Independent Evaluation

DFAT – Australian Red Cross Humanitarian Partnership 2015–2018

November 2018

Aid activity summary

Aid activity name	DFAT–Australian Red Cross Humanitarian Partnership
Aid initiative number	(INL893)
Period	1 July 2015 – 30 June 2019
Purpose of report	The purpose of the evaluation was to address, first, to what extent has the DFAT investment in the 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? 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*?
Total Australian commitment	AUD28.8 million
Delivery organisation	Australian Red Cross
Location	Global with a priority focus on the Indo-Pacific region
Primary sector	Humanitarian

Acknowledgements

The photograph on the front cover shows a Red Cross volunteer in the Community Disaster and Climate Change Committee in Chapui, a peri-urban community on Santo Island, Vanuatu. The photograph has been reproduced with the permission of the volunteer and the photographer (Graeme Storer).

The evaluation team comprised Graeme Storer (team lead), Donna Holden (partnership effectiveness), Isabelle Choutet (independent Vanuatu-based disaster risk reduction specialist), Veronica Bell (ARC representative) and Sharon Hicks (DFAT, contributions to field visit debriefs). The team brought to this evaluation humanitarian; program management; disaster risk management; gender equality and disability inclusion; partnership brokering; and monitoring and evaluation expertise along with a sound understanding of the national and international contexts and corporate knowledge of DFAT's systems and processes.

The evaluation team would like to express sincere thanks to the staff of DFAT and ARC and their partners for their insights. The team is especially grateful to the Red Cross volunteers and partners in Vanuatu and Fiji who brought their passion and experience into the evaluation and welcomed the team into their communities. We are also thankful to the government officials and local civil society organisations who 'squeezed' time into their already busy work schedules, sometimes at quite short notice.

Thanks also go to Red Cross National Society staff in Port Vila and Suva for helping to facilitate the field visits in Vanuatu and Fiji. Finally, thanks are due to Red Cross staff and DFAT Post personnel in Mongolia and Myanmar who contributed to the case studies.

Disclaimer

This Evaluation Report has been prepared by the Independent Evaluation Team. As such, the report reflects the views of the Team and does not necessarily represent the views of the Government of Australia or the Australian Red Cross or bind them to action.

Executive summary

The independent evaluation of the DFAT–Australian Red Cross (ARC) Humanitarian Partnership (2015–2019) was conducted between August and November 2018. Its purpose was to address three questions:

1. To what extent has the DFAT investment in ARC's humanitarian response and preparedness activities contributed to the anticipated results and outcomes?
2. To what extent has the Partnership demonstrated value added as an aid delivery mechanism and contributed to the anticipated results and outcomes for both partners?
3. What then are the implications for a new partnership design?

Key findings and achievements against end-of-program outcomes

The evaluation finds that the Partnership provides strong visibility of the Australian Aid program domestically, and the window into the broader Red Cross Red Crescent Movement positions DFAT *and* ARC to:

- contribute to localised disaster risk management through support to National Red Cross Societies and their local government partners and, through them, to promote community-based disaster preparedness and first response capabilities;
- engage together in high-level dialogues on regional and global policy issues, so as to influence the uptake of good practice and to contribute to shaping the humanitarian reform agenda (including the localisation agenda and other soft power, joint action);
- promote innovation through pilot projects that can be amplified elsewhere; and
- provide a unique perspective and expertise on vulnerability and protection issues, including a gendered approach to inclusive disaster risk management.

Outcome area 1: *Humanitarian assistance is efficient, equitable, economical, effective and localised*

ARC and its Movement partners are laying the groundwork for localised surge response and strengthening sub-national capacity. Building on their auxiliary role with government, National Societies have been able to forge solid and mutually respectful partnership relationships with national and provincial-level Disaster Management Authorities and are active in relevant technical working groups and Cluster Meetings. Results are being demonstrated at output and outcome level. These results have been achieved in the face of major and recurrent disaster response events. Pre-positioned non-food item (NFI) supplies are reducing DFAT's need for additional resource-intensive partnerships.

ARC and partner activities have contributed to achieving the desired gender equality and disability inclusion outcomes, supported by a cadre of passionate Red Cross women and men. There are opportunities for ARC to deepen this work and to develop a point-of-difference in its gender equality and disability inclusion programming (see also outcome area 3 below).

Outcome area 2: *National Societies are supporting communities to anticipate, prepare for and reduce risks from disasters and crises*

Working across National Disaster Management-approved structures and networks and maintaining localised readiness in the face of future emergencies is a focus for National Societies. Community-based disaster committees are foundational in improving community-led preparedness and include the preparation of village-led Disaster Activity Plans and Disaster Response Plans.

Linkages between community-based disaster committees and provincial authorities are laying the groundwork for localising and amplifying results. Whole communities are engaged in disaster risk management, preparedness and resilience activities. Community members are trained to conduct rapid assessments as soon as a cyclone or other emergency hits, which positions the Red Cross to respond within 48 hours.

Women are playing meaningful roles on women's committees and, working through their volunteer network, are carrying forward messages about health and sanitation and gender-based violence to women in neighbouring villages. The needs of people with disabilities are also considered, though there is scope to deepen engagement, in particular around removing the barriers to their full engagement (from recipients of support to contributors of support).

Outcome area 3:   *Key actors respect and advocate for humanitarian values, international humanitarian law, disaster law, gender equality and inclusion*

Through the Partnership, ARC has contributed to the understanding and uptake of International Disaster Law and International Humanitarian Law, is supporting governments to review and update national laws, and has contributed to the understanding of housing, land and property rights in humanitarian response.

Emerging priority investments have supported research and provided opportunities to pilot new ways of working. Joint research and policy work together strengthen soft power objectives and, in particular, complement DFAT's focus on protection, gender equality and disability inclusion.

ARC is positioned to deepen its contributions on gender-based violence and to protection, gender and disability inclusion. This offers DFAT new touch points to extend its influence in these areas.

Outcome area 4:   *National Societies are stronger, better functioning organisations*

Working collectively with Red Cross partners, ARC is promoting coherent and coordinated programming, aligned with National Society-driven strategies. Working collectively removes duplication and creates efficiencies and opens up opportunities to amplify impact. ARC is also promoting an approach to National Society capacity development that is fundamentally about localisation and sustainability.

ARC has been providing leadership on Gender & Diversity Networks in Asia and the Pacific and on a Pacific Finance Managers Network. These platforms are promoting south–south dialogue, the localisation of technical support and opening up a new way of learning. ARC also supported Violence Prevention and Response Pilots in Mongolia. There are opportunities to draw on the expertise of civil society organisations to expand these strands of work and to deepen the focus on gender equality and disability inclusion.

In the Pacific, the Fiji and Vanuatu Red Cross Societies have been able to secure funding other than that from the DFAT–ARC Partnership or from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). This proxy indicator demonstrates that they are becoming more viable and stronger humanitarian organisations in their own right.

Overall, the evaluation concludes, first, that ARC has, in general, performed well against the Partnership outcome areas, but has fallen short in overall articulation of results. DFAT and ARC have thus been unable to tell a convincing performance story. Second, the Partnership has contributed to efficient and effective aid delivery. However, inefficiencies have been identified in the Partnership arrangements between DFAT and ARC.

Recommendations

Presence and focus

1. [DFAT and ARC] Before considering a future Partnership design, **review and update the rationale for selecting focus countries** (based on such criteria as program 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**.

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 joint response to disaster emergencies.

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 of rehabilitation activities**, something that could be achieved through partnerships with local stakeholders and Australian NGOs.

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.

Promoting an enabling environment

5. [DFAT and ARC] The Partnership should continue to allocate resources for **joint, focused engagement and research** to:

   ▪ **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 Program and support to National Societies and their partners to develop and/or update and implement disaster laws.

