

Annual report

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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

Appeal No. MAA00004

21/04/2009

This report covers the period 01/01/2008 to 31/12/2008.



In addition to direct support to governments and advocacy with inter-governmental forums, the IDRL programme developed and began to implement intensive trainings for National Societies on IDRL in 2008. **International Federation/A. Amin**

In brief

Programme purpose: The International Federation's International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL) programme seeks to reduce human vulnerability by promoting legal preparedness for disasters, in particular, with regard to international assistance. Consistent with Resolution 4 of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent of November 2007, a substantial proportion of the programme's activity is devoted to following up on the implementation of the "Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance" (also known as the "IDRL Guidelines").

Programme(s) summary: During the reporting period, technical support projects on the IDRL Guidelines were initiated in Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and Sierra Leone, and the groundwork was laid for several others to be begun in 2009. Informal advice was provided to several additional governments and planning began on the development of model IDRL legislation.

Additionally, the programme provided support to a number of National Societies that have begun discussions with their governments about how best to implement the Guidelines, including through intensive regional training workshops, and the development of a draft legislative advocacy manual. In collaboration with partners inside and outside the International Federation, the programme engaged several inter-governmental and regional forums on the IDRL Guidelines and legal preparedness for disasters. It also upgraded the IDRL communication and dissemination tools available to Movement actors in all Federation languages.

Financial situation: The total 2008 budget was CHF 1,294,652 (USD 1,233,002 or EUR 863,101), of which 88 per cent was covered. Expenditure overall was 46 per cent. However, because commitments and transfer of the large majority of these funds did not occur until the third quarter of the year and thereafter, the overall expenditure rate for 2008 was slowed to 46 per cent of the total appeal budget to avoid entering into deficit. Nevertheless, with a quickened pace at the end of the year, the programme is on track for meeting its overall project objectives for the 2008 to 2009 appeal period.

[Click here to go directly to the attached financial report.](#)

See also the overall appeal for the [International Federation's Global Disaster Management Strategy](#), of which the present appeal is one part.

Our partners: The programme would like to thank the Governments of Australia, Canada, Finland, Norway and the United Kingdom; the National Red Cross Societies of Australia, Austria, Canada, Finland, Japan, Norway and the United Kingdom; as well as the Asian Development Bank and the FedEx Corporation for their financial support to the 2008 IDRL appeal.

In 2008, the programme worked closely with all zone offices, many National Societies and a number of UN agencies and departments, including the World Health Organization (WHO), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the United Nations Joint Logistics Centre (UNJLC).

Context

- In November 2007, the 30th International Conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent adopted the IDRL Guidelines. Reaffirming the importance of increasing legal preparedness for disasters, the conference encouraged states to make use of the Guidelines to strengthen national legal frameworks, and as the basis for bilateral and regional agreements. It also called on the International Federation and National Societies to support governments in doing so.
- A major impetus for the development of the IDRL Guidelines was the experience of the 2004 tsunami and other recent disaster operations. In 2008, Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar, the earthquake in China and an active hurricane season in the Americas have reaffirmed the importance of legal preparedness for disaster response, and the complexity of international disaster operations.

Progress towards outcomes

- A successful translation of the IDRL Guidelines from noble sentiment to useful change will require both a consolidation and deepening of understanding of their content and purpose within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and extensive cooperation with governments and other key stakeholders, including the UN and regional

organizations. The IDRL programme's three objectives were designed with this context in mind.

- With a global staff of three and a delayed response to the 2008 appeal, the programme's progress was constrained at the beginning of 2008. However, with the arrival of funds in the second half of the year, and the addition of two new staff members (in Kuala Lumpur in August and Nairobi in November) the programme was able to quicken its pace, and take substantial steps toward achieving all of its objectives in its two-year plan for 2008-2009.

Objective 1: Provision of technical assistance on strengthening legal preparedness at the national level.

Outcome(s)/Expected result(s): Policy-makers to make use of the IDRL Guidelines as a tool for strengthening and national legal, policy or institutional frameworks on disaster response.

Pilot projects



At an August partnership meeting of the Vietnam Red Cross Society, Vice-President of Vietnam, Mme Nguyen Thi Doan, affirmed the State's commitment to creating the most favourable conditions and the best legal framework for humanitarian activities. **International Federation/V. Bannon**



At a July meeting on disaster management in Vientiane, governmental and international representatives identified the need to revise Laos' legal framework for disasters. The International Federation's pilot project will support this effort. **International Federation/V. Bannon**

Goal for 2008-09: Working in conjunction with interested National Societies, undertake 10 country-level technical assistance projects on the IDRL Guidelines for interested governments.

