

Afghan Red Crescent Society Disaster Management Policy



2016

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Policy:	ARCS Disaster Management Policy
Scheduled review date:	2-3 years from date of approval
Supersedes:	All previous statements and/or policies
Approved by:	Governing board
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Preamble

The mission of the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) is “to contribute to resilient communities, delivering services efficiently by mobilizing diverse and well developed volunteers and members and staff guided by the principles of the Red Crescent & Red Cross(RCRC)Movement especially neutrality, impartiality and independence”.

The accomplishment of this mission calls for shared efforts and commitment across all levels of ARCS. To achieve this all staff and volunteers must be engaged through a shared sense of purpose and common mission. This implies adherence of the fundamental principles and values, which guide ARCS. This policy sets in place a profound shift in the attitude of ARCS that constitutes a stronger sense of identity, solidarity and shared responsibility.

This policy recognizes the importance of reinforcing organizational, coordination and operational delivery capacities to be better prepared to respond to natural and/or conflict related emergencies.

This policy was developed drawing on ARCS guidelines for policy and procedure development as guidance to set in place the parameters outlined in the policy.

Purpose

The purpose of this Disaster Management (DM) policy is to establish a foundation for the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) disaster management programme and activities carried out at a branch, regional and national level by all staff and volunteers. It applies to any DM activity carried out by ARCS in emergency response operations (natural disaster and/or conflict), or in the implementation of longer-term developmental activities such as disaster preparedness, recovery, and risk reduction.

The policy reaffirms ARCS work in DM to provide neutral and impartial humanitarian assistance to disaster and conflict impacted communities. ARCS staff and volunteers work through a countrywide network to ensure appropriate, timely and effective risk reduction, preparedness and response actions.

Scope

This policy is applicable to all ARCS staff and volunteers across all levels of the organization that are engaged through the disaster management programme and activities carried out at a branch, regional and national level by all staff and volunteers.

Policy

The DM policy reaffirms ARCS commitment to its guiding organizational values of : people, integrity, partnership, diversity, leadership and innovation. The DM policy states how these values are reflected in the disaster management work of ARCS.

People: We build the capacities of the people and communities to work in solidarity to find sustainable solutions for their most pressing needs and vulnerabilities.

ARCS recognize the importance of its DM staff, through the establishment of its volunteering policy and its integration alongside the DM policy for all staff and volunteers across all levels of ARCS to be compliant in upholding.

ARCS recognize the value of its volunteers and youth in disaster management through the commitment to allocate sufficient financial resources necessary to provide volunteers and youth with required skills training opportunities, equipment and materials to be prepared to carry out their work across national, regional and branch levels.

ARCS recognize the value and stress experienced by ARCS volunteers and youth in carrying out operational disaster response activities and the importance of health and wellbeing in emergencies by providing them with access to psychological support training and guidance as well as professional services and insurance where incidents occur.

ARCS promote community-based approaches to engage volunteers and youth in disaster management related activities. ARCS also recognize the value of a gender diverse pool of community volunteers and youth that act in accordance with principled humanitarian action.

ARCS apply the value of its people by improving the resilience of communities to cope with disasters by strengthening local capacities through community based disaster preparedness and risk reduction activities. In addition, all activities should aim to incorporate social inclusion and consider gender and diversity.

Integrity: We work in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of our Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in a transparent and accountable manner.

The DM policy acknowledges and is aligned with the IFRC principles, which guides ARCS and as enshrined by the Movement, Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity and Universality.

Specifically ARCS makes no discrimination to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases.

ARCS does not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

ARCS is a voluntary humanitarian organization not promoted in any manner by desire for gain.

ARCS also commits to ensuring its integrity by adhering to the Principles and Rules of Red Cross and Red Crescent Humanitarian Assistance that were set out and approved by the General Assembly in 2013.

The principles include:

- 1) We, the National Societies and the International Federation, consider that all persons affected by disasters are entitled to receive assistance, consistent with their needs and priorities.
- 2) We respect the dignity of all people affected by disasters, including their meaningful involvement in decisions that affect their lives and livelihoods.

