

# One.Together.

## Iraqi Red Crescent Society Strategic Plan 2014-2018



One.Together.  
[www.ircs.org.iq](http://www.ircs.org.iq)

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October 2013  
Baghdad, Iraq

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# Contents

Acknowledgements	4
A reading guide synopsis	5
Foreword	7
Abbreviations	8
Who we are	9
Environmental scan	17
<b>Strategic areas</b>	
Strategic outlook	20
Strategic outlook graph	26
People we serve	32
Disaster management, preparedness, response and recovery	36
Health and social services	44
International assistance	50
Organization	54
<b>Cross-cutting thematic areas</b>	
Volunteers	60
Gender	66
Technology	72
Branding and Communications	76
<b>Conclusion</b>	82



## Acknowledgements

The development of the five-year strategic plan was made possible through the invaluable assistance, dedication and collaboration of our staff and volunteers who spent countless hours in the past months conducting interviews, focus group discussions, studies, and surveys in a nation-wide consultative process.

We were able to gather formal feedback from more than 5,420 individuals via multiple mechanisms and collected the necessary data to analyze past achievements and setbacks, our brand, image and perceptions among Iraqi people of those who matter the most—the people we serve, in order to understand the present and look into the future of our Institution. To them, and to all the Iraqi Red Crescent staff members and volunteers who before them safeguarded and promoted our fundamental principles and humanitarian values since our inception in 1932, we extend our most sincere gratitude.

We extend our thanks and appreciation to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the German Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross and Swedish Red Cross, for their continued guidance and support throughout this process.

We also thank International Advisory, Products and Systems (iAPS) for their role in strengthening our operational planning and execution capacity and for bringing to this exercise a highly experienced cadre of local and International Professionals with intimate contextual knowledge of Iraq and the technical surge capacity required to take the strategic planning process forward.



## A reading guide synopsis

In order to provide our audience with a quick way to ascertain the purpose of this five-year strategic plan we have structured the document around three major sections:

Our introductory section describes who we are, our history, how we work and the impact our work has had on our programmatic interventions. It also describes where we are headed, and how we have leveraged the IRCS' internal and external opportunities and threats to properly inform our current and future strategic direction.

A second section aims to provide a concise outlook on steps we took during our strategic planning process to adopt a methodological framework, identify priority programmatic areas and define the operational platform of this five-year plan.

The third and last section provides an in-depth description of five pre-identified priority strategic areas, supported by four crosscutting thematic areas. For each strategic and crosscutting thematic area, an introductory discussion analyzes internal and external factors informing each strategy selection and design. Each chapter outlines the means by which the IRCS is pursuing its five strategic and four crosscutting thematic areas along with nine corresponding goals and 23 objectives—all of which are supported by 137 strategies and actions. Strategic and thematic area chapters also outline the expected results associated to the 137 strategies developed. The outlined results serve ultimately as critical benchmarks and help determine our overall effectiveness in carrying the IRCS' work in Iraq and around the world.





## Foreword



As our recent regional history has shown, the future is unexpected and often dramatic— natural disasters, social movements and economic fluctuations, have steered society in unforeseen new directions. To ensure we are prepared to respond to whatever may come, the Iraqi Red Crescent Society launched a comprehensive plan to strengthen its organizational capacities and further its positive impact on the Iraqi people. We will do more and better in our efforts to improve the lives and livelihoods of the most vulnerable in our country and we will do it as ONE and TOGETHER.

Iraq is no longer at war. Peace now gives us the opportunity to focus almost exclusively on our operational improvements. After more than eight decades alleviating the needs of our country's most vulnerable we will as ONE raise and maintain our historical standing as the leading humanitarian organization in Iraq.

This strategic plan provides a clearer and more tactical vision of the future to meet imminent humanitarian challenges with a strong, unified, and focused Iraqi Red Crescent Society. The strategy presented in this document is the product of a highly consultative process involving over 5,420 people who gave us valuable feedback via surveys and workshop interventions. These consultative meetings were highly effective as we obtained from them, a viable roadmap and foundation for planning and implementing several capacity building efforts "en route" to the development of our strategic plan.

Together we will recharge our brand as one of hope, help and integrity. Our commitment to uphold the Fundamental Principles remains firm and undeterred. Our policies promote inclusiveness and diversity across our ranks, and have served as a catalyst towards promoting efficiency, accountability, effectiveness, and most importantly their commitment to the Iraqi Red Crescent Society. Such commitment is a reflection of the Iraqi culture of charity, humanitarian work and providing help.

The Iraqi Red Crescent Society is privileged to have over 8,000 talented Iraqi men and women working every day. The skills, courage, and tenacity of Iraqi Red Crescent Society staff and volunteers, and their work all over Iraq have earned us respect and enabled us to sustain engagement even in the face of constant adversity. Because of them, the Iraqi Red Crescent Society stands as a shining beacon of peace to many Iraqis and non-Iraqis alike as our institution serves with distinction and without prejudice.

Today, we find ourselves on an exciting trajectory, where ensuring our humanitarian integrity is paramount. Listening, mentoring and training the next generation of Iraqi Red Crescent Society leaders is our main priority as we look to the future. I invite you to look into that future. It is already here.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Yaseen Ahmed Abbass  
President, Iraqi Red Crescent Society

# Abbreviations

5YSP	Five-Year Strategic Plan	HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome	KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
CME	Continuing Medical Education	HQ	Headquarters	MoH	Ministry of Health
COST	Central Organization for Statistics and Technology	HR	Human Resources	MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
CPD	Continuing Professional Development	HR	Human Resources	NDRT	National Disaster Response Teams
CRSS	Crisis Response Service Standards	iAPS	International Advisory, Products and Systems	NGO	Non-governmental organization
DAP	Department Action Plans	IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee	OD	Organizational Development
DBV	Domestic Based Violence	ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross	PERP	Provincial Emergency Response Plans
DM	Disaster Management	ICT	Information and Communications Technology	PNS	Participating National Societies
DRM	Disaster Risk Management	IDP	Internally Displaced Persons	PSE	Psychosocial Support in Emergencies
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction	IHL	International Humanitarian Law	RAMP	Rapid Mobile Phone-based survey
ERT	Emergency Response Teams	IO	International Organization	SME	Short Message Service
ERW	Explosive Remnant of War	IRCS	Iraqi Red Crescent Society	SWOT	Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunity and Threats
FHH	Female Head of Household	IRT	International Response Team	TERA	Trilogy Emergency Relief Application
FOG	Field Operations Guide	IT	Information Technology	UN OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
GBV	Gender Based Violence	IUR	Iraq Unemployment Rate	UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
Gol	Government of Iraq			WHO	World Health Organization

## Who we are

The Iraqi Red Crescent Society (IRCS) is an independent, volunteer-based National Society that works to alleviate suffering for all. We are also an auxiliary body to public authorities/government when responding to humanitarian needs. However, we maintain our independence from authorities and function as an autonomous, apolitical, non-partisan organization.

Despite Iraq's past instability and uncertainty, we have been able to successfully navigate challenges posed by continuous conflict and now, as we look to the future we move forward with a robust and progressive operating structure totaling 18 branches and a total of 93 offices across all 18 Governorates of Iraq.

Further, the IRCS counts on more than 2,300 employees and 6,100 registered volunteers across the country who are guided by the Red Cross and Red Crescent's fundamental principles and by the Iraqi's incredible spirit of charity and willingness to help his fellow man.

As we strive for a peaceful future in Iraq, we will continue to work TOGETHER as ONE alongside our donors, volunteers and employees to propel our mission and to continue our vigorous efforts to help people in need across Iraq.



**Our tagline ONE. TOGETHER. captures our unified approach to the design and development of our strategic plan and represents the unconditional dedication and efforts of our staff and volunteers**

## Our history

Henry Dunant, a Swiss entrepreneur who was devastated by the suffering of those left to die at the Battle of Solferino in 1859, outlined the desire to create neutral and impartial national societies composed primarily of volunteers to provide assistance and relieve suffering in times of war. These ideas later developed into the establishment of what is known today as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva, Switzerland in 1863.

Later in the 20th Century, in the aftermath of World War I, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) was founded based on parallel principles set forth by the ICRC. A little over two decades later, this led to the founding of the Iraqi Red Crescent in 1932 by Mr. Arshad Al-Omary, Mayor of Baghdad, in recognition of the incredible value of the Federation's principles and its humanitarian imperative.

## Now

Eight decades later, the IRCS remains the primary humanitarian provider to the Iraqi people; and we intend to continue down this path of service, through the unconditional dedication and effort of our staff and volunteers—TOGETHER as ONE.



**29th of February 1932:** The Iraqi Red Crescent was established



**1st of March 1932:** The IRCS general assembly elected the first Governing Board.



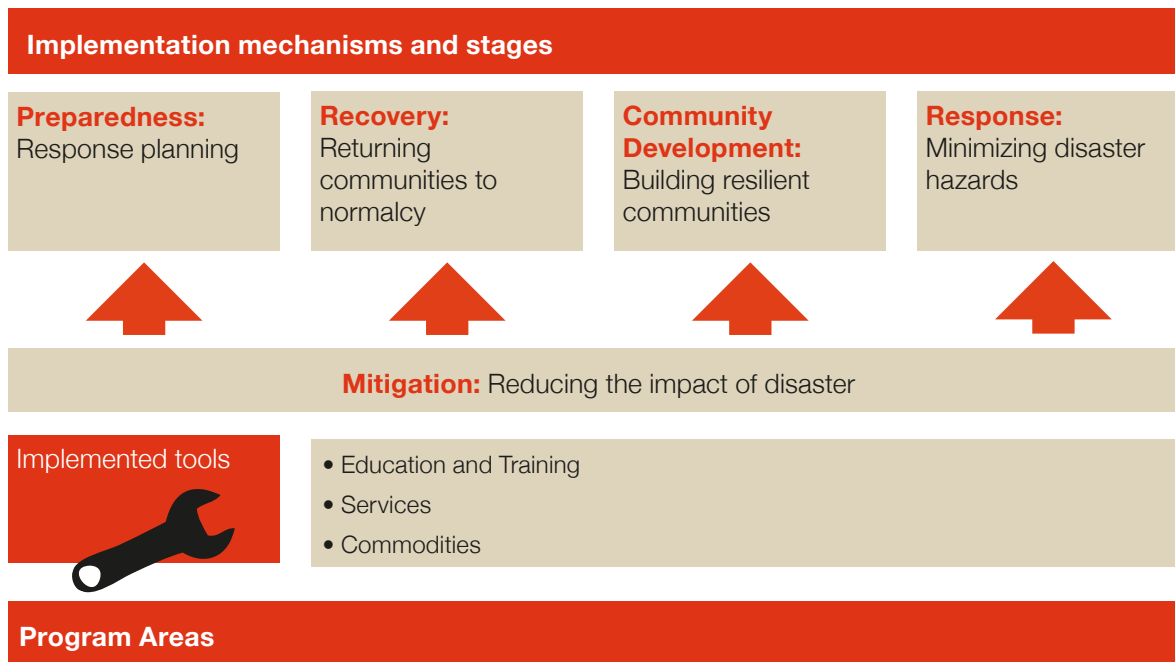
**16th of June 1934:** The IRCS gains the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Society recognition.

## What we do

We exist because of the people we serve. We provide humanitarian services to vulnerable communities without regard for race, gender, socio-economic status, education, religious or political affiliations.

It is through defined programmatic sectors—disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness and response, mitigation, health and social services, and long term community recovery and community development programs that we are here to serve all of Iraq. More specifically, our interventions focus on provision of education and training, services and relief commodities to alleviate the suffering for all, in accordance with the movement’s fundamental principles.

We provide humanitarian services across four integrated program areas:



## Our programmatic interventions

### Disaster relief



Assisting people affected by natural and man-made disasters.

### Health and social services



Health and social services include emergency medical response, health promotion, epidemic prevention and control, psychosocial care, HIV/AIDS response, reduction and treatment, among other activities.

### Medical services



Maternity, orthopedic, surgical and primary health care services. We also provide effective Continuing Medical Education (CME) services.

### Dissemination: Promoting principles and values



We promote overall understanding of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent movement's fundamental principles, humanitarian values, International Humanitarian Law (IHL), among others.

### Explosive remnants of war awareness



Help communities reduce the risk of injury from mines and explosive remnants of war through provision of behavioral change communications, effective information dissemination, education and training, and community-based mine action liaison activities.

### Restoring Family Links (tracing)



We assist those affected by war and natural disaster to re-establish links with missing relatives or separated family members.

### Youth



We promote recognition and the importance of youth as key agents for healthier and more prosperous communities. Our programs engage and promote youth volunteerism for improved civic engagement.

### Volunteers



Volunteers are at the heart of our community based activities—identifying, organizing and bringing essential services to the most vulnerable areas across Iraq. We focus on enhancing volunteer culture through process and system developments that ensure human and material infrastructure to better support, prepare and engage them in all programs and initiatives.

### Gender



We work towards reducing gender gaps and ensuring our staff composition reflects our efforts towards promoting gender balance and equity; and developing mechanisms to measure the impact of gender on our programs.

### International assistance



We are part of the world's largest humanitarian network of over 13 million volunteers in 187 countries. Working TOGETHER as ONE locally and Internationally, we build safer communities. Our contribution ranges from disaster relief to emergency medical and health services.

## Where we are heading

We will continue delivering integrated and community based services built upon evidence, informed by the people we serve and well coordinated with ongoing humanitarian and development efforts by the Iraqi government, the private sector and civil society.

The following constitute new strategic program priorities, identified through our extensive consultative processes leading up to the development of the five year Strategic Plan:

### Our Priorities

Disaster relief  
(Preparedness,  
response, recovery)



Our strategic efforts will be directed towards reducing and avoiding potential losses from hazards, assuring prompt and appropriate assistance to victims of disaster, and effecting rapid and effective recovery.

Health and social  
services



Our health strategy will remain complementary to government and private sector efforts to bridge healthcare gaps in underserved communities: addressing health care professional shortages, improving medical professional skills and competencies and the quality and accessibility of community-based health care services.

International  
assistance



We will build upon the Iraqi spirit of charity and assistance and our expertise in disaster management and response for the benefit of countries that may require assistance.

## Our impact

In 2012, the IRCS provided humanitarian assistance to more than 425,000 individuals; responding to natural and man-made disasters and tackling some of the most pressing poverty issues facing

Iraqi communities today. Regionally and internationally, we have responded to crises and disasters caused by floods, violence, diseases outbreaks, poverty and hunger.

**We have**

**BUILT RESILIENCE**

**RESPONDED to DISASTERS**

**CAPACITATED our BENEFICIARIES**

**EDUCATED our beneficiaries**

**BUILT medical facilities**

**ENHANCED our disaster response CAPABILITIES**

**MODERNIZED our work systems**

**REDUCED our operational cost to historical lows**

**SERVED IRAQ**

**ASSISTED communities at REGIONAL and INTERNATIONAL levels**

**PROMOTED ACCOUNTABILITY**

## How we work

Supported by its headquarters in Baghdad, IRCS operates out of 18 regional branch offices throughout the country. Through headquarters (HQ) and branch offices the IRCS consists of 2,309 staffers and 6,128 registered volunteers.

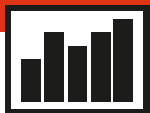
### Our programs are supported by the following Operational Departments

Information technology



Supports organizational efforts in the areas of information, communication and technology.