- When funds become available in the second half of 2008, four projects were initiated and the groundwork was laid for several others. Moreover, the addition of new staff in Asia Pacific and Africa at the end of 2008 has given the programme an important boost toward meeting its overall objective of completing ten such projects over the two-year appeal period (still dependent on additional support for the appeal – particularly for work in the Americas).
- Three of the current projects, in Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos, are being carried out in partnership with WHO, and are designed to assist those governments in examining their national legal and policy frameworks in light of the IDRL Guidelines and the International Health Regulations.
- In **Cambodia**, the project is near completion, after several months of research, interviews and meetings with responsible ministries, and other stakeholders. A draft report will be completed in January, and a workshop will then be organized to assess the results and set out next steps. Draft disaster management legislation is already being developed by a governmental committee, for which the responsible parties are awaiting the results of this project.

- In **Vietnam** and **Laos**, a series of preliminary meetings have been held with various governmental departments, UN agencies and other actors, and the projects have been integrated into existing inter-governmental committees for local oversight. Initial briefings have been provided to these committees, and recruitment is under way for local consultants to undertake the legal research.
- In **Sierra Leone**, preliminary meetings were also held with officials of the Office of National Security and other governmental departments, the National Society, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other stakeholders. A local legal researcher has also been identified to begin work in January.
- Discussions have begun with National Societies and other stakeholders in several other countries in Africa and Asia for projects in 2009, for which some funding is already available. The programme has also recently received positive signs of potential support for its planned work in the Americas.
- In addition to the foregoing, the programme collaborated with the National Societies of **Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Netherlands** and the **United Kingdom** to prepare a successful application for funds from the European Community Civil Protection Office for regional and national level studies of legal preparedness for disaster assistance in Europe beginning in 2009.
- On a more ad hoc basis, the IDRL programme also cooperated with the Indonesia Red Cross Society to provide input to governmental officials in **Indonesia** for the development of new disaster management regulations, and with the Panama Red Cross Society to provide input to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of **Panama** for the development of a new manual on disaster assistance cooperation. It further supported the Red Cross Societies of **Finland, Germany, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore** and **Switzerland** in their approach to domestic authorities concerning the IDRL Guidelines.

Handbook/model legislation

Goal for 2008-09: Commence work on a handbook/model legislation for policy-makers to implement the IDRL Guidelines (to be completed in 2010).

- While the 2008-09 plan foresaw that this project would begin in 2009, the programme already began discussion in 2008 with potential partners (in particular OCHA and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)) for developing a handbook/model legislation to help governments implement the IDRL Guidelines and related international norms. Research and drafting will begin in 2009, drawing on the experience from the pilot technical support projects.

Objective 2: Training and capacity-building of Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies on legal issues in disaster response.

Outcome(s)/Expected result(s): Interested National Societies are empowered to advocate for strengthened legal frameworks for disaster response.

Advocacy manual

Goal for 2008-09: Develop a manual for National Societies to assist them in providing advice to their governments on the drafting of effective disaster management legislation.



Participants at the May National Society reference group meeting set out the initial concept for the manual. **International Federation/D. Hempfing**



In September, participants at the annual National Societies legal advisors meeting provided further input. **International Federation/D. Fisher**

- During the reporting period, the IDRL programme organized an inter-departmental steering committee at the International Federation to develop a new manual for National Societies on legislative advocacy in the area of disaster management. A concept paper was developed to guide the project and a Reference Group of 14 National Societies was formed and convened in Geneva in May to provide initial feedback. In September, a session of the annual National Societies legal advisors meeting in Geneva was also devoted to exploring the topics of the manual.
- A partial draft of the manual was completed in November, with research support from the National Societies of the Netherlands, New Zealand and the United States. The text was discussed in two workshops, as noted below. The draft will be refined in 2009 and discussed in several additional subregional workshops before being finalized in time for the International Federation's 2009 General Assembly.

Workshops



Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (Nov. 13-14). **International Federation/A. Amin**



Abuja, Nigeria (Nov 26-28). **International Federation/D. Fisher**

Goal for 2008-09: Organize eight subregional workshops on legislative advocacy for National Societies.

- In November, the IDRL programme in collaboration with the International Federation's Asia Pacific and West and Central Africa zone offices and the Lagos regional office organized the first two of the planned subregional workshops for National Societies.

These trainings gathered over 30 participants each from National Societies, Federation staff, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other partners in Asia (in Kuala Lumpur) and Western Africa (in Abuja).

