

Independent Evaluation of the Australian Red Cross Partnership 2015-2018

Evaluation Summary

Evaluation Purpose: The purpose of the evaluation was to address, first, to what extent has the DFAT investment in the Australian Red Cross (ARC) humanitarian response and preparedness activities contributed to the anticipated results and outcomes during fiscal years 2015 to 2017? Second, to what extent has the DFAT–ARC Partnership demonstrated value added as an aid delivery mechanism and contributed to the anticipated results and outcomes for both partners? And, third, what then are the implications for a new partnership design, recognising ARC’s ability to deliver against DFAT’s Foreign Policy White Paper commitments, DFAT’s Humanitarian Strategy and Australia’s commitments under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Agenda for Humanity and the Grand Bargain?

Evaluation Completion Date: 30 November 2018

Evaluation Team: Graeme Storer (Team Leader), Donna Holden (partnership effectiveness), Isabelle Choutet (independent Vanuatu-based disaster risk reduction specialist).

Response to the evaluation report

The evaluation was jointly managed by DFAT’s Humanitarian, NGO and Partnerships Division in consultation with the ARC. DFAT and ARC consider the review to be of a good quality and that it sufficiently addressed the questions in the Terms of Reference (ToR) and subsequent Evaluation Plan.

The recommendations proposed in the review are based on the evaluations consultations, analysis and discussions. They provide a number of recommendations that have been adopted by DFAT and ARC and will be addressed in the design of a new partnership agreement, beginning in 2019.

This management response was jointly prepared by DFAT and Australian Red Cross.

Response to recommendations

Recommendation	Response	Explanation	Action plan	Timeframe
<i>Presence and focus</i>				
1. [DFAT and ARC] Before considering a future Partnership design, review and update the rationale for selecting focus countries (based on such criteria as programme objectives, the potential to amplify results and to influence the humanitarian agenda, socio-economic and risk factors, existing capacities and comparative advantage) and communicate these across DFAT, Post and ARC.	Agree	ARC and DFAT agree that criteria for selecting focus countries should be reviewed in the development of the future partnership design.	ARC and DFAT to agree criteria during design discussions, whilst ensuring that flexibility is maintained to respond to changing circumstances during the partnership. Criteria for focus country selection will be articulated in the Investment Design Summary.	By end Q2 2019
2. [DFAT and ARC] The Partnership outcomes should make explicit the linkages with the disaster risk management outcomes laid out in the AADMER (ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response) and the FRDP (Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific), both of which reflect strong commitment to reduce disaster losses in the region and to jointly respond to disaster emergencies.	Agree	DFAT and ARC agree with the focus on Disaster Risk Management (DRM), and ensuring that there are clear linkages with relevant regional and global frameworks.	ARC to clearly articulate how DRM program activities are linked to relevant regional and global frameworks in the partnership design document.	By end Q2 2019
3. [DFAT and ARC] The Partnership Design should avoid investments linked to long-term development outcomes by identifying 'touch points' to consider when to exit out		DFAT and ARC agree with a stronger focus on the DRM cycle in the next partnership design. Acknowledging that DRR and	ARC to clearly articulate the focus on DRM, including DRR and recovery and to set out clear and timebound	

of rehabilitation activities, something that could be achieved through partnerships with local stakeholders and Australian NGOs.	Agree in Part	recovery activities are often longer term endeavours, the program design document will clearly articulate ARC's focus on engaging in these activities only where best placed and in line with achieving the strategic goals of the partnership.	parameters for engagement in these aspects of DRM, in the partnership design document.	By end Q2 2019
4. ARC should make investments to (further) develop its 'point of difference' in the humanitarian space in relation to IFRC members and to Australian NGOs. This could include, for example, developing distinctive expertise in Health in Emergencies, Shelter in Emergencies or Gender in Emergencies, all of which also offer entry points for strengthening gender equality and disability inclusive practice.	Agree	DFAT and ARC agree that ARC should be able to clearly articulate their distinctive point of difference (value proposition) in the future partnership design. DFAT notes that a clear strength of the Red Cross movement is its network of national societies. DFAT strongly supports the strengthening of national societies, particularly in the Pacific, in the future partnership design.	ARC to clearly articulate their distinctive point of difference in the future partnership design including how this can be utilised to strengthen locally led and inclusive humanitarian assistance.	By end Q2 2019
<i>Promoting and enabling environment</i>				

