



**Canadian Red Cross
Croix-Rouge canadienne**

Strategic Plan

2003 – 2008

**Approved by the Annual General Meeting
November 1, 2003**

A word from the President and Secretary General

The Canadian Red Cross Society has been providing humanitarian services in Canada for more than a century. Founded as an organization to bring voluntary medical aid to the wounded on battlefields, the Society has evolved in service to humanity in Canada and around the world through its wide range of programs and services. As the needs of the vulnerable have changed, so have the Canadian Red Cross's programs and services. And we will keep evolving.

Through the years since the Red Cross opened its doors in Canada, the world has changed: growing population centres have contributed to greater numbers of casualties during disasters, new means of warfare have brought different risks to civilian populations and changing social conditions affect new groups of vulnerable people here at home and around the world. But one thing has not changed: people come to the Red Cross in times of need.

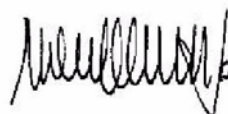
In order to ensure that the Canadian Red Cross can continue to effectively meet the needs of vulnerable people in Canada and around the world, the Canadian Red Cross embarked on a strategic planning process to shape the future of the Society. This process involved identifying trends and issues in the humanitarian aid environment and assessing the Society's capacity. In the true spirit of our *Good Governance Practices*, it also incorporated the input and feedback of volunteers and staff from all levels of the organization, as well as donors, partners and other external stakeholders. Now, almost two years later, we have redefined the Canadian Red Cross, with a new mission, vision and strategic goals that better reflect the work we do.

The Canadian Red Cross Strategic Plan 2003-2008 is our map for the next five years. It identifies core areas of focus, further defines the work we do in our communities and guides our way to ensure we are able to fulfill our mission. We believe that this plan, in setting the direction of the Society for the future, will ensure that the Canadian Red Cross continuously strives to reach more people, provide effective services and make a difference in people's lives—no matter how great or how small.

The Red Cross is many things to many people: a sign of hope, a symbol of protection, a light in the darkness, a shoulder to lean on, a friend to count on. But really, the Red Cross is people—people working together to mobilize the power of humanity.



Bob Barnes
President



Pierre Duplessis
Secretary General

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Introduction

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is the most universally respected and recognized humanitarian organization in the world. Its emblem is a powerful symbol, offering protection in times of conflict. People associate the Canadian Red Cross with humanitarian service, even though they may not know the specifics of what we do. The public come to us in times of need, expect for us to play a role in responding to disasters, and believe that Red Cross plays an important role in Canadian communities. Public opinion polling reinforces that the Canadian Red Cross is still one of the most appreciated humanitarian organizations in Canada. People demonstrate their commitment to our humanitarian goals by generously providing their time, and financially supporting our work, in Canada and around the world.

Our organization means different things to different people and this will continue. We help people at different times in their lives, when they are particularly vulnerable. We do not exist because of one specific need, rather we respond to the world around us and continue to interpret and apply our Fundamental Principles in light of the current environment. This flexibility to adapt, based on a fundamental commitment to humanity, is what has kept the institution relevant and vital for over a century.

The strategic planning process provides us with the opportunity to shape the future of Red Cross for the years ahead. As a committed member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the Canadian Red Cross supports the direction provided by Strategy 2010 and the Strategy for the Movement, and has used these as the basis for the development of this strategic plan. After careful reflection of the environment in which we live, both in communities across Canada and around the world, and listening to the advice of our volunteers and stakeholders, we have developed a strategic direction for the Canadian Red Cross that will guide our actions over the next five years.

Strategic Analysis Process

The Canadian Red Cross began the first Phase of the strategic planning process in April 2002 by engaging in widespread review and analysis, both within the Society and externally involving our partners, clients, donors, volunteers and other key stakeholders. The review encompassed the macro environment, the broader International Red Cross and Red Crescent environment as well as our own Canadian context.

The Phase 1 report, Strategic Review Synthesis, was circulated in April 2003 and highlighted major trends and issues, including the threats and opportunities facing the Red Cross, and an analysis of the Society's present situation, inclusive of the organization's strengths and weaknesses. It raised strategic issues and questions, and was the basis upon which the mission and vision and strategic goals were then proposed in June 2003. Further feedback on the proposed direction for the Society was carried out over the summer of 2003.

The involvement of the Society's volunteers and staff at all levels of the organization throughout the strategic planning process has demonstrated the principles of Good Governance Practices (GGP) at work.

The strategic direction for The Canadian Red Cross Society is set out in the mission, vision, values and strategic goals. Together these define the intended direction for the Canadian Red Cross for the next five years.

