

Annual report



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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

MAA00004

13 April 2010

This report covers the period 1 January to 31
December 2009.



Participants discussed how to make best use of the IDRL Guidelines and other norms at a regional training workshop in Panama in September 2009.
IFRC

In brief

Programme purpose: The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL) Programme seeks to reduce human vulnerability by promoting legal preparedness for disasters. 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, the IDRL programme worked in three main areas: (1) collaborating with National Societies and other partners to provide technical assistance to interested governments on the implementation of the IDRL Guidelines; (2) building the capacity of National Societies and humanitarian partners to understand and make use of the IDRL Guidelines and other international norms; and (3) promoting, disseminating and researching effective disaster law.

Financial situation: The total 2009 budget was CHF 2,402,878 (USD 2,314,930 or EUR 1,615,160), of which CHF 2,081,957 (87 per cent) was covered during the reporting period (including opening balance). Overall expenditure during the reporting period was CHF 1,316,014 (representing 55 per cent of the budget and 65 per cent of funds actually received).

The relatively low spending in relation to the budget had to do with several factors. First, a substantial proportion (CHF 935,712, or 45 per cent) of the overall funding received was earmarked for use in the Asia Pacific region only. Of the remaining income, CHF 479,912 (42 per cent) was not pledged until the second half of the year. Thus, the recruitment of a new delegate for the Americas, originally planned for January, was delayed until September, and initial work on projects in that region was correspondingly delayed.

More importantly, however, substantial external delays were encountered in the initiation of country-level technical assistance projects in Asia Pacific and Africa. Notwithstanding promotion by concerned National Societies and positive indications of interest from a large number of governments, formal governmental approvals for the initiation of projects have proven slow in arriving. To address this issue, the programme has been working with National Societies and governments to pilot a more flexible approach, allowing for preliminary research work to begin before the establishment of an official task force to oversee the projects.

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

See also the IFRC's overall [Global Disaster Management Strategy](#) for 2009-10, of which the IDRL plan was one part.

No. of people we have reached: Please see chart on page 11.

Our partners: The programme is extremely grateful for the support of its donors so far towards its 2009-10 plan. These include the Governments of Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway and the United Kingdom; the National Red Cross societies of Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Japan, Norway and the United Kingdom, as well as the Asian Development Bank and the European Commission (both via ECHO and the Community Civil Protection Financial Mechanism). In 2009, the programme worked closely with all Federation zone offices, many National Societies and a number of UN agencies, including WHO and OCHA.

Context

- Over the course of six years, the IFRC's IDRL programme undertook global research and consultations on the [main problem areas and best practices](#) in the regulation of international disaster relief. This investigation revealed that regulatory problems – including both excessive bureaucracy in some areas and insufficient monitoring in others – have substantially impaired the timeliness, effectiveness and quality of the aid that devastated communities have received after major disasters, while at the same time increasing its costs. It also showed that better legal preparedness at the domestic level could go a long way to preventing these kinds of problems.
- In November 2007, the 30th International Conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies adopted the [IDRL Guidelines](#) to assist governments overcome these problems. Reaffirming the importance of increasing legal preparedness for disasters, the conference encouraged states to make use of the guidelines to strengthen national legal frameworks for regulating external relief, and as the basis for bilateral and regional agreements. It also called on the IFRC and National Societies to support governments in doing so.
- In 2009, the IFRC continued to assist its member National Societies in supporting their governments to use the IDRL Guidelines before disasters strike to assess their levels of preparedness for the legal realities of large relief and recovery operations. In addition to improving the environment for aid to disaster-affected persons, this work has helped to

strengthen the auxiliary relationship of a number of National Societies with their governments.

Progress towards outcomes

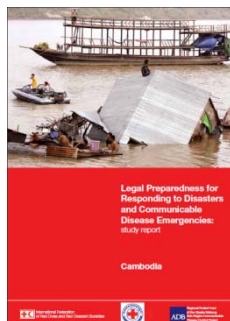
Outcomes

Programme Component 1: Technical assistance at the national level

Country-level technical assistance projects



A technical assistance project workshop in Vientiane. IFRC



Cambodia research report



A technical assistance project workshop in Freetown. IFRC

Goal for the two-year period of 2009-10: Working in conjunction with interested National Societies, organize 14 country-level technical assistance projects on the IDRL Guidelines for interested governments.