Monitoring, evaluation, reporting and (adaptive) learning

6. [ARC] The **performance framework** should be **developed in parallel with the program 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**.

7. [DFAT and ARC] The Partnership should **adopt a 'development evaluative' approach to monitoring and evaluation**, which focuses on **adaptive program and partnership management and learning** and allocate resources for **regular joint evaluative tasks** that will allow DFAT and ARC to tell compelling change stories.

Protection, gender equality and disability inclusion

8. ARC should **expand support to strengthen National Society capacity to deliver on protection, gender equality and disability inclusion commitments**. This should include continuing, first, to lobby Movement 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 gender-based violence in disasters.

9. ARC should **harness the localised power of the Asia and Pacific Gender & Diversity 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 program to accompany emerging gender equality and disability inclusion leadership.

10. ARC should **lobby within IFRC to strengthen gender equality 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, so as 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 discussions to prioritise allocation of program resources.

Commit stable and long-term resources to National Society development

11. ARC should continue to invest in:

    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

    b. consolidating and expanding **sub-national network strength**, sustaining the commitment of **community-based disaster committees** and encouraging **volunteer motivation and retention**. This might include, for example, harnessing technologies to engage youth volunteers and/or allocating resources to mentor emergent leadership within National Society teams.

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 foundational for sustainable organisational development and for advancing the localisation agenda.

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**).

14. [ARC] **National Society organisational development outcomes should be linked to the Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting 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.

Future-fit the Partnership management, governance and communication arrangements

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:

    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 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

e. revisit financing arrangements including piloting a new arrangement for prepositioned funds for humanitarian crises, removing Australian NGO Cooperation Program funding from the Agreement and providing resources for humanitarian leadership and soft power joint action.

Abbreviations

AADMER ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response

ARC Australian Red Cross

ASEAN Association of South East Asian Nations

BOCA Branch Organisational Capacity Assessment

CDC Community-based disaster committee

CDCCC Community disaster and climate change committee

CVTL Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste (RC Timor-Leste)

DAC Development Assistance Committee

DFAT Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)

DRM Disaster risk management

DRR Disaster risk reduction

EAG Ethnic armed groups

FRCS Fiji Red Cross Society

FRDP Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific

GBV Gender-based violence

GESI Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

HLP Housing, land and property

ICBRR Integrated Community-Based Risk Reduction Program

ICRC International Committee of the Red Cross

IFRC International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies

ICR Indirect cost recovery

ICR Indirect cost recovery

M&E Monitoring and evaluation

MERL Monitoring, evaluation, research and learning

The Movement

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (ICRC, IFRC, Red Crescent Societies and Red Cross National Societies)NDMO National Disaster Management Office

NFI Non-food item

OCAC Organisational Capacity Assessment and Certification Process

OECD Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

RCS Red Cross Society

TC Tropical Cyclone

TOR Terms of Reference

UAVs Unmanned aerial vehicles

VCA Vulnerability and Capability Assessments

WASH Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

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Appendices

1   Background

In line with the DFAT Humanitarian Strategy, the goal of the 2015–2019 DFAT–ARC Humanitarian Partnership (hereafter, the Partnership) is to save lives, alleviate suffering and enhance human dignity. Though global in nature, the Partnership maintains a priority focus on the Indo-Pacific region and ARC's global outcomes. Countries engaged in the current agreement are Bangladesh, Indonesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Timor-Leste in Asia, and the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu in the Pacific.

Working through local National Societies or the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), partnership investments provide material and other humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable during and after crises, by strengthening the capacity of National Societies. In addition, the Partnership contributes to strengthening the global humanitarian architecture through:

- ARC's active engagement in initiatives such as Strengthening Red Cross Red Crescent Movement Coordination and Cooperation;
- pushing for more locally led humanitarian assistance;
- seeking innovative solutions to humanitarian challenges; and
- modelling and promoting good practice in key thematic areas such as protection, gender equality and disability inclusion and disaster risk management (DRM).

The Partnership's multi-year, flexible funding model allows for continuity and commitment to longer-term National Society preparedness and organisational strengthening. An annual allocation addresses emerging priorities that promote agile responses to emerging opportunities and challenges.

This independent evaluation was designed to:

- systematically and objectively assess and report on how the aid investment has performed;
- demonstrate effectiveness and stakeholder accountability;
- highlight learning about what does or does not work in a particular context; and
- provide recommendations to inform decisions about a future partnership.

2 Scope of the evaluation

2.1 Evaluation purpose

The **purpose** of the evaluation was to answer three questions:

- To what extent has the DFAT investment in the ARC humanitarian response and preparedness activities contributed to the anticipated results and outcomes during fiscal years 2015 2017?

- To what extent has the Partnership demonstrated value added as an aid delivery mechanism and contributed to the anticipated results and outcomes for both partners?

- 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*?

2.2 Evaluation approach

A detailed description of the Evaluation Plan and Terms of Reference can be found in Appendices I and II respectively.

The Evaluation set out to build upon the existing knowledge and collaboration between DFAT, ARC, IFRC and National Society partners in several ways. In summary, an initial **desk review** of project and partnership documents and reports informed the Evaluation Plan, the evaluation questions and the overall approach. A **one-day planning consultation** with DFAT and ARC personnel finalised expectations and set the stage for a transparent and collaborative process. Following on, **Skype, phone call and face-to-face consultations** were conducted with Australia-based DFAT/ARC personnel, IFRC regional personnel (Suva), National Society staff (Suva, Vanuatu, Myanmar and Mongolia), and National Society volunteers and community members (Suva and Vanuatu).

Special consideration was given to ensuring that the field visits and key informant discussions and the desk review elements included the perspectives of women and girls and men and boys and people with disabilities. **Gender and socially inclusive approaches** to intervention design and delivery explored the different experiences of and benefits to women and girls and men and boys, as well as people with disabilities.

The evaluation has drawn on a **case study approach**. Field visits were made to Fiji and Vanuatu to consult with the DFAT Posts, National Society staff, volunteers and community members, national and provincial government agencies, women's organisations and disability organisations and with humanitarian actors in both countries. Consultations with selected Vanuatu and Fiji national women's organisations and disability organisations provided valuable insights into how they have been cooperating with their National Societies and identified what they saw as the opportunities and limitations to furthering their cooperation. An **end-of-mission briefing** was provided to the Fiji Red Cross Society (RCS) and the Vanuatu RCS, and two **Aide Memoires** were circulated amongst DFAT and ARC personnel, one each at the conclusion of the Fiji and Vanuatu field trips (Appendix IVA and IVB respectively). This was consistent with a 'no surprises' approach and allowed for early reactions by DFAT and ARC staff.

A concurrent **Partnership Review** (Aide Memoire #3, Appendix IVC) explored and documented how the working relationship between DFAT and ARC has been established and evolved. These findings have contributed to the assessment of efficiency and effectiveness within this report. A third Aide Memoire has provided practical and strategic insights into how DFAT and ARC might articulate a future-fit partnership.

In addition, two in-depth desk reviews (informed by project documents and discussions with Red Cross staff and with DFAT Post in each location) were conducted for Myanmar and Mongolia. The resulting case studies (Appendix III) provide a snapshot of ways of working that are contributing to the desired Partnership outcomes.

A full list of references can be found in Appendix V.

2.3   Scope

The evaluation focuses on the DFAT–ARC Humanitarian Partnership during 2015–2018. It includes investments made through the Partnership across different levels of the IFRC and different thematic areas relevant to outcome areas 1–4 in the overall design logic:

1. ARC and its Movement partners provide efficient, equitable, effective and localised surge response in emergencies.
2. Local branches of National Societies engage and support communities to prepare for and manage the risk and the impact of humanitarian crises.
3. Key actors respect and advocate for humanitarian values, international humanitarian law, disaster law, gender equality and disability inclusion.
4. National Societies are stronger, better functioning organisations.