Mission

The Canadian Red Cross mission is:

***to improve the lives of vulnerable people
by mobilizing the power of humanity
in Canada and around the world***

Vision

The Canadian Red Cross is the leading humanitarian organization through which people voluntarily demonstrate their caring for others in need.

Values

Our actions and decisions will be based upon:

- Humanitarian values, as expressed in our Fundamental Principles;
- Respect, dignity and care for one another within and outside of Red Cross, and
- Integrity, accountability, effectiveness, and transparency.

Core Areas of Focus and Strategic Goals

This strategic plan sets out the direction for the Red Cross for the next five years. The four core areas of focus help us frame the image of the Canadian Red Cross. The concept of using core areas of focus comes from the Federation's Strategy 2010. The four core areas of focus for the Canadian Red Cross are:

- ***Humanitarian Values***
- ***Disaster and Conflict***
- ***Health and Injury Prevention***
- ***Organizational Capacity***

The first three core areas further define the work we do in our communities to improve the lives of the vulnerable. These areas build on the strength and competencies within the organization and at the same time focus our efforts for future growth. Within each core area national programs provide standard services that address common community needs in Canada. At the local level volunteers and staff ensure that programs and services address special needs and circumstances within their communities and build on local capacities.

For each core area strategic goals have been defined to express the specific difference we will make as a result of mobilizing resources to improve the lives of the vulnerable. All initiatives, whether local or national, should address unmet needs and contribute directly to strategic goals.

Red Cross initiatives seek to prevent or mitigate the circumstances that contribute to vulnerability. Direct programs and services to clients will be complemented by advocacy initiatives, where this may reduce barriers or improve conditions for vulnerable populations.

The core area "Organizational Capacity" ensures we have sufficient human and financial resources required to effectively fulfill our mission and mobilize the power of humanity to carry out our work.

No one core area is more important than the other. Together they define the intended scope of activity for the Canadian Red Cross. It is expected that all jurisdictions will operate in each core area, based on local needs and capacity, and that national support will be available to help achieve this.

Humanitarian Values

We protect lives and ensure respect for the human being.

Our strategic goal is to:

1. **Increase awareness of, respect for and promote action on humanitarian values and International Humanitarian Law**

Disaster and Conflict

We provide relief when individuals and communities require support.

Our strategic goal is to:

2. **Prepare for and respond to disasters and conflicts**

Health and Injury Prevention

We reduce suffering, save lives and build safe and healthy communities for individuals at vulnerable time in their lives.

Our strategic goals are to:

3. **Prevent unintentional and intentional injury**
4. **Improve health status and maintain dignity**

Organizational Capacity

We mobilize sufficient support and resources to carry out our humanitarian mission.

Our strategic goals are to:

5. **Strengthen the financial health of the organization.**
6. **Increase opportunities for active participation of volunteers.**

Establishing Priorities

Priorities as they relate to core areas of focus, define the specific populations and issues that Red Cross will address. The Board of Governors is responsible for setting strategic directions and priorities for realizing the mission and strategic goals. Within the framework of the strategic goals and national priorities, regions identify specific groups at risk or in need within their communities. Zone priorities identify those population groups or issues that are common to all regions or that the zone wishes to particularly address.

National programs address common priorities or needs across the country. Where there are specific local priorities, national programs may be offered to specific audiences and/or local community services may be delivered.

Through the summer 2003 feedback process regions and zones were asked to develop a list of priorities for 2004-2005 which reflected the unique needs of their communities, as established through prior environmental scan or needs assessment activities. This provided the Board with the opportunity to review common and unique priorities in relation to each strategic goal and to use this as the basis for development of national priorities.

Humanitarian Values

Goal 1 - Increase awareness of, respect for and promote action on humanitarian values and International Humanitarian Law

The most common suggested regional priority was youth. Specific unique regional priorities are ethnic populations who are at risk of discrimination, racial conflict and unaccompanied children who are asylum seekers. National priorities include alignment with and support of relevant Federation and ICRC priorities.

The national priorities are:

- **Youth**
- **Persons and communities at risk of discrimination and/or in need of protection**

Disaster and Conflict

Goal 2 - Prepare for and respond to disasters and conflicts

The most common suggested regional priorities were individuals and communities at risk or affected by disaster. Specific unique regional priorities

include: homeless individuals and medically vulnerable at risk from extreme weather, unaccompanied children who are asylum seekers, individuals and communities at risk to specific threats including earthquakes, wildfires, and floods.

