



CHANGING THE WORLD TOGETHER

## Strategic programme for 2008-2011

## CONTENTS

<b>FOREWORD</b> .....	3
<b>EVERYDAY WELFARE AND TRANSITION IN SOCIETY</b> .....	4
<b>THE FOUNDATION OF FINNISH RED CROSS ACTION</b> .....	7
<b>FINNISH RED CROSS STRATEGIC PROGRAMME FOR 2008 – 2011</b> ...	10
<b>Strategic goal 1:</b> .....	10
The Finnish Red Cross is prepared to provide fast and effective assistance in Finland and abroad	
<b>Strategic goal 2:</b> .....	17
The Finnish Red Cross is a leading and attractive voluntary	
<b>Strategic goal 3:</b> .....	22
The Finnish Red Cross creates partnerships that increase impact	
<b>SUMMARY</b> .....	25

# Strategic programme

## FOREWORD

The assistance work of the Finnish Red Cross has received a lot of praise in recent years. Thanks to our thousands of volunteers, the lives of many people both in Finland and abroad look much brighter than they would otherwise.

All of us have noticed how fast the world around us is changing. Our changing operating environment presents demands to us but it also offers new opportunities.

The Finnish Red Cross (FRC) has been building a better Finland for more than 130 years. At the same time, it has become a significant actor within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and thereby an effective helper of millions of people.

The power of the Red Cross has always been founded on the willingness of millions of people all over the world to help voluntarily amid disasters and despair. Working with shared values and principles of helping, ordinary people and the network they create still have the power that will change the world.

The document at hand is the Strategic programme of the Finnish Red Cross for the years 2008-2011, as adopted by the FRC General Assembly. This organizational document sets directions and goals for future action. It also gives some background for the chosen directions. The Finnish Red Cross still aims to maintain its position as a strong helper and a leading voluntary organization. The General Assembly decides on the goals, direction and means that enable us to change the world together.

## EVERYDAY WELFARE AND TRANSITION IN SOCIETY

Within one generation, the operating environment of the Finnish Red Cross has changed significantly. Finland has become wealthier and people's standard of living has risen. Lifestyle is completely different from that of a few decades ago.

For the majority of the population, development has brought a lot of good. Basic needs are well met, the standard of housing has risen and leisure activities have increased. People are healthier and live on average longer lives. Therefore they can actively participate in voluntary work and duties in society for a long time even after retirement.

Along with the risen level of information, increased international action and changes in the communications environment, the younger generations also create various networks and channels for influencing for themselves. People are concerned about climate change and pollution in the living environment. They want to preserve nature and defend vulnerable people both near and far. Doing good is part of the set of values and many seek meaningful content to their lives e.g. through voluntary work.

Voluntary action has maintained its appeal as a channel for influencing and participation. People perhaps do not want to commit themselves for as long as before and to a certain organization as they did decades ago, but activities regarded as useful still find their doers.

The humanitarian values of the Red Cross connect people regardless of their different backgrounds. The Red Cross can be an open channel for action for all people interested in its work and accepting its principles. As a humanitarian organization, the Red Cross can serve as a bridge builder between different cultures and groups.

With growing immigration, the recruitment of different ethnic groups to join in Red Cross activities presents a special challenge in the new inter-Assembly period. This will increase the credibility of the Red Cross as an organization that has multiple values, is international and accepts people's different backgrounds.

Research shows that the vast majority of the young still feel fine and trust in the future. Young people's increased activity will also create new opportunities for the Red Cross.

## **Red Cross is needed**

However, active participation and increased welfare have not been distributed equally. Economic growth has not increased the welfare of all Finnish people to the extent the figures would lead to assume.

A circle of social exclusion threatens young people especially when the parents have lost control of their own lives for one reason or another. The children then lack family support. Many families lack the support of traditional social networks. A part of the young drop out of education, hobbies and networks. This negative circle leads to new problems. Increased use of intoxicants and its consequences have resulted in public health problems in all age groups. Many organizations are involved in intoxicant-related work, but the Red Cross with its extensive networks and varied activities has a unique opportunity to contribute to preventing intoxicant abuse.

