

RCRC

Red Cross Red Crescent

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Fighting time and tide

An island nation seeks to become the 191st National Society

Beyond borders

Building trust and protecting migrants wherever they are

Surfing the future

Riding the breaking trends of humanitarian action



Floods and massive mudslides in China and Sierra Leone. Vast floods in Bangladesh, India and Nepal. Severe storms, heavy rain and floods in the Caribbean and southern United States. The year 2017 has been marked by severe, wet weather. This picture from Bangladesh, much of which was inundated after September floods, captures the desperation of those who have lost homes, crops, family members and even safe water sources as the waters swallowed everything around them.

Photo: Aminul Shawon/Bangladesh Red Crescent Society

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Crisis within crisis



THE MAGAZINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL
RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is made up of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the National Societies.



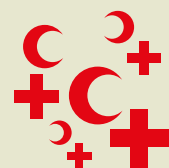
ICRC

The International Committee of the Red Cross is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance. The ICRC also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the Geneva Conventions and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It directs and coordinates the international activities conducted by the Movement in armed conflicts and other situations of violence.



International Federation of
Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest volunteer-based humanitarian network, reaching 150 million people each year through its 190 member National Societies. Together, the IFRC acts before, during and after disasters and health emergencies to meet the needs and improve the lives of vulnerable people. It does so with impartiality as to nationality, race, gender, religious beliefs, class and political opinions. Guided by Strategy 2020 — a collective plan of action to tackle the major humanitarian and development challenges of this decade — the IFRC is committed to 'saving lives and changing minds'.



National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies embody the work and principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in more than 190 countries. National Societies act as auxiliaries to the public authorities of their own countries in the humanitarian field and provide a range of services including disaster relief, health and social programmes. During wartime, National Societies assist the affected civilian population and support the army medical services where appropriate.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

is guided by seven Fundamental Principles:

humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

All Red Cross and Red Crescent activities have one central purpose:

to help without discrimination those who suffer and thus contribute to peace in the world.

No time for hopelessness

In late June, the classification of 'famine' was lifted for parts of South Sudan — a testament to what can be achieved when resources and access allow an adequate response. But this achievement in no way obscures the humanitarian catastrophe that still envelops our country.

In South Sudan some 1.7 million people face 'emergency levels of hunger', according to the United Nations, and 6 million people are considered food insecure. Due to ongoing conflict and inter-tribal violence, some 2 million people are internally displaced and an equal number are living as refugees in neighbouring countries. These are the very people who, under normal circumstances, would be producing food and keeping local markets alive. Lack of clean water and adequate sanitation has led to cholera outbreaks in numerous areas while malaria has also made a comeback.

Similar deadly dynamics are playing out elsewhere — the Lake Chad region in western Africa, Somalia, Yemen — where violence, extreme hunger, drought, disease and conflict conspire to leave millions of people in untenable conditions.

Yet even in these horrifying and chaotic environments, we cannot afford the luxury of hopelessness. We can and must do more to protect vulnerable people, save and improve lives and help build local resilience to future shocks.

Although part of the solution lies in greater resources, it's not all about money or putting more humanitarians and aid packages on the ground. It's about learning to work together as humanitarians much more effectively.

Here in South Sudan, 138 international organizations are providing services.



Photo: South Sudan Red Cross

These actors, including sister National Societies and other components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, have too often worked in isolation, reporting back to their donors in their home nations on their own individual projects.

But this model is now being challenged. In South Sudan, the Movement has been working under a new paradigm that emphasizes collective achievement and fully coordinated action. Although many Movement partners are working in South Sudan, this year we have issued only one joint Movement fund-raising appeal and agreed on one Movement narrative to explain more clearly our collective response.

We have also set up a coordinating group to review closely all projects proposed in the country. Before any project is approved, this group ensures that it responds to the population's most urgent needs, fills an important gap in our collective response and supports the work of local actors rather than undermining them by setting up parallel structures.

The downside to such collaboration is that it takes time — a very precious commodity during crisis. It does mean, however, that our collective response is far more effective and, as a result, more people are being

saved. Speaking with one voice also makes our joint appeals for access and protection of civilians more powerful and lends more credibility to our arguments for greater long-term investment in sustainable, local resilience.

Communities across Africa need better access to clean water, health systems and markets. While many projects attempt to tackle some of these needs, they will have to be massively scaled up and better coordinated if we want to avoid a repeat of 2017 in five or ten years.

Even before conflict broke out in 2013, this fertile and resource-rich country was already largely dependent on imported food products. The lack of roads and the high cost of transport took away any incentive to produce large quantities of food and transport them to market. When conflict, civil strife and mass displacement came, this lack of basic development was as much a cause of famine as lack of rainfall.

While humanitarian organizations cannot address all these issues, we can be part of the solution and we can offer insights based on our experience. When the Movement gathers in early November, in Turkey, we will focus on new ways of working together and will discuss innovative methods to adapt to rapid and complex change.

New systems for collaboration during complex emergencies are a critical innovation that must continue to be at the top of our agenda. Even in the midst of crisis, we must continue to innovate, learn and improve. Our future depends on it.

By **John Lobor**
Secretary General of the South Sudan Red Cross

Thousands more flee violence in Myanmar

Aid agencies now estimate that some 400,000 people fleeing violence in Myanmar have crossed the border into Bangladesh. “They arrive hungry and dehydrated,” says Mozharul Huq, secretary general of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society. “We’re distributing emergency food supplies, but it isn’t enough.” The National Society was particularly concerned that children, pregnant women and older people would become malnourished and sick. The IFRC, ICRC and other National Societies also provided food and purified water. “Our teams of doctors, nurses and paramedics are treating hundreds of injured and sick people but the queues keep getting longer,” Huq says.

Movement mourns more aid worker killings

More Movement aid workers have tragically lost their lives after being deliberately targeted in violent attacks. In September, a physiotherapist in ICRC’s rehabilitation centre in Mazar-e-Sharif, Afghanistan, was shot, apparently by a patient, as she went about her daily work helping people relearn how to walk or complete other tasks after losing limbs or suffering from other disabilities. Lorena Enebral Perez, from Spain, was 38 years old. This senseless tragedy came three days after an ICRC truck driver, Lukudu Kennedy Laki Emmanuel, was shot and killed in South Sudan. Known as kind, fun-loving and generous, Emmanuel was delivering essential goods when the convoy of trucks he was part of came under fire. In June, a volunteer for the Central African Red Cross Society, Joachim Ali was killed by an unidentified armed group while on duty at a Red Cross compound in the town

of Bangassou. “He was a young, brave man. He was committed and dedicated to his work,” said Antoine Mbao-Bogo, president of the Central African Red Cross Society.

Red Cross played major role in fighting Ebola

Red Cross volunteers potentially averted more than 10,000 cases of Ebola during the 2013–2016 West African outbreak, according to a recent study in the journal *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*. The study measured the impact of safe and dignified burial (SDB) teams and the role of community health workers during the Ebola outbreak, during which Red Cross teams in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone took on the dangerous and crucial task of safely burying people who had died of Ebola. One Sierra Leone Red Cross Society volunteer, Alpha Sesay, recalls how people called them ‘the Ebola boys’ and often treated them harshly. “Those Ebola boys are coming!” Sesay recalls them saying. “It was not really easy for us.” Meanwhile, the experience of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in responding to Ebola was one reason that an outbreak in May 2017, which took the lives of at least four people, was contained within only two months. “The Red Cross has responded to all past Ebola outbreaks in the country and has a strong network of experts,” said Grégoire Mateso, president of the Red Cross of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

122 states adopt treaty on prohibition of nuclear weapons

Seventy-two years after the ICRC and other International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement members first called for the elimination of nuclear weapons, 122 countries attending a United



Photo: Ibrahim Sher Khan

Fighting in Mosul ends, leaving lifelong scars

Although military operations in Mosul, Iraq, came to an end in July, massive humanitarian needs remain — for both those inside the city and the more than 800,000 people still displaced. For those trying to return home, the challenges are many. Neighbourhoods are scarred by heavy fighting with thousands of homes, hundreds of roads and bridges, and many water stations, electricity plants, hospitals and schools completely destroyed. The ICRC has rehabilitated key water pumping stations in the eastern part of Mosul and has engaged in numerous projects in west Mosul. By early July, an ICRC mobile surgical team operating in Mosul General Hospital had received more than 650 cases. The Iraqi Red Crescent Society, meanwhile, has delivered hot meals and food baskets, set up water points and provided psychosocial support to people in camps outside Mosul, as well as in and around the city.

Nations conference adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in July. Although a large number of states did not attend the conference and a few have already announced they will not become party to the treaty, a joint IFRC and ICRC statement said the treaty “confirms that a clear majority of states unequivocally rejects nuclear weapons on moral, humanitarian and now legal grounds”.

Fighting grips Philippine city

Fighting between government forces and an armed group in the Philippine city of Marawi left large

numbers of people displaced and in need of help. In the first week of the fighting in May, the ICRC and the Philippine Red Cross distributed food rations, addressed water and sanitation issues and provided household and hygiene items for the displaced. As of early July, the ICRC had evacuated more than 700 people. The ICRC has also delivered large quantities of medical supplies to rural health units and hospitals that were overwhelmed by the influx of displaced people. “I’m just grateful because at least my family is complete and we’re safe,” said Casamudin Riga, a 51-year-old trader. “We hope that we can return to our homes soon and start again.”