The national priorities are:

- **Individuals and communities at risk for or affected by disaster or conflict**

Health and Injury Prevention

Goal 3 - Prevent unintentional and intentional injury

Suggested regional priorities are youth at risk of abuse, violence, bullying and harassment and their caregivers, children and young men at risk of drowning, ethnic communities, new immigrants and refugees at risk because of language barriers, aboriginal populations, seniors and rural and isolated groups. Specific examples of unique regional priorities include seniors at risk of falls, youth at risk of suicide, youth/adults at risk of gang violence, persons at risk of injury due to farm equipment, skidoo's, or moose/vehicle collisions.

The national priorities are:

- **Youth**
- **Aboriginal populations**

Goal 4 – Improve health status and maintain dignity

The most suggested regional priority is seniors. Specific unique regional priorities include: elderly and disabled individuals lacking access to health care services, homeless and refugee claimants lacking basic needs and transitional services, children and parents dealing with illness, isolated individuals and children at risk of poor nutrition, and people requiring basic health services support to maintain independence.

The national priorities are:

- **Seniors**
- **Women and children at risk**

Organizational Capacity

Goal 5 – Strengthen the financial health of the organization.

The national priorities are:

- **Increase of operational reserves**
- **Ensuring adequate resources to deliver services in each of the core areas of focus**

Goal 6 – Increase opportunities for active participation of volunteers.

The national priorities are:

- **Youth**
- **Ensuring representation of the diversity in our communities**

Measuring Our Success

The strategic goals serve to guide and focus our efforts. They describe the impact and measurable change in people and communities that Red Cross works to achieve. We want to know that the investments we are making are having the intended impact. Our success in achieving our strategic goals will be assessed using a set of measures gathered on a routine basis utilizing internal and external information sources. The measurement activity will be lead nationally and will support monitoring of trends across the country. The results of our measurement activity will be utilized in annual and strategic planning cycles.

In addition to measuring progress related to the strategic goals, we will monitor four key indicators of success – service, image, public support, and resources. Baseline measures will be established and annual progress will be monitored and reported back to the general membership annually.

Service – percent of population reached with our services, quality of our services, impact and outcome of our services for the affected population

Image – public trust and perception of the Red Cross

Public Support – contributions of volunteers and financial donors, membership and recognition as an effective partner

Resources – efficiency of services, respect of budget targets, number and characteristics of our volunteers

Implementing the Plan

The strategic directions set out in this plan will be implemented beginning April 2004. Over the next five years, it is expected that all jurisdictions will build capacity to engage in all core areas of focus based on local needs and capacity.

The annual planning cycle is as follows:

April – June

- Annual results and trends analyzed
- Region and Zone annual meetings
- Emerging needs and opportunities identified through environmental scanning

September - October

- Annual General Meeting
- Annual results and trends reviewed, national priorities set
- Planning and budgeting guidelines established

November – December

- Region and Zone priorities set
- Operational plans and budgets developed

January - March

- Plans and budgets revised as required

The Red Cross is largely a crisis response organization and as such must have the ability to adapt and focus attention in response to specific disasters and conflicts that cannot be planned for or predicted with any degree of certainty. Business continuity plans help insure that the Society has the capacity to both respond to these events and to maintain core business operations. There may be periods when the impact of local or world events is such that operating plans require revision outside of this annual planning cycle.

Mobilizing the Power of Humanity

Red Cross fulfills its mission by mobilizing the power of humanity. We do this by:

Creating a place where people can come together to create solutions and deliver services to meet community needs. We have a strong volunteer base, where the potential of volunteers is fully realized. In keeping with our Fundamental Principles we ensure that our organization and its work is inclusive and representative of the diversity of our communities. Working effectively with our supporters and partners, we actively engage people who share our values.

Providing leadership and linking through our network as a local, national, and global organization. We effectively share experience in Canada and in our international work. Through strong leadership we influence decision makers in our core areas of focus.

Mobilizing financial resources. By having a diversified and sustainable financial resource base we are able to deliver services in Canada and abroad. We provide opportunities for our donors to contribute in meaningful ways. We are committed to responsible financial management and strategic investment of our resources. A strong fundraising culture is critical to our success.

Resource Assumptions

This strategic plan has been developed in a period where the Society is focused on stabilization and growth. The capacity to expand activities within each of the core areas of focus is dependent on securing stable and secure funding. It is expected that communities support needed services and play a critical role in the identification of local needs. Support includes financial, material and human resources.

Local needs and capacity will differ. Red Cross operates in both large urban centres and in geographically remote communities. The communities have different needs and capacities and Red Cross must be able to adapt and operate effectively in all communities.