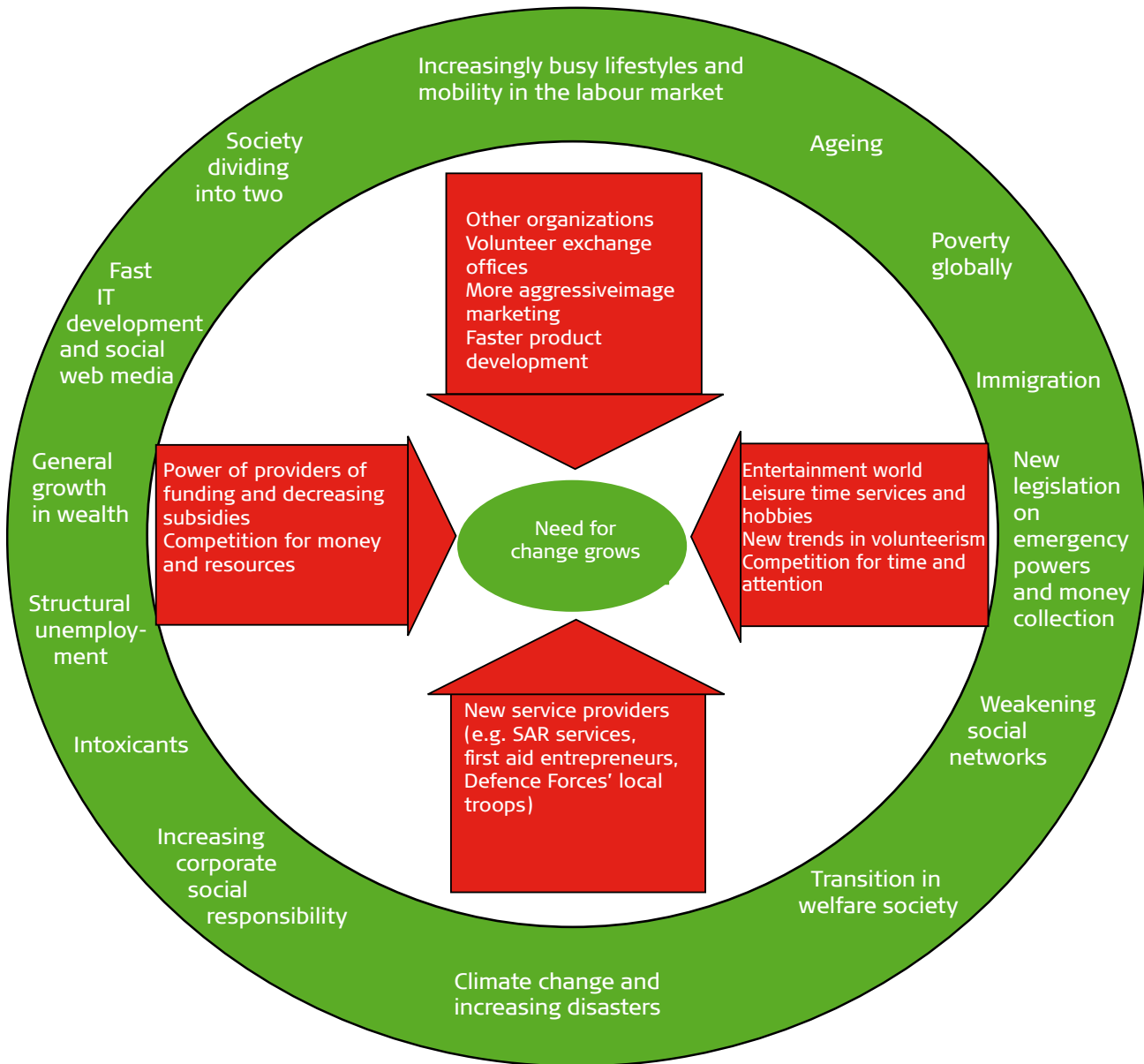
Population growth and climate change have increased the number of disasters and people affected by them around the globe. The gap between the wealthy and those living in inadequate conditions increases manifold when we turn our eyes from Finland to look at other countries. A large part of the world's population lives beyond the reach of all welfare indicators. The lives of these people are shadowed e.g. by armed conflicts, violence, poverty and lack of health services.

Societies struggling with coping are also prone to destruction caused by natural calamities. It is difficult to prepare for and recover from natural disasters. Neutral and independent assistance observing the Red Cross principles is often the only chance of delivering aid to those in need. The effects of climate change have even reached Finland and tested our preparedness for example in flood situations.

The ageing of the population also causes problems. The social welfare and health services provided by society do not meet the growing demand. Loneliness and problems brought about by it increase. Challenges are even more tangible in remote areas where the remaining old people lose the safety net provided by relatives, neighbours and even society.

The auxiliary role of the Red Cross in relation to the public authorities grows. We necessarily need more volunteers to be able to help people to cope both in their daily lives and in emergencies. An important duty of the Red Cross is to enhance community spirit and caring locally. As a large part of FRC's present volunteers also grow older and the demand for assistance grows, effective action is expected from the FRC in order to recruit an adequate number of new and motivated volunteers.

## Finnish Red Cross operating environment



**Image 1: The impact of the operating environment on Red Cross action**

The above image shows some of the most important changes in the operating environment that affect FRC action and the way it works. Needs grow and become more complicated while competition for resources, doers, competence and reputation simultaneously increases. Cooperation becomes ever more significant.

Ageing, growing immigration, social exclusion caused by the transition in welfare services, and the division of society into two have an impact on what the Red Cross does and what kind of programmes it has. Ageing, increasingly busy lifestyle, IT development and growing wealth present demands and opportunities for how we do things. Changes in legislation and expectations laid on the third sector set limits to the activities. Competition for competent people, partners and resources encourage the FRC to focus on the core areas and functions of the Red Cross.

# THE FOUNDATION OF FINNISH RED CROSS ACTION

Finnish Red Cross action is based on the seven Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, FRC's Statutes and the jointly adopted mission, vision and strategies.

## 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, endeavours, 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 endeavours 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 continue 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 the desire for gain.

### **Unity**

There can be only one Red Cross or one 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.

## **Mission**

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and their volunteers form a unique international network. We work together to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity.

The Red Cross is able to improve the collective capacity of people and communities to improve welfare, to cope in everyday lives and in potential disasters when:

- the activities get as wide support as possible from people, helpers and those needing assistance, public authorities as well as private and public corporations,
- the organization has an adequate amount of volunteers, partners, expertise, funds, equipment, humanitarian support, and commitment to the values of caring and taking care.

