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Evaluation 2017/2

Independent Evaluation of the Swiss Contribution to the ICRC Headquarters



Independent Evaluation of the Swiss Contribution to the ICRC Headquarters

Commissioned by the Evaluation and Corporate Controlling Division
of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

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Bern, July 2017

Evaluation Process

Evaluations commissioned by the SDC's Board of Directors were introduced in the SDC in 2002 with the aim of providing a more critical and independent assessment of the SDC activities. These Evaluations are conducted according to the OECD DAC Evaluation Standards and are part of the SDC's concept for implementing Article 170 of the Swiss Constitution which requires Swiss Federal Offices to analyse the effectiveness of their activities. The SDC's **Senior Management** (consisting of the Director General and the heads of SDC's departments) approves the Evaluation Program. The **Evaluation and Corporate Controlling Division**, which is outside of line management and reports directly to the Director General, commissions the evaluation, taking care to recruit evaluators with a critical distance from the SDC.

The Evaluation and Corporate Controlling Division identified the primary intended users of the evaluation at both the SDC and the ICRC, and invited them to participate in a **Reference Group**. The Reference Group actively accompanied the evaluation process. It commented on the evaluation design (Approach Paper). It provided feedback to the evaluation team on their preliminary findings and on the draft report. During a debriefing on the Draft Report, the Reference Group had the opportunity to comment on the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations.

The evaluation was carried out according to the evaluation standards specified in the Terms of Reference.

Based on the **Final Report of the Evaluators**, one member of the SDC's Senior Management assumed the responsibility of drafting a **Senior Management Response (SMR)**. The SMR was subsequently approved by the SDC's Board of Directors and signed by the SDC Director-General.

The SMR is published together with the **Final Report of the Evaluators**. For further details regarding the evaluation process see the Terms of Reference (Appendix D) and the Inception Report (Appendix E).

Timetable

Step	When
Approach Paper finalized	February 2016
Implementation of the evaluation	May - October 2016
Senior Management Response in SDC	June 2017

I Executive Summary

Donor	SDC – Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Report title	Independent Evaluation of the Swiss Headquarters' Contribution to the ICRC
Geographic area	Switzerland
Sector	Humanitarian Aid
Language	English
Date	July 2017
Author	The International Solutions Group, USA: Stephen Ladek, Raj Rana

Background

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is Switzerland's international cooperation agency within the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). Swiss Humanitarian Aid (SDC-HA) is one of four SDC departments. To realize its objectives, SDC-HA supports and assists international organizations, and more generally, the humanitarian aid system, to deliver results and improve performance of the same. SDC-HA also carries out direct activities.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was established in 1863 and is at the origin of the Geneva Conventions and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The ICRC is a private association registered in Switzerland whose humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance.

SDC-HA provides financial support to the ICRC in two streams: an annual, non-earmarked, core contribution to the ICRC headquarters in Geneva (HQ); and varying levels of funding to the ICRC's field operations. As detailed in the Terms of Reference (TOR) for this assignment, since 1988, the core contribution to ICRC's HQ has totalled 1,821.1 billion CHF, and the current annual contribution is 80 million CHF. This is by far the largest financing for the tasks carried out at the ICRC HQ and represents an approximately 40 percent share of the 2015 194 million CHF budget of the ICRC HQ.

The TOR established the following funding goals of SDC-HA's contribution to the ICRC HQ:

- **Operations:** To maintain a strong, effective and efficient ICRC HQ that supports ICRC's delegations around the world.
- **Policy:** To intensify policy dialogue and exchanges on operational approaches and international humanitarian community areas of concerns, including humanitarian principles, between SDC-HA, the ICRC and the Donor Support Group (DSG); and to intensify partnerships with key actors and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.
- **International Humanitarian Law:** To strengthen ICRC's mandate in the promotion, reaffirmation, clarification, and development of IHL; to foster compliance with IHL; and to improve access to vulnerable populations.
- **International Geneva:** To maintain a robust ICRC headquarters that aligns with Switzerland's Foreign Policy Strategy 2012-2015, i.e., the "systematic promotion of international Geneva," which should enable Switzerland to play an international role "disproportionate to the size of its national territory."

The SDC is accountable to the Swiss Parliament on the results achieved by official development assistance. SDC is therefore interested in strengthening the efficiency and

results of its partners, including the ICRC. While Switzerland has financed the ICRC with headquarters contributions since 1949, the partnership has never been independently evaluated.

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the SDC-ICRC funding relationship to develop forward-looking recommendations that will inform their future partnership. Its objective is to determine to what extent the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ has realized the goals of the funding, which were compiled during the development of the TOR for this evaluation. The evaluation considers activities undertaken as part of the SDC-ICRC relationship from 2013 to 2016, as they relate to the ICRC HQ. The audience for this evaluation is the leadership and key decision makers at both SDC and ICRC.

An analytical framework was created during the inception phase to structure the evaluation. Two streams create the foundation for the evaluation's research and subsequent analysis:

- **Research Stream 1:** This portion of research for the assignment evaluates how ICRC is managing, maintaining, and transforming its Geneva headquarters to strengthen its ability to deliver its core services while increasing its effectiveness and efficiency for the same.
- **Research Stream 2:** This portion of research for the assignment evaluates how the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ is relevant to the overall objectives of the FDFA (mainly SDC-HA).

The resulting findings and conclusions from these independent research streams were then used to answer the overarching evaluation question.

Findings

The evaluation finds that the reorganization of the ICRC HQ has the potential to improve the HQ's performance and, more importantly, the delivery of the ICRC's core services across its global operations. The processes of change being undertaken have only just begun and, as such, their true contribution to performance improvements remains to be determined. The ICRC manages its human and financial resources within the standards expected of similar humanitarian organizations, and is pursuing changes that have the potential to realize significant financial efficiencies across its global operation.

The ICRC's planned changes to the organization's professional and cultural expectations and the professionalization of the human resources (HR) department have the potential to improve the impact of the ICRC's core services by shifting to a performance-based mindset and a structure that provides broader, more equitable opportunities to the entire global workforce. While the internationalization of ICRC's workforce happened more than two decades ago, ICRC largely retained a traditional distinction in its staffing expectations and processes for expatriates and local staff. The current envisioned changes place the ICRC in the middle of the competition for talent at all levels and geographies, and demands that staff bear the responsibility of maintaining their own careers.

Results-based management (RBM) is part of the ICRC organizational culture at all levels, and underscores expectations for the conduct of its programming and professional staff. However, the processes and tools that the ICRC uses for RBM fall short of what is truly needed to identify, monitor, and manage against programmatic and organizational outcomes. ICRC is in the process of holistically transforming its RBM process and tools to address this.

The SDC-ICRC partnership structure, while unique in terms of historical context and governance structure, is not unusual in the funding portfolio of SDC-HA and is well aligned

with the SDC-HA trust-based partnering modality. The reorganization of ICRC HQ, if fully realized, should have a net positive effect on the objectives of the partnership.

The evaluation is mixed with regards to how the Swiss contribution to ICRC headquarters is relevant to the overall objectives of the FDFA, mainly SDC-HA. During the evaluation timeframe, ICRC and FDFA lacked a clear and shared understanding of some of the objectives and their connections to specific activities or initiatives. The Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ is written into the strategic priorities of SDC-HA and can be seen as implementation of their objectives, and is therefore fully aligned and relevant. However, there is an unconsidered potential to connect the ICRC's work with the FDFA's broader strategic objectives, which would better respond to the interest to intensify, or derive greater value, from the funding relationship and strategic dialogue.

The dialogue between FDFA and ICRC has been better structured in the period under evaluation as a result of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was signed in 2013. However, FDFA is largely perceived by external stakeholders as following the ICRC's positions, and not vice versa. As FDFA is not perceived as a leading donor in cutting-edge humanitarian policy thinking and agendas, there were questions about where the policy dialogue and relationship with the ICRC should go. The ICRC is intensifying its own investment in policy and shows increased engagement and sophistication. The president and director general are credited with pushing the ICRC to engage with the humanitarian and international community in a clearer, more constructive way. This shift has yet to completely anchor itself below the leadership and senior management levels of the HQ.

The ICRC has anchored the importance of partnership in its institutional strategy in an increasingly sophisticated manner and is perceived as having increased the quality of its engagement from its HQ. While the partnership with the Movement has been given increasing strategic importance by the ICRC, the relationship around IHL is the strongest example of partnership between the ICRC and FDFA.

While the ICRC has integrated the "software" focus from the 2014 Swiss strategy for International Geneva into its 2015-2018 Institutional Strategy, the ICRC has not been given any explicit guidance from the FDFA on what is expected for it to contribute to the success of International Geneva. Some stakeholders within the FDFA fear the ICRC will leave Geneva or lose interest in the FDFA relationship. This fear is shaped in the context of the ICRC's transformation and globalization, delocalization of transactional services outside of Geneva, and ambition to grow. However, others who have a more business-oriented view provide balance. There is little likelihood that the ICRC will leave Geneva or forget its privileged relationship with Switzerland. However, this emotional component of the relationship represents a critical obstacle to having frank, direct, and authentic strategic discussions.

Conclusions

The key question of this evaluation was to examine the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ and assess to what extent the objectives identified have been achieved. Ultimately, the findings allow the evaluators to draw conclusions about the four evaluation objectives, but these conclusions do not, and cannot, comment on achievements realized by the ICRC HQ funding. Rather, the conclusions offer an opportunity to form recommendations for the future SDC-HA and ICRC funding relationship. As such, over the timeframe considered by the evaluation, we can conclude that:

- **Conclusion 1:** The ICRC has been its own worst critic, proactively recognizing that it must successfully undergo transformational change in order to grow, remain relevant, meet donor demands, and deliver on its mission.

- **Conclusion 2:** The ICRC seeks to operate as efficiently as possible, without sacrificing effectiveness or quality.
- **Conclusion 3:** Having laid the foundations for its transformation, the ICRC now faces the significant challenge of implementing substantive change in the organization's culture.
- **Conclusion 4:** The ICRC is becoming more competitive in the humanitarian sector.
- **Conclusion 5:** The transformations accompanying the ICRC's growth strategy include fundraising, which has implications for its relationship with Switzerland.
- **Conclusion 6:** Stakeholders have perceived strong tangible and intangible benefits when ICRC and FDFA have pursued joint initiatives with clear goals and outcomes.
- **Conclusion 7:** The ICRC is recognized as a leader in the humanitarian sector, but is challenged to authentically allow itself to be influenced by outsiders.
- **Conclusion 8:** While the ICRC HQ's engagement with Geneva is aligned with Switzerland's International Geneva strategy, a lack of clarity on what is expected of them from FDFA suggests that the realities have outgrown the scope and funding envelope of the existing FDFA-ICRC MoU.
- **Conclusion 9:** While the connection between FDFA and the ICRC is strong, this is largely due to a shared history, their connection to the Geneva Conventions and almost parallel organizational strategic objectives, rather than clarity about how the organizations support or strengthen one another. The FDFA-ICRC relationship has been better structured in 2013-2016, but more can be done.

Recommendations

From these conclusions, the evaluation provides the following recommendations for the ICRC, FDFA and their relationship-partnership moving forward:

For the FDFA and ICRC

- **Recommendation 1:** Start a new strategic FDFA-ICRC conversation.
- **Recommendation 2:** Define a partnership that allows measurement of its successes and challenges.
- **Recommendation 3:** Remove the International Geneva objective from the future MoU, and shift to a more agile project-based or core funding partnership to allow FDFA and the ICRC to develop further initiatives.
- **Recommendation 4:** Build on the successes of the partnership, particularly IHL.

For FDFA and SDC-HA

- **Recommendation 5:** The FDFA should seek to learn from the ICRC's transformation and increasing sophistication.
- **Recommendation 6:** The FDFA should continue to seek to punch above its weight by specifically supporting innovation and performance measurement.
- **Recommendation 7:** Create opportunities for Switzerland to champion institutional causes.

For ICRC

- **Recommendation 8:** Prepare, communicate, and maintain an operational vision for what ICRC will become due to its transformation that includes all processes and changes.
- **Recommendation 9:** Continue to pursue the transformation toward increased efficiency, while ensuring the continued delivery of effective and high-quality services.

- **Recommendation 10:** As part of the transformation process, ICRC should seek to streamline its decision-making processes.
- **Recommendation 11:** Accompany the cultural shift associated with large institutional change.

II Senior Management Response

Senior Management Response of SDC's Directorate (strategic level)

Bern, 19.06.2017

Signature: Manuel Sager, Director-General SDC



The Management Response states the position of the SDC Board of Directors on the recommendations of the Independent Evaluation report on the Swiss headquarters contribution to the ICRC. Where appropriate, other concerned units at the FDFA were consulted in the preparation of this Management Response.

Introduction

In accordance with the Approach Paper approved by the SDC Board of Directors in February 2016, an independent evaluation team under the direction of International Solutions Group was selected by public tender. The evaluation was carried out between April and October 2016. The final version of the evaluation report was completed in mid-October 2016. It includes four recommendations addressed to both the FDFA and the ICRC and three recommendations addressed specifically to the FDFA and Swiss Humanitarian Aid, a department of the SDC, in response to which the present Management Response has been prepared by the Head of Swiss Humanitarian Aid. The Management Response was submitted to the Board of Directors for approval and signed by the SDC Director-General. It sets forth concrete measures and actions to be taken, including the division of responsibilities and a time horizon for implementation by the concerned units of the SDC.

In addition to these recommendations, the evaluation report also included four recommendations addressed specifically to the ICRC. The ICRC has addressed a written statement directly to the Evaluation and Corporate Controlling Division in response to the recommendations and the evaluation as a whole.

Assessment of report and evaluation procedure

For the first time since 1949 an evaluation was conducted of the SDC's ICRC headquarters contribution. The conduct of such an evaluation was justified and, in view of the many changes that have occurred in the area of humanitarian aid, opportune. The SDC Board of Directors expresses its appreciation that the evaluation and the resulting discussions further deepened the mutual understanding on the partnership between the ICRC and Switzerland for the funding of the headquarters contribution.

The purpose of the evaluation was to review the objectives, effectiveness and efficiency of the SDC's contribution. The subject-matter of the present evaluation was the partnership between the SDC and the ICRC for the funding of the headquarters contribution. Because of this specific focus, a number of potential ambiguities were inherent in the process:

- The relationship between the FDFA and the ICRC is of broad scope. In addition to contributing funding for the headquarters, Switzerland provides support for strategies and projects related to international humanitarian law (IHL), protection standards, access to persons in need, innovation, etc. In addition, Switzerland also assists the ICRC with earmarked contributions in crisis areas.
- The purpose of the financial support provided to the ICRC headquarters in Geneva is to enable the ICRC to perform its mandate, that is, to save lives, alleviate suffering and defend rights.
- The funding is allocated to the ICRC on a non-earmarked basis. This means that the financial support provided to the Geneva headquarters is not contingent on its use for specific programmes or projects.

The ICRC and the FDFA devoted necessary time and resources to facilitate the evaluation process. Numerous representatives from the diverse levels of both institutions were interviewed and the evaluation team was supplied with a large body of documentation. There were also regular contacts and meetings between the evaluators and representatives of the ICRC and the FDFA. In addition, the ICRC and the FDFA were given the opportunity to review the facts presented and to express their opinions and points of view with regard to the Approach Paper, Draft Inception Report. Draft Evaluation Report.

The potential ambiguities referred to above are indeed key areas for consideration, and were therefore subject of intensive discussions on numerous occasions over the course of the evaluation procedure. Some are manifested in the report and reflected in the Management Response.

The evaluation team offered some different perspective on the relationship between the FDFA and the ICRC, leading to constructive new conversations and exchanges between the ICRC and the FDFA. At the same time, however, the over 150-year history of the ICRC in Switzerland and the close relationship that exists between Switzerland and the ICRC must be considered as factors of paramount importance in evaluating the country's contribution to the ICRC headquarters. Adopting a fundamentally new and different perspective on the nature of the partnership between Switzerland and the ICRC would be difficult politically and require a more comprehensive process than an evaluation limited by design to the country's contribution to the organisation's headquarters. However, the evaluation rightly underlined the impact of a fast changing humanitarian environment on the ICRC, as well as the ICRC's ongoing efforts to adapt their institutional and operational capacities.

Remarks on the main findings and recommendations of the evaluation

Of the report's seven recommendations, full agreement may be expressed on one; on five there is partial agreement. One recommendation cannot be concurred with.

In this Management Response the SDC Board of Directors welcomes the idea of ensuring a more systematic follow-up of successes and challenges of the FDFA-ICRC partnership, including with regard to the Switzerland's financial contribution to the ICRC headquarters. This should be done with a view to avoid creating additional reporting burden on the ICRC. (Recommendation 2).

There is no agreement on the recommendation calling for removal of the International Geneva objective from a future Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). International Geneva, in which the ICRC plays a central role, is a matter of high importance to the FDFA. The view that including the promotion of International Geneva as an objective in the MOU could have negative implications for more flexible project-based or core-funding partnerships is shared by neither the FDFA nor the ICRC, as evidenced by the negotiations for the new 'Protocole d'accord'. (Recommendation 3)

Those recommendations on which there is full or partial agreement are largely consistent with the lessons learnt that the FDFA and the ICRC regularly identify in their scope of close cooperation and the subsequent initiatives taken.

The evaluation on the Swiss headquarters contribution to the ICRC and the action plans outlined in the management response on the individual recommendations will make a significant impact to ensuring that Switzerland's relationship with the ICRC, the most important partner in the field of humanitarian aid, will continue to develop positively and forward-looking.

Management Response to the Recommendations

Table 1 presents the recommendations addressed jointly to the FDFA and the ICRC (Recommendations 1-4) and separately to the FDFA and Swiss Humanitarian Aid (Recommendations 5-7). The SDC Board of Directors indicates whether it agrees (fully or partially) or disagrees with each recommendation and provides an explanation of its standpoint. It also suggests measures to be taken in each case, including the division of responsibilities and a time horizon for implementation.

Recommendations for the FDFA and ICRC

Recommendation 1: Start a new strategic FDFA-ICRC conversation.

The FDFA and the ICRC can be credited with always finding new points on the horizon where they can cooperate. There is a solid foundation for moving forward, but this evaluation underlines that there is less clarity than the partners appear willing to publicly accept. The FDFA and the ICRC need to start a new conversation, one that potentially adds other FDFA funding partners, in a process that iteratively shapes a new *raison d'être* for the ICRC HQ contribution. The conversation needs to be plain-spoken and nurture a clear and shared understanding of what, concretely, each partner wants from the other. The FDFA and the ICRC need to clearly articulate their actual desires, and set aside the political or other constraints that have been regularly underlined to the evaluators. This should not become yet another 'high level' formal meeting of senior management, but a conversation that starts with understanding the snapshot of ICRC realities presented in this report, and re-imagines what a new, truly synergistic partnership could become.

Management Response

Fully agree	Partially agree	Not agree
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The SDC Board of Directors recognizes this recommendation in considering a new strategic FDFA-ICRC conversation.

Based on the recommendation, the FDFA and the ICRC senior management held a strategy session on their bilateral relationship in early 2017. Both organisations concurred that the moment is opportune: the strategic context for humanitarian action has changed, the Swiss Parliament adopted a new four-year strategic framework (Dispatch) and the

bilateral 'Protocole d'accord' between the FDFA and ICRC needs to be renewed.

The conclusion of the discussion was that the partnership between the two organisations is grounded on a shared solid foundation and a relationship of mutual trust. Representatives of the FDFA and the ICRC judge their relationship to be very positive and open. The senior management panel expressed unanimously the view, that the strategic conversation should be based and further developed on this solid foundation.

The renewed 'Protocole d'accord' which was signed on May 1, 2017 is taking this evolutionary approach in the strategic relationship between FDFA and ICRC into account. New elements commonly agreed between both signatories include strengthening the ICRC's action in protracted crisis and conflicts and the promotion of innovation within the ICRC.

With regard to the HQ contribution, the Parliament and the Federal Council, which provide the ICRC with broad support, have decided that the funds allocated should not be earmarked. The SDC respects this decision and - in view to Switzerland's 'Grand Bargain' commitment - does not wish to advocate for a change in this practice, in line with international best practices for funding, such as promoted by the OECD-DAC and the Good Humanitarian Donorship, (refer to recommendation 2). So far the 'Protocole d'accord' has given important cornerstones to the relationship ICRC-FDFA and helped much to structure it. However, Switzerland's expectation linked to the ICRC HQ contribution will have to, in accordance with the ICRC, be formulated and expressed more explicitly, in order to lead more in depth conversations over time and allow a certain monitoring of progress regarding FDFA expectations linked to the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ.

Measures / Responsibilities / Time horizon:

- 1.1. High-level meeting between Federal Councillor and Head of the FDFA Didier Burkhalter and ICRC President Peter Maurer. / FDFA¹ / annually.
- 1.2. Strategic discussion at senior management level. / FDFA / 2-3 times a year.
- 1.3. Identify a referential framework together with the ICRC allowing to track the strategic effect of the Swiss non-earmarked contribution. Ensure that this represents a minimal reporting burden for the ICRC. / ICRC-FDFA / end of 2017.
- 1.4. Reflect the referential framework in the ICRC CCM Sheet. / SDC-HA / November 2017.

Recommendation 2: Define a partnership that allows measurement of its successes and challenges.

Once the FDFA and the ICRC have determined how they would like to deepen their engagement in the future, this should be defined in an agreement, contract, joint statement, or some other vehicle that can be used to guide the partners on the path towards achieving a shared vision and also clearly define the criteria on which its success will be readily measured and challenges identified.

Management Response

Fully agree	Partially agree	Not agree
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At the time of writing this Management Response, a new 'Protocole d'accord' has entered in force. This document has taken into account the observations made in this evaluation and has been jointly signed by the ICRC's president and Federal Councillor Burkhalter. This part of the recommendation is thus already acted upon.

¹ Where not otherwise indicated, „FDFA“ includes the three partners SDC-HA, DDIP and PD-HSD (under the leadership of SDC-HA).

The SDC Board of Directors welcomes the idea to reinforce the monitoring that allows taking stock of successes and challenges, especially with regard to the Swiss contribution to ICRC's headquarters.

The ICRC provides very comprehensive reports on results and financial statements. Mid-term and annual reports and the ICRC donor website (ICRC extranet) give detailed information and regular updates on HQ and field operations². Also in its discussions with the SDC, the ICRC makes steady improvements in its reporting. In addition, the FDFA / SDC and the ICRC constantly search for innovative ways to achieve results (refer to recommendation 6).

However, the FDFA and the ICRC convened at 'the Senior Management meeting 2017' that it is still necessary to identify a strategic level and depth of measurement to monitor year after year the progress made and lessons learned in the identified areas (common referential framework).

The ICRC has started the process of identifying indicators for measuring organisation wide performance, as well as indicators measuring HQ support to the field operations. Further, the ICRC's internal Planning for Results (PfR) tool is being reformed. It will become easier in the future for the ICRC to collect performance data.

Once the ICRC has identified indicators to measure organisation (and HQ) wide performance, they can also be referred to in the dialogue with its biggest donors. Those most relevant to Switzerland's financial contribution to the ICRC HQ can be chosen and used to develop, together with the ICRC, a referential framework, mentioned under point 1.3. This referential framework would aim at monitoring on a strategic level the main developments on successes and challenges faced in the partnership between the FDFA and the ICRC in connection with the Swiss Contribution to the ICRC HQ. The SDC Board of Directors specifically stated that this should not take the form of a results-based reporting framework, as a political decision was made that the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ should not be earmarked.

The follow-up of the referential framework will have to take the following into consideration:

- It should not require additional human resources.
- It should not contradict the 'Grand Bargain' commitments:
Within the framework of the 'Grand Bargain'³ initiative Switzerland undertook a commitment to:
 - a) more non-earmarked contributions; and
 - b) fewer and simplified reporting requirements.

Also, the next ICRC Donor Support Group (DSG) Presidency 2017/2018 will look into constructing the institutional ICRC strategy 2019-2022. As a member of the DSG, this presents an opportunity for Switzerland to underline the importance of the support function of the ICRC HQ to the field operations and its clearer consideration in the next ICRC strategy.

² Examples of ICRC reporting:

- Annual Report - 616 pages (Volumes I+II) and 89-page Annual Report Supplement. The Supplement provides information comparing the ICRC's finances and operations over several years. HQ section, 28 pages.
- Annual Mid-term Review on the most important operations.
- ICRC Extranet for Donors – enables accredited users to access and retrieve ICRC reporting documents and to be informed about funding-related events. The platform also provides weekly reports on the ICRC's most important interventions.

³ The "Grand Bargain" was officially launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016; [The Grand Bargain | Agenda for Humanity](#).

Measures / Responsibilities / Time horizon:

- 2.1 Elaboration of a referential framework between the FDFA and the ICRC. This framework is meant to review successes and challenges of the FDFA-ICRC partnership in connection with the Swiss Contribution to the ICRC HQ. / FDFA-ICRC / end 2017.
- 2.2 Consolidation and agreement on the referential framework at the senior management meeting. / FDFA-ICRC. / first quarter 2018.
- 2.3 Discuss with the ICRC possibility of publicly available scorecard on organisational and development effectiveness. / FDFA-ICRC. / Senior Management meeting 2018.
- 2.4 Review of the referential framework during the FDFA-ICRC Senior Management meeting.
/ FDFA-ICRC. / annually, starting first quarter 2019.
- 2.5 Closely follow-up with the ICRC on its internal process of identifying key indicators to measure organizational performance as well as support given by the HQ to the field. / SDC-HA / regularly.
- 2.6 As a member of the ICRC DSG, Switzerland will be highlighting aspects linked to ICRC HQ, its functioning and monitoring of its performance. / SDC-HA / 2017-2018.
- 2.7 ICRC Core Contribution CCM Sheet will define a new outcome considering the reform efforts of the ICRC result based management RBM cycle, not only taking into account the accountability aspect, but also the learning effects. / SDC-HA / November 2017.

Recommendation 3: Remove the International Geneva objective from the future MoU, and shift to a more agile project-based or core funding partnership to allow the FDFA and the ICRC to develop further initiatives.

The International Geneva strategy is of critical importance to Switzerland, and goes beyond the scope of its MoU with the ICRC. It should be removed from the MoU and replaced with the expectation that Switzerland will consider supplemental funding of ICRC initiatives that align with its strategy, that are beyond the MoU expectation that the ICRC will continue to maintain its HQ in International Geneva.

Management Response

Fully agree	Partially agree	Not agree
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The SDC Board of Directors cannot give consent on this recommendation. The view that including the promotion of International Geneva as an objective in the 'Protocole d'accord' could have negative implications for more flexible project-based or core-funding partnerships is not shared. The ICRC and the FDFA convened on keeping the International Geneva dimension in the renewed 'Protocole d'accord'.

The creation of ICRC and the signature of the Geneva Conventions in 1863 and 1864 mark the dawning of International Geneva. Its importance as a global governance platform has grown over the 150 years. The ICRC is setting professionally a qualitative high level and is seen as a reference among the humanitarian organisations. This is why the organization is of great importance for the Swiss host state policy. International Geneva has a high significance for humanitarian actors, as well as for the Parliament, the Swiss government in general, and the FDFA in particular. International Geneva is also an asset to the ICRC due to close geographical links to the permanent missions, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, the UN organisations and other humanitarian organisations.

The overall objective of the 'Protocole d'accord' was to outline the strategic aspects of the FDFA-ICRC partnership without defining specific and measurable goals. Flexible, project-based funding has been pursued in the past and nothing precludes the FDFA from doing

so in the future, (refer also to recommendation 6). However, the SDC Board of Directors recognizes that the International Geneva dimension should be better defined, so as to ensure that the Swiss headquarters contribution to the ICRC has a clear effect at this level too.
Measures / Responsibilities / Time horizon: N/A

Recommendation 4: Build on the successes of the partnership, particularly IHL.		
As the most concrete example of partnership success, the FDFA and ICRC should examine the best practices and challenges from this initiative to do more of what works.		
Management Response		
Fully agree	Partially agree	Not agree
The SDC Board of Directors fully endorses this recommendation. Building on successes such as cooperation in the area of IHL is important, as well as learning from challenges faced. During the past twelve months, several cooperation initiatives between the FDFA and the ICRC have been launched (not covered in detail in this evaluation – refer also to recommendation 6) in full respect of the ICRC’s independence, neutrality and impartiality. However, the example of IHL is a very specific case, due to the ICRC’s unique role as a guardian of IHL and Switzerland’s unique position as the depository of the Geneva Conventions. It will therefore be difficult to replicate this experience to all of the ICRC’s operations.		
Measures / Responsibilities / Time horizon:		
4.1. Discuss successes and challenges of the partnership every year at Senior Management meetings and include them on the agenda of the annual high-level meetings. / FDFA-ICRC / annually.		
4.2. Use the ICRC DSG meetings (biannual policy fora, annual meeting, DSG field trips) to articulate specific topics of concern to Switzerland. Next DSG cycle’s topic on constructing next ICRC institutional strategy will give a good opportunity to manifest FDFA’s key concerns. / SDC-HA / ongoing.		

Recommendations for FDFA and SDC-HA

Recommendation 5: The FDFA should seek to learn from the ICRC’s transformation and increasing sophistication.		
While the evaluation focuses on how SDC-HA funding has helped the ICRC, a consistent, unstated subtext across the evaluation was the reversal of this question. That is, “how is the relationship with ICRC benefiting FDFA?” SDC-HA should seek to better understand the transformation of the ICRC to learn from best practices that can be incorporated into its own structure and delivery, and shared with other organisations it funds.		
Management Response		
Fully agree	Partially agree	Not agree
The opinion that the FDFA can learn from ICRC’s best practices as both undergo constant change is shared. The SDC Board of Directors expresses its appreciation that the evaluation contributed to a		

better understanding of the ICRC's transformation and best practices. An exchange based on trust and openness promotes mutual learning. Such exchange takes place at all levels of the institutions. However, the FDFA would like to stress the fact that the institutions have different mandates, structures and processes.