Outcome area 5, related to improved health, was funded under the Australian NGO Cooperation Program funding stream. While it reinforces ARC's approach to holistic programming and a broader understanding of community resilience, it is not included in the evaluation.

3   Limitations

The depth of the data-gathering analysis was constrained to some degree by the time allocated in the overall evaluation schedule to conducting the field and desktop research, in light of the end-of-year publication deadline. It was only feasible to conduct field visits in two locations, both in the Pacific, namely Fiji and Vanuatu. The Fiji and Vanuatu National Societies were pressed to arrange the schedule of visits, as proposed by the evaluation team. A planned visit to Tanna Island in Vanuatu had to be cancelled as flights were already fully booked. Alternative arrangements were made to visit Santo, where the branch team was working hard to support evacuees from a government-led evacuation of Ambae Island. It wasn't possible to meet with everyone whom we would like to have connected with during the field visits.

The two case studies for Myanmar and Mongolia cannot be taken as representative of the complex work ARC supports in Asia. Nevertheless, they are illustrative of how different components of the Movement are working collaboratively, contributing to National Society capacity strengthening and supporting innovation.

Assessing organisational development outcomes (particularly those related to National Society development) is difficult where associated change remains open and process-oriented. A modified results chain approach (emphasising 'use of outputs' – see Evaluation Plan, Appendix I) was used in assessing the effectiveness of organisational development investments. This helped in closing the gap of what is often a jump between output and outcome, a grey area generally based on assumptions and attribution.

In some instances, ARC investments have been made in bilateral relations with individual National Societies; other investments have been made in multi-lateral relationships with other Red Cross partners; and others, in collaboration with the IFRC. All effort has been made to 'tease out' investment lines and to distinguish results that can be directly attributed to ARC investments from contributions (co-investments made in collaboration).

As much as possible, meetings were conducted with women, men and young people in separate groups. In some cases, this was not possible, and the team was aware village hierarchies were sometimes at play and that answers may have been filtered. Professional judgements were made to interpret self-reported stakeholder perspectives. Where possible, care was taken to triangulate reported data against regular program-generated data to offset possible bias. In Fiji, for example, the team was able to triangulate a presentation of 'achievements' (made by the Fiji RCS senior management team) with self-reported data from branch volunteers and community members and our conversation with the Fiji National Disaster Management Office (NDMO).

4 What the Partnership is achieving (lessons)

This section discusses various investments made under the current Partnership. It is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather illustrative of how these investments have contributed to the program outcomes through bilateral and multi-lateral relations and through working across multiple levels within the Movement. The full range of investments made under the current Partnership Agreement are listed in the tables in Appendix VI, which show:

- contributions made to IFRC projects (e.g. Asia Pacific Disaster Management, Efficient & Effective Response Systems and National Society development);
- direct contributions to host National Societies and indirect contributions via partner National Societies (e.g. support to Bangladesh is provided through the British Red Cross); and
- long-term deployments (e.g. a Pacific Regional Shelter Coordinator and Regional Logistics Advisor, Suva).

4.1 ARC and its Movement partners are laying the groundwork for localised surge response and strengthening sub-national capacity (outcome area 1)

The relationship between the Fiji RCS and the Fiji NDMO at both national and provincial level has grown since Tropical Cyclone (TC) Winston. Today the NDMO relies on the Fiji RCS to undertake initial damage assessments: *"we trust the information collected and don't need to duplicate the assessments"*. In mid-2018 the NDMO signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Fiji RCS to "*extend community-based disaster preparedness activities to villages on remote outer islands*" that are currently not adequately served during a disaster response. The Fiji RCS has a seat at the Council of Ministers.

The Vanuatu RCS has also established a strong relationship with the NDMO, participates in Council of Ministers' meetings, actively contributes to national and provincial level NDMO forums, and engages with a range of humanitarian actors. The Vanuatu RCS is Co-chair of the Shelter Cluster and active in the Protection & Gender Cluster. The Vanuatu RCS supported the NDMO to develop the country-standard community-based disaster risk reduction (DRR) methodology, including Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment tools, to which all stakeholders must now adhere. The Vanuatu RCS was the only local organisation called on to support the government evacuation of Ambae Island in 2017.

As an auxiliary to the Mongolian Government, the Mongolian RCS (Mongolia RCS) works closely with the Local Emergency Management Agency, jointly planning and implementing a variety of DRM activities. The Mongolia RCS is the largest humanitarian organisation in Mongolia, operating through a network of over 30 mid-level and over 800 primary level branches nationwide.

4.2 National Societies are supporting communities to anticipate, prepare for, and reduce risks from disasters and crises (outcome area 2)

4.2.1 Networked governance structures support timely decision-making and implementation

Networked governance structures are critical in supporting DRM decision-making and decision-implementation in the face of high-level, multi-hazard exposure to disasters[1], as occurs in the Pacific Islands. Working across

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[1] Astrid Vachette (2016) *Networked Disaster Governance in Vanuatu: Anatomy of an Inclusive and Integrated System to Build Resilience in a Small Island Developing State* (PhD Dissertation, Centre for Disaster Studies, James Cook University, Australia)

NDMO-approved structures and networks and maintaining localised readiness in the face of future emergencies is a focus for both the Fiji RCS and the Vanuatu RCS. Community-based disaster committees (CDCs) in Fiji and community disaster and climate change committees (CDCCCs) in Vanuatu are foundational in improving community-level preparedness and for preparation of village-led Disaster Activity Plans and Disaster Response Plans: "*Before anyone came, I didn't know what to do except panic … that didn't help.* [Now] *if anything happens, I know what to do and how to help the people I'm appointed to help*" (female Head of CDCCC, Santo, Vanuatu). Today villagers in Fiji and Vanuatu are able to conduct rapid assessments as soon as a cyclone or other emergency hits. Pending open communication lines and access, this positions the Red Cross to respond within 48 hours.

There are indications of horizontal learning from village to village. Following TC Winston, the Fiji RCS provided training to youth volunteers in basic carpentry, masonry and metal work. The volunteers then built a model house (identified through Habitat International and aligned with the government's 'build-back safer' guidelines). The first house, which included a ramp, was made available to a disabled man and his family. The volunteers continued to build houses for other community members, rebuilt the school and later moved on to help neighbouring villages. Women are playing leadership roles on women's committees and, working through the volunteer network, women are carrying forward messages about health and sanitation and gender-based violence (GBV) to women in neighbouring villages.

Community cohesion is a critical success factor in the formation of the CDCs/CDCCCs. The Fiji RCS facilitated visits between an established CDC to neighbouring villages. The visiting CDC explained how they had formed, described what they had accomplished through working together and offered their support to their neighbours' recovery. Their efforts were only successful in villages where there were no factions or jealousies at play. This observation may help to explain why the CDCCCs did not appear functional during the Ambae Island evacuations in Vanuatu in 2017 and 2018, when anxiety about the future would have been top-of-mind for everyone ("*Where are we going, will we be able to come back home?*").

4.2.2 Facilitating linkages between community and provincial structures is key to sustainability

Facilitating linkages between CDCs/CDCCCs and provincial authorities has been foundational in localising and amplifying results in both Fiji and Vanuatu. In Wailotua village in Fiji, "*a trust fund was set up to support community-identified rehabilitation priorities … community members top up the fund once a year, using remittances from family members working elsewhere or from income generating activities*". Following a visit to view the community's rehabilitation efforts, the provincial governor agreed to provide a top-up grant of FJD6,500 (approx. AUD4,200) for communal water, sanitation and hygiene facilities.