- In addition to enabling participants to assess initial drafts of the advocacy manual and to share their own experiences and strategies in legislative advocacy, the workshops included intensive scenario-based training sessions on the IDRL Guidelines and other IDRL instruments.

Movement briefings and commissions



European Legal Support Group, Cavtat, Croatia, April 2008. International Federation/D. Fisher



Pan African Conference, Johannesburg, South Africa, October 2008. International Federation/J. Stumm

- The programme provided IDRL briefings to a number of National Societies during the reporting period, including regional group meetings of National Societies in **Europe** (European Legal Support Group), the **Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) region**, the “**Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)-region**” (including Societies from the Middle East, Africa and Asia), a leadership training course for Spanish-speaking National Society leaders, National Society partnership meetings for Myanmar, Vietnam and Western Africa, and National Society leadership meetings for East and Southeast Asia, as well as for disaster management and logistics meetings in Kuala Lumpur. At their request, individual briefings were conducted for the staff of the Red Cross Societies of **Cambodia, Côte d’Ivoire, Finland, Norway, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Vietnam and the United Kingdom**.
- The programme also provided technical support to the organizers of the **Pan-African Conference** of the Red Cross and Red Crescent which was convened in Johannesburg in October, where follow-up on IDRL was one of the primary themes of discussion. The programme organized a special working group during the conference on the IDRL Guidelines, where speakers from the National Societies of Mozambique and Cote d’Ivoire gave presentations of their experiences in IDRL advocacy. The outcome document for the conference, the “Johannesburg Commitment,” engaged African National Societies to advocate with their governments for the implementation of the Guidelines.

Consolidation of IDRL within the International Federation

- While not enumerated in its original plan, it became clear in 2008 that the IDRL programme could also add significant value within the International Federation’s secretariat by helping to mainstream the use of IDRL in the work of the zones and in operations.
- Programme staff directly participated in planning meetings for the International Federation’s regional zone offices for **Asia-Pacific, Western and Central Africa and Eastern Africa** to assist zone and country-level staff to support National Societies in their promotion of the IDRL Guidelines. They also provided advice and feedback to other

zone and regional offices in the development of their plans. As a result, 29 of the global, zone, regional and country plans for 2009 to 2010 incorporated the promotion of IDRL.

- The programme has also been working with partners within the secretariat to explore how to make operational use of the IDRL Guidelines and the legal information it has gathered. In May, IDRL programme staff was temporarily deployed to Bangkok to provide technical advice related to the relief operation for Cyclone Nargis in **Myanmar** and in June, the Asia-Pacific IDRL Coordinator accompanied senior Federation staff to Yangon. The programme has also been working with the International Federation's acting legal counsel and various other technical and operational departments within the secretariat to see how the IDRL Guidelines might be used in future agreements.
- The programme has also provided significant support to related normative processes in the International Federation. Its coordinator has served on the core group formed for the review of the Principles and Rules of Red Cross and Red Crescent Disaster Relief, providing legal advice and assisting in consultations with National Societies. The programme has also participated in an ad hoc working group on protection in natural disasters.

Objective 3. Advocacy for legal preparedness, and dissemination of existing legal and policy instruments.

Outcome(s)/Expected result(s): The IDRL guidelines are well-known at the global and regional levels. Partnerships are developed to advocate for legal preparedness with global and regional organizations.

Advocacy



The 63rd UN General Assembly adopted multiple resolutions citing the IDRL Guidelines. **UN/P. Filgeiras**



APEC's Economic Leaders approved a new disaster management strategy which refers to the IDRL Guidelines. **Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)**

Goal for 2008-09: Intergovernmental and regional forums will take note of the IDRL Guidelines and encourage their members to use them.



The programme supported advocacy on the IDRL Guidelines by the International Federation's New York Delegation at the **UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the 6th Committee and the General Assembly**. As a result, a number of resolutions made direct reference to the Guidelines this year and encouraged member states to make use of them.¹

¹ These included ECOSOC Resolution 2008/36 on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (o.p. 5); UN General Assembly Resolution 63/139 on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (o.p. 8); UN General Assembly Resolution 63/141 on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development (o.p. 6); and UN General Assembly Resolution 63/137 on strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster (o.p. 5). Additionally, following a speech by the International Federation on the

The programme also provided advice to the **International Law Commission's** Special Rapporteur Eduardo Valencia-Ospina on the issue of “protection of persons in the event of disasters”, including through participation in small forums organized by the Lauterpacht Centre for International Law in Cambridge and the Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons in Geneva. In his preliminary report, Valencia-Ospina drew on the programme’s research and emphasized the importance of the IDRL Guidelines.