Progress as of the end of 2009: Technical assistance projects were completed in four countries in 2009, field research began in two more, and discussions on potential projects reached an advanced stage in over a dozen others.

In **Cambodia**, **Vietnam** and **Laos**, the IDRL Programme supported the National Societies concerned to organize an intensive research and consultation process over a period of approximately one year, in collaboration with relevant governmental officials and its project partner WHO. These projects analyzed existing local laws and institutions in light of the IDRL Guidelines, as well as the International Health Regulations.

In each country, the projects involved the establishment of a country task force overseen by the relevant government ministry and including the National Society and other key stakeholders; the engagement of local legal consultants; desk research and consultations about existing laws and rules; the convening of national workshops (in Phnom Penh on [January 21, 2009](#), in Hanoi on [April 28 to 29 2009](#) and July 31, 2009, and in Vientiane on August 5, 2009); and the development of comprehensive reports and recommendations approved by the overseeing taskforces (available separately online for [Cambodia](#), [Laos](#) and [Vietnam](#)).

To add momentum to these findings and recommendations, a high-level “Mekong Regional Forum on Legal Preparedness and Regional Arrangements for Disasters and Health Emergencies” was organized in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank in Phnom Penh on October 15 to 16, 2009. Participants included disaster management and health officials from the governments and National Societies of Cambodia, China Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam, as well as from international and regional bodies

Signs are quite encouraging that these projects will result in the development of new laws. After the completion of the project report in Cambodia, the National Committee for Disaster Management formally requested that the International Federation extend its support to allow the

engagement of a consultant to draft the new legislation consistent with the recommendations provided. That work is currently underway.

In Vietnam, UNDP has initiated a similar follow-up project to assist the government in drafting new disaster management laws and regulations, using the IFRC's report recommendations with regard to the international component. It has engaged the same consultants employed for the Federation project, and has requested that the IFRC serve as an advisor to the project. Discussions are currently ongoing with UNDP with regard to the potential development of a similar follow-up project in Laos.

In **Nepal**, the National Red Cross Society began its own project of legal research and consultations with financial and technical support from the IDRL Programme. A detailed research report will be completed, and a workshop organized in 2010.

The IDRL Programme's first project in Africa was also completed in **Sierra Leone** in 2009. Like in Asia, the National Red Cross Society played a key promotional role. Moreover, in this case, both research and consultations were organized by a legal consultant who also serves as legal counsel to the National Red Cross Society. Her work included desk research, surveys and the organization of two national workshops in Freetown (on July 9 and December 4, 2009). The legal consultant also served as secretary to a special task force chaired by the Office of National Security (ONS) which oversaw the process. At the second workshop, it was decided that the ONS would carry forward the recommendations and findings of the project into the development of new laws and regulations for Sierra Leone.

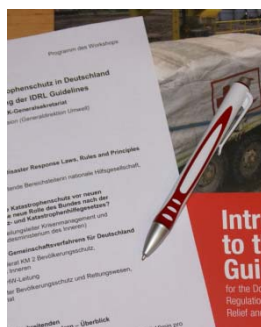
A new project commenced in **Uganda** at the end of 2009, with the signing of a formal memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the government and the appointment of a legal research team (under the management of the Uganda Red Cross legal counsel), which has begun initial work. A project task force chaired by the Office of the Prime Minister subsequently convened its first meeting in January 2010, and a preliminary presentation of project goals and methodology was made to all concerned ministries and civil society organizations at the National Disaster Risk Reduction Platform.