4.2.3 Consolidating sub-national network strength will be key to sustaining community-led interventions

Consolidating and expanding sub-national network strength and keeping volunteers motivated (particularly youth volunteers) will be critical to ensuring community-led interventions are sustained. Two ways that this has been done is through refresher training of volunteer Emergency Response Teams in advance of the cyclone season and responding to requests for preparedness and response training from government and local and international humanitarian actors. The Vanuatu RCS was able to mobilise its volunteer network (in response to a request from the Ministry of Health) to support a mass Dengue Awareness Campaign. Further analysis is needed to understand the factors that contribute to volunteer turnover and how to re-engage youth volunteers and/or those who migrate for work.

4.3 Strengthened legal frameworks and humanitarian influence (outcome area 3)

> Note: At the time of writing the Evaluation Report, DFAT is conducting a 'Soft Power' review. The *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper* defines soft power as the "*ability to influence the behaviour or thinking of others through the power of attraction and ideas*". More broadly, and in this report, we are understanding soft power to be about relationships (extending the reach of touch points in any given context), public diplomacy (changing hearts and minds), aid communications, policy and influence (DFAT *2017 Foreign Policy White Paper*, 'Chapter eight: Partnerships and soft power').

4.3.1 Linkages have been established that are expanding the potential for regional influence

The IFRC (Suva) Country Cluster Team has established formal and informal relationships with various regional and global networks. For example, Pacific Island States and Territories and Red Cross NS are linked into a regional and global resilience network. The network includes the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat; the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP); the Pacific Community (La Communauté du Pacifique); the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO); and the global Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Change Centre. Such linkages expand the potential for regional influence in relation to cash-based programming, forecast-based funding, early action protocols and other soft power outcomes.

4.3.2 ARC's contributions to research and dialogue are offering DFAT new touch points to extend its influence

Sexual and gender-based violence and gender equality and disability inclusion

A 2015 IFRC global research report, *Unseen, Unheard*, highlighted the increased risks of gender-based violence (GBV) in disasters and other emergencies. Following on, a joint-action resolution passed at the 32nd International Red Cross and Red Crescent Conference stressed the need to understand and address the root causes of GBV in order to effectively prevent and respond. It also recognised that, despite their prevalence, incidents of GBV are often invisible because taboos, stigma, feelings of guilt or shame, fear of retribution, and the lack of information and support can prevent victims/survivors from coming forward. National frameworks for supporting gender equality in DRM and for GBV protection in disasters are generally fragile and under-resourced even in non-disaster times.[2] These findings highlight the importance of ensuring National Societies have strong gender equality and GBV protection standards in place and that these are operational and that governments are supported in coordinating surge capacity relating to GBV. ARC is recognised by Movement partners for its capacity in gender equality and disability inclusion. There is scope for ARC to build on its experience and draw in actors within and beyond the Movement to expand understandings of approaches to prevent and respond to GBV in emergencies.

International disaster law and international humanitarian law

Strengthening disaster laws and their implementation is a priority in various global and regional multilateral commitments (such as the Sendai Framework, the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response and the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific). National Societies and key partners are gaining capacity and tools for their work in disaster law. The first ever Asia-Pacific Regional Disaster Law Field School was co-hosted by ARC and the IFRC in Sydney in March 2017. The field school explored legal issues related to the local implementation of international and regional legal and policy frameworks for DRM and highlighted the auxiliary role of National Societies across the DRM spectrum. Participants included one government representative and one National Society representative from 12 Asia-Pacific countries plus representatives from relevant sub-regional bodies. An expected output was that participants would further

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[2] IFRC (2016) *Effective law and policy on gender equality and protection from sexual and gender-based violence in disasters*

develop legislative influencing skills and would draw on the disaster law tools and guidelines to undertake an analysis of their own domestic frameworks. Following their joint participation in the Field School, the Government of Fiji approached the Fiji RCS about supporting a legislative review of the Fijian DRM Act and National Disaster Management Plan. An MoU signed in March 2018 formalised the engagement of the government, the Fiji RCS and the IFRC in a technical working group to lead the review process. In partnership with the IFRC, ARC has invested in a full-time lawyer position embedded in the Fiji NDMO to guide the review. In addition, the Fiji RCS Disaster Risk Coordinator is contributing up to 40% of his time to the project. Work is also underway to legislate the auxiliary role of the Fiji RCS (currently recognised in a letter of agreement).

Housing, land and property rights in humanitarian response

Since September 2016, ARC and the IFRC, with pro-bono engagement of Allens (an Australian commercial law firm) has been mapping housing, land and property (HLP) rights in 12 Asia-Pacific countries. At the time of writing the Evaluation Report, ten HLP Country Profiles have been completed, and two are being researched. Allens has drawn on ARC's, IFRC's and its own networks to engage local lawyers to contribute to the project, thereby ensuring the accuracy of the mapping. The Country Profiles (available on the HLP page of the Global Shelter Cluster website) provide a targeted understanding of the tenure landscape and a tool to help identify potential HLP vulnerabilities in a humanitarian response. Country profiles were shared with partner agencies in the 2018 TC Gita response in Tonga, the 2018 Ambae Volcano response in Vanuatu, and (in a draft form) in the 2017 Bangladeshi floods.

The value of the IFRC engagement with regional governmental platforms is underscored in the support provided to the Government of Mongolia in hosting the 2018 Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Close cooperation between DFAT and ARC helped to promote key messages across the conference and lays a foundation for the preparation of the next conference to be hosted by Australia in 2020.

4.3.3 Emerging priority investments provide opportunities to draw on research to innovate and influence others

Two actions funded under the Emerging Priority portfolio have been research on Localisation in the Pacific, which is shaping discussions about what localisation might look like in a Pacific context (see also outcome area 4 below); and research on forecast-based action in the humanitarian sector (which is informing discussions about humanitarian aid architecture and funding flows). A third action, the **Pacific Local Supplier Engagement** Project[3] (a response to a DFAT Cyclone Pam Evaluation) scoped out how the sector might approach procurement of disaster supplies by linking up private sector providers via a procurement software platform with the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Vanuatu Business Resilience Committee.

A fourth study of **unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in humanitarian work in the Pacific** mapped current use and identified factors to be considered when operating UAVs in Pacific Island states. The findings provide a useful reference point for ARC and other humanitarian organisations to guide planning around the integration of UAV technology in their work. A key success of the research has been the formation of a partnership between WeRobotics and the GIS Lab at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji to launch a regional Flying Lab™ (Fiji-based knowledge hub) intended to accelerate and amplify the impact of humanitarian action through the use of robotics solutions. Recent projects undertaken by the lab have included youth engagement, cargo drone

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[3] ARC (2017) *Pacific Local Supplier Engagement Project Completion Report* (internal report) – identified as an emerging priority within the partnership, the initiative was funded under the Australian Government's Pacific Humanitarian Challenge
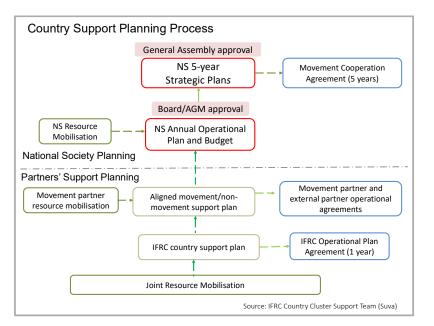
demos and a humanitarian deployment with the Fiji RCS. Work is also underway to expand its network to other countries across the Pacific, starting with a hub in Vanuatu.

An evaluative review scheduled in this final year of the Partnership will determine the effectiveness of the overall portfolio and will document lessons learnt.

4.4   ARC is strengthening sub-national capacity and organisational effectiveness (outcome area 4)

4.4.1 ARC is working intentionally towards achieving collective impact

ARC is adopting a 'considered' approach to IFRC-level investments, investing only where there is shared strategic intent. More explicit definition of the 'what we are doing together' and 'why' (the intended outcomes) would help to bring greater clarity and accountability. ARC is also working closely with IFRC to drive a 'country support planning process' whereby all Movement partners 'line up behind' National Society 5-year Strategic Plans (as approved by the General Assembly) and subsequent annual operational plans and budgets (approved by local boards). The linkages and entry points for joint action (shown in the accompanying diagram) can be expected to reduce duplication, improve alignment and allow for joint resource mobilisation.