The ICRC is the world's leading humanitarian actor, but it is also an independent organisation – as stated in the internationally endorsed Statutes of the Movement; these have been agreed by States in order to limit “interference” with the ICRC and Switzerland has to be mindful of this constraint. In respect to these highly valued attributes it is not considered a task of the FDFA to ensure that the ICRC's best practices are adopted by other humanitarian organisations such as UN agencies and NGOs.

Measures / Responsibilities / Time horizon:

5.1. The FDFA and the ICRC have regular exchanges on organisational issues (at operational and strategic levels). / FDFA / regularly.

Recommendation 6: The FDFA should continue to seek to punch above its weight by specifically supporting innovation and performance measurement.

The character of the FDFA as a donor is unique: Its funding decisions underline a strong belief in playing a transformative role, where Switzerland punches above its weight, and it is happy to do so without seeking public recognition. The FDFA is broadly recognised as being ‘the’ donor that will provide seed funding for new ideas that other donors would not prioritise. What is currently missing from the FDFA side is a push for the ICRC to solve the same problems differently (i.e. innovation) and the requirement to show results (i.e. performance measurement). If the FDFA lacks the capacity to realise these requirements (i.e. not enough, or not the right, in-house technical staff), the FDFA should take steps to:

- Build it by hiring staff and technical experts that can manage innovation, monitor partnerships, and provide technical guidance; or
- Outsource these functions to other third parties like universities (e.g. EPFL), think tanks or others with the technical expertise.

Management Response

Fully agree	Partially agree	Not agree
-------------	------------------------	-----------

The concern of this recommendation is acknowledged and the SDC Board of Directors emphasizes that the 2017-2020 Dispatch takes the above mentioned aspects of the cooperation between the FDFA and the ICRC in particular into consideration.

Furthermore, the renewed ‘Protocole d'accord’ between the FDFA and the ICRC contains a new paragraph mentioning the promotion of innovation in the scope of humanitarian action.

The FDFA and the ICRC have developed several innovative initiatives and forms of cooperation (some already at the implementation stage):

- Global Humanitarian Lab
- The Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiations
- Humanitarian Impact Bond (HIB)
- Red Cross Red Crescent National Society Investment Mechanism (NSIM)
- Use of cash instead of / in parallel to in-kind assistance (secondment of an SHA expert)

The FDFA intends to continue along this path, building on the first encouraging experiences.

However, on the FDFA side, providing both strategic and technical support for these

projects requires time and qualified human resources; it seems unlikely that within the currently available resources, much more manpower could be dedicated to following such projects.

Outsourcing the development and guidance of innovative projects would increase the complexity of transactions and raise the costs of projects. Four of the projects are highly specific in nature. The SDC Board of directors agrees with the key role of various players, including the academic world and private sector. However, the FDFA cannot drive innovation for the ICRC; in SDC's eyes, the value of the non-earmarked contribution is precisely that it also provides flexible resources that the ICRC can use to promote innovative collaborations independently from external influence.

Measures / Responsibilities / Time horizon:

6.1. Launch of Humanitarian Impact Bond (HIB), NS Investment Mechanism (NSIM). / SDC-HA; IFRC-ICRC / 2017.

6.2. Regular exchange with the ICRC on progress made on HIB, GHL, NSIM by fostering innovations as stated in the new 'Protocole d'accord'. / FDFA-ICRC / end of 2017.

Recommendation 7: Create opportunities for Switzerland to champion institutional causes.

Large allotments of non-earmarked funding are extremely rare in the humanitarian sector. Switzerland could stake a claim as a champion of fundamental - yet not very attractive - causes, such as the ICRC's institutional transformation of systems and processes, at the ICRC and in other organisations. Such a move potentially offers high returns in terms of efficiencies and effectiveness for the sector, and the opportunity to be a leader in the Grand Bargain conversation.

Management Response

Fully agree	Partially agree	Not agree
-------------	-----------------	-----------

As a donor to humanitarian organisations, Switzerland works constantly to ensure the effective and efficient use of resources as a general principle.

In the negotiations on the 'Grand Bargain' initiative in 2016, Switzerland played an important role. Together with other organisations, efforts are currently underway to develop a review process that would provide reports on the status of projects conducted in connection with the 'Grand Bargain'. At the SDC's suggestion, the annual 'Grand Bargain' conference on 'Efficiency and Effectiveness of Humanitarian Action' will be held 20th June 2017 in Geneva.

As specifically concerns the ICRC, and with a view to that organisation's independence, the FDFA does not consider it appropriate for Switzerland to discuss publicly the internal ICRC reforms or to present itself as an advocate on these issues.

Measures / Responsibilities / Time horizon:

7.1. Launching of an initiative for and organisation of an international conference on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian actions, with a prominent role assigned to the ICRC (Grand Bargain Annual Conference). / SDC-HA / June 2017.



ICRC

III ICRC Position Taking

Management Response by the ICRC

Introduction

Switzerland's annual contribution to the ICRC headquarters is of strategic importance to the institution and allows the ICRC to fulfill its mandate to alleviate the suffering of victims of conflicts across the globe the way it does it today.

Firstly, the unearmarked nature and high predictability of the contribution gives the ICRC the necessary flexibility to adapt its headquarters to respond most effectively and efficiently to requirements that the ICRC's humanitarian operations in the field demand. As the ICRC reinforces its global scope, the headquarters will remain a strong “centre”, steering the organization and ensuring its leadership in key domains. The annual contribution of Switzerland helps to strengthen the support that the ICRC headquarters provides in a number of key areas, including:

- providing strategic direction and overseeing its execution;
- ensuring global crisis management;
- "connecting the dots" at the global and regional levels;
- strengthening innovation;
- managing relationships with global networks;
- and developing the organization.

Secondly, the fact that Switzerland's reporting requirements are covered by the ICRC's standard reporting illustrates the trust that Switzerland places in the ICRC which must not be taken for granted. It is also a key example of best practice in term of simplified reporting that the Grand Bargain, an outcome of the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), advocates for. The ICRC is very happy to work with a donor government that has been living up to these high standards long before they have been captured at this important gathering in 2016.

For the FDFA and ICRC

Recommendation 1: Start a new strategic FDFA-ICRC conversation.

The ICRC is ready to engage with the FDFA at all levels in order to secure the best outcome of the discussions for all partners involved. In this sense, the discussion at the senior management level in early 2017 was a essential in defining the next steps, which include the review of the “Protocol d'accord” and the annual meeting between Federal Councillor and Head of FDFA Didier Burkhalter and ICRC President Peter Maurer.

Recommendation 2: Define a partnership that allows measurement of its successes and challenges.

The ICRC is willing to contribute its share to ensure measurement of successes and challenges. This will be helpful to assess the results of discussions. It will be necessary to identify the right level and depth of measurement in order to keep it at the strategic level.

Recommendation 3: Remove the International Geneva objective from the future MoU, and shift to a more agile project-based or core funding partnership to allow FDFA and the ICRC to develop further initiatives.

The ICRC is ready to explore with the FDFA the relevance of this recommendation. However, regardless of whether International Geneva is in the scope of the future MoU or not, the ICRC intends to remain an active player contributing to International Geneva. It will do so in many forms including through the conferences and debates it organizes in its Humanitarium, the holding of the International Red Cross Red Crescent Conference in Geneva and the multiple interactions, initiatives and partnerships that it engages in with international and local actors in the city.

Recommendation 4: Build on the successes of the partnership, particularly International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

The ICRC certainly sees its collaboration with Switzerland on IHL issues as a positive experience and example and will examine how best the experiences around the mentioned initiatives and work streams could serve as best practices.

For ICRC

Recommendation 8: Prepare, communicate, and maintain an operational vision for what ICRC will become due to its transformation that includes all processes and changes.

The ICRC will continue to strengthen communication around its ongoing transformation, highlighting the implications on its processes, practices, people, and tools. Rather than developing a separate “operational vision”, the organization will bring out these aspects in the ongoing implementation of its current Institutional Strategy (2015-2018) and integrate them within its next Institutional Strategy (2019-2022).

Recommendation 9: Continue to pursue the transformation toward increased efficiency, while ensuring the continued delivery of effective and high-quality services.

The ICRC will continue to strive for the optimal use of resources to achieve its intended humanitarian outcomes, in order to maximize its “value for money”. Providing meaningful services to its beneficiaries will remain the organization’s ultimate pursuit; it will safeguard the quality and effectiveness of its operational response, undertaking required adaptations in line with these drivers. At the same time, the organization will continue to focus on efficient service delivery, revising its processes and pursuing cost-reduction measures where appropriate. In ensuring that donor contributions are used responsibly, the ICRC does not conceive of quality/effectiveness and efficiency as either-or options.

Recommendation 10: As part of the transformation process, ICRC should seek to streamline its decision- making processes.

The ICRC will continue to implement its new operating model, characterized by devolution of responsibilities to the level closest to implementation. This necessarily includes a review of decision-making that aims to ensure that decisions are made in an informed and timely manner by those who are clearly empowered to do so.

Recommendation 11: Accompany the cultural shift associated with large institutional change.

The ICRC acknowledges the important level of change both culturally and operationally that is happening within the organization and understands the importance of change management in the transformation process. It has recently taken steps to strengthen its organization-wide approach to change management, in order to reinforce support to the people at the centre of the changes underway, and it will continue to pursue related efforts in the future.

IV Evaluators' Final Report

Commissioned by the Evaluation and Corporate Controlling Division
of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

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December 2016

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Acronyms and Initialisms

BI	Business Intelligence
CDAC	Communicating with Disaster Affective Communities Network
CHF	Swiss Franc
DSG	Donor Support Group
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Organization
EPFL	Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
FAD	Finance and Administration Division
FDFA	Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
FTE	Full-Time Employee
GHL	Global Humanitarian Lab
GVA	Geneva
HA	Humanitarian Affairs
HLMS	Humanitarian Leadership Management School
HQ	Headquarters
HR	Human Resources
HRIS	Human Resources Information System
IAP	International Assignment Planning
IC	International Conference
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross
IG	International Geneva
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IRA	Immediate Response Account
ISG	International Solutions Group
KII	Key Informant Interview
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSSC	Manila Shared Services Center
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PfR	Planning for Results
PMP	People Management Programme
RBM	Results-Based Management
REX	ICRC Fundraising Unit
REP	Reporting
SCHR	Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SECO	Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs
SFAO	Swiss Federal Audit Office
SMCC	Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	The UN Refugee Agency
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
UNISDR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNOPS	United Nations Operations
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit

Executive Summary

Background

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is Switzerland's international cooperation agency within the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). Swiss Humanitarian Aid (SDC-HA) is one of four SDC departments. To realize its objectives, SDC-HA supports and assists international organizations, and more generally, the humanitarian aid system, to deliver results and improve performance of the same. SDC-HA also carries out direct activities.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was established in 1863 and is at the origin of the Geneva Conventions and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The ICRC is a private association registered in Switzerland whose humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance.

SDC-HA provides financial support to the ICRC in two streams: an annual, non-earmarked, core contribution to the ICRC headquarters in Geneva (HQ); and varying levels of funding to the ICRC's field operations. As detailed in the Terms of Reference (TOR) for this assignment, since 1988, the core contribution to ICRC's HQ has totalled 1,821.1 billion CHF, and the current annual contribution is 80 million CHF. This is by far the largest financing for the tasks carried out at the ICRC HQ and represents an approximately 40 percent share of the 2015 194 million CHF budget of the ICRC HQ.

The TOR established the following funding goals of SDC-HA's contribution to the ICRC HQ:

- **Operations:** To maintain a strong, effective and efficient ICRC HQ that supports ICRC's delegations around the world.
- **Policy:** To intensify policy dialogue and exchanges on operational approaches and international humanitarian community areas of concerns, including humanitarian principles, between SDC-HA, the ICRC and the Donor Support Group (DSG); and to intensify partnerships with key actors and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.
- **International Humanitarian Law:** To strengthen ICRC's mandate in the promotion, reaffirmation, clarification, and development of IHL; to foster compliance with IHL; and to improve access to vulnerable populations.
- **International Geneva:** To maintain a robust ICRC headquarters that aligns with Switzerland's Foreign Policy Strategy 2012-2015, i.e., the "systematic promotion of international Geneva," which should enable Switzerland to play an international role "disproportionate to the size of its national territory."

The SDC is accountable to the Swiss Parliament on the results achieved by official development assistance. SDC is therefore interested in strengthening the efficiency and results of its partners, including the ICRC. While Switzerland has financed the ICRC with headquarters contributions since 1949, the partnership has never been independently evaluated.

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the SDC-ICRC funding relationship to develop forward-looking recommendations that will inform their future partnership. Its objective is to determine to what extent the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ has realized the goals of the funding, which were compiled during the development of the TOR for this evaluation. The evaluation considers activities undertaken as part of the SDC-ICRC

relationship from 2013 to 2016, as they relate to the ICRC HQ. The audience for this evaluation is the leadership and key decision makers at both SDC and ICRC.

An analytical framework was created during the inception phase to structure the evaluation. Two streams create the foundation for the evaluation's research and subsequent analysis:

- **Research Stream 1:** This portion of research for the assignment evaluates how ICRC is managing, maintaining, and transforming its Geneva headquarters to strengthen its ability to deliver its core services while increasing its effectiveness and efficiency for the same.
- **Research Stream 2:** This portion of research for the assignment evaluates how the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ is relevant to the overall objectives of the FDFA (mainly SDC-HA).

The resulting findings and conclusions from these independent research streams were then used to answer the overarching evaluation question.

Findings

The evaluation finds that the reorganization of the ICRC HQ has the potential to improve the HQ's performance and, more importantly, the delivery of the ICRC's core services across its global operations. The processes of change being undertaken have only just begun and, as such, their true contribution to performance improvements remains to be determined. The ICRC manages its human and financial resources within the standards expected of similar humanitarian organizations, and is pursuing changes that have the potential to realize significant financial efficiencies across its global operation.

The ICRC's planned changes to the organization's professional and cultural expectations and the professionalization of the human resources (HR) department have the potential to improve the impact of the ICRC's core services by shifting to a performance-based mindset and a structure that provides broader, more equitable opportunities to the entire global workforce. While the internationalization of ICRC's workforce happened more than two decades ago, ICRC largely retained a traditional distinction in its staffing expectations and processes for expatriates and local staff. The current envisioned changes place the ICRC in the middle of the competition for talent at all levels and geographies, and demands that staff bear the responsibility of maintaining their own careers.

Results-based management (RBM) is part of the ICRC organizational culture at all levels, and underscores expectations for the conduct of its programming and professional staff. However, the processes and tools that the ICRC uses for RBM fall short of what is truly needed to identify, monitor, and manage against programmatic and organizational outcomes. ICRC is in the process of holistically transforming its RBM process and tools to address this.

The SDC-ICRC partnership structure, while unique in terms of historical context and governance structure, is not unusual in the funding portfolio of SDC-HA and is well aligned with the SDC-HA trust-based partnering modality. The reorganization of ICRC HQ, if fully realized, should have a net positive effect on the objectives of the partnership.

The evaluation is mixed with regards to how the Swiss contribution to ICRC headquarters is relevant to the overall objectives of the FDFA, mainly SDC-HA. During the evaluation timeframe, ICRC and FDFA lacked a clear and shared understanding of some of the objectives and their connections to specific activities or initiatives. The Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ is written into the strategic priorities of SDC-HA and can be seen as implementation of their objectives, and is therefore fully aligned and relevant. However,

there is an unconsidered potential to connect the ICRC's work with the FDFA's broader strategic objectives, which would better respond to the interest to intensify, or derive greater value, from the funding relationship and strategic dialogue.

The dialogue between FDFA and ICRC has been better structured in the period under evaluation as a result of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was signed in 2013. However, FDFA is largely perceived by external stakeholders as following the ICRC's positions, and not vice versa. As FDFA is not perceived as a leading donor in cutting-edge humanitarian policy thinking and agendas, there were questions about where the policy dialogue and relationship with the ICRC should go. The ICRC is intensifying its own investment in policy and shows increased engagement and sophistication. The president and director general are credited with pushing the ICRC to engage with the humanitarian and international community in a clearer, more constructive way. This shift has yet to completely anchor itself below the leadership and senior management levels of the HQ.

The ICRC has anchored the importance of partnership in its institutional strategy in an increasingly sophisticated manner and is perceived as having increased the quality of its engagement from its HQ. While the partnership with the Movement has been given increasing strategic importance by the ICRC, the relationship around IHL is the strongest example of partnership between the ICRC and FDFA.

While the ICRC has integrated the "software" focus from the 2014 Swiss strategy for International Geneva into its 2015-2018 Institutional Strategy, the ICRC has not been given any explicit guidance from the FDFA on what is expected for it to contribute to the success of International Geneva. Some stakeholders within the FDFA fear the ICRC will leave Geneva or lose interest in the FDFA relationship. This fear is shaped in the context of the ICRC's transformation and globalization, delocalization of transactional services outside of Geneva, and ambition to grow. However, others who have a more business-oriented view provide balance. There is little likelihood that the ICRC will leave Geneva or forget its privileged relationship with Switzerland. However, this emotional component of the relationship represents a critical obstacle to having frank, direct, and authentic strategic discussions.

Conclusions

The key question of this evaluation was to examine the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ and assess to what extent the objectives identified have been achieved. Ultimately, the findings allow the evaluators to draw conclusions about the four evaluation objectives, but these conclusions do not, and cannot, comment on achievements realized by the ICRC HQ funding. Rather, the conclusions offer an opportunity to form recommendations for the future SDC-HA and ICRC funding relationship. As such, over the timeframe considered by the evaluation, we can conclude that:

- **Conclusion 1:** The ICRC has been its own worst critic, proactively recognizing that it must successfully undergo transformational change in order to grow, remain relevant, meet donor demands, and deliver on its mission.
- **Conclusion 2:** The ICRC seeks to operate as efficiently as possible, without sacrificing effectiveness or quality.
- **Conclusion 3:** Having laid the foundations for its transformation, the ICRC now faces the significant challenge of implementing substantive change in the organization's culture.
- **Conclusion 4:** The ICRC is becoming more competitive in the humanitarian sector.
- **Conclusion 5:** The transformations accompanying the ICRC's growth strategy include fundraising, which has implications for its relationship with Switzerland.

- **Conclusion 6:** Stakeholders have perceived strong tangible and intangible benefits when ICRC and FDFA have pursued joint initiatives with clear goals and outcomes.
- **Conclusion 7:** The ICRC is recognized as a leader in the humanitarian sector, but is challenged to authentically allow itself to be influenced by outsiders.
- **Conclusion 8:** While the ICRC HQ's engagement with Geneva is aligned with Switzerland's International Geneva strategy, a lack of clarity on what is expected of them from FDFA suggests that the realities have outgrown the scope and funding envelope of the existing FDFA-ICRC MoU.
- **Conclusion 9:** While the connection between FDFA and the ICRC is strong, this is largely due to a shared history, their connection to the Geneva Conventions and almost parallel organizational strategic objectives, rather than clarity about how the organizations support or strengthen one another. The FDFA-ICRC relationship has been better structured in 2013-2016, but more can be done.

Recommendations

From these conclusions, the evaluation provides the following recommendations for the ICRC, FDFA and their relationship-partnership moving forward:

For the FDFA and ICRC

- **Recommendation 1:** Start a new strategic FDFA-ICRC conversation.
- **Recommendation 2:** Define a partnership that allows measurement of its successes and challenges.
- **Recommendation 3:** Remove the International Geneva objective from the future MoU, and shift to a more agile project-based or core funding partnership to allow FDFA and the ICRC to develop further initiatives.
- **Recommendation 4:** Build on the successes of the partnership, particularly IHL.

For FDFA and SDC-HA

- **Recommendation 5:** The FDFA should seek to learn from the ICRC's transformation and increasing sophistication.
- **Recommendation 6:** The FDFA should continue to seek to punch above its weight by specifically supporting innovation and performance measurement.
- **Recommendation 7:** Create opportunities for Switzerland to champion institutional causes.

For ICRC

- **Recommendation 8:** Prepare, communicate, and maintain an operational vision for what ICRC will become due to its transformation that includes all processes and changes.
- **Recommendation 9:** Continue to pursue the transformation toward increased efficiency, while ensuring the continued delivery of effective and high-quality services.
- **Recommendation 10:** As part of the transformation process, ICRC should seek to streamline its decision-making processes.
- **Recommendation 11:** Accompany the cultural shift associated with large institutional change.

Acknowledgements

The evaluation team would like to thank all of the individuals who contributed their time and perspectives to the findings of this report. We especially thank Abraham Doblado, who tirelessly coordinated efforts at the ICRC, and Lena Einsele, who did the same at FDFA/SDC. Stephen Ladek extends his thanks to the delegations in Bangkok and Manila, and the Manila Shared Services Centre, for all of their help in coordinating successful field visits.

Limitations and Constraints

This report represents a snapshot in time, and the narrative, findings, conclusions, and recommendations should be seen in that light. As with all evaluations, this report is limited by the time and effort allotted to its creation.

The evaluation benefited from an in-depth inception process that included a documentation review and interviews with more than 30 key stakeholders. This process resulted in the identification and unanimous agreement on the following important constraints to this evaluation:

Formal structure of Switzerland- ICRC relationship

The four funding goals presented in the TOR for this evaluation (see below) reflect the broad spirit of various MoU between Switzerland and the ICRC HQ since the 1970s. These goals are not written as actual objectives, and there are no indicators to measure results. Furthermore, the MoU does not include reporting requirements for ICRC about progress toward achieving the goals or how they have employed the funding. A table of activities was developed by SDC-HA, which complemented the most recent 2013 *Protocole d'Accord*. This listing was described to the evaluators as an illustrative exercise between the parties and not a road map of, or commitment to, actual outputs. This table has been updated by the ICRC and SDC-HA, most recently in June, 2016.

The evaluation team flagged this issue through the inception process, asking stakeholders specifically about what their expectations were for the focus of the evaluation. The topics in the report below reflect these consultations.

Non-earmarked funding

It was made clear to the evaluation team that the provision of non-earmarked funding to the ICRC is a conscious political decision by the Swiss government that underscores its deep and abiding support. At the same time, ICRC views non-earmarked funding from the Swiss government, and other donors, as highly strategic because of its flexibility.

As the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ is non-earmarked, the ICRC is not required or expected to provide grant-specific reporting on the use of the funds. While SDC-HA has made progressively greater investments in its internal reporting on the grant provided,¹ at the time of this evaluation, these reports remain at a broad-brush level of detail. This evaluation's TOR thus represent a form of reverse-engineering, attempting to connect Swiss funding to broader ICRC HQ results, rather than articulate known metrics and systems of measurement.

The evaluation has included this missing element of clear metrics and systems of measurement regarding the relationship as one of the key recommendations for improving performance in the future.

¹ See Results-oriented Core Contribution Management (CCM), 2012, 2013 and 2014, provided to the consultants.

Attribution

As noted in the TOR, the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ represents roughly 40 percent of the total ICRC HQ budget. The 2015 audit undertaken by the SFAO² reported that 73 percent of the total ICRC HQ budget is on staff expenditure alone. As such, the Swiss contribution would cover, at best, roughly 60 percent of total ICRC HQ salaries, with no indication of which salaries the Swiss contribution funded. During inception interviews, the consultants noted that, generally, respondents attributed a great deal of ICRC HQ success stories to Swiss non-earmarked funding - which underscores the difficulties associated with attribution.

As stated in the TOR, the purpose of this assignment is first for learning and second for accountability. Given the nature of the funding (i.e., non-earmarked) the evaluation is unable to comment on specific uses of the funds. To complete the assignment, the evaluation team therefore created an analytical framework (see below) that provided for in-depth research about the activities and outcomes as they related to the specific evaluation questions.

Work Stream 1

The research for Work Stream 1 - which focuses on how the ICRC is managing, maintaining, and transforming its Geneva HQ to strengthen its ability to deliver its core services, while increasing its effectiveness and efficiency for the same - was limited by the absence of a guiding document that would provide a complete overview of the organizational, structural, and cultural changes being undertaken at ICRC. While the evaluators spent a significant portion of time understanding the changes, this report does not attempt to provide this holistic overview.

Work Stream 2

The Work Stream 2 portion of the report - which focuses on the relevance of the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ compared with the overall objectives of FDFA (mainly Swiss humanitarian aid) - has deliberately focused on specific aspects of the ICRC HQ's work in policy, partnerships, International Humanitarian Law (IHL), and International Geneva. It does not attempt to evaluate all of the work done in these domains nor claim the funding of Switzerland to the ICRC HQ would have covered all of the organization's costs in policy, IHL, and International Geneva functions and activities. In answering the specific questions posed in the evaluation, efforts have been made to illustrate the findings through the use of case studies that were jointly identified by both FDFA and the ICRC.

Internal Audit Reports

Finally, the evaluation team specifically requested access to relevant ICRC internal audit reports in order to better understand the transformations the organization is undergoing and how it has partnered with the Swiss government. In line with ICRC policy, access to these reports was denied to the evaluators.

² See Sitzbeitrag der Schweiz an das Internationale Komitee vom Roten Kreuz (IKRK), Direktion für Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit (DEZA), 2015.

Background

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is Switzerland's international cooperation agency within the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). Swiss Humanitarian Aid (SDC-HA) is one of four SDC departments. To realize its objectives, SDC-HA supports and assists international organizations, and more generally, the humanitarian aid system, to deliver results and improve performance of the same. SDC-HA also carries out direct activities.

Within SDC-HA, the Multilateral Division (MD) is responsible for Switzerland's multilateral humanitarian engagements and commitments. The SDC-HA currently supports six priority partners:

- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC),
- World Food Programme (WFP),
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR),
- United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF),
- Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and
- United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

Given its focus on protection, the quality of its interventions, its access to target populations, and its development and promotion of IHL and humanitarian principles, the ICRC is a privileged interlocutor of Switzerland on institutional, legal, and operational levels.

SDC-HA provides financial support to the ICRC in two streams: an annual, non-earmarked, core contribution to the ICRC HQ in Geneva, and varying levels of funding to ICRC field operations. As detailed in the TOR for this assignment, since 1988, the core contribution to ICRC's HQ has totalled 1,821.1 billion CHF and the annual contribution currently stands at 80 million CHF. This is by far the largest financing for the tasks carried out at the ICRC HQ and represents an approximately 40 percent share of the 2015 194 million CHF budget of the ICRC HQ.

The International Committee of the Red Cross³

The ICRC was established in 1863 and is at the origin of the Geneva Conventions and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The ICRC is a private association registered in Switzerland with the humanitarian mission to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance. The ICRC also endeavours to promote respect for international humanitarian law and its implementation in national law. The ICRC is financed entirely through voluntary contributions from the States Parties to the Geneva Conventions, the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, supranational organizations, and private donors.

The ICRC's work is based on four pillars: assistance, cooperation, prevention, and protection. The ICRC employs more than 13,000 staff worldwide, nearly 1,000 of whom work at the Geneva headquarters. The annual budget for the headquarters was CHF 194 million in 2015.⁴

³ This section is copied verbatim from the original TOR for this evaluation. See page 4.

⁴ ICRC (2014), Appeals 2015 – Headquarters, Geneva: ICRC.

Funding Objectives

As noted in the Limitations and Constraints section, in the humanitarian sector it is commonly understood that grantees of non-earmarked funding have a greatly reduced reporting burden and are generally not required to provide activity- or outcome-specific reporting on the use of funds.⁵ To perform an evaluation, criteria therefore had to be determined by which the performance of the relationship could be measured. The TOR established the goals of SDC-HA's contribution to the ICRC HQ as:

- **Operations:** To maintain a strong, effective and efficient ICRC HQ that supports ICRC's delegations around the world.
- **Policy:** To intensify policy dialogue and exchanges on operational approaches and international humanitarian community areas of concerns, including humanitarian principles, between SDC, ICRC, and the Donor Support Group (DSG), and intensify partnerships with key actors and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.
- **International Humanitarian Law:** To strengthen the ICRC's mandate in the promotion, reaffirmation, clarification, and development of IHL; foster compliance with IHL; and improve access to vulnerable populations.
- **International Geneva:** To maintain a robust ICRC HQ in line with Switzerland's Foreign Policy Strategy 2012-2015, i.e., the "systematic promotion of international Geneva," which in turn should enable Switzerland to play an international role "disproportionate to the size of its national territory."⁶

The SDC is accountable to the Swiss Parliament for the results achieved by official development assistance. SDC is therefore interested in strengthening the efficiency and results orientation of its partners, including the ICRC. While Switzerland has financed the ICRC with HQ contributions since 1949, the partnership has never been independently evaluated. However, the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) did conduct an audit of the SDC contribution to the ICRC HQ in 2015. The audit report focused on the management of resources at the ICRC HQ and "revealed neither marked inefficiencies nor any unacceptable use of funds."⁷

Evaluation Purpose, Objectives, Scope, and Intended Audience

Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to evaluate the SDC-ICRC funding relationship to develop forward-looking recommendations that will inform their future partnership.

Objective

Whereas the SFAO audit was specifically interested in the use of SDC's ICRC HQ contribution and compliance with the Swiss subsidies law, the objective of this evaluation is to determine to what extent the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ has realized the goals of the funding, which were compiled during the development of the TOR for this evaluation.

⁵ For examples, see Annex I in http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Grand_Bargain_final_22_May_FINAL-2.pdf.

⁶ See TOR, p. 9 and Bundesratsbeschluss "Contribution financière de la Confédération au budget siège du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR) pour l'année 2015"; Switzerland's Foreign Policy Strategy 2012-2015.

⁷ See TOR, p. 10 and EFK, Sitzbeitrag der Schweiz an das Internationale Komitee vom Roten Kreuz (IKRK), EFK-14481 / inkl. Stellungnahme / 31. März 2015, p. 9.

