



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
 Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
 Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
 الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL) Programme

Towards the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, November 2007



before aid reaches disaster affected-victims...



Pakistan earthquake, 2005

"Pakistan suffered from the lack of a pre-existing National Disaster Management Authority and identified the creation of a legal framework as a lesson to apply"

NDMA, ISDR Side-event at ECOSOC, 2006

Hurricane Katrina, USA, 2005

"Comprehensive policies and procedures are needed to ensure appropriate use of and accountability for international assistance"

US Government Accountability Office

From 2000 to 2006:

§ 3520 disasters have already struck
 § affecting over 1.7 billion people and
 § causing an estimated damage exceeding USD 450 billion.

Disasters hit everywhere, affecting both developing and developed countries.

The disasters are increasingly diverse: sudden onset natural disasters (storms, floods, earthquakes); industrial accidents (Bhopal, Chernobyl), health emergencies (HIV/AIDS, human influenza) and slow onset disasters, such as drought or food insecurity.

Disasters pose a serious threat to sustainable development. They exacerbate the impoverishment of the existing poor and push more people below the poverty line. As such, disasters imperil poverty reduction strategies and reverse progress made in achieving the MDGs.

The large majority of disasters are successfully addressed domestically by national authorities, with the support of the Red Cross or Red Crescent National Society and civil society.

However, *when disaster situations exceed national coping capacities*, international assistance becomes necessary and is called upon.

In this situation, *a pre-existing adequate national legal framework* that determines how international assistance will be facilitated, coordinated and regulated can maximise the capacity of international assistance to save lives and alleviate the suffering of disaster-affected victims.



Unfortunately, such legal frameworks are scarce. Therefore, holistic disaster preparedness is essential. Legal preparedness is a crucial component of it.

The need for appropriate legal frameworks and policies is also heavily underlined in the Hyogo Framework for Action on Disaster Reduction. Legal frameworks should also link relief and recovery to rehabilitation and development by anchoring disaster response into local capacity-building and building safer communities.

In their absence, legal challenges consistently arise which cause delays, add subsidiary costs and decrease the efficiency of international assistance.

What is the IDRL Programme?

The IDRL Programme looks at how law, rules and principles can be a tool to simplify international humanitarian assistance while at the same time ensuring its timeliness, efficiency & quality.

Objectives of the IDRL Programme

1. Promote access to legal information; awareness and implementation of existing legal instruments;
2. Identify weaknesses and gaps in existing normative frameworks at the international, regional and national levels through substantive research;
3. Find solutions through the promotion of dialogue with various stakeholders.



Types of IDRL legal challenges encountered by international actors include: delayed request for international assistance, non-recognition of professional qualifications and lengthy procedures to obtain legal status which is necessary to open bank accounts or hire local staff. Others are:



Entry of personnel
Difficulty in obtaining visas/work permits for foreign relief workers



Entry of goods
Delays and taxation in the import of relief goods and equipment

Receiving authorities also encounter significant IDRL challenges. These include: irrelevant or inappropriate assistance that does not respond to the needs of disaster affected people or their cultural traditions, international aid which undervalues local knowledge and capacities.



Coordination
Lack of complementarity and willingness to operate within the coordination structure of the disaster-affected state



Quality & Accountability
Expired goods, untrained or unqualified personnel, religious advocacy

Timeline up to the 30th International Conference, Nov. 2007

2001	I.C. 2003	2005	2006	2007	I.C. 2007
Origin Research	Mandate Book	Asia-Pacific Proj. Case studies	Database Surveys	Forums Desk study	

2006 outputs and activities as planned in the IDRL Appeal

Online IDRL database at: www.ifrc.org/idrl
Search by region or country, disaster, type of document and over 100 thematic issues



Advice on national legislative review (collaboration with Indonesian and Sri Lanka Red Cross National Societies)

Regional high-level stakeholder consultations
European Forum, Antalya, Turkey, 25-26 May
Asia-Pacific Forum, Malaysia, 12-14 December

New operational case studies
§ *Thailand, Sri Lanka and Indonesia*: Response operations to the tsunami (Asia Pacific IDRL Project)
§ *Turkey*: 1999 Earthquake (Turkish Red Crescent)
§ *EU*: IDRL Framework (IDRL and Austrian Red Cross)
§ *Kenya*: Drought operations (Kenya Red Cross)
§ *Mali*: Food crisis and locust infestation (Mali Red Crescent)
§ *Guatemala*: Tropical storm Stan caused floods (ongoing)

Communication tools: e-newsletter & weekly press service

2006 advocacy events: ECOSOC side-event, ASIL/ABA webinar, FEMA roundtable on Hurricane Katrina, Wilton Park, Davos Conference on Disaster Reduction Webster Humanitarian Conference, Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, Red Interamericana de Mitigacion de Desastres.

2006 international recognition of IDRL Programme

Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) Report
ICEC (International Conference on Emergency Communications)
UN Secretary General Report to General Assembly
UN Special Envoy on the tsunami report
UN General Assembly, 6th committee, ILC discussions

2007 planned outputs and activities towards IC 2007

- ü Regional high-level stakeholder consultations
Pan-African Forum on IDRL, 1st half 2007
Americas Forum on IDRL, Panama, April 2007
- ü Recommendations to IC 2007 on how the existing IDRL regulatory framework might be strengthened, including a Declaration of principles on the domestic facilitation and regulation of international relief and recovery assistance as a useful tool to guide the review and elaboration of national legislation
- ü Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies IDRL advocacy guide

CONTRIBUTE TO IDRL

The IDRL Programme's 2007 budget stands at 1,200,000 CHF (450,000 covered, detailed budget available) in order to successfully deliver its mandate conferred by the 28th International Conference in 2003 and achieve its goals as reflected in the IDRL 2006-2007 Global Appeal.

The IDRL Programme provides high visibility to its donors, through mentioning their contributions on its website, in its quarterly e-newsletter and official documents. Special visibility will be granted to 2007 contributors in the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

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IDRL contributors 2006