## **FINNISH RED CROSS VISION**

The General Assembly held in Pori in 2005 adopted the vision of Finnish Red Cross members:

**We are courageous and reliable  
people's helpers close to all.**

The aim of FRC's Strategic programme is to bring this vision closer to everyday life and to integrate it in all our activities. Each member, volunteer or employee may use their capacities to go closer to people's daily lives and be prepared to help.

## **Operational values**

Red Cross action is based on the Movement's Fundamental Principles. Operational values guide our action and our decisions. They serve as guidelines for the choices made to make FRC's vision a reality. A supporter, donor, volunteer or member evaluate Red Cross action on the basis of how these values are implemented in the organization's practical work.

**Through decisions made, the Finnish Red Cross has committed itself to be:**

- A service-minded organization that gives first priority to those who need help and services. Red Cross actors, donors and members get the support, information, coaching and feedback they need.
- An attractive organization, which as the most appreciated assistance organization generates collective wellbeing and joy of caring.

- An effective organization that uses its resources in the right manner, focusing on implementing common goals.
- An open and transparent organization that works close to people and offers opportunities to act for all who are committed to its principles. The planning and decision-making processes of the organization are transparent.
- A cooperating organization that works actively and seeks partners with whom to respond to people's needs of help.

### **Common strategy of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

Globally, the Red Cross focuses its resources and efforts on four core areas. They and the related strategic directions were adopted by the International Federation's General Assembly in 1999. They are based on the common Strategy 2010 of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, which also serves as the basis of the Strategic Programme of the Finnish Red Cross.

#### **The core areas are:**

1. promotion of Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values,
2. disaster response,
3. disaster preparedness, and
4. promotion of health and care in the community.

From the backbone of the core areas, the International Federation has defined three strategic directions for the National Societies.

**Strategic direction 1:** Responsive and focused programmes.

**Strategic direction 2:** Strengthening well-functioning National Societies.

**Strategic direction 3:** Working together effectively both internally and with partners.

# FINNISH RED CROSS STRATEGIC PROGRAMME FOR 2008 – 2011

## Strategic goal 1:

The Finnish Red Cross is prepared to provide fast and effective assistance in Finland and abroad

During the inter-Assembly period, the goal is to improve operational capacities in order for the FRC to be able to send help to the victims of domestic and international major accidents, natural disasters, wars and conflicts even faster. The foundation of Red Cross aid is to respond to people's assistance needs through appropriately focused programmes. Disaster preparedness aims at strengthening people's safety and their coping in everyday life. The Finnish Red Cross therefore focuses its activities on:

- increasing preparedness to assist and safety in everyday living,
- preventing social exclusion,
- promoting first aid skills, welfare and health,
- strengthening skills in psychosocial support, and
- preventing HIV/AIDS and intoxicant use.

Social participation and doing things together strengthen wellbeing and promote health, and prevent e.g. social exclusion. The FRC offers lively action for people of all ages and backgrounds, and strengthens people's independent action in their own communities. The FRC Health and welfare policy specifies our role as a third sector actor in Finland.

The aim is that the Red Cross advocates actively and strongly also for people in need of help or support. Advocacy means taking positions and cooperating with other actors and public authorities, as well as action in favour of people in need together with them. The aim is that public authorities and citizens are familiar with the special role of the Red Cross as a guardian and expert of international humanitarian law.

The principal activity forms in FRC local branches are: friend visitors and support persons, first aid, primary care, youth and multicultural activities, health promotion, as well as campaigns and fundraising. The aim is that the activities are closely interlinked and constitute the preparedness of the local branch. Each branch works as a representative of the Red Cross responding to the local needs with the resources available. By intensifying internal cooperation between the activity groups within a branch and between branches, the operational capacities available regionally can be improved and possibilities created for specialization in certain fields among the branches. In assistance activities, young people act as equals by adults and also use their own means to promote values as well as everyday wellbeing and health.

The Finnish Red Cross is also a channel for helping people outside the borders of our own country. Our international assistance is based on effective disaster preparedness and response, as well as on long-term development and rehabilitation programmes. Our development cooperation supports our Sister Societies (National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) to become more self-reliant in assisting their own populations.

The aim is to maintain FRC's position as the leading actor in the field of disaster response in Finland and to increase the amount of high-quality support to development and rehabilitation. FRC's special expertise in disaster response includes Emergency Response Units (prepacked field hospitals and clinics, mass water purification equipment as well as personnel that can be sent to a disaster area within a few hours' notice), and this expertise will be strengthened further.

The Kontti Recycling Department Stores aim at offering meaningful work for the long-term unemployed and at generating resources for FRC activities.

The Youth Emergency Shelters help young people and their families to cope. Our aim is to prevent the young from becoming excluded in time so that the young and their families need not seek support from the public authorities. In the Emergency Shelters, we will also develop new operating procedures that will interlink voluntary and professional work even more closely together.

The FRC Blood Service is an important part of FRC's voluntary activities, preparedness and contingency for emergency conditions. The aim is that in all situations Finnish hospitals have an adequate amount of high-quality and safe blood and cell products available to treat the patients who need them.