Scope

The evaluation considers activities undertaken as part of the SDC-ICRC relationship from 2013 to 2016, as they relate to the ICRC HQ.⁸ ICRC field programming is not included in this assignment, except as it relates to the effectiveness and efficiency of HQ operations.

Intended Audience

The audience for the deliverables associated with this evaluation are the leadership and key decision-makers at both SDC and ICRC. The deliverables could also be of interest to the ICRC Donor Support Group (DSG). The final report will be published on the FDFA home page, according to FDFA standards.

Analytical Framework

An analytical framework was created during the inception phase to structure the evaluation. Two streams create the foundation for the evaluation's research and subsequent analysis:

- **Research Stream 1:** This portion of research for the assignment evaluates how ICRC is managing, maintaining, and transforming its Geneva HQ to strengthen its ability to deliver its core services while increasing its effectiveness and efficiency for the same.
- **Research Stream 2:** This portion of research for the assignment evaluates how the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ is relevant to the overall objectives of FDFA (mainly Swiss Humanitarian Affairs).

The findings and conclusions from these independent research streams were then used to answer the overarching evaluation question. The framework is presented in detail in Annex C.

Evaluation Methodology

Overall Approach

Guiding Principles

In addition to the evaluation being in accordance with the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation, the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, and the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, International Solutions Group (ISG) has used a range of participatory methods to ensure that key stakeholders and partners were centrally involved in reflective and forward-thinking processes, and has adhered to the following principles:

- **Consultation** with, and participation by, key stakeholders to ensure that the assignment is fully relevant to its users and stakeholders, and that the evidence and analysis are sound and factually accurate. Consultation was iterative, and each stage was informed by and built upon earlier project work.
- **Methodological rigor** to ensure that the most appropriate sources of evidence for answering the Analytical Framework were used in a technically appropriate manner. The consultants will use different data sources and various methods throughout the

⁸ The Swiss HQ contribution is disbursed by SDC and managed by the SDC-HA Multilateral Division. Importantly, other directorates within the FDFA (e.g. Directorate for International Law) are also involved in ICRC HQ-related activities, and this work will, as necessary and possible, be incorporated into the evaluation as detailed in the Analytical Framework.

process of the study to triangulate information - checking and corroborating findings to ensure that they are consistent.

- **Technical expertise and expert knowledge** to ensure that the assignment benefits from knowledge and experience in the field of humanitarian aid, that it contributes to building the body of evidence around what works, what does not work, and in each case why.
- **Independence** to ensure that the findings stand solely on an impartial and objective analysis of the evidence, without undue influence by any stakeholder group.

In this context, our approach incorporates best-practice evaluation criteria and principles for effective development assistance, as well as norms and standards of the OECD/DAC framework.

Data Sources

The consultants have collected data from three main sources: documentation, key informant interviews and field visits (observation):

- **Documentation:** Documentation is the cornerstone of the evaluation. The consultants provided both SDC and ICRC with specific requests for documentation, and additional documents sourced by SDC, the ICRC, and the consultants were reviewed as the assignment progressed. A listing of documents reviewed for this assignment is included in Annex B.
- **Key Informants:** The consultants interviewed 88 stakeholders throughout the course of the data collection phase to clarify documentation and glean deeper insights into HQ operations at ICRC. A complete list of stakeholders interviewed is included in Annex A.
- **Field Visits (Observation):** Field visits were conducted at the Bangkok, Thailand, Regional Delegation; the Manila, Philippines, Delegation; and the Manila Shared Services Centre.

Data-collection tools and purposes

The inception report for this evaluation has been attached as Annex D to this report and contains information about the data-collection tools and purposes.

General Findings of the Evaluation Objective

Evaluation Objective

To what extent has the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ realized the goals of the funding, which were compiled during the development of the TOR for this evaluation?

As evidenced in the pages below, the evaluation finds that the reorganization of the ICRC HQ has the potential to improve the HQ's performance and, more importantly, the delivery of the ICRC's core services across its global operations. The processes of change being undertaken have only just begun and, as such, their true contribution to performance improvements remains to be determined. The ICRC manages its human and financial resources within the standards expected of similar humanitarian organizations, and is pursuing changes that have the potential to realize significant financial efficiencies across its global operation.

The ICRC's planned changes to the organization's professional and cultural expectations and the professionalization of the human resources (HR) department have the potential to improve the impact of the ICRC's core services by shifting to a performance-based

mindset and a structure that provides broader, more equitable opportunities to the entire global workforce. While the internationalization of ICRC's workforce happened more than two decades ago, ICRC largely retained a traditional distinction in its staffing expectations and processes for expatriates and local staff. The current envisioned changes place the ICRC in the middle of the competition for talent at all levels and geographies, and demands that staff bear the responsibility of maintaining their own careers.

Results-based management (RBM) is part of the ICRC organizational culture at all levels, and underscores expectations for the conduct of its programming and professional staff. However, the processes and tools that the ICRC uses for RBM fall short of what is truly needed to identify, monitor, and manage against programmatic and organizational outcomes. ICRC is in the process of holistically transforming its RBM process and tools to address this.

The SDC-ICRC partnership structure, while unique in terms of historical context and governance structure, is not unusual in the funding portfolio of SDC-HA and is well aligned with the SDC-HA trust-based partnering modality. The reorganization of ICRC HQ, if fully realized, should have a net positive effect on the objectives of the partnership.

The evaluation is mixed with regards to how the Swiss contribution to ICRC headquarters is relevant to the overall objectives of the FDFA, mainly SDC-HA. During the evaluation timeframe, ICRC and FDFA lacked a clear and shared understanding of some of the objectives and their connections to specific activities or initiatives. The Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ is written into the strategic priorities of SDC-HA and can be seen as implementation of their objectives, and is therefore fully aligned and relevant. However, there is an unconsidered potential to connect the ICRC's work with the FDFA's broader strategic objectives, which would better respond to the interest to intensify, or derive greater value, from the funding relationship and strategic dialogue.

The dialogue between FDFA and ICRC has been better structured in the period under evaluation as a result of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was signed in 2013. However, FDFA is largely perceived by external stakeholders as following the ICRC's positions, and not vice versa. As FDFA is not perceived as a leading donor in cutting-edge humanitarian policy thinking and agendas, there were questions about where the policy dialogue and relationship with the ICRC should go. The ICRC is intensifying its own investment in policy and shows increased engagement and sophistication. The president and director general are credited with pushing the ICRC to engage with the humanitarian and international community in a clearer, more constructive way. This shift has yet to completely anchor itself below the leadership and senior management levels of the HQ.

The ICRC has anchored the importance of partnership in its institutional strategy in an increasingly sophisticated manner and is perceived as having increased the quality of its engagement from its HQ. While the partnership with the Movement has been given increasing strategic importance by the ICRC, the relationship around IHL is the strongest example of partnership between the ICRC and FDFA.

While the ICRC has integrated the "software" focus from the 2014 Swiss strategy for International Geneva into its 2015-2018 Institutional Strategy, the ICRC has not been given any explicit guidance from the FDFA on what is expected for it to contribute to the success of International Geneva. Some stakeholders within the FDFA fear the ICRC will leave Geneva or lose interest in the FDFA relationship. This fear is shaped in the context of the ICRC's transformation and globalization, delocalization of transactional services outside of Geneva, and ambition to grow. However, others who have a more business-oriented view provide balance. There is little likelihood that the ICRC will leave Geneva or

forget its privileged relationship with Switzerland. However, this emotional component of the relationship represents a critical obstacle to having frank, direct, and authentic strategic discussions.

Findings on ICRC HQ's Effectiveness and Efficiency (Research Stream 1)

This portion of the report evaluates how ICRC is managing, maintaining, and transforming its Geneva headquarters to strengthen its ability to deliver its core services, while increasing its effectiveness and efficiency for the same.

Evaluation Question 1: To what extent does the current reorganization of the ICRC HQ improve the performance of both the HQ and the ICRC as a whole?

***Finding 1:** The reorganization of the ICRC HQ has the potential to improve the HQ's performance and, more importantly, the delivery of the ICRC's core services across global operations. The processes of change being undertaken have only begun, so their true contribution to performance improvements remains to be determined.*

It would be difficult to understate the breadth and depth of change that is occurring, under consideration, or recently delivered at the ICRC - both at the HQ and across the organization. A summary of these changes is provided below. To understand how these changes have, or have not, improved the performance of the ICRC, it is important to understand a) why the decision to initiate these changes has been taken, and b) what the expected performance improvements resulting from the changes will be.

Why the decision to enact changes has been taken

The ICRC has made a strategic decision to expand its operations in response to the changing nature of humanitarian action.⁹ In summary, the humanitarian landscape is becoming increasingly complex on all levels. Specifically speaking about conflict, the ICRC's focal area for humanitarian operations, trends find conflicts are lasting longer; increasingly involve non-state actors; cover more, diverse geography; and are intensified by other environmental factors, such as natural disasters and climate change.¹⁰

At the same time, funding for humanitarian action remains a perennial problem, and funding gaps for response continue to be a norm across the sector. While innovative and diverse funding mechanisms are being offered (see section on funding diversification below), these new options also make the fundraising landscape increasingly complex to navigate.¹¹

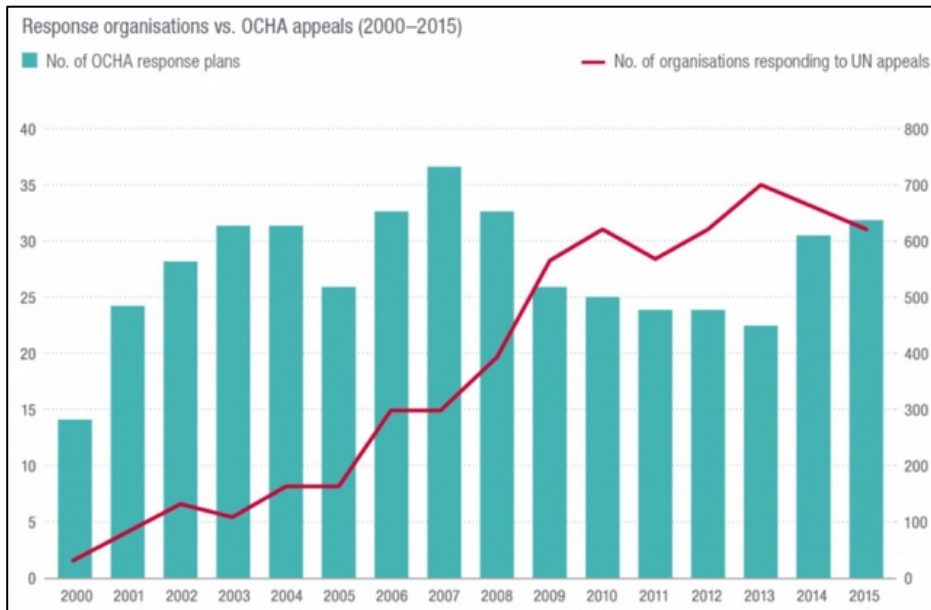
Within this environment, the ICRC also sees the delivery of its services evolving. Once an organization that relied solely on its ability to be physically present for protection and assistance, the ICRC is increasingly finding itself in need of delivering information and communication services that align with the digital age. The ICRC also continues to strengthen, reimagine, and refine its services related to health, access to education, cash assistance, and more. The ICRC is also working more intensely with partners, such as National Societies, to deliver its services effectively and efficiently.¹²

⁹ Taken from internal ICRC document to ICRC and SDC.

¹⁰ See <https://www.odi.org/opinion/10345-infographics-how-humanitarian-action-changed>.

¹¹ See Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2016, Development Initiatives at <http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/GHA-report-2016-full-report.pdf>

Source: Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2016
ICRC Strategy 2015-19.



Finally, the humanitarian sector is increasingly competitive, with more and more organizations entering the sector. While the ICRC, as the legally mandated guardian of IHL through the Geneva Conventions, continues to hold a unique

position for traditional donors, other organizations continue to acquire a greater share of available funding (see graphic left).¹³ As interviewees noted, while ICRC has substantially increased its investment in internal systems in recent years, it underinvested in those systems from early 2000 to 2010. Without significant changes across the organization, the ICRC cannot be adaptive, agile, and responsive to the humanitarian needs and donor expectations of today and the future.

What the ICRC expects to improve with its changes

The ICRC has decided to enact changes at its HQ and across the global organization to accommodate its plans to grow in response to current and future humanitarian needs. The ICRC expects the envisioned changes will improve its operational performance by:¹⁴

- Increasing the agility and flexibility of organizational structures and functioning,
- Devolving decision-making responsibilities to country and regional delegation levels,
- Eliminating duplication and improving the contextualization of responses through clarity and transparency of staff roles and responsibilities,
- Prioritizing staff management of external relationships (e.g. diplomacy and partnerships),
- Eliminating historical “one size fits all” administrative processes and introducing differentiated approaches¹⁵,
- Giving individuals and teams greater autonomy, and
- Increasing cost efficiency without sacrificing operational effectiveness.

Concurrently, the ICRC expects to improve its performance by delocalizing and/or outsourcing many of its corporate services, such as IT, accounting, and others.

Importantly, the ICRC has specifically focused on de-correlating the continued growth of field operations from its HQ. This has been realized by significantly limiting transactional

¹³ Graphic source: <https://www.odi.org/opinion/10345-infographics-how-humanitarian-action-changed>. The graphic shows that while appeals for funding from OCHA have a slightly upward trend, the number of organizations that are responding to UN appeals is growing rapidly.

¹⁴ Taken from internal ICRC document to the ICRC and SDC.

¹⁵ “One size fits all” refers to the ICRC’s past practice of delivering the same administrative services to all delegations and staff regardless of size, expertise, and other factors.

activities at HQ (see below) and instead focusing activities on strategic, global, and high value for money tasks.

How change decisions may realize performance improvements

A detailed account of the change activities being undertaken by the ICRC is not provided in this report, given their volume, breadth, and scope. Indeed, as noted below, the evaluation was not provided with a single source document, or overall planning tool, that captures the change happening. An overview of these activities - and how they interact with the performance improvement goals - can be seen through the four categories below.

Importantly, the changes being undertaken at the ICRC are in various stages of delivery, and as of this report, there has not been enough time for an evidence base to be built that would demonstrate how the changes have actually contributed to improved performance.

Human Resources

The ICRC still delivers the vast majority of its services by “being there” with staff on the ground in a conflict context; it is an organization of people physically serving other people. As such, the most profound changes happening across the ICRC are those related to HR through the interconnected People Management Programme (PMP) and restructuring of the HR department. A detailed discussion of these changes is provided below (see Evaluation Question 3). At its core, as described by stakeholders, is the decision to move from a task/delivery mindset to a performance-based mindset within the organization. This is a deep cultural shift throughout the ICRC, and, as most ICRC interviewees clearly stated, the one process that has received the most pushback.

The changes involved in this set of processes directly address the improvement performance metrics of devolving decision making, clarity of staff roles and responsibilities, eliminating “one size fits all” administrative processes, and giving individuals and teams greater autonomy. Strategically, the changes involved in this area improve the ICRC’s ability to ensure they have “the right person, at the right place, at the right time, at the right cost.”

Structural Changes and Delocalization

Complementing or closely aligning with the HR changes are the decisions around the delocalization and outsourcing of corporate services and restructuring of the fundamental model of delegation management.

The delocalization¹⁶ and outsourcing of services is described in detail below (See Evaluation Questions 2 and 3). The delocalization process responds to a number of ICRC’s proposed performance-improving metrics. For the portion of delocalization focused on moving transactional duties (e.g., accounting, reporting) from Geneva to service centers, they realize cost savings and efficiencies while improving service quality.¹⁷ At the same time, the delocalization of other positions, such as HR managers, responds to increasing flexibility, devolving decision making, improving clarity and transparency in staff roles, and eliminating the “one size fits all” administrative structure.

One question asked by a majority of interviewees regarding structural changes revolved around decision making and governance. In sum, staff is wary that the ICRC will simply

¹⁶ From the TOR for this evaluation: Delocalization is when corporate services are offshored to ICRC shared service centres in Manila or Belgrade. Services are outsourced when they can be done by a company or organization outside of ICRC.

¹⁷ A good example of this can be seen in the REX/REP delocalization of all reporting to MSSC. ICRC has found that they have substantially reduced the cost associated with report, while dramatically improving and expanding this service.

redraw its organigram without implementing concurrent changes to how decisions are made or operations run. At the time of this report, the ICRC is just beginning the process of determining a new delegation-management model. Interviewees stressed that this process needs to be a bottom up/grassroots approach that involves a large stakeholder group to ensure buy-in and minimize the same types of change-management issues experienced with HR processes. This process will tackle the issues of how a delegation will be organized in the future (e.g., structure, direct reports, oversight) and, importantly, whether delegations will be managed by objectives or exceptions.¹⁸ The conversations around these restructuring processes potentially feed into the realization of all performance metrics.

The higher-level governing structures of the ICRC¹⁹ have also experienced changes as part of the overall reorganization. Since 2012, the Office of the Director General has, among other changes, removed layers of management, established a Project Management Office, incorporated the legal counsel function, established a Global Compliance Office, integrated Division for Cooperation and Coordination within the Movement, and overseen the development of the new planning and monitoring tool.

Planning and Monitoring

ICRC has been an organization focused on results-based management (RBM) since it adopted the Planning for Results (PfR) process in 1998. Discussions with interviewees made it clear that the process is deeply embedded in the culture and operations of ICRC, but does not provide the organization with the data needed to track outcomes, share data across the organization, or perform multiyear planning. A more detailed discussion of this topic is below in Evaluation Question 6.

At the time of this evaluation, the ICRC is in the beginning stages of building an entirely new organization-wide planning and monitoring system. This tool is expected to completely modernize the PfR system and allow the organization to have “one source of the truth”²⁰ regarding the performance of its global operations, including at the outcome level. Complementing this new system, the ICRC is already using a new business intelligence (BI) system to monitor its delivery at the strategic level. As a cornerstone to the delivery of the ICRC’s programming, these new tools have the potential to contribute to realizing improvements across essentially all performance metrics.

Information Management and Systems

Underlying and supporting the changes happening in the ICRC’s structure and programming delivery is a concurrent profound change process of the organization’s information-management systems and process. An assessment carried out in 2012²¹ described a situation at the ICRC where the information systems and processes were

¹⁸ For a discussion of the differences, see <http://www.differencebetween.com/difference-between-mbo-and-vs-mbe/>. Briefly, management by objectives seeks to create common objectives for all staff that if realized will improve organizational performance. In contrast, management by exceptions sets standards for practice by staff and asks for management intervention only when deviation from those standards happens.

¹⁹ These are the Assembly, the Assembly Council, the Office of the President, the Directorate, the Internal Audit Unit, and the Independent Data Protection Control Commission.

²⁰ Today, information across ICRC is spread across organizational silos, and within those silos, information is held in separate compartments. These systems do not communicate with one another. As such, ICRC is either unable to create a detailed understanding of its global operations, or that understanding is unnecessarily arduous or time-consuming to create. Much of the information-management changes that have been enacted or are in process seek to change this so that everyone in the global organization has access to the same information and, as a result, all have the same “truth.”

²¹ See ICRC Information Environment Strategy & Roadmap, 2012.

10-15 years behind the times. Some areas of forward thinking and modern technology existed in the organization, interviewees noted, but these were far from the norm and in no way connected to, or shared information across, the global operation. Critically, the antiquated state of information management was not limited to IT infrastructure, applications, and what most people think of as Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the humanitarian world. Rather, it also includes organization of information, process management, and change management. The assessment was the foundation the Directorate used to approve a five-year strategic plan and road map for change - the first of its kind - and, as of the end of 2015, the IT Division estimates it has delivered more than 115 separate projects related to changing the ICRC's information-management systems.

The ICRC's level of maturity regarding its thinking and approach to information management has evolved considerably - from just thinking about IT tools to a much deeper consideration of how technology and information management can contribute to the achievement of the organization's strategic goals. Notably, the IT Division is also now involved in all strategic planning. The modernization of the ICRC's information-management systems should contribute to improving its performance by increasing agility, eliminating duplication, improving decision making, and providing efficiencies across the organization.

Challenges

The single greatest challenge the ICRC faces regarding the changes that are happening is the absence of a complete, well-defined, properly communicated overarching plan that both tells the story of all concurrent processes and provides expected demarcations for the beginning and end of the same. This not only contributes to the change fatigue staff members experience, but also unnecessarily increases their stress and anxiety levels amid prolonged uncertainty. That said, the ICRC's choice to enact so much change at the same time is actually good from a risk perspective: the ICRC is not relying on one large change (e.g., one ERP system) to reorient the organization. When one of the many processes experiences difficulties or unforeseen challenges, as is clearly the case with the PMP and reorganization of the HR department, the organization still has many other threads that continue to move it toward its desired results.

Another challenge stakeholders noted is the pace and complexity of the ICRC's decision-making processes. The ICRC operates within a culture of decision by consensus, and it is taken for granted that even small decisions usually require significant amounts of time. While slow decision making is not necessarily unusual for larger organizations, reporting requirements related to decision making within ICRC are noted as especially arduous.²² Further, stakeholders reported that the consensus culture also defaults to pushing decisions "up the food chain," toward Geneva and, ultimately, the Directorate.

Evaluation Question 2: To what extent does the ICRC demonstrate efficiency in managing its human and financial resources?

The evaluation sought to answer this question by investigating whether the ICRC, as an institution, seeks to deliver the highest-quality core services in the most cost-effective manner. We also considered the OECD DAC criteria concerning whether the ICRC's services are efficient compared with alternatives.²³

²² Interviewees indicated that reporting to decision-making bodies (Assembly, Council of the Assembly, Steering Committee, Directorate and Control Commission) consumed inordinate amounts of staff time, which noticeably detracted from building and eventually enacting the changes related to the PMP and HR reorganization.

²³ See <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>.

Finding 2: *There is a widely accepted perception among internal and external stakeholders that the ICRC is able to acquire access, operate in locations, and address issues that other organizations cannot.*

Alternatives to ICRC

While the humanitarian sector experiences growth, and more actors enter the sector (see above), interviewees underscored their perception that it maintains a unique position in the humanitarian world. Its mission, mandate, brand, and reputation are indisputable around the world, and the organization is provided access and able to operate in situations of armed conflict where other organizations cannot.²⁴ As such, to some degree, there is a perception that the funding provided to the ICRC to deliver its programming and maintain its organization is a unique investment in a particular form of humanitarian activity that other organizations cannot replicate.

Finding 3: *The ICRC manages its human and financial resources within the standards expected of similar humanitarian organizations, and is pursuing changes that have the potential to realize significant financial efficiencies across its global operation.*

Efficiency of ICRC's Human Resources

As noted elsewhere in this document (See Evaluation Question 1 above and Evaluation Question 3 below), the ICRC is at the beginning of an organizational change that will profoundly affect its staff. While much of this change is focused on cultural shifts through the PMP, attention has also been given to how the ICRC can most efficiently use its funding. To that end, the organization has embarked on processes of delocalization, outsourcing and internationalization that have three goals: to move transaction-focused positions such as accounting, contracting and IT support to shared service centres in Manila and Belgrade or to contractors; to shift delivery of HR services closer to field operations; and to attract and retain talent from the markets in which it operates.

Transaction-Focused Positions. The delocalization of transaction-based positions to the Manila Shared Service Centre (MSSC) began in 1993, with five financial auditing positions. Realizing success, the ICRC has continued to invest in this process, with an acceleration over the past three years. As of this evaluation, the MSSC is expected to host 149 staff that perform tasks related to financial auditing and compliance, logistics, donor reporting and HR services. The Belgrade service centre is the ICRC's new IT hub and hosts its server farm and IT support staff. While other outsourcing has happened in the past, since 2014, outsourcing of ICRC positions has been limited to travel-related services.

HR Delocalization. The HR delocalization is part of the ICRC's strategic goal of shifting decision making and greater responsibility to field operations. By placing HR representatives in regional and country delegations, the ICRC expects to realize efficiencies related to sourcing and retaining talent by providing individualized, professional HR services. HR services such as Learning and Development (LnD) are also being delivered closer to the source, helping to increase efficiencies. As a final outlier example, but one that provides a potential glimpse of the future, the ICRC is also experimenting with delivering training via virtual reality through use of a video-game interface.²⁵ While the evaluators note that completely revamping their training delivery is not currently part of the ICRC's plans, a platform like virtual reality has the potential to radically disrupt how the ICRC delivers its core services through highly customized,

²⁴ Several of these situations were discussed with stakeholders during this evaluation, but specifics about these operations have not been included to ensure the continued confidentiality of ICRC's work.

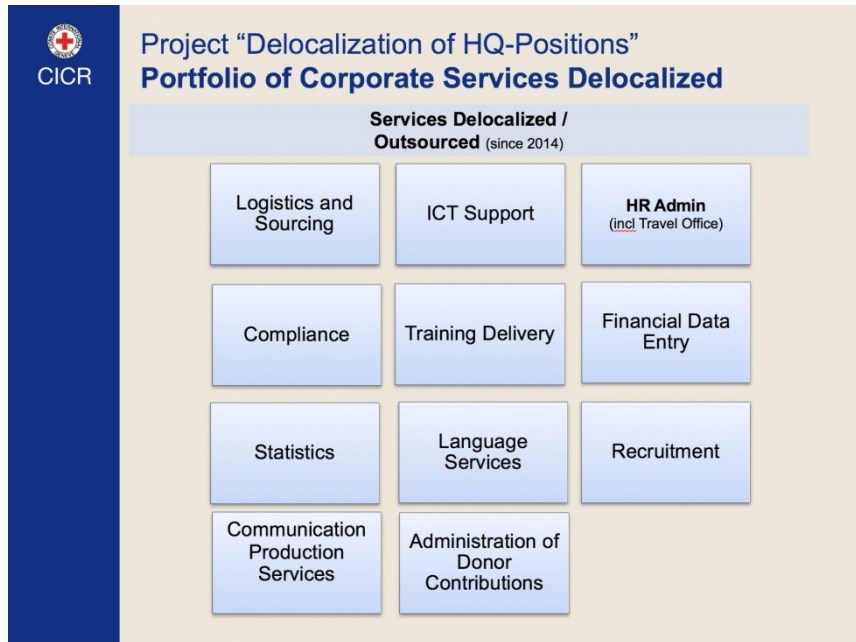
²⁵ See <http://blogs.icrc.org/gphi2/2015/05/06/the-innovation-series-3-virtual-reality-tools/>.

realistic training scenarios that can be delivered anywhere for a fraction of the cost of physical delivery.

Local Talent. The ICRC's decision to pursue "one global workforce" as the foundation of the PMP also has the potential to realize significant efficiencies for the organization.

Traditionally, high-profile positions of leadership and coordination have been held by mobile (i.e., expatriate) staff because of

issues related to the need for individuals with neutral nationality to perform field work,²⁶ confidentiality of information, and individuals with appropriate skills and experience not being available in the resident community. This reality has changed significantly over the past 20 years, thanks to the rapid development of mobile communications and increasing availability of qualified local talent, which allow field operations to deliver the same high-quality services at much lower costs.



Source of graphic: Presentation to Evaluation Team by ICRC

Efficient Use of Financial Resources

The evaluation did not perform a detailed study of the ICRC's use of its funds at HQ or field levels, as this had been recently completed during an audit by the SFAO.²⁷ This audit did not find any misuse of funds and, overall, found that the use of funding for HQ positions was within the norm of similar Geneva-based organizations.

As would be expected of any large, global organization, interviews with SFAO staff and other stakeholders indicated areas where the ICRC could improve efficiency. These include items such as centralizing logistics, professionalizing purchasing and supply chain management, and ensuring that salaries and bonuses are allocated according to expected performance. As indicated elsewhere in this document, these are all areas that are being addressed through the ICRC change processes.

While this evaluation does not provide extensive details related to financial savings realized by HR restructuring and the internationalization of the organization, the ICRC reports that the delocalization and outsourcing process will realize 26.5 million CHF in savings from fiscal year 2014 to 2018 on the total HQ cost base and a recurring annual cost savings of 10.2 million CHF.²⁸

²⁶ While the issue of citizenship from a neutral nationality is valid, the interviewees noted that the internationalization of ICRC continues to complicate this even further (e.g. individuals who hold a Swiss passport, but are ethnically non-European), and that parties to today's conflicts many not view Swiss nationality as "neutral" (see Evaluation Question 4 below).

²⁷ See EFK, Sitzbeitrag der Schweiz an das Internationale Komitee vom Roten Kreuz (IKRK), EFK-14481 / inkl. Stellungnahme / 31. März 2015.

²⁸ Source: ICRC presentation for this evaluation.

Finding 4: *ICRC's reserves are the mechanism ICRC uses for ensuring business continuity and an ability to provide rapid response to emergencies. This practice is in line with similar mechanisms at other humanitarian organizations, including those funded by SDC.*

ICRC Reserves

The topic of how ICRC creates, maintains and uses financial reserves was one area flagged for discussion in the recent audit by SFAO. At the core of this issue is the fact that, because ICRC is a not-for-profit entity, it should technically not be able to carry excess funding from year to year and still receive additional contributions from the Swiss government. ICRC gave the evaluators a robust explanation for how reserves are both created and used.²⁹ The evaluation team did not find the existence of reserves unusual or unreasonable for such an organization. Importantly, similar mechanisms exist in other organizations funded by SDC (e.g. the IRA at the WFP). The critical difference between ICRC and WFP in this example is that the WFP is contractually granted the specific right to retain and apply any unused funding to its subsequent operations, and if none exist, to the IRA. This suggests that the question is not whether ICRC should carry a reserve but rather how one is created and how big it should be (i.e., should ICRC be able to operate for one quarter, one year or some other length of time?).

Evaluation Question 3: To what extent does ICRC manage its human resources for maximum impact?

