

Why this Working Paper ?

The Principles and Rules for Development Cooperation (PRDC) are general guidelines. Like most such documents, they provide broad directions and not detailed regulations. In a Movement comprising 149 National Societies, care obviously has to be taken not to seek to impose rigid strait-jackets that would discourage the necessary flexibility and initiatives of National Societies to respond to particular regional priorities and situations.

Those using the PRDC will find them most useful for general guidance and reference rather than as a source of "definitive" answers to technical and location or culture specific issues. Most "development" questions do not readily lend themselves to quick "absolute" responses. Yet the asking of the appropriate kinds of questions can often clarify key options and their respective implications. Mistakes can consequently be avoided, if not perfect solutions found.

This working paper approaches development questions in that spirit. It follows the format of the PRDC item by item. It explores further some of the issues necessarily treated briefly in the PRDC. It suggests flexible models that might assist National Societies as they work out agreements for development cooperation and specific bilateral development contracts. It explores ideas that might be found helpful on Red Cross/Red Crescent training courses. In some areas, such as contract budgets and audit procedures, it links the PRDC documents with currently prescribed League practices. This paper, it must be emphasized, does not have the authority of the PRDC. It is intended to serve as both a training resource and an operationally practical reference paper. As experience is gained in the use of the PRDC, so this working paper will be modified to draw on collective lessons and ideas. Those using this working paper are encouraged to inform me of improvements that would make it more helpful.



Ian McAllister
Senior Adviser for Development
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Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
<u>Introduction</u>	
Table of Contents	1
<u>The General Provisions</u>	
1. Purpose	3
2. Development (definitions of)	3
3. Basic Principles	5
4. Development Cooperation	6
5. Role of Red Cross/Red Crescent	7
6. Ways and Means of Assistance	8
. Community Level	8
. National Level	8
. Regional Level	9
. Global Advocacy	11
7. Agreements for Development Cooperation	12
. General Introduction on Agreements and Contracts	12
. Agreements: Purpose and Process	14
. Agreements: Contents (fourteen points)	15
. Agreements: Summary	21
Contracts for Development Programmes	22
. Contracts : Purpose and Process	22
. Contracts : Contents (eight points)	24
. Contracts : Summary	31

8. Coordination	32
9. Effectiveness	34
10. League Technical Assistance	36
<u>Priorities and Concerns for Development Assistance</u>	38
11. Priorities for Development	38
12. Concerns of Special Interest	38
<u>Organization and Preparation at the National Level</u>	40
13. National Society Development Plans	40
(Fourteen and fifteen should not be given numbers in the PRDC)	
16. Management of the Development Plan	41
17. Sustaining the Development Plan	42
<u>Responsibilities for International Development Assistance</u>	43
18. The Role of Operating National Societies	43
19. The Role of Participating National Societies	43
20. The Role of the League	43
21. The Role of the ICRC	44
22. Human Resource Development	44
23. Special Cases	46

(Each of the twenty-three segments in this table of contents relates to the twenty-three segments of the Principles and Rules for Development Cooperation. While it may be helpful to read the working paper in its entirety to gain an overview, it will probably prove most useful on a segment by segment basis - with the PRDC open at the same time).

THE GENERAL PROVISIONS (OF THE PRINCIPLES AND RULES FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION)

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the P.R.D.C. is to provide frameworks within which development cooperation can take place between National Societies, and some key directions or principles on which such cooperation can be built. The spirit of any such cooperation is to be one of "partnership". Whether a National Society be wealthy or poor, each has a responsibility to see bi-lateral and multi-lateral relationships as a shared partnership - with a constant focus on the humanitarian principles of the Movement and on helping those in need. To be poor is, in no way, to be seen as to be subservient. To be a rich National Society is, in no respect, to be viewed as giving that Society any right to impose its views on what is appropriate in the domain of a poorer National Society. To share resources within the Movement is a basic principle on which the Movement is built. Victims are helped regardless of which side they may be on; the same applies to the principle of sharing between National Societies.