Source: IFRC Country Cluster Support Team (Suva)

4.4.2 Working collectively promotes more coherent and coordinated programming

ARC is the lead in the Integrated Community-Based Risk Reduction (ICBRR) Consortium in Timor-Leste. ICBRR sets out to support and strengthen national and district-level capacity to deliver the integrated program components to remote and vulnerable communities. Consortium partners are the host, Cruz Vermelha de Timor-Leste (CVTL), New Zealand Red Cross, British Red Cross, Korean Red Cross and the IFRC. The consortium partners have adopted joint monitoring tools (one logframe, one monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan and unified donor reporting). This is allowing them to work collectively towards a coherent set of program outcomes and a coherent advocacy strategy. There are cost-efficiencies (e.g. the one-program plan in place of multiple focused plans, and coordination meetings in place of separate sectoral meetings). Thirdly, the presentation of one Red Cross 'face' is helping to raise the profile of the Timor-Leste RCS.

The desktop study ('Building Resilient Communities and Promoting Connectedness in Myanmar', Appendix IIIA) relates to Outcome Area 5 in the Partnership Design Document and is funded under the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP) agreement. It is included here because it provides a second illustration of how

collaborative engagement between the Movement partners – in this case the Myanmar RCS, ARC and the Swedish Red Cross – utilised the value of the Movement partners, resulted in reduced duplication, and supported a 'localised' resilience pilot. A final review noted positive results in terms of the desired health outcomes and rated the project favourably with regard to disability inclusiveness: the British Red Cross "*went beyond mere concerns of accessibility and contributed to persons with disabilities being seen as valued community members involved in public affairs*"[4]. In terms of gender, though, the project did less well, as there had been no follow up on a village-level power analysis to engage women in a meaningful way. The review also found that the project under-delivered on DRR outcomes.

The findings prompted questions about ARC's niche in Myanmar compared to other Red Cross partners or to Australian NGOs operating in the same space, and whether or not the investments in Myanmar would be better redirected to the Pacific Islands. These queries point to a need to review the criteria for selecting priority focus countries. This point is taken up in the recommendations.

4.4.3 Localisation goes hand-in-hand with stronger, better functioning National Societies

The 2016 World Humanitarian Summit reinforced 'localisation' as a priority issue, compelling donors, aid organisations and NGOs to sign up to *The Grand Bargain* and the accompanying charter4change. Following on, DFAT and ARC jointly pledged to strengthen local humanitarian action, particularly in the Pacific. A 2017 ARC-commissioned, Pacific-led research report – *Going Local: Achieving a more appropriate and fit-for-purpose humanitarian ecosystem in the Pacific* – addresses the question: What would a successfully localised disaster management ecosystem in the Pacific look like, and what changes would be required to get there? This research has shaped ARC's approach to National Society organisational development, which is fundamentally about localisation and sustainability and about redressing power dynamics. Further research is seeking to understand potential challenges and opportunities for effective protection in a locally led disaster response.

Linking local and regional capabilities

Localisation was tested and demonstrated during the TC Gita response in Tonga (February 2018). Building on lessons learned[5] (from within Tonga and elsewhere in the Pacific), and working closely with the Tongan National Emergency Management Office, the Tonga RCS activated an existing Disaster Response Plan to demonstrate improved DRM, financial management, ICT infrastructure and governance capabilities:

- The Disaster Management Unit provided operational leadership (with technical support from the IFRC teams in Suva and Kuala Lumpur and from ARC and New Zealand Red Cross) and set up a temporary Emergency Operation Centre in a Tonga Red Cross Society school. The Vanuatu RCS and regional IFRC teams provided peer-to-peer logistics support.

- A core team of 154 trained volunteers, 17 staff and the community volunteer network afforded access to the most vulnerable communities across 80% of the country and supported vulnerability and capacity assessments, first aid training, psychosocial support and relief distribution.

- Relief supplies and beneficiary distribution forms pre-positioned in 14 sites (with regular stocktakes supported by ARC), allowed the Tonga RCS to articulate resupply needs within two days. ARC and NZ Red Cross provided in-kind NFI (non-food item) donations for distribution and replenishment.

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[4] Myanmar Red Cross Society, ARC & Swedish Red Cross (2018) *Seeds of Success*: Final Review of the Project Building Resilient Communities in Myanmar's Kayin State

[5] ARC Humanitarian Response Proposal (HRP) for support to Tonga Red Cross Society in Response to TC Gita (version 1/2015); IFRC (2018) *Emergency Plan of Action Final Report Tonga: Cyclone Gita* (16 February 2018)

- Tonga RCS volunteers were trained in basic logistics processes to facilitate and track the transport of NFIs to distribution sites. (Shipping and transport constraints meant that not all stocks were easily transported to more remote islands).

Promoting south–south learning

Two platforms – the Pacific Finance Managers Network and a Gender & Diversity Network in Asia and the Pacific – are promoting south–south dialogue and the localisation of technical support, and are opening up a new way of learning, thereby challenging what has traditionally been a north–south knowledge flow. Each network is, by definition, non-hierarchical – learning issues are identified from within, and Red Cross partners enter these networks in the spirit that priorities are negotiated, and leadership shared.

The **Pacific Finance Managers Network is supporting robust financial reporting**. Under the current Partnership Agreement, ARC has invested in a full-time Finance Development Program Lead (Pacific Region). The role draws together contributions from the IFRC, New Zealand Red Cross and ARC to convene the Finance Managers Network. The Network is allowing Finance Managers to problem-solve together and to identify technical resources that can be mobilised from within the network. An important output from a 2017 Network meeting was an agreement to work towards more harmonised reporting and to maintain financial statements as a fundamental pillar of financial integrity. This agreement can be expected to result in time and cost efficiencies and allow comparisons to be made about the return on investments in different locations.

In both Fiji and Vanuatu, the evaluation team met with Red Cross male and female gender focal points who were committed and passionate about gender equality and disability inclusion, acutely aware of the need to break down cultural norms and taboos around speaking gender and disability rights, but who did not necessarily feel they had determined and consistent leadership support. The **Gender & Diversity Network** is providing a forum for these gender equality and disability inclusion champions to work together to build a case for change. They are supported in part by tow research publications: *Unseen, Unheard* (above) and a case study capturing the experiences of Samoan women and girls during the TC Gita response (*Cutting through the web of violence*).

> *People would not speak out … people have got to keep their pride … hide their shame … if they spoke out, it would force families to be ostracised … but when women did start to speak out in the research, it helped us to move forward with the government and build links with community-based organisations doing the same work.* (Tala Mauala, Secretary General, Samoa RCS)

The Program Officer at the Vanuatu Society for People with Disabilities appreciated the Vanuatu RCS' inclusion of the needs of people with disabilities in emergency response planning. At the same time, she reinforced the principle of 'nothing about us, without us', stressed the need to be more purposeful about engaging people with disabilities in vulnerability and capacity analyses, and urged organisations like the Red Cross to incorporate empowerment strategies into the design of any community response. A lawyer at the Vanuatu Women's Centre Legal Office spoke about how she is situating empowerment strategies 'up front' in her work addressing violence against women and girls in emergency and post-emergency contexts. ARC is positioned to broker partnership between local organisations like these and the National Societies so that they might work collectively on the 'startling' intimate partner and family-based violence statistics that extend across the Pacific, violence that is exacerbated in times of disaster and crises. The Pacific Gender & Diversity Network could be an entry point to strengthen the focus on gender equality and disability inclusion and GBV in emergencies.

5   Analysis of Partnership performance against the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria

5.1   Relevance

The Partnership is working within relevant humanitarian standards and safeguards (including the Core Humanitarian Standard, the Grand Bargain and the Sendai Framework) and influencing their uptake by other humanitarian actors.