Finding 5: *The ICRC's planned changes to the organization's professional and cultural expectations and the professionalization of the Human Resources Department have the potential to improve the impact of the ICRC's core services through a shift to a performance-based mindset and a structure that provides broader and more equitable opportunities to the entire global workforce.*

The ICRC is transforming its relationship with its staff around the globe through two processes: the People Management Program (PMP), and a reorganization of the Human Resources (HR) Department. Broadly, the PMP processes are focused on shifting organizational culture, while the restructuring of the HR department is focused on professionalizing this function across the ICRC. While the two are realized as distinct processes, when completed, all PMP transformations will be owned by the HR department. As such, we've treated these as one process for the discussion below.

The PMP and HR restructuring have been initiated in response to the ICRC's identification of three major challenges:³⁰

- **Staffing:** The ICRC has increasingly had difficulty strategically managing its workforce; does not currently maximize the potential of its staff; and has difficulty sourcing and placing mobile staff, especially in hardship locations (a common issue for humanitarian organizations).
- **Meeting staff expectations:** The ICRC has recognized that managers want more voice in the makeup of their teams, and that staff seek more control over their career paths and are increasingly unsatisfied with available career opportunities.
- **Inadequate HR systems:** The ICRC does not have a modern HRIS, lacks a consistent and transparent HR process and professional HR roles, and has "overcentralized" the HR function at its HQ.

²⁹ See DDC_Reserve_2015.pptx and "What Reserves Are Used For".

³⁰ See HR Transformation, ICT Coordinators' Seminar Presentation 27 JUN 16.

The ICRC has initiated a wide-ranging response to these challenges. The PMP was envisioned and officially begun in 2012.³¹ Its underlying focus is the creation of “one global workforce” at the ICRC where the organization can put the “right person, in the right positions, at the right time, at the right cost.” While recognized by stakeholders as something of a cliché, the fundamentals of this ring true:

- The right person = the effectiveness of the ICRC’s service delivery
- The right place/time = the efficiency of the ICRC’s service delivery
- The right cost = the economics of the ICRC’s service delivery

Importantly, the PMP is a fundamental recognition that the ICRC’s growth will continue to include a majority of non-Swiss staff, and that resident staff will continue to make up the majority of the organization’s human talent (80 percent or more). As one stakeholder noted, the PMP is a process of “changing the resident/mobile staff story” across the organization.

At the time of the evaluation, while the PMP has been in process for several years, many components have only recently been put in place or realized in the organization.

Finding 6: *While the internationalization of the ICRC’s workforce happened more than two decades ago, the ICRC largely retained a traditional distinction in its staffing expectations and processes for expatriates and local staff. The current envisioned changes place the ICRC in the middle of the competition for talent at all levels and across all geographies, and demands that staff be responsible for maintaining their careers.*

Growing the talent pool

Traditionally, the ICRC operated from a perspective that high-value positions in its operations would be held by mobile staff. This is an artefact seen in other humanitarian organizations, whereby it was assumed that individuals from the communities where ICRC works do not have the skills or experience necessary to fulfil the needs and duties. This reality has changed dramatically in the past 25 years as resident staff gain advanced degrees, experience and savvy, and the PMP has specifically recognized this fact and its advantages for the ICRC. The PMP specifically seeks to exhaust options from the local market to fill positions before assigning mobile staff.³²

International Assignment Planning (IAP) and Pool Management

The IAP and Pool Management initiatives have two fundamental focuses:

- Staffing short-term (less than 12 months) positions (60 percent of mobile positions)
- Providing a job market (Compendium) for longer-term positions (40 percent of mobile positions)

Short-term positions: This process is newly designed to better manage the mobile workforce within metiers that are fielded for short-term assignments. The Pool Management process has made the Chef de Personnel role redundant.

Long-term positions: The ICRC has created an internal job market for longer-term positions. This is consistent with other large organizations, such as UN Agencies. Available or upcoming positions are published biannually, and staff can apply for positions if they qualify. Applications are then vetted and processed across multiple layers to find the best fit for each available position.

³¹ ICRC Annual Report, 2013 and People Management Program Strategy, 2012.

³² This is a good example of the interconnected nature of the HR department restructuring. To better facilitate the recruitment of local talent, ICRC is putting HR managers in the field in region- and country-specific roles.

The process of fulfilling short- and long-term staffing needs stands in sharp contrast to the traditional process for mobile staff, as stakeholders explained to the evaluators. Briefly, in the past, careers for mobile staff were managed through a relationship between the staff member and an HR officer at HQ (i.e., staffing was centrally planned). Staff did not apply or compete for positions; they were assigned to them. Today, employees are expected to manage their own careers, while ICRC provides support and tools. As could be expected, this change is viewed favourably by resident staff, but largely unfavourably by veteran mobile staff. The anxiety around this change was encapsulated by veteran mobile staff who recognized that they do not appear competitive “on paper” even though this is how they will be judged in the compendium process.³³ Other veterans believe that the new process is just another twist on the previous system. The Compendium process still requires Heads of Delegation to be part of the selection process, and it is assumed they will choose people they like or have worked with, even if those people are not the most qualified for the position.

Elements still to be implemented: Job grading and rewards

Three final pieces of the PMP that the ICRC has yet to realize are the creation of a job grading system that is consistent and transparent across jobs; the compensation policies, or rewards, for each job; and the benefits for mobile and resident staff. Dates for the finalization of this process are still being determined internally.

Finding 7: Recognizing its expectation that ICRC staff “own” their career paths, the organization is expanding the education and development outlets it provides in order to support this process, and has ensured the same outlets are available to all staff.

Learning and Development (LnD)

The transformations across LnD have been largely recognized and noted by ICRC stakeholders. Resident staff, especially, expressed highly positive sentiments for the possibilities these changes will have on their careers. LnD changes are seen across three processes:

- Humanitarian Leadership Management School (HLMS)
- iDevelop
- ICRC new staff integration

Humanitarian Leadership Management School

The HLMS has been created in response to two identified needs within ICRC for managers to be able to manage people. First, as reported by stakeholders, the ICRC’s management has traditionally been highly task- and delivery-oriented. Mobile staff rise through the ranks at the ICRC, learning how to deliver the day-to-day tasks of ICRC services and then, when they eventually become a Head of Delegation, they are generally unprepared to be professional managers. Second, the ICRC is increasingly diversifying its service delivery (e.g. health, education, diplomacy).

The ICRC created the People Leadership and Management (PLM) course in partnership with the UK’s Ashridge University. This effort was replaced by the HLMS, which has three modules: “Leading by example,” “Leading high-performing, multidisciplinary teams,” and “Leading complex operations and transformation.”

Interviews with ICRC stakeholders indicated this particular part of the PMP (i.e. “managers managing” vs. “managers delivering on tasks”) is an area where the

³³ Several veteran mobile stakeholders presented a similar story during interviews: a belief that if they would have to apply for their current jobs today by submitting their CV, they wouldn’t even receive a first consideration because they lack educational and other requirements.

organization is still getting significant internal pushback. Interviews with delegation staff confirmed this sentiment and underscored the need to increase the perceived value of the HLMS.

iDevelop

Created in 2014, the iDevelop program replaced the Capital Avenir Fund, which was available only to mobile staff. Through iDevelop, all staff can pursue individual skill development paid for by the ICRC. Stakeholder interviews indicate this is a very well-received development, especially for resident staff.

ICRC staff integration

Traditionally, after being hired, mobile staff were sent to Geneva for two weeks of integration training. The new format combines integration of resident and mobile staff, and provides integration as close to their assignment locations as possible. The updated integration is also delivered through a new, three-phase pedagogy that includes e-learning, face-to-face, and work-based learning.

Elements still to be implemented: Performance Management & Competency Framework

Another critical piece of the HR transformation is the development of a process that allows the ICRC to objectively assess the performance of its staff. In September 2015, the Directorate and Assembly Council approved five metrics that will be used for all staff performance grading: Leadership, Representation of the ICRC, Accountability, Beneficiary and Client Focus, and Teamwork and Collaboration; and an appraisal system for grading these metrics has been designed. The rollout of this system will accompany the delivery of the Human Resources Information System in 2017-2018.

Finding 8: *The ICRC has completely redesigned and restructured its Human Resources Department to professionalize this function, support staff needs, and improve the ICRC's competitiveness.*

Delocalization of HR Managers

As of June 2016, the ICRC reports that 75 percent of its global workforce is now supported by 26 field-based HR managers and four Geneva-based HR managers. The number of field managers is expected to grow to 31, covering 90 percent of the organization, by the end of 2016. The evaluators spoke with HR managers in the Bangkok regional delegation and Manila delegation. In Bangkok, the HR manager arrived only three weeks before the evaluation. The ultimate goal of these staffing changes is to provide HR support where it is needed locally. While staff stakeholders expressed satisfaction with the change, because it is so recent they did not have specific feedback about how this has improved performance at the delegation level.

Centres of Expertise (CoEs)

As part of the professionalization process, the ICRC has begun to create CoEs that allow the HR division to be more strategic and consistent. The ICRC has created CoEs for Compensation and Benefits, Staff Health, and Framework and Compliance.

Talent Management

The ICRC created the Global Talent Management Division in March 2016. This division is tasked with anticipating and defining the ICRC's HR needs, and attracting and retaining skilled individuals. The division will consist of a Workforce Planning Unit, a Talent Acquisition and Sourcing Unit, a Career Management Unit, a Gender and Diversity advisor, a National Societies HR advisor, and a Pool Management coordinator. Because this division has just been formed, its implications for the ICRC have not yet been felt across the organization.

Human Resources Administration

The HR Department has been part of the ICRC's corporate services initiative through the outsourcing of the travel agency service and by moving some administrative tasks (i.e., contracting for mobile staff) to MSSC.

Elements still to be implemented: Human Resources Information System (HRIS)

The ICRC does not have a modern information-management system for its HR processes. The HRIS, named HRspace internally, is a critical tool for the realization of the ICRC's PMP and HR aspirations. Such a system will allow for, among other things, transparency and communication regarding IAP and Pool management and monitoring progress. With the HRIS in place, the ICRC will be able to answer questions important to effectiveness and efficiency, such as cost per hire, position vacancy rates, time to fill, delegation staffing balance, and the cost of standby personnel.

While designed and planned in 2014, the rollout of the HRIS has been delayed until 2017-2018 because of other IT system restructuring. When it comes online, the HRIS will also link to the ICRC's overall monitoring and planning systems used for strategic and program-level management decisions.

Challenges

The transformations being realized by the PMP/HR restructuring are steps that could have significant effects on the ICRC's ability to deliver its core services around the globe. The transformations are not without internal critique, as can be expected in any change process, particularly one that was long overdue.

The potential biggest losers, at least in perception, across the PMP/HR transformation are the very people that the ICRC continues to rely upon for delivering its core services. As of July 2016, of the 104 Heads of Delegation positions maintained by ICRC, 99 are held by mobile staff and five by resident staff. Within these ranks, approximately 80 percent are men and 20% are women, and 31 have Swiss nationality. Unless a specific policy is enacted requiring mobile staff to fill these positions, in theory, over time, more and more of these positions could be filled by qualified resident staff, especially in "less difficult" or contentious places to work. If the conclusion of the PMP/HR processes result in a system where veteran staff, who came up through ICRC in the "old way," do not feel they continue to be valued or have access to positions that correspond with their experience and expectations, they could lose motivation, leave the organization or retire early, affecting the ICRC's ability to deliver in the field. This risk is acute given the organization's significant growth and the challenge to preserve quality and its institutional culture.

The evaluators heard a consistent message from stakeholders that the PMP/HR transformation process has taken "too long," and the cultural pushback against the "corporatization" of the ICRC was massively underestimated.³⁴ While this does not ultimately affect the delivery of the PMP/HR processes, this is a lesson for ICRC to learn for future change management.

There is the potential for both brand and cultural erosion through the PMP/HR transformations. As the ICRC seeks to attract talent by looking deeper locally and from a broader base internationally, it finds itself competing in the same markets as many other

³⁴ Historically, ICRC staff were recruited into the organization, trained in "the ICRC way" and worked their way up the organization into management and leadership. The notion of corporatization, in the context of the evaluation, is a perception that the ICRC is compromising its integrity and values in an effort to bring in donor funding on a grander scale, that the traditional HR system has been replaced with one where anyone qualified can be recruited into any position at any time, and that the organization is less "human" as people are treated as assets.

humanitarian actors. Stakeholders raised concerns about the realities of the very fluid humanitarian workforce (i.e., that professionals move between organizations easily) and what that means for maintaining “the ICRC way.” With the rationalization of the global workforce, the ICRC should pay careful attention to its brand and identity.

Evaluation Question 4: To what extent does ICRC’s strategy to diversify its funding impact the FDFA-ICRC partnership?

***Finding 9:** The ICRC’s strategy to diversify its funding base does not directly impact the current structure of the FDFA-ICRC funding relationship. However, the extent to which the ICRC’s plan of continued growth will impact the FDFA-ICRC partnership is largely in the hands of the SDC, FDFA, and Switzerland.*

ICRC accepts contributions in the form of cash, cash-for-kind and in-kind/in-services. In 2015, the organization received a total of 1497.24 million CHF.³⁵ The vast majority of ICRC funding comes in the form of cash (95 percent to 99 percent of all funding) and from traditional donor governments (84 percent) and the European Commission (8 percent). Private funding sources (5 percent), funding received from National Societies (2 percent), general public sources (1 percent), and funding from international/supranational sources (less than 1 percent) total less than 8 percent of all funding.³⁶

Fundraising within the ICRC is handled by the External Resources (REX) department. Recently, three specific foci have emerged as part of the funding diversification process:³⁷

- First, a separate division was created outside of REX to focus on fundraising from private donors and other non-traditional sources. Stakeholder conversations indicated there has been internal discussion about the value of the private fundraising unit, given its relatively small contribution to the overall pool of funds. Other observations indicated that this unit has the opportunity to capitalize on traditional donors’ growing need/call for innovative funding options (e.g. public-private partnerships, matching funds).
- Second, REX observed that the ICRC had historically divided its fundraising into regions similar to its operations. In this model it was easy for a small or non-contributing country to be unintentionally de-prioritized because of the presence of a larger donor (e.g. Lithuania in the same region as Germany). To address this, a “Prospect” unit was created to focus on raising funds from countries that are small or non-contributing, and metrics for staff performance in this area were adjusted appropriately.
- Third, the ICRC seeks to raise significant funds from emerging (i.e. non-Western, non-traditional) government donors such as China.

In addition to these funding pools, REX has initiated several strategies to improve, expand, and deepen its fundraising capabilities.³⁸ These include:

- Creating roles for fundraising across the ICRC’s global footprint at a regional level. Examples of this include REX representatives based in Russia and Kuwait whose knowledge of context and nuance should help to realize funding increases through more intimate relationships with donors.
- Leveraging ICRC communications as an opportunity to also communicate fundraising needs and opportunities effectively.

³⁵ Overview of ICRC Funding, August 2016 (provided by MSSC REX/REP).

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Taken from internal ICRC document to ICRC and SDC.

³⁸ Ibid.

- Seeking ways to cooperate with National Societies on fundraising.
- Working with ICRC leadership to ensure that fundraising is a recognized top priority for all organs at the ICRC, including/especially the delegations.

The ICRC is also pursuing more innovative/forward-thinking funding ideas. An example of this is the Humanitarian Impact Bond,³⁹ which enables investors to support humanitarian activities with the expectation of receiving a return on their investment based on the achievement of programmatic outcomes.

Challenges

ICRC's fundraising risks

Driving the need for diversification is the fact that ICRC maintains a fairly risky funding partner portfolio, and has so far at least the time frame of this evaluation (although the problem has been much longer standing). This riskiness can be broken into two main areas:

- As clearly evident from documentation, the vast bulk of the ICRC's funding comes from fewer than 10 donors.⁴⁰ Their contributions have increased over the years, along with the ICRC's growth. However, as the ICRC has strategically positioned itself for considerable growth, it is not clear how far these donors are willing to go. More importantly, this reliance on a small set of donors presents a serious portfolio risk: should any of them falter, the ICRC's operations would be significantly affected.⁴¹
- Interviewees also underscored that the origin of the ICRC's funding has added to its risk. Briefly, the vast majority of the ICRC's funds come from Western donors. One needs to look no further than the DSG, where the only non-Western donor is Kuwait, whose contribution is dwarfed by the seven largest donors. Groups in areas of protracted conflict (e.g. Syria, South Sudan) know this, and it potentially puts the ICRC's field operations at risk as the ICRC is seen as politically tainted.

The Swiss Contribution

Stakeholder interviews underscored that Switzerland will always be a reliable supporter of the ICRC. However, at the same time, these same interviewees recognized the potential for the Swiss contribution to steadily decline in proportion to the overall budget. The ICRC has taken the decision to grow in response to the humanitarian needs of today and beyond, and there is no turning back.

³⁹ See <http://blogs.icrc.org/gphi2/2016/05/24/transforming-aid-one-humanitarian-impact-bond-time/>.

⁴⁰ See Figure 1, pg. 5 in the TOR for this evaluation.

⁴¹ REX is already positioning itself for a funding decrease from the UK because of Brexit and the pound's depreciation.

Evaluation Question 5: To what extent do the ICRC's governing bodies, management, and staff use results frameworks and results' reporting to inform decision making?

***Finding 10:** Managing for results is part of the ICRC organizational culture at all levels and underscores expectations for the conduct of its programming and professional staff. However, the processes and tools the ICRC uses for RBM currently fall short of what is truly needed to identify, monitor, and manage against programmatic and organizational outcomes. ICRC is in the process of holistically transforming its RBM process and tools to address this.*

The ICRC's version of Results-Based Management (RBM), called Planning for Results (PfR), was introduced in 1998 and is deeply embedded in the organization.⁴² PfR is a required part of the annual planning and budgeting process for all divisions and units. This process annually determines the programmatic objectives each division, delegation, unit, or program, and associates each with an expected budget. The PfR informs decision making through reviews of financial expenditures throughout the fiscal year. These reviews are used to determine how programming must or can be adjusted to account for funding shortages or overages.

All interviewees noted that, while the PfR process is able to report at the activity and budget/expenditure level, it does not provide the ICRC with outcome-level reporting. Indeed, interviewees were frank about the ICRC's difficulty crafting outcome level indicators and the fact that there is currently no way for ICRC outcomes to be connected with financial data. These limitations, and others, were also identified during an internal process in 2010,⁴³ including multiple repositories of RBM information, high volume of transactions required for RBM, limited monitoring of outcome level results, limited reporting capacity, and limited ability to link expenditures to results.

Complementing the standard PfR process at the HQ level, the ICRC's leadership has recently begun monitoring the organization's strategy and the environmental factors that influence its fulfilment using Business Intelligence (BI) technology.⁴⁴ Traditionally, monitoring indicators associated with the achievement of strategic goals was a manual process, which was time-consuming and ultimately provided sub-optimal information for decision making.⁴⁵ The BI technology provides ICRC leadership with a dashboard view of its progress toward strategic objectives.

At the time of this evaluation, the ICRC has embarked on a process of holistically transforming its RBM processes and tools.⁴⁶ This process is intended to improve RBM by consolidating the RBM process across the organization, facilitating multiyear planning and becoming the "one source of truth" for ICRC programming. Importantly, the new tool is also expected to flip how staff time is spent on data collection and analysis by dramatically reducing the burden of data collection (currently 80 percent of time) and emphasizing the use of the tool for analysis (currently 20 percent of time) to improve performance.

Reporting on results is an intrinsic part of the current PfR system and, as mentioned above, is used to adjust programming according to budget availability and priority programming areas. With regards to external reporting, ICRC is similar to other humanitarian organizations: the majority of reporting is done reactively according to donor

⁴² See ICRC Field Planning For Results Guidelines 2017, March 2016.

⁴³ Planning and Monitoring Tool Project Brief 03 May 2016.

⁴⁴ Examples taken from internal ICRC document to ICRC and SDC.

⁴⁵ Business Intelligence Program Description 02 June 15.

⁴⁶ See Planning and Monitoring Tool Project Brief 03 May 2016.

requirements. The delocalization of the REX/REP unit to the MSSC, however, has begun to yield new opportunities for proactive reporting in the form of infographics, briefs, and other outputs that can be useful for key stakeholders and other data consumers, while ensuring these outputs are based on the larger data sets associated with regular reporting requirements.

Challenges

The ICRC's PfR system has been deeply embedded in the operations and culture of the organization. However, stakeholder interviews indicate that delegations still struggle with being able to move from answering the "what" (i.e., reporting on activities/outputs) about their service delivery to the "so what" (i.e., reporting on the outcomes of activities/outputs). Because this problem has been around for so long, it is accepted internally as "the way things are." This has potentially been exacerbated by a lack of donor demand for outcome-based reporting and results, though some DSG members expressed frustration at not receiving reporting on ICRC outcomes.

RBM is something that the humanitarian community has struggled with for many years. It is clear that the ICRC wants to move to outcome-based management and a deeper understanding of the impact of its programming - it is ultimately a win for everyone involved. The internal challenge of the new planning and monitoring tool is not only the design and build, but the associated shift in professional and cultural expectations.

Evaluation Question 6: To what extent does the ICRC's HQ reorganization affect the objectives of the SDC-ICRC partnership?

***Finding 11:** The SDC-ICRC partnership structure, while unique in terms of historical context and governance structure, is not unusual in the funding portfolio of SDC and is well aligned with the SDC trust-based partnering modality.*

SDC-ICRC HQ funding partnership structure

Since 1949, the Swiss have supported the ICRC's HQ through the contribution of non-earmarked funds (currently at an annual rate of 80 million CHF). This contribution is a conscious political decision to support ICRC. Additional support is also given for ICRC operations and other activities, but these are outside the scope of this evaluation. By definition, the non-earmarked funds are not tied to specific expected outcomes. In 2013, the ICRC and SDC drew up a Memorandum of Understanding⁴⁷ (MoU) that was "intended to strengthen the strategic dialogue between the Swiss Confederation and the ICRC through the strengthening and development of areas of collaboration between the Swiss Confederation and the ICRC."⁴⁸ While this MoU is not legally binding, it provides general themes across which ICRC and SDC have common strategic interests. While the ICRC relationship is unique in terms of both historical context and ultimate governance structure, similar funding relationships with non-earmarked funds exist in the SDC portfolio, such as those with OCHA and WFP.

While radically smaller in size at 4 million CHF over a two-year period, the purpose of the core funding is essentially parallel to that of ICRC funding: "to support OCHA in its efforts to building a more enabling environment for humanitarian action; developing a better prepared and more effective humanitarian coordination system; strengthening its own management and administration; and promoting gender equality across all its activities." Other comparisons of equivalency:

⁴⁷ See Protocole d'accord DFAE et CICR, 2013.

⁴⁸ Translated from original French in the 2013 Protocole d'accord.

- OCHA's agreement notes that other funding may be provided to OCHA from SDC for specific operations through other mechanisms.
- An agreement for biannual meetings between OCHA and SDC to discuss the progress of OCHA's work.
- SDC's access to visit OCHA's field operations and HQ.
- The only reporting requirement is OCHA's standard annual report.

SDC's funding agreement with the World Food Program (WFP) offers a contrast to the OCHA and ICRC agreements, specifically because 28.215 million CHF of funding is earmarked for delivery of WFP food assistance and use of cash to specific geographies. However, 6 million CHF is granted to WFP's multilateral fund for its "Immediate Response Account" and are non-earmarked. In other regards, the agreement is parallel in terms of oversight (i.e., WFP financial standards are used) and that WFP standard annual reporting is the only requirement. No meetings are specified.

Finding 12: *The reorganization of ICRC's HQ, if fully realized, should have a net positive effect on the objectives of the SDC-ICRC partnership.*

The four objectives of the SDC-ICRC partnership are articulated in detail earlier in this document. The ICRC HQ transformation is driven by the changing nature and volume of humanitarian activities, especially as they relate to protracted armed conflicts. These factors have led to a significant increase in the organization's overall budget, as well as a doubling of its operational surface over the past five years.⁴⁹ The reorganization of the ICRC HQ seeks to realize a vision where the HQ is focused almost exclusively on activities that provide strategic direction, improve analysis, create stronger political/diplomatic bonds, and foster innovation.

In this regard, while ICRC has capped the growth of the HQ in terms of FTE through 2018,⁵⁰ the reorganization specifically pursues a policy of maintaining positions at HQ that will add value to its programming, while delocalizing transactional and administrative functions to realize cost efficiencies and improve programming effectiveness. Assuming ICRC is successful in its reorganization in terms of both structure and, perhaps more importantly, cultural changes, the net outcome should be positive for the objectives of the SDC-ICRC partnership in the following ways:

Operations

As the restructuring is realized across the ICRC's global operation, the Geneva HQ's ability to support ICRC delegations should be more effective. The ICRC's leadership envisions a HQ that is responsible for:⁵¹

- Developing and executing the organization's strategic direction,
- Managing the coordination and response to global crises,
- Maintaining a global and regional perspective that allows ICRC to "connect the dots" across its programming,
- Identifying and investing in innovation, and
- Managing and building relationships with global networks.

The reorganization also has the opportunity to realize significant efficiencies. Twenty-five years ago, the ICRC's HQ was the administrative center, and all transactions passed through the Geneva HQ. As interviewees noted, this structure reflected the organization's

⁴⁹ Source Stakeholder interviews.

⁵⁰ See ICRC Annual Reports.

⁵¹ Taken from internal ICRC document to ICRC and SDC

mindset, which mirrored the structure of Swiss government departments and embodied the ICRC's top-down management foundations. ICRC's HQ reorganization is intended to disinvest in activities that are directly related to delivering its programming or supporting the administrative functions of its overall operations (i.e., corporate services such as accounting). As such, in the new model, the resulting profile of HQ will be very much strategic, all but devoid of transaction-based work. The delocalization is not limited to transactional functions, however. As exemplified in the delocalization of the REX/REP unit to the MSSC,⁵² the ICRC also has the opportunity to realize efficiencies in high-value-add areas.

Policy and International Humanitarian Law

As noted above, the ICRC reorganization explicitly seeks to strengthen the analytical, political and value-added role of HQ positions. To that end, the reorganization could broaden and deepen opportunities for cooperation and collaboration between ICRC and SDC in areas of policy, strategy, and the promotion and dissemination of IHL. These elements are considered further in Questions 7, 8 and 9.

International Geneva

The ICRC is pursuing a strategy of significant growth across its global operations. At the same time, the organization has capped its growth in Geneva.⁵³ However, both the ICRC's documentation regarding the reorganization⁵⁴ and stakeholder interviews reflect the ICRC's commitment to remaining in Geneva and Switzerland. This is realized in the fact that, even with the cap, the ICRC will still maintain approximately 900 full-time employees in Geneva. The ICRC will remain a pillar within the international community of Geneva by its continued presence alone. This element is further considered in Question 10.

At the same time, ICRC's reorganization also has the potential to add value to and strengthen Geneva's position as an international city. ICRC's plans include investing locally to support IHL and humanitarian response through initiatives such as the Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiations and Global Humanitarian Lab (see Question 10). Finally, ICRC's HQ reorganization explicitly calls for 20 percent of HQ positions to be reserved for individuals rotating from delegations.⁵⁵ Assuming this is actualized, this constant flow of experienced, mobile staff from around the globe contributes to the realization of Geneva as an international center by both bringing their experience to Geneva and exporting the Geneva experience abroad.

Findings on the Relevance of the ICRC HQ Contribution for the FDFA (Mainly Swiss Humanitarian Aid) (Research Stream 2)

This portion of the report evaluates how the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ is relevant to the overall objectives of the FDFA (mainly Swiss humanitarian aid). The evaluators have deliberately focused on specific aspects of the ICRC HQ's work in policy, partnerships, IHL, and International Geneva, as articulated by the ICRC and FDFA. It does not attempt to evaluate all of the work done in these domains, nor can it be claimed

⁵² The REX/REP unit in MSSC is responsible for all reporting. Initially focused on mandatory donor reporting, the success of the unit has expanded its outputs to include value-added reporting for proposals, missions, and other functions.

⁵³ According to stakeholder interviews, ICRC initiated this cap voluntarily in an attempt to be proactive to evolving requests from donors about how funding is allocated across humanitarian organizations (i.e., limiting overhead as much as possible). Stakeholders also emphasized ICRC's focus on growth is field based.

⁵⁴ Taken from internal ICRC document to ICRC and SDC

⁵⁵ Source, Stakeholder interviews.

that the funding of Switzerland to the ICRC HQ would have covered all of the organization's costs in policy, IHL, and International Geneva functions/activities. In answering the specific questions posed in the evaluation, efforts have been made to illustrate the findings through the use of examples and case studies that were jointly identified by FDFA and the ICRC.

Finding 13: *ICRC and FDFA lacked a clear and shared understanding of some of the objectives and their connections to specific activities or initiatives.*

Research Stream 2, to varying degrees, has suffered from a lack of clarity on the part of FDFA and ICRC on what the three objectives of the MoU actually sought to achieve. The questions posed by the evaluation went beyond the scope of the relationship described in the MoU and considered those elements from the perspective of either the ICRC or FDFA. To recall, the “soft goals” considered in evaluation questions 7-10 below, include:

- **Policy:** To intensify policy dialogue and exchanges on operational approaches and international humanitarian community areas of concerns, including humanitarian principles, between SDC, ICRC and the Donor Support Group (DSG), and intensify partnerships with key actors and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Questions 7 and 8).
- **International Humanitarian Law (IHL):** To strengthen ICRC in its mandate to promote, reaffirm, clarify, and develop IHL; foster compliance with IHL; and improve access to vulnerable populations (Question 9).
- **International Geneva:** To maintain a robust ICRC Headquarters (HQ) in line with Switzerland's Foreign Policy Strategy 2012-2015, i.e., the “systematic promotion of international Geneva,” which in turn should enable Switzerland to play an international role “disproportionate to the size of its national territory” (Question 10).

