

GUAYAQUIL COMMITMENT

We, the National Societies of the Red Cross of the Americas, meeting in Guayaquil, Ecuador, from 4-7 June 2007 under the theme of “safer and healthier communities”, aiming to scale up the impact of our individual and collective work during the next four years, make the following commitments:

I. To strive for safer and healthier communities, empowered to take responsibility for their own development.

We will promote participatory Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment to ensure that our programmes and services meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our populations, through an integrated approach. We will invest more in building the capacities of communities and branches.

II. To intensify our work with communities to reduce disaster risk and vulnerability.

We are committed to the Hyogo Framework for Action, and aim to build a culture of safety and resilience, as well as addressing the underlying factors that contribute to increased vulnerability. We will pay particular attention to awareness, adaptation and action related to climate change.

III. To maintain and expand our capacity to respond to disasters and emergencies.

We will ensure that those affected by disasters participate fully in all aspects of our response. We will promote early recovery and the restoration of livelihoods, ensuring that rehabilitation is linked to community development and the reduction of future risks. We will scale up our capacity to provide leadership in the area of shelter, as our contribution to global humanitarian reform.

IV. To intensify and scale up our contribution to community health, through social mobilisation, more effective advocacy and strong partnerships.

We will focus in particular on key health areas including HIV and AIDS, mother and child health, water and sanitation, first aid, voluntary blood donation, psycho-social support, emergent and re-emergent diseases, harm reduction related to drug use, and road safety.

We will intensify our efforts on HIV and AIDS, focusing on prevention, care, treatment and support, and reducing stigma and discrimination.

V. To significantly increase our work to promote respect for diversity and human dignity, and to reduce intolerance, discrimination, violence and social exclusion.

We will promote positive behaviour change, and advocate to influence public policy and decision-making. We will implement activities in partnership with affected groups to reduce discrimination based on e.g. national and ethnic origin, age, social and legal status, gender, sexual orientation, disability, political opinion and religious beliefs.

We will give priority to reducing stigma related to HIV and AIDS, and to addressing the increasing problems related to all forms of violence. We aim to ensure that the Red Cross is inclusive and open to all, fully respecting our fundamental principles and humanitarian values.

VI. To better protect, support and assist people affected by migration, regardless of their legal status.

We will advocate for unconditional access to migrants, and strengthen our work in Tracing, Restoring Family Links, and Family Re-unification.

We will work to reduce all forms of discrimination against migrant workers and their families.

We will support the development of a Federation policy on migration, and improve cooperation between National Societies in countries of origin, transit and destination.

We will advocate with governments to respect the rights of all migrants, including in particular, the application of the Principle of *Non-refoulement* and the provisions of the 1951 Refugee convention and its 1967 Protocol, and implementation by governments of all their international and national legal and human rights obligations.

We will advocate for policies that facilitate the voluntary return of migrants to the country of origin.

VII. To attract and prepare leaders with clear strategic vision, able to drive the internal changes and innovations required to meet the challenges of the future.

We will promote diversity in our leadership, and will ensure that positions are accessible to new leaders coming from youth, communities, civil society and the private sector.

VIII. To develop a more strategic approach to communications and advocacy as a fundamental condition for scaling up the quality and impact of our programmes.

In particular, we will develop our communications capacity through training initiatives, knowledge sharing and networking. We will advocate on behalf of vulnerable groups, bringing to bear a credible, collective Red Cross voice to influence policy and behaviour.

IX. To introduce a results-based planning and management system, linked to the Federation-wide performance and accountability framework.

We aim to enhance the impact, transparency and effectiveness of our programmes by establishing measurable indicators, quality standards and mechanisms for peer review.

X. To invest in our people as our main asset to achieve the global agenda goals.

We will increase the number of volunteers and manage them more effectively, thereby improving their ability to have a lasting impact on the communities they serve.

We will invest in high quality professional staff, and will establish or consolidate appropriate human resource management systems.
We will work together to strengthen our community, volunteer and membership base as the foundation for our work ensuring at the same time that this base reflects the composition of the population we serve.

XI. To take steps to ensure that youth have the opportunity to be actively involved in all aspects of our work and our organisation.

We will invest in their preparation, and will encourage them to work with their peers and respond to their own needs as well as to the needs of entire communities and future generations.

XII. To develop more effective, innovative and professional resource mobilisation, and diversify our funding base to scale up our programmes and ensure our sustainability and independence.

We will promote and engender corporate social responsibility. We will allocate resources to develop our fundraising capacity, and we will draw on competent expertise where needed.

XIII. To enhance Movement cooperation at national, regional and global levels.

We will strengthen our technical and other networks to promote exchange of experience and develop common approaches.

We will build on existing cooperation, and will find new ways (including operational and global alliances) of working together more effectively.

XIV. To further define and build on our auxiliary role, and actively contribute to the development of strong partnerships with external partners

We will cooperate more closely with public authorities, international organisations and the private sector at local, regional and international levels.