2. DEVELOPMENT

Development is not an easy concept to define and it is not an absolute one either. It is relative. There has been considerable debate in the Movement about its meaning and also the appropriate interpretation and emphasis. The P.R.D.C. cannot clear up all the questions, but two guidelines are given:-

First, development refers to the strengthening of National Societies;

Second, development is the process whereby communities and individuals grow stronger and less vulnerable to disaster. Let us expand on this a bit further:

Strengthening National Societies

It has become clear from the experiences of the League that strong National Societies are better able to respond to disaster situations than weak ones. Such is obvious. But the best way to strengthen a National Society is not so clear, nor indeed is it discussed often enough. Some Societies have placed emphasis on buildings,

some on staff, some on volunteers, some on links with other organizations, some on vehicles...The list is quite long and the approaches have been varied. Some Societies have, it appears, tried to do "everything for everybody" - with disastrous results. Others have been quite narrowly focussed. Some have tried to "change with the times"; others have behaved a bit like dinosaurs - with extinction as a risk.

In seeking to develop any National Society, three key questions should be borne in mind :

- 1) What are the primary goals of the National Society?
Are they clear?
- 2) How does the existing structure of the National Society relate to the primary goals?
- 3) If structural changes are needed in order to respond to the primary goals - can we build in clear checks and balances to safeguard the need for future flexibility? It is not much use pouring resources into financing more horse - drawn carriages when air transportation is the direction of the future; nor is it much use placing emphasis on head office palaces when the real work of the Society, it may have been agreed, is being done by volunteer youth in the field. Priorities and directions require careful planning to match resources to objectives.

Communities and Individuals

Development is defined, secondly, as the process whereby communities and individuals grow stronger. The role of the Red Cross/Red Crescent in this form of development is discussed later (see item 6). Guidelines for Red Cross/Red Crescent involvement in supporting such development processes must ultimately fall back upon the humanitarian principles of the Movement. Economic growth "at any cost" is obviously not a direction that can be supported by the humanitarian principles, any more than can "efficiency yardsticks" that place weight on the production of physical outputs - regardless of the human or environmental costs or implications. The strengthening of the capacities of those most vulnerable is at the heart of Red Cross/Red Crescent priorities.

For the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement to be an effective agent in contributing to "appropriate" development, the National Societies themselves must be strong in the best sense of that word. Hence the two definitions of development used in the P.R.D.C.

3. BASIC PRINCIPLES

The section on basic principles places emphasis on the humanitarian mission of the Movement. No actions under the name of "development" should be contemplated that run counter to these principles. There are, of course, times when sometimes unpopular efficiencies will be required for Red Cross/Red Crescent work to be more effective. In the treatment of all, including employees, the Red Cross/Red Crescent must relate actions to the humanitarian principles. That is not to argue against re-assigning or releasing personnel when such actions are warranted, but it is to place emphasis that when such actions are taken they follow careful consideration about the welfare of the individuals.

Emphasis in Red Cross/Red Crescent development planning and action is to be given to the concept of participation. It is easy to place "lip service" on this idea - harder to implement it. What does it imply? It requires that, whether at community level or at National Society level, those to be assisted should, so far as practicable, be brought into the planning and management processes. Their ideas, their concerns, their priorities - these need to be integrated in the whole planning and management process. Many of the major development mistakes that have been made this century can be demonstrated to have been caused by failure to bring local communities into the planning and implementation processes. Young people, women as well as men, old people, racial minorities, handicapped, poor and wealthy - all have ideas about the appropriate actions; their ideas warrant respect even though there will inevitably have to be 'trade-offs' where some may be less pleased than others with decisions and results. That does not mean, however, that the ideas of as many as possible should not be seriously sought and seriously regarded. They should be. Better results will be achieved if they are.

Under the section on Basic Principles also appear the phrases "the equitable sharing of resources and a respect for the conservation of the environment." Each of these ideas generates challenges.

What is really meant by "equitable sharing of resources"? Is this to be interpreted at the community level? Is it an individual responsibility? Does it mean that equitable sharing of resources must be done between National Societies? It is an uncomfortable challenge in a world of great inequities and in a situation where there are also extreme disparities between the incomes and wealth of National Societies. There is no comfortable solution to this uncomfortable challenge - it is a principle that challenges the integrity of Red Cross/Red Crescent development commitment.