The lack of clarity resulted, particularly in the Policy and International Geneva objectives, in relatively little written documentation being provided, or a relatively narrow range of shared examples being identified by SDC and ICRC to the evaluators. Some of the examples that were presented (see Question 10 below, the dimension of International Geneva) were not even funded by the core contribution of Switzerland to the ICRC HQ, but represented supplemental funding that FDFA provided to ICRC that corresponded to the MoU objectives.

Finding 14: *The Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ is written into the strategic priorities of SDC-HA, and can be seen as implementation of their objectives, and is therefore fully aligned and relevant. That said, there is an unconsidered potential to connect the ICRC's work with the broader strategic objectives of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, which would better respond to the interest to intensify, or derive greater value, from the funding relationship and strategic dialogue.*

Among Switzerland's five goals expressed in its Message on International Cooperation 2013- 2016: Key Points in Brief,⁵⁶ the ICRC HQ contribution is a clear fit in the first priority: preventing and overcoming crises, conflicts, and catastrophes. In further publications,⁵⁷ Switzerland's strategic priorities with ICRC are identified as:

- **Strengthening protection of civilian population in armed conflict:** Switzerland promotes a better understanding of and respect for IHL and humanitarian principles among all actors in a conflict.

⁵⁶ <https://www.eda.admin.ch/publikationen/en/deza/diverse-publikationen/botschaft-internationale-zusammenarbeit-2013-2016.html>.

⁵⁷ From SDC Factsheet, International Organization, ICRC, January 2015.

- **Strengthening Organization’s Performance and Efficiency:** The established partnership with the ICRC gains value by sharpening focus and developing clear accents in the institutional dialogue.
- **Strengthened Movement:** Switzerland contributes to and advocates for a more proactive role of the ICRC in strengthening the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

These FDFA priorities clearly illustrate the interests, values, and themes it shares with the ICRC and the RC/RC Movement. ICRC HQ funding is *de facto* fully relevant to the FDFA objectives. However, the current relationship is financially and intellectually restricted to the objectives of the MoU and SDC-HA. This limits the range of potential of a broader Government of Switzerland-ICRC relationship. As examples:

- SDC Development focuses on fragile contexts and includes regions where the ICRC is present and active: regions of East African Great Lakes, the Horn of Africa, Southern Africa and Niger, Chad, North Africa/Palestine, Hindu Kush, Mekong, Nepal, and Haiti. This includes Switzerland’s development commitment to strengthening fragile states. While the ICRC does not see itself as a development actor, it maintains a substantial volume of multiyear programming in these regions that would logically connect it to the SDC Development strategy.
- Switzerland provides a 240 million CHF contribution to the World Bank’s International Development Agency (IDA) through its Development Cooperation. In interviews with ICRC leadership, opening a funding and partnership dialogue with the World Bank was identified as a priority for the organization. There is an opportunity for SDC Development and ICRC to collaborate on this initiative.
- The Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) includes in its five themes the extension of city infrastructure and supply structures. The ICRC recently published ‘Urban Services During Protracted Armed Conflict’⁵⁸, and interviewees underlined the challenges being faced in urban contexts, facing massive infrastructure needs, often in Middle Income Countries (MIC) affected by conflict.

These few examples illustrate the types of broader potential connections between the FDFA International Cooperation priorities and approaches and ICRC that could be considered.

Evaluation Question 7: To what extent have policy dialogue and exchanges on operational approaches and international humanitarian community areas of concerns, including humanitarian principles, been intensified between SDC and ICRC and within the DSG?

***Finding 15:** The dialogue between FDFA and the ICRC has been better structured in the period under evaluation, as a result of the MoU that was signed in 2013. The annual Senior Level Management Meeting illustrates how strategic discussions translate into joint initiatives and positioning as seen in the Swiss/ICRC joint initiative to strengthen compliance with IHL and the 32nd International Conference.*

FDFA-ICRC Policy Dialogue and Exchanges

The FDFA-ICRC MoU of 2013⁵⁹ appears to have refreshed the relationship between the two organizations. When the process was launched in 2012, interviewees said, both parties realized there was low awareness of the range and richness of contacts, exchanges, and joint activities between FDFA and ICRC. Some interviewees suggested

⁵⁸ <https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/publications/icrc-002-4249.pdf>.

⁵⁹ Protocole d’accord entre le DFAE et le CICIR, October 2013.

that the close geographic proximity of the two institutions had led to a situation where they simply took each other for granted.

While interviewees from the ICRC saw the MoU negotiation as being an initiative driven by Bern, both parties agreed that the initiative was a reaction to the observation that the ICRC was having more sophisticated discussions with other donors. There is a shared perception that, while contact was dense at the top level, it grew less consistent as it descended through the respective hierarchies. ICRC and FDFA interviewees expressed satisfaction with the process of defining and shaping the 2013 MoU, feeling that the renewed engagement is driving more value out of the relationship. There is shared agreement that the dialogue is much better structured than in the past and that the exercise respected the ICRC's independence. The reinforcement of the Swiss connection has been applauded, and there is genuine pride in reinforcing the Swiss home base and roots of the ICRC.

In terms of policy, the MoU described the following relationship:

- Regular exchange of experience and analysis in domains of shared interest, including the protection of civilians, humanitarian access, security of humanitarian and medical staff, humanitarian principles, innovation, and humanitarian coordination/mechanisms.
- ICRC and FDFA were to share their respective projects and, if appropriate, elaborate of common strategies and initiatives.

The minutes of the annual Senior Level Management Meetings between FDFA-ICRC from 2015-16 illustrate that the strategic dialogue between the two organizations respects the expectations of the MoU. The minutes include presentations by the ICRC of selected country and regional operations that reflect on, for example, security, Movement coordination and access. The minutes also include substantive and strategic exchanges that aligned efforts and interests for the 32nd International Conference of 2015 and the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) of 2016.⁶⁰ Also considered were the new ICRC strategy, Swiss Chairmanship of the DSG, fundraising, and event planning.

Finding 16: *FDFA is largely perceived by external stakeholders as following the ICRC positions, and not vice versa. As FDFA is not perceived as a leading donor in cutting-edge humanitarian policy thinking and agendas, there were questions about where the policy dialogue and relationship with ICRC should go in the future.*

ICRC interviewees noted that FDFA/SDC is not very demanding in terms of policy engagement when compared with other donors. Several ICRC key donors routinely share their policies and strategies with the ICRC, and request strategic, operational, and technical input. While this level of FDFA-ICRC relationship is typical with IHL matters, there is less contact, for example, between ICRC's Assistance Division and SDC-HA. One ICRC respondent went so far as to suggest that the ICRC could play a role in helping SDC strengthen and shape its strategy, discussing beyond SDC-HA to the broader FDFA, and advocating new approaches in how Switzerland allocates its ODA. FDFA interviewees questioned how much such support was necessary, feasible, or would be welcomed.

External stakeholders readily observed the similarities between the ICRC and FDFA policy positions. These stakeholders generally found that both partners espouse the same

⁶⁰ It should be noted that several FDFA and ICRC stakeholders found this focus on a handful of very high-level annual "moments" or initiatives to be the ideal scope and result for the FDFA-ICRC relationship.

principles and values, have a strong focus on IHL and protection of civilians, and could be expected to advocate for a clear distinction of humanitarian action in situations of armed conflict. This was never seen as a threat to ICRC's independence. To the contrary, external stakeholders imagined that FDFA was following the ICRC's lead, and this exposed an underlying tension: If Switzerland is not perceived as a leading donor in cutting-edge humanitarian policy thinking and agendas, there were questions about where the policy dialogue and relationship with ICRC should go in the future.

Finding 17: *ICRC is intensifying its investment in policy and shows signs of increased engagement and sophistication. The president and director general are credited with pushing the ICRC to engage with the humanitarian and international community in a clearer, more constructive way. This shift has yet to completely anchor itself below the leadership and senior management levels of the HQ.*

ICRC's Investment in Policy

Over the evaluation period, there has been a significant change in the importance that the ICRC gives to policy. Comparing the ICRC HQ Policy priorities/activities 2013 vs. 2016:

- 2013: Engage with all humanitarian stakeholders and influence the debate on key issues, including access to conflict/violence-affected people, civil-military relations, the effects of certain weapons, and sexual violence.⁶¹
- 2016: Develop the ICRC's capacity to engage, shape, and lead humanitarian policy debates: use evidence/expertise-based policy tools (position/policy papers, the Review, fact sheets, outreach events such as the Conference Cycle, implementation of strategies) to raise ICRC humanitarian concerns and protection challenges widely (on topics including protection, "migration," IDPs, sexual violence, explosive weapons in populated areas) and in appropriate humanitarian forums to influence legal and policy debate; capitalize on "vectors" such as the New York delegation to both capture trends and appropriately position ICRC within current discussions by the humanitarian sector.⁶²

The sophistication of approach, targets, and language shows a similarly stark difference between the ICRC Strategy 2011-2014 and 2015-2018. The latter specifically calls for growing ICRC's policy capacity beyond national contexts, with the goal of participating and engaging more actively in professional and diplomatic exchanges on emerging challenges in major regional humanitarian hubs, including Geneva, Amman, Nairobi, Bangkok and New York. Collectively, these stated ambitions are a noticeable shift from the ICRC of five years ago - one that external stakeholders perceived as being a silent observer more comfortable commenting on legal and UN texts.

FDFA, ICRC and external stakeholders expressed admiration at how the ICRC communicated and engaged during 2013-2016. The ICRC's president and director general are generally credited with leading the ICRC's engagement with the humanitarian and international community in a clearer, more constructive way and moving away from the traditionally dense ICRC language. While the shift was credited to senior leadership, the recruitment of an external candidate to lead its policy function in 2014 reinforced it. However, several stakeholders perceived this shift in thinking, communicating, and policy engagement as only partially anchored below the leadership and senior management levels, and potentially as still fragile and unsustainable.

⁶¹ ICRC HQ Budget 2014, Executive Summary, International Law and Cooperation.

⁶² Budget Global 2016, Annex 5, International Law and Policy. The priority was framed within challenges to "principled humanitarian action" and increased global demands to "rethink" the humanitarian landscape. It noted that debates and discussions on these issues are projected to also take place beyond traditional fora and will include the fast expanding/evolving digital space and a highly competitive humanitarian legal and policy sector.

External stakeholders said that the “old” ICRC culture can still be observed. The ICRC was seen by several stakeholders as being challenged to genuinely consult with other actors; its *modus operandi* is still perceived as presenting the final version of a document, rather than sharing it for comments. In the context of International Geneva (see Evaluation Question 10), the ICRC was not perceived as a major “policy player.” There were varying views on the ICRC’s working level participation to policy discussions in Geneva - critiques of ICRC not being present, or if present, critical that middle managers would not naturally share the ICRC’s experiences or actively contribute to discussions.

Finding 18: *The ICRC DSG is seen by its members as being better organized and of higher quality than other large organizations. However, there has not been a particular intensification of the policy dialogue and exchanges within the DSG during the evaluation period.*

Donor Support Group (DSG)⁶³

The ICRC DSG is made up of governments contributing more than 10 million CHF annually. It had 18 members in 2015. The DSG meets an average of three times a year, including an annual meeting and two policy forums. There is a rotating one-year chairmanship assumed by a DSG member (in the 2013-2016 period, that included Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland and Germany). The thematic foci of the DSG are seen as a function of the respective DSG chair’s interests and relationship with the ICRC.

The ICRC Donor Support Group (DSG) brings together the organization's major government donors. Since its inception in 1998, the DSG has met regularly for open and frank exchanges about the ICRC's policies and programming. Its members and the ICRC believe that this regular and cooperative dialogue is the right way to discuss issues that are of strategic importance for both donors and the ICRC.

In addition, permanent mission representatives of the DSG members are regularly invited to the ICRC HQ for briefings or consultations on specific operations or thematic issues, and all members have exclusive access to select ICRC documentation via a password-protected web portal. Field trips are organized that give these donors a hands-on opportunity to understand context and the ICRC’s response to local humanitarian needs, and to accompany delegates in their work and interactions with beneficiaries. Recent DSG field trip destinations have included South Sudan and Myanmar in 2015, and Afghanistan and the Central African Republic in 2016.

Interviews with DSG members shaped general observations of the period 2013-2016. These included:

- The DSG is seen as better organized and of higher quality than similar forums with other large humanitarian organizations. ICRC is perceived as professional, authentic and well prepared.
- DSG membership is perceived as a privileged relationship with the ICRC. Some donors maintain additional bilateral strategic relationships with the ICRC.
- Some stakeholders observed that the ICRC more readily shares privileged information with DSG members.
- The DSG is a group with varied interests and experience with humanitarian action.

The evidence available does not suggest that there was a particular intensification of the policy dialogue and exchanges within the DSG during the evaluation period, largely because this was already being done. Interviewees questioned the degree to which the ICRC is really being influenced by its key donors through the DSG - challenging whether

⁶³ <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/icrc-donor-support-group>.

“regular and cooperative dialogue” is really intended. As one respondent put it, the DSG reflects what the ICRC wants to talk with its donors about - and not what it doesn't want to talk about.

Notably, during Switzerland's chairmanship of the DSG, discussions about engaging the private sector sparked activity. ECHO, a DSG member, invited the ICRC to Brussels to present its private-sector engagement model to a broader audience, as it was seen as cutting-edge thinking.

Evaluation Question 8: To what extent have partnerships with key actors and within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement been intensified?

This section presents its findings on how the ICRC's engagement with key actors and the RC/RC Movement has changed from 2013 to 2016. It presents a snapshot of perceptions of whether these partnerships have intensified, or whether the ICRC is perceived as partnering differently in the period under evaluation.

Finding 19: *The ICRC has anchored the importance of partnership in its institutional strategy in an increasingly sophisticated manner.*

The ICRC has maintained a focus on its partnerships with Movement and external actors in its Institutional Strategy 2011-2014 and 2015-2018. The evolution across these strategic documents underlines the increasing importance the ICRC gives to partnership: In the 2011-2014 strategy, there is a single orientation that addresses both groups and limits the goal to improved understanding of local situations in order to respond more effectively. In the 2015-2018 strategy, this has grown to a more robust vision that includes “Contribute to a more significant response by the Movement to large-scale emergencies,” and four strategic objectives with the Movement.⁶⁴ Engagement with key, or external, actors is given equal weight, with external actors enhancing access and proximity through local partnerships and collaboration, diversifying the breadth and types of donors, situating ICRC's operational response across various international agendas, and building stronger relationships with International Geneva.

The ICRC does not maintain a centralized register of its institutional partnerships at HQ or field levels. A reference document provided to evaluators gave a broad overview of partnerships, and the *Review of the Implementation of the Institutional Strategy 2011-2014* included a section on partnerships. However, this documentation did not provide a comprehensive listing of all Movement and external partnerships, so the evaluation cannot determine whether there has been a quantitative increase in the number of institutional partnerships in the period under review.

While the ICRC's Movement partnerships are overseen from the Cooperation and Coordination within the Movement Division, non-Movement partnerships have many owners in the HQ. ICRC respondents described partnerships with external actors being undertaken at institutional, department, division, and unit levels. The range of partnerships included the very strategic and operational (e.g. UNHCR, WFP) and the thematic (e.g. Al Jazeera, Geneva University Hospital, Centre for Education and Research in Humanitarian Action (CERAH), Wilton Park, Asea Brown Boveri (ABB) and Holcim Limited).

⁶⁴ These include enhancing joint Movement planning, support to National Societies, strengthening partnerships, and engaging with Movement actors to establish pragmatic dialogue and partnerships.

Finding 20: *The ICRC is perceived as having increased the quality of its engagement from its HQ. The focus on intensifying partnerships with key actors is interpreted in very different ways by the ICRC and FDFA. For the FDFA, the interest is largely focused on how the ICRC HQ partners with other Swiss-funded partners and strategic interests.*

Partnership with Key Actors

FDFA identified a listing of who they considered key actors - Geneva and Rome - to inform this section of the evaluation. They included Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, Geneva Call, International Council of Volunteer Agencies (ICVA), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Médecins Sans Frontières, OCHA, Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection (PHAP), Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR), UNHCR, and WFP.

Several stakeholders highlighted a general shift from the traditional ICRC role of a quiet observer to that of a full and active participant. The ICRC has been applauded for the quality and engagement in the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) by the IASC's director general. It was described there as being the strongest propositional force, constructively engaging and bringing an extra UN perspective to the debate. The ICRC's chairmanship and contribution to task teams of the SCHR, and its more recent participation in debates and initiatives on accountability to beneficiaries (including membership in the CDAC Network)⁶⁵, were further examples provided of how the ICRC is seen as increasing its engagement and partnership with external actors.

In terms of its strategic and operational partnerships with key actors, there was evidence of increased interaction, including better strategic-level dialogue and coordination efforts. Interviewees highlighted an increased frequency and depth of strategic and operational exchanges, in thematic areas where even a few years ago the ICRC would have remained silent (e.g. migration).

The ICRC is still generally perceived by interviewees as being cautious, but understandably so, given their need to maintain their independence and neutrality. Some external stakeholders applauded the ICRC for not getting embroiled in the politics and infighting of the UN system. They recognize the complexity of the contexts in which the ICRC functions, and the increasing demands made of National Societies in situations of conflict.

As the key actors interviewed are strategic and funded partners of FDFA, there was some reflection on the perceptions of Switzerland as a donor. In interviews, key actors noted that FDFA tends to reinforce its strategic priorities in the humanitarian sector, often seen as protection of civilians, disaster risk reduction, and IHL. They felt that FDFA encouraged them to collaborate with other FDFA/SDC funding partners. This encouragement ultimately becomes a multiplier effect as new Swiss-funded initiatives tended to draw in other Swiss funding partners (this is explored more in Evaluation Question 10 below).

Finding 21: *Movement partnership has been given increasing strategic importance by the ICRC. However, the specific example of the SMCC illustrates an ongoing process of Movement partnership, rather than a marked intensification.*

⁶⁵ <http://www.cdacnetwork.org/about-the-network/members/>.

Partnership with the RC/RC Movement

Similar to the findings in Question 7, ICRC leadership at the president and director general level are credited with pushing the ICRC toward meaningful engagement with the Movement. This shift in thinking is enshrined in the 2015-2018 ICRC Institutional Strategy (Objective 4). The strategic importance of Cooperation and Coordination within the Movement Division was reinforced in 2014 when it was moved to the Office of the Director General. The ICRC undertook an evaluation of Operational Partnerships between the ICRC

'Switzerland welcomes the decision to organize a more open and inclusive Conference in a multilateral environment characterized by many - at times competing - events and processes. A meaningful agenda and modern design will increase the visibility as well as the impact of the Conference and will contribute to addressing today's humanitarian challenges.'

and National Societies in 2013, which underscored that there is clear evidence of progress in its strategy on partnerships with the Movement. This is further reinforced by a 2015 ICRC Directorate decision redefining the goals of its Partnership Initiative with National Societies of Global Influence.

Some external stakeholders questioned how deeply this shift in leadership engagement is translating to the HQ and ICRC/Movement Field Operations. Specific examples were provided to the evaluators of the coexistence of the newer and authentic ICRC Movement engagement at the leadership level, and the older, at times distant and suspicious engagement with RC/RC partners. These critiques are in no way new for the ICRC or the Movement.

It is beyond the scope of this evaluation to consider the breadth of the ICRC's investments in its Movement partnerships. These efforts can be grouped under strategic and operational partnerships, coordinating the Movement's components, National Society capacity-building, and contributing toward the design and implementation of Movement policies.⁶⁶

A broad illustration provided by ICRC and SDC on how partnership with the Movement has changed is the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) initiative. During the evaluation reporting period, this included Resolution 1 of the 2015 Council of Delegates and Resolution 4 of the 2013 Council of Delegates. These recent efforts have to be framed in the resolutions' roots: the Seville Agreement of 1997 and the Supplementary Measures of 2005.⁶⁷

Interviews provided limited evidence to suggest that the 2015 Resolution has taken the SMCC ambitions much further. The process has illustrated that the ICRC and International Federation successfully collaborated to develop a vision paper and lead a consultation process with the Movement. Interviews suggested that the continuity of the SMCC work in the period under evaluation has been somewhat ad hoc in nature and dependent on changing personalities and leadership in the ICRC and the Federation. Ultimately, Resolution 1 of the 2015 Council of Delegates provides a greater level of detail and a more specific action plan that will be reported on in the 2017 Council of Delegates.

Switzerland can be credited with proposing an effort that cleverly dovetails and reinforces the ongoing SMCC ambition: the concept of the ICRC and IFRC Joint National Society Investment Mechanism. Though it is outside of the 320 million CHF ICRC HQ contribution

⁶⁶ These are reflected in the 2015-2018 strategy; this overview of the ICRC's Cooperation approach was last updated in 2010: <https://www.icrc.org/eng/what-we-do/cooperating-national-societies/overview-cooperation-national-societies.htm>.

⁶⁷ <https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/misc/5ijkwe.htm> and <https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/misc/council-delegates-2007-seville-151007.htm>.

(2013-2016) under evaluation, the evaluators found it an insightful proposal that reinforces capacity building of National Societies, while further promoting joint ownership by the ICRC and the Federation. While it was presented as a response to the SMCC Resolution, it was equally a perfect fit for the WHS and the commitment to invest in local capacities. Some stakeholders noted that it could also be a mechanism allowing the Movement to access development funding, with links to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) included in the document.

FDFA-ICRC/Movement Partnership-Development of the 32nd International Conference⁶⁸

The first proposals on the shaping of the 32nd International Conference were provided by SDC. The Swiss quickly seconded the conference commissioner, a Swiss ambassador. Given the extremely broad range of conference stakeholders, interviewees presented different opinions. FDFA was extremely proud of its initiative and ambition. Switzerland has assumed responsibility for hosting the conference since 1986⁶⁹ and sets high expectations. One FDFA stakeholder went so far as to frame the investment in the IC as not being about the ICRC relationship but about Switzerland trying to increase the value of the conference itself. It should be noted that SDC provided separate funding for the IC, including 1.5 million CHF in direct costs and in-kind support of 500,000 CHF.

Some respondents observed that Swiss ambitions for the IC are historically not new. When a different branch of FDFA lead in past conferences, the ICRC was being pushed to use a shorter and more attractive format, with no resolutions. Other state participants questioned the breadth and detail of the 32nd International Conference, flagging the impossibility for their delegations to participate in and contribute to the 10 Resolutions and their negotiations. While the ICRC and FDFA systematically flagged the IHL Resolution in the scope of this evaluation, other stakeholders were more interested in other, less contentious resolutions. Given the diversity of stakeholders and interests, there is no format panacea for the International Conference that would satisfy its audiences.

Evaluation Question 9: To what extent has the FDFA/ICRC partnership strengthened the ICRC's role as guardian and advocate of IHL in promoting, affirming, clarifying and developing IHL?⁷⁰

***Finding 22:** The relationship around IHL is the strongest example of partnership between the ICRC and FDFA. It represents the domain where the partnership is clearest, adds the greatest value, and ensures that each partner plays to its respective strengths.*

Evaluation question nine is focused on the extent to which the FDFA/ICRC partnership strengthened the ICRC's role in IHL. It goes beyond the wording of the objective found in the FDFA-ICRC 2014 MoU, which states:

- **International Humanitarian Law:** To strengthen ICRC in its mandate to promote, reaffirm, clarify, and develop IHL; foster compliance with IHL; and improve access to vulnerable populations.

⁶⁸ Taken from a letter from FC Burkhalter addressed to the chairman of the Standing Committee of the RC/RC, Geneva, 09 September 2014.

⁶⁹ In addition to this unbroken 30-year commitment, the international conference has been hosted by Geneva on four previous occasions since 1867: <https://www.icrc.org/fre/resources/documents/misc/5fzf8w.htm>.

⁷⁰ This question merges two questions that were included in the evaluation Approach Paper: To what extent does the SDC-ICRC partnership strengthen ICRC in their role as advocate and defender of IHL? To what extent does the SDC-ICRC partnership strengthen ICRC's role as the guardian of IHL and for promoting, reaffirming, clarifying, and developing IHL?

There is a clearly a complementary relationship between FDFA and ICRC as concerns IHL:

- **Switzerland:** State party to the Geneva Conventions, where “the respect, promotion and reinforcement of international humanitarian law” are among Switzerland’s foreign-policy priorities. Switzerland has a specific role as depositary state for the four Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols, as it does for 79 international treaties. This role does not include substantive control over the acts submitted to it.⁷¹
- **ICRC:** As the guardian of humanitarian law, the ICRC takes measures to ensure respect for, to promote, to reaffirm, and even to clarify and develop this body of law. The organization is particularly concerned about possible erosion of international humanitarian law and takes bilateral, multilateral, or public steps to promote respect for and development of the law.⁷²

These vested interests lead to a natural FDFA-ICRC collaboration. The annual meeting notes related to IHL cooperation were among the most detailed examples of SDC-HA-ICRC dialogue and reporting provided in the evaluation. Almost half of the Annual Activity Inventory of FDFA-ICRC activities (2014, accompanied the revised MoU to illustrate the specific collaborations) is oriented around IHL. It is the objective around which FDFA and ICRC have the greatest density of clear activities and regular contacts. The relationship was described by interviewees from both organizations as being open, frank, and based on mutual trust. Interviews gave the impression of a multiplicity of contacts through all levels of the ICRC Department of Law and Policy.

Despite concerns for ICRC independence and neutrality, there are key products of the IHL partnership that are branded with both FDFA and ICRC logos. Interview and meeting notes show a clear and informed dialogue where FDFA shows great sensitivity to ICRC/IHL concerns and they jointly strategize accordingly. External respondents expressed some concern that given the identical interests, the relationship risks becoming too exclusive and potentially ignores the collective interests of the State signatories and the RC/RC Movement.

The ICRC has a clear and accepted mandate in its advisory and guardianship roles of IHL. Anecdotally, an FDFA respondent explained how they see the significance of the ICRC: it’s their key partner, as Switzerland sees IHL as a sort of national product and certainly a clear national priority. Some stakeholders suggested that the intimate FDFA-ICRC relationship can at times blur the ownership of IHL. Such comments should not be interpreted as undermining the partnership: Switzerland and the ICRC are seen as “moving mountains” in their attempts to advance the debate around compliance with IHL. Respondents defined the challenge as particularly acute in the current political context, where States have little appetite for discussion about compliance with stricter enforcement of IHL, despite its growing relevance.

There was no question by stakeholders as to whether the FDFA’s funding of the ICRC’s HQ contributed to the strengthening of the ICRC’s role as guardian and advocate of IHL. For the ICRC and FDFA interviewees, Switzerland, as depositary, signatory and donor, holds the expectation that the ICRC maintains a world-class capacity as a reference in IHL, and sees its funding as their clear commitment. ICRC stakeholders made a strong argument that without the Swiss non-earmarked HQ contribution, it would otherwise be

⁷¹ <https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/dfa/foreign-policy/international-law/international-humanitarian-law/switzerland-commitment.html>.

⁷² ICRC: Its Mission and Work, https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/icrc_002_0963.pdf.

difficult to fundraise for their IHL and prevention activities.⁷³ They made the argument that the permanent and advisory tasks of the ICRC Law and Policy department, which focus on mid- and long-term qualitative outcomes and impact, are otherwise difficult to fund.

Finding 23: *The ICRC-FDFA partnership around the Strengthening Compliance with IHL process mutually strengthened the partners. It is seen as a courageous attempt to advance the IHL debate when there is little political interest to do so. Given the results of the 32nd International Conference, there appears to be a nuanced interpretation of the way forward, one that reflects the respective identities of the ICRC and the Government of Switzerland.*

Joint Consultation Switzerland – ICRC on Strengthening Compliance with IHL and the 32nd International Conference

To capture a sense of how the FDFA-ICRC partnership strengthens the ICRC’s IHL as guardian and advocate, a high-profile initiative that spanned 2012-2016 was identified as a case study.



In the period under evaluation, Switzerland and the ICRC undertook a joint initiative on Strengthening Compliance with IHL

consultation process. The initiative was a result of Resolution 1 of the 31st International Conference, recognizing the importance of “exploring ways of enhancing and ensuring the effectiveness of mechanisms of compliance with international humanitarian law.” Switzerland and the ICRC received the mandate to jointly facilitate the consultations. Nine meetings were held and more than 140 states participated in the consultation.

The process was described in interviews with stakeholders from ICRC and FDFA as an extremely positive and productive partnership. The success of the partnership was strongly linked to the trust between the FDFA and ICRC, which resulted in frank and open conversations. Regular meetings were held to keep the initiative and partners on track toward their expected goal. Despite being a contentious process, no parties tried to separate ICRC and FDFA. External stakeholders underlined the courage that was required to champion this initiative. One FDFA respondent described the lengthy process as being a successful marriage of substance and diplomacy. An IHL expert underlined the significant body of intellectual work that resulted, an enduring intellectual legacy on its own.⁷⁴

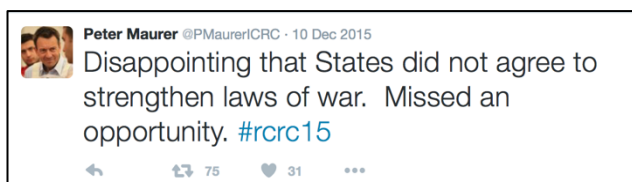
The results of this process were brought to the 32nd International Conference, the negotiations resulting in Resolution 2 (Strengthening Compliance with International Humanitarian Law (32C/15/R2)). In the broader context of findings already presented under Question 8, stakeholders had varied opinions concerning the initiative’s outcome. The resolution was clearly seen as having disappointed the ICRC, which was lobbying for the International Conference to provide Switzerland a mandate to convene a meeting to create the mechanism. FDFA was satisfied with the resolution that gave Switzerland and the ICRC the mandate to continue the state-driven intergovernmental process based on the principles of consensus after the 32nd International Conference, to submit the outcomes to the 33rd Conference in 2019. Mixed comments were received from other

⁷³ When asked, at least one other DSG member stated that if Switzerland no longer funded such permanent activities of the ICRC, they would consider filling that gap.