In addition to the above, planning was undertaken in 2009 for the development of new projects in a number of other countries. It is expected that initial country-level work will begin for projects in **Colombia, Peru and Vanuatu** in early 2010. Scoping discussions are still ongoing with National Societies and governmental officials in Mozambique, Namibia, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Tajikistan; and while it is still too early to predict a start date, the programme anticipates that projects in several of these countries will start up in 2010.

EU regional IDRL study



National IDRL workshop in Berlin. **German Red Cross.**



National IDRL workshop in Paris. **IFRC**

Goal for the two-year period of 2009-10: Working in conjunction with six National Societies, undertake regional and country case-study research on IDRL in the European Union.

Progress as of the end of 2009: A regional desk study has been completed and will be published in early 2010. Country case studies have been drafted and will be finalized in 2010.

With support from the European Commission, the IDRL programme is collaborating with the National Societies of **Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Netherlands** and the **United Kingdom** in a three-stage study scheduled for completion at the end of 2010. This study aims to assist regional National Societies, governments and EU institutions to examine regulatory frameworks relevant to cross-border disaster assistance within Europe, both at the EU and domestic levels.

In 2009, a regional study of EU laws and norms related to the issues in the IDRL Guidelines was completed, and will be published in early 2010. Draft country-level studies were prepared by the participating National Societies and each organized [national workshops](#) to refine their findings and disseminate information about potential gaps. These studies will also be finalized and published in 2010. Later in 2010, a synthesis report and recommendations for EU member states will be prepared based on the foregoing research and a regional workshop will be organized for representatives of European governments and disaster response agencies to discuss potential follow-up action.

Cooperation with UNDAC preparedness missions

While not expressly mentioned in its 2009-10 plan, in 2009, the IFRC took the opportunity to increase its outreach to governments and increase its cooperation with UN OCHA by participating in [United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination \(UNDAC\) team preparedness missions](#).

In March, it provided substantive assistance and input to a mission to **Cambodia** (based on prior research from its ongoing project there as described above), and participated directly in missions to **Peru** in March and **Papua New Guinea** in May. As noted above, the mission to Peru paved the way to a more extensive project to begin in 2010, and potential follow-up is still being explored in Papua New Guinea.

Handbook/model legislation

Goal for the two-year period of 2009-10: Commence work on a handbook/model legislation for policy-makers to implement the IDRL Guidelines (to be completed in 2010).

Progress as of the end of 2009: Core partners have been brought on board and initial research has begun.

The IFRC formed a partnership with OCHA and the Inter-Parliamentary Union to develop model language and guidance for states seeking to incorporate the IDRL Guidelines into national law. While originally described in the plan as a “handbook,” discussions have steered the project towards the development of model legislation with substantive commentary. As an initial step in the process, the IFRC has procured the pro bono assistance of several major law firms to do preliminary comparative research on the best examples of existing national legislation. An advisory committee of agencies and experts will be convened in early 2010, and several expert meetings are planned over the course of that year to assist with drafting.

Disaster law course for policy-makers

Goal for the two-year period of 2009-10: Develop a five-day course on disaster law for governmental officials to take place in 2010.

Progress as of the end of 2009: Initial funding was obtained for the course, and planning began with partners. The course itself is scheduled for delivery at the end of 2010.

The IFRC began planning for the course with partners at the Danish Emergency Management Agency Staff College (which offers a range of training sessions concerning crisis response for officials from various nationalities), and the Danish Red Cross. The programme also received a pledge of initial financial support for the course from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Programme Component 2: Training and capacity building

Advocacy manual

Goal for the two-year period of 2009-10: Develop a manual for National Societies to assist them in providing advice to their governments on the drafting of effective disaster management legislation.

Progress as of the end of 2009: An advance draft was completed, to be published in 2010.

The IFRC prepared and widely circulated a draft manual for National Societies on advocacy for effective laws related to disaster management and health emergencies. The manual provides information about the particularities of the Red Cross and Red Crescent approach to such advocacy, as well as on relevant international norms, examples of existing legislation, and issue areas highlighted by the International Conference and other Movement decision-making bodies. In order to facilitate feedback, the draft has been translated into Arabic, English, French, Spanish, and Russian; and made available on FedNet.