The concept of respect for the conservation of the environment is another uncomfortable challenge. "Conservation" is not intended to mean "preservation of a status quo"; many environmental situations, such as water supply systems or tree-cut hillsides, are already in serious trouble. Conservation in such settings implies "improvement of". Nor is conservation intended to imply that change is not frequently to be encouraged, but rather that the ecological and human environment has to be treated with respect and concern. Development has to be sustainable. The environment has to be treated with great respect.

4. DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The League has a long history. The world has changed much over the past century. When the League was established, continents were considerably divided into regions reflecting imperial greed and entrepreneurship. Much of the pre-World War II Red Cross history and philosophy was driven by European and North American focussed interests and interpretations of priorities and needs. Development cooperation, heavily short-term relief and medical assistance oriented, reflected that. The post World War II years have seen dramatic changes in the spread and directions of the Movement. Colonies have become independent nations, empires have crumbled in name and (often) in influence. Red Cross/Red Crescent structures and activities reflected the process that took place on the broader world scene. While the humanitarian principles remained at the core, the interpretation of appropriate activities broadened and changed. World configurations still continue to change; now it is the turn for Europe again to restructure; other continents will undoubtedly undergo major adjustments over the coming century. All this places emphasis on the need for solidarity within the League to ensure that development cooperation genuinely assists the vulnerable communities and individuals across the world and is not a micro image

of the political intrigues and ideologies of the day. Red Cross and Red Crescent solidarity is built on agreement that individuals, wherever they live and however poor they may be and whatever their religious or political beliefs, have basic human rights and, when in need, have a legitimate call on Red Cross/Red Crescent assistance. The Movement is challenged to raise the resources to respond and to influence others to do so as well.

The mechanism for cooperation between the National Societies is clearly spelled out in the PRDC; it is upon the request of an operating National Society and it is through the League. This, of course, does not mean that bi-lateral relationships are not to be encouraged: they are. It is, however, to emphasize the necessity of a rather more disciplined way of cooperating - one that does not side-step the League in Geneva, but enables the League to play a facilitating and information exchange role - for the benefit of both operating and participating National Societies. If the League in Geneva is considered weak in some areas, then the challenge is to strengthen those segments that are important for the priorities of the Movement. If there are some sections viewed as largely irrelevant to changing circumstances, they should be scrapped and the resources redeployed.

5. ROLE OF THE RED CROSS/RED CRESCENT

The Red Cross/Red Crescent was not established to take over the legitimate roles of governments. Basing all its activities on the humanitarian principles, Red Cross/Red Crescent is frequently the provider of auxiliary assistance to government programmes for the poor and needy, for those hurt or weakened by disasters of one kind or another - or for those at risk. Sometimes the Red Cross/Red Crescent pioneers activities and policy directions while governments and other public/private or NGO bodies subsequently assume the responsibility for themselves; sometimes the appropriate direction of Red Cross/Red Crescent work is of an auxiliary nature to public programmes that need the kind of reinforcement that Red Cross/Red Crescent staff or volunteers feel called upon to give. There are occasions when the Red Cross/Red Crescent interpretation of the appropriate work they should be undertaking may not be in harmony with some of the ideological or political points of emphasis of some government in power. In such cases, be it in the form of policy advice through advocacy or in the form of direct action - such as through providing food or medical support for victims of famine or repression - the Red Cross/Red Crescent guidelines are clear and public. They

are built upon the Geneva Conventions: the League is neutral. The foundations for the interpretation of what is or is not appropriate by way of development cooperation and assistance are the humanitarian principles.

6. WAYS AND MEANS OF ASSISTANCE

Red Cross/Red Crescent is a Movement with enormous strengths and flexibility. Historically, depending on the regions and circumstances, the emphasis of development and relief activities has fluctuated between the community level, between the global advocacy level, and between the national level.

The new PRDC guidelines do not suggest that one or other level that may have been focussed on has been inappropriate or should be downplayed. However, there is explicit recognition given that the League can - and must (given the enormous challenges it now faces) - seek to support humanitarian development cooperation more consistently, more aggressively and on more fronts.