⁷⁴ The complete products are showcased on the websites of the ICRC and FDFA. For example: <https://www.icrc.org/eng/what-we-do/other-activities/development-ihl/strengthening-legal-protection-compliance.htm>

stakeholders. Some interviewees saw the FDFA-ICRC efforts as being courageous and working outside their comfort zone. Another respondent suggested that given the lack of consensus, the resolution should have been withdrawn the first day of the International Conference.

The partnership's strength has not been eroded by the compliance-focused process, nor the resolution. That said, interviews indicate there is some hesitancy since the International Conference for FDFA and the ICRC is collectively charting the way forward. The interviews suggested that FDFA and ICRC were considering the risks associated with the process differently. As a state, Switzerland can comfortably drive the process forward - as its operating landscape is one of states. As an international organization, the ICRC needs to balance the risks and consequences if the compliance process fails; the organization lives off its integrity and operates in an environment that includes states, civil society, and the Movement.



Evaluation Question 10: To what extent does maintaining a strong ICRC HQ in Geneva contribute to the realization of “International Geneva”?

This question relates to the following objective of the 2013 FDFA- ICRC MoU: International Geneva (IG): To maintain a robust ICRC Headquarters (HQ) in line with Switzerland's Foreign Policy Strategy 2012-2015, i.e., the “systematic promotion of international Geneva”, which in turn should enable Switzerland to play an international role “disproportionate to the size of its national territory.”

Finding 24: *While the ICRC has integrated the “software” focus from the 2014 Swiss strategy for International Geneva into its 2015-2018 Institutional Strategy, the ICRC has not been provided with any explicit guidance from FDFA on what it is expected to contribute to the success of International Geneva.*

There was little clarity from FDFA stakeholders on what was expected of the ICRC in this objective. In the simplest terms, expressed in interviews with FDFA stakeholders and the objective above, the expectation for achieving this objective seemed to be that the ICRC HQ simply continues to exist in International Geneva, the “Humanitarian Capital.” One stakeholder in Bern made it even clearer: “We ... do not and will not fund ICRC presence, activities and projects only for the sake of our policy toward Geneva, and we certainly do not mandate nor even expect ICRC to contribute accordingly.”

The recent Swiss strategy for International Geneva of 2014⁷⁵ marks a significant broadening of its intent. Before 2014, Switzerland's primary focus was on “hardware” investments: ensuring and improving the required infrastructure and services to improve the attractiveness of International Geneva and play its role as host state. The newly added second pillar emphasizes the “software” component of International Geneva: to increase the global impact and reach of International Geneva, and therefore that of Switzerland, by undertaking measures that enable organizations to interact and cooperate more closely and more efficiently contribute to the resolution of the world's more pressing problems.

⁷⁵ Message concernant les mesures à mettre en œuvre pour renforcer le rôle de la Suisse comme Etat hôte, 19 November 2014.

Despite the ambivalent expectations of its donor, the ICRC has given greater prominence to its engagement with International Geneva in its Institutional Strategy 2015-2018.⁷⁶ ICRC leadership has insisted since 2014 that more references to International Geneva be integrated in their communication, and they have developed a range of platforms and initiatives (see below) that integrate the language and intent of the 2014 strategy.

Finding 25: *There is a perception that a variety of recent ICRC International Geneva investments result from the HQ contribution, when in fact, they receive supplemental FDFA funding and represent new partnerships.*

The following are presented as snapshots of ICRC investment/engagement with International Geneva. They represent examples that were systematically presented by ICRC and FDFA stakeholders. They are vastly different in scale and maturity and illustrate starkly different approaches toward the use of Swiss funding to the ICRC:

Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiations⁷⁷

This investment initially did not benefit from the annual funding provided to the ICRC HQ. FDFA has seconded a staff member to serve as the centre's senior adviser. The centre also includes an objective of "other Presidency initiatives." The ICRC contributes with its own staff: two full-time employees in 2016, rising to four or five in 2017. The Canton of Geneva provided a renovated space at La Pastorale, for which the ICRC pays rent. The centre does not have funding from other donors beyond SDC. Launching in October 2016, it is described as having an up-to-five-year incubation process. It appears to reinforce Switzerland's investment strategy in niche-relevant centres and platforms in Geneva. It also brings together several SDC-funded partners in a new, separately funded collaboration. One stakeholder observed that it seemed quite radical, succeeding in uniting major humanitarian actors around a common, operational cause.

Global Humanitarian Lab (GHL)⁷⁸

The ICRC refused to fund this initiative with money from the annual HQ contribution. The ICRC Foundation funded an ICRC staff position that was dedicated to the development of this initiative over 12 months from 2015, while the ICRC provided office space and political support. Like the Centre of Competence, it is a partnership of major humanitarian actors collaborating around a platform for innovation. Launched during the WHS, publicly available details remain scarce. Switzerland has made a concrete financial contribution of 1 million CHF over 3 years, and Australia is a confirmed donor.⁷⁹ Stakeholders presented a vision of the GHL with several regional hubs and a budget growing to 100 million CHF in just a few years. Switzerland makes its contribution to UNOPS and not to the ICRC. FDFA and the ICRC president are members of the organization's board, with President Maurer acting as its chair.

⁷⁶ 3.6 Identify and seize opportunities for building stronger relationships within the ICRC's political, social, and scientific environment in Geneva.

⁷⁷ <http://frontline-negotiations.org/about-the-centre-of-competence/>. Partners include the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, the ICRC, Médecins sans Frontières, UNHCR and WFP. This initiative is anchored in the ICRC's Institutional Strategy 2015- 2018: '2.6 Support development and analysis of the ICRC's negotiation experience as a policy tool to improve the ability of staff throughout the organization to negotiate and persuade at field and headquarters levels'.

⁷⁸ <http://www.globalhumanitarianlab.org>. Partners include Handicap International, ICRC, OCHA, Terres des Hommes, UNHCR and WFP.

⁷⁹ Details of the GHL initiative were provided orally by staff as no detailed documents were received from FDFA or ICRC. After the submission of the draft evaluation report, ICRC claims that 100,000 CHF has been budgeted for the GHL in 2016 and 2017 from its HQ budget. SDC claims that Australia is now a confirmed donor.

ICRC Humanitarium⁸⁰

The Humanitarium is funded by the ICRC. “The Humanitarium is the ICRC centre for exchange and debate on humanitarian law, policy and action.” It is a conference facility that is only available for ICRC use and its public events; the only exception to this rule has been made for an event that formed as part of the SDC-funded Norwegian Refugee Council project on humanitarian principles. While it is a thoughtful investment in a state-of-the-art conference space for the ICRC and as a “showroom” for the HQ, there is otherwise no shortage of such space already funded by FDFA in International Geneva. Other similarly-sized spaces are openly accessible to non-ICRC users, potentially recovering some of their costs through usage fees. The ICRC streams the events of the Humanitarium globally; the actual physical audience of the Humanitarium is less important than the substance and speakers they showcase.

Humanitarian Tech Hub⁸¹

The Hub is funded by the ICRC. Launched in March 2016, the Hub is a research and development program launched by the ICRC and the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL). The goal of the hub is to foster collaboration between the humanitarian and scientific sectors, as well as specialists in other fields, to develop technologies to tackle the humanitarian challenges facing the world today. An ICRC staff member is based in EPFL. This initiative was not directly mentioned by ICRC or FDFA as a contribution to International Geneva.

What emerges from the examples above is that some of these initiatives were only partially financed by Switzerland’s contribution to the ICRC HQ. This suggests that FDFA has a double-funding philosophy which, while proudly described as investing like a venture capitalist, poses questions about effectiveness and efficiency. There remains success in being able to quietly bring together the biggest operational agencies around shared causes and interests. Some interviewees stated that many of the high-profile investments made are public relations efforts on the part of ICRC leadership and Swiss interests in International Geneva. These same critics worry that there is often an over-fascination with initiatives that are visionary and innovative, yet questionably useful in practice. As one respondent suggested, there is a risk of a growing “Swiss cocoon,” where Swiss entities and funding partners are being paid to continually work with similar organizations. While this was a minority view, the evidence underlines a genuine concern on the degree to which FDFA funding is inspiring greater connections across the breadth of the Humanitarian Capital. In interviews with ICRC leadership, more than one respondent claimed that the non-earmarked funding of Switzerland to the ICRC HQ typically resulted in the most innovative work. The examples debunk this notion, as these innovative projects often benefited from supplemental FDFA funding.

Finding 26: *Some stakeholders within FDFA fear the ICRC will leave Geneva or lose interest in the FDFA relationship. This fear is shaped in the context of the ICRC’s transformation and globalization, delocalizing transactional services outside of Geneva and its ambition to grow. However, this view is balanced by others with a more business-oriented outlook. There is little likelihood that the ICRC will leave Geneva or forget its privileged relationship with Switzerland. However, this emotional component of the relationship represents a critical obstacle to having frank, direct and authentic strategic discussions.*

⁸⁰ <https://www.icrc.org/en/humanitarium/overview>.

⁸¹ <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/icrc-and-epfl-launch-humanitarian-tech-hub>.

An Emotional Engagement

The national priority attached to the International Geneva investment was highlighted by the majority of FDFA stakeholders. There is clear commitment by Switzerland to be the best possible host state. In examining the breadth of their investments in the 2014 strategy for IG, it is clear they intend to remain the most important government center worldwide. This investment strategy was presented as being a perfect value alignment

Le directeur général du CICR, Yves Daccord, tempère les informations données par la RTS vendredi soir. Si l'organisation explore les solutions pour réduire ses coûts de fonctionnement, elle rejette toute idée de délocalisation de son siège et de ses 900 salariés [Tribune de Geneve, 07.09.2013]

with the Switzerland-UN Charter and allows Switzerland to “punch above its weight.” An ICRC respondent did make a distinction by stating that “International Geneva is an operational interest for the ICRC - it’s a political thing for Switzerland.” The ICRC and the RC/RC Movement are seen as the very foundation for the title of “Humanitarian Capital” and one of its key pillars. As one stakeholder put it, “If you take the Red Cross out of Geneva, we can’t claim that we are the humanitarian capital.” All other key actors of the International Geneva landscape fully understand the interests of Switzerland and how this links to their funding investments.

At a deeper level, this evaluation question brought underlying fears about the FDFA to the surface. The quote in the text box above was the ICRC’s response to a locally mediatized claim that the organization was considering a massive delocalization of staff due to financial concerns (2013). Despite assurances to the contrary, this seems to have planted a seed of grave concern in the minds of some FDFA interlocutors that the ICRC will outgrow Switzerland, lose interest in their privileged relationship, and one day leave International Geneva altogether. In fairness, respondents who reacted with emotion and nostalgia were balanced by others who maintained a sober and business-oriented view of the relationship. The latter group questioned to what degree FDFA should be interested in the ICRC’s internal decisions on its use of Switzerland’s HQ contribution, provided it delivers on its institutional strategy and maintain its quality and impact.

The evaluators find the fear a number of FDFA respondents expressed is a critical emotional obstacle to the ICRC-FDFA relationship. The evidence of this evaluation highlights that the ICRC is globalizing in every sense of the term. The overall financial support of Switzerland may, one day, be eclipsed by other donors. Yet neither the ICRC nor FDFA respondents believe the relationship is at risk of being lost.

Conclusions

The key question of this evaluation was to examine the Swiss ICRC HQ contribution and assess to what extent the objectives identified have been achieved. As introduced in the Limitations and Constraints section, it was clear from the onset that a causal link was impossible to make. At the same time, the four objectives themselves were not specific and, at best, represent broad areas of potential cooperation. Ultimately, the findings above allow the evaluators to draw conclusions about the four objectives, but these conclusions do not, and cannot, comment on achievements realized by the ICRC HQ funding. Rather, the conclusions offer an opportunity to form recommendations for the future SDC-HA and ICRC funding relationship. As such, from the findings in the previous section, over the time frame considered by the evaluation, we can make these conclusions:

Conclusion 1: *The ICRC has been its own worst critic, proactively recognizing that it must successfully undergo transformational change in order to grow, remain relevant, meet donor demands, and deliver on its mission. (Based on Findings 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12)*

The ICRC is on a path of significant growth, in a sector where already scarce humanitarian funding is being pursued by an increasing number of actors, acquiring and retaining human talent is increasingly difficult, the conflict areas in which it works are ever more complex and enduring, and the needs of those affected by conflict are quantifiably increasing.

The ICRC has not been criticized as being too expensive or ineffective. The ICRC's reputation within the humanitarian sector is so well established that even those who would be its most likely critics - its largest donors - have been uncharacteristically undemanding, especially in terms of reporting on and monitoring outcomes. When speaking to stakeholders who were directly responsible for managing or intimately connected with the change processes at ICRC, it was regularly noted that their transformational changes stem from a self-critical analysis of what the organization needs to change - rather than from external pressure to change - to fulfill its current Institutional Strategy. The changes being undertaken underscore that the ICRC recognizes there is a level of trust it must continue to earn and a necessity to show it is not only keeping pace with other organizations but positioning itself for future challenges as a robust and strategic international organization.

Conclusion 2: *The ICRC seeks to operate as efficiently as possible, without sacrificing its effectiveness or quality. (Based on Findings 2, 3, 5, 6, 7)*

The ICRC's reputation is based largely on being the best at what it does, not the cheapest. Yet, like every humanitarian organization, it strives to show that donor funds have been used in the most efficient manner to achieve the desired ends. However, by overemphasizing efficiency, it is not uncommon for the effectiveness and/or quality of services or goods to be compromised. Numerous stakeholders - internal and external - raised the concern that, in the quest for change and a perception of its efficiency, the ICRC risks eroding the consistency, discipline and quality for which it is admired. In fact, many stakeholders challenged the "corporatization" that the ICRC's changes will inevitably bring about, bringing it ever closer to equivalency with United Nations agencies and potentially eroding the value and reputation of the brand that has been built over the past 150 years.

The evaluation shows that the ICRC is highly mindful of the potential for brand erosion and has identified quality as an issue that is being challenged by its growth. Now several years into the dual processes of growth and transformational change, ICRC stakeholders are conscious the organization needs to ensure there remains a focus on effectiveness and quality.

Conclusion 3: *Having laid the foundations for its transformation, the ICRC now faces the significant challenge of implementing substantive change in the organization's culture. (Based on Findings 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 17, 19, 20, 21)*

Since 2010, the ICRC has embarked on an overdue process of modernizing its institutional systems. While much has been accomplished to date, all stakeholders agreed that the overall process was just starting to be implemented in the organization's field delegations.

The investments in growth and change are part of a scenario that will be the lasting legacy of the ICRC's current leadership. The practical, structural, and organizational changes being pursued (e.g. IT systems, HR delocalization), while not simple, should be manageable with strong, consistent leadership as they are rolled out across the global organization. The perceived leadership push for ICRC engagement, dialogue, partnership, and investment in International Geneva remains somewhat disconnected from the working

level of the organization. The real challenge for ICRC will be maintaining its course as it navigates the waters of changing its organizational culture embedded in those who are currently responsible for leading and managing its operations in the field.

Conclusion 4: *The ICRC is becoming more competitive in the humanitarian sector. (Based on Findings 2, 6, 7, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23)*

The modernization of the ICRC not only underpins its growth and the maintenance of effective operations but also seeks to enhance the organization's competitiveness. As one example offered by stakeholders, humanitarian professionals are increasingly sophisticated, and the talent market is increasingly fluid. Faced with uncertainty about their personal growth and advancement, ICRC staff do not hesitate to leave one organization for similar positions at another. ICRC seeks to become an attractive long-term employer, and one that can function effectively with staff who may stay with the organization for only a few years, through the PMP and HR initiatives. Another example is found in its fundraising strategy, where stakeholders demonstrated that the ICRC is more consistently calling on donors to make specific, significant investments in programming that the donor has stated the ICRC is performing well on. Finally, a strong case can be made that the ICRC HQ has intensified its strategy and engagement with key actors and with the RC/RC Movement.

Conclusion 5: *The transformations accompanying the ICRC's strategy of growth include the organization's fundraising, which has implications for its relationship with Switzerland. (Based on Findings 4, 9, 11, 12)*

The expected growth to a budget of 2BN CHF- and possibly beyond, if the evolving realities of violent conflict continue - requires the ICRC to rethink its overall donor portfolio, which it is attempting with limited success to date. The organization's efforts with the private sector have shown real promise, bearing in mind it represents a decade's worth of investment. Its recent growth in this period of evaluation has otherwise been funded by increased contributions from existing key donors.

Throughout the evaluation, stakeholders spoke of Switzerland's "privileged position" regarding the ICRC. However, should the Swiss maintain current funding levels, they will likely find themselves with decreasing financial importance as the global ICRC budget grows. FDFA and ICRC stakeholders could not imagine that the privileged ICRC-Switzerland relationship would be lost, even if Switzerland's financial importance decreases. However, scenarios where other, significantly larger donors begin to displace Switzerland in terms of strategic support and also demand seats on the Assembly are plausible. At the same time, FDFA is perceived as not keeping pace with the ICRC's greater sophistication. Should this divergence continue, it will significantly hamper or eliminate FDFA's ability to provide other types of strategic support beyond funding.

Conclusion 6: *Stakeholders have perceived strong tangible and intangible benefits when ICRC and FDFA have pursued joint initiatives with clear goals and outcomes. (Based on Findings 15, 22, 23)*

Joint initiatives illustrated the clearest potential of what the funding relationship could ideally achieve. The FDFA-ICRC IHL objective and subsequent partnership shows irrefutable evidence of how a government and an international organization can effectively collaborate on a complex and contentious initiative. Switzerland's 30-year commitment to hosting the International Conference similarly highlights the strength of a shared belief in IHL, and in working to shape the importance and future of the RC/RC Movement. The FDFA proposal and funding of initiatives such as the Joint National Society Investment Mechanism illustrate that they are working beyond the confines of their relationship with

ICRC, and support a “greater good” in their commitment to the RC/RC Movement. These examples illustrate how partnership can push the ICRC and FDFA out of their comfort zones, with a result whose whole was greater than the sum of its parts.

The Swiss HQ funding of the ICRC’s mandate to promote, reaffirm, clarify and develop IHL, foster compliance with IHL, and improve access to vulnerable populations is a clear value-for-money proposition for Switzerland. The 17.6MM CHF that the ICRC Department of Law and Policy represents in the 2016 budget is a clear result, and aligns with the Swiss expectation that the ICRC maintain a world-class reference capacity in IHL that can deliver on the MoU objective.

Conclusion 7: *The ICRC is recognized as a leader in the humanitarian sector, but is challenged to authentically allow itself to be influenced by outsiders. (Based on Findings 16, 17, 18)*

The evaluation shows that that the ICRC’s brand is as strong as ever. FDFA and external stakeholders consistently hold the organization in the highest esteem. Regardless of whether the ICRC chooses to lead in the sector, it is still typically seen as the benchmark for humanitarian action.

This historically consistent admiration of the ICRC coexists with the perception of the unprecedented engagement efforts being driven by its leadership in the period under evaluation. The ICRC is seen as increasingly active, open, engaged, and contributing to humanitarian *fora* and debate. This has raised the expectations of stakeholders - Movement, key actors, the DSG, policy thinkers - that the ICRC is genuinely open to being influenced. However, the ICRC is still limited in its openness to informal dialogue and forms of partnership and collaboration that are typical for other organizations. The ICRC HQ in its engagement, while improving, still risks being perceived as a monolithic and formal organization that engages on the topics it wants to at the exclusion of all else.

Conclusion 8: *While the ICRC HQ’s engagement with Geneva is aligned with Switzerland’s International Geneva strategy, a lack of clarity on FDFA’s expectations suggests that the realities have outgrown the scope and funding envelope of the existing FDFA-ICRC MoU. (Based on Findings 24, 25, 26).*

The evaluators find that there are too many moving pieces in the FDFA-ICRC MoU objective on International Geneva. The objective, as stated, speaks about the interests of Switzerland, and suggests a thematic area of interest, rather than any clear expected result from the ICRC. In its simplest form:

- FDFA funds the ICRC HQ to exist, and engage as the organization sees fit, in International Geneva. That existence is a reinforcement of the foreign policy strategy of the “systematic promotion of International Geneva.” FDFA has explicitly stated that it has no specific expectation of ICRC activities to reinforce Geneva.
- ICRC has embraced and institutionalized the 2014 Swiss International Geneva strategy, language, and intent. The increasing convergence of Switzerland and ICRC in the Global Humanitarian Lab and the Centre of Competence for Humanitarian Negotiations has resulted in new initiatives and supplemental project-based funding beyond the annual funding provided to the HQ by Switzerland.
- The ICRC’s increased engagement in policy dialogue and partnership with the Movement and International Geneva key actors can also be engineered to fit the interests of Switzerland, while they are actually critical contributions in the implementation of its own institutional strategy. It is at times unclear which investment is being made for which result.

It is not surprising that the FDFA and the ICRC struggled to identify and isolate what they imagine to be the actual contribution to the International Geneva objective of their MoU: it simply isn't clear.

Conclusion 9: *While the connection between FDFA and the ICRC is strong, this is largely due to a shared history, their connection to the Geneva Conventions and almost parallel organizational strategic objectives, rather than clarity about how the organizations support or strengthen one another. The FDFA-ICRC relationship has been better structured in 2013-2016, but more can be done. (Based on Finding 13, 14, 15, 20, 23, 24, 26).*

FDFA strategies and priorities have integrated, and clearly illustrate, the shared interests, values, and themes with the ICRC and the RC/RC Movement. This evaluation concludes that the ICRC HQ funding is de facto fully relevant to the FDFA objectives. While the FDFA-ICRC dialogue has been better structured since the MoU of 2013, the agreement essentially creates a comfort zone for both parties. One stakeholder captured this in very stark terms: "Switzerland and the ICRC seem to invest a lot of effort to maintaining the status quo." Senior FDFA and ICRC respondents were unanimous in their agreement that the scope of the relationship naturally coalesces around two to four visible, flagship initiatives over four years.

SDC-HA has been clear that providing non-earmarked funding is a conscious political decision. Similarly, ICRC has been clear that this funding provides a strategic lever for fulfilling its mandate, provides space for innovation, and allows ICRC to focus on its work in the field rather than having to fundraise for its HQ. However, as long as the organizations remain in this comfort zone, there is limited incentive to determine the extent to which they are achieving the objectives of the 2013 MoU or if there is a genuinely shared understanding of what is actually expected of the ICRC in this regard.

This evaluation has clearly shown the current relationship has the potential to become a much stronger partnership - but the FDFA and the ICRC each appear to be waiting for the other to invite them to that new conversation. While this evaluation has been largely focused on how the ICRC translates the funding of its HQ into results, it has indirectly highlighted how the FDFA and Switzerland have themselves been significantly strengthened through their funding relationship with the ICRC.

Recommendations

From the conclusions in the previous section, we provide the following recommendations for the ICRC, FDFA, and their relationship-partnership moving forward:

For the FDFA and ICRC

Recommendation 1: *Start a new strategic FDFA-ICRC conversation. (Based on Conclusions 1, 5, 6 and 9)*

FDFA and the ICRC can be credited with always finding new points on the horizon where they can cooperate. There is a solid foundation for moving forward, but this evaluation underlines that there is less clarity than the partners appear willing to publicly accept. That said, there is an inevitable inertia to a funding relationship that dates to 1949, and MoU objectives that reflect a consistent scope since the 1970s.

While it would be overly simplistic to recommend a new strategic dialogue to the partners, this is only a piece of what is required. FDFA and the ICRC need to start a new

conversation, one that potentially adds other FDFA funding partners, in a process that iteratively shapes a new raison d'être for the ICRC HQ contribution. The conversation needs to be plainspoken and nurture a clear and shared understanding of what, concretely, each partner wants from the other. FDFA and the ICRC need to clearly articulate their actual desires, and set aside the political or other constraints that have been regularly underlined to the evaluators. This should not become yet another "high level," formal meeting of senior management, but a conversation that starts with understanding the snapshot of ICRC realities presented in this report, and re-imagines what a new, truly synergistic partnership could become.

Recommendation 2: *Define a partnership that allows measurement of its successes and challenges. (Based on Conclusions 1, 5, 6 and 9)*

Once FDFA and the ICRC have determined how they would like to deepen their engagement in the future, this should be defined in an agreement, contract, joint statement, or some other vehicle that can be used to guide the partners on the path toward achieving a shared vision and also clearly define the criteria on which its success will be readily measured and challenges identified.

Recommendation 3: *Remove the International Geneva objective from the future MoU, and shift to a more agile project-based or core funding partnership to allow FDFA and ICRC to develop further initiatives. (Based on Conclusion 8)*

The International Geneva strategy is of critical importance to Switzerland, and goes beyond the scope of its MoU with the ICRC. It should be removed from the MoU and replaced with the expectation that Switzerland will consider supplemental funding of ICRC initiatives that align with its strategy, that are beyond the MoU expectation that the ICRC will continue to maintain its HQ in International Geneva.

Recommendation 4: *Build on the successes of the partnership, particularly IHL. (Based on Conclusion 6)*

As the most concrete example of partnership success, FDFA and ICRC should examine the best practices and challenges from this initiative to do more of what works.

For FDFA and SDC-HA

Recommendation 5: *The FDFA should seek to learn from the ICRC's transformation and increasing sophistication. (Based on Conclusions 1-6 and 9)*

While the evaluation focuses on how SDC-HA funding has helped the ICRC, a consistent, unstated subtext across the evaluation was the reversal of this question. That is, "how is the relationship with ICRC benefiting FDFA?" SDC-HA should seek to better understand the transformation of the ICRC to learn from best practices that can be incorporated into its own structure and delivery, and shared with other organizations it funds.

Recommendation 6: *The FDFA should continue to seek to punch above its weight by specifically supporting innovation and performance measurement. (Based on Conclusions 1-6 and 9)*

The character of the FDFA as a donor is unique: Its funding decisions underline a strong belief in playing a transformative role, where Switzerland punches above its weight, and it is happy to do so without seeking public recognition. FDFA is broadly recognized as being "the" donor that will provide seed funding for new ideas that other donors would not prioritize.

What is currently missing from the FDFA side is a push for the ICRC to solve the same problems differently (i.e., innovation) and the requirement to show results (i.e. performance measurement). If FDFA lacks the capacity to realize these requirements (i.e., not enough, or not the right, in-house technical staff), FDFA should take steps to:

- Build it by hiring staff and technical experts that can manage innovation, monitor partnerships, and provide technical guidance; or
- Outsource these functions to other third parties like universities (e.g. EPFL), think tanks or others with the technical expertise.

Recommendation 7: Create opportunities for Switzerland to champion institutional causes. (Based on Conclusion 6)

Large allotments of non-earmarked funding are extremely rare in the humanitarian sector. Switzerland could stake a claim as a champion of fundamental - yet not very attractive - causes, such as the ICRC's institutional transformation of systems and processes, at ICRC and in other organizations. Such a move potentially offers high returns in terms of efficiencies and effectiveness for the sector, and the opportunity to be a leader in the Grand Bargain conversation.

For ICRC

Recommendation 8: Prepare, communicate, and maintain an operational vision for what the ICRC will become due to its transformation that includes all processes and changes (Based on Conclusions 1-5)

ICRC should fill the gap of a clear and complete operational vision of what the ICRC will become (e.g. ICRC 2025 Operational Vision) to help staff and external stakeholders situate the ongoing transformations, and their future, into something more concrete.

Recommendation 9: Continue to pursue the transformation toward increased efficiency, while ensuring the continued delivery of effective and high-quality services. (Based on Conclusions 1-6)

The changes at the ICRC have the opportunity to provide it with a “leapfrog moment” in the humanitarian sector, with significantly increased efficiency, agility and data-driven insight. However, in the pursuit of growth concurrent with substantial change, the ICRC risks decreasing either or both the quality and effectiveness of its service delivery. This in no way means that the ICRC should just continue to “do the same thing” it has always done. Indeed, as it transforms, so will much about its core services. Rather, as these services also evolve, quality and effectiveness should continue to be held as the ultimate pursuit.

ICRC should explicitly state this within its change management documentation and regularly communicate it as the processes continue. An additional step could be to place these high within the stated shared organizational values and ensure its inclusion as a key metric for staff performance at all levels.

Recommendation 10: As a part of the transformation process, the ICRC should seek to streamline its decision-making processes. (Based on Conclusion 1)

The evaluation team acknowledges that a key part of the organizational change at ICRC is meant to shift decision making closer to the field. During this process, ICRC should acknowledge its current culture of consensus and determine appropriate areas where layers of consultation and approval can be made more efficient or removed.

Recommendation 11: *Accompany the cultural shift associated with large institutional change. (Based on Conclusion 3 and 7)*

The iceberg of culture that has been created over the past 150 years cannot, and should not, be underestimated by ICRC's leadership. The institutional changes that have been set in motion openly challenge many time-honored practices and indirectly challenge many others that are simply understood as "the way things are done," but never articulated. No better example exists than the delays and difficulties of the PMP and HR restructuring.

For ICRC staff with more than five years of experience: The ICRC needs to communicate with staff, both mobile and resident, who have been with the ICRC for more than five years, to help them understand how the changes at the ICRC benefit them (i.e., answer the "What's In It For Me?" question) and the organization's ability to deliver its mission. At the same time, ICRC should provide a bridge from the old culture to the new one, explicitly identifying old practices and matching them with the new. A clear vision of what the ICRC wants to actually become by 2025 might help its staff better situate the rationale for the transformational changes, beyond the modernization of systems.

For new ICRC hires: Regardless of what level they enter the organization and where they came from, ICRC should provide explicit guidance about cultural expectations that align with the values of one global workforce.