- 3) We commit to protect people affected by disasters, particularly those made vulnerable by any form of discrimination.
- 4) We have the duty to bring humanitarian assistance to those in need. We partner with states, which have the primary responsibility to meet the needs of disaster-affected people in their countries.
- 5) We advocate on behalf of people at risk and affected by disasters for increased action to address their vulnerabilities and unmet humanitarian needs.
- 6) We increase and expand our assistance through mobilizing our network. We commit that all international assistance provided by a National Society or the International Federation is with the consent of the National Society of the disaster-affected country.
- 7) We are each other's primary and preferred partners. We pursue operational partnerships with external actors – consistent with our Fundamental Principles – to further increase operational reach, scale and effectiveness.
- 8) We ensure that our assistance is well coordinated among ourselves and with relevant external actors.
- 9) We ensure that our assistance is appropriate, efficient, effective, and accountable, and we support the transition from relief to recovery for disaster-affected people.
- 10) We provide international assistance that builds upon local capacities and complements local response mechanisms, contributing to preparedness for possible future disasters and strengthening long-term resilience.

ARCS will uphold its responsibility to maintain a comprehensive security management system, “safer access framework” and procedures that will reduce risk and protect the safety and security of all staff and volunteers providing disaster management related activities at national, regional and branch levels.

ARCS will ensure all staff and volunteers act responsibly in respecting the use of the emblem and prevent its misuse.

ARCS commits to ensuring that all staff and volunteers receive training and/or information sessions on a regular basis so as to retain the necessary knowledge applicable and the application of the fundamental principles in humanitarian action. Alongside this ARCS commits to ensuring that adequate financial and human resources are allocated to strengthening information dissemination related activities across all levels of ARCS and its DM program.

Partnership: As a member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and, guided by its statutes, we cooperate with the government, and with other organizations in line with the Fundamental Principles, without compromising our emblems and the independence, impartiality and neutrality that they represent.

ARCS advocate through coordination mechanisms at national, regional and branch level with government, donors and communities on the importance of investment in disaster preparedness and risk reduction activities.

In addition, ARCS DM department works in close coordination with ARCS sector departments to ensure relevant sector specific operational preparedness capacity is established and maintained in order to be activated accordingly in

disaster response. ARCS commits to strengthening internal day-to-day and operational response coordination and communication between ARCS disaster management and other sectoral departments so as to ensure efficient and effective operational disaster response across all levels of the organization.

ARCS engages where relevant in opportunities for strong cooperation and partnerships between ARCS DM, IFRC, ICRC, Partner National Societies, government, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizational and other local, regional and branch actors. In doing so, ensure that expectations and agreed obligations of each party are clear, while at the same time upholding its principles and values.

ARCS recognize its role as auxiliary to government by holding a position as a member on the National Disaster Management Committee and Provincial Disaster Management Committees. In addition ARCS will carry out its responsibilities as outlined under the National Disaster Management Plan while in accordance with the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary services, unity and universality.

Diversity: We respect the diversity of the communities; we work with and of our volunteers, members and staff, based on non-discrimination and our principles of impartiality, unity and universality.

The DM policy recognizes ARCS gender policy and its integration alongside the DM policy for all staff and volunteers across all levels of ARCS to be compliant in upholding.

ARCS endeavors to put in place measures that promote institutionally the full participation of both men and women

staff and volunteers across all levels of the organization, to ensure that gender differences are taken into consideration across all facets of ARCS disaster management program and activities.

ARCS will promote the inclusion and integration across sectoral departments in gender mainstreaming of disaster management programming and response activities so as to ensure the specific needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of men, women, boys and girls are recognized and addressed according.

ARCS will strengthen its operational systems and procedures to promote accountability of social inclusion and participation of men and women, boys and girls equitably at a community level in needs assessment, program design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation.

Leadership: We show leadership and strive for excellence in our work, drawing attention to the rights, needs and vulnerabilities of communities and the factors that underlie them.

ARCS seeks to provide emergency response to the most vulnerable people affected by natural and/or conflict related emergencies, by committed ARCS staff and volunteers across all levels of the organization. ARCS will take into account SPHERE standards to the best possible extent while planning and providing assistance.

The DM policy acknowledges the role of ARCS in disaster response as an auxiliary to the government of Afghanistan as being complementary and supporting in nature. In addition, ARCS will uphold the fundamental principles and values of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in delivering on

its agreed roles and responsibilities supported by national disaster management legislation.

ARCS commit to provide emergency health services to communities affected by natural disasters and/or conflict related emergencies that are complementary to those of the government and through an integrated approach alongside disaster management activities.

ARCS endeavors to strengthen its organizational structures, systems, procedures and guidelines at national, regional and branch levels for effective operational disaster preparedness. In particular, prioritizing pre-positioning of stock in high-risk regions areas, strengthening of national skilled surge capacity to respond to localized natural and/or conflict related emergencies, advocacy and agreements in place with relevant government ministries to activate international response tools such as; (FACT, RDRT, ERUs) from Red Cross Red Crescent Movement to respond to large-scale disasters and/or conflict which exceed national capacity and securing sustainable financial resources as a means to mobilize and maximize its strategic direction/priorities and impact in Afghanistan.