Thus the PRDC places emphasis on four main levels for development assistance to help those vulnerable and in need:

First, the Community Level. Local projects and programme initiatives are to be supported, provided, of course, they are based on the Humanitarian Principles. The ideas for these projects and initiatives should largely have come from the local people and branch offices of the National Society - but frequently there will be some blending of ideas and experience, both within National Societies and between them, as experiences are shared. There is a large task ahead to help communities identify, plan and manage projects better. Training staff and volunteer assistants and the use and compilation of practical manuals are important processes to encourage. At all levels, improved 'professionalism' must be encouraged - but that is not, it must be emphasized, to be interpreted as meaning more red-tape or more bureaucracy. Often it will mean less red-tape and leaner bureaucracy. But some critical support is necessary for advising community level volunteers and staff on basic approaches to project planning and management. Each National Society has a responsibility to determine how best to do this and when perhaps outside help may be useful from a delegate from another National Society.

Second, the National Level. There are two basic avenues for national level development assistance:

First, there is the operational work of the national Society itself. Clear development policy goals, defined

in such a way that they can be assessed in terms of effectiveness, are essential.

Always it is important to be clear about the target groups: who are they? How many are they? Where do they live? What do they want? Always it is important to be selective - in terms of recognizing that there are limits to the available resources of the Red Cross and Red Crescent - so difficult choices do have to be made. Julius Nyerere of Tanzania once said "to plan is to choose." This is just as true for Red Cross/Red Crescent as for governments.

The National Society level work should more and more be seen in terms of programmes and not simply isolated projects. A community health programme, a youth and development programme, and so on. Buildings, cars, people, materials should be allocated within programme frameworks to accomplish clear goals, and not simply used in a random way without clear programme direction. Increasingly National Society work should be set within programme frameworks; that is equally necessary for effective cooperation for development work between National Societies.

Second, however, to the 'operational' work of a National Society regarding 'its own development programmes', is the role it should strive to play in influencing public opinion, in co-operating with other NGOs, government and the private sector to be concerned about humanitarian principles. This can be undertaken in various ways - for examples, through organizing conferences on Red Cross/Red Crescent themes, through reviewing and advising on government development plans and policies (but not, it should be emphasized, in a political manner), through publications in newspapers and books, through film productions and media work, through developing Red Cross/Red Crescent guidelines for 'public project planning', injecting humanitarian considerations into the process.

When other National Societies cooperate with an operating National Society it is, of course, extremely important that they do not meddle in the domestic political affairs of the country in which they are privileged to be cooperating. They should not come between the operating National Society and its government. The same is critical also for both League and ICRC in all matters concerning development cooperation.

Third, the Regional Level. Regional level cooperation for development is going to become more and more important in a world more closely linked by improved transport and communication networks. There

are various ways regional cooperation can be encouraged. Some examples will illustrate:

- a) by several National Societies sharing information, meeting regularly at various levels, deliberately learning from each others' experiences, sharing staff, sharing volunteers, organizing regional programmes and projects of mutual concern, relating to external National Societies through regional agreements and not just through national bi-lateral ones;
- b) by the League setting up regional development offices, as part of the regional decentralization process out of Geneva, which would provide technical and policy advisory services to National Societies both within the region and those working on bi-lateral development and disaster relief contracts;
- c) by regional staff training and development institutes. Care has to be taken not to add yet another layer of big buildings or unnecessary bureaucracy. In some cases regional Red Cross/Red Crescent training institutions could usefully be linked into universities, vocational training schools and research institutes. As a general principle they should not be established outside a broader support fabric from which they can draw intellectual and applied research sustenance and into whose broader resource capacity they can link. Red Cross/Red Crescent training institutes, when not within a broader system, can otherwise become isolated, unnecessarily expensive and incompetent 'white elephants'? Routine reviews are necessary to ensure that this is not happening.
- d) By working more energetically with key international and regional organizations - such as the Asian Development Bank, the Economic Commission for Africa, the European Commission and so on. Red Cross/Red Crescent has to be concerned to relate effectively with a number of such strategic organizations and to play a constructive advisory role, within Red Cross/Red Crescent competence, on their committees and boards. It is important to be aware of the directions these other regional organizations are moving, so that Red Cross/Red Crescent work in development is complementary, so far as reasonable, not just with national governments but also with regional institutions. Resources are too scarce to be duplicated unnecessarily. Some regional institutions, moreover, should be energetically accessed for Red Cross/Red Crescent fund raising purposes, when mutually complementary goals are being worked towards.