While initially projected for finalization in 2009, it was decided to continue to refine the draft in 2010 to allow for additional consultations.

Training and consultation workshops



IDRL training in Suva. IFRC



IDRL training in Almaty. IFRC



IDRL training in Nairobi. IFRC

Goal for the two-year period of 2009-10: Organize seven subregional training and consultation workshops over the course of two years.

Progress as at the end of 2009: Four subregional workshops were organized in 2009.

The IFRC organized three-day subregional workshops for:

- **East Africa** in Nairobi (June)
- the **Pacific** in Suva (August)
- **Central and South America** in Panama (September), and
- **Central Asia** in Almaty (October)

The workshops were aimed at National Societies, humanitarian partners (and, in the case of the events in Almaty and Panama, governmental partners) from the respective subregions. The latter two workshops were also formally co-sponsored by OCHA.

Each workshop provided two days of interactive [training sessions on the IDRL Guidelines](#) and associated international norms for disaster response, as well as a day of structured consultations on successful strategies for legislative advocacy in this area. These latter consultations have contributed directly to the development of the draft legislative advocacy manual discussed above.

Additional workshops are currently being planned for Asia, the Caribbean, Europe and Southern Africa in 2010.

Support for National Society workshops

The IFRC contributed to a number of national-level workshops organized by National Societies to inform their domestic authorities and other stakeholders about IDRL. These included workshops in **Spain** (February), **Sweden** (March), **Canada** (May), [Indonesia](#) (July), [Ireland](#) (October), and [Colombia](#) (December) (as well as those organized in the context of the European regional IDRL study discussed above).

Additional training for humanitarian colleagues

The IFRC led IDRL sessions within trainings organized by outside partners for persons involved in disaster management. These included:

- A training for governmental disaster management officers in Cairo in May.
- UNDAC induction trainings in Oman in May and Geneva in June.
- A training on international law for resident and humanitarian coordinators in Turin in June.
- Danish Emergency Management Agency trainings for European officials deployed through the European Commission Civil Protection Mechanism in Snekkersten in March, and (through representation by The Netherlands Red Cross) in October.

Additionally, briefing sessions on the IDRL Guidelines were organized for Federation staff and National Society representatives during the reporting period in Dakar, Jakarta, Geneva, Panama, Paris, Nairobi, Kuala Lumpur and Suva.

Programme component 3: Dissemination, advocacy and research

Advocacy and promotion



SADC Meeting in Johannesburg. IFRC



Two-year progress report



IDRL panel at the Global Platform on disaster risk reduction (DRR). IFRC

Goal for the two-year period of 2009-10: Governments, inter-governmental organizations, National Societies, humanitarian partners, academics and other stakeholders are informed about the IDRL Guidelines and make use of them.

Progress as of the end of 2009: The IFRC continued to elicit a high level of interest in the IDRL Guidelines at the global and regional levels.

At the **global** level, the need for implementation of the IDRL Guidelines was among the messages that the IFRC voiced at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva in June. At the platform, IFRC organized a specific briefing on IDRL for Central Asian governments, as well as a [special event](#) for all participants, co-sponsored with OCHA, on legal preparedness for disaster cooperation.

In November, the IFRC published a [two-year progress report](#) on the global implementation of the IDRL Guidelines. The report relied in part on a survey conducted in mid-2009 of governments and National Societies on their efforts and challenges in carrying out the resolution of the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent related to the guidelines. That survey received over 100 responses, including 70 from National Societies and 40 from states. A majority of both the states and National Societies responding indicated that they had started to take steps to make use of the IDRL Guidelines, although only a handful of governments had, thus far, adopted new legislation.

With support from the programme, the IFRC's New York delegation once again brought the importance of the [IDRL Guidelines to the attention of UN member states at the UN Economic and Social Council and General Assembly](#), resulting in specific endorsements in relevant resolutions on humanitarian coordination ([ECOSOC res. No. 2009/3](#) (o.p. 5); [GA Res. A/RES/64/76](#) (o.p. 10)).