The programme also cooperated with the Asia Pacific zone office and the South America regional office to advocate for attention to IDRL around **APEC's** Lima summit in November. As a result, APEC’s new “Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Emergency Preparedness and Response” refers to the IDRL Guidelines and contemplates cooperation with the International Federation in assisting member states to make use of them. Moreover, it is planned that the new regional “**Disaster Reduction Facility**” announced by Australia and Indonesia at the summit will also devote attention to promoting implementation of these IDRL Guidelines.



The programme supported advocacy by the Pacific regional office with the **Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC)** in July resulting in a “call to action” from SOPAC CEOs urging member states to take up the IDRL Guidelines, and indicating willingness to collaborate with the International Federation in promoting them.



The programme continued its ongoing cooperation with **ASEAN**, which also included giving advice on the development of standard operating procedures by the ASEAN Disaster Management Committee, and participating in disaster management meetings and a simulation exercise in Thailand in August. It also supported a presentation by the International Federation at a similar Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) exercise in November in Yerevan.



The programme formally presented the IDRL Guidelines to the Executive Council of the **International Civil Defense Organization** in May, and to the European Commission’s Civil Protection Committee in June.



It supported similar presentations by Federation leadership to the **Inter-Parliamentary Union's** 118th Assembly in April, and its Executive Council in November; to the 3rd Asian Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction, as well as the Humanitarian Liaison Working Group in December; by the ICRC to a **Commonwealth Law Ministers** in July; and by the Norwegian Red Cross Society to a meeting of the Nordic states’ civil protection authorities in February.

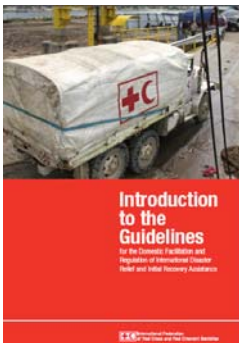


It also provided substantive input to the **Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention and Relief (CAPRADE)** in its development of materials on disaster cooperation, and to the “Multinational Planning Augmentation Team” (a cooperative effort by 33 militaries in Asia Pacific to improve multilateral cooperation, including in disaster response).

topic, the 6th Committee’s resolution 63/439 on the report of the International Law Commission on the work of its sixtieth session called on the Commission to consult with the International Federation in the context of its project on the “protection of persons in the event of disasters” (o.p 16).

Dissemination kit

Goal for 2008-09: Develop a dissemination kit to encourage attention to, and understanding of, the IDRL Guidelines.



In 2008, the programme developed a **dissemination kit** for National Societies and Federation staff regarding the IDRL Guidelines. The kit includes a 30-page introductory-brochure, fact sheets, updated paragraph-by-paragraph annotations, model presentations, and questions and answers among other materials.

The kit was made available to National Societies and Federation staff on the FedNet (an online network available to National Societies and Federation staff) and through targeted dissemination via zone and country-level Federation representatives in Arabic, English, French and Spanish (with Russian translation currently in process).

Communications tools

Goal for 2008-09: Upgrade communications tools to generate greater attention to disaster law issues.



- The programme redesigned its **public website** (www.ifrc.org/idrl), which is now available in four languages, and updated monthly. It also updated its page on **FedNet** (<https://fednet.ifrc.org/sw41845.asp>) in the four official languages and provided new content for its page on **DMIS** (another online network used by Red Cross and Red Crescent actors, with revisions scheduled to go live in 2009).
- The programme upgraded its **newsletter** to a professional format, including not only information about the programme's activities, but also articles on current legal developments and interviews with key actors in the development of disaster management law. It is now sent out bi-monthly in four languages to over 2,800 subscribers around the world.
- The programme and IDRL Guidelines were featured in the January 2008 issue of the Red Cross Red Crescent Magazine, and in the September issue of the Japanese Red Cross newsletter. The programme was also invited to contribute an article to the March edition of the newsletter of NATO's Civil Emergency Planning department.

Research and writing

- In March, the programme published a new case study on regulatory issues in the international response to the 2007 floods in **Bolivia**, available in English and Spanish.

- It also continued its collaboration with the Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (RSG) on the human rights of internally displaced persons on a project to encourage the implementation of the rights of displaced persons in domestic law. The programme contributed substantial research papers on the **law of humanitarian assistance** and the **law of disaster risk reduction** which were used by the RSG, along with input from other experts, to develop a manual for policymakers on the implementation of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. A separate book including the chapters written by the IDRL programme is scheduled for publication by the American Society of International Law in 2009.
- The programme also contributed substantive articles to the Second Annual Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) Regional Security Outlook and Volume 34 of the **Commonwealth Law Bulletin**, and continued to expand its online legal database.