Humanitarian index

500,000: Number of people suspected of being ill with cholera in Yemen as of 14 August 2017. By then, more than 2,000 people had lost their lives to the disease.**
47,000: Number of safe burials conducted by Red Cross National Societies during the Ebola outbreak in West Africa between 2013 and 2016. This accounted for more than half of all safe and dignified burials carried out during the outbreak.*
1 million: Number of bicycles the Red Cross Society of China will provide to volunteers under a partnership with IFRC (with support from the government of China) to help volunteers more easily reach isolated and vulnerable communities in China.***
1.3 million: Number of hot meals distributed per month by volunteers of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society to families displaced during fighting in Mosul, Iraq in 2017.*
19 million: Approximate number of people reliant on aid in Yemen, which as a country is now considered the world’s single largest humanitarian crisis.****

Sources: * IFRC; ** World Health Organization; *** Red Cross Society of China; **** ICRC

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Wherever they are
Whether in a camp in Bangladesh, riding the rails between Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Tajikistan or in a camp in Greece, the Movement endeavours to protect the health, safety and emotional well-being of migrants.

■ Humanitarian trends
Surfing the future
Getting ahead of impending trends is not about trying to predict the future, but about asking the right questions and becoming operationally and strategically able to react quickly and stay on top of trends. A look ahead at future developments being discussed at the 2017 Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Statutory Meetings.

Uniting for humanity
As he steps down after eight years as president of the world’s largest humanitarian volunteer network, Tadateru Konoé reflects on the critical work ahead in strengthening National Societies, volunteerism and local humanitarian response.

A race against time and tide
A nation of 1,156 islands in the South Pacific is poised to become the 191st National Society. Even before the fledgling Marshall Islands Red Cross Society is officially recognized, it faces a host of challenges, from rising seas, droughts and storms to the toxic legacy of nuclear weapons.

■ Resources
Recent publications, videos and online products from around the Movement.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of researchers and support staff of the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies.

The magazine is published three times a year in Arabic, English, French and Spanish and is available in 190 countries, with a circulation of more than 60,000.

The opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Unsolicited articles are welcomed, but cannot be returned.

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The maps in this publication are for information purposes only and have no political significance.

On the cover: In eastern Africa, people are suffering through numerous overlapping crises. Thousands of families have been displaced by both conflict and drought. The hardships of mass displacement — linked with a lack of clean water, proper sanitation, nutrition and hygiene — have led to still further crises, such as outbreaks of cholera. Inside photo: REUTERS/Feisal Omar; middle photo: REUTERS/Feisal Omar; outer photo: Emil Helotie/Finnish Red Cross
Photos this page, from the top: Abdikarim Mohamed/ICRC; Merlijn Stoffels/The Netherlands Red Cross; Ralph El Hage/ICRC; Nadia Shira Cohen/IFRC; Nick Jones/IFRC.



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Voices

“With the prohibition of nuclear weapons now established in law at the global level, we are at a turning point in efforts to end the era of nuclear weapons.”

Joint ICRC and IFRC statement following the adoption by 122 countries of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Near the town of Dilla, in north-western Somalia, a woman watches over her goats. Of the 200 once in the flock, more than 100 have already died of hunger and thirst.

Photo: Arie Kievit/The Netherlands Red Cross

Crisis within crisis

With conflict and ravaged infrastructure complicating the response, the Somalia drought crisis is a case study on the challenges of saving lives in a complex emergency.

AS RIVERS STARTED DRYING UP due to lack of rain and the harvest shrivelled earlier this year, the people whose livelihoods rely on farming and herding livestock were left with no choice but to move closer to water points or urban centres to survive.

“From my herd of almost 300 animals, I only have 30 left. The others died during the drought,” says Abdullahi, who is dependent on proceeds from the sale of livestock to sustain his family. With his remaining animals too weak to sell or be slaughtered for food, he moved his family 25 kilometres north of the town of Garowe, where he hopes to sell sand from a nearby riverbed to support his family.

As the dry spell continued, the population faced the very real possibility of famine and humanitarian organizations had to work hard and fast to avert a disaster like that experienced in 2011 when, according to news reports, more than 250,000 people lost their lives due to extreme hunger. “People are suffering everywhere and the harsh reality is that they all need assistance,” says Dusan Vukotic, the ICRC’s coordinator for relief programmes in Somalia.

As Somalia entered the rainy Gu season that runs from May to June, many areas were still affected by drought, while others began to experience flash floods, which occur regularly during the Hagaa season of short rains from July to September.

In many areas, farmers started tilling their land once again. But even if sufficient rains come, they will not wash away the enduring hardships faced in recent months. Cases of malnutrition among children continued to rise, according to data collected by the Somali Red Crescent Society, and water-borne diseases like cholera were also increasing. With no income from farms or livestock, many people have been left financially ruined.

Humanitarian organizations therefore have been operating in full emergency mode. The crisis has required diligent, intense efforts in order to continue saving lives so that people have at least a chance of rebuilding once the drought finally eases.

A complex, complementary response

Doing so in a situation as complex as the one in Somalia, however, is no simple task. Fortunately, the Somali Red Crescent Society and other Movement partners have long-standing operations in the country

Don’t blame the rain

Across sub-Saharan Africa, millions of people are not getting enough to eat and thousands are falling sick due to inadequate nutrition and lack of clean water. While the specific causes behind the shortage of food vary in each area, there is one common theme: extended drought is being exacerbated by a host of man-made conditions. In South Sudan and Somalia, for example, the failure of seasonal rains came on top of ongoing conflicts that had already caused the mass displacement of millions and disruption of normal food production. Meanwhile, inadequate infrastructure and other barriers to humanitarian access have made relief efforts extremely challenging. “We can’t just blame the lack of rain for these unfolding tragedies,” said one Movement aid worker recently. In the following stories, we examine the challenge of responding to these multiple, overlapping crises.

and could, therefore, respond in a complementary manner as the drought unfolded, focusing on areas with few if any humanitarian actors on the ground.

The ICRC, for example, has nine established offices in Somalia, six of which have warehousing capacity. The ICRC supports 76 Somali Red Crescent health facilities, more than 40 mobile clinics, four hospitals and two stabilization centres in Biadoa and Kismayo. It also helps sustain 20 primary healthcare centres, eight Somali Red Crescent Society mobile clinics and 19 outpatient therapeutic centres.

The IFRC and partner National Societies provide support to Somali Red Crescent Society mobile clinics and, from the IFRC offices in Somaliland, organize water, sanitation and hygiene efforts, as well as provide shelter relief items. They also deploy a cholera treatment centre, among other things.

This kind of complementary action — with each component responding where it can in various parts of the country — is one reason that, collectively, the ICRC, the IFRC and the Somali Red Crescent Society have been able to help more than 1 million people during the crisis. Coordination is vital in complex emergencies even as it becomes more challenging, especially when ongoing fighting makes gaining access to people very difficult or impossible.

“Both the donors and the humanitarians have been committed from the outset to providing a comprehensive response,” says Daniel O’Malley,



deputy head of the ICRC's Somalia delegation based in Nairobi, Kenya. "Having said this, we have still witnessed the habitual constraints in terms of coordination, something relatively understandable given the size of the operations and the large number of humanitarian partners involved."

Race against time

Another challenge for all humanitarian actors in Somalia has been logistics. "After 30 years of conflict, the country's infrastructure has been decimated," he says.

The urgency of containing the malnutrition and cholera crises, as well as the dire need for storing water, meant that critical equipment needed to repair basic infrastructure had to be flown into Somalia from Geneva and Nairobi.

Pumps located at the boreholes started breaking down because they were running for longer periods than usual. Pumps and generators had to be procured by the dozen in order to secure more water,

At Kismayo General Hospital's stabilization centre, Fatuma looks on as her five-month-old grandson is weighed. The weight of malnourished children is monitored daily to see how they respond to treatment.

Photo: Pedram Yazdi/ICRC

A member of a Somali Red Crescent Society health team speaks to women about the advantages of breastfeeding, vaccination, proper hygiene and sanitation during a visit by the National Society's mobile clinic to a village in central Somalia.

Photo: Abdikarim Mohamed/ICRC

a lifeline to drought-affected people. In addition to repairing boreholes, national ICRC staff constructed hand-dug wells and installed both open storage tanks and temporary water troughs for livestock.

However, even the most essential and urgent functions such as transporting aid supplies have been expensive and at times challenging due to a range of human-made and natural factors: restrictive import rules, bureaucracy in countries through which aid is shipped, roadblocks by armed groups, the general need to take longer routes due to security concerns and, again, weather patterns.

Despite these challenges, the ICRC managed to deliver 440 truckloads of aid and airlift medical supplies to different parts of Somalia. In addition, two boats were purchased to access the isolated Bantu communities in the Bajuni Islands. Having the boats made it easier and more economical to do assessments and monitoring among these communities. "The boats have since been donated to the Somali Red Crescent Society for visits to the Bajunis", says Gunther Kreissl, the coordinator for ICRC logistics activities in Somalia.

"In the monsoon season, ships reach the port of Bosasso from Mogadishu very slowly and they are very expensive," he says, adding that some of the smaller transport vessels that the ICRC normally uses refuse to sail during the monsoon season when seas are particularly rough.