Appendix A – Individuals Interviewed

Aeby, Daniel	Financial Audit Expert at Swiss Federal Audit Office	SFAO
Aeschlimann, Simone	Deputy Director , Human Resources	ICRC
Andersen, Catherine	Former Advisor at the Permanent Mission of Norway to the UN	Government of Denmark
Anthony Gray, Martin	Human Resources Integration Manager	ICRC
Anusonadisai, Nattasuda	Public Relations and Digital Communications Officer, Manila	ICRC
Berli, Christine	Vice President	ICRC
Belachew, Amare	Regional Finance and Administration Coordinator, Thailand	ICRC
Bernard, Vincent	Editor-in-Chief of the International Review of the Red Cross, Department of International Law and Policy	ICRC
Bessler, Amb. Manuel	Vice Director, Head of the SDC Humanitarian Aid Unit	FDFA
Bonanno, Aron	Chief Advisor, Humanitarian Action, Migration and Civil Society, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Government of Denmark
Bruderlein, Claude	Personal Advisor to the President	ICRC
Busino, Nicola	Head of Division, Office of the Head of the Finance and Administration Division	ICRC
Buzard, Nan	Executive Director, International Council of Volunteer Agencies	ICVA
Chapagain, Jagan	Chief of Staff and Director of Office of the Secretary General, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	IFRC
Christophe, Martin	Head of Multilateral Division	ICRC
Cocking, Jane	Former Humanitarian Director	OXFAM GB and SCHR representative
Coninx, Dr. Rudi	Coordinator, Policy, Practice and Evaluation Unit, Emergency Risk Management + Humanitarian Response, World Health Organization	WHO
Conti, Riccardo	Deputy Head of Delegation for Operations	ICRC
Coutau, Oliver	Delegate for International Geneva	Canton of Geneva
Cruz-Ferrer, Evecar	IHL Coordinator, Philippines	ICRC
Cuba, Ruben	Head of Sector FAD	ICRC
Daccord, Yves	Director General	ICRC
Dalton, Clare	Diplomatic Advisor, Multilateral Organizations and Humanitarian Action, Department of International Law and Policy	ICRC
Davis, Zorana	Head of Business Intelligence Programme	ICRC
de Riedmatten, Anne	First Secretary, Swiss Permanent Mission to UN	FDFA
Dela Cruz, Jamie	Deputy Head of unit FAD/COMP	ICRC
Delarue, Olivier	Chief Executive Officer, Global Humanitarian Lab	GHL
Doblado, Abraham	Programme Manager, External Resources Division, New and Prospective Donors	ICRC
Doermann, Knut	Head of Division, Office of the Head of Legal Division	ICRC
Drouin, Antoine-Ouellet	Head of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Sector	ICRC
Durham, Helen	Director, Department of International Law and Policy	ICRC
El Hajal, Georges	Human Resources Manager, Philippines	ICRC
Endres, Daniel	Director of Division of External Resources, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	UNHCR
Epprecht-Noetzli, Sarah	Chief of Staff, Department of Operations	ICRC

Evangelio, Lovely	Head of Internal Control, Manila Shared Services Center	ICRC
Fasel, Amb. Alexandre	Former Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations Office in Geneva, current Special Representative at United Nations and International Organisations Division	FDFA
Gabriel Saugeron, Wolde	Deputy Head of Delegation for Prevention and Communication	ICRC
Gentile, Pierre	Head of Division, Office of the Head of Central Tracing Agency and Protection Division	ICRC
Guillaume, Johan	Head of Sector REX/REP	ICRC
Halff, Kate	Executive Secretary, Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response	SCHR
Hancock, Caroline	Programme Officer, Humanitarian Aid/Multilateral Aid Division	FDFA
Herth, Peggy	Head of Internal Audit	ICRC
Hoehne, Oliver	First Secretary, Swiss Permanent Mission to UN	FDFA
Huber, André	Deputy Head of Humanitarian Aid, Head Africa, SDC Humanitarian Aid	FDFA
Hundt, Pascal	Head of Division, Assistance	ICRC
Illias, Fouad	Scientific Collaborator, United Nations and International Organizations Division	FDFA
Kemileva, Kamelia	Executive Manager	Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights
Kobler, Othmar	Organizational Development Manager	ICRC
Kocher, Benno	Head of Unit, External Resources Division, Donor Relations and Fundraising	ICRC
Lang, Angharad	Executive Director, Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection	PHAP
Levy, Karla	Senior Business Analyst	ICRC
Liewchirakorn, Vicha	Trainer, Learning And Development, Thailand	ICRC
Mahattamasign, Tanwich	WatHab Field Officer, Civil Engineering, Philippines	ICRC
Maire, Philippe	Head of Financial Sector, Financial Analysis and Management Unit	ICRC
Mardini, Carla	Head, External Resources Division	ICRC
Mardini, Robert	Regional Director, Operations for the Near and Middle East	ICRC
Maurer, Peter	President	ICRC
Meyrat, Theiry	Head of Delegation, Nairobi	ICRC
Milisic, Zlatan	Deputy Director of Operations, World Food Programme	WFP
Moser, Claudia	Deputy Head, Human Security Division	FDFA
Muller, Rudolph	Director, A.I. and Chief Emergency Services Branch, OCHA Geneva	OCHA
Mumenthalter, Mariella	Diplomatic Collaborator, Human Security Division	FDFA
Munn, Jamie	Director, Humanitarian Policy/NRC Geneva, Norwegian Refugee Council	NRC
Ott, David	Chief Operating Officer, Global Humanitarian Lab	GHL
Pandey, Uma	Trainer, Learning And Development, Thailand	ICRC
Pawlotsky, Catherine	Head, IT Division	ICRC
Philippe Carnat, Jean	Regional Human Resources Manager	ICRC
Pontrandolfi, Gherardo	Director, Human Resources Directorate	ICRC
Porchet, Pascal	HoD, Manila	ICRC

Puillet-Breton, Daniel	Cooperation Coordinator, Thailand	ICRC
Rakwanat, Aekarad	Head of Cooperation Unit, Bangkok Regional Delegation	ICRC
Rivier, Cristian	Protection Coordinator, Thailand	ICRC
Rochus, Peyer	Legal Officer, Humanitarian Affairs	Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations Office in Geneva
Rock, Megan	Project Manager	ICRC
Rouffaer, Christian	Head of Virtual Reality Project	ICRC
Sams, Katie	Chief of Staff	ICRC
Sarmiento, Amelia	Head of Sector, LOG/STAT	ICRC
Saugy, Christian	Deputy Head of Division, Office of the Head of the Finance and Administration Division	ICRC
Sawaluck, Melinda	Assistant, Cooperation Department	ICRC
Schweizer, Beat	Head of Regional Delegation	ICRC
Staehelin, Balthasar	Deputy Director General	ICRC
Stillhart, Dominik	Director of Operations	ICRC
Stürchler, Nikolas	Head, International Humanitarian Law and International Crime Justice, Directorate of International Law	FDFA
Taramarcaz, Christophe	Manager	ICRC
Tumsai, Khan	WatHab Field Officer, Environmental Engineering	ICRC
Wicki, Arno	Deputy Head of SDC Humanitarian Aid/Head Multilateral Aid Division	FDFA
Wiegmann, Katrin	Deputy Head of Division, Cooperation and Coordination within the Movement	ICRC
Zellweger, Amb. Valentin	Former Director, Directorate of International Law, current Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations Office in Geneva	FDFA

Appendix B – Documentation Reviewed

Throughout the course of the assignment, the evaluation team was provided with a large amount of internal documentation from ICRC. For reasons of confidentiality, this documentation has not been included in the list below, but is known to both ICRC and SDC.

- Consolidated Financial Statements of the ICRC 2011
- Consolidated Financial Statements of the ICRC 2012
- Report of Independent Auditor and Consolidated Financial Statements of the ICRC 2013
- Report of Independent Auditor and Consolidated Financial Statements of the ICRC 2014
- Australian Multilateral Assessment of the ICRC 2012
- DFID Multilateral Aid Review: Assessment of the ICRC 2011
- Direktion für Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit (DEZA),
- Sitzbeitrag der Schweiz an das Internationale Komitee vom Roten Kreuz (IKRK), 2015
- Humanitarian Emergency Response Review, 2011
- SIDA Study: How to Define and Measure Value for Money in the Humanitarian Sector, 2013
- ICRC HQ Appeal 2012
- ICRC HQ Appeal 2013
- ICRC HQ Appeal 2014
- ICRC HQ Appeal 2015
- ICRC HQ Appeal 2016
- SDC Contribution financière de la Confédération au budget siège du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR) pour l'année 2012
- SDC Contribution financière de la Confédération au budget siège du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR) pour l'année 2013
- SDC Contribution financière de la Confédération au budget siège du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR) pour l'année 2014
- SDC Contribution financière de la Confédération au budget siège du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR) pour l'année 2015
- SDC Contribution financière de la Confédération au budget siège du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR) pour l'année 2016
- SDC International Organization Factsheet, ICRC, 2015
- ICRC Booklet Appeals, 2016
- ICRC Funding Strategy (email), 2015
- Meeting Minutes FDFA ICRC 12 JUL 13
- Meeting Minutes FDFA ICRC 06 MAR 15
- Meeting Minutes FDFA ICRC 31 MAR 16
- Message concernant les mesures à mettre en œuvre pour renforcer le rôle de la Suisse comme Etat hôte, 2014
- Joint Reflection Group on the future of International Geneva "Geneva+" (undated)
- Impacts de la Genève internationale sur l'économie et les finances suisses et du Grand Genève, 2012
- Stratégie de politique étrangère 2012–2015, 2012
- Stratégie de politique étrangère 2016–2019, undated
- The Think Tank Hub Geneva, undated
- Transformation du modèle de service ICT, 2014
- IE Strategy update - Kick off Presentation, 2016

- IES ICT Transformation Program Presentation, 2015
- ICT Capacity Planning EM Presentation, 2016
- Vision Stratégique du Système d'Information, undated
- ICT Change Management Dashboard presentation, 2015
- ICT Change Management Dashboard presentation, 2016-07-12
- IES ICT Transformation Program, Business Case Review Presentation, 2016
- Information Environment Strategy & Roadmap, 2012
- The Geneva Convention I-IV
- Statues of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, 1986, 1995, 2006
- Accord, entre le Conseil fédéral Suisse, et le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge, en vue de déterminer le statut juridique du Comité en Suisse, 2993
- ICRC Annual report Supplement 2012
- ICRC Annual report Supplement 2013
- ICRC Annual report Supplement 2014
- ICRC Midterm Report Human Resources 2012
- ICRC Midterm Report Human Resources 2013
- ICRC Midterm Report Human Resources 2014
- ICRC Midterm Report Human Resources 2015
- ICRC Strategy 2007-2010
- ICRC Strategy 2011-2014
- ICRC Strategy 2015-2018
- Review of the Implementation of the Institutional Strategy 2011-2014, 2013
- The SDC Multilateral Humanitarian Aid Concept, 2012
- ICRC Directorate Roadmap 2011-2015

Appendix C – Analytical Framework

<p>Evaluation Purpose Evaluate the SDC-ICRC funding relationship to develop forward-looking recommendations that will inform their future partnership.</p>			
<p>Evaluation Objective Determine to what extent the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ has realized the goals of the funding, which were compiled during the development of the TOR for this evaluation.</p>			
<p>Research Stream 1: Strengthen ICRC Headquarters</p>			
<p><i>This portion of research evaluates how ICRC is managing, maintaining and transforming its Geneva headquarters to strengthen its ability to deliver its core services while increasing its effectiveness and efficiency for the same.</i></p>			
Key Questions	Research Activity (RA)	Sources	Example of how ISG answers the questions
<p>To what extent does the current reorganization of ICRC HQ improve the performance of both the HQ and ICRC as a whole?</p> <p>To what extent does ICRC's HQ reorganization affect the objectives of the SDC-ICRC partnership?</p> <p>To what extent does ICRC demonstrate efficiency in managing its human and financial resources?</p> <p>To what extent does ICRC manage its human resources for</p>	<p>RA 1) Analysis of organizational development and change activities (e.g. global systems development, delocalization) at HQ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Financial Management ● Human Resources Management ● Information Management (IT) ● Corporate Service Networks (CSN) <p>RA 2) Comparative analysis of codified agreements with two other SDC/HA funding</p>	<p>Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strategies ● Roadmaps ● Annual Plans (PfR) ● Project Plans (institutional) ● Action plans ● Surveys ● Policies ● Org charts ● System specifications ● Publicly available documentation from other organizations ● Reports ● Other <p>KIIs with ICRC staff and staff of other orgs</p>	<p>RA 1) For each HQ division/directorate, the consultants collected documentation of planned and actual change activities during the evaluation period and analyzed what has been accomplished, what remains, what challenges exist, and what is planned for the future.</p> <p>RA 2) For two SDC/HA funding partners, the consultants analyzed relevant contracts and agreements that define their relationship with SDC and compared with those of ICRC. (Preference for WFP and OCHA)</p>

maximum impact?	partners (i.e. WFP, OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNISDR and UNRWA)		
To what extent does ICRC's strategy to diversify its funding impact the FDFA-ICRC partnership?	RA 3) Analysis of diversification fundraising strategy, results over the period 2013- 2016.	Documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies • Action plans • Reports • Other 	RA 3) The consultants reviewed all fundraising strategies and activities during the evaluation period and plans for future diversification.
To what extent do ICRC's governing bodies, management, and staff use results frameworks and results reporting to inform decision making?	RA 4) Taking stock of current and planned RBM systems from 2013-2016.	Documentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring tools • RBM systems • Action plans • Decision-making systems/processes/structures • Reports • Other 	RA 4) The consultants reviewed RBM systems and their use during the evaluation period and plans for future RBM activities.

Research Stream 2: The SWISS and ICRC Partnership

This portion of research will evaluate how the Swiss contribution to the ICRC headquarters is relevant to the overall objectives of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (mainly Swiss humanitarian aid).

Key Question	Research Activity	Sources	Example of how ISG answers the questions
<p>To what extent have policy dialogue and exchanges on operational approaches and international humanitarian community areas of concerns, including humanitarian principles, been intensified between SDC and ICRC and within the DSG?</p> <p>To what extent have partnerships</p>	<p>RA 5) Comparison of Swiss Strategic objectives and ICRC strategic objectives for 2013-2016</p> <p>RA 6) Develop an overview of expected and actual results (FDFA, ICRC) of the following key engagements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHS (2016) 	<p>Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Council's Dispatch on International Cooperation 2013-2016 • ICRC Strategies 2011-2014 and 2015- 2018 • DSG meeting minutes • Documentation related to WHS • Documentation related to Int'l Conference and ICRC strategy vis-à-vis the Red Cross/Red 	<p>RA 5) The consultants reviewed the alignments, gaps and overlaps during the evaluation period and plans for future joint engagements.</p> <p>RA 6) The consultants developed a snapshot of key strategic initiatives of Switzerland/ICRC during the evaluation period and reviewed the degree of intensification/changes that resulted from the relationship.</p>

<p>with key actors and within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement been intensified?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● RC/RC International Conference (2015) 	<p>Crescent Movement</p> <p>Qualitative data: KII interviews</p>	
<p>To what extent does the SDC-ICRC partnership strengthen ICRC in its role as advocate and defender of IHL?</p> <p>To what extent does the SDC-ICRC partnership strengthen ICRC's role as the guardian of IHL and for promoting, reaffirming, clarifying, and developing IHL?</p>	<p>RA 7) Review of activities at ICRC International Humanitarian Law Directorate, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Overall strategy for advocacy and defence of IHL (FDFA) ● Review of joint activities between ICRC and SDC including informal engagements ● Strengthening compliance with IHL joint initiative 	<p>Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Federal Council's Dispatch on International Cooperation 2013-2016 ● ICRC Strategies 2011-2014 and 2015-2018 ● Action/project plans (specifically the Compliance Conference initiative, others as available) ● Annual meeting minutes ● Outputs and papers ● Other 	<p>RA 7) The consultants reviewed respective strategies and joint activities during the evaluation period and the degree to which the relationship has strengthened ICRC's role as advocate and guardian of IHL.</p>
<p>To what extent does maintaining a strong ICRC HQ in Geneva contribute to the realization of "International Geneva"?</p>	<p>RA 8) Review of initiatives that directly involve ICRC from UN and Int'l Org Division of FDFA.</p>	<p>Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Federal Council's Dispatch on International Cooperation 2013-2016 ● Federal Council's Dispatch on Implementation Measures to Reinforce Switzerland's Role as Host State 2016-2019 ● Switzerland's Foreign Policy Strategy 2012-2015 ● Publicly available documentation on International Geneva <p>KIIs with ICRC and FDFA staff and potentially staff of other orgs</p>	<p>RA 8) Consultants reviewed the Swiss strategic documents that frame their interest and investment in International Geneva and the degree to which ICRC HQ contributes to those goals. This was supplemented with qualitative data, including interviews with UN agencies, FDFA staff in Bern and Geneva, and other stakeholders from International Geneva.</p>

Appendix D – Terms of References

Terms of references Contract no. 81041827 (B Mandate) Independent evaluation of the Swiss headquarters contribution to the ICRC

Note: This document refers to the related Approach Paper of this evaluation. The Approach Paper will be revised after the Kick-Off Meeting scheduled on the 04th of May 2016. The Terms of Reference will be amended accordingly.

Context

This evaluation is mandated by the SDC's Bord of Directors and commissioned by the Evaluation and Corporate Controlling Division, which is outside the operational lines and reports to SDC's Director-General. The contracted evaluation team will be independent of SDC and ICRC, and their independence will be safeguarded throughout the evaluation.

Purpose and Overall Goal of the Evaluation

Purpose

The main purposes of this evaluation are learning and accountability.

- The evaluation contributes to learning at SDC and at ICRC by generating conclusions and recommendations on how best the Swiss headquarters contributions are used by ICRC.
- The evaluation has further a purpose of accountability on the use and the achievements of the Swiss headquarters contributions towards SDC's Senior Management and to the Swiss parliament.

Focus and Scope

Switzerland has a special interest in evaluating the use and achievements of the headquarters contribution because of its special role as the most important contributor to the "permanent tasks of the ICRC". Accordingly, the evaluation will focus on the Swiss *headquarters* contribution to the ICRC. The main period to be considered is the period of the current Swiss Federal Council's Dispatch to the

Parliament on International Cooperation 2013-2016, which defines the strategic and financial framework of SDC, including Swiss humanitarian aid.

Both SDC and ICRC shall benefit from this evaluation on the Swiss Headquarters Contribution to the ICRC. The evaluation will be conducted according to the international agreed standards and principles of the OECD-DAC (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability) as well as the SEVAL-Standards. The evaluation will make an independent analysis of the use made of the Swiss contribution to the ICRC headquarters and identify the results achieved, as well as possible challenges or problems and present findings and recommendations for improvement.

Objectives

The evaluation addresses the following objectives:

- assess how the Swiss headquarters contribution is used by ICRC;
- assess to what extent the objectives of SDC's financial contribution to ICRC's headquarters were achieved / are likely to be achieved;
- identify the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives.

The evaluators shall present recommendations on the relevance and the use of the Swiss headquarters contribution to the ICRC by further improving the effectiveness and efficiency of ICRC headquarters.

Consultant Mandate

Evaluation Team

The evaluation will be carried out by the International Solutions Group headquartered in Washington D.C., USA.

The evaluation will be conducted by Stephen Ladek as team leader and Single Person of Contract (SPoC), and Raj Rana as co-evaluator.

Stephen Ladek will be responsible for the quality of the evaluation and will ensure the implementation of the evaluation in accordance with all evaluation outputs as defined in the Approach Paper. He will coordinate, guide and supervise the work of the evaluation team and ensure that key questions are adequately addressed. He is furthermore responsible for the deliverables (see below).

Deliverables

The evaluation team is expected to provide the following services and products:

- Kick-off meeting in Geneva;
- Inception Report and discussion with the Reference Group;
- Draft Evaluation Report and discussion with the Reference Group on first results and recommendations;
- Final Evaluation Report with recommendations for further optimization of the use of the Swiss headquarters contribution. We expect a report of maximum 20 pages, annexes excluded.
- Presentation of the findings and recommendations to the SDC directorate and to the ICRC.

The evaluation report will be published together with the management response and ICRC's position on the Management Response thus accessible for the public.

Time Frame

The evaluation team will undertake this assignment between May and October 2016.

Date	Activity	Responsibilities
02 May 2016	Contract signed with ISG	SDC E+C
04 May 2016	Kick-off meeting at ICRC headquarters in Geneva	E+C / Evaluators / Reference Group
May 2016	Study of documents and first interviews in Bern and Geneva; writing of Draft Inception Report	Evaluators
June 2016	Meeting on Draft Inception Report in Bern or Geneva	Evaluators / E+C / Reference Group
June 2016	Finalization of Inception Report (incorporation of SDC and ICRC comments)	Evaluators
May-June 2016	Logistics and administrative preparation of the field visits	Evaluators / ICRC / E+C
June 2016	In-depth desk review and interviews	Evaluators
June-July 2016	Field visits and in-country data collection	Evaluators
July-August 2016	Data synthesis and analysis	Evaluators
August 2016	Development and submission of Draft Report	Evaluators
August/September 2016	Meeting on Draft Evaluation Report in Bern or Geneva	Evaluators / E+C / Reference Group

October 2016	Final Evaluation Report	Evaluators
October 2016	Presentation of the findings and recommendations to SDC's Directorate and to the ICRC	Evaluators (Team Leader) / E+C
November 2016	Management Response and publication	E+C

For the consultant

Place and date, ...02. MAY.....2016


.....
Stephen Ladek

For SDC

Bern, 28.04.2016

Evaluation and Corporate Controlling Division


.....
Jean-Marc Clavel


.....
Lena Einsele

Annexes

- Approach Paper (Version 25 April 2016)
- Technical offer
- SDC's formatting and submission guidelines for external evaluations

Appendix D

Inception Report

**Independent evaluation of the Swiss
headquarters contribution to the ICRC**

**Contract number: 81041827
Project number: 7F-07632.02.10**

PREPARED BY:

International Solutions Group

PREPARED FOR:

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Contact Us

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Acronyms and Initialisms

CHF	Swiss Franc
DSG	Donor Support Group
FDFA	Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
GE	Gender Equality
HA	Humanitarian Aid
HQ	Headquarters
HR	Human Resources
HSD	Human Security Division
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
ISG	International Solutions Group
IT	Information Technology
KII	Key Informant Interview
MD	Multilateral Division
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RBM	Results Based Management
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SFAO	Swiss Federal Audit Office
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Guidelines
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
WFP	World Food Programme
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit

Introduction

This inception report is a means of ensuring mutual understanding and interpretation of the evaluation's Terms of Reference (TOR) – specifically the research related to the evaluation and the questions it will seek to answer – and the consultants' proposed methodology, plan of action and the timeline for conducting the evaluation.

Background to the Evaluation

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is Switzerland's international cooperation agency within the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). Swiss Humanitarian Aid (SDC-HA) is one of four departments of SDC. To realize its objectives, SDC-HA supports and assists among other things international organizations, and more generally, the humanitarian aid system, to deliver results and improve performance of the same.

Within SDC-HA, the Multilateral Division (MD) is responsible for Switzerland's multilateral humanitarian engagements and commitments. The SDC-HA currently supports six priority partners:

1. International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC),
2. World Food Programme (WFP),
3. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR),
4. United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF),
5. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and
6. United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

Given its focus on protection, the quality of its interventions, its access to target populations, and its defence and promotion of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and humanitarian principles, the ICRC is a privileged interlocutor of Switzerland – on institutional, legal and operational levels.

SDC provides financial support to ICRC in two streams: (1) an annual non-earmarked, core contribution to the ICRC headquarters in Geneva (HQ), and (2) varying levels of funding to ICRC field operations. As detailed in the TOR, since 1988, the core contribution to ICRC's HQ has totalled 1,821.1BN CHF and the annual contribution currently stands at 80MM CHF. This is by far the largest financing for the permanent HQ tasks of the ICRC and represents an approximate 40% share of the 2015 194MM CHF budget of the ICRC HQ.

At the outset of this evaluation, SDC realized that the goals and metrics related to the funding provided to ICRC HQ were not rigorously or concisely defined. However, SDC determined that goals for the funding were mentioned, more or less explicitly, in different official documents relevant to the SDC/ICRC partnership. As such, for this evaluation, SDC has established the goals of its contribution to the ICRC HQ as:

- **Operations:** To maintain a strong, effective and efficient ICRC HQ that supports the ICRC delegations around the world.
- **Policy:** To intensify policy dialogue and exchanges on operational approaches and international humanitarian community areas of concerns, including humanitarian principles, between SDC, ICRC and the Donor Support Group (DSG), and intensify partnerships with key actors and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

- **International Humanitarian Law:** To strengthen ICRC in its mandate to promote, reaffirm, clarify, and develop IHL, foster compliance with IHL and improve access to vulnerable populations.
- **International Geneva:** To maintain a robust ICRC Headquarters (HQ) in line with Switzerland's Foreign Policy Strategy 2012-2015, i.e. the “systematic promotion of international Geneva”, which in turn should enable Switzerland to play an international role “disproportionate to the size of its national territory”.¹

The SDC is accountable to the Swiss Parliament on the results achieved by official development assistance. SDC is therefore interested in strengthening the efficiency and results orientation of its partners, including the ICRC. While Switzerland has financed the ICRC with headquarters contributions since 1949, the partnership has never been independently evaluated. However, the Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO) did conduct an audit of the SDC contribution to the ICRC HQ in 2015. The audit report focused on the management of resources at the ICRC headquarters and “revealed neither marked inefficiencies nor any unacceptable use of funds”.²

Pre-Inception Activities

The inception period for this assignment has been deliberately extended, to ensure time and space for stakeholders to understand, contribute to and shape the process. Three activities were undertaken prior to the creation of this document in order to define the focus of the assignment to ensure the most valuable outputs possible.

Kick Off Meeting

A kick off meeting for the assignment was held on May 4th, 2016 at the ICRC HQ.

Given that the assignment will generate a public report, available to the Swiss Parliament and the general public, a key question was how the evaluation would be used. Both SDC and ICRC seek an output from this evaluation that would provide assistance in further refining the relationship between the two organizations and help ICRC continue its transformation. Another specific request from ICRC was that this assignment serves a function that is clearly distinct from the 2015 audit. Whereas the SFAO Audit was specifically interested in the use of SDC's ICRC HQ contribution, and compliance with the Swiss subsidies law, this assignment will focus on the relevance, effectiveness and efficient use of the funding.

Initial Round of Key Informant Interviews

Between May 5th and June 8th, 2016, the consultants conducted 31 Key Informant Interviews (KII) with stakeholders at SDC and ICRC. A list of interviewees is included in Annex A. Findings from these discussions are summarized below.

Document Review

The consultants reviewed a selection of documents provided by SDC and ICRC that pertained to the long-standing relationship between the same. These documents were supplemented during the pre-inception interviews and will continue to be augmented throughout the assignment. A list of documents reviewed is in Annex B.

¹ See TOR, p. 9 and Bundesratsbeschluss „Contribution financière de la Confédération au budget siège du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR) pour l'année 2015”; Switzerland's Foreign Policy Strategy 2012-2015

² See TOR, p. 10 and EFK, Sitzbeitrag der Schweiz an das Internationale Komitee vom Roten Kreuz (IKRK), EFK-14481 / inkl. Stellungnahme / 31. März 2015, p. 9.

Findings of the Inception Phase

Interviewed stakeholders recognize that the relationship between SDC and ICRC is very long-standing and highly nuanced across many departments, levels and areas of activity. While all stakeholders in FDFA and ICRC expressed interest and enthusiasm for the assignment, there was also unanimous agreement that it would be essentially impossible to rigorously evaluate the four goals of SDC funding as articulated in the TOR. The consultants concur with the stakeholders in this regard. The difficulties of such an exercise can be summarized across the following four topics:

- **Formal structure of Switzerland- ICRC relationship:** The four funding goals presented in the TOR (see above) reflect the broad spirit of various Memorandums of Understanding between Switzerland and the ICRC HQ since the 1970s. These goals are not written as actual objectives and there are no indicators to measure results. Further, there are no requirements for reporting on progress in achieving the goals. While a table of activities was developed by SDC-HA (complimenting the most recent 2013 *Protocole d'Accord*), it was described as an illustrative exercise and not a roadmap of, or commitment to, actual outputs. This table is update twice per year, with the most recent update in June 2016.
- **Non-earmarked nature of the funding:** As the Swiss contribution to the ICRC is non-earmarked, the ICRC has not provided grant-specific reporting on the use of the funds. While SDC has made progressively greater investment in their internal reporting on the grant provided,³ these reports remain at a broad-brush level of detail. This evaluation's TOR thus represent a form of reverse-engineering, attempting to connect Swiss funding to broader ICRC HQ results, rather than an articulation of known metrics and systems of measurement.
- **Attribution:** As noted in the TOR, the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ represents roughly 40% of the total headquarters budget. The 2015 audit undertaken by the SFAO reported that 73% of the *total* ICRC HQ budget is on staff expenditure alone. As such, the Swiss contribution would cover, at best, roughly 60% of total ICRC HQ salaries, with no indication of which salaries were funded by the Swiss contribution. During inception interviews, the consultants noted that, generally, respondents attributed all ICRC HQ success stories to Swiss non-earmarked funding - which underlines the convenience of not being able to clearly define attribution.
- **Original purpose and objectives of the evaluation:** As stated in the TOR, the purpose of this assignment is first for learning and second for accountability. Attempting to achieve this purpose by evaluating activities that ICRC has not been required to measure would set the rigour of the evaluation at risk (see also Risk Management below).

