

**Statement of Voluntary Commitments
of Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies Stakeholder Group
for the Africa-Arab Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, 9th – 13th October 2018, Tunis,
Tunisia.**

The International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies (IFRC) Secretariat in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region representing sixteen members of the Arab region National Societies of Red Cross and Red Crescent (RC/RC) attending the Africa-Arab Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction:

Noting that in the Arab region communities are facing some of the most challenging humanitarian conditions of the 21st century: sudden and protracted disasters and crises leading to internal displacement, cross border migration which has resulted in massive food insecurity, lack of basic needs such as shelter, water, sanitation, coupled with communicable and non-communicable diseases, rapid urbanisation, environmental degradation and uncertainty of climate change.

Reaffirming the IFRC commitment to contribute to the interlinked global frameworks particularly the implementation of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) 2015-2030 ("Sendai Framework"), Paris Climate Agreement, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the World Humanitarian Summit Grand Bargain localisation agenda.

Acknowledging the IFRC Strategy 2020 describes the importance of engaging in life-saving activities in disasters and crises, while also highlighting the importance of protecting livelihoods, strengthening recovery and enabling healthy and safe living in the longer-term.

Reinforcing the RC/RC approach to community resilience is in part about bridging our development and humanitarian work through common insights and approaches that integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation strategies. Inclusive, sustained, accountable and participatory approaches, for example, are as relevant to humanitarian work as they are for development.

Noting multiple risks and their impacts on vulnerable people must be considered together with assessments of capacities and efforts to strengthen these. Building community resilience requires the understanding that the level of vulnerability to disasters, crises and shocks is often determined less by the scale of a hazard and more by the underlying vulnerability of people caused by a set of inter-related risks.

The IFRC remains strongly committed to continuing the work on DRR, strengthening community and institutional resilience. Our work aligns to the Arab Strategy for DRR and its Programme of Action for 2019-2020, and contribute to the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

As IFRC, we commit ourselves to work together with the 16 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in the Arab region in the following actions:

- We will operationalise the [IFRC Framework for Community Resilience](#) by implementing the [IFRC Road to Resilience \(R2R\)](#) guide in at least five countries ensuring every community in living in high risk areas to have a capacity to reduce

risk, to prepare for and respond to disasters, and promote inclusion and strengthen volunteer/community-based networks, promote role of communities, mainstream gender and strengthen the role of women as a force in local level resilience building.

- We will continue and scale up support to volunteer contribution to resilience building and enhance technical and financial investments to the RC/RC national societies in DRR and Community Resilience building.
- Aligned with the Sendai Framework, we will continue to advocate for the Institutionalisation of integrated multi-sectoral community resilience approaches in local level risk reduction policies, planning and programmes and strengthen community-local government partnerships, legal frameworks and accountability mechanisms to create an enabling environment for DRR, preventing the emergence of new risks and making communities safer.
- We will advocate for the enhancement and consolidation of a culture of safety and resilience that is action oriented and respects local realities, cultures and ancestral practices that contribute to a better understanding of risks and thus contribute to the generation of actions to reduce vulnerability,
- We will prioritize actions based on the needs of people living at high risk or belonging to traditionally excluded groups, in particular those who live in geographically remote areas; in areas affected by insecurity and conflict, migrant populations, those affected by the impact of climate change.
- In their auxiliary role to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are committed to joining forces with local and national authorities to develop local risk management and promote an approach of community resilience and sustainability.
- Aligned with the IFRC Framework for Building Community Resilience and the One Billion Coalition for Community Resilience, we will strengthen the collaboration and coordination with civil society organizations, and with their respective national and local governments.

The National Societies of Arab region and the IFRC call upon the Arab States:

- To review their legislative, institutional and other frameworks (policies, plans, strategies) for DRR in the light of the “Law and DRR Checklist” developed by the Federation in conjunction with UNDP, in order to align them with the Sendai Framework.
- To actively promote, support and recognize community-based volunteers in order to maximize the potential of these agents of change for their community.
- Ensure a financial investment of at least 5-10 percent of annual local revenue to enable the integration of risk reduction and climate adaptation into public investments policies and planning.
- To make available to local authorities, who play a fundamental role in risk management, the technical, financial and political support necessary to develop their local plans with a sustainable development approach.
- To promote inclusive education and training at all levels and in all sectors through innovative learning tools, both face-to-face and virtual, to achieve universal access to risk reduction education.
- Promote local early warning systems, integrated into national systems, that describe the roles, functions and responsibilities of all stakeholders, including those at the end of the information chain, to ensure that they arrive in a timely manner and can save lives and livelihoods.
- To promote investments that enhance knowledge, innovation, access to information and the sustainability of processes, ensuring that the funds are used to complement and catalyse local investment and resources

The IFRC stands ready to support states and work with partners to ensure implementation of these commitments is reaching the local level, where disasters and crises are most severely felt, and improving the safety and resilience of those most vulnerable.

Given in Tunis on Friday, 12 of October 2018.