



Austrian Red Cross
International Aid
Mission Statement

November 2008



AUSTRIAN RED CROSS

Mission and principles

In accordance with the mission of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (Federation), the overriding goal of all ARC International Aid's activities is to **"improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity."** The seven fundamental principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (RC/RC) constitute the framework for achieving and implementing this objective.

Humanity

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

Impartiality

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

Neutrality

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

Independence

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

Voluntary service

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

Unity

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

Universality

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

International Aid of the Austrian Red Cross (ARC) strives to benefit the most vulnerable people. It acts impartially as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions.



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Strategic framework

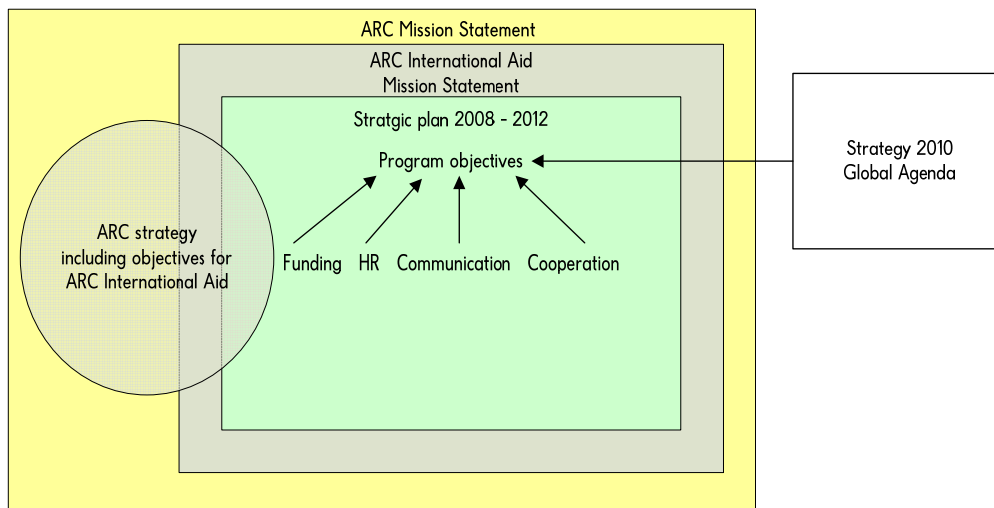
ARC International Aid's activities are guided by the Federation's policy statements and strategies.

Strategy 2010¹ defines the core areas of the global RC/RC programmes, which are:

- disaster response
- disaster preparedness
- health and care in the community
- promotion of the principles and humanitarian values of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement)

Strategy 2010 has been supplemented through the **Global Agenda**² with clear objectives as well as drawing on the UN Millennium Development Goals³. The Global Agenda's objectives are the basis for ARC International Aid's activities:

- reduce the number of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters
- reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies
- increase local community, civil society and RC/RC capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability
- promote respect for diversity and human dignity, and reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion



¹ Strategy 2010: <http://www.ifrc.org/who/strategy.asp>

² Federation of the Future incl. Global Agenda: http://www.ifrc.org/who/structure.asp?navid=03_04

³ Millennium Development Goals: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>