## **In the inter-Assembly period, we will do and develop the following things to reach our goals:**

### **Development goal 1:**

#### **More visible defender of values**

#### **We will do the following:**

In all our activities, we will bring out the values of caring and decisively defend needy people and their rights. We will collect information about the experiences and assistance needs of people and volunteers in order to get support for making discussion initiatives and for directing our activities.

We will train and coach our membership, volunteers and governance to ensure that the principles and values are known both in Finland and abroad.

We will raise the issues of volunteering, membership and the values of caring at all organizational levels in connection with our special events: Friendship Day (Valentine's), Day against Racial Discrimination, Red Cross week, Blood Donor Day, World First Aid Day, Hunger Day and the international AIDS Day. The Board of the Finnish Red Cross will annually outline the principal national campaign themes. The FRC Headquarters will produce and deliver national campaign and information materials well ahead to support the work of the local branches. Organizing campaign events is a common responsibility of the entire branch.

All Red Cross volunteers will work actively in favour of tolerance and against racism, discrimination and bullying. We will ensure that our own activities do not discriminate anyone and we will not accept discriminating language or action against any group. In addition, we will initiate active discussion against discrimination and in favour of humanity.

**We will follow up these issues:**

A clear majority of the local branches organizes a Red Cross week event in their area. The number of events on the anti-racism day grows year by year.

As established through surveys conducted, the Finnish Red Cross maintains its status as the best-known civic organization and its reputation is good. The respondents recall FRC's statements and discussion initiatives.

**Development goal 2:**

**Raising awareness of international humanitarian law**

**We will do the following:**

We will organize training on international humanitarian law (IHL) for the Defence Forces, students, journalists, PR officers, staff members, governance and other volunteers. We will increase cooperation in IHL training also with Ministries, research institutions and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

We will train IHL trainers and promoters (volunteer instructors and experts of voluntary work) for all districts and continue to deepen and update their knowledge. They will also be supported in organizing local events and trainings.

IHL will be promoted for school pupils through campaigns, games and visits. The Headquarters will produce teaching materials for the use of volunteers, teachers and pupils.

We will support the establishment of IHL study and hobby groups in local branches and the continuity of the group activities.

In 2009, we will pay attention to several milestones of international humanitarian law. In national communications, we will especially promote the 60th Anniversary of the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Solferino.

**We will follow up these issues:**

Public authorities, journalists, teachers and other actors recognize our expertise in international humanitarian law and use it actively.

Training courses and a special event related to the law of war are organized every year in all FRC districts. As established by a survey, knowledge of IHL increases both among volunteers and the population at large.

## Development goal 3:

### More effective disaster preparedness

#### **We will do the following:**

We will draw up and maintain local preparedness and contingency plans and assess how well they function through district-level exercises at regular intervals. The preparedness plans are based on local vulnerability analyses, i.e. an assessment of assistance needs as well as risks and hazards. We will enhance cooperation between branches and with public authorities to ensure the regional coverage of the plans. Activity groups are a part of disaster preparedness, and all local branch actors, including representatives of special groups, have the opportunity to participate in making the preparedness and contingency plans.

FRC districts and branches participate in making local safety and security plans with the public authorities.

For the helpers and the general public, we will organize training in psychosocial support that will help to maintain people's psychosocial capacities to cope with crises. In crises and accidents, we will be faster to offer domestic relief and the services of groups trained in voluntary primary care and psychosocial support. We will also take care of providing adequate resources for the psychologists' emergency group.

We will offer chances to donate blood at the permanent premises of the FRC Blood Service (FRCBS), as well as at mass sessions organized in different parts of the country. The FRCBS will develop and manufacture modern blood and cell products and deliver them to Finnish hospitals. We will also offer the laboratory tests necessary for these products and other services of added value.

In accordance with our agreement, we will take part in the reception of refugees and asylum seekers and prepare for organizing reception at mass population influx situations. The tracing services will also be made better known.

In international activities, we will focus our competence, personnel and funds allocated to development cooperation on strengthening the disaster preparedness of our Sister Societies, on local level health activities and on the organizational preparedness of National Societies. In our cross-border areas, we will support Red Cross disaster preparedness and health programmes. We will link the youth delegate programme more effectively to other international assistance activities.

In international assistance, we will develop the smooth continuum from relief to recovery and development by linking the different phases of assistance projects better.

Due to climate change, we will develop domestic and international disaster preparedness related to floods, storms and droughts. We will also develop FRC's preparedness to respond to new social welfare and health threats (e.g. pandemics).

We will create opportunities for local branches, action groups and donors to participate in international programmes and to fund larger appeals. We will make use of the things learned, operating procedures used and experiences gained by delegates in international activities for volunteer training and information activities in Finland.

We will ensure that the Disaster Relief Fund has adequate monies available and offer everyone interested the chance to collect money and donate. Every local FRC branch will take part in Operation Hunger Day.

**We will follow up these issues:**

Disaster preparedness and contingency plans cover all of Finland. Agreements with the public authorities on primary care increase.

The amount of psychosocial training offered by branches and districts increases every year among citizens and FRC volunteers. The services of primary care and psychosocial groups are used to an increasing extent at the regional and local level.

There is an annual increase of at least 10 per cent in the number of Hunger Day fundraisers from the present 20,000 during the inter-Assembly period.