The Partnership allows Australia and ARC to contribute to localised DRM through supporting the organisational development of National Societies and their local government partners and, through them, to reach out to improve the ability of vulnerable communities to rapidly respond to disaster and conflict and to take practical steps to become more resilient in the face of these risks.

The Fiji RCS and the Vanuatu RCS clearly exemplify how National Societies are reinforcing the national response mechanism, and there is consistent alignment between National Society emergency preparedness and response activities and NDMO priorities. Working through government-endorsed structures and networks, each National Society has access and reach through its sub-national branch structures to an extensive village-based volunteer network. The network enables rapid activation and amplifies response capacities. In both Fiji and Vanuatu, community preparedness and response planning guidelines ensure that emergency response actions consider the specific needs and culture of local communities and those of women and men, youth and the elderly and are culturally appropriate and 'pitched' to the capacities within the community. The needs of people with disabilities are also considered in these plans, though as one informant noted, "*as receivers of support rather than as contributors*". There are opportunities to deepen protection, gender equality and disability inclusion-focused outcomes (see section 5.6 'Gender and social inclusion' below).

Ongoing interaction between Branch and community volunteers allows for regular communication, feedback and course correction as needed.

ARC has been supporting efforts to influence coordination and collaboration across the IFRC – for example, through investments in real-time response methodologies and contributions to the harmonisation of IFRC global tools (e.g. assessment standards, competency frameworks for deployment and accompanying training packages).

5.2   Effectiveness (results and performance)

The field visits showed that results are being demonstrated at output and outcome level and that these results have been achieved in the face of major disaster response events. TC Winston, which hit Fiji in 2016, was the most intense tropical cyclone in the southern hemisphere on record. In Vanuatu, TC Pam recovery efforts were exacerbated by a drought, which was followed by TC Donna and two consecutive evacuations from Ambae Island. Engagement in these responses has contributed to the profile of both DFAT and ARC.

In addition to government partnerships, the Fiji RCS and the Vanuatu RCS are active in Technical Working Groups and collaborating with non-government actors. There is room to better understand the different types of engagement and how expertise and learning is shared within these networks and to tease out where there is complementarity (or lack thereof). The evaluation team feel that the Fiji and Vanuatu National Societies could expand and formalise partnerships with local civil society and research institutions, so as to draw on their specialist expertise (rather than striving to be 'best in field' at everything).

An MoU has been signed between the Fiji RCS and the Fiji NDMO to support an update of Fiji's 1998 National Disaster Management Plan (1995) and Natural Disaster Management Act. In collaboration with the IFRC, ARC is investing in a full-time lawyer based in the NDMO to support the process. The Fiji RCS is also contributing 40% of the Fiji RCS DRR Manager to this work.

Both the Fiji RCS and the Vanuatu RCS have been able to secure funding other than that from the DFAT–ARC Partnership or from the IFRC. This unintended outcome, along with government recognition of the Red Cross as auxiliary, can be taken as a proxy indicator that the National Societies are becoming more viable and stronger humanitarian organisations in their own right. Both the Fiji RCS and the Vanuatu RCS singled out the Regional Finance Network as significantly contributing to their organisational rigour.

The Vanuatu RCS has, up until September 2018, been supported by both ARC and the French Red Cross, and it is not possible to attribute the results observed to ARC alone. This is not considered problematic, as we can assume that the support has been managed by the Vanuatu RCS and contributed to overall effectiveness.

5.3   Efficiency

The re-accreditation of ARC in March 2018 confirms ARC's commitment to eliminating inefficiency and duplication and to streamlining finance and risk management through centralised teams. ARC has been undergoing a period of reform, which has resulted in a shift in ARC's approach to programming and partnerships. This includes working closely with the IFRC to support National Society-defined strategies, program and operational plans, and capacity development priorities. This collaboration can be expected (over time) to reduce duplication and promote collective impact as IFRC members align their investments with National Society-driven agendas.

Inefficiencies have been identified in the Partnership arrangements and are described below (see section 5.7).

5.3.1 Value for money

ARC's 10% indirect cost recovery (ICR) charged to the DFAT Partnership compares well to Australian NGOs partnering with DFAT. Like many Australian NGOs, ARC does not charge out the full value of ICR to DFAT. (Current indirect costs are higher than 10%, and the balance is absorbed within ARC's expenditure.)

ARC does charge 10% ICR to the whole of the Partnership funding and also charges 10% on most humanitarian response funding. In specific cases where there is no expectation that ARC will actively manage, monitor and report on the expenditure of funding and its associated activities, no ICR is charged. In such cases all management, monitoring and reporting is undertaken and provided by the Partner, and expectations and associated budgets (including ICR) are discussed and negotiated at the time of the funding proposal.

The results described below exemplify significant efficiencies and value addition in the Partnership:

Working collectively removes duplication and creates efficiencies and opens up opportunities to amplify impact
- ARC (with New Zealand Red Cross and the IFRC) has been coordinating the Pacific Finance Managers Network, which over time can be expected to contribute to robust and accountable reporting.
- ARC is the lead in the ICBRR Consortium (see section 4.4 above), which is creating cost-efficiencies and supporting the Timor-Leste RCS to achieve a coherent set of program and advocacy outcomes.
- ARC (with New Zealand Red Cross and the IFRC) is promoting 'Knowledge Pacific', which is exploring the use of technology to promote knowledge-based decision-making to improve community resilience and disaster response.

Pre-positioned NFI supplies reduce DFAT's need for additional resource-intensive partnerships

- Supplies are pre-positioned in warehouses in Kuala Lumpur, Amberly (DFAT) and Melbourne and link to and support Asia-Pacific National Societies, the IFRC and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

- NFI supplies are also pre-positioned at key points across the Pacific, and branch-level warehouse capacity has expanded over the course of the current agreement. The Fiji RCS, for example, has pre-NFI relief supplies pre-positioned in 28 containers and 18 warehouses across 13 branches. The Tonga RCS has NFIs pre-positioned in 14 sites. The Vanuatu RCS has storage sites in Port Vila and in Santo, Malakula, Tanna and Vanua Lava islands. (The storage site in Ambae Island is not currently operational due to the volcano evacuations, with Ambae stocks currently held in Santo.) ARC is supporting regular stocktake updates and a technical resource (based in the IFRC, Suva) to strengthen Pacific-wide logistics capacity.

Joint research and policy work strengthen soft power outcomes and complement DFAT's focus on protection, gender equality and disability inclusion

- The adoption of Resolution 3 on Joint Action and Response to Sexual and Gender-based Violence at the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (Dec 2015) has given heightened focus on gender equality and disability inclusion across the IFRC.

- The publication on localisation in the Pacific, *Going Local*, is shaping dialogue about localisation and humanitarian reform both within DFAT and ARC and within the broader Movement.

- The Asia-Pacific Disaster Law Program is assisting National Societies to support their authorities in developing and applying state-of-the-art disaster-related legislation, policies and procedures.

5.3.2 Funding flows

During the evaluation, questions were raised by DFAT personnel about whether or not ARC should be the entry point for all investments made to the Movement. (This is the case for Department for International Development (DFID) funding to the British Red Cross, though there is no agreement about the efficiencies this arrangement affords). It was noted that during the Myanmar appeal in 2017, there were delays in getting funds to the ICRC office in Myanmar (which can be attributed, in part, to decision-making and approval requirements within DFAT).

Decisions about whether to work directly with ICRC or with ARC should be driven by purpose – what do we want to achieve and why? There needs to be further dialogue between DFAT and Post and ARC and ICRC about this and, importantly, an internal dialogue within ICRC about their internal procedures that govern funding flows.