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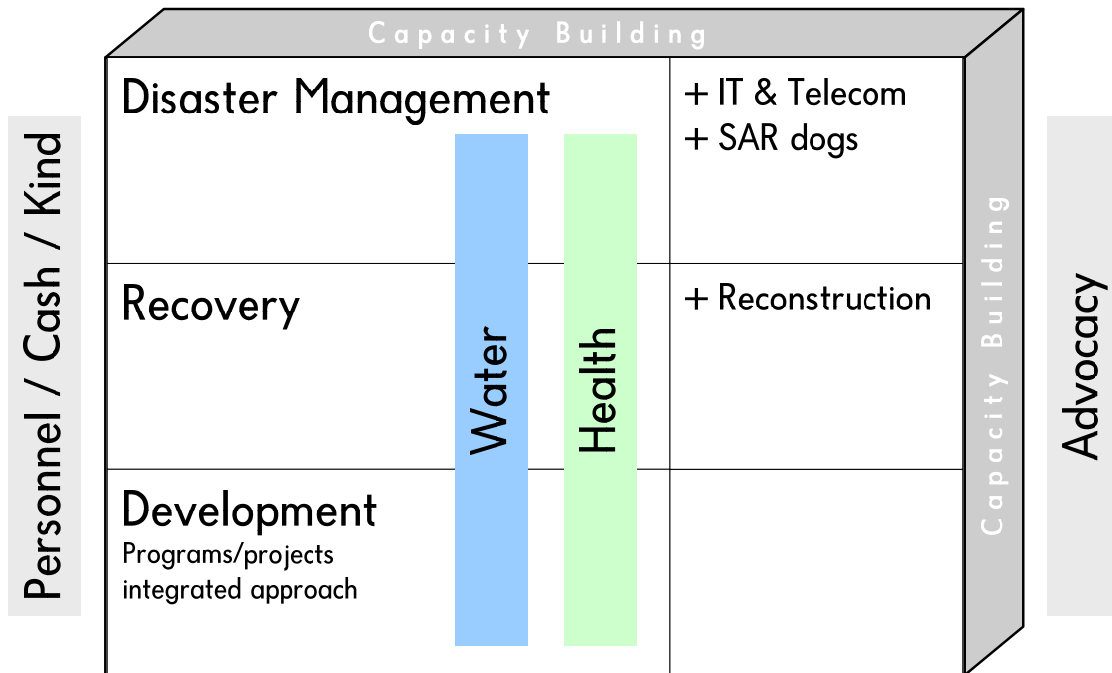
ARC International Aid's programmes consider, amongst other, the following current and future **challenges**:

- effects and consequences of climate change
- migration
- pandemics

Focus

ARC International Aid's fields of activity are **humanitarian aid (disaster response and recovery)** and **development**, allowing for cross-linking within the Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) approach in the programme activities.

Thematic and regional focuses help to ensure well targeted and professionalized programmes and use of expertise. Within the **central programmatic themes of water and health**, ARC International Aid's range of activities is constantly advanced, updated and adjusted to global challenges such as climate change and migration.



ARC International Aid's activities and key areas



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All long-term ARC international programmes are conducted as part of an **integrated approach**. Programme planning is based on participation, considering all relevant needs of the target group. **Capacity building** in the target communities (encouraging and supporting self-help) and in the respective Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies forms a central component of all ARC International Aid's programmes and projects, in development as well as disaster management. ARC International Aid supports vulnerable people based on demand and on available resources either **financially, in kind** (provision of relief goods) or by **deploying staff**. An essential basic requirement for the successful accomplishment of all ARC's international projects is their effective implementation by dedicated, qualified and well prepared staff. ARC boasts experienced specialists via its concept of a **core delegate group**. These delegates have successfully completed Federation, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and ARC missions worldwide, undergo continuous training to attain the very best qualifications and are available to the ARC for international work both in the short and long term. Additionally, ARC International Aid also contributes to high-quality educational work related to disaster and development policies via its **advocacy work for people in need**.

Key themes

ARC International Aid **focuses** its activities on **water** and **health**, with these two major issues often closely interlinked in project implementation. Providing people with clean drinking **water** is the number one priority for the ARC at all stages of assistance: through the drinking water kits provided by the Emergency Response Units (ERUs) in disaster relief, through repair and rebuilding of wells and latrines in the recovery phase, and through long-term activities aimed at promoting water and settlement hygiene in long-term development. Another core area of responsibility for ARC International Aid are its efforts to protect, preserve and promote **health** – humankind's most valuable asset. This includes disaster relief supplies (such as medicines), the reconstruction of local health facilities during the recovery phase, and provision **for** basic health care and in combating epidemics. All related activities are integrated into the national strategies being pursued by the target countries national Red Cross or Red Crescent Society.

In addition to the key topics water and health, three **cross cutting issues** that are **disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change, capacity building** and **gender**, are considered or respectively integrated in disaster management, rehabilitation and development activities.

The ARC provides an **additional expertise** in disaster relief through provision of SAR dogs (Search and Rescue) and through deployment of IT and telecommunications ERUs. These units specialize in rapidly establishing communication links, so that following a disaster the humanitarian effort can be efficiently coordinated. During the rehabilitation stage alongside water and health issues the ARC focuses on rebuilding the local infrastructure (above all housing).



