

Local to Global

Policy on International Engagement for Australian Red Cross



This Policy on international engagement (Policy) for Australian Red Cross is underpinned by relevant policies and Statutes of the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (the Movement) and informed by globally endorsed policy frameworks. The Policy is supported by an internal guidance document¹ and enacted in conjunction with Australian Red Cross Ethical Framework² and Ways of Working³ and commits staff, members and volunteers, working internationally, to the following:

In all instances and in all contexts, our work is guided by the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement⁴ and the Statutes of the Movement.⁵

We uphold the norms that safeguard humanity, enshrined in international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law. We commit to using the Red Cross and other distinctive emblems correctly, as provided under IHL.

We respect the independence and mandates of Movement components⁶ and are committed to working in genuine partnership with National Societies and other components of the Movement internationally. We recognise the mandate of national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies as the primary local responders in their own countries, and work to support this mandate.

We look for opportunities to harmonise and align our work with Movement partners, and move towards a collective impact model where possible - seeking cross-sectoral partnerships and collaboration to meet the needs of the communities we work with.

We differentiate between development and welfare, recognising that welfare is primarily concerned with support and maintenance, rather than the processes of capacity strengthening and empowerment that are intrinsic to sustainable development.

Our work is informed by the notion of doing no harm: *all* people can live in safety and dignity, with equal access to - and participation in - development assistance based on their differentiated needs, capacities and vulnerabilities.

This will take place without discrimination based on age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion, ethnicity, nationality or legal/migration status. We are committed to the protection of children and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. We promote community engagement and accountability in order to monitor and enhance our work in the field.

While affirming the complementarity of local, national and international action, we prioritise local perspectives and voices in all our work and hold ourselves accountable to the individuals and communities we work with.

Our work prioritises strengthening resilience, recognising that the risks of disasters, humanitarian crises, conflict and global health epidemics have the potential to reverse hard-won development gains.

We seek to minimise our environmental footprint and ensure that our actions contribute to environmental sustainability.

1 Guidance on the Policy for International Engagement. Guidance will be reviewed annually and approved by the Executive Team.

2 <https://australianredcross.sharepoint.com/EthicalFramework/Documents/Ethical%20Framework%20Booklet.pdf#search=code%20of%20ethics>

3 <https://www.redcross.org.au/ways-of-working>

4 The Seven Fundamental Principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

5 <https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/statutes-en-a5.pdf>

6 The Movement consists of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and 191 national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies.

The Policy on International Engagement was endorsed by the Australian Red Cross Board in 2018. It is scheduled for review and re-endorsement in 2021.

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