The Finnish Red Cross is able to respond to international appeals as well as to the requests of the public authorities and people in need fast, effectively and with expertise. As established by surveys conducted, the Finnish Red Cross maintains its leading position as a well-known and reliable humanitarian aid organization.

## **Development goal 4:**

### **More welfare and health to people's daily lives**

**We will do the following:**

We will develop the first aid training offered to the public to make it correspond with the EFAC (European First Aid Certificate) quality requirements of the European Red Cross Societies. We will develop a monitoring system that will ensure the quality of the training nationally. We will increase the competitive ability of first aid training at all organizational levels. We will draw up a national strategy for first aid training and the related products.

First aid groups will be more active in offering new actors the opportunity to join in voluntary activities. We will develop the group leader training to make it respond to the new needs of the groups and to improve the quality of the activities.

Voluntary friend visitors and support persons offer social support especially to informal carers, the lonely, people in institutionalized care and immigrants resettling in Finland. We will continue to implement the Senior activities policy.

The Steps in working life (Työaskel) project will facilitate the employment of the long-term unemployed entitled to salary support especially in the Kontti Recycling Department Stores and in the FRC Logistics centre. We will develop tools and provide support to the branches that have employed a long-term unemployed person.

We will develop the Kontti chain as a visible channel for helping that prevents the social exclusion of the long-term unemployed and increases the resources available for helping and voluntary activities. We will also offer volunteers opportunities to act in the various Kontti outlets.

We will expand the Wellbeing and safety worth living (EHYT) project to all districts. We will spread the modes of operation developed in the project to branch activities aimed at preventing social exclusion.

In HIV/AIDS work, we will focus on prevention. Support for the HIV infected is offered through Pluspoints, health points, HIV/AIDS helpline and campaigns.

Intoxicant work focuses on prevention. We will include it in FRC's basic range of activities and target it at all age groups. Local branches will organize information sessions and events related to health promotion and visit schools to discuss health and intoxicant issues, supported by materials produced by the FRC Headquarters.

We will organize activities supporting integration to immigrants who need it. We will give special support to refugees who require it.

We will support the community-based health programmes and first aid training of Sister Societies. Special attention is given to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria as well as the health of women and children. We will utilize the competence and experiences gained within psychosocial support domestically in international programmes.

**We will follow up these issues:**

Annually, 150,000 people complete a Red Cross certified first aid training course (2007: approx. 130,000). The share of the districts and branches of the course participants is 52,000 people (2007: approx. 42 000).

The Finnish Red Cross organizes voluntary activities supporting the integration of immigrants in 150 municipalities.

The number of friend visitors and support persons grows by 5 per cent every year.

The number of active first aid groups rises to 250 (2007: 212).

**Development goal 5:**

Young people to promote values and everyday wellbeing

**We will do the following:**

All over Finland, we will invite young people to join in our activities more actively and inform about young people's opportunities for action in order to raise awareness of the Red Cross also as a youth organization. We will approach young people especially through schools, educational institutions and the Internet. We will also take into account school leavers and dropouts.

We will offer the young equal opportunities to serve as volunteers side by side with the grown-ups in branch activity groups, events, campaigns, fundraising and in positions of trust as helpers, advocates and decision-makers.

To support youth activities and school cooperation, we will develop materials on the law of war, tolerance, sexual health and the prevention of intoxicant use.

We will produce materials and instructor training for junior clubs in line with the Reddie Kids model.

In addition to the existing modes of action, we will offer the young new ideas to be tested in youth groups, at schools, on camps and in the Internet. Examples of these include e.g. first aid activities at schools, international projects, role plays, youth membership drives and innovative virtual activities.

We will develop support directed at the young, i.e. communications, training, promo instructor system, events and peer gatherings to ensure that young people all over Finland have the opportunity to get adequate information and good-quality guidance.

We will reform the annual youth meeting (formerly called the Youth parliament) to take stands more clearly and to be more inspiring. We will encourage young people to participate in training given to holders of positions of trust and also in decision-making at all levels of the organization.

We will enhance cooperation with other youth organizations both nationally and locally. Through cooperation with NGOs, we will develop training and gatherings aimed at young people and seek ways to prevent social exclusion among the young.

**We will follow up these issues:**

The number of youth members reaches 15 per cent of the total membership (2007: approx. 10 %).

The number of active youth members grows by five per cent a year.

## Strategic goal 2:

The Finnish Red Cross is a leading and attractive voluntary organization

The basis of Red Cross preparedness lies in functioning branches with their active volunteers and members. The keys to success include interesting and responsive action, as well as good-quality support given to volunteers. We also need motivated and competent leaders for governance positions and experts in volunteering to organize the activities locally. Voluntary work becomes attractive when it generates joy, enthusiasm and positive experiences.

The aim is to develop the volunteers' opportunities for action and the support given to them with the help of regular surveys. Bureaucracy and overlapping is cut down and energy directed to actual activities. Therefore it is important that all those who coordinate voluntary activities – volunteers, governance and staff members alike – are given such training and tools that enable them to develop and understand voluntary work and the volunteers' needs better than before. The personal guidance and support provided for branches and volunteers is increased by developing the so-called coaching system and by increasing the cooperation between neighbouring branches.