The DM policy recognizes ARCS emergency health services a key operational component in disaster management and its integration through ARCS health policy for all staff and volunteers across all levels of ARCS to be compliant in upholding.

ARCS commits to provide emergency health services that adopt an integrated community based approach by harnessing the capacity of communities to save lives, promote health and prevent disease outbreaks.

ARCS recognize its responsibility to instill humanitarian

diplomacy into its organizational culture. Fostering such a culture, ARCS will apply advocacy, negotiation, communication and other measures to persuade opinion leaders to act in the best interest of vulnerable people as well in expanding humanitarian access to support those most vulnerable affected by natural disasters and conflict related emergencies.

ARCS commits to ensure its integrity is upheld through high ethical standards, transparency and accountability to all stakeholders (internal and external) beneficiaries, donors, public citizens, cooperating partners, contractors and suppliers that support ARCS DM program and activities. Alongside this, ARCS endeavors to strengthen its organizational structures, systems, procedures and guidelines across all levels to ensure the prevention and control of fraud and corruption of which all ARCS staff and volunteers will be accountable to adhere to. If such cases are proven, ARCS leadership will take the responsibility to deal with such matters with appropriate disciplinary measure and legal action.

ARCS commits to ensure its integrity is upheld with adherence by all staff and volunteers to act in accordance with quality standards and behavior as outlined in the Code of Conduct of the International Red Cross & Red Crescent Movement & Non-Government Organizations in Disaster Relief.

Innovation: We draw inspiration from our shared history and tradition, but are equally committed to finding innovative, sustainable solutions to problems that threaten human well-being and dignity in a changing world.

ARCS recognize the linkages in disaster management programming and values innovation to maximize operational

effectiveness and efficiency between disaster response, recovery, preparedness and risk reduction in being able to save lives and strengthen the ability to build more resilient communities.

ARCS will strive to achieve self-reliance and sustainability of its disaster management programming in order to mobilize resources, materials and ultimately strengthen operational capacity to deliver effective, efficient and relevant disaster response.

ARCS will pursue innovation to strengthen its operational preparedness capacity to meet its obligations in disaster response across key areas outlined under its DM programme.

ARCS commits to fostering the value of beneficiary communications across its disaster response, recovery, preparedness and risk reduction activities by harnessing new applications of technologies with the aim to save lives, promote dignity and accountability giving those affected by natural disasters and/or conflict related emergencies a voice in decision making.

Roles & Responsibilities

ARCS has the responsibility to ensure under its disaster management program, (preparedness, response, recovery and risk reduction) that appropriate information concerning the policy will be communicated and disseminated across all levels of the organization; that all activities are carried out in compliance with this policy; that all staff and volunteers across all levels have received sufficient information, training, are equipped with essential skills and are aware of the content and responsibilities in adhering to the policy; and that all

relevant governmental, non-governmental and Movement partners are appropriately informed of this policy.

Headquarter level

Policy development, maintaining and review of the policy;

Advisory support to regional and branch levels on implementation of policy;

Development of policy communication and information dissemination guiding tools;

Regulating body for the compliance of the policy

Governing Board

The governing board will be responsible for the approval and future amendments of the DM policy. The board will be responsible for ensuring sufficient funds and resources are allocated in order to carry out necessary activities for the implementation of the policy across all levels of ARCS. The board will be responsible to act responsibly in demonstrating its compliance and supporting all levels of leadership and management to carry out necessary activities required for the implementation and compliance of the policy.

Secretary General

The Secretary General will, or may choose to assign at any time a representative to update the governing board on a bi-annual basis on adherence to the DM policy reporting on any operational issues and risks that require attention. The Secretary General will provide leadership or may choose to assign a representative to ensure the roll out and all activities

required for the implementation of the DM policy are carried out accordingly.

Under Secretary General Programs

The Under Secretary General Programs will advocate adherence of the DM policy ensuring all Heads of Departments, Regional Heads of Office and Heads of Branch are held accountable for its implementation by all staff and volunteers across all levels.

The Under Secretary General Programs will update the Secretary General on the regulation of the policy on a bi-annual basis, reporting on any operational issues and risks that require attention in relation to the implementation of the policy.

Head of DM Department

The Head of Disaster Management department will be responsible for working in close coordination with the Head of International Relations department in developing materials and resources required for all communications and information dissemination related activities, of the implementation of the DM policy.