The IDRL programme also supported the integration of legal preparedness into advocacy messages deployed by the humanitarian community in negotiations related to the UNFCCC Conference of Parties in Copenhagen in November. It provided input to the UN Protection Cluster, for its *Operational Guidelines and Field Manual for Human Rights in Natural Disasters*; and the International Law Commission, in relation to its project on the protection of persons in natural disasters. In May, the IDRL programme presented the IDRL Guidelines to the ISO Technical Committee 223, charged with designing international standards on societal security. Participants voiced their interest in incorporating the Guidelines in an ISO standard.

In **Africa**, the IFRC presented the IDRL Guidelines to a [high-level meeting of governmental disaster managers](#) convened by SADC in Johannesburg in October. The resulting communiqué called on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) member governments to “explore the incorporation” of the IDRL Guidelines into their domestic laws.

In **Asia Pacific**, the IDRL programme was involved in conferences, workshops and seminars around the region, including:

- the [Coordination Forum for Aceh and Nias](#) in Indonesia, the Asian Development Bank Regional Health Forum in China, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Consultative Meeting on Regional Cooperation in Pandemic Preparedness and Response in Cambodia in February;
- the Australasian Hazard Management workshop in Australia in August;
- the [Inter-Agency Pandemic Preparedness Forum](#) in Thailand in October;
- the 4th Annual Pacific Disaster Risk Management Partnership Network meeting and 2nd Meeting of CEOs of Finance and Planning and Disaster Management, both organized by the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) in Fiji in May;
- the Pacific Humanitarian Team/Inter-Agency Contingency Planning Workshop for Humanitarian Assistance in Samoa in May and in Vanuatu in September; and
- the Pacific Islands Law Officers Network (PILON) meeting in Samoa in December.

The IDRL Guidelines have also been taken up by other regional initiatives, such as the Multinational Planning Augmentation Team (MPAT) Tempest Express 16, a multinational

exercise on military engagement in disaster relief in the Philippines. Likewise, in May, the 4th Annual Pacific Disaster Risk Management Partnership Network meeting included a recommendation to bring IDRL issues forward by supporting “governments to develop or strengthen national laws and policies for enhanced legal preparedness for national and international disaster response.”

As noted above, in October, the IFRC cooperated with the Asian Development Bank to organize the “Mekong Forum on Legal Preparedness for Disasters and Health Emergencies” in October for representatives of governments and National Societies in Southeast Asia. The forum adopted, as a top priority recommendation, the updating of national laws using the IDRL Guidelines and other instruments.

In the **Americas**, the Organization of American States ([OAS](#)) [General Assembly adopted a resolution](#) (OAS GA Res. 2492 (XXXIX O/09) calling for a “process of joint assessment of existing legislative and coordination mechanisms in the natural disaster and humanitarian assistance areas, which takes into account coordination efforts that can be made by the organization, and to consider the advisability of updating them.”

Potential elements of this process were discussed at the [“Second Regional Conference on Humanitarian Partnerships”](#), hosted by the Government of Brazil and OCHA in Florianopolis in September, and where the IFRC was an active participant. The 18 governmental representatives gathered there adopted a resolution which highlighted the importance of the IDRL Guidelines, and encouraged governments to examine their national laws in light of their recommendations.

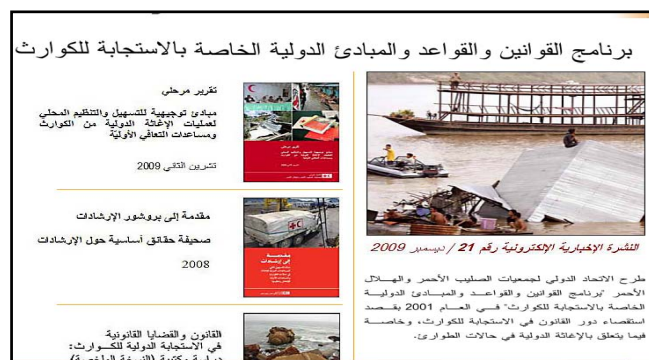
In October, the IFRC presented the IDRL Guidelines to government members of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA) at a seminar on regional disaster cooperation. Likewise, in December, the IFRC was invited to present the IDRL Guidelines at a [regional conference organized by CDEMA](#) in Jamaica and to the [Andean Commission of Jurists](#) in Peru.