Getting through with cash

At the same time, Movement support for the Somali Red Crescent has allowed it to take advantage of evolving technologies and aid delivery innovations such as electronic mobile banking and data collec-

tion — a particular challenge given the constant movement of people as they search for food, water and some form of livelihood.

Use of mobile technology, for collecting epidemiological data and registering and following-up on aid beneficiaries, has allowed the National Society's volunteers to collect, analyse, monitor and report data in a more timely and accurate way than ever before.

There are many challenges, however. The process entails collecting many types of data across an extensive area in which volunteers face varying obstacles in gaining access to people in need of aid.

On the other hand, cash transfers via telephone banking systems were already in wide use before the current drought struck, enabling the Somali Red Crescent and Movement partners to reach thousands with life-saving support.

Where markets are functioning, cash interventions have been credited with revitalizing local trade, albeit to a small extent, and increasing local resilience. But the degree to which markets can remain open, or be bolstered by cash, depends on whether people feel secure enough to make even the shortest of journeys.

Where phone networks were not available, or when beneficiaries were reluctant to share their phone numbers, cash vouchers were distributed. "The vouchers are exchanged for cash by selected financial service providers," says Martin Kenny, ICRC cash and market specialist in Somalia.

Working together

Cash transfers have become one platform for improved coordination as many agencies — as well as private sector banks and telecommunications companies — work together to create unified, easier-to-use systems for beneficiaries.

But there are still many challenges getting in the way of smooth coordination. According to some interviewed for this story, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee cluster system has not yet been fully activated in Somalia, so communication and coordination among all sectors of humanitarian aid could be improved.

Under the humanitarian cluster system, relief organizations work in groups known as clusters to share information and coordinate their actions on specific areas of concern, such as shelter or health. In Somalia, some clusters are more active than others. In some cases, the ICRC has had bilateral discussions with various clusters to share the locations of food distribution. This made it possible to avoid overlapping on the ground and ensure the help available reached as many people as possible, and that less-visible needs, including urgent ones, were met.

At the same time, communication channels in Somalia are not always available, further complicating



At Baidoa regional hospital in southern Somalia, a grandmother watches over her malnourished orphan grandchild. Both live in a camp for displaced people outside of town. Photo: Abdikarim Mohamed/ICRC

When death comes suddenly

At the cholera treatment centre in Baidoa, desperately ill people fill the corridors. Outside, an extra tent has been erected to accommodate the growing number of patients, many of whom are children. When night falls, many sleep outside.

This is just one cholera treatment centre supported by the ICRC. During the height of the emergency, the ICRC also supported the Baardheere treatment centre for a short time and a centre in Kismayo until it was closed due to a decline in the number of patients. These centres provided assistance to some 7,000 people and close to half were children.

Such centres have been critical as cholera can deplete children's health quickly.

"Cholera comes suddenly and may quickly cause dangerous fluid loss," says Ana Maria Guzman, ICRC health programme manager for Somalia. "The goal is to replace lost fluids using a simple rehydration solution."

Without rehydration, approximately half the people with cholera die. With treatment, the number of fatalities drops to less than 1 per cent.

Meanwhile, Somali Red Crescent Society volunteers promote proper hygiene habits by making door-to-door visits, educating people about washing hands and other techniques for avoiding infectious disease. They also provide them with water purification tablets.

Still, conditions in many areas, including camps for displaced people, mean people still face an elevated risk of contamination. "Access to safe water and water storage conditions are dramatically below the minimum standard and large numbers of displaced people have extremely limited access to water," notes Nicolas Boyrie, an IFRC relief delegate. "And, in some instances, the water they do access is contaminated."

coordination efforts. Fortunately, the long-term presence of the Movement meant that communication with relevant stakeholders and groups with influence on events, including armed actors, has been in place for many years and this helped reinforce the acceptance of Movement efforts in many areas.

Until long-lasting stability comes to the country, however, efforts to make desperately needed, large-scale improvements in Somalia's transport, agriculture and health sectors that will improve the Somali people's resilience to future droughts will also remain limited. ■

By **Rita W. Nyaga**

Rita W. Nyaga is a communications assistant for the ICRC's Somalia delegation, based in Nairobi, Kenya.



One response, one voice



Amid a deadly convergence of conflict, hunger and disease in South Sudan, the Movement is multiplying its collective impact through better coordination.

📍 In the state of Jonglei, South Sudan, a makeshift target is set up to guide an ICRC airdrop of food for 21,000 people, as well as seeds and farming tools for thousands of displaced people who arrived in the area seeking refuge.

Photo: Olav Saltbones/Norwegian Red Cross

WHEN A DEADLY SPATE of violence in the South Sudanese capital of Juba last July was followed closely by an outbreak of cholera, the two emergencies tested whether the various parts of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement could work closely, quickly and efficiently under a new operating model being developed for just that purpose.

While the ICRC supported the South Sudan Red Cross in responding to immediate needs of the cholera response, the IFRC worked with the National Society to launch a series of actions supported by the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund. "The cholera response was conducted from day one in close collaboration and communication with all Movement partners," says Michael Charles, head of the IFRC's country office.

The ICRC's cooperation delegate in South Sudan, Bayram Valiyev, adds that because all public communications were prepared collectively, with the South Sudan Red Cross taking the lead, the Movement (including the many sister National Societies operating in South Sudan) was seen as "one family".

During crisis response, such unity of purpose poses a challenge as each organization that contributes must report to donors and public back at home about their particular efforts and results. If done well, however, fully coordinated communications show donors the full impact of the Movement response and help further gel unity within the Red Cross and Red Crescent family.

Hand-in-hand

The July violence was just one episode in a larger, ongoing internal conflict in South Sudan that — along with numerous, local, inter-tribal battles — have displaced some 2 million people within the country and an equal number as refugees to neighbouring nations.

On top of that, drought pushed people in many parts of the country to the brink of starvation. While an earlier declaration of famine in two states has been lifted, almost half of South Sudan's population is still considered food insecure, according to the United Nations. And due to a lack of access to drinking water, numerous locations around the country reported outbreaks of cholera. By mid-June, there were more than 5,000 cases countrywide and 169 reported deaths.

In such complex, long-term crises, effective coordination is especially critical. But it is often complicated by conditions on the ground. The lack of adequate roads and communication networks has made a large-scale intervention even more challenging. Much aid has had to come in by plane, rather than by road, but in the rainy season, even many airstrips stop functioning.

"Efficient coordination is demanding, time-consuming, requires specific skills and commitment, and comes with a cost."

From the 2015 report *Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC), optimizing the Movement's humanitarian response.*

Web extra

Will we ever be able to say 'never again' to drought, famine and violence in sub-Saharan Africa? On our website, www.rcrcmagazine.org, humanitarian and writer Kathy Mueller examines a range of emerging and innovative financing tools that could help prevent future famines.

In addition, 138 international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) work alongside more than 700 local actors in South Sudan, one reason the government has advocated for a more streamlined approach, starting with the creation in 2016 of a commission to assess, register, monitor and audit the activities of all NGOs.

While such a commission may well help to ensure more people receive assistance, international governments and aid agencies have expressed concern that the laws may limit the number of foreign humanitarians eligible to work in the country at a time when needs are greater than ever.

To date, truly effective and impactful collaboration among all these actors is still not happening on a grand scale, with some aid workers lamenting that many continue to work in silos, focused on their individual contributions.

Five 'country labs'

For this reason, the Movement is testing its own new methodologies to improve internal collaboration. Along with four other 'country labs' (Haiti, Philippines, Syria and Ukraine), South Sudan is a test bed for a process agreed on by all National Societies operating in the country.

Known internally as Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC), the efforts are a response to two resolutions adopted by the Movement's governing structures and a 2015 report that said the need for improved coordination was "urgent and important and requires the commitment of all Movement partners".

The "unparalleled outreach and the complementary roles and mandates of the Movement's components" means it "is uniquely placed to adapt to the changing humanitarian environment", the report notes. "But the Movement as a whole must work harder and overcome its internal challenges to increase the impact of its humanitarian response."

This is exactly what is unfolding in South Sudan. Together, the Movement components working there have developed a Movement Response Plan that is "complementary to other actors" and "recognizes that the food security crisis... is intrinsically linked to... risks relating to health, water and sanitation and nutritional levels".

They have also developed a joint communications strategy and issued one international appeal (under the umbrella of the ICRC) rather than the traditional approach of having separate appeals managed by various Movement components. They also continually revise Movement-wide contingency plans and map the capacity and activities of each actor within the Red Cross Red Crescent family.

A Movement coordination group, meanwhile, meets regularly to scrutinize new projects based

on their necessity, appropriateness and sustainability. "We ask, 'Does this make sense based on the needs or is it just a donor-driven activity or project that will simply collapse once the donor withdraws funding?'" says the IFRC's Michael Charles.

"And when we communicate about our efforts, we say the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement is taking this action, not the specific National Society or ICRC or IFRC," he says. "This makes sense because whatever one Red Cross or Red Crescent National Society is able to do here, it is the result of contributions and capacity-building efforts from many Movement partners over the years."

It has taken years to get to this point but Nicolas Luyet, the ICRC's head of projects on strengthening Movement coordination and cooperation, says the work is starting to pay off. "Over time, we've seen that Red Cross and Red Crescent partners working here are being more proactive about making sure their actions integrate well with the larger Movement effort," he says.