In order for the Finnish Red Cross to cope with the challenges caused by ageing and the transition in society, to be able to provide help and to upkeep its preparedness, the FRC must recruit more volunteers. Therefore, one of the main aims of this inter-Assembly period is to increase the number of volunteers. This means that volunteer recruitment, the orientation offered as well as the participation opportunities and support forms are developed further. Every volunteer must receive an adequate induction for their duties and must feel welcome. The FRC aims at being a leading voluntary organization in Finland – an organization whose range of voluntary activities is well known, and which offers those choosing to join in experiences of helping and excellent opportunities for action.

The aim is that at the end of this inter-Assembly period FRC's economic status as a whole is at least as well in balance as at present. Fundraising has a significant impact on our operational capacities. Therefore we aim at creating ground for an increase in fundraising.

The values and principles represented by the Red Cross lie in the centre of its internal operating environment. The preconditions of achieving them include clear strategies, professional leadership methods, functioning structures, appropriate competence of volunteers and staff, adequate human resources and functioning support systems as well as a balanced economic status. The aim is to develop and reform all this gradually and simultaneously to keep up with the pace set by external pressures in the operating environment. A further aim is to make FRC's image as an employer more appealing.

**In the inter-Assembly period, we will do and develop the following things to reach our goals:**

**Development goal 1:**

**More volunteers to improve assistance**

**We will do the following:**

We will increase the recruitment of volunteers at all organizational levels, advocate more actively for volunteering and inform about our activities. We will organize a centralized campaign to invite volunteers to join in. We will create nationally uniform tools for local branches, promo instructors and other volunteers to facilitate the recruitment and orientation of volunteers. We will cooperate actively with corporations, educational institutions, NGOs and municipalities. In this manner we will reach those who need assistance, new volunteers and members better.

All are welcome to join in Red Cross action. Special target groups of recruitment include the young, retiring people, seniors and immigrants.

We will define nationally standardized requirements and responsibilities for the most common volunteer duties. Local branches will make sure that all volunteers find their duties clear, carry their responsibility and perform their duties, and know which options the FRC offers for future action.

We will actively encourage volunteers to become FRC members. We normally expect volunteers to pay the membership fee if they participate in regular group activities.

When current registers function in an adequate manner, we will establish a national volunteer register to support local voluntary activities. With the help of the volunteers' data, we can contact them more easily, activate those who participate seldom, as well as motivate and reward all volunteers.

**We will follow up these issues:**

According to national opinion polls, the majority of Finns consider the Finnish Red Cross to be a leading and attractive voluntary organization.

Membership is back to being on the increase. New members continue their membership and participate in FRC's activities. The number of volunteers grows every year. Each activity group has an annual increase of five per cent in their number of volunteers.

As concluded by a survey conducted among the volunteers, the majority of them are very satisfied with the reception and orientation given by the branch.

## Development goal 2:

### Offering opportunities for action and increasing diversity

#### **We will do the following:**

We will offer new ways to participate in voluntary work through workplaces, educational institutions and the virtual world of the Internet. The branches will also contact local workplaces and educational institutions and maintain their own websites.

We will design new ways to participate in short-term voluntary action. Local branches will organize so-called Narikka short-term operations and events with support from promo instructors and include them in their range of activities.

We will contact the persons who have indicated their interest in Red Cross activities without delay. We will offer them opportunities for action either in their own or in one of the neighbouring branches.

Nationally we will develop forms of voluntary action that encourage the whole family to participate. Local branches will consider the needs of families in organizing their activities.

We will actively invite people with diverse backgrounds to join in and remove any obstacles to participation. On the basis of the Volunteering policy and the Human resources strategy, we will draw up a Diversity and equality policy that will be used as a tool and guideline for enhancing diversity. We will develop the competence of staff members and volunteers to encounter diversity.

We will consider the needs of various groups in communications, recruitment and activities. We will increase joint action and partnership with immigrants and minority groups both internally and with other organizations.

#### **We will follow up these issues:**

Finnish Red Cross members, volunteers, people in positions of trust and staff represent the diversity and scope of people living in Finland in as much as possible.

As concluded through a survey, new volunteers have had easy access to Red Cross activities.

## Development goal 3:

### Volunteers are satisfied with their opportunities to act and their work is appreciated

#### **We will do the following:**

We will develop voluntary activities and support provided to it as outlined in the Volunteering policy adopted by the General Assembly.

We will direct financial resources, staff competence and time at supporting volunteers more than before. We will review the staff working methods on the basis of the needs of volunteers.

The aim is to make in-house cooperation smoother and to ensure equally good support services for all volunteers.

We will increase neighbour and peer support as well as personal guidance to the local branches by developing the promo instructor system, the competence of trainers, the district coach system as well as the Headquarters way of working. The coach system stands for a so-called branch responsibility system, in which each branch has a designated staff member at the district office. We will expand the coach system nation-wide and facilitate mutual cooperation between branches with regional meetings. The district governance will also take part in the regional meetings.

We will unify volunteer training and simplify the system. We will ensure that basic training is available for volunteers locally and regionally. The Headquarters will also design training packages available in the Internet and accessible to all volunteers. Local branches will recruit trainers and organize trainings in cooperation with other branches in their area.

We will develop new electronic services and tools accessible in the Internet for branches and different volunteer groups. The electronic branch office makes practical help for managing the branch and projects easily available.

We will make a coherent annual plan for both regional and national communications. We will develop branch communications with support from the coach from the district office or through regional trainings.