Financial Management



Manages and controls all financial functions in accordance with the Iraq's legal and administrative statutes, and generally accepted accounting principles.

Monitoring & following up



Monitors IRCS programs and activities, identifies trends and provides recommendations for current and future programmatic interventions.

Auditing



Directs audits to evaluate organizational efficiency, including field and financial operations.

Information



Supports information sharing internally and externally through dissemination of timely and accurate information on our program responses and interventions. The information department also serves as the primary media contact on behalf of the organization.

Construction and rehabilitation



Supports organizational efforts through technical design solutions, rehabilitation of existing structures and oversight of construction of new facilities.

Medical services



Supports IRCS medical facilities, hospitals and teams with quality assurance, commodities and equipment.

Security



Supports the organization through mitigation and protection strategies.



#### International relations



Supports the organization's coordination activities with stakeholders and partners in the region and internationally.

#### Administrational and human resources



Support IRCS' work in the areas of general administration and human resource management.

#### Logistics



Plans, coordinates and delivers critical logistical support to programs and operations and ensures timely access to relief commodities.

#### Legal



Provides all legal and statutory support to the organization.

#### Organizational development



Designs and delivers continuing professional development and capacity building services for the organization.

## Environmental scan

Our in depth environmental scan looked at key societal, humanitarian, political, social and economic trends impacting our people, organization and programs, and the people we serve throughout Iraq. This strategic plan builds upon the environmental scan exercise and also fully reflects our external environment analysis; including programs, initiatives, services and operations reflecting current realities and future projections.

The environmental scan helped inform the strategic planning pathways along with evidence produced throughout our in- depth desktop research and key events attended by the national lawyers, academics, political and human rights activists, journalists, politicians, health professionals, volunteers, and IRCS staff. The participants in workshops were asked series of targeted questions in a relaxed atmosphere and encouraged to freely and openly express which actions they perceived to be most urgently demanded in Iraq's humanitarian context. The information gathered through workshops was matched to our in-depth research focused on a thorough review of a plethora of articles, reports and academic articles published since 1999.

**We sought to understand vulnerability beyond traditional boundaries of poverty, by delving into the isolation, insecurity and ability (or inability) of social groups to survive shocks or subsequent stress.**

### Purpose and process

For the purposes of this environmental scan, we used vulnerability as a main indicator applied to food insecurity, political insecurity, poverty, lack of access to basic services, contamination of the environment, violation of women's rights and gender based violence, child displacement and child labor. All these variables undoubtedly belong to a larger group of recurring social, political and economic shocks afflicting the most vulnerable on a daily basis but constitute priority variables identified through our consultative processes.

In addition, our purpose was to examine the ability of different population segments (classified as social groups, by gender, age, ethnicity, and other factors) to cope, resist, recover, and anticipate the potential impact of certain risk factors on their well being, and whether such capacity is or has been tested by natural or man-made hazards.

We aimed at establishing the threat or hazard to which they are vulnerable, and what makes them vulnerable to such threats. We also sought to understand vulnerability beyond the traditional boundaries of poverty, by delving into the isolation, insecurity and ability (or inability) of social groups to survive shocks or subsequent stress.

**In the Iraqi context, vulnerability is neither a linear nor an additive phenomenon with discrete causes and effects. Rather, it is an intricate interaction of any number of hazards and competing human systems that complicate them.**

## Findings

We found that vulnerability, in the Iraqi context, comes mainly from prolonged suffering and continued emotional and material losses caused by chronic threats. We established that these ongoing conditions maintain their effect over time, and that they have diminished the capacity of many Iraqis to cope or resist them. In our attempt to dissect and measure this multi-layered vulnerability, we found that the vulnerability is neither a linear nor an additive phenomenon with discrete causes and effects. Rather, it is an intricate interaction of any number of hazards and competing human systems that complicate them.

After analyzing the chronic insecurity affecting Iraq, and the extent of chronic poverty in this nominally rich country, this environmental scan identified women, youth and children, as the most vulnerable segments of the population in Iraq, followed by the elderly, the disabled and the internally displaced. Iraq's vulnerable, unfortunately continue to represent a large proportion of the Iraqi population and continue to be affected by the lack of effective public services, unemployment, poverty, illnesses, lack of shelter, violence and marginalization.

War and insecurity in Iraq have together been responsible for the deaths of more than a million people since 1991. The nation's human and material costs from displacement during the past decades, have proven not to be one-time costs, but recurring ones, now spanning more than 30 years.

Today there are more than two million Iraqis classified as internally displaced persons (IDPs) or

refugees, a number likely to increase if the current Middle East crisis intensifies. The effects of violence and armed conflict have had particularly harsh effects on women, children, young people and the elderly. They have suffered from poverty, displacement, fear, human rights violations, unemployment, marginalization, lack of access to basic services and homelessness.

Over one quarter (28%) of all internally displaced people (IDP) are women. A substantive number of women are either widowed, divorced, separated, or caring for sick spouses, becoming even more susceptible to unequal treatment and to gender based violence (GBV).

Children affected by war-related violence have lost years of education and approximately 1 in 6 Iraqi children under the age of 18 is an orphan. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has stated that 5.2 % of children under the age of 17 experienced the death of one or more parents during the most recent war. Further, children currently constitute an alarming 48% of the IDP population across Iraq.

Unemployment is probably the number one concern in the daily lives of Iraqis. From 2003 until 2012, Iraq Unemployment Rate (IUR) averaged 20.04% reaching an all time high of 28% in December of 2003 and a record low of 15% in December of 2009. The Iraqi unemployment rate measures the number of people actively looking for job as a percentage of the labor force.

As per the Central Organization for Statistics and Technology (COST), the unemployment rate in Iraq decreased by 7% last year, from 23% in 2011 to 16% in 2012, however rates of unemployment are alarmingly higher among the internally displaced population as they lack the ability to secure stable income and subsequently cannot self-sustain. Conditions are even more dire for displaced women head of households, who are often unable to find work and so fall into secondary type displacement, moving further down the socio-economic chain.

Poverty continues to be a major contributor to increased vulnerability across the Iraqi population. The poor are more likely to live and work in areas exposed to potential hazards, while they are less likely to have the resources to cope when a disaster strikes. We found that the poor were disproportionately affected by natural disasters, including drought (2009) and flash flooding (2004,2006,2011,2012).

Most importantly, our findings confirm that vulnerability and its causes exert equivalent pressures on our own organizational capacities and resources. Responding to the needs of the most vulnerable in Iraq in a timely manner will require adaptations to more responsive training procedures, and an improvement in 'speed of deployment', with a greater emphasis and sophistication in workforce development – evaluation of successful approaches – coordinated planning and strategy – and the adoption of a systems based approach.



# Strategic outlook

Our strategic plan is built upon 82 years of experience and clearly defines a new path marked by great expectations, structural reformulation, innovation and increased dynamism. Our strategy has been designed to serve as the guiding framework for the IRCS staff, volunteers and stakeholders. Their contribution is critical to accomplishing IRCS' mission and its clearly defined strategic goals and objectives. We fully expect the IRCS to rise to new heights of engagement and accountability for the people we serve—from transparency and accountability, to effectiveness and efficiency; coupled with internal communication strategies that foster a culture of organizational conversation.

The Strategic Planning Task Force, hereafter referred to as Task Force, worked diligently to bring the first IRCS Strategic Plan to fruition. The Task Force was broadly represented by the IRCS board and staff members, and supported by key representatives and technical experts of the Stakeholders Group—including the IFRC, ICRC and Participating National Societies: the German Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross and Swedish Red Cross.







To ensure a strong strategic planning design we assembled and engaged a wide range of experts and advisors locally at organization, community and grass roots level to help create an all inclusive and participatory process. This led to creating a strategic planning culture that recognizes the values of strategic conversation towards achieving our goal.

To strengthen our operational planning and execution capacity, we engaged International Advisory, Products and Systems (iAPS). iAPS brought to this exercise a highly experienced cadre of local and international professionals with intimate contextual knowledge of Iraq and extensive capacity to positively contribute to all aspects of the strategic planning process.

Collectively, the strategic planning process was designed to meet the rigorous requirements of the IRCS within Iraq's operating environment, rather than looking to apply traditional strategic planning frameworks that would be generally applicable to any context.

This process was driven by a comprehensive consultative process with operations, technical and

management experts; and guided by the Task Force which consulted and gathered formal feedback from more than 5,420 individuals using multiple mechanisms—including surveys, in person one-on-one interviews, anonymous feedback and interviews, focus group discussions, organizational departmental mapping, and workshops.

The strategic planning process was characterized by an open, inclusive, transparent, systematic, and data-driven methodology. The expert team identified and implemented fourteen parallel actions via extensive consultative processes that promoted open participation, conversation, evidence based approaches, strategic analysis and objective projections.

The team of experts fully analyzed the results, consulted secondary sources and additional experts to develop and consolidate reports. The IRCS solicited feedback from staff, volunteers and civil society to gauge how relevant, effective and appropriate the recommended strategies were for the people we serve.

## Consultative process informs strategic planning

1. Administered structured surveys to 4,464 staff members, volunteers and the general public.
2. Conducted nine workshops with over 144 participants to consult on survey design.
3. Held seven strategic planning preparatory capacity building sessions with over 124 IRCS staff members and volunteers. Capacity building sessions covered strategic planning and communication, crisis management, financial management and budgeting and strategic plan preparation.
4. Held seven management level Consultative Focus Group Discussions with over 112 IRCS middle and senior level management staff members.
5. Conducted over 65 one on one interviews on IRCS strategic leadership and the top management.
6. Organized and implemented a Strategic Plan tagline competition securing feedback from 634 staff and volunteers.
7. Held consultations with 149 community based members and 45 civil society, academia, media and other relevant stakeholders to inform community engagement strategies and help project future humanitarian needs in Iraq.
8. Held three national workshops on strategic direction securing feedback from 144 IRCS staff.
9. Consulted over 93 lay community members on strategic direction.
10. Designed, developed and produced short movie on IRCS' work and impact in collaboration with 44 IRCS staff and volunteers.
11. Conducted field monitoring and evaluation of programs via our Monitoring and Evaluation expert to inform the five year strategic plan development process.
12. Performed a detailed HQ and branch office mapping exercise, including Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunity and Threats analysis (SWOT) for program and initiatives and organizational matters.
13. Secured stakeholder feedback from 28 total members of local and national government technical and management personnel, including IFRC, ICRC, participating National Societies: Swedish, Norwegian and German Red Cross, civil society and nonprofit organizations.



## Steps to strategic planning process

### People we serve

1

We listened to those who matter the most: the people we serve, as well as our volunteers and staff members.

Invaluable insight was gained into the current and projected needs of the people we serve, as well as our overall programmatic effectiveness, setting the stage for where we want to be in 2020.

### Stakeholder analysis

4

A detailed mapping exercise of key international, regional, national and community level stakeholders was conducted to identify their functions and levels of influence over the IRCS hierarchy and operations, and to gain better understanding and perspective on expectations and perceptions. Also examined were stakeholder roles, responsibilities, influence over funding streams and programmatic direction. This stakeholder analysis was supported by email, phone and face-to-face interviews.

### Surveys

2

In order to guide our strategic plan through evidence-based data, our experts administered three comprehensive surveys:

1. Brand, Image and Perception Survey
2. Volunteers Satisfaction Survey
3. IRCS Employees Survey

Survey data now constitute a solid baseline on staff and volunteer satisfaction, and branding and perception of the IRCS, and will help our commitment to continue monitoring trends and establishing individual and collective improvement benchmarks within the organization.

### Vision and mission, principles and values

5

Technical experts ensured that throughout the strategic planning process, the topics of vision, mission, values and guiding principles remained a pillar and central theme. Staff member and volunteer beliefs, motivations, and adherence to IRCS' guiding principles and its influence on work were examined.

### Program and initiatives

6

Experts conducted detailed assessments and analysis of past and current national and international program elements the IRCS' principle humanitarian assistance focus areas to understand, dissect and critically evaluate past and present programmatic pillars and determine current scope of work and level of foreseen programmatic restructuring set to increase quality, outreach and impact via the IRCS Strategic Plan.

### Environmental scan

3

Our strategic plan builds upon this environmental scan exercise. It was conducted as an internal and external analysis of past and present operational environments, specifically focusing on key societal, humanitarian, political, social and economic trends impacting our people, organization and programs, and the people we serve throughout Iraq. Therefore it reflects current realities and future projections of our programs, initiatives, services and operations.

### An objective and comprehensive assessment of the organization's strengths and limitations

7

Critical analysis of the IRCS' organizational capacity looking across the broad spectrum of technical, functional and operational areas within the organization was conducted to examine past and the current capacities and determine future absorption capacity within the foreseen results framework of the IRCS Strategic Plan.

Information, communication and technological environment

8

Technology represents new opportunities but also generate new expectations. We have therefore examined what is currently in place, what is possible from a contextual and environmental perspective; what are innovations available; and how soon can they be implemented.

Strategic plan 'tag line' competition

9

The strategic plan tagline competition secured written suggestions and opinions from IRCS staff members and volunteers on which phrase should the Plan's tagline be, and how the IRCS should brand itself over the next strategic planning period.

Donors and funding

10

An objective and realistic assessment of IRCS funding mechanisms for both international and national programs was conducted. The expert team reviewed past funding history, analyzed resource allocation modalities for current programming; facilitated discussion on existing resource restructuring and reallocation towards identified and defined priority programming initiatives. New donors/funding streams and projections were also analyzed to ensure sustainability of programmatic areas under the strategic plan.

Establishing priorities and strategy sustainability

11

Technical experts applied multiple participatory, research and evaluation methods to determine administrative, operational and resource considerations-both human and material- required for sustaining strategies and new initiatives prioritized under the Strategic Plan.

Prioritization was applied using participatory methods across the broader IRCS management platform to define and identify priorities that were selected as flagship initiatives in line with goals, objectives, and strategies and progressive developments of the Federations' 2020 Strategy.

The private sector

12

Consultations and interviews were conducted with select private corporations in Iraq to enhance our understanding, generate ideas and test possibilities of what is required by IRCS to:

1. Receive funding from Iraq's private sector;
2. Train and recruit private sector employees as IRCS volunteers;
3. Create private sector employee volunteer days sponsored by Iraq's private sector.

Technical experts used multiple levels of discussion and environment analysis.

Government

13

Building trust, legitimacy and support for the strategic planning process and related outputs guided the discussions with the technical leadership of the Government of Iraq.