"We are trying to change our internal mindsets, the modus operandi of each Movement partner, and that takes time," explains Luyet. At times, he says, old reflexes kick in and there can still be interference from outside South Sudan or too much vertical communication between the field, regional and global offices when "coordination belongs at the country level".

The costs of coordination

These reflexes are understandable. As the 2015 Council of Delegates report noted, "efficient coordination is demanding, time-consuming, requires specific skills and commitment, and comes with a cost".

One cost of the single international appeal, says John Lobor, secretary general of the South Sudan Red Cross, was lost time. While some emergency funds were available to help the most needy, the process of crafting a joint appeal took about a month, potentially delaying help for populations in need, as well as the Movement's reputation as a timely deliverer of comprehensive assistance. Once the appeal was launched, however, Lobor says the South Sudan Red Cross (with its 8,800 volunteers) was able to help far more people due to better collaboration with Movement partners.

Lessons learned from all the country labs that are part of the SMCC process will help inform further discussions at the Council of Delegates in November, in Turkey. The idea now is to consolidate and share the lessons learned so that better coordinating mechanisms, appropriate for each context, can be developed at the onset of emergencies and improved over time. ■

By **Katherine Mueller**

Katherine Mueller is a humanitarian, writer and communicator, based in Canada.

Cholera grips Yemen



With more than 20 million people reliant on aid, Yemen was already the world's single largest humanitarian crisis before it fell victim to a deadly cholera outbreak that has now claimed some 2,000 lives. By the end of 2017, the number of cholera cases is expected to top 800,000. Meanwhile, front-line workers are struggling to cope within a healthcare system decimated by two years of relentless war. Today, only 45 per cent of hospitals are operational, while less than a third of needed medicines and medical supplies are getting into the country. With no garbage collection or electricity, rubbish is piling up in the streets and water systems are crippled. The ICRC has sent critical medical supplies from seven countries, including intravenous fluids, oral rehydration salts, antibiotics and chlorine tablets, and its health staff and engineers are supporting 17 cholera treatment facilities. But it's far from enough. These photos — depicting an outbreak of an easily preventable disease — should make anyone living in the 21st century want to hang their heads in shame.

☺ Aln Sabeein hospital in Sana'a, Yemen, a father and a mother worry as their son shows more and more symptoms of cholera.



War in Yemen has forced many, such as this 55-year-old fisherman (above left), into abject poverty. "This shirt I am wearing, I picked it up from the sea," he says. The combination of extreme deprivation, malnutrition, lack of clean water, inadequate sanitation and no garbage disposal (such as that seen in the city of Taiz, above) are some of the drivers. For this reason, ICRC engineers work with the staff from local water boards to keep the water flowing (right). The Yemen Red Crescent Society, meanwhile, works on a number of fronts to prevent and respond to cholera. Below, ICRC staff and Yemen Red Crescent volunteers take part in a cleaning campaign to combat cholera inside a detention centre.

Photos (clockwise from lower left): Ralph el Hage/ICRC; Ralph el Hage/ICRC; Ali al Kawkabani/ICRC; Khalid al-Saeed/ICRC; Fareed al-Homaid/ICRC.





📍 Bangladesh Red Crescent Society volunteers bring life-saving drinking water to marooned households in Islampur. Heavy monsoon rains in August and September caused floods that devastated wide areas of Bangladesh, India and Nepal. Floods this year in Bangladesh have affected some 7.4 million people, while in Nepal, landslides killed more than 100 people and damaged 62,000 homes. Photo: Kamrul Hasan/Bangladesh Red Crescent Society



📍 In Texas, United States, people carry their children and pets through flood waters caused by Tropical Storm Harvey in August. Photo: REUTERS/Jonathan Bachman

📍 When the waters come, people must quickly take what is dearest to them and try to find safe ground. On the outskirts of Agartala, India, a man carries his child through a flooded area after heavy rains hit his village in September. Photo: REUTERS/Jayanta Dey



A year of extremes

When it comes to weather, 2017 has been a year of extremes. As ongoing drought ravages large swathes of Africa and parts of the Americas, this year has been marked by heavy rains, tropical storms, and massive flooding and landslides, affecting millions of people. Meanwhile, heatwaves and dry conditions have led to wildfires in many parts of Europe and North America. With climate change raising ocean temperatures, rainfall and storm surges are becoming more intense. These pictures represent some of the human costs, and humanitarian challenges, that we may see more and more often in the future.



📍 In June, heavy rains in China prompted a massive landslide that swept over Xinmo village killing more than 130 people, causing the evacuation of 630,000 people and leading the Red Cross Society of China to launch an immediate emergency operation. More than 6,500 houses were destroyed in the flooding. Photo: Red Cross Society of China

📍 Then in September, on the outskirts of Freetown, Sierra Leone, houses built on Sugar Loaf Mountain were buried in a mudslide caused by unusually high levels of rainfall. Photo: Katherine Mueller/IFRC

Photo: Katherine Mueller/IFRC



📍 Floods also usually cause massive and rapid displacement, creating an immediate demand for shelter. American Red Cross shelter manager Irene Gray prepares a stadium in Louisiana, United States for evacuees from Tropical Storm Harvey, in August. Photo: REUTERS/Jonathan Bachman



📍 A Netherlands Red Cross volunteer distributes water and assesses needs on the island of St. Maarten after Hurricane Irma damaged or destroyed 70 per cent of the homes, buildings and critical infrastructure, including water supplies. Photo: Arie Kievit/The Netherlands Red Cross



📍 Elsewhere, extreme heat and dryness created ideal conditions for wildfires, which broke out across Europe, the north-west of the United States and Canada. Here, firefighters work to put out a forest fire near the town of Skradin, Croatia in August. Photo: REUTERS/Edin Tuzlak



Beyond borders

Migrants can make important contributions to the communities in which they live. Sometimes all they need is a feeling of safety and a helping hand.

A suburb of the industrial city Turin in northern Italy, Settimo Torinese is a fitting place to explore the day-to-day challenges that migrants face in a new world. After all, the city was largely created for people from southern and eastern Italy who came looking for employment in the 1960s and 1970s. Today, Settimo Torinese is still a place where migrants from around the world work towards their dreams. But with youth unemployment in Italy hovering around 34 per cent, taking even the first steps towards that dream is not easy. As public debate about migration becomes increasingly heated and anti-immigrant protests increase in Italy and beyond, Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies around the world are working to ensure their safety, and that their dream of making a positive contribution does not end at the water's edge or at the border fence. The photos and stories on the following pages — from Italy, Sweden and beyond — highlight just some of the challenges migrants face and the contributions they can make if given a chance. Photos and text by Nadia Shira Cohen.

Known to his friends as Kaba, Alesani Paroqui comes from Guinea in West Africa. Now living in Settimo Torinese, he works with children in a summer camp held at the San Giuseppe Artigiano church, where migrants from the Italian Red Cross reception centre work as assistants to camp counsellors. "It's a way for the people in the community to get to know Alesani," says programme director Giuseppe Venero. "Then he becomes not just a number, but the human being that he is, with a history and a future."

The centre hosts both temporary guests, who stay anywhere from a few days to a month, and permanent residents, who may stay up to a year or more. The permanent residents are the focus of a dynamic integration programme that aims to achieve full community acceptance and combat discrimination. As a first step, the centre offers immersion language classes, which prepare refugees for work and school.



Gumbo Toray, 19, from Gambia, is one of many migrants to be invited into an Italian home as part of a programme that aims to break down the dividing lines between migrants and Italians. The Italian Red Cross provides participating families with basic food and clothing support. Here, Toray shares the dinner table of his host brother, Alberto Gigliotti, and host father, Emilio.

"I feel like I'm living in a real home with a real family that loves me and takes care of me," says Toray, whose father, an imam, forced him to leave Gambia aged 13 to study the Koran in Senegal. Feeling despondent there and estranged from his family, he decided to leave and managed to get to Libya before finally taking a boat to Italy.

After spending a year in Florence, where he didn't learn any Italian and was not doing much besides playing football, he was quite depressed. Finding his way to the centre in Settimo Torinese, he started studying Italian and taking courses in the hospitality industry. He recently passed an exam that allows him to continue high school in the Italian school system. "Someday I will have my own place, I will have my own family," he says. "Then someday, who knows, I may go back to Gambia... yes, someday."





☞ The small town of Hedemora, Sweden is also a fitting place to look at what happens when communities welcome migrants and refugees. Here, the idea of welcoming those in trouble is not new. Reinis Kins, shown jumping from a diving platform, came from Latvia eight years ago. Many of Kins' friends and classmates are Swedes of Finnish descent, whose parents or grandparents came here as orphans during the Second World War, when the Hedemora branch of the Swedish Red Cross was created specifically to help those fleeing the war. Since then, the branch has seen several waves of refugees over the years and activities currently revolve around helping migrants and refugees placed in Hedemora and neighbouring towns by Swedish authorities. The main goal is to facilitate integration by offering language classes with onsite childcare, organizing meetings between Swedes and foreigners, connecting Swedish and migrant families, and offering help in navigating immigration and other government offices, such as the national labour agency.