We will give a higher public profile to thanking volunteers in connection with national campaigns. We will also review the local and national feedback and reward system for volunteers.

We will develop the training and orientation given to members of the governance. Nationally we will target the renewed training especially at branch chairpersons and vice-chairpersons as well as at district boards.

We will develop new forms of support for volunteers who encounter difficult and challenging situations to help them with coping.

**We will follow up these issues:**

According to the findings of the volunteer survey, volunteers are satisfied with the support they get and feel appreciated.

Eighty per cent of the branches utilize the tools of the electronic branch office in managing and developing their activities.

## **Development goal 4:**

### **Adequate resources and high-quality support services**

#### **We will do the following:**

We will invest in human resources planning and supervisory work. We will respond to the tightening competition by developing our recruitment and employer image.

We will strengthen the competence of staff members as experts in voluntary activities and take care of their welfare at work.

We will develop operating procedures for management/leadership. We will reform the planning, guidance, monitoring, reporting and communications related to FRC's activities and finances in a manner that responds both to the needs of organizational units and the requirements of interest groups.

In order to even better secure the operating preconditions, we will develop fundraising and property management on the basis of ethical values corresponding with Red Cross values. Districts and branches will take part in FRC's main campaigns and collections. We will increase the sales volume of Red Cross products at all organizational levels and improve the sales profitability. To strengthen the financial preconditions at districts and branches, their own means of fundraising will be developed.

We will develop support services to make them respond better to the needs of all FRC actors.

We will utilize information technology in all FRC activities better than before.

#### **We will follow up these issues:**

Staff members reach the goals set for performance and competence, which will be monitored through performance reviews.

As concluded through staff surveys, the satisfaction of employees at the Finnish Red Cross as an employer is good.

FRC's economy is in balance at all organizational levels.

The national total revenue of fundraising increases to three euros per inhabitant towards the end of the inter-Assembly period. The annual yield of the Disaster Relief Fund will increase by ten per cent in comparison with the present level. The result achieved especially in non-earmarked funds will grow.

According to the surveys conducted, different organizational units are satisfied with the level of support services offered.

## Strategic goal 3:

### The Finnish Red Cross creates partnerships that increase impact

From the point of view of the Finnish Red Cross, the significance of partnerships grows. Resources become scarcer and action must be made more efficient. At a similar pace, services in sparsely populated areas are cut down while the service provision in major cities becomes more diverse. These challenges call for a new way of working that combines resources. Partnership will be a mode of operation for the FRC also in the future. Cooperation is intensified in three sectors:

- internally within the organization,
- with public authorities and
- with external actors.

The FRC increases its internal cooperation by sharing competence and best practices. Internal cooperation is developed in order to better achieve the goals set and to utilize common resources more efficiently. The aim is to ensure that the quality of action and support meets the needs of the area all over the country.

The partners selected by the Red Cross consist of such external actors (corporations, organizations, public authorities, educational institutions, etc.) whose reputation and action concur with the principles and rules of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The purpose of partnerships is to achieve greater impact for the activities, and they are based on the Partnership policy adopted by the FRC Board.

The aim is that at the end of the inter-Assembly period the Finnish Red Cross has four national main partners, two of which districts and local branches also work with. In addition, the FRC coordinates or participates in at least two national inter-NGO partnerships that seek to promote volunteering and to alleviate the loneliness of elderly people.

The auxiliary role in relation to the public authorities is common to all National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. It is also one of the conditions for recognition of National Societies. This special duty distinguishes us from other civic organizations, and it is also included in the Presidential Decree on the Finnish Red Cross (811/205). The aim is to develop cooperation with the public authorities to function even better within both national and international preparedness. Another aim is to increase the knowledge of the cooperating authorities of the operating principles and special role of the Red Cross.

## **In the inter-Assembly period, we will do and develop the following things to reach our goals**

### **Development goal 1:**

#### **More intense cooperation within the organization**

##### **We will do the following:**

We will clarify FRC's planning, decision-making and monitoring procedures in a manner that results in better support to cooperation between organizational units.

We will ensure that various FRC units act according to the decisions made and goals set by the General Assembly, and by making use of the opportunities and means of cooperation.

We will implement programmes, training, campaigns and development initiatives across branch and district borders and in cooperation with the FRC Headquarters. We will make better use of resources and avoid overlapping activities. At the same time we will also facilitate the development of small units.

To utilize the opportunities available in the Helsinki metropolitan region, we will experiment with new forms of resource mobilization and membership recruitment as well as recruiting and motivating volunteers. We will intensify the cooperation of various FRC units working in the region and use resources more effectively in order to improve the visibility and impact of the activities.

We will ensure through partnership programmes that we share our competence and practices also with Sister National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and learn from our international partners.

##### **We will follow up these issues:**

Regional cooperation between branches has become more intense and its results show in improved impact.

We contribute to the development of a code of good partnership that is based on mutual respect for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. In international operations we are able to implement diverse cooperation forms, with the help of which the bilateral and multilateral activities are joined together better as programmes with comprehensive impact.

### **Development goal 2:**

#### **Stronger cooperation with public authorities**

##### **We will do the following:**

We will actively participate in the implementation of the Ministry of the Interior's Internal security programme with public authorities and other organizations both locally and nationally.

We will contact the public authorities at each organizational level and discuss the special auxiliary role of the Red Cross in relation to public authorities.