Working in close coordination with the Head of International Relations department provide advisory and technical support to headquarter, regional and branch levels to deliver communication, information dissemination and training for the implementation and compliance of the policy by staff and volunteers.

Working in close coordination with the Head of International Relations and Heads of departments apply periodic

monitoring, tracking of compliance and implementation of the policy by staff and volunteers and report on a bi-annual basis to Under Secretary of Support programme.

Head of International Relations

The Head of International Relations department will be responsible for working in close coordination with the Head of Disaster Management department in developing materials and resources required for all communications and information dissemination related activities, of the implementation of the DM policy.

Working in close coordination with the Head of Disaster Management provide advisory and technical support to headquarter, regional and branch levels to deliver communication, information dissemination and training for the implementation and compliance of the policy by staff and volunteers.

Heads of Department

All Heads of department will be responsible to ensure that sufficient communication materials and resources are provided to support information dissemination and training to staff and volunteers under their respective department.

Regional and Branch level

Communication and information dissemination of policy;

Monitoring and implementation of the policy

Regional Heads of Office

Regional Heads of Office are responsible for working in close coordination with the Head of Disaster Management and International Relations Department to ensure that sufficient communication materials and resources are provided to support information dissemination and training to staff and volunteers.

Provide sufficient information dissemination and trainings surrounding the DM policy and its application to staff and volunteers at a regional and branch level. Applying periodic monitoring and tracking of compliance and implementation of the policy by staff and volunteers and report on a bi-annual basis to Heads of Disaster Management and International Relations departments.

Heads of Branches

Heads of branches are responsible for applying periodic monitoring and tracking of compliance and implementation of the policy by staff and volunteers and will report on a bi-annual basis to Regional Heads of Office. Any operational issues in relation to the implementation of the DM policy are to be communicated to the Regional Heads of Office.

All levels

Compliance of the policy

All staff & volunteers

All staff and volunteers are to be provided with sufficient communication, information dissemination and training to acquire the skills and knowledge surrounding the DM policy

and its application.

All staff and volunteers are accountable for compliance of the DM policy in their day-to-day work.

Policy evaluation and review

The ARCS DM department will be responsible for managing monitoring and evaluation related activities associated with the compliance of the DM policy. In doing so, the DM department will ensure that strategic direction, systems and procedures are in place to fulfil PMER requirements in strengthening measurability, quality and accountability of the DM policy that in turn, will be captured and integrated throughout future policy review processes.

The DM policy will be reviewed 3-2 years from the date of effect, which will be set upon approval by the governing board to ensure its alignment with the ARCS strategic planning processes.

References

This policy should be considered in conjunction with all other ARCS and Federation policies such as:

- ARCS Constitution;
- ARCS Volunteering policy;
- ARCS Gender policy;
- National Disaster Preparedness and Response Law;
- The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief;
- The 1997 Agreement on the Organization of the International Activities of the Components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Seville Agreement);
- The Principles and Rules for Red Cross Red Crescent Disaster Relief;
- International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) in Afghanistan
- IFRC disaster preparedness policy;
- IFRC emergency response policy;
- IFRC food security and nutrition policy;
- IFRC post-emergency rehabilitation policy;
- IFRC migration policy;
- IFRC gender policy;

- IFRC volunteering policy;
- IFRC youth policy;
- IFRC health policy;
- IFRC integrating relief, rehabilitation and development policy;
- IFRC humanitarian diplomacy policy;
- IFRC fraud and corruption prevention and control policy;
- ICRC safer access for all national societies;
- SPHERE handbook: Humanitarian charter & minimum standards in humanitarian response

Annex 1: Definitions

Gender

Gender refers to the roles, responsibilities, needs, interests and capacities of both men and women. These are influenced by social and cultural factors. Therefore the term 'gender' does not replace the term 'sex' which refers exclusively to biological differences. Men and women often play different roles in society and accordingly they may have different needs. A gender perspective is required to ensure that men's and women's specific needs, vulnerabilities and capacities (set in the broader context of class, ethnicity, race and religion) are recognized and addressed.

(IFRC Gender Policy)

Diversity

Diversity means acceptance and respect for all forms of difference. This includes, but is not limited to, differences in: gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, HIV status, socio-economic status, religion, nationality and ethnic origin (including minority and migrant groups).

(IFRC strategic framework in gender and diversity issues 2020-2013)

Annex 2: Fundamental Principles

Humanity: The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavors, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality: It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality: In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence: The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary service: It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity: There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality: The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