☞ The Hedemora Red Cross branch also offers childcare for participants in their Swedish language class so that both parents have the opportunity to attend and study. Red Cross volunteer Gunborg Moran says that if they didn't offer childcare, many women would not be able to attend as they often stay at home to take care of children. This would leave the women at a severe disadvantage when integrating into society. Here, in the children's room at the Hedemora branch, Latifa Farzi from Afghanistan reunites with her children after a Swedish lesson.

☞ The Swedish Red Cross also tries to help local people understand more about the migrants' customs and religious practices. For migrants it can be difficult to maintain their traditions in a new environment and it is helpful if Swedes understand what their new neighbours are going through. Observing Ramadan this summer, Istar Mohammad, 26, of Somalia and Zarghona Rahimi of Afghanistan, neither eat nor drink during daylight hours. During Sweden's summer, however, daylight can last up to 20 hours, meaning some Muslims might eat dinner at 22:30 then rise again at 2:00 in the morning to prepare food for the next day.



☞ Migrants and migration experts interviewed for this story agree that Swedish people are mostly tolerant and helpful towards migrants and refugees. Still, prejudice and misunderstandings persist among some. Following a recent attack in Stockholm and youth unrest in the city of Malmö, some Swedes are beginning to feel that their society is under threat. This is why Red Cross and Red Crescent integration activities, including those that aim to liberate some of the stress and emotional pressure, are so critical. Meanwhile, Afghan asylum seeker Javad Rasoli has found his own way to calm his mind by fishing at the lake in Lanshytan, a district in the town of Hedemora.



Wherever they are

Whether travelling by train, road, foot or plane, migrants and asylum seekers often find themselves in extremely vulnerable situations. They can be subject to substandard water and close quarters where they are susceptible to infectious disease. They may feel isolated, depressed, cut off from a home far away. Around the world, Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, along with the IFRC and the ICRC, engage with migrants to help them cope with immediate physical and emotional needs, as well as longer-term but equally important goals. The Red Crescent of Azerbaijan, for example, eases the transition of migrants from Afghanistan, South-East Asia and elsewhere by providing free language courses, pre-requisites for work or education. “We also seek to familiarize them with our culture by organizing events and visits to historical sites, museums and theatres,” says teacher and course founder Sona Hajiyeva. The Red Crescent also runs information sessions on first aid, breast cancer, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and healthy lifestyles. Here are a few more examples of what the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is doing to protect and help migrants and those they leave behind.

The power of music

When they met in the Skaramagas migrant camp in Greece, Mariam, Houssam and Muhannad discovered fleeing the war in Syria was not the only thing they had in common. Each was an accomplished musician in Syria, so they began playing together and are now sharing their love of music with other people living at Skaramagas.

“When listening to the music, people feel a sense of freedom,” says Mariam. “There’s so much pain and suffering in this camp. Everyone living here has gone through so much to reach Greece. But music brings back our sense of joy and passion and spontaneity.”

The three friends then teamed up with the IFRC to teach singing and music theory to almost 50 students, aged between 13 and 20, on a range of instruments, from guitar to oud. The IFRC and Hellenic Red Cross provide instruments and space for the musicians to give their lessons. Around the country, the IFRC and the Hellenic Red Cross work with people living in camps across Greece to organize language classes, sports lessons and competitions, and arts and crafts. By sharing their skills in safe spaces, the migrants can have a small break from camp life.

By **Avra Fiala**, IFRC

After the storm, exposed and alone

When Cyclone Mora struck south-western Bangladesh at the end of May, the storm had a devastating impact on the informal settlements in Cox’s Bazar, then home to some 75,000 displaced people from Myanmar who fled violence in parts of northern Rakhine state.

Made of mud walls with plastic sheeting roofs wrapped over bamboo poles, these shelters could not withstand the force of the cyclone’s winds and rain. Possessions and food stocks were also lost to the storm, driving this already marginalized population deeper into crisis.

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society provided shelter, health services, clean water and sanitation. But even before the storm, Red Crescent volunteers such as Tamjid Hossen Naim were giving psychosocial support to new arrivals. In recent months, the needs in Cox Bazaar have only increased, with estimates on the number of people fleeing Myanmar for Bangladesh exceeding 400,000 by the end of September.

Every day, Niam and other volunteers navigated the muddy paths and hills of Kutupalong settlement to offer psychosocial support and protection services. Listening skills are a critical asset, he says, particularly when dealing with especially vulnerable groups, such as children or unaccompanied minors. Nearly 60 per cent of the new arrivals are girls and boys under the age of 18. “We cannot go to school because in the morning we have to do our chores to help our families,” says a young girl in the Kutupalong settlement.

A significant number of children arriving in Bangladesh are alone or separated from their parents, according to a survey by the Bangladesh Red Crescent. This is of particular concern because of their high vulnerability to physical, sexual and psychological violence, discrimination and social exclusion.

“Both of my parents died in the fighting,” says an 8-year-old boy. “I saw it happen to them. I ran and a man rescued me. He took me with the other people and left me here in this place.”

By **Gurvinder Singh**, IFRC

Photo: Mirva Helenius/IFRC



Lifeline on a deadly trail

In the southern state of Chiapas, the Santa Martha shelter in Salto del Agua, is one of the first that northbound migrants reach after crossing the Guatemalan border into Mexico. Having walked for days on end, they often arrive with foot injuries, which volunteers from the Mexican Red Cross tend to with diligence and care.

Further north, in Ciudad Serdán, in south-eastern Mexico, a doctor from the Mexican Red Cross provides basic healthcare to migrants at an aid station strategically placed between a highway and a railway line. Nearby, another volunteer offers them the chance to make free phone calls to loved ones.

In Honduras, meanwhile, volunteers from the Honduran Red Cross welcome returned migrants who have been deported from Mexico through Guatemala. The volunteers provide pre-hospital care or help them get in touch with their families.

These are just a few examples of what the Red Cross Societies of Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico are doing to provide essential emergency services to people who make the arduous and dangerous journey north every year in order to escape chronic poverty and violence.

Photo: Jesús Cornejo/ICRC

‘The train of humanity’

For 20 years, more than 1 million Tajik families have relied on income from loved ones doing seasonal work in Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation. Now, the three National Societies in the region are working together on ‘the train of humanity’, as the initiative is called, to provide health and legal information to migrant workers as they travel between the three countries.

Armed with information on the risks of tuberculosis (TB), hepatitis and sexually transmitted diseases, volunteers from the Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan board the train in the country’s capital Dushanbe. Teams from the Kazakh Red Crescent get on the train in Kazakhstan’s western Atyrau province, followed by volunteers from the Russian Red Cross, who join the journey in the south-western city of Volgograd.

“Many people are oblivious to their rights and unaware of their entitlement as legal migrant workers to basic healthcare,” says Tajikistan Red Crescent legal expert Rano Saidova, who is a team member on the train of humanity, providing first-aid tips and basic information on infectious diseases and workers’ rights, especially in relation to medical treatment. “It means a lot to the people in the train that someone is thinking about them and understands their situation,” says Saidova. “People told us that they often feel isolated and alone.”



‘Away forever’

Migration also takes an immense toll on the families and friends left behind. These photos taken for the ICRC by photographer José Cendon help tell their story.

Mamadou was 55 years old when he went missing. His wife still keeps his carpentry tools, which she shows laid out on a mat. She keeps them in case he comes back, so “he can work and we can have the same life as before”.

Another young man, also named Mamadou, was 20 years old when he went missing. “He grew up fishing and loved the sea more than anything else in the world,” says his mother, Faousseuk Fall. “And the sea took him away forever.”

For the loved ones of the men and women who are never heard from again, the ICRC and the Senegalese Red Cross Society provide support groups, literacy classes, education and training, and help to set up small businesses.

Photo: José Cendon/ICRC

Surfing the future

Getting ahead of future trends is not always about predicting particular events or outcomes, but about being poised to respond to the unpredictable.

IMAGINE SURFING a huge, fast-moving wave. You don't know how the wave is going to break — maybe an offshore wind will slow the wave's crest or an underwater shoal will force it to crash earlier than expected.

Knowing something about prevailing winds and underwater shoals doesn't hurt. But ultimately, your ability to stay on the board is not based on knowing exactly how and when the wave will break, but on having the agility, skills and experience to react to whatever comes your way.

For humanitarians, staying on top of fast-moving trends is a bit like riding that wave. While we can be pretty certain of some trends — the world's temperature will continue to rise, drought and storm cycles will intensify, technology will transform our lives even more deeply — we don't know how all these complex dynamics will play out and interact.

Humanitarians aren't the only ones unsure of the future. Most thinkers, high-tech gurus, futurists and financial prognosticators generally only agree on a few basic things: the pace of change will increase, the web of interconnections that define modern life will become even more complex, and nobody really knows where the wave will take us.

- Will the gap between rich and poor increase or decrease?
- Will paper money disappear?
- Will the centres of influence, capital and commerce shift?
- How big can the world's cities get?
- When will space travel really be a thing?
- What will the rise of artificial intelligence and robotics mean for human beings?
- What could be the ramifications of genetic engineering on plants, animals and humans?
- What will be the average age of death in 30 years?
- What is the future of warfare?
- What advances in energy and food production will we benefit from?

The future is uncertain

Some answers to these questions lie in what is already happening. Take the question of money. Roughly 80 per cent of people in some urban areas in China, for example, now use no paper cash in their daily transactions, according to one study. It all

happens electronically through mobile phones. In some parts of rural Africa, the statistics reveal a similar trend.