Given these realities, the consultants have three recommendations for performing the assignment and creating a deliverable that truly adds value to both SDC and ICRC:

1. **Ensure realistic expectations from SDC and ICRC:** Realistically, the consultants can undertake a structured research exercise that examines the funding delivered in the Federal Council's Dispatch on International Cooperation 2013-2016. This funding overlaps two ICRC Strategies (2011- 2014 and 2015- 2018) and would provide detailed insights into both the ICRC HQ's recent history and forward looking plans. While the assignment will remain an evaluation, stakeholders must bear in mind its limits, particularly the non-earmarked nature of the funding and the impossibility of attribution of Swiss funding to specific ICRC HQ results.

³ See Results-oriented Core Contribution Management (CCM), 2012, 2013 and 2014 provided to the consultants.

2. **Refine the overall purpose of the exercise:** The purpose of this assignment is to evaluate the SDC / ICRC funding relationship to develop forward-looking recommendations that will inform their future partnership.
3. **Special Switzerland- ICRC Relationship:** The inception phase has underlined the importance of unpacking the specificities of the Switzerland- ICRC relationship. Interviews and documentation underscored the deep emotional relationship between the partners that risks becoming an obstacle to the development of a more focused funding partnership.⁴ Adding a specific focus to understanding the advantages, challenges and limits of this relationship and its components will allow the assignment to more realistically frame its conclusions and recommendations.

Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Scope

Based upon the recommendations above, the following revised purpose, objective and scope are proposed by the consultants:

Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to evaluate the SDC / ICRC funding relationship to develop forward looking recommendations that will inform their future partnership.

Objective

Whereas the SFAO Audit was specifically interested in the use of SDC's ICRC HQ contribution, and compliance with the Swiss subsidies law, the objective of this evaluation is to determine to what extent the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ has realized the goals of the funding which were compiled during the development of the TOR for this evaluation.

Scope

The evaluation will consider activities undertaken as a part of the SDC / ICRC relationship from 2013-2016, as they relate to the ICRC HQ.⁵ ICRC field programming is not included in this assignment, other than as it relates to the effectiveness and efficiency of HQ operations.

Intended Audience

The audience for the deliverables associated with this evaluation are the leadership and key decision makers at both SDC and ICRC. The deliverables could also be of interest to the ICRC Donor Support Group (DSG). The final report will be available in the public domain.

Analytical Framework

Following the recommendations above, the consultants have created the Analytical Framework below to achieve the objective of the evaluation. The Framework regroups the objectives of the original TOR into two research streams and recognizes that there can be no specificity regarding what the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ has funded. These

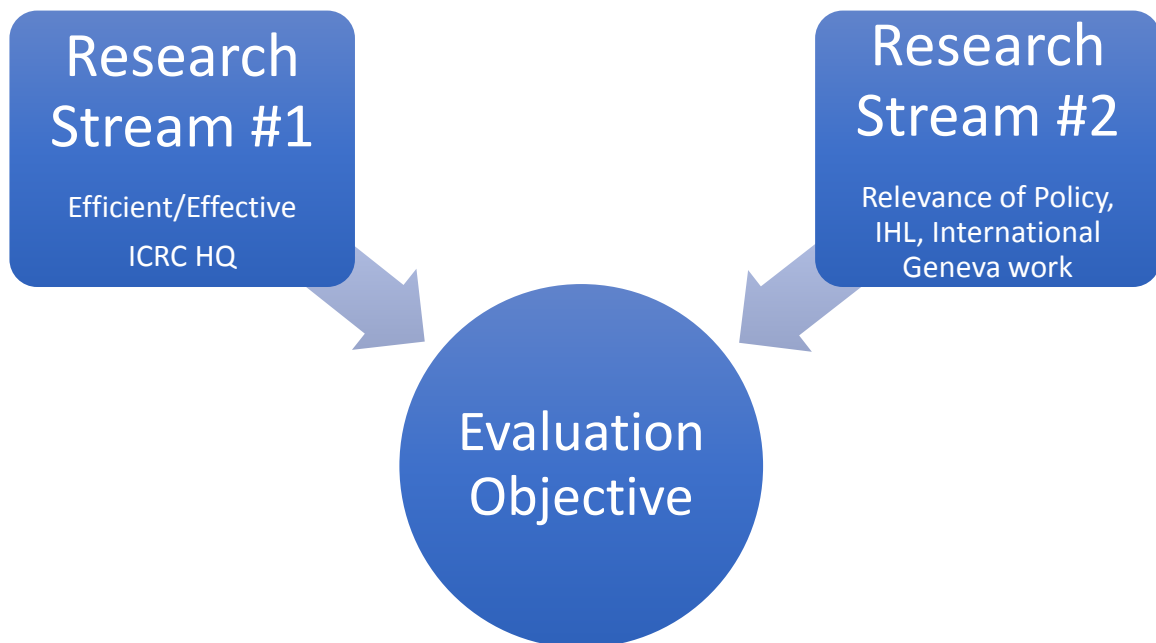
⁴ Select examples of this special relationship include: the embedded nature of ICRC in the Swiss psyche while the organization continues to evolve from a "Swiss" organization to a truly global one, and a very high percentage of FDFA staff that are former ICRC delegates, contributing to a very dense fabric of powerful, yet informal, relationships.

⁵ The Swiss HQ contribution is disbursed by SDC and managed by the SDC-HA Multilateral Division. Importantly, other directorates within the FDFA (e.g. Directorate for International Law) are also involved in ICRC HQ related activities and this work will, as necessary and possible, be incorporated into the evaluation as detailed in the Analytical Framework.

two research streams will create the foundation for which the consultants will analyse the evaluation objective:

1. **Research Stream #1.** This portion of research for the assignment will evaluate how ICRC is managing, maintaining and transforming its Geneva headquarters to strengthen its ability to deliver its core services while increasing its effectiveness and efficiency for the same. This focus will enjoy a rich set of documentation and first hand perspectives regarding the transformations undertaken by the ICRC in the 2013- 2016 period.
2. **Research Stream #2.** This portion of research for the assignment will evaluate how the Swiss headquarters contribution to the ICRC is relevant to the overall objectives of *Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs* (mainly Swiss humanitarian aid). The consultants will select a handful of examples which can be researched as case studies, from which broader conclusions and recommendations can be formed.

Graphically, the Analytical Framework can be visualized as such:



Evaluation Purpose			
Evaluate the SDC / ICRC funding relationship to develop forward-looking recommendations that will inform their future partnership.			
Evaluation Objective			
Determine to what extent the Swiss contribution to the ICRC HQ has realized the goals of the funding which were compiled during the development of the TOR for this evaluation.			
Research Stream #1: Strengthen ICRC Headquarters			
<i>This portion of research will evaluate how ICRC is managing, maintaining and transforming its Geneva headquarters to strengthen its ability to deliver its core services while increasing its effectiveness and efficiency for the same.</i>			
Key Questions	Research Activity (RA)	Sources	Example of how ISG will answer the questions
<p>To what extent does the current reorganization of ICRC HQ improve the performance of both the HQ and ICRC as a whole?</p> <p>To what extent does ICRC's HQ reorganization affect the objectives of the SDC-ICRC partnership?</p> <p>To what extent does ICRC demonstrate</p>	<p>RA 1) Analysis of organizational development and change activities (e.g. Global systems development, delocalization) at HQ:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Management • Human Resources Management • Information Management (IT) • Corporate Service Networks (CSN) <p>RA 2) Comparative analysis of codified agreements with two other SDC/HA funding partners (i.e.</p>	<p>Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies • Roadmaps • Annual Plans (PfR) • Project Plans (institutional) • Action plans • Surveys • Policies • Org charts • System specifications • Publicly available documentation from other organizations • Reports • Other 	<p>RA 1) For each HQ division/directorate, the consultants will collect documentation of planned and actual change activities during the evaluation period and analyse what has been accomplished, what remains, what challenges exist and what is planned for the future.</p> <p>RA 2) For two SDC/HA funding partners, the consultants will analyse relevant contracts and</p>

<p>efficiency in managing its human and financial resources?</p> <p>To what extent does ICRC manage its human resources for maximum impact?</p>	<p>WFP, OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNISDR and UNRWA)</p>	<p>KIIs with ICRC staff and staff of other orgs</p>	<p>agreements that define their relationship with SDC and compare to those of ICRC. (Preference for WFP and OCHA)</p>
<p>To what extent does ICRC's strategy to diversify its funding impact the FDFA-ICRC partnership?</p>	<p>RA 3) Analysis of diversification fundraising strategy, results over the period 2013- 2016.</p>	<p>Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies • Action plans • Reports • Other 	<p>RA 3) The consultants will review all fundraising strategies and activities during the evaluation period and plans for future diversification.</p>
<p>To what extent do ICRC's governing bodies, management and staff use results frameworks and results' reporting to inform decision-making?</p>	<p>RA 4) Stock taking of current and planned RBM systems from the period 2013-2016.</p>	<p>Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring tools • RBM systems • Action plans • Decision making systems/processes/structures • Reports • Other 	<p>RA 4) The consultants will review RBM systems and their use during the evaluation period and plans for future RBM activities.</p>

Research Stream #2: The SWISS and ICRC Partnership

This portion of research will evaluate how the Swiss headquarters contribution to the ICRC is relevant to the overall objectives of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (mainly Swiss humanitarian aid).

Key Question	Research Activity	Sources	Example of how ISG will answer the questions
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<p>To what extent have policy dialogue and exchanges on operational approaches and international humanitarian community areas of concerns, including humanitarian principles, been intensified between SDC and ICRC and within the DSG?</p> <p>To what extent have partnerships with key actors and within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement been intensified?</p>	<p>RA 5) Comparison between Swiss Strategic objectives and ICRC strategic objectives for the 2013-16 period</p> <p>RA 6) Develop an overview of expected and actual results (FDFA, ICRC) of the following key engagements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHS (2016) • RC/RC International Conference (2015) 	<p>Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Council's Dispatch on International Cooperation 2013-2016 • ICRC Strategies 2011- 2014 and 2015- 2018 • DSG meeting minutes • Documentation related to WHS • Documentation related to Int'l Conference and the ICRC strategy vis-à-vis the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement <p>Qualitative data - KII interviews</p>	<p>RA 5) The consultants will review the alignments, gaps and overlaps during the evaluation period and plans for future joint engagements.</p> <p>RA 6) The consultants will develop a snapshot of key strategic initiatives Switzerland/ICRC during the evaluation period and review the degree to which there has been an intensification/changes that results from the relationship.</p>
<p>To what extent does the SDC / ICRC partnership strengthen ICRC in their role as advocate and defender of IHL?</p> <p>To what extent does the SDC / ICRC partnership strengthen ICRC's role as the guardian of IHL and for promoting, reaffirming, clarifying, and developing IHL?</p>	<p>RA 7) Review of activities at ICRC International Humanitarian Law Directorate including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall strategy for advocacy and defence of IHL (FDFA) • Review of joint activities between ICRC/SDC including informal engagements • Strengthening compliance with IHL joint initiative 	<p>Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Council's Dispatch on International Cooperation 2013-2016 • ICRC Strategies 2011- 2014 and 2015- 2018 • Action/project plans (specifically the Compliance Conference initiative, others as available) • Annual meeting minutes • Outputs / Papers • Other 	<p>RA 7) The consultants will review respective strategies and joint activities during the evaluation period and review the degree to which the relationship has strengthened the ICRC in their role as advocate and guardian of IHL.</p>

<p>To what extent does maintaining a strong ICRC HQ in Geneva contribute to the realization of “International Geneva”?</p>	<p>RA 8) Review of initiatives that directly involve ICRC from UN and Int’l Org Division of FDFA.</p>	<p>Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Council’s Dispatch on International Cooperation 2013-2016 • Federal Council’s Dispatch on Implementation Measures to Reinforce Switzerland’s Role as Host State 2016- 2019 • Switzerland’s Foreign Policy Strategy 2012-2015 • Publicly available documentation on International Geneva <p>KIIs with ICRC and FDFA staff and potentially staff of other orgs</p>	<p>RA 8) Consultants will review the Swiss strategic documents that frame their interest and investment in International Geneva and the degree to which the ICRC HQ contributes to those goals. This can be supplemented with qualitative data including Interviews with UN Agencies, FDFA staff Bern/Geneva, other stakeholders from International Geneva.</p>

Evaluation Methodology

Overall Approach

Guiding Principles

In addition to the evaluation being in accordance with the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, ISG will use a range of participatory methods to ensure that key stakeholders and partners are centrally involved in reflective and forward thinking processes and will adhere to the following principles:

- **Consultation** with, and participation by, key stakeholders so as to ensure that the assignment is fully relevant to its users and stakeholders, and that the evidence and analysis are sound and factually accurate. Consultation will be iterative and each stage will be informed by and build upon earlier project work.
- **Methodological rigor** to ensure that the most appropriate sources of evidence for answering the Analytical Framework are used in a technically appropriate manner. The consultants will use different data sources and various methods throughout the process of the study to triangulate information – checking and corroborating findings to ensure that they are consistent.
- **Technical expertise and expert knowledge** to ensure that the assignment benefits from knowledge and experience in the field of humanitarian aid that it contributes to building the body of evidence around what works, what does not work, and in each case why.
- **Independence** to ensure that the findings stand solely on an impartial and objective analysis of the evidence, without undue influence by any stakeholder group.

In this context, our approach incorporates best practice evaluation criteria and principles for effective development assistance as well as norms and standards of the OECD/DAC framework.

Data Sources

The consultants will collect data from three main sources: Documentation, Key Informant Interviews and Field Visits (Observation):

- **Documentation:** Documentation will be the cornerstone of the evaluation and critical to the stocktaking exercise. The consultants will provide both SDC and ICRC with further specific requests for documentation as the assignment progresses. Additional documents sourced by SDC, ICRC and the consultants will be reviewed as the assignment moves forward in order to inform the final report.
- **Key Informants:** The consultants have already interviewed 31 key informants from both FDFA and ICRC staff at HQ during the inception phase of the work. The consultants will reconnect with these informants, and other stakeholders throughout the course of the data collection phase to clarify documentation and glean deeper insights into HQ operations at ICRC. The consultants will seek to interview ICRC staff, the DSG, other International Organizations and individuals from the greater Geneva area.
- **Field Visits (Observation):** Field Visits will be finalized in consultation with SDC and ICRC. During the Field Visits, consultants will perform KIIs and take note of and incorporate their direct observations into the Final Report.

Data collection tools and purposes

Document review

The document review has informed the initial assessment of the SDC/ICRC relationship and will continue to be used to identify current practices, future plans, strengths and weaknesses of the relationship and ICRC's HQ operations.

ISG will apply the following systematic framework within which the document review can be structured:⁶

- Scoping – clarifying the focus and scope of the documents to be reviewed.
- Searching – identifying potentially relevant documents, reports, and data sources.
- Selecting – deciding which items to include or focus on in more depth.
- Analysing – analysing and appraising the included program documents and data.
- Synthesizing – drawing together data/findings from the analysis of included documents.
- Reporting – structuring and creating assignment outputs.

Additional secondary data will be gathered and reviewed as the assignment progresses.

Key informant interviews

Semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with a wide variety of stakeholders are an ideal method for obtaining in-depth, qualitative information. The main advantage of this method is that it will promote serious reflection and response by knowledgeable people in a setting of trust and confidentiality; the consultants will be able to probe and follow-up with interviewees in a way that surveys or other static instruments do not allow, potentially yielding more nuanced information relevant to the assignment.

KIIs will be conducted, to the extent possible, in an informal setting. Typically, these interviews will be with a single respondent, but in some cases, the respondent may invite two or three people. The consultants will record responses by detailed note taking. Confidentiality will be maintained and records will be held securely. In cases where individuals are unavailable for face-to-face interviews, the consultants will administer the interview virtually.

Field Visits (Observation)

Observation provides the opportunity to document activities, behavior and physical aspects without having to depend upon stakeholders' willingness and ability to respond to questions. Beyond additional KIIs, the main added value of the Field Visits and observations will be to review, first-hand, activities as implemented by ICRC. Field Visits also assist in validating other data sources, notably documents and ICRC HQ interviews.

Deliverables

The following deliverables will be submitted for this evaluation:

- Inception Report (this document)
- Draft Evaluation Report
- Meeting on Draft Evaluation Report in Bern or Geneva
- Final Evaluation Report (Maximum 20 pages, excluding Annexes)
- Presentation of final report findings to SDC Directorate and to ICRC

⁶A comparative study of methodological approaches to reviewing literature, Rickinson & May, 2009

Quality Assurance

ISG Team Roles and Responsibilities

ISG will be responsible for timely and effective execution of the assignment process as well as the timely submission of assignment deliverables, as agreed upon in the Inception Report (this document). An overview of specific roles and responsibilities of individual Project Team Members are described in the table below.

Table: Project Team Roles and Responsibilities

Title	Name of Team Member	Responsibilities
Core Team Members		
Team Leader	Stephen Ladek	Mr. Ladek will lead the development of the data collection tools, participate in data collection activities (including piloting) and will lead in the analysis and reporting aspects of the project.
co-Evaluator	Raj Rana	Mr. Rana will assist the Team Leader in tool development, participate in data collection activities and support the development of additional project deliverables.
Supporting Team Members		
ISG Staff	TBD	ISG staff members may be used for administrative support, and other duties as necessary to complete the assignment efficiently.

Reference Group Roles and Responsibilities

As detailed in the TOR, the evaluation will be managed by a Reference Group and Management Group:

The Reference Group is composed of the following members:

From SDC:

- Arno Wicki, Head of Multilateral Department Humanitarian Aid
- Caroline Hancock; Programme Officer Department Humanitarian Aid

From ICRC:

- Helen Alderson, Director of Financial Resources and Logistics
- Katie Sams, Chief of Staff, Office of Director General
- Nicola Busino, Head of Finance and Administration Division
- Benno Kocher, External Resources

The overall evaluation will be managed by SDC's Evaluation and Corporate Controlling division (SDC E+C). The Management Group consists of:

- Jean-Marc Clavel, Head of Evaluation and Corporate Controlling Division
- Lena Einsele, Junior Programme Officer Evaluation and Corporate Controlling Division
- Monika Egger Kissling, External Consultant

Risk management

For the sake of brevity, a full risk management analysis and matrix is not provided in this report. Consultations with ICRC delegations and offices will be conducted prior to deployment of the consultants for field visits and will include an up-to-date assessment of risks in terms of security, communicable diseases, natural disasters, and other severe threats to the assignment. ISG assesses that the main risks to the assignment are as follows:

Figure: Risks and Risk Mitigation

<p>Difficulty rigorously evaluating Swiss funding objectives (Probability: High): The consultants are unable to provide a rigorous analysis that determines to what extent the Swiss funding goals for the ICRC HQ have been achieved.</p> <p>Contingency: The consultants will follow the Analytical Framework elaborated above. If it is determined that progress against the goals cannot be measured with any reliability, this will be considered a key finding of the assignment. The consultants will provide recommendations for improving upon this in the future.</p>
<p>Human Resource (Probability: Low): One of the experts from the ISG team becomes unavailable or leaves the project.</p> <p>Contingency: ISG will communicate with the management group at SDC E+C regularly. We have confirmed the approved consultants' availability for the duration of the assignment. Additionally, ISG has a large network of consultants who possess the necessary technical and thematic expertise to carry out this assignment. If a team member becomes unavailable during the course of the assignment, ISG will, if necessary, with approval from SDC E+C, replace the member with an equally capable consultant to continue the assignment as projected.</p>
<p>Access to Stakeholders (Probability: Medium): The consultants are unable to meet with one or more key stakeholders, groups, organizations, etc. during data collection.</p> <p>Contingency: ISG will initiate scheduling for all documentation, key stakeholder interviews and field visits shortly after the submission of this inception report. This will ensure that SDC and ICRC are given ample preparation time to coordinate all data collection activities.</p>
<p>Missing or Incomplete Documentation (Probability: High): Key documentation is missing, affecting the team's ability to perform a complete and accurate evaluation.</p> <p>Contingency: The consultants will maintain a list of all documentation received and will perform the assignment to the best of its ability with available documents and data.</p>
<p>Difficulty in absorbing, summarizing and analysing volume of information (Probability: Low): The assignment covers a broad scope of activities across a global organization and it may be difficult for the consulting team to digest and analyse to provide a complete picture or summary story.</p> <p>Contingency: The consultants will work directly with SDC and ICRC to ensure accuracy, completeness and appropriateness of the content of any reporting.</p>
<p>Decision-making (Probability: Medium): The consultants encounter a situation where they do not agree on a particular aspect of the assignment or content of a deliverable.</p> <p>Contingency: While a participatory process will be employed, the assignment Team Leader will retain final decision making authority, as well as responsibility for the quality of all deliverables.</p>
<p>Drift in Scope of Work (Probability: Medium): Expectations from SDC and/or ICRC change over the course of the project.</p> <p>Contingency: This inception report details the nature of the research related to this assignment and the questions this research will seek to answer. ISG and SDC will communicate regularly about assignment implementation, and will coordinate and confirm all assignment activities prior to implementation.</p>
<p>Delay in receipt of feedback (Probability: High): ISG does not receive feedback or comments on written reports in a timely manner.</p> <p>Contingency: All project documentation and reports will be submitted for time stamping and ISG, SDC and ICRC will agree on feedback timelines. The Reference Group will coordinate feedback and commenting internally.</p>
<p>Non-acceptance of deliverables (Probability: Low): SDC or ICRC refuses to accept ISG's deliverables.</p>

Contingency: All project documentation will conform to specifications provided at the outset of the assignment. Validation will, additionally, play a key role in ensuring that findings and recommendations may be owned by stakeholders.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms

ISG will employ the following Quality Assurance Mechanisms throughout the assignment:

- **Inclusion:** ISG's approach to data collection will utilize a transparent, participatory, consultative process that meaningfully involves and engages key stakeholders in the process. This participatory approach is inherent to all aspects of the assignment including design and planning, data collection and analysis during the inception phase with SDC, reporting and results dissemination. Engaging stakeholders as active participants allows them to reflect, analyze issues from their own experience, identify what works and does not work, and to take responsibility for the changes they recommend. As such, this approach contributes to building the capacity of stakeholders to be key actors in their own development and empowers them to obtain results. A participatory process also promotes accountability, ownership, and recipient "buy-in," and enhances the relevance and subsequent use of the assignment's findings and recommendations.
- **Appropriateness:** The assignment will use a mixed-methods approach and will be participatory in nature in order to ensure that the data collected can answer the key questions noted in the Analytical Framework above. The consultants will work with SDC and ICRC to finalize KII data collection tools. Further, the consultants will work in consultation with SDC and ICRC to identify appropriate stakeholders to engage during the assignment.
- **Triangulation:** The consultants will work to ensure that the most appropriate sources of evidence for undertaking the assignment are used in a technically appropriate manner. The consultants will collect and analyse data from different available sources and maintain an ongoing consultation process with SDC and ICRC throughout the assignment in order to triangulate information – checking and corroborating findings from multiple sources to ensure that they are consistent and accurate.

Evaluation Work Plan

4-May-16	Kick-Off Meeting
05 May – 08 JUL 16	Inception Phase
05-Jul-16	Meeting on Inception Report
09 JUL – 31 AUG 16	Data Collection Receipt of Requested Documents (by 15 July) Kills in Bern and Geneva in person and remote (12 July – 15 August, 2016) Field visit to Philippines by Stephen Ladek (estimated: August 22-23, 2016) Field visit to Kenya Regional Delegation by Raj Rana (estimated: August 1-2, 2016)
02-Sep-16	Draft Evaluation Report Submitted by Consultants for written feedback by the Management Group
20-Sep-16	Meeting on Draft Evaluation Report to discuss and receive compiled feedback from Reference Group
10-Oct-16	Final Evaluation Report submitted by Consultants
24-Oct-16	Presentation of Findings and recommendations to SDC's Directorate and to the ICRC
15-Nov-16	SDC management response, ICRC commentary and publication

Annex A – Individuals Interviewed

Abraham Doblado	Programme Manager	External Resources Division, New & Prospective Donors	ICRC
Amb. Alexandre Fasel	Ambassador	Swiss Permanent Mission to UN	ICRC
André Huber	Deputy Head of Humanitarian Aid, Head of Africa	Humanitarian Aid	FDFA
Anne de Riedmatten	1st Secretary	Swiss Permanent Mission to UN	ICRC
Arno Wicki	Deputy Head of Humanitarian Aid/Head of Multilateral Aid Division	Humanitarian Aid/Multilateral Aid Division	FDFA
Balthasar Staehelin	Deputy Director General		ICRC
Benno Kocher	Head of Unit	External Resources Division, Donor Relations and Fundraising	ICRC
Carla Mardini	Head	External Resources Division	ICRC
Caroline Hancock	Programme Manager	Humanitarian Aid/Multilateral Aid Division	FDFA
Catherine Pawlotsky	Head	IT Division	ICRC
Christian Saugy	Deputy Head of Division	Office of the Head of the Finance and Administration Division	ICRC
Christine Beerli	Vice President		ICRC
Claude Bruderlein	Personal Advisor to the President		ICRC
Claudia Moser	Deputy Head of Section Humanitarian Policy and Migration	Human Security Division	FDFA
Daniel Aeby	Audit Expert	Swiss Federal Audit Office	SFAO
Dominik Stillhart	Director	Operations	ICRC
Fouad Illias	Scientific Collaborator	United Nations and International Organizations Division	FDFA
Gherardo Pontrandolfi	Director	Human Resources Directorate	ICRC
Helen Durham	Director	Department of International Law and Policy	ICRC
Katie Sams	Chief of Staff		ICRC
Knut Doermann	Head of Division	Office of the Head of Legal Division	ICRC
Marielle Mumenthaler	Diplomatic Collaborator	Human Security Division	FDFA
Martin Anthony Gray	Director	Human Resources integration manager	ICRC
Martin Christophe	Head of Multilateral Division		ICRC
Megan Rock	Project Manager		ICRC
Nicola Busino	Head of Division	Office of the Head of the Finance and Administration Division	ICRC
Nikolas Stürchler	Head of International Humanitarian Law and International Crime Justice	Directorate of International Law	FDFA
Peter Maurer	President		ICRC
Philippe Maire	Head of Financial Sector	Financial Analysis & Management Unit	ICRC
Pierre Gentile	Head of Division	Office of the Head of Central Tracing Agency & Protection Division	ICRC
Robert Mardini	Regional Director	Operations for the Near and Middle East	ICRC
Yves Daccord	Director General		ICRC

Annex B – Documents Reviewed

- Consolidated Financial Statements of the ICRC 2011
- Consolidated Financial Statements of the ICRC 2012
- Report of Independent Auditor and Consolidated Financial Statements of the ICRC 2013
- Report of Independent Auditor and Consolidated Financial Statements of the ICRC 2014
- Australian Multilateral Assessment of the ICRC 2012
- DFID Multilateral Aid Review: Assessment of the ICRC 2011
- Direktion für Entwicklung und Zusammenarbeit (DEZA),
- Sitzbeitrag der Schweiz an das Internationale Komitee vom Roten Kreuz (IKRK), 2015
- Humanitarian Emergency Response Review, 2011
- SIDA Study: How to Define and Measure Value for Money in the Humanitarian Sector, 2013
- ICRC HQ Appeal 2012
- ICRC HQ Appeal 2013
- ICRC HQ Appeal 2014
- ICRC HQ Appeal 2015
- ICRC HQ Appeal 2016
- SDC Contribution financière de la Confédération au budget siège du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR) pour l'année 2012
- SDC Contribution financière de la Confédération au budget siège du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR) pour l'année 2013
- SDC Contribution financière de la Confédération au budget siège du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR) pour l'année 2014
- SDC Contribution financière de la Confédération au budget siège du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR) pour l'année 2015
- SDC Contribution financière de la Confédération au budget siège du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge (CICR) pour l'année 2016
- SDC International Organization Factsheet, ICRC, 2015
- ICRC Booklet Appeals, 2016
- ICRC Funding Strategy (email), 2015
- Meeting Minutes FDFA ICRC 12 JUL 13
- Meeting Minutes FDFA ICRC 06 MAR 15
- Meeting Minutes FDFA ICRC 31 MAR 16
- Message concernant les mesures à mettre en œuvre pour renforcer le rôle de la Suisse comme Etat hôte, 2014
- Joint Reflection Group on the future of International Geneva "Geneva+" (undated)
- Impacts de la Genève internationale sur l'économie et les finances suisses et du Grand Genève, 2012
- Stratégie de politique étrangère 2012–2015, 2012
- Stratégie de politique étrangère 2016–2019, undated
- The Think Tank Hub Geneva, undated
- Transformation du modèle de service ICT, 2014
- IE Strategy update - Kick off Presentation, 2016
- IES ICT Transformation Program Presentation, 2015
- ICT Capacity Planning EM Presentation, 2016
- Vision Stratégique du Système d'Information, undated
- ICT Change Management Dashboard presentation, 2015
- ICT Change Management Dashboard presentation, 2016-07-12
- IES ICT Transformation Program, Business Case Review Presentation, 2016
- Information Environment Strategy & Roadmap, 2012

- The Geneva Convention I-IV
- Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, 1986, 1995, 2006
- Accord, entre le Conseil fédéral Suisse, et le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge, en vue de déterminer le statut juridique du Comité en Suisse, 2993
- ICRC Annual report Supplement 2012
- ICRC Annual report Supplement 2013
- ICRC Annual report Supplement 2014
- ICRC Midterm Report Human Resources 2012
- ICRC Midterm Report Human Resources 2013
- ICRC Midterm Report Human Resources 2014
- ICRC Midterm Report Human Resources 2015
- ICRC Strategy 2007-2010
- ICRC Strategy 2011-2014
- ICRC Strategy 2015-2018
- Review of the Implementation of the Institutional Strategy 2011-2014, 2013
- The SDC Multilateral Humanitarian Aid Concept, 2012
- ICRC Directorate Roadmap 2011-2015

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