<p>5. DFAT and ARC] The Partnership should continue to allocate resources for joint, focused engagement and research to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> influence the humanitarian reform agenda, including localisation, uptake of humanitarian law and other soft power objectives; and strengthen and influence the implementation of legal frameworks. This could include further strategic investments in the Asia-Pacific Disaster Law Programme and support to National Societies and their partners to develop and/or update and implement disaster laws. 	<p>Agree</p>	<p>DFAT and ARC agree that these elements of work should be retained in the future partnership design.</p>	<p>ARC to continue to deliver on these areas in the current partnership and include them as core areas of work in the future partnership design document.</p>	<p>By end Q2 2019</p>
<p><i>Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and (adaptive) learning – do it well</i></p>				
<p>6. [ARC] The performance framework should be developed in parallel with the programme design, blending output-level indicators with a select number of outcome-level indicators and a discrete set of partnership effectiveness indicators. (It goes without saying that the Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) system must be objective (see Recommendation 15d) and able to collect and report on disaggregated gender and disability inclusion data.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>ARC and DFAT agree with this recommendation and consider it a priority for the next partnership design, noting that the performance framework should collect sex, age and disability disaggregated data.</p>	<p>ARC to lead on development of a performance framework that will form a key component of the future partnership design proposal.</p> <p>This framework will align with relevant priorities of DFAT's humanitarian strategy, relevant ARC policies and relevant key international commitments made by both partners.</p>	<p>By end Q2 2019</p>

<p>7. [DFAT and ARC] The Partnership should adopt a 'development evaluative' approach to monitoring and evaluation (M&E), which focuses on adaptive programme management and learning, and allocate resources for regular joint evaluative tasks that will allow DFAT and ARC to tell compelling change stories.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>ARC and DFAT agree with this recommendation and consider the development of an M&E approach that encourages adaptive management practices drawing on disaggregated data to be a priority for the next partnership design. DFAT would welcome the opportunity to be engaged in monitoring and learning opportunities, within existing resources.</p>	<p>ARC to lead on design of learning agenda and associated activities, including confirming roles and responsibilities for joint monitoring.</p> <p>DFAT to allocate human and financial resources for at least one joint monitoring mission per financial year.</p>	<p>By end Q2 2019</p>
<p><i>Protection, gender and inclusion (PGI)</i></p>				
<p>8. ARC should expand support to strengthen National Society capacity to deliver on protection, gender and disability inclusion commitments. This should include continuing, first, to lobby IFRC partners to ensure all National Societies have actionable gender equality and disability inclusion and gender-based violence standards in place; second, to provide technical support to operationalise these standards in organisational and programming practice; and third, to strengthen the capacity of National Societies to support government efforts related to sexual and gender-based violence in disasters.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>ARC and DFAT strongly agree with the recommendation to support strengthening of national societies in Protection, Gender and Inclusion in the next partnership design, and continued advocacy within the Federation on these issues.</p>	<p>ARC to integrate PGI into the future partnership design document, and ensure allocation of resources.</p>	<p>By end Q2 2019</p>

<p>9. ARC should harness the localised power of the Asia and Pacific Gender & Diversity (G&D) Networks. This could include action-focused learning and expanded dialogue about, for example, gender in emergencies and gender-based violence protection and response in emergencies, supported through expanded and formalised partnerships that draw in the technical expertise of local civil society and 'local' research organisations to build an evidence base for change. ARC could also consider supporting a mentoring programme to accompany emerging protection, gender and disability inclusion leadership.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>ARC and DFAT agree with an increased focus on expanded dialogue and action focused learning on Gender and Diversity in the future partnership design.</p>	<p>ARC to integrate PGI into the future partnership design document, and ensure allocation of resources to support national and regional champions.</p>	<p>By end Q2 2019</p>
<p>10. ARC should lobby within IFRC to strengthen protection, gender and disability inclusion accountability mechanisms. ARC could consider, for example, lobbying with IFRC regional structures to have each National Society report on and discuss disaggregated gender and disability inclusion data to increase their awareness of the importance of removing barriers to enable full participation of women and girls, people with disabilities and marginalised groups and to draw on these</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>ARC and DFAT agree with the recommendation to continue advocacy on these issues within the Federation, including in support of prioritising resource allocation to PGI.</p>	<p>ARC to integrate PGI into the future partnership design document, and ensure allocation of resources.</p>	<p>By end Q2 2019</p>

discussions to prioritise allocation of programme resources.				
<i>Commit stable and long-term resources to National Staff Development</i>				
<p>11. ARC should continue to invest in:</p> <p>a. maintaining National Society headquarter and branch-level readiness in the face of future emergencies (through, for example, relevant training, simulations and participation in regional networks of Emergency Response Teams); and</p> <p>b. consolidating and expanding sub-national network strength, sustaining the commitment of community-based disaster committees and encouraging volunteer motivation and retention.</p>	Agree	<p>a. ARC and DFAT support the focus on national society headquarter and branch level readiness - particularly Pacific national societies - in the future partnership design.</p> <p>b. ARC and DFAT support a continued focus on sub-national network strengthening, including strengthening community-led initiatives to reduce disaster risk and enhance response and encouraging volunteer motivation and retention, in the future partnership design.</p>	ARC to address these recommendations in developing the future partnership design document, and ensure allocation of resources.	By end Q2 2019
<p>12. ARC should also continue to invest in supporting National Societies to put in place robust strategic and business planning, financial sustainability and accountable governance structures, as these are a foundation for sustainable organisational development and for advancing the localisation agenda.</p>	Agree	ARC and DFAT support an increased focus on national society strengthening - particularly Pacific national societies - in the future partnership design.	ARC to address these recommendations in developing the future partnership design document, and ensure allocation of resources.	By end Q2 2019