And how about these so-called 'thinking machines'? Very primitive forms of artificial intelligence already play a huge role in our everyday lives — in our phones, cars and homes. Every time someone makes a purchase or does research on the internet, for example, computers track these activities then use complex mathematical formulas to profile consumers, predict future behaviour and market directly to their potential needs — all without any human input.

Similarly, computers use algorithms to make split-second stock-trading decisions, produce weather modelling analyses or tell certain weapons systems how to react in specific circumstances.

There is considerable debate about how quickly artificial intelligence and robotics will take over greater aspects of human life. But many thinkers predict that as the pace and complexity of life increases, humans will become more and more reliant on artificial intelligence to help them cope. When combined with other evolving technologies — genetic engineering or human enhancement — some predict that in a few generations, human beings could become a very different kind of animal.

It may sound far-fetched. But the assertion is based on developments already under way. Numerous companies are developing human enhancement systems, such as mechanical exoskeletons to improve physical strength. Others offer to install various forms of nano-technology (microscopic devices and computers) into human bodies to improve sight, provide security clearance or track a person's biological status.

While these technologies pose many possible benefits, they also come with plenty of ethical baggage and potential humanitarian fallout. Might human enhancement technologies be put to malicious use or increase the likelihood of violations of humanitarian law? Will our increasing interface with technology be a source of freedom or leave us more vulnerable to control? If robots or semi-automated or enhanced humans do more work, what will it mean for workers, their families and communities? Will these changes affect people equally around the world?

The future is local

Not all trends and innovations are driven by new technology, however. Nor are they all developed in well-funded labs in developed economies of the global North or West. Many innovations are happening in communities around the world as people figure out new ways to cope with their own complex problems.

A case in point: an Indonesian farmer breeds black soldier flies that eat the garbage in streambeds that cause water blockages and flooding. While the adult insects help prevent flooding, the larvae of those flies can be used to feed farm animals.

This idea caught the eye of the Indonesian Red Cross Society (known locally as PMI), the IFRC, Hamburg University and various donors that teamed up to create an 'innovation fund' looking for pioneering flood-prevention ideas to support.

"Innovations are already happening in communities,"

says Carlos Álvarez, who works on innovation and futures communications for IFRC's Policy, Strategy and Knowledge unit. "It's about bringing them funding and further incubating their innovations so they can be more widely diffused across communities to achieve impact on a larger scale."

The soldier fly idea is just one of many that has come up in the last year as IFRC, ICRC and National Society teams have sought to interpret emerging and future trends and support ideas that will help the Movement get ahead of that wave — a key theme of the 2017 Statutory Meetings of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, set for November, in Turkey.

The RC² Forum, which will take place during the meetings, will focus on current and future dilemmas, as well as potential solutions. The ideas that emerge will complement discussion at the IFRC General Assembly, inform debates and decisions during the Council of Delegates, and help guide the agenda of the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in 2019.

With so many questions ahead, however, the challenge for the Movement is not necessarily about predicting specific outcomes or developing the perfect gadget or innovation for any potential scenario. In a sense, it's about learning to be better surfers.

"The question for us becomes: 'How do we build the mechanisms and cultures within our organizations so that we are constantly scanning the horizon and adapting to the changes around us?'" says Shaun Hazeldine, who leads the IFRC team analysing future trends.

At the core of these discussions are some very fundamental and compelling questions: what kind of Movement do we need to be to face these complex and rapidly evolving challenges and what kind of humanitarians do we need to be in a world where even basic assumptions of past generations — including what it means to be human — may be open to question?

Promise or threat?

Given the rapid and potentially monumental changes ahead, is the future for humanity a bright one? Or will the changes to come lead to something darker? What does all this mean for humanitarians?

At gatherings of Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers and staff assembled to examine future trends as part of the 'Futures and Foresights' process, opinion was generally split, says Aarathi Krishnan, an IFRC innovation coordinator based in Kuala Lumpur. "About half saw the changes ahead as an opportunity and the other half saw them as a threat," she says.

Bright or dark, change is upon us. And it's happening fast. For the business world, staying on top of fast-moving trends, market forces and consumer tastes has always been critical. With change happening ever more quickly, companies are investing even more in interpreting future trends, largely through the analysis of vast quantities of data. In short, they use computer-run mathematical formulas to look at patterns in vast quantities of data to reach conclusions or make decisions.

The convergence of artificial intelligence, computers capable of 'deep learning' and cloud computing (which allows vast data sets to be gathered, merged and analysed) provides new ways of seeing, understanding and influencing both individual behaviour and broad political and economic trends.

Big data

Humanitarian organizations have tended not to invest far less heavily in innovation, making use of breakthroughs developed in other sectors. But that is starting to change. How 'big data' is used may be one example. The Netherlands Red Cross, for example, has launched the 510 Global Initiative, which seeks to make humanitarian aid faster and more cost-effective by using machine learning to predict the damage caused by typhoons, earthquakes and floods.

"Based on historical damage data, we are increasingly able to predict the impact of a disaster, just hours after it happens," says Maarten Van der Veen, the initiator of the project for the Netherlands Red Cross. "This initial data can help us prioritize our immediate relief operations."

At the Nangbéto dam on the Mono River in Togo, meanwhile, machine-learning systems are helping hydropower operators predict flood risks and communicate these risks to communities downstream.

"Hydropower dams are natural partners for this initiative as it is possible to predict when flooding is likely to occur," says Pablo Suarez, who is associate director for research and innovation at the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre and one of the architects behind the scheme.

After a major flood on the Mono River in 2010, when it took 34 days for disaster relief funding from international sources to reach the Togolese Red Cross, Suarez and colleagues developed a system that uses a complex algorithm to analyse past rainfall patterns and predict when the dam will reach full capacity. Disaster prevention funds are then released before any flooding takes place based on forecasts of likely peak flows downstream.

My data, my dignity

These projects are just two examples of the role data can and will play in our future. By 2018, some 3.6 billion – almost half of the world's population – are expected to use at least one messaging app.

Humanitarian organizations are no exception. One example is 'What now?', an initiative supported by a partnership between Google and the IFRC's Global Disaster Preparedness Centre, that provides worldwide mobile users with early warning and action guidance.

New research from the ICRC suggests that apps should be considered to a much greater extent as a tool to make operations more effective and responsive to rapidly evolving needs. But as the ICRC's January 2017 report, *Humanitarian Futures for Messaging Apps*, points out, humanitarian organizations need to tread carefully.

Most messaging apps collect a wide range of information about users as a matter of routine business. So if humanitarians are using messaging apps to reach specific groups of people in need, they must protect that data. Even the inadvertent collection of that data could increase risks to individuals or groups.

Humanitarian organizations, therefore, must have clear and strong data-protection policies that proactively address a range of intersecting issues, from informed consent to effective encryption measures and privacy rights, among other things.

This is relevant beyond the use of messaging apps, as humanitarian organizations increasingly use electronic means to conduct field assessments, register beneficiaries and transfer funds to aid recipients. Some even use biometric data such as handprints to verify the identity of people receiving aid. This is part of the reason the ICRC recently launched a research project with Privacy International to further explore the risks of meta-data generated by humanitarian organizations.

New challenges, new baggage

Indeed, with every new opportunity, trend or innovation comes a myriad of interacting technical and ethical dilemmas. The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement will need to identify, analyse and respond to these trends — and weigh in on the humanitarian consequences — more rapidly than ever.

In a recent article for the blog of the International Telecommunications Union, the ICRC's Anja Kaspersen notes that such algorithms have diagnosed some forms of cancer more accurately than experienced human oncologists.

"And recently, an artificial intelligence algorithm called Libratius is showing great promise as a poker player," she notes. The problem is that, so far at least, it's hard to know why these algorithms made certain decisions and this makes corrective action or accountability extremely challenging. If artificial intelligence is used to give autonomous targeting power to weapons systems, these questions become even more serious.

"Imagine a deep learning algorithm that proves more capable than humans in distinguishing combatants from civilians," she writes.

"Knowing it will save more civilians than human decision-makers, do we have an ethical obligation to allow this algorithm to make life-and-death decisions? Or would this be morally unacceptable, knowing that the algorithm will not be able to explain the reasoning that led to a mistake, rendering us incapable of remediating its ability to repeat that mistake?"

Understanding the potential benefits and pitfalls of artificial intelligence [AI] is critical, she says, as we appear to be "on the brink of an AI-powered global arms race... and AI-powered systems are likely to transform modern warfare as dramatically as gunpowder and nuclear arms".

New players, new playing field

Good or bad, not all big changes affecting humanitarian action come from new technology. New humanitarian actors, including creative alliances between private, public and community actors, are changing the way people engage in humanitarian response.

"A new wave of social impact enterprises are working with NGOs [non-governmental organizations] to design solutions and attract alternate forms of financing," says Ramya Gopalan,

☺ The transparent waves in this photo are described by their creator, Pablo Suarez, director of research for the IFRC Climate Centre, as a 'data sculpture'. The peaks and valleys represent variations in water flow upstream and downstream of a dam in Togo, where a machine-learning programme is being used to predict flood dangers.