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Regional focuses

ARC International Aid provides disaster response and recovery aid worldwide, although given the need for efficient assistance, regional proximity of the disaster area is a significant factor. In **development**, strategically targeted parts of **Africa** and **Asia** form the **regional focuses** based on the high level of need. These regions/countries have been selected based on the following criteria:

A) Least developed countries (LDCs) in Africa and Asia where the following criteria among others apply:

- countries where ARC already maintains a presence through a humanitarian programme
- coordination with the key regions of Austrian Development Cooperation (OEZA)
- the Federation's key countries of development (i.e. through operational alliances)⁴

First priority: Africa: Southern Africa (chiefly Mozambique)

East Africa (chiefly Ethiopia, Sudan)

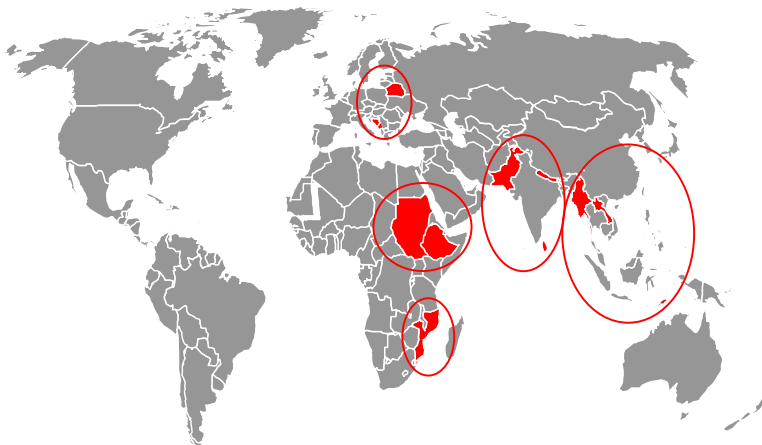
Second priority: Asia: South Asia (chiefly Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka)

South East Asia (chiefly Laos, Myanmar, Timor-Leste)

B) Selected (South)Eastern European transition countries, non-EU member states:

Third priority: Eastern Europe and Western Balkans

(chiefly Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro)



KEY REGIONS	
East Africa	Ethiopia, Sudan
Southern Africa	Mozambique
South Asia	Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka
South East Asia	Laos, Myanmar, Timor-Leste
Eastern Europe and Western Balkans	Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro

ARC International Aid's key regions and countries

⁴ Federation of the Future: <http://www.ifrc.org/Docs/pubs/who/fof-en.pdf>



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System-specific framework

The expertise and resources coming from all ARC's services (including National Disaster Management, Health and Social Services, Marketing and Public Relations, Austrian Youth Red Cross) and from the **ARC's regional branches** add significant value to a needs-based programmatic approach to supporting people in need internationally.

ARC International Aid forms an integral part of the **Movement's network** - the **world's largest humanitarian organization** - comprising 186 national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the ICRC and the Federation. Within ARC, the headquarters is responsible for implementing international tasks and for ARC's coordination with all the components of the Movement. We attach particular importance to this networking role which aims to achieve synergies and enhance efficiency by exploiting RC/RC partners' expertise for the greatest possible benefit of people in need. Cooperation with the Red Cross societies of Austria's neighbouring countries is especially important in this regard. Based on the requirements of international efforts, the programmes and projects are implemented either **bilaterally** with one of the 186 national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies locally or **multilaterally** through the Federation or the ICRC.

In line with the **international trend** of decentralizing both, content-related and financial decision-making in humanitarian aid and also in development, ARC staff are being increasingly deployed in our key regions with a view to strengthening the capacity of our sister RC/RC organizations.

In its **cooperation with Austrian public agencies**, the Red Cross is seeking to build on its special status as an *auxiliary to the public authorities*.

Through participation in national and international conferences, we are **continually engaged in pooling experience and information both** within the Movement and with representatives of public agencies and various stakeholders from civil society.

CONTACT and INFORMATION:

Mr. Max Santner

Austrian Red Cross, Headquarters, INTERNATIONAL AID

TELEPHONE: 0043 1 589 00 – 531, FAX: 0043 1 589 00 – 339,

E-MAIL: max.santner@redcross.at,

ADDRESS: Wiedner Hauptstrasse 32, 1040 Vienna, Austria