5.4 Monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning

In March 2016, a second milestone payment was made to ARC on the understanding that the Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) system was fully operational. However, significant shortfalls have been noted in the MERL system (described in one report as "*modest at best*"). Several contributing factors have undermined overall articulation of results:

- The final Partnership Agreement performance framework was determined after the design had been finalised, and not in conjunction with the design itself.

- The 28 indicators agreed upon by DFAT and ARC are largely quantitative and focus on transactional outputs that have been disaggregated "*to the point that they are almost meaningless*".

- There has been lack of articulation within ARC, not about 'what' should be tracked, but 'why'.
- Finally, there are no mechanisms and processes for delivering narratives and qualitative information that would make a significant contribution to telling a performance story.

ARC has acknowledged continued challenges in extracting data from the MERL system and in achieving consistent reporting across all ARC-funded investments. ARC has also acknowledged that it could do more to fill the gaps in measuring and communicating outcomes and in providing qualitative data that would support adaptive learning. At the same time there needs to be stronger engagement between ARC and DFAT and between ARC and its partners (including IFRC and National Society partners) to close this gap and agreement by all parties about what is non-negotiable, such as reporting on disaggregated gender and disability data and transparency around financial investments.

There were no joint DFAT–ARC monitoring and evaluation visits conducted during the current Partnership Agreement, which meant that all M&E functions were undertaken internally by ARC. This has inhibited the application of a collaborative learning agenda and/or course correction. Being able to report on the non-negotiable outputs as well as a selective number of outcomes and to supplement these data with qualitative research will be critical if DFAT and ARC are to communicate a compelling, change-nuanced story about what the Partnership is achieving and the added value of the Partnership (see Partnership Review paper, Appendix IVC). What is needed is a shift towards an adaptive learning approach to M&E[6], matched with resources for more regular evaluative tasks and 'deep dives' into specific country responses or thematic issues.

5.5   Sustainability and localisation

ARC has been collaborating with IFRC to support priority National Societies to:

- develop strategic plans that clearly articulate National Society strategic objectives and associated programs and operational costs;
- strengthen financial and operational management; and
- put in place functioning governing boards.

Each of these is foundational to developing more robust and sustainable National Societies and to ensuring that National Society-identified priorities drive integration and localisation and are supported through collective resourcing by Red Cross partners.

ARC is playing a significant role in developing, moderating and localising global IFRC tools. This includes questioning some of the complexities that are part of the National Society Development Framework. Two organisational development tools within the National Society Development Framework are the Organisational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC) and the Branch Organisational Capacity Assessment (BOCA). The former focuses on the structure, systems, procedures, and resources required by an effective National Society, and then on programmatic impact (e.g. relevance, program quality and scale). The BOCA tool provides an assessment of branch-level capacity to deliver services. Organisational development self-assessment tools are powerful, particularly when they are facilitated in a way that allows organisations to chart their own growth *and* when discussions about program quality drive discussions about systems and structures.

Why is this important? The most promising results that the team observed in the field visits were those emerging at community-level and supported through the formation of CDCs/CDCCCs and accompanying community-led disaster activity planning and disaster response plans. Consolidating and expanding sub-national

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[6] Also referred to as a developmental evaluative approach to social change innovation in complex or uncertain environments.

network strength will be foundational to monitoring and enhancing the effectiveness of these committees and thus to ensuring sustainability. The emphasis should be on ensuring the sub-national network and the volunteer network remain response-ready. It should not be about creating physical structures (though these will be needed in some instances) or applying a one-size approach to branch replication. Identifying activities to keep volunteers motivated and engaged (particularly youth volunteers) is critical to securing sustainable results. This is in addition to strengthening and retaining National Society technical capacity to be able to surge nationally and regionally. As ARC puts forward elsewhere[7], deepening commitment to the localisation of humanitarian aid will require a more strategic approach to strengthening DRM capacities that moves beyond training to consider how to secure the capacities that have been built; strengthens M&E processes to support learning and adaptive management; and explicitly plans for sustainability (e.g. by putting in place exit strategies, identifying and mentoring emergent leadership and planning for retention of technical skills and volunteers).

5.6   Gender and social inclusion[8]

During the field visits, the evaluation team met with female and male staff and volunteers in both Vanuatu and Fiji who were passionate gender equality and disability inclusion champions, modelling the way to colleagues and community members alike and "*fighting*" for gender equality and disability inclusion. We also met committed advocates working for women's organisations and disability organisations. All expressed an appreciation for the work being done by the Red Cross. Two people with disability organisations in Vanuatu described how they had benefited from training provided by the Red Cross and how this had allowed them to develop their own disaster response plans. The team believes there are opportunities for National Societies to more closely join hands with civil society organisations and draw on their experience and expertise to influence their own practice and strengthen gender equality and disability inclusion analytical skills.

Given what we know from IFRC-sponsored research and that of others, it is clear that attitudes towards women and girls and to people with disabilities remains traditional and constrained. It may be, for example, that women have taken on more work in implementing village-level emergency response plans. When we asked a group of women about this, one of the women responded: "*We're not going to rely on the men ... we are committed to no more deaths from a disaster.*" In another location, the villagers spoke about paving paths to ensure the elderly persons and people with disabilities in the village could move about easily. However, there were no elderly or disabled persons at the community meeting the evaluation team attended.

ARC-supported Violence and Prevention Pilots in Mongolia (Appendix IIIB) and Vanuatu were positively received by community and civil society actors. More is needed, however. As one gender focal point noted: "*We are not doing it properly, if we are not able to provide consistent follow up.*" Another female noted: "*I want to do more, but when a woman talks to me about GBV ... what can I do ... everyone knows everything that's going on in ... if I try to make a referral, then I'm bringing shame to the village.*" Another gender focal point wanted more consistent leadership and questioned why there were so few women in senior positions.

The Gender & Diversity Networks are providing a forum for protection, gender equality and disability inclusion focal points to learn from one another and to exchange field experience. However, the focal points need more skills and confidence if they are to energise commitment and buy-in within their National Societies. There is potential to launch a more thoughtful and consistent approach through the Gender & Diversity Network. Key

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[7] International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies 'Briefing note: Building DRM Capacity: a strategic approach' and 'Strategic Research into National and Local Capacity Building for DRM Synthesis Report'

[8] Dignity, access, participation, and safety of women and girls, men and boys, people with disabilities and the inclusion of marginalised groups

for each National Society will be to keep pressure on their senior management teams and National Society boards, so that they prioritise and allocate resources and expertise to operationalise gender and inclusion activities. The National Societies in each country occupy a privileged position as auxiliary to the government and could build on this privilege to demonstrate leadership. ARC has made significant contributions to advancing protection, gender equality and disability inclusion outcomes within the IFRC and is positioned to accompany select National Societies and the Gender and Diversity Network on this journey.

5.7   Partnership effectiveness

"Large-scale changes dealing with multi-faceted and complex challenges … will more likely only come from collective impact approaches where multiple actors are pushing in the same direction. Implicit in this are challenges to existing partnership and business models, engagement with new actors and technologies and an openness to new ways of thinking – to leverage a bigger change than we could achieve on our own and allow local actors to lead."[9] (DFAT & ARC 2017)

The Partnership has enabled ARC to play a collaborative role in the Pacific and to pace change. The TC Gita response in Tonga was well-coordinated. Pre-positioned supplies were moved and distributed. Trans-regional communications were leveraged, and the response was 'smooth' compared, for example, to the challenges and confusion posed by TC Winston in Fiji or TC Pam in Vanuatu. It appears then that lessons are being transferred and, overall, response abilities are expanding. Further research to identify the critical success factors would allow learning to be more systematically amplified.

DFAT and ARC's joint pledge to strengthen local humanitarian action, particularly in the Pacific at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, provides one example of joint 'soft power' action and highlights the potential for the Partnership to take a leadership role in reforming the humanitarian agenda.