Photo: Janot Mendler de Suarez/
IFRC Climate Centre

IFRC innovation coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa Region. "These social impact enterprises often incorporate lean, start-up management style."

For the Movement, experience has always been one of its greatest assets. But in this new world, this can be a hindrance. "Many organizations as large as ours have an entitled approach," Gopalan notes. "We believe we will stay in business because it's always been that way. But that entitled approach no longer holds."

As humanitarian organizations face more pressure from donors to transform their operating model and better coordinate their actions, including with local groups and other sectors, understanding these trends will be critical.

"The humanitarian ecosystem is screaming for change and this requires a significant mindset shift," according to Peter Walton and Fiona Tarpey, director and manager of international strategy and policy for the Australian Red Cross, in an article for the *Red Cross Red Crescent* website (rcrcmagazine.org).

"We must start taking a longer-term, more systemic approach to collaboration between organizations and Movement components and find more creative coalitions," they argue.

One example is an Australian Red Cross pilot project in Vanuatu to involve local suppliers in aid delivery. The idea is that partnerships between local suppliers, humanitarian agencies and government are formed to increase the capacity for local businesses to provide goods and services from the first rapid response. This could thereby bring relief more quickly to hard-to-reach island communities while also stimulating the local economy.

Such change will not be without pitfalls, however, and one big challenge for the Movement lies in adapting to change while ensuring respect for the values that have ensured its reputation as a trusted and neutral provider of impartial relief for more than 150 years.

"It's not about getting rid of our traditions and our culture," says John Sweeney, who coordinates IFRC's futures and foresights team. "It's about figuring out how to take on opportunities and meet the changes head on, finding things that work and scaling them up, making that the new normal and then continuing to mutate and evolve." ■

By **Malcolm Lucard**

Malcolm Lucard is editor of
Red Cross Red Crescent magazine.



Uniting for humanity

After eight years as president of the world's largest humanitarian volunteer network, Tadateru Konoé reflects on the critical work ahead in strengthening National Societies, volunteerism and local humanitarian action.

EMERGING FROM HIS CAR into the intense heat of an Uzbek summer morning, Tadateru Konoé bows his head and places his right hand over his heart in a customary local greeting to a group of smiling volunteers and staff from the Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan.

Two women in matching embroidered *tyubeteykas*, or skull-caps, present trays of flatbread and dried fruits, traditional welcome offerings in Central Asia.

As president of the IFRC, Konoé is in the historic city of Samarkand, south-west of the Uzbek capital Tashkent, to meet members of the local branch, who minutes later have a chance to ask the president a

range of questions, from the future of volunteering to first-aid training and disaster preparedness. One young volunteer asks about the future role of youth in the Movement.

Konoé is direct in his reply. Criticizing the 'old-fashioned' approach of some National Societies in their dealings with youth, he says all IFRC members need to do more to empower young people and bring them into decision-making roles.

Noting the city's centuries-long history as a trade hub and cultural melting pot along the famed Silk Road, Konoé encouraged Samarkand volunteers to continue to lead by example.

"Despite the fact the world is so divided, our 190 National Societies share the same seven basic principles," he tells the audience. "I hope you can further strengthen the understanding of these principles and continue, by example, to promote a culture of tolerance and non-violence as you work to build resilience."

Part of something larger

Before catching the high-speed train back to Tashkent later in the day, he enthuses about the frankness of the young people in the audience. "I very much like meeting and working with volunteers. I really feel a part of this Movement at those times," he says. "So if my visits can serve as an encouragement and recognition of the services provided by volunteers, I think they're worthwhile doing."

In his role as head of an assembly of 190 National Societies, including his own, the Japanese Red Cross Society, Konoé is very much the public face of the IFRC and its chief humanitarian diplomat. The trip is particularly momentous because it marks the first visit ever to Uzbekistan by an IFRC president. Since 2009, when he was elected president at the biennial General Assembly, he has visited nearly 100 countries on 73 separate trips, racking up almost 600 days on the road.

His country visits typically include meetings with a nation's leadership and high-ranking officials. "The profile of some National Societies may not be very high and they may not have had much chance to meet the country's leader," says Konoé, a day after talks with members of the Uzbek government. "So they can use my presence as an opportunity to deliver their own message."

Unfortunately, Konoé explains, high-level talks are sometimes not enough. "Often it takes a disaster for the government to pay attention," he says. "A big disaster provides a chance for a National Society to show itself and its relevance to the government. It's not ideal, but it's the reality."

Konoé's overseas trips give him the opportunity to recognize the work of so many unsung volunteers and staff, and also to reinforce his message of

"By uniting our power of humanity, we can do much more. Then we need to improve the capacity of each National Society, otherwise, as a Movement, we cannot exert our power and address challenges."

➤ In all his travels over the years, IFRC President Tadateru Konoé has always made meeting with volunteers a top priority. Here, he speaks with a young volunteer from the Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan during a visit to the country in June 2017. Photo: Nick Jones/IFRC

solidarity. The IFRC's principal strength, he says, is its commonalities.

"If we can better unite ourselves for the common cause, perhaps we can present ourselves more strongly to the outside world," says Konoé, sitting aboard the Tashkent-bound train. "By uniting our power of humanity, we can do much more. Then we need to improve the capacity of each National Society, otherwise, as a Movement, we cannot exert our power and address challenges."

These trips are also a chance to maintain a connection to the grass-roots side of the organization, says Konoé, who has been president of the Japanese Red Cross Society since 2005. "You have to see with your own eyes and listen with your own ears to assess the reality on the ground. Feeling empathy is also important. As a basic policy, whenever a major disaster hits, I try to make a visit."

Shortly after taking office, Konoé visited his first disaster zone as IFRC president after a 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck the Caribbean island of Haiti in January 2010. A few months later, Pakistan experienced its worst flooding in recorded history, with up to 20 million people affected. Other catastrophes followed, including a devastating earthquake and tsunami in Konoé's home country in 2011, as well as numerous conflicts and refugee crises.

Konoé, 78, is no stranger to such scenes of calamity and suffering. He has spent more than five decades with the Movement and during that time, has been



➤ In his role as the IFRC's top humanitarian diplomat, Konoé has been a passionate advocate for a number of humanitarian causes. Here, he stands with ICRC President Peter Maurer during a visit to Hiroshima, Japan, during which the two reiterated their call that states negotiate an international agreement to prohibit the use of and completely eliminate nuclear weapons within a binding timetable. Photo: IFRC

“It’s crazy that there are 15,000 nuclear warheads in the world that could kill humankind multiple times. If leaders are committed to international humanitarian law, maybe there is a chance to solve situations in better ways.”

involved in some 30 relief missions around the world. One early, formative experience was a three-month stint with a Japanese Red Cross Society medical team in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in 1970, following the deadliest tropical cyclone on record.

“That was a typically complex emergency, and similar situations exist in many parts of the world today,” says the tall, slender Konoé, sitting in his office in Tokyo one midweek morning. “So we can still use the lessons we learned from that time. The problems are the same today, but the international community is better equipped and organized, though investment in preparedness is still not enough.”

Humanity’s ‘lifeblood’

Visiting with volunteers — who Konoé describes as the ‘lifeblood’ of the humanitarian network — is always a highlight of his missions. Fostering volunteerism has been a priority during his tenure. A volunteer charter, which aims to recognize, protect and encourage volunteers while clarifying their rights and responsibilities, is expected to be adopted at the upcoming General Assembly.

Strong volunteer networks also require strong National Societies. But the IFRC needs to acknowledge weaknesses within its network and find solutions. One of those weak points is that many National Societies are still far too dependent on a narrow source of income, often funding provided by a limited number of sister National Societies.

And while a major disaster may draw the media spotlight and an influx of donations to a National Society, Konoé argues that once world attention has moved on, National Societies need to find innovative ways to fund-raise for long-term recovery

efforts and for less visible but vital medical and social welfare programmes.

Recalling the massive relief operation during the Ethiopian famine of the 1980s, Konoé explains how the IFRC and National Societies worked together to address some of the root causes of the large-scale hunger.

“I like that kind of multifaceted approach involving many actors,” he says. “Some argue that it’s not the work of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, that it’s too ambitious. That may be true, but without multidisciplinary approaches to solving this kind of problem, nothing will improve.”

The One Billion Coalition for Resilience — which brings people, businesses, communities, organizations and government together to reduce risks and improve health and safety — is one example of multi-sector collaboration that Konoé has enthusiastically supported.

An issue close to his heart

Born into one of Japan’s most prominent samurai families, the young Konoé was averse to the country’s politically polarized landscape and had little interest in a career in politics, a family tradition (both his elder brother and grandfather served as prime minister). Instead, he pursued travel and education outside Japan, eventually studying in the vibrant academic environment of the United Kingdom’s London School of Economics in the early 1960s.

“I learned how to analyse situations from different angles. It was very useful, particularly with regard to the situation in Japan at that time, which was deeply divided. Then I started getting interested in how one can be neutral or fair and how common sense can prevail,” he says.



Like many Japanese, Konoé is resolute in his opposition to nuclear weapons, a position reinforced after conversations with some of the *hibakusha*, or survivors, of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings of August 1945.

“As a Japanese, I am obviously particularly close to this issue,” he says. “It’s crazy that there are 15,000 nuclear warheads in the world that could kill humankind multiple times. If leaders are committed to international humanitarian law, maybe there is a chance to solve situations in better ways.”