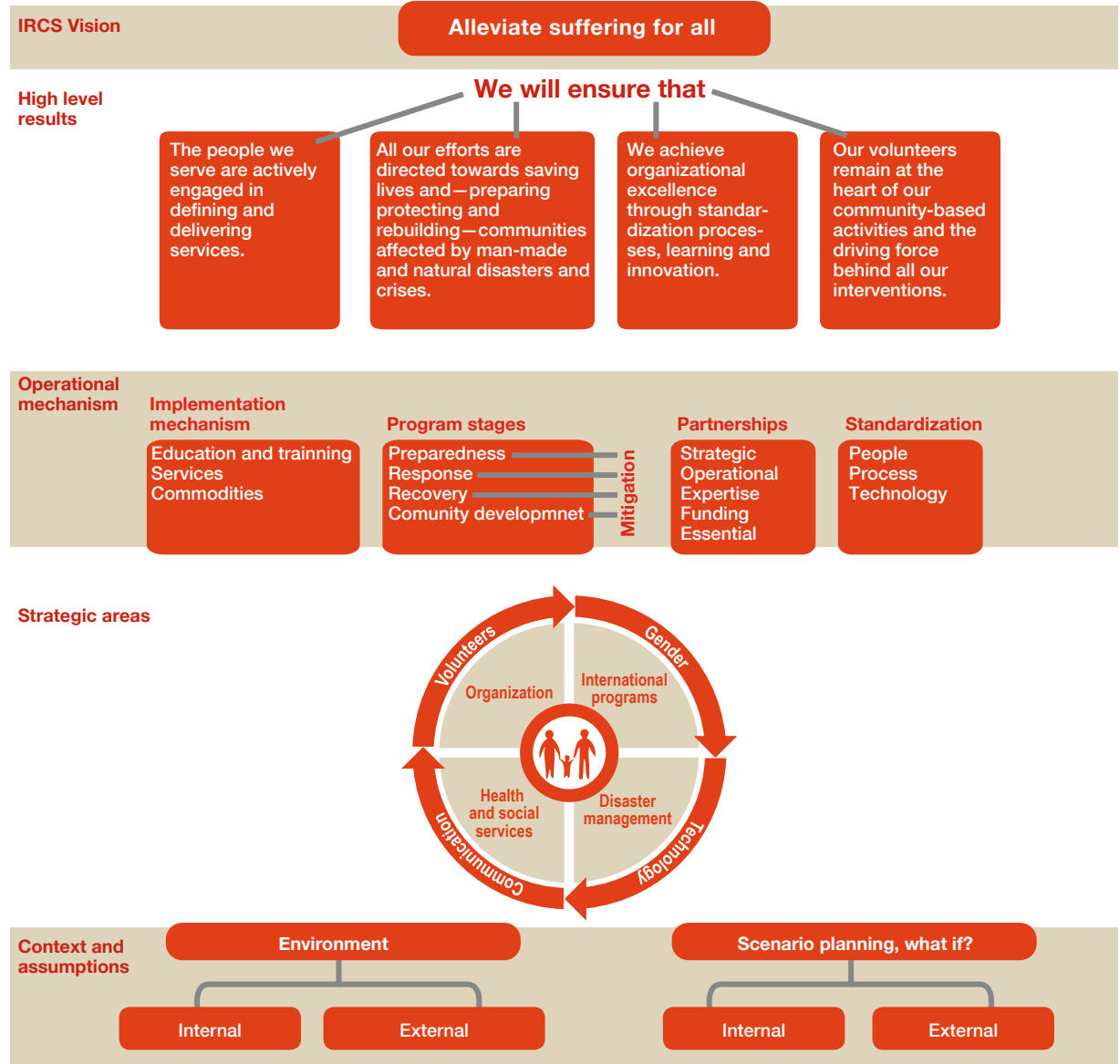
Community-based organizations and not for profits

14

Discussions with nonprofit and select community organizations were carried out to gain awareness on current and future engagement modalities.

The IRCS also carried out consultations with civil society organizations aimed at building legitimacy and generate more positive response in relations to key community based humanitarian issues of concern.

## Strategic outlook



## Strategic program areas reading guide

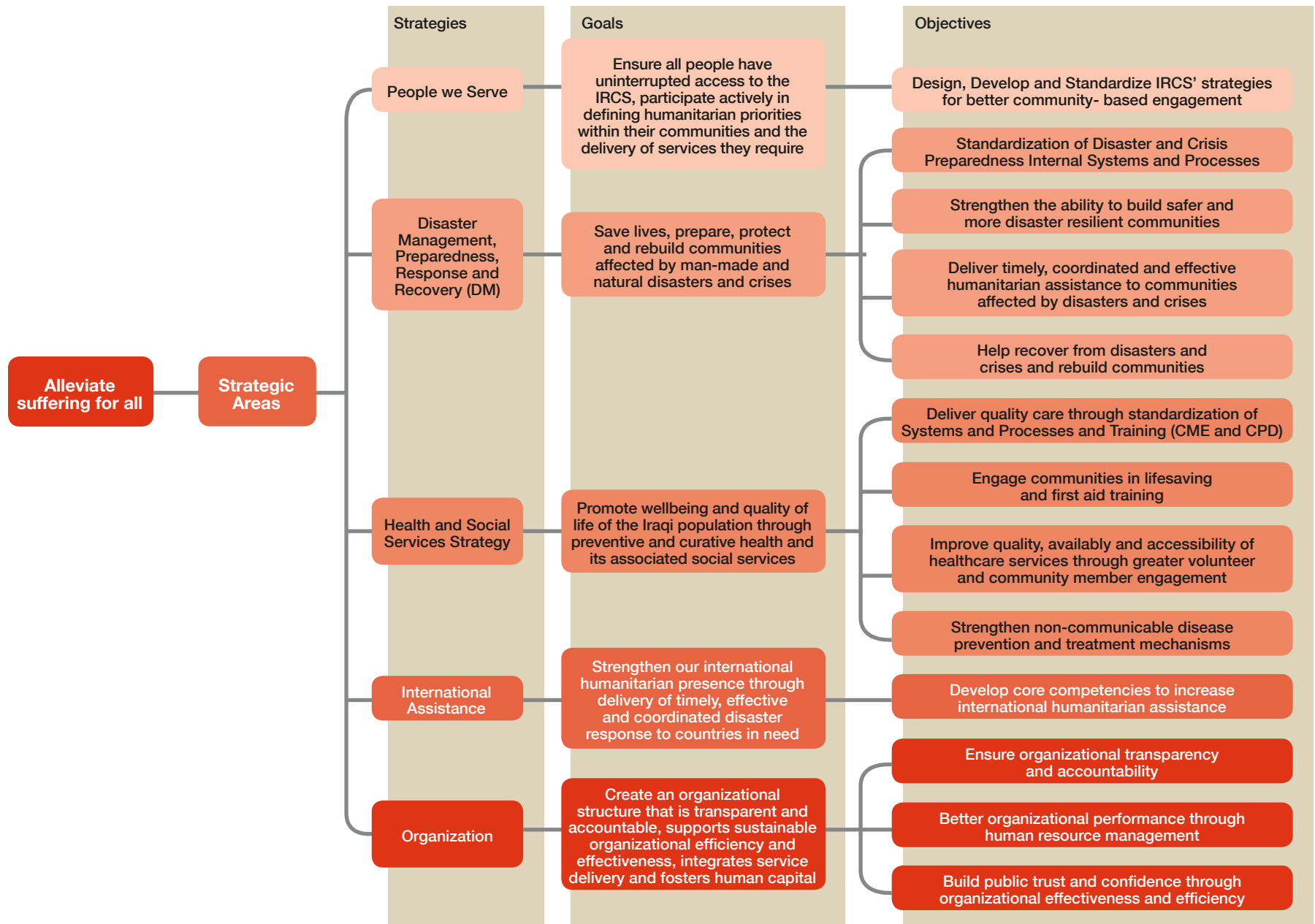
The five-year strategic plan is organized around five strategic areas and supported by four cross-cutting thematic areas. For each strategic and cross-cutting thematic area, an introductory chapter provides a discussion of both internal and external factors that informed the strategy selection and design.

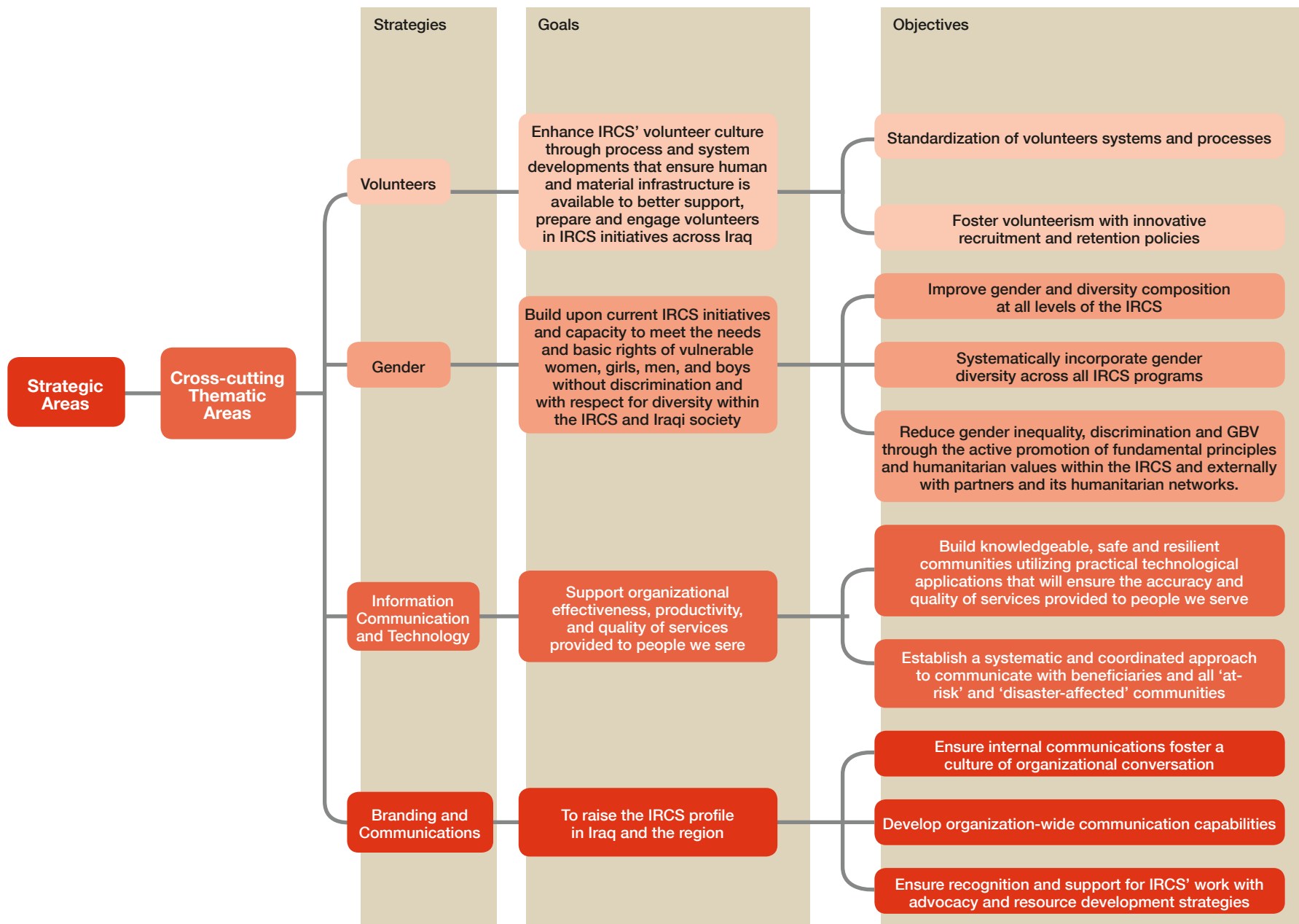
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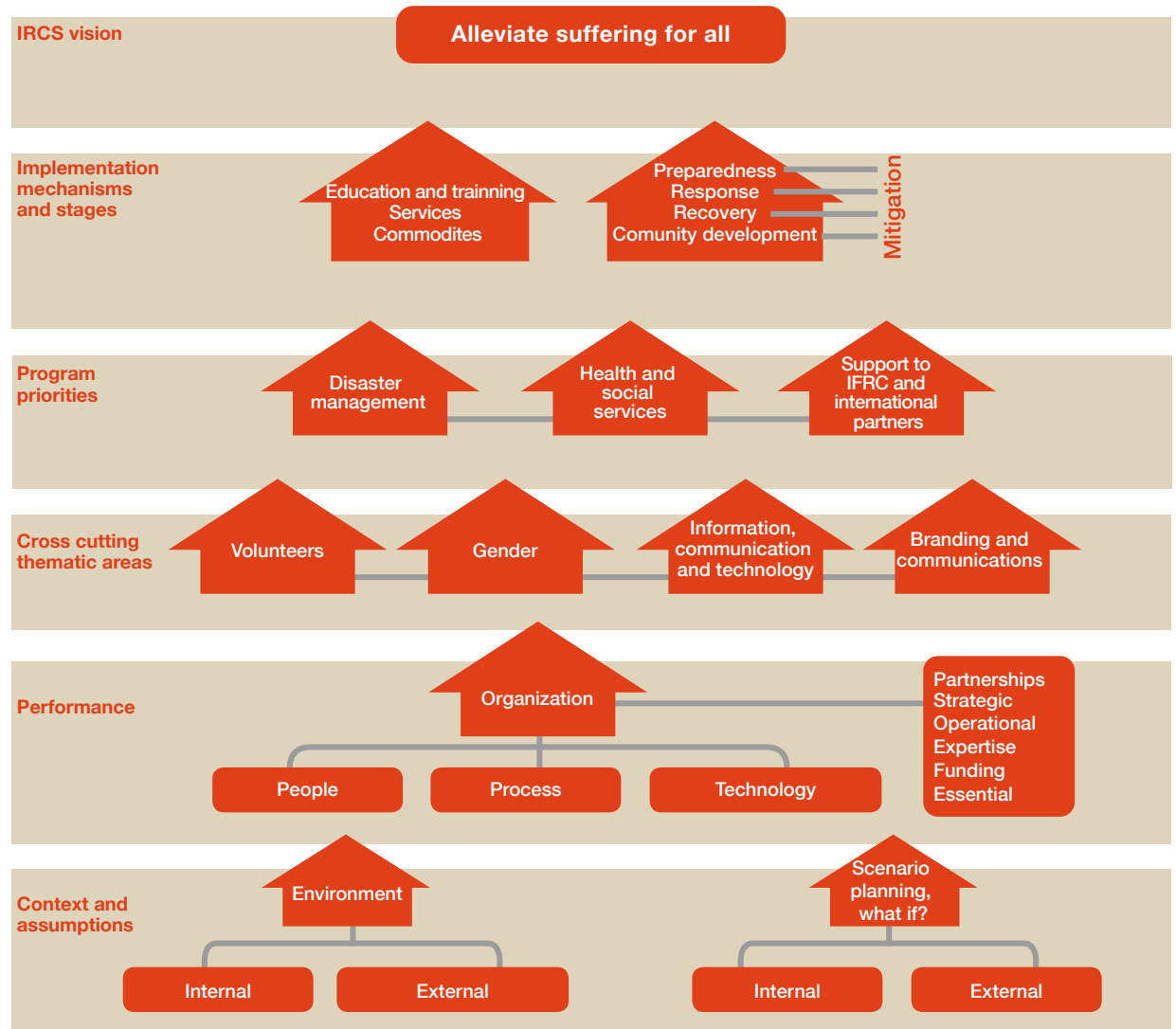


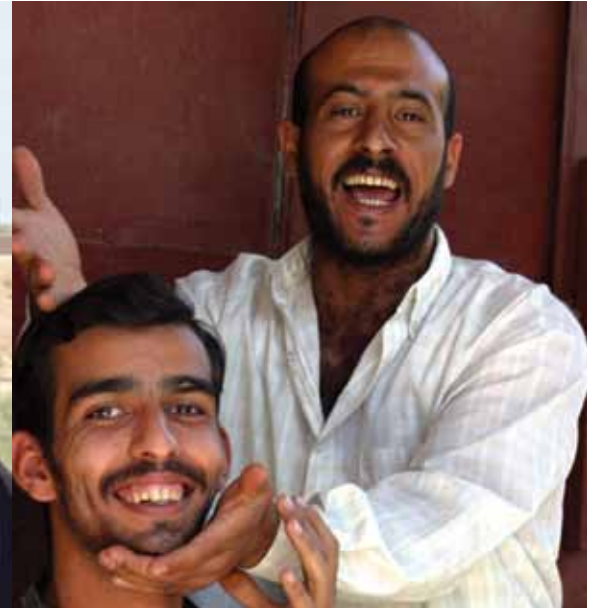
## Strategic framework 2014 - 2018





## Operational model





# People we serve



Iraq, known in classical antiquity as Mesopotamia, is home to the oldest civilizations in the world. With a cultural history of over 10,000 years, Iraq is often referred to as the Cradle of Civilization. This rich cultural history is our heritage and a source of great pride to our people.