Working in partnership

The programme's most important partnerships are with **National Societies** and during the reporting period, it assisted a number of them to approach their own governments and other actors on IDRL, as noted above. It further encouraged National Society representatives to represent IDRL in international forums, such as the IPU and the Nordic States civil protection meeting. It engaged with the European National Societies Legal Support Group, and provided advice for the creation of the new African National Societies Legal Support Group. The programme also partners with **Federation staff** in various disciplines, particularly in the zone and country offices. As noted above, moreover, the programme is collaborating directly with **WHO** in its pilot projects in Southeast Asia.

The IDRL programme also worked to deepen partnerships in the wider humanitarian community on IDRL issues, including through: briefings to the UN's **Logistics Cluster** in October and the regional **Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)** in Bangkok; support to the **United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC)** preparedness mission to Bhutan in April, an UNDAC training in Panama in May, and an **OCHA** training on protection in Panama; support for a presentation to the **Interaction** forum in April; and presentations to three sessions of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism staff management training at the **Danish Emergency Management Agency Staff College**.

It also continued to stimulate academic interest in IDRL, through presentations to the **Fordham University's** International Diploma for Humanitarian Assistance Programme, the Inter-disciplinary Programme on Humanitarian Assistance at the **University of Geneva**, the **University of Aix-Marseille Law School**, and a climate change conference in Hameenlinna organized by the **University of Applied Sciences/University of Glamorgan**.

These efforts also paid dividends in the programme's own work in 2008. For example, OCHA and UNJLC provided presenters for the programme's training workshops in November. OCHA was active in soliciting Red Cross presentations on IDRL in its contingency planning workshops in Senegal and Togo in the fall. The European Commission agreed to fund and participate in a regional IDRL study in 2009, and arrangements are being made to cooperate with OCHA and IPU on the model legislation/handbook project.

Contributing to longer-term impact

The IDRL programme's primary objective is to improve the legal regulation of disaster management, particularly with regard to international relief, in order to reduce disaster vulnerability and improve the delivery of relief and recovery services. This is directly related to

the International Federation's Global Agenda Goals 1 and 2, which seek to reduce the global impact of disasters and health emergencies on communities. Over the longer term, the programme expects to see new legislation at the domestic level, innovative arrangements at the regional level for disaster cooperation, and greater attention to legal issues in disaster management at the international level. The IDRL programme's work in 2008 has set the stage for these developments.

Looking ahead

The IDRL programme faces 2009 with expanded staffing and capacity. In addition to its coordinator in Geneva, the programme now has two staff members concentrating on Asia-Pacific in Kuala Lumpur, and a delegate for Africa based in Nairobi. As of January 2009, a delegate for the Pacific will take up her post in Suva. The 2008-09 plan also foresees a delegate for the Americas and prospects seem positive for this position to be supported. This new energy will allow the programme to multiply its efforts and reach out to additional partners, particularly among regional organizations. As in 2008, however, the programme's main goal will be to serve as a support and catalyst for the activities of National Societies, Federation staff and other partners to promote IDRL.

The programme expects that the increasing attention to the issue of climate change in 2009 -- not least with the Climate Change Conference scheduled in Copenhagen at the end of the year - - will heighten governments' receptivity to the argument that legal preparedness for disasters needs to be addressed. This should help the programme maintain its long-term momentum needed to foster the strengthening of laws. In 2009, it will also take important steps to consolidate the expertise of the Movement in this area, as a growing cadre of legal advisors, disaster management directors and other representatives are trained and empowered to use the IDRL Guidelines and other relevant international instruments.

How we work	
<p>The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".</p>	<p>Global Agenda Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the numbers 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 Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability. • Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.
Contact information	
<p>For further information specifically related to this report, please contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Geneva, David Fisher, IDRL Programme Coordinator. Legal Department; e-mail: david.fisher@ifrc.org; phone: +41 22 730 4360; and fax: +41 22 730 4929. • In Kuala Lumpur, Victoria Bannon, Asia-Pacific IDRL Unit Coordinator, Asia Pacific zone; e-mail: victoria.bannon@ifrc.org; phone: +60-3-9207-5764; and fax: +60-3-2161-0670. • In Nairobi, Eilif Torma, IDRL Delegate for Africa, East Africa zone; e-mail: eilif.torma@ifrc.org; phone: + 254 20 283 5249; and +254 20 271 2777. 	