In 2009, the IFRC adopted a resolution that urges states to continue their efforts towards the elimination of nuclear weapons with determination and urgency. At a Red Cross and Red Crescent conference in Nagasaki earlier this year, however, Konoé lamented both the lack of full participation by states in discussions on the issue and the failure to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

But he welcomed the adoption by 122 states of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons at a recent United Nations conference in New York. The move was hailed as a significant step forward in the struggle against nuclear weapons although there is still much work ahead: several key nuclear-armed states have said they do not intend to participate in the treaty.

Now in the final weeks of his presidency, Konoé takes a few moments to contemplate a question about his strengths as a leader. “From the very beginning when I ran [for president], I’ve said I would be a good listener,” he eventually replies. “Particularly in this age of globalization, leaders have to listen to the opinions of others and try and find common ground wherever that exists.” ■

By **Nick Jones**

Nick Jones is a journalist and editor, based in Tokyo, Japan.

During one of his first international missions for the Japan Red Cross, a young Tadateru Konoé takes part in relief efforts following a major earthquake in Nepal in 1966.

Photo: Japan Red Cross Society

➡ In his role as president of the IFRC and the Japanese Red Cross Society, Konoé has made a point of visiting people affected by disaster and conflict. Here, he talks with people left homeless by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in north-eastern Japan. Photo: Japan Red Cross Society



A race against time and tide

An island nation is poised to become home to the 191st National Society.

LIKE MANY PACIFIC ISLAND NATIONS, the Republic of the Marshall Islands is in a race against time. With sea levels rising and the population affected by a succession of droughts and heavy tropical storms, the country faces existential threats that are abstractions for many other nations.

“We’re going to be at the forefront of some horrific problems in the near future and we don’t have moments to spare,” says Secretary General Jack Niedenthal.

While the Marshall Islands Red Cross has been active for several years, and receives funding, training opportunities and technical support from the IFRC, official recognition by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement would help expand the scope of its work, especially during disasters and give it a greater voice on vital issues in international forums, says Niedenthal.

“To me, recognition is going to be a really important part of what we’re trying to achieve as a country, not just as the Red Cross,” he says.

Adding to the country’s problems is the legacy of nuclear testing by the United States in the 1940s and 1950s in Bikini Atoll. People were displaced and still cannot return, so toxic is the radiation level in the soil.

“We have a 40 per cent unemployment rate. A lot of young people want to do something for their country but don’t have the platform for it.”

Jack Niedenthal, secretary general, Marshall Islands Red Cross

The remote Marshall Islands is made up of 29 atolls and 1,156 islands and is home to just over 50,000 people, the majority of whom live in the capital Majuro. But many still live in the far-flung outer islands, presenting logistical problems for both the government and the Red Cross. This is of particular concern during the country’s many droughts, one of which has the Marshall Islands currently under a state of emergency, with no rain since November 2016.

Niedenthal says the Red Cross would also like to help the government address the nation’s numerous health problems, including diabetes, hepatitis A, mumps and gout, as well as mosquito-borne diseases such as dengue fever, chikungunya and Zika virus. The country also faces many difficult social issues, including high unemployment, youth suicide, teen pregnancy, domestic violence and child abuse.

“We have a 40 per cent unemployment rate,” says Niedenthal, adding that building up the country’s 300-plus volunteer corps is top on his list. “A lot of young people want to do something for their country but don’t have the platform for it.”

He and Alexandre Pinano, the newly elected National Society president, also plan to set up a non-remunerated blood donation system and to expand the numbers of people trained in first aid.

“We’ve trained more than 100 volunteers in first aid and CPR [cardiopulmonary resuscitation] including some in two of the outer islands,” says Pinano. “It is my aim to try to ensure that every outer island has trained Red Cross responders.”

A family doctor who lives on the island of Majuro, Pinano formed in 2011 a volunteer committee of people from the private and governmental sectors, including lawyers, who worked on a constitution and bylaws. Two years later, after many drafts, the Movement’s Joint Statutes Commission approved the documents and, on 26 November 2013, the Marshall Islands Red Cross Society Act was passed.

In June 2017, the National Society held its inaugural general assembly, where it elected its first board, ratified the constitution and rules, and gained several new members, including Hilda Heine, the country’s president, and Amentha Matthew, the minister of internal affairs.

“We still have to accomplish the ten conditions for recognition and pass a joint assessment mission,” says Pinano. “More importantly, we have to become sustainable and develop a volunteer base in the outer islands so we can respond and work together with our partners.

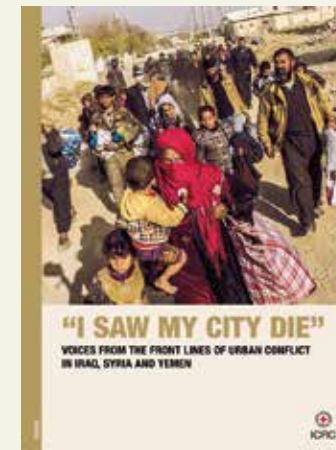
“The last few months have been really exciting,” he says. “This place means a lot to me, it’s where I’m going to die and be buried. I want to leave a legacy for my children and my grandchildren.” ■

By **Corinne Ambler**

Corinne Ambler is an IFRC communications delegate based in Suva, Fiji.

Resources

PUBLICATIONS



I saw my city die: voices from the front lines of urban conflict in Iraq, Syria and Yemen
ICRC, 2017

Urban wars in Iraq, Syria and Yemen are among the deadliest conflicts of our time. Through first-hand stories of residents of cities like Aleppo in Syria, Mosul in Iraq and Taiz in Yemen, this report vividly explores the consequences of these conflicts for communities, cities and entire countries. The report also makes urgent recommendations about the immediate and longer-term steps that military forces and armed groups, governments and others can and must take to help to alleviate and prevent human suffering.

Available in Arabic, English, French, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish

Refugee/migrant crisis in Europe: scenarios
ACAPS/IFRC, 2017

Following the March 2016 agreement between the European Union and Turkey, which regulated the level of migration to Europe from Turkey, the central Mediterranean route to Italy became the most popular migration channel to Europe. This document describes a modelling exercise in which experts involved in assistance to migrants imagined and discussed various potential scenarios critical to next steps in the humanitarian response.

Available in English

40th Anniversary of the 1977 Additional Protocols to the 1949 Geneva Conventions
ICRC, 2017

This report describes the impact that the Additional Protocols have had on norms, how they have shaped the practice of parties to conflict and why they remain relevant 40 years after their adoption on 8 June 1977.

Available in English

A socio-economic impact assessment of the Zika virus in Latin America and the Caribbean, with a focus on Brazil, Colombia and Suriname
IFRC–UNDP 2017

This report is a contribution to the ongoing efforts of governments in Latin America and the Caribbean to design national Zika virus responses. The report was prepared by a joint team of experts, led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the IFRC, with the collaboration of the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal) and Johns Hopkins University.

Available in English and Spanish

Acquiring and Analysing Data in Support of Evidence-based Decisions: A Guide for Humanitarian Work
ICRC, 2017

Gathering and analysing data — to study the consequences of crises and carry out activities in response — is an essential element of humanitarian work. It helps to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of such work and enables accountability. This book is a technical guide for field staff who, though not specialists in this area, need to collect and analyse data in connection with assessments and monitoring and evaluation.

Available in English

ICRC materials are available from the International Committee of the Red Cross, 19 avenue de la Paix, CH-1202 Geneva, Switzerland. www.icrc.org.
IFRC materials are available from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, P.O. Box 303, CH-1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland. www.ifrc.org.

Commentary on the First Geneva Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field: Part of Commentaries on the 1949 Geneva Conventions
ICRC, 2017

The application and interpretation of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their two Additional Protocols of 1977 have developed significantly in the 60 years since the ICRC first published its commentaries on these important humanitarian treaties. This article-by-article commentary takes into

account developments in the law and practice to provide up-to-date interpretations of the convention.

Available in English

Handbook on Data Protection in Humanitarian Action
ICRC, 2017

Published as part of the Brussels Privacy Hub and ICRC’s Data Protection in Humanitarian Action project, this handbook is aimed at the staff of humanitarian organizations involved in processing personal data as part of humanitarian operations, particularly those in charge of advising on and applying data protection standards.

Available in English

ONLINE



Game of life: the story of Sharif
IFRC, 2017

Sharif, 15, fled Afghanistan after his entire family was killed. Shot at and jailed during his one-and-a-half-month journey through Iran and Turkey, Sharif finally made it to Europe where he hoped for a future. Nine months later, he is in limbo living in one of Greece’s island camps. The IFRC hopes this video will help shine a light on the people behind the statistics, to share the stories and experiences of those who are more than the label ‘migrant’ or ‘refugee’ has come to mean. The IFRC and London-based comic artist Karrie Fransman worked in collaboration to produce this short film.

Available in English

Life after losing a limb
ICRC, 2017

During the Lebanese armed conflict, Ali lost a leg and an arm, while Qassem lost both legs. However, as this short video reveals, their will to live was stronger than their traumatic experience. With the aid of the ICRC’s Prosthetics Rehabilitation Programme, Ali and Qassem received prosthesis, which helped them pursue their dreams. Ali is now doing a PhD on international humanitarian law and Qassem is a renowned writer.

Available in English