In **Europe**, IDRL briefings were provided to officials from the European Commission (including ECHO, and the Directorates General for External Relations and the Environment) in Brussels in January. In November, the IDRL programme was invited to present the guidelines to over 800 participants at the European Commission’s [Third Forum on Civil Protection](#) in Brussels. The programme gave input to NATO, in support of its development of a checklist for its members on cross-border disaster assistance.

Dissemination and publicity



IDRL newsletter



IDRL web site in Arabic



Guidelines in Mongolian

Goal for the two-year period of 2009-10: Information about the IDRL Guidelines and the issues they address are made widely available.

Progress as of the end of 2009: New materials and means for transmission were developed, and IDRL issues were covered in several press articles.

The IFRC made information about IDRL widely available to governments, humanitarian organizations, academics and other stakeholders in 2009. Through cooperation with National Societies, background material on the IDRL Guidelines has now been translated into over a dozen languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Greek, Japanese, Khmer, Lao, Mongolian, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The IDRL public web site and FedNet site are each now available in five languages.

The [IDRL bi-monthly newsletter](#) and [weekly news service](#) were both redesigned and reached a combined audience of over 3,000 stakeholders around the world. For the first time, the programme also gained a presence on “Twitter” and “Facebook”.

IDRL activities were covered in several press articles over the course of the year, including in [Nicaragua](#), Panama, [Laos and Vietnam](#), as well as on the [Commonwealth web site](#).

New research on disaster risk reduction and law

Goal for the two-year period of 2009-10: In 2010, the IDRL programme would undertake a concentrated programme of research on legal issues in disaster risk reduction.

Progress as of the end of 2009: Preliminary research and planning began for this project in 2009; however, the bulk of the work will take place in 2010.

Foster academic interest in IDRL

Goal for the two-year period of 2009-10: Inspire academic interest in IDRL, including by initiating a working paper series, contributing articles to outside journals, and encouraging the development of pools of experts.

Progress as of the end of 2009: The working paper series was launched, several articles were contributed, and students were engaged

The IFRC launched its “Disaster Law Working Paper Series” in September with the publication of a paper entitled “[The Effectiveness of Pandemic Preparations: Legal Lessons from the 2009 Influenza Epidemic](#)” by Dr. Bradley J. Condon and Dr. Tapen Sinha of the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México. It is anticipated that papers will be issued at least quarterly on various topics.

The programme also prepared:

- a section on “Updating laws for pandemics and other disasters” for an article on “Limiting the impact of pandemic influenza through community-level actions” in [Risk Wise Epidemics](#);
- an article on “Improving legal preparedness for cross-border disaster medicine,” to be published in the [Journal of Pre-Hospital and Disaster Medicine](#); and
- an article on “[Developments of interest to the Commonwealth in the regulation of international disaster response, 2008–09](#)” published in the Commonwealth Law Bulletin.

In May, the programme cooperated with the Canadian Red Cross Society to organize a panel on IDRL at the World Congress on Emergency and Disaster Medicine in Victoria, Canada. Lectures were also given to students at the Australian National University, University of Nairobi, University College of Dublin, and the University of Geneva over the course of the year.