Fourth, Global Advocacy. Red Cross/Red Crescent has played an important global advocacy role - particularly, but not exclusively, in the field of humanitarian law. There is work to be accomplished, building on the humanitarian principles, in the field of development and development cooperation. This can be undertaken in various ways - for examples, through the kind of important work UNICEF accomplished under the title of "Adjustment with a Human Face", by the holding of major conferences (the League is organizing such an initiative in Prague on Europe in Transition)), by sponsoring one or several international lectures by outstanding individuals, by well researched and documented publications, by quiet and unobtrusive diplomacy, by building new initiatives (perhaps even one day the establishment of a Red Cross/Red Crescent University for Humanitarian Principles). There is enormous scope for effective global advocacy in development cooperation. The world is too perilously poised for Red Cross/Red Crescent to take a back seat at the global advocacy and policy level. Once more must come the reminder that the Humanitarian Principles must be the foundation; that neutrality must be maintained; that effective coordination is essential; and, for global advocacy, it is essential that the League is the leading coordinator and directing body, directly working under the guidance of the General Assembly and Executive Council - through the office of the Secretary General.

7. AGREEMENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Two kinds of frameworks for facilitating development assistance between National Societies and also the League are outlined in the Provisional Principles and Rules for Development Cooperation. They are called, in PRDC, "Agreements for Development Cooperation" and "Development Programme Contracts".

General Introduction on Agreements and Contracts

- a) The Agreements for Development Cooperation are not contracts. They are a declaration by the Operating National Society of its development goals and the manner in which it seeks help from sister National Societies, including an outline of priorities. The Agreements are intended to indicate longer-term (five years or so) aims. They shall also include some basic analysis of just why the Red Cross/Red Crescent National Society is seeking aid and how it intends to implement support. The term 'agreement' is perhaps too legalistic in possible interpretation. It is likely to be revised and called 'Partnership Framework for Development Cooperation'. That is its essence.

In the case of some larger National Societies, working in complex and quite large economies, the Agreements for Development Cooperation will be relatively comprehensive and detailed documents - perhaps comprising up to twenty or so pages (including appendices and references).

For countries with relatively small populations (such as, for example, some of the islands in the South Pacific), the Agreements need only be relatively brief, with each main heading responded to - but often succinctly in but a few lines. The total Agreement (less any appendices) might be but three or four pages in such cases. Whether the Agreements are for complex or quite simple situations, they should always seek to be very clear on such basic matters as "What? Why? How? By Whom? When? Where? Who is to benefit? Who pays? What costs?"

Many Operating National Societies already have agreements in force of some form or another. This new process does not in any way invalidate existing agreements, but it does provide a more rigorous and systematic framework towards which National Societies should progress, in a disciplined manner. Yes, there will be some growing pains - but hopefully there will also be substantial improvements in programme and project design, as well as in

coordination and delivery and in accessing additional external funding.

- b) Development Programme Contracts are more specific in focus and detail than the Agreements for Development Cooperation. They are commitments by an Operating National Society and by particular bi-lateral or multi-lateral partners (and/or the League on occasion) to finance and to endeavor successfully and economically to accomplish certain clear objectives, over a particular time period, helping particular communities and groups through carefully identified means. One Operating National Society will only have a single Agreement for Development Cooperation in force at any one point in time (co-signed with the League), but it may have more than one Development Programme Contract (ten would be on the high side, but in some situations not unreasonable). These contracts would be co-signed with the Bilateral or Multi-lateral partners, or (if the League is actually co-managing a programme) with the League.

There will have to be some 'give and take' in the early application of these new agreements and contracts, while National Societies and the League Secretariat begin to implement and to learn from the experience of working with these frameworks. They may, at first sight, appear cumbersome and bureaucratic; over time they should be found to be helpful ways for better Red Cross/Red Crescent development programming and planning. That is their purpose; the intent should not be forgotten when some inevitable 'growing pains' are experienced, nor should a narrow legalistic attitude ever be allowed to overwhelm the spirit behind the process - that of Red Cross/Red Crescent partnership for humanitarian aims.