Since its inception in 1932, the IRCS has witnessed waves of war and struggle. In the more recent past, economic sanctions placed a significant burden on the Iraqi people's livelihood and on the development of the nation. War's many negative consequences resulted in the largest population movement in the history of the region— causing a crisis of internally displaced persons and a flood of refugees into other countries. However, these negative consequences have not been able to shake the Iraqi peoples resolve to move forward and take responsibility for rebuilding their communities, time and again, in the face of crises and disaster.

People will always be central to our humanitarian intervention approach. As such, the IRCS understands its critical support role in the Iraqi society, and that it exists to serve the most vulnerable without discrimination or prejudice. We will continue to serve those with little to no capacity to cope, resist or recover from man made and natural disasters. We will continue to prioritize intervention reach the isolated, insecure and defenseless suffering from natural and man-made shocks, hazards and stress. Critical to our success is ensuring our assistance is well designed, planned and coordinated not only with government, non-governmental and private sector actors, but at the community level.

To this end, we have not only consulted subject matter experts, but have visited, spoken and in-

terviewed community members extensively to understand how we can improve processes and systems relevant to the people we serve and how this translates into a sustainable people-first approach to development.

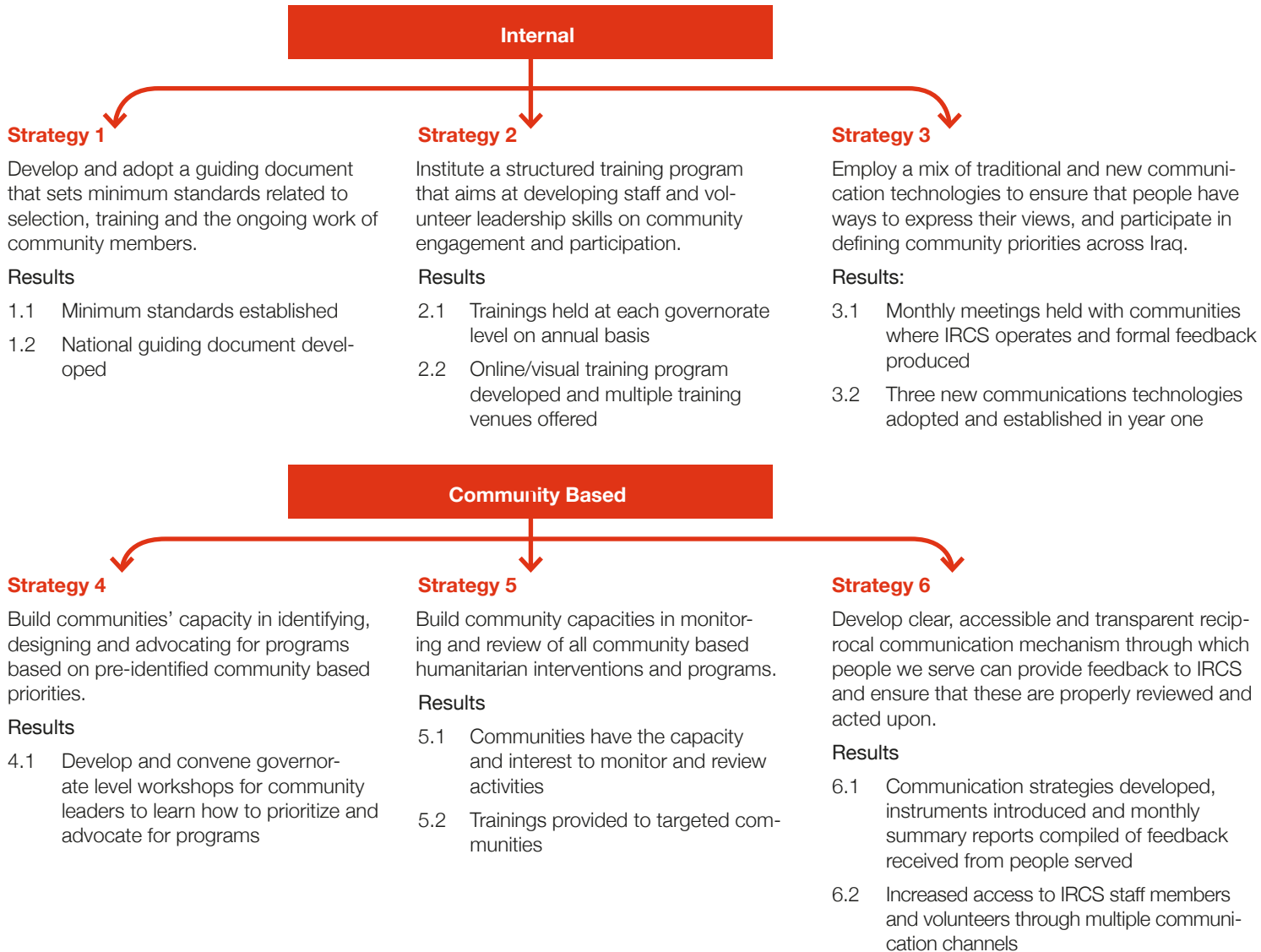
**Ensure all people have uninterrupted access to the IRCS, participate actively in defining humanitarian priorities within their communities and the delivery of services they require.**

The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is the largest humanitarian and development network worldwide serving tens of millions of people and relying on millions of volunteers around the world through the 187 national societies under its umbrella. As society members, we are the standard-bearers for humanitarian interventions, adhering to the three most important pillars within the humanitarian world- neutrality, impartiality and non-discrimination towards the people we serve. This is the standard the IRCS has adhered to since its inception and one it will continue to uphold into the future.

As we seek to become a 21st century provider of humanitarian assistance we are moving towards making those we serve the cornerstone of our organizational culture; prioritizing the development of multiple avenues for interaction, feedback and exchange from communities across all of Iraq. Above all, we are striving to have community members define community priorities and take charge in making sure that community needs are met.

**Objective 1: Design, Develop and Standardize IRCS' strategies for better community- based engagement**

Given, that we exist because of the people we serve and originate from the same communities we serve day in and day out, the IRCS will work towards standardizing leadership and capacity building training programs; internal communication strategies and their associated technological requirements to better engage the people we serve in identification, selection, design and execution of our programs.





# Disaster management

preparedness, response and recovery



Iraq is a country that has gone through an inordinate amount of natural and man-made shocks over years, from flooding to cholera outbreaks, to hosting and serving thousands of IDPs across all of Iraq and meeting the needs of refugees seeking safety.

Our clinics and hospitals have been flooded with patients, our ambulances overstretched as we responded to terrorist attacks; schools devastated and children left without a choice for education. However, despite these hardships the Iraqi people have demonstrated incredible resilience.

The IRCS is ONE and the same with the Iraqi people. Our volunteers and staff are from the same communities that have been historically affected by disasters and crises and understand the importance and relevance of having proper Disaster Management capacity to respond to these in a timely and efficient manner.

Building upon over 80 years of experience and the last 10 years of tumultuous history, we have assembled and consulted a team of experts at the community and organization level to look at our disaster management infrastructure past and current in order to inform programming not only for the next five years, but for the long term future. We are confident that our current capacity will improve as we seek to become a 21st century provider of humanitarian assistance.

Disaster management is and will remain the primary pillar of programming for the IRCS due to its historical past, current and projected program requirements.

To the IRCS, disaster management means reducing and avoiding potential losses from hazards, assuring prompt and appropriate assistance to victims of disaster, and effecting rapid and effective recovery.

We adhere to a disaster management cycle focused on reducing the impact of disasters, ensuring proper reaction times, and taking the appropriate steps to recover after a disaster has occurred. This translates into three disaster management phases:



These actions within the disaster management framework lead to greater preparedness, better warning systems, and reduced vulnerability. Equally important within this framework is the development and standardization of policies, plans and procedures that influence or mitigate their impact on people, property and infrastructure.

As part of our commitment to increasing our impact on the people we serve, we have moved towards concretizing our approach to Disaster Management, as such our primary goal is:

**To save lives, prepare, protect and rebuild communities affected by man-made and natural disasters and crises.**

This goal represents an attempt to integrate efforts of communities and humanitarian actors, while engaging government and the private sector in holistic approaches that will strengthen disaster management processes and improve Iraq's preparedness to respond and recover from disasters and emergencies.

The IRCS will work with these partners to develop relationships, programs, processes and agreements that leverage resources and prepare communities to care for themselves. We recognize that hazards affect local communities and that we must work towards strengthening response, planning, preparedness and prevention capabilities while taking into account the relevant mitigation strategies necessary to address natural and man-made disasters and crises when they occur.

\* Disaster mitigation is a cross-cutting phase which directly affects preparedness, response and recovery phases.

**Objective 1: Standardization of Disaster and Crisis Preparedness Internal Systems and Processes**

The IRCS will focus increased attention and efforts on standardization of systems, processes and guidelines required for the development of human resource capacity paired with technological requirements to ensure we have the capacity to meet the demands of all phases of the disaster management cycle.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Development, adoption and systematic updating of field operations guide in line with IFRC's global response tools.	1.1 On-field operations guide developed, reviewed and updated on annual basis
2. Standardization of hiring, training and retention practices for disaster response team.	2.1 Disaster response HR process developed, standardized and implemented 2.2 All relevant personnel trained on its methods of application 2.3 Standard training package developed for new recruits 2.4 Scaled benefits packages developed and ensure new hires/volunteers understand scaled benefit packages 2.5 Annual review conducted on adherence to standardized process
3. Structure activities through establishment of performance based benchmarks to better determine impact of services provided.	3.1 Disaster Management (DM) and program performance based benchmarks established 3.2 Quarterly program based performance review instituted 3.3 Annual impact review instituted 3.4 Evidence based data collection mechanisms established to support the impact
4. Professionalize emergency management workforce through certified trainings and continuous professional development initiatives.	4.1 Integrated systems for learning and humanitarian research established 4.2 DM personnel training needs and tracking systems defined and established 4.3 Annual training levels and quality of trainings targets established 4.4 At least two levels of certified training introduced 4.5 Professional incentive mechanisms established to encourage staff and volunteers to attend certified trainings on annual basis
5. Unify country-wide staff, volunteer and community capacity to respond to disasters and emergencies.	5.1 95 nation-wide team capacities built (15 members per team of 10 volunteers and 5 staff members) 5.2 Cascaded training program instituted for an optimum number of 1,425 first responders with ability to apply standard methods for assessment, response and recovery applications 5.3 A minimum of 10% of new recruits added to the network of first responders and trained on annual basis. Assumption that 10% of trained responders will drop on annual basis 5.4 Cascaded and scalable training program introduced and matched per priority geographic areas

Strategies	Strategic Results
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.5 A minimum of 250 first responders trained on annual basis</li> <li>5.6 Monthly emergency response team meetings, per governorate</li> <li>5.7 Annual all disaster team meeting</li> </ul>
<p>6. Develop and implement robust usage of information technology that supports IRCS information and communication systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.1 All information collected through digital technology</li> <li>6.2 Phone/tablet/computer based applications developed to allow data collection processes.</li> <li>6.3 Digital Database developed for all first responders and weekly updates sent to all emergency response team subscribers electronically</li> <li>6.4 Online training application developed and applied for distance learning</li> <li>6.5 Set annual targets for the development of additional modules for distance learning applications</li> </ul>
<p>7. Build community and partner trust in the IRCS brand through improved engagement and performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7.1 Continued community engagement including eliciting community feedback and responding to feedback</li> <li>7.2 Program impact evaluation conducted for building community trust and learning purposes</li> </ul>

**Objective 2:  
Strengthen the  
ability to build  
safer and more  
disaster resilient  
communities**

The IRCS will strive to increase its level of preparedness to respond to any emergency situation through targeted improvements that strengthen technical and managerial capacity, enhance response mechanisms and procedures, simulations, developing long-term and short-term strategies focused on disaster risk reduction, pre-positioning of supplies, public education and building early warning systems.

These are coupled with development of national and regional development plans that delineate information on hazards, emergency risks and the countermeasures necessary, and how affected communities can make use of this information.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Systematize vulnerability and capacity assessments and analysis (disaster prone districts of the country).	1.1 National system on vulnerability and capacity assessment and analysis designed and adopted. 1.2 Staff and volunteers trained on systems and tools developed on vulnerability and capacity assessments and analysis
2. Develop early warning mechanisms and criteria at the community and IRCS levels.	2.1 National guidelines on early warning system and application developed and introduced. 2.2 Regional/local applications developed based on national guidelines (floods, droughts, etc.)
3. Build a culture of preparedness through integrated, effective and community based programming and disaster risk reduction activities.	3.1 Online guide with clearly defined roles for IRCS in Disaster Risk Management (DRM) at the national and governorate level developed 3.2 Disaster risk reduction framework developed and guiding principles for integrating DRR activities into programming 3.3 Guide and online video for communities on Disaster Risk Reduction processes/mechanisms developed
4. Community based preparedness, prepositioning and capacity building.	4.1 Governorate-based stakeholder engagement, roles and responsibilities defined. 4.2 Community based DRR partnerships with relevant actors, including academia developed, established and formalized 4.3 At least 5 governorate based DRR capacity building exercises conducted
5. Strengthen and ensure maintenance of community, governorate and national based (first responders) capabilities through standardization, education and evaluation.	5.1 A minimum of one annual refresher training conducted per area in areas most prone to disasters 5.2 Online training video produced 5.3 Monthly communication and engagement mechanism with first responders volunteers established 5.4 Monthly electronic and video message mechanism developed for first responders network
6. Strengthen and ensure maintenance of community, regional and national based disaster response team and surge capacity teams.	6.1 Communication Strategy developed 6.2 Monthly communication strategies enhanced and rolled out 6.3 Annual drills conducted
7. Maintain readiness to respond at IRCS, National, Governorate and Community levels through periodic simulations internally and within the governorate emergency cell structures.	7.1 Annual governorate and nationally coordinated drills conducted 7.2 Drills at the HQ level conducted

**Objective 3: Deliver timely, coordinated and effective humanitarian assistance to communities affected by disasters and crises**

Our aim is to provide effective, efficient and immediate assistance to maintain life, improve health and support the affected communities. The focus in the response phase is on meeting the basic needs of the people until more permanent and sustainable solutions can be found. This will be done through engagement of national and local stakeholders in follow through and adoption of a field operations guide containing clear emergency response plans; including required funding designation criteria per type of emergency, communication strategies and commodities necessary to effect an appropriate response. We need to add emergency response team readiness.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Respond to all crises through well-functioning systems (including integration of IFRC global response mechanisms), programs and commodities: logistics, communication and warehousing.	1.1 Linkages to global and regional assessment and response teams strengthened and formalized. 1.2 National Disaster Response Teams (NDRT) developed and instituted. 1.3 Crisis Response Service Standards (CRSS) established as part of the Field Operations Guide
2. Engage stakeholders at the national and governorate level in developing and communicating clear emergency response plans, policies and procedures, roles and responsibilities.	2.1 Roles and responsibilities clearly defined for all actors at the provincial level. 2.2 Provincial Emergency Response Plans developed (PERP)
3. Ensure that each IRCS office has adequate strategic and operational plans and programs to effectively address all hazards and minimize loss of life, protect livelihoods and property.	3.1 Field operational guide made available at each field office. 3.2 All staff and volunteers trained on disaster response field operations guide. 3.3 One operational plan developed per province that complements the Provincial Emergency Response Plan (PERP)
4. Ensure minimum required levels of contingency funding for emergencies are available in relation to crisis activation criteria.	4.1 A minimum emergency response funding level (contingency) mechanism devised and developed
5. Establishment of disaster/crisis response command centers.	5.1 One central and a minimum of 3 field disaster/crisis response command centers established and operational 5.2 A robust disaster communication program established that provides “real time” information during the crisis
6. Respond to all crises through well-functioning and trained teams of first responders and maintain adequate level of surge capacity.	6.1 National response readiness capacity maintained. 6.2 Multiple layers of readiness and response capabilities at the local, governorate and national level established and maintained
7. Minimizing opportunities for waste, fraud, and abuse through internal management control and training programs.	7.1 Annual trainings conducted for all DM senior management teams on administrative and financial processes needed for emergency response and annual program implementation

**Objective 4: Help recover from disasters and crises and rebuild communities**

The IRCS understands that as emergencies are contained and controlled, the affected population will be able to undertake a number of activities that help restore livelihoods and infrastructure. Thus the focus of the IRCS will turn towards enhancing prevention and increasing preparedness to reduce future vulnerability. This developmental shift will occur through community based pre and post disaster planning, better integration of resources, and augmentation of early recovery and longer term development oriented disaster risk reduction activities.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Establish programs that strengthen local capabilities to conduct pre-disaster planning through well-coordinated and improved integration of resources from all government, private and non-governmental sectors in disaster risk reduction and recovery efforts.	1.1 Communities prioritized for DRR and recovery efforts 1.2 Communities' capacity is developed to identify and articulate DRR and recovery priorities. 1.3 Funding leveraged for communities to integrate DRR and recovery efforts
2. Determine community-based vulnerability and begin community planning for recovery during the disaster and crisis response.	2.1 Community plans developed based on evidence-based data on community vulnerability during crisis
3. Effective delivery of disaster recovery and disaster risk reduction activities to mitigate the long-term effects of disasters and crises.	3.1 Recovery interventions (health, food security, livelihoods, water and sanitation) ensured through community engagement in sustainable recovery solutions 3.2 Linkages to internal and external capacity building and resource mobilization mechanisms for sustainable recovery interventions established
4. Ensure immediate rebuilding of preparedness and response logistical and other essential infrastructure capabilities.	4.1 Immediate assessments and rebuilding/transitional plans are prepared and presented 4.2 resource mobilization strategies and campaigns for all community transitional plans designed 4.3 Within 15 days of disasters IRCS engages donors on communities based recovery and transitional plans
5. Establish long-term development planning opportunities for disaster risk reduction, conflict mitigation and community integrated programming.	5.1 Integrated recovery and reconstruction planning checklist developed as part of the field operation guide 5.2 A community/disaster-affected areas integrated recovery and reconstruction plan developed



# Health and social services



Iraq, once the Middle East's standard bearer of health and social services, lost its standing due to years of wars, corruption, improper policies and inadequate investments in the healthcare sector. This, coupled with four decades of natural and manmade disasters also put insurmountable pressure on the healthcare system, its facilities and healthcare professionals. Overcrowded hospitals and clinics, inadequate supply of medications, ill-equipped doctors, and the inevitable loss of doctors due to brain drain are just few very painful examples of the realities Iraq has faced over the last decade.

However, the tides are turning given that Iraq is no longer a country at war. This is reflected in government and private sector re-prioritization and investment in the health care system. New investments, progressive policies and procedures have had a positive impact on health services and the delivery of these across Iraq. However, despite these improvements, visible shortages still remain. Iraq still faces a severe shortage of healthcare professionals. Subject matter experts agree that this critical issue must be addressed immediately in order to avoid any additional setbacks in our overall healthcare infrastructure.

To this end, IRCS investments in health care and social services will remain complementary to governmental and private sector strategies. The ICRS strategy aims to bridge the gap in service provision to underserved communities, address health care professional shortages, improve medical professional skills and competencies, and improve the quality and accessibility of community based health care services.

We are also committed to strengthening our relationships with the Ministry of Health and other government service providers as their prime auxiliary partner, and to strengthen our ties with communities and the Iraqi people as the preferred non-governmental service provider. We will continue to develop policies that help us improve the impact on the people we serve. As such, our primary goal is:

**To promote the well-being and quality of life of the Iraqi population through preventive and curative health and its associated social services.**

We define quality health and social services as an integrated approach focused on improving the overall well-being of the Iraqi people through the promotion of behaviors and the provision of health related services that help the population live healthy and productive lives. Our goal represents our determination to integrate into efforts being exerted by communities, public, and private and government service providers.

We aim to ensure competency based health training and education are at the forefront of our efforts to improve quality, availability and accessibility of services, while simultaneously bolstering our capacity to mitigate, respond and recover from future disasters and emergencies.

The IRCS will continue productive relationships, programs, processes and agreements that leverage resources and extend the quality and accessibility of care provided to communities.

**Objective 1: Quality care through standardization of internal Systems and Processes and Training (CME and CPD)**

We will focus increased attention and efforts on standardization of systems, processes and technical guidelines required for the delivery of quality health and social services and develop human resource capacity to ensure we have the internal capacity to meet the pressures and demands for these services. We will also invest in establishing technological innovations that will help us streamline health and social service delivery across Iraq.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Development, adoption and systematic updating of health and social service guidelines (e.g. community based health first aid, psychosocial and support services).	1.1 Health and social services guidelines developed and adopted that consider Iraq specific epidemiological profile
2. Updating and adoption of volunteer manual on community based health first aid, psychosocial and support social services.	2.1 Volunteer manual endorsed and adopted and made available to all through face to face and e-learning platforms
3. Strengthen the IRCS health and social service advisory group through a reorganization and redefinition of roles and responsibilities as they relate to current and projected pre-identified health needs.	3.1 Improved capacity to identify, track, analyze public health data 3.2 A minimum of two studies conducted and scientific reports developed and published on annual basis 3.3 All mid and senior level management staff trained on research protocols 3.4 Tools and technological standards established and annual reviews conducted to verify their availability
4. Reinforce and support a skilled and informed workforce.	4.1 Continuing medical education and continuing professional development training programs developed to meet current and projected health and social service needs 4.2 CME/CPD credit system established and enforced
5. Strengthen IRCS health and social service infrastructure.	5.1 Health staff trained on health program development 5.2 Intradepartmental knowledge of all health programs increased through production of systematic and regular reports and bulletins
6. Develop and establish innovations in health.	6.1 Incentive system in place to encourage individual/group innovations in health technologies 6.2 Technological improvements adopted to increase the efficiency of intra, inter and extra departmental health and social service activities
7. Develop and adopt health services ethics guidelines.	7.1 Medical and Social Service ethical standards developed, published, and distributed 7.2 Ethical standards applied to programmatic interventions 7.3 Periodic review system established to ensure adherence to ethics standards 7.4 Ethical standard monitoring mechanisms developed and established
8. Build upon and develop quality assurance and improvement mechanisms for health and social service programs.	8.1 Knowledge management mechanisms developed and established 8.2 Guidelines for quality assurance and program accountability developed and established. 8.3 Departmental annual review to examine quality assurance and program accountability performed

**Objective 2:  
Engage communities  
in lifesaving initiatives  
through first aid training  
development**

We will strengthen our role as the premier first aid provider in Iraq and continue to build the capacities of a representative cross-section of the Iraqi population in order to increase to the ability to respond to disasters and emergencies when and where they may occur.

Concomitantly, we will standardize internal competencies through training and capacity building initiatives that improve technical and managerial abilities across the IRCS. This combined approach will enable us to strengthen our response mechanisms and procedures and make emergency first aid a standard life-saving function throughout Iraq.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Establish IRCS first aid training program best practices and guidelines and IRCS branded training guides and materials.	1.1 First aid Training Guidelines for technical and managerial staff developed 1.2 Systematic training imparted for a pre-identified cadre of technical and administrative staff
2. Create central and regional certified and well branded first aid certification training and education centers.	2.1 Training curricula for community based first aid interventions developed 2.2 Competency based first aid education and levels of certification training schedules introduced and delivered 2.3 CPD training and schedule modalities established for First aid trained responders to practice and update their skills
3. Enhance people's preparedness for disasters and daily emergencies.	3.1 A minimum of 9600 newly certified first aid trainees certified 3.2 A minimum of 3600 first aid trainees re-certified within the parameters of new training modalities
4. Offer a mix of practical and e-learning first aid training and refresher training programs with online recertification process.	4.1 APPs (smart device applications) developed for a variety of first aid training functions 4.2 Re-certification process defined and accessible to current certification holders
5. Strengthen linkages with community based and workplace first responders.	5.1 Two new methods of communication introduced utilizing ICT 5.2 Continuous professional development opportunities created through technological innovation (APPs developed to update training modules and inform first responder cadre of refresher course availability)

**Objective 3:  
Improve quality, availability and accessibility of healthcare services through greater volunteer and community member engagement**

Serving vulnerable, poor and underserved communities with sustainable and quality access to health and social care is our priority. Therefore our new strategy points towards greater and aligned engagement between our volunteers, communities, our service providers and policy makers. The IRCS will continue strengthening its community-based primary preventive and curative healthcare services, and to work in partnership with the Ministry of Health and other local healthcare providers. Our long-term developmental strategies will support effective implementation of community-based advocacy and service delivery strategies to improve quality, accessibility and affordability of primary health and specialized health services through our clinics and hospitals.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Volunteers and Community members engaged in preventive care interventions.	1.1 Communities incorporated/involved in preventive care program design through established process of meetings, feedback from relevant points of contact, etc. 1.2 Food security and nutrition outcomes improved 1.3 Community based health education curricula developed based on pre-determined priorities 1.4 IRCS volunteers and pre-identified community members capacitated to deliver health education sessions and messages to communities
2. Volunteers and Communities saving lives during health emergencies.	2.1 Training drills and exercises conducted for volunteers 2.2 E-learning courses developed and offered to volunteers 2.3 Volunteers and community members properly capacitated to react and respond to health emergencies
3. Improve the health outcomes of communities through improved engagement and coordination with volunteers, communities and Government entities.	3.1 Joint initiatives between Ministry of Health and communities supported 3.2 Communities capacity increased to work in tandem with Ministry of Health and other partners in identifying local primary health care priorities 3.3 Existing community based primary healthcare approaches improved through increased engagement with communities 3.4 Appropriate community based advocacy and service delivery strategies implemented
4. Improved specialized services made available.	4.1 Improvements in standards of care defined and measured annually

**Objective 4:  
Strengthen  
non-communicable  
disease prevention  
and treatment  
mechanisms**

We aim to reduce the burden and impact of non-communicable diseases preventing the Iraqi population from living a healthier and productive life. In partnership with the Iraqi Ministry of Health, the IRCS programming will continue working and assisting the most vulnerable through prevention awareness strategies and its practical applications at the community level. The IRCS understands that non-communicable diseases – cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases, cancers and diabetes - cause the majority of deaths in Iraq. We will therefore build upon preventive health education initiatives to promote healthier lifestyles for a better quality of life. Further, we will continue to work diligently to address mental health and psychosocial disorders by strengthening clinical and social support mechanisms for communities.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Support an integrated approach and a coordinated response for prevention and control of non-communicable diseases.	1.1 Increased incorporation of new technologies for advocacy and public awareness 1.2 Prevention and control of non-communicable diseases included in all national health plans 1.3 Service activities coordinated to prevent and control non-communicable diseases
2. Help monitor trends, impact and determinants of non-communicable diseases at the community level.	2.1 Improved community-based capacity to participate in national surveillance and monitoring systems, such as collection of relevant data on risk factors
3. Establish health education priorities within communities most vulnerable to non-communicable diseases.	3.1 IRCS health education handbook for non-communicable disease prevention developed 3.2 Interactive health education material created for use on website and social media 3.3 IRCS management capacitated as Trainer of trainers to flow training down to volunteers 3.4 Community awareness raising campaigns and sessions conducted across high priority areas
4. Development, adoption and systematic updating of psychosocial programming guide in line with IACS Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies.	4.1 Standardized annual updating of psychosocial programming guide developed and reviewed. 4.2 Psychosocial and mental health expert advisory committee appointed to review the adherence to standards of program quality
5. Professionalize psychosocial workforce through trainings and continuous professional development initiatives.	5.1 Integrated systems for learning and psychosocial research and publications established 5.2 Annual training levels and quality of trainings targets established 5.3 Incentive mechanisms established to encourage staff and volunteers to attend continuous professional development trainings and and certification training
6. Promote mental health integration into primary healthcare.	6.1 Training delivered to Iraq's primary healthcare practitioners to recognize and refer mental health issues
7. Psychosocial care made available for people affected by disasters and major incidents made available.	7.1 Availability of psychosocial services for people affected by major incidents, conflict, crisis and disasters
8. Integration of psychosocial methods into the existing programs.	8.1 Psychosocial programming methods integrated 8.2 Teams that provide psychosocial care are well integrated with other IRCS teams providing complementary services to people we serve

# International assistance



As we move forward under the directing force of our strategic plan, we intend to build upon the Iraqi people's history of charity and strengthen our ties with regional and global governments and societies to formalize and concretize channels through which the IRCS can extend humanitarian assistance to other countries in need.

Over the last decade, Iraq has been a recipient of generous International assistance from a plethora of governments, organizations, academic institutions, foundations and corporations from all over the globe. The Iraqi people continue to enjoy the benefits of material and technical assistance and have witnessed the positive effects of international assistance on Iraq's overarching infrastructure.

Our international assistance strategy will build upon this spirit of charity and assistance and not only address the imminent needs present in our own country, but also build upon our expertise in emergency and disaster management and response for the benefit of countries that may require assistance. This assistance will be in line with the Federation's guiding principles, standards and requirements and implemented through the already well-established red cross/red crescent network and platform.

To this end, we have not only consulted our staff members and volunteers but we have also consulted subject matter experts and interviewed community members to understand and better define our international assistance strategic framework. As a result our goal is to:

**Strengthen our international humanitarian presence through delivery of timely, effective and coordinated disaster response to countries in need.**

Building upon our international assistance in neighboring countries we will leverage our association to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to transfer our skills, expertise and resources across countries suffering from man made and natural disasters. We will remain true to the universal fundamental principles of humanitarian assistance. We have upheld this golden standard throughout our history and will continue to uphold it into the future through projected interventions abroad.

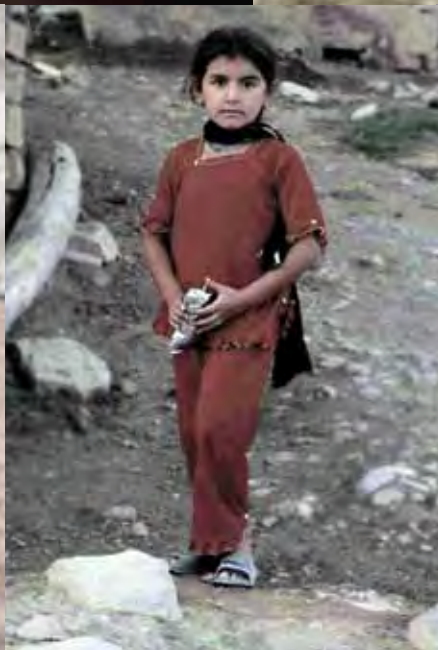
**Objective 1:  
Develop core competencies required to increase provision of coordinated, timely and effective international humanitarian assistance**

The IRCS will work diligently towards developing our internal administrative functions and our programmatic competencies to meet the ever-changing requirements of disaster response and emergency response services internationally.

Strengthening our internal administrative, financial and human-resource procedural functions and mechanisms will be imperative in order to maintain the level of flexibility and fiscal solvency required to remain current, relevant and competitive in the International humanitarian assistance arena.

Further, our core intervention capacities (relief commodities and emergency health care) will need to be strengthened through integrating state of the art technological improvements which will lead to timely and efficient international responses, when paired with properly capacitated IRCS staff.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. To improve IRCS international humanitarian response capacity.	1.1 Response guidelines developed to determine whether IRCS international response assistance is needed/warranted 1.2 Preparedness and response guidelines for international humanitarian assistance developed and instituted 1.3 International response training curricula developed for IRCS administrative, financial and ERT staff 1.4 International Response Team scope of work and composition defined 1.5 Training delivered to improve technical and managerial competencies for expanding to international assistance 1.6 Number of IRCS staff participating in international development assistance annually increased 1.7 Annual reviews conducted to discuss the role and capabilities of IRCS staff before, during and after an international deployment
2. To provide coordinated, timely and effective humanitarian assistance.	2.1 Relief commodities distributed as per IRCS or national/IFRC needs assessments e.g. food and non food items, camp management, logistics 2.2 Technical specialist provided as part of IRCS international assistance team 2.2 Standards defined for types of assistance offered (i.e. cash versus commodities)
3. Provision of emergency medical services.	3.1 Technical assistance provided in response to natural and manmade disasters 3.2 Medical supplies provided in response to natural and manmade disasters 3.3 Training services in emergency medical care provided in response to natural and manmade disasters
4. Effective delivery of primary health care services.	4.1 Camp and community based preventive and primary health care services provided 4.2 Technical assistance and training provided 4.3 Medical supplies provided



# Organization



The IRCS recognizes that a shift towards a developmental approach is not only inevitable, but essential to ensuring the organization remains at the forefront of humanitarian interventions in Iraq.

As we move towards becoming a 21st Century organization, we understand that the overall structural well-being of the organization is critical to our continued success; and redirecting efforts towards organizational efficiency overrides project specific approaches that were more relevant during war and conflict emergency response scenarios.

We have worked diligently over the recent past with Senior Leadership, staff, volunteers, stakeholders, external advisors and consultants to diagnose the organization's current needs while working with leaders to clarify the goals and objectives that help us achieve greater effectiveness.

To this end, the IRCS will continue to support reform initiatives aimed at securing lasting and transformative effects as they relate to financial compliance and adherence to the humanitarian fundamental principles. These reforms aim to enhance the organizational effectiveness and streamline structural parameters, while concomitantly embedding the principles of 'people, process and technology' throughout the IRCS to ensure maximum efficiency.

Reform efforts represent our strict commitment to creating visible and measurable improvements in quality, transparency, and timeliness of our programs but also set the stage for a shift in organizational perception among IRCS staff and volunteers. Further, these reforms ensure our re-

lationship with stakeholders and partners remains strong. To this end we will continue to maintain constructive and mutually beneficial relationships that contribute towards the delivery of high quality humanitarian services.

We understand that organizational development strategic planning are a driver for long term growth and that it can only be achieved through measuring outcomes consistently and meaningfully; maximizing our administrative and operational capacity and efficiencies and fostering growth of our human capital. As such our goal is to:

**Create an organizational structure that is transparent and accountable, supports sustainable organizational efficiency and effectiveness, integrates service delivery and fosters human capital.**

We are accountable to government, legislative bodies, humanitarian agencies and the people we serve. As such, via this objective we are enabling the development of an organizational platform that promotes and upholds the highest standards of transparency and accountability, while concomitantly meeting our legal and humanitarian mandate, and fulfilling our roles and responsibilities towards our staff and volunteers and the people we serve.

We will promote better understanding of our humanitarian principles, mandate and role as a humanitarian organization both internally (within the IRCS) and externally (the people we serve; public

and private sectors). We will also improve communication with the diverse media outlets and relevant stakeholders to keep strengthening our brand, image and perception.

### Objective 1: Ensure Organizational Transparency and Accountability

Good governance within any institution is supported by two central pillars: transparency and accountability. These two pillars are necessarily interdependent as transparency is a precondition for accountability. Without access to clear and accurate information it is not possible to determine whether pre-set standards are upheld.

As such, the IRCS' strategies focus on building upon the legal framework of the organization to ensure it is better prepared to manage resources, programs and people while simultaneously ensuring that the fundamental principles are layered into every aspect of our work.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Ensure that the legal and reporting frameworks are well structured, monitored and transparent.	1.1 The IRCS continues to be recognized under the Red Cross/Red Crescent law, act or decree and information is disseminated to all staff members 1.2 Statutes are available, provisions respected and information disseminated
2. Ensure organizational integrity and responsible stewardship of all resources (fight fraud and waste and implement strategies to eliminate inefficient and improper practices).	2.1 Instruments, policy and training materials are developed and instituted 2.2 Staff members capacitated through in person and e-learning classes 2.3 Integrity instruments (e.g. complaint mechanism and conflict of interest) are functioning, monitored and reporting mechanisms established
3. Improve management systems through use of evidence based data and information to improve the health and well-being of the Iraqi People.	3.1 Tools and strategies for evidence based decision making established 3.2 Functional components guide on data management system established across the organization 3.3 Annual reviews of process to improve evidenced based decision making and data quality and information use
4. Ensure promotion of work ethical standards associated with IRCS (engage all IRCS supporters and people we serve, at all levels as strategic partners to champion and enhance IRCS strategic plan through operational excellence).	4.1 Operational excellence and ethical standards developed and instituted 4.2 Annual statements disseminated to all offices on operational excellence and ethical standards
5. Ensure activity compliance with core fundamental principles at design and implementation stages (annual review when annual plans are developed, check list developed).	5.1 Information on fundamental principles disseminated to all staff, volunteers and partners associated with IRCS work 5.2 Annual workshops held on the fundamental principles

**Objective 2: Better organizational performance through human resource management, – innovative and learning organizational effectiveness**

Our strategies seek to establish a clear, coherent and consistent approach to organizational performance and improved job satisfaction. Performance management and strategically linked performance appraisal systems will be complemented by department action plans and employee development strategies. In addition, the design of our performance management system will be influenced by workload, organizational culture and integrated into other strategic initiatives.

Further, we will foster continuing professional development (CPD) initiatives that are closely monitored, supervised and incentivized. This will serve to ensure that our workforce (staff and volunteers) are afforded the opportunity to receive proper orientation as they start their new positions as staffers or volunteers at the IRCS and are afforded the opportunity to upgrade their knowledge, skills and capabilities on an annual basis. This will ensure our workforce remains effective and motivated in today’s fast pace workforce environment.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Develop strategies for training competencies to meet the organizational requirements of the IRCS (Unified Organizational Capacity Building Strategy).	1.1 National training and development competencies designed and developed and matched to IRCS organizational strategy 1.2 Regional and department competencies implementation plans developed
2. Ensure a professional, competent, and highly diverse workforce.	2.1 Policy, standards and tools defined and organization wide continuing professional development targets established 2.2 Strategy for in person and e-learning context and content established 2.3 CPD learning and certification criteria established
3. Improve organizational effectiveness through human resources performance.	3.1 Effectiveness criteria established (e.g. PMP) 3.2 Appraisal and evaluation processes redesigned, developed and instituted 3.3 Annual staff performance appraisals evaluations developed and instituted 3.4 Performance analyses conducted and reviewed by the senior management systematically
4. Strengthen human resource management systems, processes and capacity.	4.1 Human resources tools, methodology, capacity, strategy and information systems redesigned, developed and instituted 4.2 Annual workforce strategy and implementation framework developed 4.3 Workforce policies and procedures reviewed on annual basis for effectiveness 4.4 Inter and intra departmental monitoring systems developed and established
5. Improve employee satisfaction and reduce voluntary turnover.	5.1 Recruitment, training and retention strategies created to meet the requirements of the IRCS operational environment. 5.2 Employee commitment, performance and humanitarian service delivery enhanced 5.3 Staff and volunteer turn over ratio and staff satisfaction measured through annual studies and analysis

**Objective 3: Build public trust and confidence through organizational effectiveness and efficiency**

Our focus will remain two-fold: ensure quality control and quality of services provided to the people we serve. Our commitment to evaluation and learning will form the basis for better management and delivery of humanitarian services. This will also provide us with an opportunity to reflect and share experiences at all levels and enhance technical, operational and managerial collaboration.

Our performance review will continue to be the basis for learning, and enhance internal and external collaborative efforts towards addressing the weaknesses and building on our strengths and our commitment to being a leading actor for humanitarian interventions in Iraq.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Develop an organizational performance measurement system (this includes performance management tracking and reporting system).	1.1 Organization wide performance measurement indicators and metrics established and linked to IRCS mission
2. Develop and institute Knowledge Management processes and systems.	2.1 Knowledge management, organizational performance, department action plans, and performance and individual performance systems formulated, defined, developed and instituted
3. Maximize utilization of technology to improve internal communication and approval processes and external information sharing.	3.1 Internal communication and business processes plan developed and instituted 3.2 Intra and inter departmental technological network established (e.g. SharePoint)
4. Develop emergency and business readiness strategies.	4.1 Organizational disaster recovery plan and processes developed and established 4.2 Risk management and readiness strategies developed and systematic reviews conducted
5. Development of Department Action Plans.	5.1 Departmental action plans developed and approved 5.2 Departmental action plans are properly linked to organizational strategy and cross departmental performance indicators 5.3 Departmental performance reviews conducted annually
6. Establish effective and evidence based budgeting mechanisms.	6.1 Checklist used to demonstrate that budgets are based on operational and programmatic impact and involve transparent processes 6.2 Budget prioritization processes conducted involving key program design, implementation and monitoring stakeholders 6.3 Staff trained on financial data analysis and financial projections
7. Create a system for stakeholder collaboration and accountability management.	7.1 Stakeholder engagement guide developed from policy and operational perspective





# Volunteers



Volunteers are at the heart of our community based activities and have historically been IRCS' extended arm—identifying, organizing and bringing essential services to the most vulnerable areas across Iraq. Volunteers have also been our best advocacy and service champions. They have a unique understanding of community needs, and have advocated for the application of the fundamental principles and the value of human capital across communities we serve throughout Iraq. They are the driving force behind our interventions bringing credibility, objectivity, refreshed energy and new perspectives while simultaneously providing us with immediate access to communities and the ability to provide more targeted services.

Our measure of success will continue to focus on quality rather than quantity. To demonstrate our commitment to securing and preparing a more qualified cadre of volunteers, we have recently established a critical baseline for a continuous annual monitoring based on volunteer satisfaction. These activities that will periodically be reviewed by IRCS Senior Management and expert consultants to track progress on volunteer recruitment and retention, and to better understand what motivates them to serve in this capacity and how to improve their experience with the IRCS.

This critical process began with an extensive internal assessment of how IRCS can expand our volunteer management systems, specifically those related to community-level volunteers. As a result we are now shifting towards developing a solid foundation for success and a platform for development with particular focus on the three pillars of volunteerism outlined by the International Federation – protection, recognition and promotion—ful-

filling through these meaningful initiatives that will keep volunteers engaged; while also attracting and absorbing a new generation of volunteers that can make a meaningful contribution across all levels of the organization.

Historically, most volunteers have been engaged in health-related activities, followed closely by disaster preparedness, response and recovery, and other general support services. In the near term, given that we expect projected service provision demand to remain consistent with recent trends, the IRCS volunteer network will shift incrementally towards recruiting potential volunteers from the medical field and the private sector to support our human resource requirements.

We recognize the incredible value that volunteers bring to the organization. As such, our commitment to increasing quality, capacity and range of our volunteer base will remain our first priority. To this end our primary goal is to:

**Enhance IRCS' volunteer culture through process and system developments that ensure human and material infrastructure is available to better support, prepare and engage volunteers in IRCS initiatives across Iraq.**

This goal represents our commitment to making necessary developmental changes required to increase the organization's human capital and meet the humanitarian needs across Iraq. As we build momentum towards becoming a 21st Century organization, we understand that commitment is reciprocal and investing in our human resource

cadre is a determinant requirement for success as we seek to make targeted improvements across our human resource base.

To this end, we have identified a number of structural improvements that will allow the IRCS to standardize mechanisms required internally to sustain quality and growth of the core of volunteers and externally to ensure long-term commitment to the IRCS.

**Objective 1:  
Standardization  
of Volunteers  
Systems and  
Processes**

The IRCS will focus increased attention and efforts on standardization of systems, processes and guidelines required for the development of human resource capacity paired with advanced technological requirements to ensure we have the capacity to meet the demands of all phases of the volunteer engagement cycle.

- Uses best practices for recruiting, selecting, orienting, training, supervising and recognizing volunteers.
- Provides staff with regular training and communications about respecting and valuing volunteers.
- Board, leadership and management fully support and see the value of volunteer engagement.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Development, adoption and systematic updating of volunteers engagement and management guidelines.	1.1 A national, clear and consistent policy, procedures linked to volunteer engagement and development strategies 1.2 An internal “how-to guide” that offers detailed checklists, templates, and other practical tools to implement the process from identification to volunteers engagement
2. Create an integrated volunteer engagement strategy and benchmarks.	2.1 Consolidated national, organization wide, cross-departmental, annual volunteers engagement plan developed and adopted every November 15 for the following year 2.2 Department based annual volunteers engagement strategy developed
3. Ensure volunteers are trained, motivated, and engaged in the IRCS institutional processes.	3.1 Effective systems of volunteer engagement established 3.2 Quarterly review of volunteers engagement framework
4. Engage volunteers in the IRCS Organizational Planning process.	4.1 Clearly defined and enforced practices that takes into account the role of volunteers in its annual organizational and departmental annual and program based planning process
5. Provides staff with regular training and communications about respecting and valuing volunteers.	5.1 A statement and a guide to IRCS' stance on volunteer importance and values issued 5.2 Written communication and e-messages developed
6. Establishment of performance based benchmarks to better determine impact of volunteer services provided.	6.1 Performance indicators defined and developed
7. Provide volunteers with access to levels of certified trainings and continuous professional development initiatives.	7.1 Face to face and e-learning opportunities instituted 7.2 Volunteer trainings structured and consolidated e.g. first aid, disaster management. 7.3 Training and certification curricula defined and developed 7.4 Age appropriate, professional advancement e-learning trainings for IRCS volunteers introduced

Strategies	Strategic Results
8. Align staff, volunteer and community capacity to respond to disasters and emergencies.	8.1 Curricula developed for cross-organizational integrated approaches. 8.2 Annual training plans developed and instituted for human resource pool 8.3 Annual reviews and analyses conducted to examine the change in volunteer and community capacity to respond to disaster and emergencies
9. Foster collective efforts to create a new culture of responsible citizens expand recruitment platforms and provide effective and ongoing training.	9.1 Information dissemination and associated technologies properly linked for nationwide distribution of information on benefits of involvement in IRCS programmatic interventions 9.2 Recruitment channels and target population identified and defined (i.e. Medical School and University staff and students, Primary and Secondary School Teachers, Private sector corporations and employees) 9.3 Training curricula defined and developed for the variety of target groups for recruitment
10. Expand traditional recruitment and training through state of the art technology.	10.1 10 year volunteer recruitment plan and strategy developed 10.2 Annual recruitment plans developed to include the latest technology and e-communication and learning platforms

**Objective 2: To foster a renewed volunteer culture through innovative volunteer recruitment and retention policies**

The aim is to build upon current human resource recruitment and retention policies to accommodate new human resource infrastructure under the new strategic plan. Our policies will contain innovative recruitment practices which seek to expand, diversify and secure a volunteer base tailored to IRCS' current and projected requirements over the life of our new strategic plan. We will continue to focus on community based recruitment practices, but widen our reach to include university and medical school students, private sector, elementary and secondary school staff. As respected members of their communities, we will recruit senior citizens to favorably change attitudes towards volunteer work.

This new expanded recruitment base will proactively promote IRCS core values and principles in humanitarian programming; while also continuing to reach out to communities to instill a culture of social responsibility.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Ensure continued volunteer commitment via program vs. activity based engagement alternatives.	1.1 Organization wide methodologies developed and adopted to move away from activity to program based engagements.
2. Offer volunteers opportunities to contribute at all levels of IRCS' work via leadership, program management, advisory and administrative functions and processes.	2.1 Volunteer inter-organizational engagement defined and developed 2.2 Minimum volunteer engagement standards developed 2.3 Annual performance reviews developed and instituted
3. Provide volunteers with multiple outlets for interaction and exchange (Internal, External and Technological) and support mechanisms to ensure volunteers have their voices heard.	3.1 Personnel capacitated to manage communications with volunteers 3.2 Organization wide strategy and platforms introduced for absorption of volunteer feedback. 3.3 Confidentiality mechanisms developed and established 3.4 Volunteers complaint procedures developed and instituted 3.5 Staff capacitated to handle and resolve volunteer complaints
4. Recognize and celebrate volunteer contributions to the IRCS.	4.1 Annual Volunteer appreciation events held at the provincial and national levels
5. Develop strong leadership and advocacy capacities within the volunteer cadre to sustain the volunteer culture of the IRCS.	5.1 Multiple training opportunities offered e.g. e-learning and certification. 5.2 A minimum of 257 leadership and advocacy volunteers trained and in place by 2018
6. Create multiple avenues responsible for permeating the culture of volunteerism in communities across Iraq.	6.1 Information dissemination guide developed at the national level 6.2 Governorate based action plans developed and monitored 6.3 Indicator guide developed and impact monitored on an annual basis
7. Identify and capacitate a robust volunteer cadre to contribute effectively to primary health care interventions building in primary health care interventions.	7.1 Training curricula for primary health care volunteers improved, adapted and finalized 7.2 Pre-identified and pre-defined recruitment base utilized to secure 6500 volunteers for capacity 7.3 Training of a minimum of 6500 volunteers performed and placement secured across 1900 primary health care centers nationwide by 2018
8. Improve Volunteer engagement in Disaster Management (DM) interventions.	8.1 Disaster Management Curricula developed and adopted for volunteers 8.2 Annual volunteer training plans developed for DM certification 8.3 A minimum of 700 volunteers DM certified by 2018 8.4 70 Disaster response locations in geographic priority areas established by 2018



# Gender



Historically, Iraq has been a staunch supporter of gender equity. In the 1950s Iraq became the first Arab country to have a female minister in Government and today the Government maintains a mandatory 25% gender quota for representation in Parliament. However, years of conflict have created a sharp disparity across the gender divide. In post-war Iraq, violence has had a profound effect on gender equity that extends well beyond direct mortality.

In an economy still recovering from over a decade of war and internal conflict, priority has not been adequately given to support initiatives that integrate women into the workforce. This is a worrying statistic considering that women now head about 10% of Iraqi households. Iraq's Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) estimated that there are more than 1 million widows in Iraq, and 400,000 in Baghdad alone (including those whose husbands died of natural causes). One of the most significant drivers of gender vulnerability has come as a result of massive displacement. Women, children and youth constitute a majority of the Iraqi population that to this day remains marginalized.

Mainstreaming gender programs is of critical importance to the IRCS. We have been at the forefront of gender balance initiatives within the organization, and are cognizant of the positive crosscutting impact this has had throughout all systems and processes of the IRCS. However, our recent nationwide consultative processes and population-based assessments have shown the continued need to build upon our gender equity integration strategies. Our goal is to encourage more equal representation of gender groups and active participation of women in the development

of our internal management systems as well as our external program development initiatives and interventions.

The gender makeup of our employees and volunteers continues to be incongruent with that of the general Iraqi population. While females make up a larger part of Iraqi society, they represent less than 40% of our staff and volunteer community, and a very small percentage of these are represented within IRCS' middle to senior management levels. Further, among our target groups and beneficiaries, vulnerable women (Widows and Female Heads of Household) continue to suffer from the residual effects of war and conflict—among these are the most unacceptably high level of unemployment, illiteracy, lack of access to healthcare, and the lack of basic social and public services.

As such, we aim to develop a comprehensive gender mainstreaming strategy with realistic benchmarks and measurable outcomes, taking concrete steps to empower vulnerable women and girls through improved internal and external policies.

We will systematically incorporate gender awareness and diversity in all programs, services and tools, covering the full management cycle, from assessment to planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting - capitalizing on the strengths people of all genders bring to the organization.

We will also work at all levels of IRCS to mainstream gender perspectives throughout our programs. Ultimately, our aim is to empower vulnerable groups to actively contribute to and benefit from our programmatic interventions.

As part of our commitment to increasing our impact on the people we serve, we will be looking critically at our community-based programs, their current management infrastructure and the composition and relevance of our advocacy strategies, and as such our primary goal is to:

**Build upon current IRCS initiatives and capacity to meet the needs and basic rights of vulnerable women, girls, men, and boys without discrimination and with respect for diversity within the IRCS and Iraqi society.**

To meet our goal, we will work towards reducing gender gaps; ensuring our staff composition reflects our efforts towards promoting gender balance and equity; and developing mechanisms to measure the impact of gender on our programs; and help better identify women and girl's priority and needs while encouraging greater participation.

**Objective 1: Improve gender and diversity composition at all levels (governance, management, staff and volunteers) of the IRCS**

As we strive to reduce gender gaps we will develop clear gender balance policies across our management cycle, integrate gender sensitive monitoring systems and work towards gender equity throughout all levels of the IRCS.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Formulate clear gender balance policies and institutionalize management tools and checklists into the full management cycle, from assessment and planning to monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.	1.1 Gender policies, tools, and checklists developed 1.2 Relevant personnel trained on gender policies
2. Engage senior management in gender mainstreaming processes to ensure organizational accountability.	2.1 Seminars conducted for senior management on gender policies and tools 2.2 Gender policy document developed and established and signed off by staff to ensure adherence
3. Create opportunities for improved gender equity within management infrastructure.	3.1 Systems for “positive discrimination” established 3.2 Scalable quotas developed to achieve enhanced gender balance within management infrastructure
4. Ensure that gender-mainstreaming efforts are solidified and not affected by organizational restructuring efforts.	4.1 Regular expert reviews conducted to ensure quotas are maintained and gender mainstreaming efforts are in line with established policies
5. Develop policies for gender balance in staff acquisition and retention, program design and its associated processes and systems.	5.1 Benefits package established to promote gender balance in workplace (e.g. daycare allowance, maternity leave, etc.)
6. Institute gender sensitive performance monitoring systems for human resources, budget formulation, and Information Communication Technology.	6.1 Checklist developed to ensure systems are gender sensitive
7. Develop advocacy training package for policy dialogue across the IRCS to increase understanding about implications of gender relations within the organization and its interventions across Iraq.	7.1 Materials package developed to inform IRCS staff of gender mainstreaming efforts, and its impacts within the organization and its activities (e.g. how emergencies affect women and girls differently, why it is important to consider gender roles in emergencies, etc.) 7.2 Cascade training from senior management to all IRCS staff on gender mainstreaming as well as basic human rights as they are relevant to gender dynamics

**Objective 2: Systematically incorporate gender and diversity strategies across all levels of IRCS programming**

To ensure an effective mainstreaming of gender and diversity perspectives, we will focus on the creation of programs that cater to the diverse needs of vulnerable men, women, boys and girls—ensuring access to essential services and healthcare. We will achieve this through incorporation of capacity building, program development and fundraising policies and initiatives.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Develop gender awareness and gender sensitivity training programs that assist the IRCS and its implementation staff in identifying gender issues.	1.1 Context specific training materials developed for dissemination and training for IRCS staff
2. Increase prioritization of multi-sector programming targeting vulnerable women (Female Heads of Household and Widows) and girls across Iraq.	2.1 Gender priorities established across all programs 2.2 Integrated approaches to gender programming targeting the multi-layered vulnerabilities
3. Develop and institute gender analysis measures that assist in identifying differences between men and women in relation to resource control, decision-making authority and their direct impact on programs.	3.1 Analysis measures developed using gender metrics tools 3.2 Gender analysis measures incorporated into ongoing vulnerability and intervention related assessments
4. Develop and institute gender indicator indexes and Gender Empowerment measures to gauge progress towards meeting gender equity targets within programs and documenting success rates.	4.1 Gender indexes developed and subject to quarterly review
5. Integrate gender budgeting and gender audits, to allow resource allocation analysis in terms of shares directed toward meeting the needs vulnerable men, women, boys and girls, and report the extent to which donor agencies—Government, private or public match their commitments to gender mainstreaming with concrete financial allocations to address gender and women's issues.	5.1 Gender budgeting guidelines and checklist developed, including matching commitments 5.2 Training curricula developed and implemented for relevant finance/administration staff 5.3 Scalable quotas developed for budgetary allocations for meeting the needs of vulnerable men, women, boys and girls.

**Objective 3: Reduce gender inequality, discrimination and gender-based violence (GBV) through the active promotion of fundamental principles and humanitarian values within the IRCS and externally with partners and its humanitarian networks**

Our efforts to mainstream gender and diversity are not limited to improving the quality of our programs and organization; we will also focus on the reduction of gender and diversity based discrimination in Iraqi society with broad support from our stakeholders, partners and multiple networks in country. We will focus on building resilience and removing barriers to justice by working with all communities to ensure that their voices are heard.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Integrate gender strategies into assessment, planning and implementation, and monitoring and evaluation stages of disaster risk reduction programming (e.g., community-based disaster preparedness, mitigation activities, livelihoods or other activities).	1.1 Gender strategy checklist developed and adhered to throughout implementation, from conception to evaluation
2. Integrate gender strategies into activities through legal assistance programs to bridge the gap between victims of GBV and DBV and the Justice System.	2.1 Links developed with the formal justice system to support victims of GBV and DBV 2.2 Systematic capacity building programs for IRCS program staff developed and imparted 2.3 Vulnerable populations receive legal assistance
3. Develop knowledge and information on social support, treatment of and protection against gender-based violence.	3.1 Referral pathways established and information disseminated to communities 3.2 Protection programs incorporated into all response activities
4. Develop advocacy mechanisms to highlight GBV and DBV risk factors and protective measures in communications campaigns and beneficiary communication mechanisms.	4.1 Advocacy mechanisms developed and IRCS staff trained on established mechanisms 4.2 Protective measures for risks of GBV and DBV incorporated into communications campaigns
5. Strengthen partnerships and networks among staff and partners and with national gender and women promotion institutions and NGOs to enhance knowledge sharing for effective programming.	5.1 Partnerships strengthened with government service providers 5.2 Partnerships established with CBOs and NGOs implementing referral pathway programs and other empowerment programs



# Technology



New technologies provide an unprecedented ability to use collective action and intelligence to respond to successions of major disasters. Just as the mobile phone has entirely changed the way emergency responders communicate with each other, newer technologies like real time assessment data sharing, crowd source data mapping and use of satellite imagery can help organizations communicate, coordinate services and measure impacts. These tools can help us move to the vanguard of deploying new technologies that have changed the landscape of disaster prevention, preparedness, response and rehabilitation.

As part of our overarching DM goal, “saving lives, preparing, protecting and rebuilding communities affected by man-made and natural disasters and crises”, the Iraqi Red Crescent Society is launching information and communication technologies (ICT) as a key crosscutting tool to all organizational development efforts.

We have consulted a team of experts on ICT infrastructure necessary to support our strategic plan implementation, but also set the stage for continuing recognition and appreciation for emerging technologies. We are confident that our strategic and operational focus will be greatly enhanced through ICT efforts to support improvements in productivity, management effectiveness and ultimately, the quality of services offered to the people we serve.

We recognize the substantial benefits of introducing new information and communication technologies, but are also aware of the numerous prerequisites for successful implementation of

ICT systems, including the need for shift in organizational culture, human resource infrastructure and capacities to better utilize these. Therefore, our strategy includes actions that will focus on the positive contributions that ICT will have on everything we do, and the capacity to meet the challenges in use and maintenance of required ICT systems.

While the latest technologies have not entirely replaced older Information and Communication technologies, like radio, TV, posters or bill-boarding, they have shown to be extremely effective at adding value through interventions such as text messaging—an easy accessible and reciprocal communication mechanism through which people we serve can provide feedback on how humanitarian assistance is being developed and extended to communities. Most noteworthy is the use of text messages as an early warning system for required responses across vulnerable communities. To this end, we will not dismiss existing methods and technologies as long as they remain effective and serve their purpose, however we will incrementally introduce new technologies at the organizational and community levels to enhance our operational capabilities.

Today, nearly all of Iraq is covered by mobile telephone service capabilities, with a ratio of 1.78 mobile phones per Iraqi family, and with a penetration rate at 80 percent.<sup>1</sup> This number continues to grow as oil revenues push economic growth above 9 percent and drive a changing demand for better services. The recent launch of 3G services in Iraq has provided an unprecedented boost in

user growth, as the country's oil industry fuels a consumer spending boom. The IRCS intends to capitalize on consumer mobile technology use and leverage wireless Internet based communications to improve operational modalities.

As part of our commitment to increasing our impact on the people we serve, and whether the technology is digital or analog, old or new, we have placed our ICT strategy high on our agenda; as such our primary goal is to:

**Adopt technologies to support improvements in organizational and management effectiveness, productivity; and the quality of services provided to people we serve.**

ICT plays a critical and foundational role in IRCS strategic efforts to modernize the way IRCS staff members and volunteers perform their work and engage with stakeholders and people we serve. We will strive to develop a system that supports all IRCS organizational and programmatic efforts. For example, our ICT strategy directed at disaster management efforts will endeavor to build a functioning disaster management and communication system that will provide accurate, timely and reliable information before and during the crisis and disaster response events.

The technology will not only enhance our organizational and programmatic agility and effective-

ness but also our ability effectively communicate with the general public; including the use of effective ICT applications to prepare communities for crisis and disasters and its supporting technologies to help communities recover after a disaster has occurred.

<sup>1</sup> <http://isper.escwa.un.org/Portals/0/National%20Profiles/2011/English/Iraq-11-E.pdf>

**Objective 1: To build knowledgeable, safe and resilient communities utilizing practical technological applications that will ensure the accuracy and quality of services provided to people we serve**

We will proactively ensure that volunteers and communities have the capacity to utilize technologies required to receive and provide information during emergencies or disasters. To achieve this objective, the IRCS will engage communities in an effective community outreach strategy, using community media, building information from the ground up with multiple methods of communications from (lo-tech) face-to-face communication and town hall meetings to (hi-tech) crowd sourcing via Short Message Service (SMS) and crisis mapping.

Strategies	Strategic Results
<p>1. Boost the use of technologies that are practical and flexible to implement while maintaining reasonable costs, to improve the way we collect and send life saving information before, during and after a crisis.</p>	<p>1.1 New technology solutions adopted by all programs and their use streamlined through the organization            1.2 ICT solutions packages instituted and implemented as keys to emergency response tactics and to appropriately prepare for crisis and disasters            1.3 Staff and volunteers trained in software and hardware to streamline communications across national network            1.4 Cost-effective technologies instituted and implemented that improve organizational efficiency</p>
<p>2. Implement two-way communications for real-time access to information and access to services and interventions geared towards the most vulnerable communities.</p>	<p>2.1 Communities trained in new technologies to streamline reciprocal information sharing during emergencies and disasters</p>
<p>3. Adopt new communication technologies for early crisis warning, humanitarian response and civil resilience, focusing on how IRCS communicators can leverage these technologies in multiple contexts.</p>	<p>3.1 Communications strategies for 'at-risk' and 'disaster-affected' communities developed            3.2 Administrative and frontline staff and selected volunteers trained in mobile data transmission, vulnerability assessment, and data collection and analysis</p>
<p>4. Develop and promote technology adoption based on mediums most suitable to communities (radio, television, mobile phones, community meetings, newspaper, social media (Facebook, twitter, e-bulletins and workshops, and one on one face communications), either as stand alone or a combination of old and new communications.</p>	<p>4.1 Contextual and cultural-specific communication plan developed            4.2 Community-based technology adopted based on medium communities listen to, use, trust, or own            4.3 Lo tech and hi tech communication mechanisms established tailored to community requirements</p>

**Objective 2: Evaluate and develop the overall information architecture and approach to information management to improve the efficiency, capacity and use of information systems internally and externally—including a systematic and coordinated approach to communicate with beneficiaries and all ‘at-risk’ and ‘disaster-affected’ communities**

Technology represents an opportunity to build capabilities and leverage existing capabilities to improve overall efficiency of IRCS operations.

Strategies	Strategic Results
1. Develop internal capacities to develop a robust, low-risk, low-cost technological platform through software and hardware to integrate information technologies across the organization.	1.1 ICT architecture improved to provide information and tools for decision-making and to streamline internal and external skill-sharing processes 1.2 Desktop and mobile communications technology developed for and used by staff and volunteers to share information across the organization 1.3 IT department fully staffed, funded, and trained 1.4 Organization-wide architecture redefined, developed, and adopted by IT Department to integrate and disseminate mission critical information 1.5 Departmental IT specialists established
2. Implement ICT solutions and efficient ICT operations that directly support organizational work processes efficiency.	2.1 Technology developed to build programmatic capabilities and leverage existing capacity to improve overall efficiency 2.2 SMS use promoted in the delivery of disaster relief, emergency assistance, health and social programs
3. Establish internal networks integrated with external platforms for information sharing to improve two-way communication mechanisms.	3.1 Public website developed with restricted areas that provide staff extranet access 3.2 Public or IRCS extranet linked to strategic partners (communications service and infrastructure providers, government entities and other National Societies)
4. Adopt and implement digital solutions required to maximize the impact of operational logistics during relief efforts.	4.1 Logistics specific applications and hardware developed and instituted for IRCS staff
5. Increase of the capacity of volunteers to utilize digital technology and data collection mechanisms to improve reaction times of humanitarian interventions and disaster response.	5.1 Volunteers capacitated in ICT functions as resource to communicate and for data collection and analysis 5.2 Volunteers capacitated in RAMP and TERA as part of their menu of ICT apps
6. Develop accountability framework for reciprocal communication mechanisms with beneficiaries.	6.1 Active engagement, and accountability with beneficiaries ensured

# Branding and communications



The IRCS recognizes that a robust organizational communications strategy is necessary to effectively communicate with internal and external stakeholders, including staff and volunteers and the people that we serve across Iraq. We also recognize that if instituted properly, it will help us streamline communications across our different department functions. Thus, helping management, human resources and media departments maintain a unified voice and consistent messaging internally and externally on IRCS institutional and programmatic priorities.

As we move forward with developing our new communications strategy we are building upon a recent nationwide consultative process to define how key organizational functions integrate and share information internally and externally while ensuring that key messages are in line and promote the IRCS' broader strategic mission and vision.

In addition, as part of the consultative process, we have designed and implemented a nationwide survey to inform the IRCS on staff, volunteer and general population perception of the organization and its brand. This was the first internal and external brand and perception exercise for our national society which has ultimately guided the groundwork for our communications strategy initiative that provides concrete support to a broad range of priority areas—including service provision, capacity building, and decentralization of important services throughout the IRCS; and more importantly aligning our mission, vision and values across stakeholder, partner organizations and the general population.

We have found that a large proportion of the Iraqi population recognized the IRCS as a humanitarian organization, however there were smaller but very important pockets of the population that equated the IRCS with government. Further, despite our operational speed and presence in all major disaster response interventions over the past decade, a significant proportion of the population recognized other humanitarian organizations (30%) as being at the forefront of humanitarian interventions in Iraq. These critical results indicate a need to shift in focus towards instituting a multi-pronged communication strategy that ensures brand recognition, awareness of our humanitarian imperative and our neutrality and non-affiliation to Government.

To this end, our primary goal will be to clearly link communications planning to key organizational objectives, activities and expected results internally and externally:

**To develop a multi-pronged branding and communications strategy that assists in raising the IRCS profile and visibility in Iraq and the region via clearly linked communication solutions that support, articulate and project departmental functional priorities, organizational objectives and universal humanitarian principles externally.**

The IRCS will adopt state of the art communication and information technologies and the full gamut of available applications as primary tools to institute structural communications, branding and information flow processes within IRCS manage-

ment. These will be aligned to match external requirements that help heighten public awareness around our work, our core values and our humanitarian principles.

We will achieve this by activating a robust capacity building exercise focused on aligning management, human resources, programs, advocacy and media functions within the IRCS to ensure clear internal communication structures assist in properly advocating and projecting the IRCS brand, image, and programmatic interventions nationally and regionally.

**Objective 1: Ensure internal communication strategies foster a culture of organizational conversation**

To demonstrate our shift towards a 21st Century organization we are moving towards a communication culture that encourages conversation and exchange on all levels. We recognize that internal communication is not solely a Human Resource or a top down management function but also a mechanism which leverages employee interaction and engagement and improves alignment with strategic goals and objectives.

Strategies	Strategic Results
<p>1. Improve internal communication systems and processes to ensure engagement and involvement with Senior and Middle Managers with staff and volunteers on the organization's strategic direction.</p>	<p>1.1 Iraqi Red Crescent communications strategy developed and instituted                      1.2 Communications tools are developed and implemented                      1.3 Selected Red Cross staff trained in communications development tools</p>
<p>2. Adopt a multi-directional communication culture within the organization that promotes better dialogue on organizational priorities and disincentives top-down interaction.</p>	<p>2.1 Key internal messages developed and key communications delivery methods established                      2.2 Training provided to all staff to ensure understanding of operational standards and the levels of communications expected                      2.3 Communications staff capacitated on tools and services and their practical applications</p>
<p>3. Engage staff at all levels of the organization in maintaining internal communication processes and systems.</p>	<p>3.1 Workshops provided to all IRCS staff and volunteers on how to utilize the intranet and website as a communications tool within the organization                      3.2 Interactive platforms developed and used for discussions and dissemination of evaluation or review findings or to gather information on the progress of program (monitoring your progress)                      3.3 Feedback collected systematically to ensure organization maintains expected standards of internal employee communications and support</p>

**Objective 2: Build organizational capacity to properly contribute to and develop organization-wide communication capabilities**

The IRCS recognizes that to be effective internal communication systems are imperative to creating a well trained workforce capable of supporting the communication requirements of the organization. These efforts will subsequently lead to improved collaboration, coherence, innovation and operational efficacy to meet our external communication needs.

Strategies:	Strategic Results:
<p>1. Institute and Implement inter-institutional programs for IRCS staff geared towards aligning communication strategies with organizational goals and priorities.</p>	<p>1.1 Department heads and managers trained in internal cross-departmental communications procedures, issues and challenges                      1.2 Key messages aligned with goals and priorities disseminated via multiple methods of targeted delivery                      1.3 Messages targeted to diverse audiences across the IRCS are absorbed and understood (ranging from front line personnel to senior leadership)                      1.4 Communications plans (e.g. for initiatives, issues management) developed and delivered                      1.5 Best practices, tools and approaches for effective and compelling communications recommended, and implemented</p>
<p>2. Establish an internal communication framework that prioritizes accountability to internal and external stakeholders and the people we serve.</p>	<p>2.1 Internal stakeholders engaged to ensure alignment and create positive outcomes                      2.2 All staff capacitated to understand operational standards and the levels of quality communications expected in the strategy                      2.3 Communications staff capacitated on use of tools and services</p>
<p>3. Develop a best practice blueprint for donor communication to ensure long-term support to IRCS initiatives.</p>	<p>3.1 Best practices for fundraising communications campaigns developed, partnerships identified and donors engaged                      3.2 Traditional and non-traditional bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors informed and kept abreast of IRCS' work</p>
<p>4. Develop risk awareness communication strategies.</p>	<p>4.1 Communications tactics developed to mitigate and fend off reputational risks from disasters, conflict, and economic, legal or political changes.</p>
<p>5. Develop communication strategies focused on visual identity and reputation management communication strategies.</p>	<p>5.1 Selected staff and volunteers trained in the basics of branding and managing brands from visual identity to reputation management and positioning</p>
<p>6. Develop capacities in traditional, virtual and social media communication technologies for external use.</p>	<p>6.1 'Always on' social media capabilities established                      6.2 Timely feedback provided to external stakeholders, beneficiaries and the general public</p>
<p>7. Develop beneficiary feedback tracking mechanisms to inform decision-making processes.</p>	<p>7.1 The IRCS beneficiary database and mass media database fully operational and equipped with standardized communications material</p>

**Objective 3: Ensure recognition and support for IRCS' work externally through the development of advocacy and resource development strategies**

For the IRCS, being recognized as the leading humanitarian organization in Iraq is imperative. Our brand recognition and communication strategies will be geared towards setting us apart from other humanitarian agencies or advocacy groups; while simultaneously engaging key external stakeholders (public and private) to effectively promote the IRCS' vision, mission and mandate in Iraq.

Strategies	Strategic Results
<p>1. Develop general advocacy messaging on IRCS programmatic priorities to ensure engagement of stakeholders and communities.</p>	<p>1.1 The IRCS fundamental principles and humanitarian values of the Movement disseminated via multiple communications channels                      1.2 Advocacy and communication function strengthened                      1.3 Task force and leadership trained in humanitarian principles and values                      1.4 Criteria established to map and prioritize audience chosen and audiences ranked against them (to decide how much effort communicating with them will be invested)</p>
<p>2. Develop mass media and direct communication messaging geared towards timely and effective governmental and non-governmental support to vulnerable communities in time of need.</p>	<p>2.1 Bottom-line communications goals developed that impact the most vulnerable                      2.2 Increased participation of IRCS private sector partners and supporters in Red Cross key events such as World Red Cross Day, World AIDS Day, First Aid Day among others                      2.3 Information flow task lists developed and monitored regularly to ensure regular information is provided to key stakeholders</p>
<p>3. Integrate traditional and social media outreach mechanism to convey IRCS' mission, vision and programmatic priorities externally to garner stakeholder and general population support.</p>	<p>3.1 Standardized materials developed to convey mission, vision and programmatic priorities.                      3.2 Key messages incorporated into programmatic strategies (e.g. through the community based disaster management training material)                      3.3 Red Cross youth engaged in using the web site and contributing information                      3.4 Organizational successes regularly showcased in the local media</p>
<p>4. Develop and deliver messages that are culture and age specific and adapted to the varying cultural contexts to motivate and garner broad-based support for IRCS' work across Iraq.</p>	<p>4.1 Increased number of volunteers working with the IRCS                      4.2 Awareness and behavior change is generated inside and outside the IRCS</p>



# Conclusion

We recognize that as an Iraqi organization and a valued member of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, we must continue to advance our organizational, technical and functional capabilities and adapt to ever changing environments if we are to fulfill our mission successfully now and in the future.

The IRCS 2014-2018 Strategic Plan builds upon the overarching principles of the IFRC 2020 Strategy. However, it is unique in that it is our first attempt to formulate a long term strategic plan built upon over 80 years of progressive experience assisting the humanitarian imperative through solid partner and operational networks.

This Plan is structured under five strategic areas supported by four main crosscutting thematic areas. It serves as a roadmap for our staff, volunteers, partners, stakeholders and communities towards accomplishing greater accountability and more measurable impact across communities we serve.

In summary, our strategic plan aims to accomplish the following:

First, we will ensure that people we serve are actively engaged in defining and delivering services

Second, all our efforts will continue to be directed towards saving lives and—preparing protecting and rebuilding—communities affected by man-made and natural disasters and crises.





Third, we will rise to new heights of engagement and accountability through increased transparency, effectiveness, efficiency that coupled with internal communication strategies that foster a culture of organizational conversation. Our aim remains straight-forward- to achieve organizational excellence through standardization processes, learning and innovation.

Fourth, we will make sure that volunteers remain at the heart of our community based activities and that they continue to be the driving force behind all our interventions as they bring credibility, objectivity, refreshed energy and new and improved perspectives.

This plan is ambitious but necessary as we strive towards becoming a 21st century organization. We are committed to seeing this long-term plan succeed through concrete, well-structured and practical operational and department action plans that are systematically reviewed to ensure we adhere to our goals, objectives, strategies and results.

Having said that, the success of our Strategic Plan and what we set out to accomplish TOGETHER as ONE, is solely dependent on our staff and volunteer's commitment to our fundamental principles and the people we serve. Reciprocally, the people we serve and the unwavering support of the Iraqi people is what will make us stand as ONE in alleviating suffering for all.

We are on the right path.

## The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

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**Humanity** / The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

**Impartiality** / It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

**Neutrality** / In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

**Independence** / The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

**Voluntary service** / It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

**Unity** / There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

**Universality** / The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.





One.Together.

[www.ircs.org.iq](http://www.ircs.org.iq)