Progress toward quantitative goals

Goal for the two-year period of 2009-10	Level achieved in 2009
Fourteen governments benefiting from country-level pilot technical assistance projects	Four projects were completed, two more were underway, and over a dozen additional possibilities were under discussion.
Six governments benefiting from case studies in EU (and all EU states benefiting from the overall regional study).	All six country projects underway and regional study progressing.
Twenty government representatives benefiting from the five-day course (probably beginning in 2010).	Planned for 2010
Five governments benefiting from disaster risk reduction country case studies.	Planned for 2010
At least 70 representatives of National Societies receiving training on IDRL.	Sixty-five representatives of 47 National Societies received training on IDRL in 2009, and additional training workshops for Asia, the Caribbean and Southern Africa are planned for 2010.
At least 70 representatives of National Societies benefiting from advocacy workshops.	Sixty-five representatives of National Societies benefited from advocacy and training workshops.
At least 30 representatives of partner humanitarian organizations benefiting from training on IDRL.	Forty representatives of 17 partner organizations received training on IDRL.
At least four intergovernmental and regional organizations will be formally introduced to the IDRL Guidelines.	Six intergovernmental and regional organizations were introduced to the IDRL Guidelines.

Constraints and Challenges

Donors have reacted positively to the IDRL programme this year, allowing a large number of activities to go forward, as described above. However, as noted above, substantial portions of the funding received was earmarked by region and/or guaranteed only very late in the year. This meant, for example, that the recruitment of the IDRL Americas delegate was delayed until September (as opposed to January as planned), and the onset of projects in Africa and Central Asia was also delayed.

A very important challenge has been overcoming barriers to the initiation of country-level projects. Notwithstanding active promotion by National Societies and high levels of interest among governments, the process of obtaining formal agreements to these projects has proven quite complex, particularly in the Pacific. This is due to the fact that the projects involve not only an investment of time and attention of a number of stakeholders, but also a political commitment to set the basis for support for any new legislation that might emerge from them.

The IDRL programme continues to believe that a strong local engagement is critical if the recommendations coming from the projects are to have concrete results. However, it is working with its members to implement a phased process of initiation of future projects, allowing for some preliminary research to take place prior to the convening of governmental task forces.

Some National Societies representatives continue to report trepidation in raising IDRL with their governments because of a lack of technical expertise. The training workshops are designed to allay these concerns, and seem to be having the desired impact in regions where they have been conducted.

Working in partnership

Our key partners are National Societies – often involving a combination of leadership, disaster managers and legal advisors. A major goal of the programme’s work is to help them to support their own authorities on the development of effective disaster laws.

The programme has also expanded its partnership with several UN agencies this year, in particular OCHA; including through the UNDAC programme, collaboration in trainings, and joint approaches to governments. In Southeast Asia, our partnerships with the WHO and the Asian Development Bank were key aspects of the success of technical assistance projects in the Mekong Valley.

As discussed above, the programme is also working to build new partnerships for projects in 2010, including with the Danish Emergency Management Agency and the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Contributing to longer-term impact

The IFRC continues to believe that the best way to solve regulatory issues in international assistance is to prepare systems – including legislation – prior to a disaster. As noted in the [two-year progress report](#) mentioned above, several countries have adopted new administrative regulations to implement the IDRL Guidelines, and a number of review processes are underway.

Looking ahead

In 2010, the programme will be finalizing some important products, including the legislative advocacy manual and the model statutory language on the IDRL Guidelines. Most importantly, the programme will continue to encourage and assist National Societies to take a leading role in promoting legal preparedness for disasters in their countries, in particular through the development of online training modules, additional regional training workshops, and cooperation in a number of country-level technical assistance projects. It will also begin to build the knowledge of Federation members and our partners in the area of law and disaster risk reduction, through a comprehensive study project to be undertaken jointly with the IFRC’s community preparedness and risk reduction department. These projects are described in more detail in the programme’s [2010-11 plan](#).

As of end of 2009, the programme had staff positions to support National Societies and Federation staff on IDRL issues in Asia Pacific, Africa and the Americas. Per the 2010-11 plan, it is also hoped that support will be obtained for dedicated human resources to work in the Middle East/Northern Africa and Eastern Europe/Central Asia. By maintaining a minimal staff presence in Geneva (currently a single coordinator), and concentrating resources in the field, it is hoped that the programme can take best advantage of the Federation’s decentralized management structure, and ensure that its programming is relevant to specific regional needs.

How we work

The IFRC'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".

Global Agenda Goals:

- 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.

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