We will offer concrete models and support for cooperation with local authorities for the branches.

**We will follow up these issues:**

The FRC has entered into partnership and cooperation agreements with the key public authorities at the national, regional and local level.

**Development goal 3:**

**Active seeking of good external partners**

**We will do the following:**

We will increase partnerships related to assistance activities.

We will obtain national, regional and local corporate and NGO partnerships related to developing and acquiring resources. We will ensure that districts and branches also have the chance to cooperate with the national partners.

**We will follow up these issues:**

Partnerships entered into increase the impact of the activities. Partnerships are reviewed through regular discussions.

## SUMMARY

### Towards the next General Assembly

We have made good progress in implementing the recommendations and guidelines adopted by FRC's General Assembly in Pori in 2005. In order to reach the goals set by the General Assembly in Oulu, we will proceed in the direction selected in Pori but season our action with a pinch of humanity, a rewarding good feeling and concrete experiences of helping.

During the forthcoming inter-Assembly period, the Finnish Red Cross wants to bring more safety and wellbeing into people's daily lives. To succeed in doing this, we will have to be brave in reforming our organization. We must see to it that humanitarian values spread and that our action responds to actual assistance needs. We must be even wiser and more effective in using our resources and must be more active in inviting new volunteers, members and partners to join in.

When the FRC is open to new actors and new modes of action, and when the joy of caring and doing spreads out to the surrounding community, new people will be encouraged to come along. The more competent and motivated volunteers the organization has, the stronger is the chain of helping. Through a well-functioning chain we will reach more people in need and our impact will grow. Our purpose during the time before the next General Assembly is to take care of the continuity of the Finnish Red Cross and the entering of a new generation into our great organization. Together we can change the

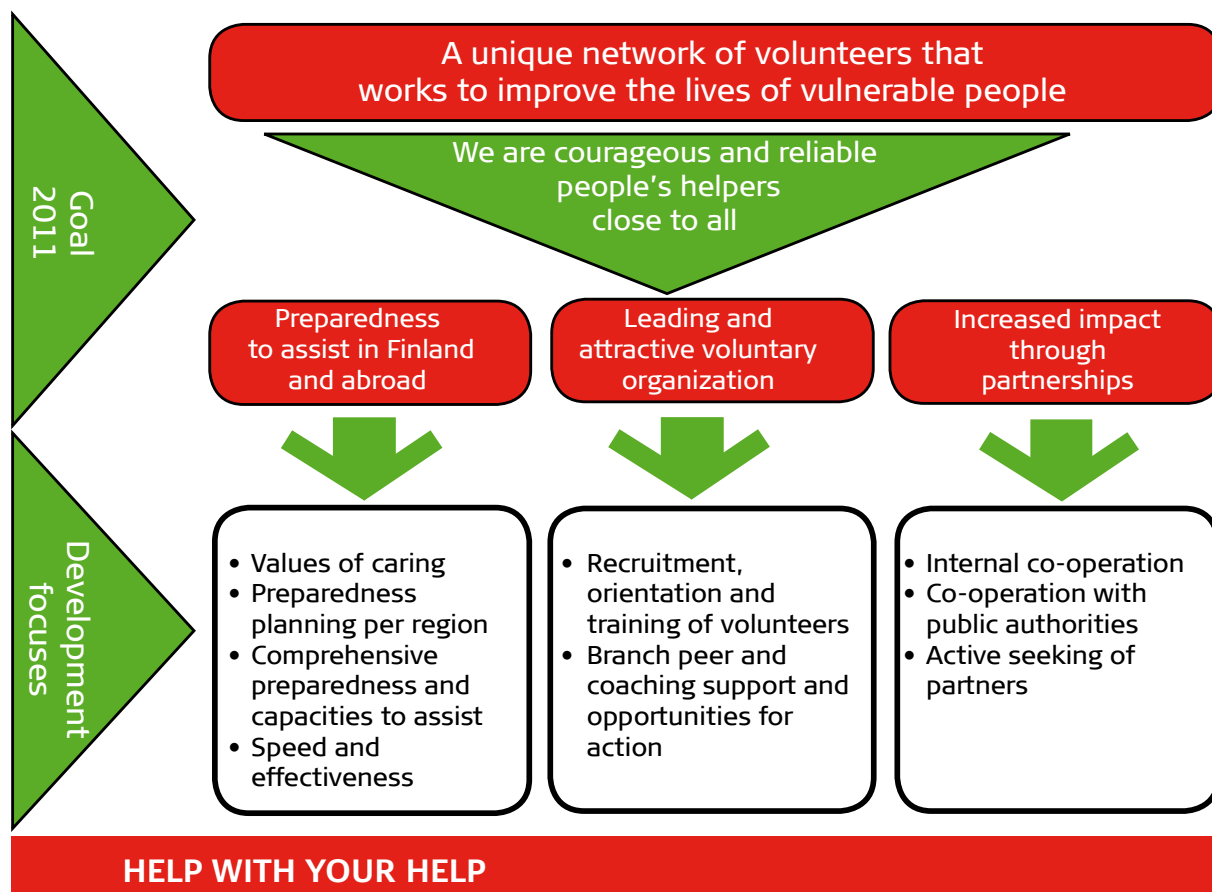


Image 2: Summary of main points in FRC's Strategic programme 2008-2011.

