flexible way of working together, as IFRC and as a wider RCRC Movement, to respond to those in acute need. We will play an active role in revising the Movement-wide coordination framework with the ambition of promoting a more synergetic approach to strengthening National Societies and securing them a more central role.

RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

Our rights-based approach sets standards and guides the analysis and design of interventions in given contexts. It is based on international human rights standards and values. Operationally, we promote and protect rights through the principles of participation, empowerment, accountability and non-discrimination. Applying this approach, we emphasise a focus on holding duty-bearers accountable and removing barriers to the full realisation of the rights enshrined in national and international law.

DRC COMMITMENTS

- Partnership objectives for all DRC long-term bilateral partnerships will be developed
- DRC will increase engagement in Movement coordination mechanisms such as consortiums and alliances
- DRC will increase collaboration with IFRC and ICRC within prioritised areas
- DRC will engage in and facilitate more partnerships with non RCRC actors to promote innovation and scale in RCRC humanitarian action

DRC COMMITMENTS

- DRC will work to include affected populations in a meaningful way in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects
- Equal and non-discriminatory access to services will be promoted in all projects
- DRC will strengthen partner accountability mechanisms in all interventions

PROTECTION, GENDER & INCLUSION

DRC COMMITMENTS

- Gender and diversity analysis will be mainstreamed into the development of new projects and interventions
- Capacity of delegates and National Societies will be increased to address protection, gender & inclusion minimum standards

We want to ensure people's access to impartial assistance through a proper understanding of protection risks and needs. This is based on a thorough analysis of how people's gender, disability, age and other diversity factors affect their vulnerability to harm. Gender equality is critical for the progressive development of humanity and a fundamental element of human dignity. Within our Protection, Gender & Inclusion Approach, we: analyse the specific vulnerabilities and capacities of men, women, girls and boys; design interventions that recognise that different people have different needs and risks; transform harmful gender and diversity roles; and promote equality and women's empowerment. At all times we want to ensure that our interventions do not increase the risk to people either by act or omission.

HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY

DRC COMMITMENTS

- All country strategies will contain humanitarian diplomacy objectives based on an analysis of relevant attitudes, laws and policies
- Capacity of delegates and National Societies will be increased to carry out humanitarian diplomacy

Humanitarian Diplomacy (HD) is the process of persuading decision-makers and opinion leaders to act in the interest of vulnerable people and with full respect for fundamental humanitarian principles. As both a civil society organisation and an auxiliary to governments, the RCRC is in a unique position to influence the HD agenda. Through various activities targeting responsible duty-bearers at all levels and ranging from confidential dialogue to public mobilisation, we and our partners seek to change attitudes, institutions, laws and policies to create the best possible conditions for human dignity, resilience and social cohesion.

INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

DRC COMMITMENTS

- More projects will apply, test or develop innovative and digital solutions
- DRC will ignite a culture and develop capacity for innovation
- Co-creation will be initiated in relevant contexts to increase impact

To address changing needs in some of the most challenging humanitarian and development contexts, DRC will transform our approach to be more user-centric, innovative and digital. DRC aims to develop a sustainable culture of innovation that incentivises working in new ways (including with technology when relevant) and results in the development and implementation of tools that support this cultural transformation. We will create results through partnerships and be open to sharing the risk of failure and embracing new ideas and learning. DRC aim to increase the global impact of humanitarian action by mainstreaming our framework for innovation and leveraging strategic partnerships with IFRC, ICRC, likeminded National Societies, researchers and private sector partners.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

The International Strategy will be operationalised through country strategies for longer-term partnerships, and through more elaborate strategic guidance that will include guidelines, operational procedures and tools. These will be uploaded on the DRC International Platform accessible to all DRC staff.

To facilitate monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy, DRC has a Global Results Framework which outlines indicators and targets to monitor progress across the portfolio. Annual results-based contracts (at departmental, unit, and regional levels), multi-year country strategies, and individual projects are all aligned to report into this Framework.

DRC monitoring of the implementation of the International Strategy includes regular follow-up on results-based contracts, and annual reports at country and project levels. The Global Results Framework is intended to summarise and measure DRC achievements against the International Strategy and to ensure quality and accountability to stakeholders.

During this strategic period, DRC will invest in improved learning. We will further improve documentation of results and impact from our international engagement, capture lessons learned in a structured manner, and disseminate this learning across the organisation as well as with partners. Throughout the strategic cycle, studies and research involving several partnerships and projects will be undertaken, which will measure impact focusing on specific themes and elements of the Strategy. Towards the end of the strategy period, a review of the attainment of our Strategic Ambitions and Global Goals will be conducted, which will provide input to the formulation of the successor strategy.



“More volunteers will act as change agents, identifying and responding to needs in their local environment.”



Danish Red Cross is part of the Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) Movement , which is the world's largest humanitarian network with 11 million volunteers in 191 countries. Guided by the Fundamental Principles the RCRC Movement provides assistance to people affected by war, conflict, crisis and disaster without discrimination to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinion.