Disaster Risk Management Policy
for International Cooperation

Swiss Red Cross
Edition notice

Swiss Red Cross
International Cooperation
iz@redcross.ch
www.redcross.ch
PC 30-4200-3
Design and print
graphic-print

Berne, August 2016

Picture cover page:
Housing reconstruction including training in building-back-safer techniques in the aftermath of the 2015 earthquake in Dolakha, Nepal, © IFRC, Carlo Heathcote

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Abbreviations

**CBDRM** Community-based disaster risk management
**DRM** Disaster risk management
**DRR** Disaster risk reduction
**IFRC** International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
**National Society** National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society
**NGO** Non-governmental organisation
**Paris Agreement** Adopted at the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, December 2015
**SDG** Sustainable Development Goals
**Sendai Framework** Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030
**SRC** Swiss Red Cross
**UN** United Nations
**WASH** Water, sanitation and hygiene
1. Introduction

1.1 Rationale and scope

The mission of the Swiss Red Cross (SRC) is to foster healthy living and improve the disaster risk management (DRM) capacities of particularly vulnerable people and communities. The Disaster Risk Management Policy is the guiding framework for all disaster-related programmes of the Department of International Cooperation. It covers the entire spectrum of SRC response, recovery and development programmes, and serves as a reference for dialogue with partner organisations, disaster management authorities and other interested institutions (for a synopsis of the DRM Policy, see Annex I).

1.2 Embedding the DRM Policy in the SRC and IFRC policy frameworks

The DRM Policy is based on the seven Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement – humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality – and guided by the policy frameworks of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the SRC.

The IFRC Strategy 2020, Saving lives, changing minds,1 renews the IFRC’s commitment to humanitarian aid and calls for more action to prevent and reduce the underlying causes of vulnerability. It focuses on three strategic aims for the next decade:

- Strategic aim 1: Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disasters and crises
- Strategic aim 2: Enable healthy and safe living
- Strategic aim 3: Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

The principal objective of the IFRC Framework for Community Resilience2 is to establish a foundation on which all IFRC programmes, projects, interventions and actions that help strengthen community resilience can be created, developed and sustained. The Framework (for an illustration, see Annex II) is an important component of the IFRC One Billion Coalition initiative, which the SRC supports. It characterises a resilient community as one that:

- is knowledgeable, healthy and able to meet its basic needs;
- is socially cohesive;
- has economic opportunities;
- has well-maintained and accessible infrastructures and services;
- can manage its natural assets;
- is connected.

IFRC definition of resilience: The ability of individuals, communities, organisations or countries exposed to disasters, crises and underlying vulnerabilities to anticipate, prepare for, reduce the impact of, cope with and recover from the effects of shocks and stresses without compromising their long-term prospects.
In accordance with its mission, and pursuant to the SRC Strategy 2020, the SRC strives to prevent and alleviate human suffering in Switzerland and abroad, to protect people’s health, life and dignity, and to foster their ability to help themselves and others. The Strategy defines DRM as one of two spheres of activity in the SRC’s core work abroad, and emphasises the application of a comprehensive approach linking relief, rehabilitation and development.

The SRC Strategy 2020 for International Cooperation defines health and disaster as core spheres of activity, both of which are crucial to development and poverty reduction. The objectives for the disaster sphere of activity are that “particularly vulnerable and deprived people and communities receive appropriate support to meet emergency needs, have the capacity to prepare for and respond to disasters appropriately and are in a position to adapt to climate change”. The SRC applies an integrated approach to health and DRM, striving to realise synergies in the form of increased efficiency and effectiveness in relation to project teams and communities. All international cooperation activities are guided by the following overarching principles of action:

- focus on particularly vulnerable and deprived groups of people;
- empower communities and individuals to take self-determined action and reinforce their self-help capacity;
- promote gender equality;
- promote voluntary work;
- emphasise relevance and effectiveness;
- cooperate in partnership;
- promote alliances and participate in networks;
- do no harm and take conflict-sensitive action.

In line with the SRC Concept Partnership in International Cooperation, the National Societies are the SRC’s preferred partners for cooperation in response, recovery and development. In the wake of major disasters, the SRC usually acts under the coordination of the IFRC. In conflicts involving violence, it works closely with the International Committee of the Red Cross. In specific instances, it may work directly with community-based organisations, (local) government institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Figure 1 shows the DRM Policy embedded in the SRC policy framework.
1.3 Recognising international policy frameworks

In addition to the IFRC and SRC policy frameworks, the work of the SRC is guided by the following global frameworks in particular:

- the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (2015),\(^7\) in particular SDGs 1, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13 and 15;
- the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015);\(^8\)
- the Paris Agreement on climate change (2015);\(^9\)
- the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere Project, 2011);\(^10\)
- the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability;\(^11\)
- the Principles for Good International Engagement in Fragile States and Situations (2007).\(^12\)
2. Context

Important milestones were achieved in 2015 in the global architecture of international cooperation (SDGs, Sendai Framework, Paris Agreement). The accompanying review processes confirmed that major development gains had been made in the preceding 15 years, including a drop of more than half in the number of people living in extreme poverty. Globally, people are living longer and are healthier and wealthier than ever before, but there is still an unacceptable and widening gap between the rich and poor, not only between, but also within countries. Poverty continues to be a key driver of vulnerability and exposure.

Global reviews also confirm that while improvements in disaster management have led to dramatic reductions in mortality in some countries, disaster risks in general have not been significantly reduced, resulting in economic losses of an average USD 250-300 billion each year. The losses and damages associated with extensive risks (minor but recurrent disaster risks) are trending upwards and having a significant economic, social, health, environmental and cultural impact in low- and middle-income countries, especially at community level.

The SRC considers the global issues, trends and challenges discussed below to be particularly relevant. These contextual factors, it should be emphasised, do not stand in isolation; more often than not, it is the complex interplay between them that serves to drive up vulnerability.

2.1 Trends in hazards and vulnerabilities

Population growth
The world’s population reached 7.3 billion in mid-2015, a leap of approximately one billion people in twelve years. This significant increase adds to the pressure on natural resources, exacerbates environmental degradation, pushes the poor in particular to live in areas exposed to hazards, and fuels access conflicts.

Urbanisation
Rapid economic growth is concentrated primarily in cities and most countries are experiencing massive internal migration to urban areas. In 2015, 54 per cent of the world’s population lived in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to increase to 66 per cent by 2050. Some of these urban areas are particularly risk-prone (floods, earthquakes, violence), as urban development has often outpaced smart and safe planning. According to the World Bank, unplanned or poorly planned urbanisation, which puts more people and assets in harm’s way, is the single largest driver of disaster risk.

Climate change
The science community has furnished robust evidence that anthropogenic climate change is taking place and projected to continue during this century and beyond, leading to an increase in the frequency and intensity of hydro-meteorological hazardous events (i.e. floods, typhoons, heat waves) and affecting the environment over the long term (i.e. increased water scarcity, food insecurity, disease patterns). Climate change and climate variability have a far greater impact on overall development in low-income and least developed countries than in developed countries.
Fragility and conflict
An estimated 20 per cent of the world’s population, or 1.4 billion people, are living in fragile contexts. The majority of fragile states are low income, home to 43 per cent of all people living on less than USD 1.25 per day. That figure is expected to rise to 62 per cent by 2030. Sub-Saharan Africa is by far the most widely affected. Although fewer in number, armed conflicts are today more deadly and more protracted, challenging humanitarian practitioners to re-examine the understanding of assistance delivery.

Population movements
People who have been displaced within or outside their countries are among the most vulnerable. In 2014, the number of people forcibly displaced by conflict, persecution and human rights violations climbed to 59.5 million – the highest figure since the end of the Second World War. Furthermore, since 2008, an average 26.4 million people per year have been displaced from their homes by disasters brought on by natural hazards. These numbers are expected to grow, driven in large part by protracted crises and changing environmental conditions.

2.2 Changes in the humanitarian and development environment

Access, acceptance and security
In recent years, access to conflict- or disaster-affected populations has been increasingly limited by many types of constraints, including security concerns, bureaucracy, the marginalisation of population groups based on their ethnic, religious or other status, the diversion of aid and interference in the delivery of relief supplies and implementation of activities, or politically and economically motivated attacks on humanitarian personnel.

“Instrumentalisation” of humanitarian aid and development cooperation
The growing tendency of donor countries to adopt a whole-of-government approach, aligning humanitarian aid policies with security and economic interests and embedding development in geopolitics, heightens the risk that humanitarian aid and development cooperation will be seen as tools to achieve strategic economic, political and military priorities.

Forgotten disasters
There has been a marked increase in the number of small, localised and extensive disasters that fail to attract media interest or – consequently – humanitarian funding, even though the impact on the welfare of the people concerned is similar. The proliferation of large-scale crises is diverting funding away from lower-profile crises.

Proliferation of humanitarian players
A growing number of participants are becoming involved in the implementation of humanitarian aid. Motivated by personal and business interests, they stiffen the competition for funding and space, making it more difficult for the sector to work to agreed humanitarian standards and adding to the lack of coordination. Moreover, the new public and private players emerging have different and conflicting interests to traditional humanitarian and development actors.

Increased national capacity
National DRM capacities are stronger, and domestic authorities and agents are more confident and asserting their sovereignty in relation to international partners. This will require a new way of working, one that is based on equal partnerships, trust and respect, and that emphasises complementarity while balancing the non-negotiable demands of the humanitarian imperative.
Primary role of local actors and lack of funding for their disaster preparedness
There is a growing consensus on the need to invest more resources in preparedness and resilience building, in recognition that local and national actors are the first responders. However, funding for disaster preparedness and risk reduction remains marginal, attracting less than 5 per cent of humanitarian funding and 1 per cent of development funding.

Increased access to technology
New technologies, global connectivity (e.g. 7 billion mobile phone subscriptions worldwide, including 5.5 billion in developing countries; 3.2 billion Internet users, including 2 billion in developing countries) and new ways of gathering and organising data offer the potential for quick, large-scale and better targeted or improved mobilisation, assessment, coordination, communication and advocacy.
3. Framework

Red Cross health action after the earthquake 2016 in Portoviejo, Ecuador, © Ecuadorian Red Cross, Miquel Cardenas

Awareness on building back safer during shelter kit distribution, © SRC, Alessandro D’Angelo
3. Framework

Strengthening the resilience of vulnerable people and communities is the SRC’s ultimate goal in the disaster sphere of activity. The SRC follows the IFRC approach, focusing on the individual, household, community and local government levels. This implies that DRM programming is an essential element, but requires a broader approach, integrating other key sectors and building alliances with other development actors. The SRC assesses where its contribution will be most effective, identifying the best entry points together with the communities concerned, building relationships with other key stakeholders and linking them with the communities, and coordinating different types of intervention in order to be more effective and stimulate more lasting system changes.

The SRC applies an integrated multi-sector approach to DRM, in line with the Sendai Framework. It understands DRM as a cyclical and comprehensive process carried out within an overall framework that comprises the core areas of disaster management, recovery and disaster risk reduction (DRR). These core areas and their key elements are spelled out in concept papers and colour coded in Figure 2: red for disaster management\(^{23}\), blue for reconstruction and rehabilitation\(^{24}\) and green for DRR\(^{25}\).

![Figure 2: SRC disaster risk management cycle](image-url)
In response, the SRC applies a comprehensive emergency relief and early recovery system (professionals, instruments, processes and resources), enabling it to provide a speedy and efficient response in bilateral and multilateral operations. It pays particular attention to forgotten disasters. Institutional preparedness (of both the SRC and its partners) plays an important role in the entire DRM cycle.

In recovery, the SRC engages in rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes in the aftermath of major disasters. It follows a holistic approach encompassing elements of physical reconstruction and aspects of social and economic rehabilitation. For this, the SRC has personnel at its disposal who are highly skilled in the technical and social fields.

In development, SRC programmes emphasise DRR, supporting local disaster preparedness, prevention and mitigation, and ensuring that DRR is institutionally embedded in sub-national and national disaster management policies and structures. DRR is implemented either as a stand-alone project or integrated into health or reconstruction programmes. DRR mainstreaming is a core concept of the DRM cycle.

The SRC bases its action on the linking relief, rehabilitation and development approach, recognising that there is no clear-cut separation between the three core areas. Overlaps and interaction are common and often help to advance the ultimate goal of strengthening disaster resilience. This is especially the case in the context of complex disasters and protracted crises.

While the SRC does not work directly on peace building and conflict prevention, it provides support for people fleeing conflict and seeking refuge inside or outside their home country (population movement). In such cases, it applies the DRM cycle by analogy in fragile contexts and situations of conflict and humanitarian crisis.
4. Objectives

4.1 Goal

Informed by global policy frameworks, oriented by the SRC Strategy 2020 and guided by the overarching principles for action of the SRC Strategy 2020 for International Cooperation, the goal of SRC DRM programmes is to

**Strengthen the disaster resilience of vulnerable people, groups and communities**

As a humanitarian organisation and member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the SRC focuses on vulnerable people, groups and communities and is committed to supporting them before, during and after emergency situations.

4.2 Outcomes

The four specific DRM objectives cover the entire spectrum of response, recovery and development. They are reflected in the SRC impact model (see Annex III).

**Lives saved and means for survival assured**

The SRC contributes to the efforts of people and communities to cope with disasters, focusing on well-defined thematic priorities. It reacts to all major disasters worldwide and to small- and medium-scale disasters primarily in its programme countries.

**Livelihoods protected**

The SRC strives to secure the livelihoods of people before, during and after hazardous events. The emphasis is on improving their living conditions and restoring their livelihoods in the aftermath of disasters, so as to enable them to resume a dignified and self-determined life.

**Exposure and vulnerability to hazards reduced**

The SRC builds on and strengthens the capacity of people and communities to better recover after natural disasters. Beyond the survival and recovery of people and communities, the SRC supports measures aimed at improving protection from hazards at different levels (individual, community and regional) and acting on local policy and decision-making.

**Disaster preparedness increased**

The SRC aims to strengthen local initiatives to better handle future hazardous events. This encompasses promoting improved response and recovery mechanisms among communities and institutional partners and supporting investment in emergency infrastructure.
5. Thematic priorities

The SRC sets out seven thematic priorities and their corresponding interventions for DRM programming (see Table 1 below). Operational strategies relating to the thematic priorities are defined in the specific concept papers (see Figure 1 above).

The thematic priorities are briefly described below in terms of approaches and strategies along the response, recovery and development continuum. SRC interventions are based on the results of multi-sectoral assessments. When choosing the appropriate approach, the SRC prefers cash transfer programming where possible, while maintaining a mixed modality approach as determined by the context. While the SRC has in the past been active mainly in rural areas, its work in urban contexts is gradually becoming more important.

Shelter, housing and non-food items
Shelter and housing are part of all major disaster response and recovery programmes and many community-based DRM projects. The SRC applies a comprehensive approach covering emergency shelter and housing reconstruction, with an emphasis on building back safer. Shelter activities are conducted with an integrated WASH perspective and a focus on capacity building. As a rule, the SRC does not implement a construction project without considering the socio-cultural and economic aspects. Non-food items are usually supplied together with suitable emergency shelter solutions, combined where possible with an earmarked cash contribution and training sessions on the appropriate use of the items. The SRC prioritises local procurement or pre-positioning over global sourcing, as this contributes to the development of the local economy.

Water, sanitation and hygiene
Because of their potential negative impact on health and shelter if not duly considered, WASH priorities are reflected at an early stage in disaster response, even though the SRC focuses on early recovery rather than emergency activities. In recovery and DRM long-term programming, which involves a community-based approach, the SRC combines “software” elements (e.g. starting or resuming awareness-raising activities) with “hardware” elements that tend to be provided in rural contexts and built on local technology (e.g. domestic and community water systems and sanitation solutions).

Health
During and after disasters, the SRC focuses on the provision of basic health services, concentrating on prevention, health promotion and universal access to health, and on epidemic control. In emergency situations, this means supporting the local health system’s efforts to provide services or acting as a substitute until it has recovered. SRC long-term health programmes in disaster-prone regions incorporate improved emergency preparedness of health institutions, SRC partners and beneficiaries.

Economic support
The SRC conducts economic support activities chiefly during response and recovery, helping families meet their essential needs and restore their livelihoods. In long-term programming, however, economic support as such is not a core competence of the SRC. Here the SRC involves others with specific expertise in, for example, income generation, livelihood diversification or marketing.
(Re)construction of public (health and social) infrastructure
The (re)construction, repair or retrofitting of public infrastructure is an essential part of the SRC’s holistic approach (including building back safer) in recovery and long-term programmes and plays an important role in the development or rehabilitation of village life. The SRC emphasises infrastructure ownership and service provision by the State, and therefore attaches importance to training local staff in operation and maintenance.

Community-based DRM
The SRC conducts long-term DRR programming mainly in the context of community-based DRM (CBDRM), to which it applies an integrated and stepwise approach. CBDRM measures are predicated on community mobilisation and organisation, and on sound assessments of hazards, vulnerabilities and capacities at community and household level. As an integral part of its work with the partner National Society on institutional preparedness (see the following paragraph), the SRC also supports the development of local government and community-based organisational capacities. In so doing, it aligns its disaster preparedness support with existing disaster management policies and structures and assists communities and local authorities to address any gaps and to link established and/or strengthened local structures to higher-level disaster management systems. Risk mitigation and disaster prevention usually take the form of community-managed micro-projects carried out with SRC technical and/or financial support. The focus is on affordable, environmentally sound and sustainably manageable solutions, opting for co-benefits.

Climate change adaptation is increasingly incorporated, focusing on changes related to extreme events and climate variability, which are factored into existing risk assessment tools and subsequent measures. This means taking into account a wider range of future climate/extreme events than those reflected in the historical record. Aspects relating to long-term changes in average climatic conditions are considered above all in terms of their impact on health and health determinants (e.g. water and nutrition), in line with the SRC’s institutional scope.

Institutional preparedness
The SRC recognises the unique role of the National Society as an auxiliary to the government in humanitarian response and in the development of the DRM capacities of the local government and community. As such, strengthening its own institutional preparedness and that of its partner National Society (or other implementing partner organisation) is a prerequisite for and complementary to the SRC’s work with communities and authorities. Based on the demands and needs expressed, the SRC is committed to supporting its partner National Society, either as a stand-alone capacity-strengthening measure or as part of a more comprehensive organisational development effort. The SRC’s in-house logistics capacity serves as the ideal entry point.

Table 1 shows the thematic priorities of DRM and their corresponding interventions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic priority</th>
<th>SRC interventions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shelter, housing and non-food items</strong></td>
<td>• Provision of emergency (family and community) shelter</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provision of shelter (repair) kits</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provision of basic non-food items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Support for disaster-resistant housing repair, retrofitting and reconstruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Capacity building and awareness raising in disaster-resistant reconstruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WASH</strong></td>
<td>• Emergency provision of water purification support, appropriate sanitation solutions and hygiene kits</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Hygiene promotion</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Repair, reconstruction and risk-proofing of damaged water sources, sewage and waste disposal systems and sanitary facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Training in the operation and maintenance of any physical systems</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Water governance</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
<td>• Support for epidemic control and prevention</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Ensuring access to basic health care</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Support for existing health systems, including capacity development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Psychosocial support</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Preparation of local health systems to manage future emergencies</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Economic support</strong></td>
<td>• Cash transfer programming</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Replacement of economic assets, restoration of livelihoods</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Income generation activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• On-the-job training</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provision of food items</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(Re)construction of public infrastructure</strong></td>
<td>• Repair, retrofitting and reconstruction of health and social infrastructure at community, municipal and district level</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Replacement of (damaged) equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Capacity development in operation and maintenance</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CBDRM</strong></td>
<td>• Preparation of hazard maps and risk studies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Awareness raising on climate and disaster issues</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Capacity development of key stakeholders at community and sub-national level (e.g. contingency planning, early warning systems)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• (Re-)establishment/improvement of emergency infrastructure</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Support for disaster mitigation measures through community-managed micro-projects (including promoting soil bioengineering)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Promotion of sustainable management techniques for the protection and rehabilitation of natural resources, environmental health</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional preparedness</strong></td>
<td>• Capacity building of host National Societies or other partner organisations in disaster response- and recovery-related thematic priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Support for the partner organisation’s efforts to coordinate with other key stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Integration of preparedness for response and recovery into broader organisational development efforts of host National Societies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Management of the SRC’s own stand-by capacity in response and recovery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: SRC thematic priorities and interventions in DRM
6. Priority approaches

SRC DRM programming uses four priority approaches at the personal, community and DRM-system levels:
1. reinforcing the DRM capacities of communities and individuals;
2. strengthening DRM systems at local level and fostering institutional links at sub-national and national levels;
3. promoting DRR mainstreaming for resilience and sustainability;
4. engaging in advocacy and policy dialogue for DRM.

DRM programming is most effective if action is taken using all four approaches. SRC programmes do not necessarily implement all approaches, but work in multi-stakeholder partnerships and alliances to engage in subsidiary and complementary action.

* DRM priority-approaches are aligned with those of the Health Policy: emphasising the community and system level, promoting wider, underlying determinants and integrating advocacy and policy dialogue.
Priority approach 1:
Reinforcing the DRM capacities of communities and individuals

Communities are key to sustainable DRM, and community-based action can have a significant impact in terms of achieving a substantial reduction of disaster risk and loss of lives and livelihoods, and health. SRC programmes generally apply the following intervention strategies.

Community action for DRM
The SRC recognises that the key to building, increasing and retaining community DRM capacity is ensuring that communities and households have access to timely and accurate information about the risks they face, and to the tools, training and education they need to help them decide what to do to reduce and transfer risks and how to handle emergency situations. In this regard, the SRC emphasises inclusiveness, ensuring that men, women, children, the elderly, minorities, etc., can all participate in the capacity-building process and have equal access to safety.

Community empowerment
The SRC facilitates the establishment of and works with local associations, village or community committees and school boards dealing with disaster risks. It strengthens and empowers them to engage in bottom-up and decentralised DRM planning, budgeting and decision-making. Their management and leadership capacities are bolstered, making them reliable partners for the local authorities.

Building on local skills, strengthening technical know-how
The SRC works to build on the capacity of local stakeholders to combine training and awareness with access to scientific information, providing technical support to facilitate risk-informed action. Planning for hardware retrofitting or reconstruction takes into account the preferences, norms, traditions and customs of the beneficiaries. Hardware activities are often implemented in the form of community-managed micro-projects and deployed as a means of strengthening the management capacity of those involved.

Capacity building for the local partner organisation
Fostering community mobilisation and supporting self-help capacities requires a shift away from the charity and distribution mode towards a facilitation role in the community. Partner organisations are enabled to facilitate an empowerment process, using the potentials and resources of communities and other local stakeholders and applying a rights-based approach.

Priority approach 2:
Strengthening DRM systems at local level and fostering institutional links at sub-national and national levels

While most countries have DRM systems and structures, in many developing countries they are not properly implemented and do not effectively reach to the local level. The SRC’s efforts are aimed at reinforcing/activating the local DRM system and bridging the gap from the national to the community level.

Strengthening institutional DRM capacities
The SRC aims to strengthen local institutions, enabling them to take responsibility and fulfil their roles. Besides the local authorities, context-specific support may be given to health and education institutions.
Promoting linkages
By working with local and (sub) national government partners, the SRC promotes vertical linkages between local and higher-level DRM planning and maximises opportunities to ensure that local plans and systems are incorporated into higher-level mechanisms and budgetary cycles. The SRC also fosters horizontal linkages by working to support local institutions and facilitating knowledge exchange, collaboration and linkages with civil society, academic circles and the private sector.

Providing operational support, if necessary
In emergency situations, the SRC will provide operational support for overstrained local systems. In such cases, the humanitarian efforts of the SRC and its partner organisation are coordinated on the ground with other national and international bodies. The service-delivery mode is applied only for as long as necessary, until the local system is working again or the specific services are not needed anymore.

Promoting the institutional embedding of the National Society in national systems
In SRC programme countries, the SRC helps the National Society find and clarify its role in the national DRM mechanism and supports its efforts to build and maintain its operational capacity to assume that role.

Priority approach 3:
Promoting DRR mainstreaming for resilience and sustainability

The SRC recognises that, in order to build resilient communities and societies, it is essential to consider current and future risks in humanitarian and development planning. The SRC mainstreams DRR measures into all its programmes in hazard-prone areas.

DRR in response
The SRC strives to ensure that assistance is provided in a way that helps people meet their immediate needs and, at the same time, builds their resilience to future disasters. SRC relief programmes help to ensure that existing risks are not worsened, new vulnerabilities are not created and future recovery activities are reflected at an early stage.

DRR in recovery
The SRC systematically applies a building-back-safer approach in all its reconstruction programmes. DRR is key to effective programming because the population’s recovery in a hazard-prone environment needs to be sustainable in the long term.

DRR in development
The SRC ensures that constructed or repaired infrastructure is hazard-proof, the staff of the institutions it supports is capacitated and equipped to deal with emergencies, and communities at risk receive disaster preparedness and risk mitigation support as per their needs and demands.
**Priority approach 4: Engaging in advocacy and policy dialogue for DRM**

The SRC acts on DRM advocacy and policy dialogue in various ways, in its programme countries and in Switzerland.

**Risk-informed development**
The SRC advocates a sustainable development approach that encourages governments, civil society and the private sector to understand risks, apply appropriate risk-proofing technologies and allocate the necessary budget funds. It engages in policy dialogue to promote the adoption and enforcement of risk-informed laws and policies.

**Policy implementation**
SRC programmes aim to help transform local and national policy into practice. Community mobilisation and awareness raising in respect of existing DRM frameworks enable local communities to drive implementation at their level and empower them to demand accountability from higher levels.

**Advocacy at scale**
Where possible, SRC programmes strive to apply innovative measures and pilot new approaches on a small scale, in order to inform and influence local policy. The capacity of partner organisations is bolstered, enabling them to engage in policy dialogue and help leverage innovations to scale. Furthermore, the SRC engages in alliances with additional partners, including the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, to boost the policy dialogue at the national level.

**Advocacy in Switzerland**
The SRC engages in advocacy to enhance DRM worldwide. It helps shape the DRM positions of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which itself has an excellent reputation in DRM and the components of which enjoy privileged access to relevant United Nations bodies and donor countries. The SRC also plays a proactive role in Swiss networks and platforms, namely the Swiss NGO DRR Platform. It engages in an active policy dialogue and operational exchange with the relevant Swiss government authorities, in particular the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and with Swiss Solidarity.
7. Quality management

The SRC Quality Management Manual defines the standards and guidelines that apply to all SRC programmes in terms of quality management, project cycle management and risk management. It highlights the following quality criteria and aspects:

7.1 Relevance and impact

SRC response, recovery and development programmes are designed and implemented to contribute to relevant local, national and global humanitarian and development goals and policies in relation to DRM. In order to achieve the highest possible impact with limited resources, the SRC supports and implements activities based on sound evidence as to their efficiency and effectiveness. The SRC understands “impact” to be the contribution of DRM projects towards strengthening disaster resilience in accordance with internationally applied frameworks and indicators. Since it is beyond the SRC’s scope to assess impact, it works with impact hypotheses, i.e. evidence-based assumptions on how the project outcomes are expected to contribute to overall DRM goals (for an illustration of the SRC impact model, see Annex III).

7.2 Monitoring, evaluation and learning

Project outcomes are regularly measured through monitoring and evaluation processes in accordance with the SRC quality management system. Projects are encouraged to use standard outcomes and indicators as recommended by the result chains and indicator toolboxes, which comprise internationally recognised indicators, including SDG and Sendai Framework targets. Comparable indicators and must-have indicators allow data aggregation. New technologies for data gathering and organisation are taken up and their use is encouraged. Regular and timely data collection and analysis make it possible to track successes and challenges, adaptation and learning. Where feasible, SRC monitoring and evaluation systems are aligned with those of the National Society being supported or the implementing NGO.

Operational research will be more systematically embedded in country programmes and at regional level. Pilot initiatives will introduce a new process of outcome measurement across projects to highlight impact on a larger scale with regard to specific thematic priorities.

The SRC engages in continuous individual training and organisational learning on DRM, both internally as well as with its partner organisations. The lessons learnt and good practices drawn from evaluations, studies, and so on, are shared across regions and at headquarters, and incorporated into future SRC programming and strategic development. Reports and studies are shared with partnership networks, stakeholder alliances and policy makers, in order to exchange information, share knowledge and capitalise on learning. The findings are also published and presented at international conferences.
7.3 Thematic and methodological advice

Developing the human resources and organisational capacities of the SRC and its partner organisations is a key requirement of DRM programming. DRM advisers work with the SRC team at headquarters and in the field to put the DRM Policy into practice. Advisory groups (e.g. on DRR, on reconstruction) and external experts, consultants and institutions provide specific knowledge and technical expertise.
## Synopsis of the DRM Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Priority Approaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening disaster resilience</td>
<td>Lives saved and means for survival assured</td>
<td>Shelter housing and NFI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Livelihoods protected</td>
<td>WASH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exposure and vulnerability to hazards reduced</td>
<td>Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disaster preparedness increased</td>
<td>Economic support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Re)construction of public infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CBDRM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Institutional preparedness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** SRC (2016)
Annex II
Framework for Community Resilience

- Building Blocks:
  - can manage its natural assets
  - has infrastructures and services (well maintained and accessible)
  - is knowledgeable, healthy and can meet its basic needs
  - has economic opportunities
  - is socially cohesive
  - is connected

A resilient Community ...

Annex III
SRC impact model

Sphere of activity Disasters

- Healthy living and improved disaster risk management capacities among vulnerable groups and communities
- Disaster resilience strengthened
- Exposure and vulnerability to hazards reduced
- Livelihoods protected
- Lives saved and means for survival assured
- Disaster preparedness increased
- Access to (basic) health care gained
- Living conditions improved
- Housing situation in zones at risk improved
- Critical sites made hazard-proof
- Natural resources protected and rehabilitated
- Increased DRM capacities and instruments applied
- DRM knowledge increased
- In kind items / cash provided
- Services provided
- Community workers trained
- Safe public infrastructure rehabilitated
- Safe housing supported
- Communities sensitized
- NS staff and institutional actors sensitized, trained, linked
- Risk mitigation supported
- Sustainable resource mgt. supported
- Risk assessment established
- Emergency system/infrastructure established
- EWS and climate monitoring established, linked
- NS mechanisms and structures in place
- Local committees formed, trained, linked
- Lives saved and means for survival assured
- Services provided
- Community workers trained
- Safe public infrastructure rehabilitated
- Safe housing supported
- Communities sensitized
- NS staff and institutional actors sensitized, trained, linked
- Risk mitigation supported
- Sustainable resource mgt. supported
- Risk assessment established
- Emergency system/infrastructure established
- EWS and climate monitoring established, linked
- NS mechanisms and structures in place
- Local committees formed, trained, linked

Focus (Disaster sphere):
- Response
- Recovery
- Development

Source: SRC (2016)
Endnotes

3. For more information, refer to http://www.ifrc.org/Global/rw/front-2016/20160204-1bc-3/.