<p>13. ARC should expand efforts to invest in private sector partnerships and technologies (both as a mechanism to support cost-efficient preparedness and response capacities and to enhance the localisation agenda).</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>ARC and DFAT support the recommendation for increased private sector engagement.</p> <p>Noting that a clear strength of the Red Cross movement is its network of national societies DFAT strongly supports engaging the private sector in activities that increase the capacity of national societies to respond and recover from disasters in the future partnership design.</p>	<p>ARC to address these recommendations in developing the future partnership design document, and ensure allocation of resources.</p>	<p>By end Q2 2019</p>
<p>14. National Society organisational development outcomes should be linked to the MERL system, with resources allocated to monitor learning application. There is potential to adopt the Core Humanitarian Standard as a complementary self-assessment and monitoring tool within the context of disaster risk management programming.</p>	<p>Agree</p>	<p>ARC and DFAT agree that clear and practical policies and practices should be in place within National Society funding to ensure accountability to affected people and be linked to organisational development outcomes in the performance framework.</p> <p>Specific tools for measuring progress will be determined through the development of the performance framework, leveraging and complementing whole of RCRC Movement ways of working in an effort to harmonise and streamline reporting burdens on partners.</p>	<p>ARC to integrate accountability standards into the performance framework, aligning with Movement-wide practice where relevant and noting that DFAT's Humanitarian Strategy encourages adherence to the Core Humanitarian Standard as well as Sphere Handbook.</p>	<p>By end Q2 2019</p>

Future-fit the partnership management, governance and communication arrangements

<p>15. DFAT and ARC should engage partnership brokering/design expertise to work with DFAT and ARC 'at design' to develop a partnering framework (integrated within the design) that can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. move beyond ARC's utility as a service provider to a more sophisticated relationship with articulates the shared value, common goals and draws upon ARC's unique assets as in the humanitarian sector; b. clarify how DFAT and ARC can best dedicate resources to manage the Partnership in a meaningful way, ensuring that a strong performance story is created and that strategic opportunities are identified and implemented by both agencies to their mutual benefit; c. Streamline contractual arrangements in order that these provide improved line of sight and linkages with the key policy and programming areas in DFAT and strengthen linkages and communication with Posts; d. discuss the potential value of bringing forward an external and objective lens 	<p>Agree in Part</p>	<p>DFAT and ARC agree with the recommendation of having a facilitated discussion at the outset of the partnership design process to agree on key principles for the partnership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. DFAT and ARC agree that internal coordination with all areas of the RCRC Movement within DFAT could be strengthened, to ensure that both agencies are identifying and leveraging opportunities for mutual benefit. DFAT and ARC however do not see a compelling reason to create a secretariat to support the partnership. b. DFAT agrees that contractual arrangements should be streamlined to minimise the administrative burden for all parties, whilst complying with relevant Australian Government contracting and policy frameworks. c. DFAT and ARC support an independent appraisal of the 	<p>DFAT and ARC to engage in a facilitated partnership discussion to agree on priorities for the partnership and the principles that will govern it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. DFAT and ARC to discuss strategic engagement under the new partnership, including strengthened engagement with DFAT Posts, during the facilitated partnership discussion in December 2018. b. DFAT to provide clarity (seeking advice from Aid Business Branch) on potential contracting mechanisms and discuss with ARC. c. DFAT to arrange independent appraisal of the partnership design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 2018 a. December 2018 b. December 2018 c. By end Q2 2019
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<p>into the M&E framework (through, for example, positioning an external M&E Adviser or forming an M&E Reference Group that could support annual or bi-annual learning reflections); and</p> <p>e. revisit financing arrangements including piloting a new arrangement for prepositioned funds for humanitarian crises, removing ANCP funding from the Agreement and providing resources for humanitarian leadership and soft power joint action.</p>		<p>design document and performance framework, as well as independent evaluations through the life of the partnership.</p> <p>d. ARC will be responsible for ensuring a robust M&E system is in place and operating effectively. ARC will ensure that appropriate resources are included in the program budget for monitoring and evaluation. DFAT and ARC will consider engaging independent M&E advice during the life of the partnership, if required, as mutually agreed.</p> <p>e. DFAT is open to including a flexible response fund within the next partnership agreement.</p>	<p>(including performance framework) as per the DFAT design quality assurance process.</p> <p>d. ARC to articulate approach to M&E in partnership design document, and ensure appropriate allocation of resources.</p> <p>e. ARC to detail how a potential flexible response fund be implemented, within the future partnership design.</p>	<p>d. By end Q2 2019</p> <p>e. By end Q2 2019</p>
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