Inefficiencies have been identified in the Partnership arrangements. The Partnership Review noted that DFAT's value addition (beyond funding) was not clearly defined within the Partnership design and thus DFAT's potential contributions to the Partnership have been under-utilised. The current Partnership Design outlines a transactional relationship between DFAT and ARC (programmatic and thematic activities to be delivered by ARC and its downstream partners), rather than laying out a pathway to a more influential and mutually reinforcing relationship that delivers good humanitarian leadership (through strengthening humanitarian assistance effectiveness and soft power outcomes).

While the design document speaks to a mutual learning, there has been little attention given to articulating a learning agenda or to allocating time and resources to making it happen. It's not surprising then that current M&E and reporting arrangements are insufficient to provide an evidence-base that could communicate a compelling performance story about what outcomes the Partnership is achieving. This will only come about if resources are allocated to support an adaptive learning approach to M&E that would look not only at program effectiveness but also partnership effectiveness and efficiency. Other inhibiting factors are funding and /or decision making protocols that do not always support the quick release of humanitarian funds, overlap between an array of subsidiary agreements and a focus on transactional rather than strategic management.

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[9] DFAT & ARC (2017) Humanitarian system change in the Pacific *Walking the Talk Insight Series* 2 (Humanitarian Advisory Group)

6   Conclusions

6.1   The value proposition (why it makes sense for ARC and DFAT to partner with each other)

"They are the go-to, first responders." (Fiji and Vanuatu NDMOs)

"…their coverage, their presence in the provinces and their ability to strengthen community preparedness" (Senior Vanuatu NDMO official)

During the evaluation, the team asked DFAT and ARC personnel and their field-based partners to define the value addition offered by the Partnership. The answers were surprisingly varied. They talked to the value addition offered by ARC, but less clearly about the value offered by DFAT, beyond funding. The value proposition given below is an attempt to 'weave together' the answers provided by key informants and information included in various project documents. It is intended to spark a discussion within the Partnership.

The Value Proposition

The DFAT–ARC Humanitarian Partnership is one of DFAT's flagship partnerships within the humanitarian sector. As auxiliary to the Australian Government and recognised for its commitment to impartiality and neutrality, ARC is positioned to support Australia's commitment to strengthening effective humanitarian disaster response capacity and also DRM and social protection activities that help build resilience of countries and communities.

The Partnership provides visibility of the Australian Aid program: domestically (through the long-term relationship and trusted Red Cross brand recognition) and a window into the Movement (comprising the ICRC, IFRC, and National Societies) and its network of volunteers.

This window into the broader Movement positions DFAT *and* ARC to:

- contribute to localised DRM by supporting the organisational development of National Societies and their local government partners and, through them, to reach out to improve the ability of vulnerable communities to rapidly respond to disaster and conflict and to take practical steps to become more resilient in the face of these risks;
- promote innovation through pilot projects that can then be amplified elsewhere;
- engage together in high-level dialogues on thematic, regional and global policy issues (such as the Grand Bargain and the Sendai Framework), so as to influence the uptake of good practice and contribute to reshaping the humanitarian reform agenda (including the localisation agenda and other soft power, joint action); and
- provide a unique perspective and expertise on vulnerability and protection issues, including a gendered approach to inclusive DRR.

The Partnership thus assists the Australian Government and ARC to amplify their commitments to respond promptly and effectively to humanitarian disasters and crises in ways that promote community-based disaster preparedness and first response capabilities. This in turn allows the Government and ARC to expand their pledge to strengthening localised humanitarian action, particularly in the Pacific.

DFAT and ARC could further capitalise on ARC's role as auxiliary to government and its relationships within the Movement to create new touch points for Australia's soft power efforts and engage regionally and globally in

high-level dialogues on thematic policy issues of mutual interest.

6.2   Concluding remarks

The evaluation set out to answer four questions:

- First, what is the evidence-base to demonstrate that ARC activities delivered under the Partnership Agreement have contributed to the anticipated humanitarian and resilience outcomes?

  The team finds that ARC has, in general, performed well against the outcome areas, but has fallen short in overall articulation of results. What was missing was clear definition of 'what we are doing' and 'why'. As a result, DFAT and ARC have been unable to tell a convincing performance story. It was particularly challenging to untangle those instances where ARC had worked collectively with other Red Cross partners and thus to assign attribution (which in fairness, is tricky under any circumstances).

- Second, in what ways have the National Societies that have used DFAT funding supported decentralised, localised and timely responses to risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery from disasters and humanitarian crises?

  This has been the area where the team feels that there is convincing evidence of results. In particular, National Societies are working closely with government partners to reinforce community-led preparedness and response mechanisms, and communities are engaged in meaningful ways in DRM, preparedness and resilience activities.

- Third, in what way are ARC and partner activities contributing to achieving gender equality and disability inclusion outcomes?

  The field visits and key informant interviews identified a cadre of women and men who are passionate about advancing gender equality and disability inclusion work. There are opportunities for ARC to deepen this work and to develop a point-of-difference in its gender and diversity programming. This will require ARC to push against internal and sometimes traditional cultural norms and to open up National Society partners to learning from outside.

- Fourth, how has the current DFAT–ARC Partnership approach/structure contributed to efficient and effective aid delivery?

  ARC is consciously working to eliminate duplication and harmonise action with Movement partners. Inefficiencies have been identified in the Partnership arrangements and recommendations are made below for how DFAT and ARC can address these inefficiencies. That being said, the team concludes that the Partnership is offering significant value addition, including working collectively to amplify impact and joint research and policy work that is strengthening soft power outcomes and complementing DFAT's focus on gender equality and disability inclusion.

7   Recommendations

Presence and focus

1. [DFAT and ARC] Before considering a future Partnership design, **review and update the rationale for selecting focus countries** (based on such criteria as program 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**.

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 joint response to disaster emergencies.

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 of rehabilitation activities**, something that could be achieved through partnerships with local stakeholders and Australian NGOs.

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.

Promoting an enabling environment

5. [DFAT and ARC] The Partnership should continue to allocate resources for **joint, focused engagement and research** to:

    ▪ **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 Program and support to National Societies and their partners to develop and/or update and implement disaster laws.

Monitoring, evaluation, reporting and (adaptive) learning

6. [ARC] The **performance framework** should be **developed in parallel with the program 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**.

7. [DFAT and ARC] The Partnership should **adopt a 'development evaluative' approach to monitoring and evaluation**, which focuses on **adaptive program and partnership management and learning** and allocate resources for **regular joint evaluative tasks** that will allow DFAT and ARC to tell compelling change stories.

Protection, gender equality and disability inclusion

8. ARC should **expand support to strengthen National Society capacity to deliver on protection, gender equality and disability inclusion commitments**. This should include continuing, first, to lobby Movement 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 gender-based violence in disasters.

9. ARC should **harness the localised power of the Asia and Pacific Gender & Diversity 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 program to accompany emerging gender equality and disability inclusion leadership.

10. ARC should **lobby within IFRC to strengthen gender equality 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, so as 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 discussions to prioritise allocation of program resources.

Commit stable and long-term resources to National Society development

11. ARC should continue to invest in:

   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

   b. consolidating and expanding **sub-national network strength**, sustaining the commitment of **community-based disaster committees** and encouraging **volunteer motivation and retention**. This might include, for example, harnessing technologies to engage youth volunteers and/or allocating resources to mentor emergent leadership within National Society teams.

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 foundational for sustainable organisational development and for advancing the localisation agenda.

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**).

14. [ARC] **National Society organisational development outcomes should be linked to the Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting 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.

Future-fit the Partnership management, governance and communication arrangements

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:

   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 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

e. revisit financing arrangements including piloting a new arrangement for prepositioned funds for humanitarian crises, removing Australian NGO Cooperation Program funding from the Agreement and providing resources for humanitarian leadership and soft power joint action.