Danish Red Cross

INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING GUIDELINE

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CONTENT

ACRONYMS

Acronym	Definition / meaning
CBDRR	community-based disaster risk reduction
CBHFA	community-based health and first aid
CBO	community-based organisation
CORE	Nepal community resilience programme
DM	disaster management
DRC	Danish Red Cross
DRR	disaster risk reduction
HR	human resources
HQ	headquarters
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
INGOS	international non-governmental organisations
IP(A)	integrated programming (approach)
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MTR	mid-term review
RC	Red Cross
RCRC	Red Cross Red Crescent Movement
RMT	risk management tool
TOR	terms of reference
VCA	vulnerability and capacity assessment

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

1   INTRODUCTION

The DRC Integrated Programming Guideline is intended to support the efforts of the Danish Red Cross (DRC) to adopt an Integrated Programming Approach (IPA) within its international operations. It is informed by the DRC's previous experience of running integrated programmes in Liberia, Mozambique, Nepal and Pakistan, and provides recommendations and factors to consider when deciding on, designing, implementing and evaluating integrated programmes. The *Integrated Programming Study[1]* which forms the basis for this guideline focused on reviewing long-term development programmes. This guideline; therefore, has not been developed for use in designing and implementing response and/or recovery programmes. Recommendations within the guideline, however, may still be applicable to response and/or recovery programmes.

This guideline is also a contribution by the DRC towards operationalizing community resilience; enabling communities to better respond to shocks and stresses, and adapt to their changing circumstances. Building community resilience requires a holistic and multi-sector approach to addressing risk and vulnerability, which is closely aligned with an IPA.

The *DRC Integrated Programming Guideline* should be read and used by all who conceive, design, manage and monitor programmes. As such, it is targeted at experienced programme managers including: DRC heads of region, programme delegates and desk officers, their national society partner counterparts, and international support technical advisers. Whilst this document will be used primarily by the DRC, it may also be of interest to others in the Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) movement; also to donors, particularly those who may be less familiar with integrated programming approaches.

It is recommended that those using this DRC Integrated Programming Guideline refer also to the DRC Integrated Programming Study: Designing and implementing successful integrated programmes which capture the lessons learned from the DRC's experiences of integrated programming in the four study countries, including a case study example.

2   DECIDING WHETHER TO DO AN INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING

2.1   What is integrated programming?

Defining integrated programming is an on-going process within the Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) movement. A useful definition, developed by the IFRC in South Asia, defines an integrated programming approach as:

> *'… a holistic approach to addressing the risks and needs faced by the community...[it] is an approach that incorporates key components of the National society's core programme areas into a holistic programme model, which recognizes the beneficiary/beneficiaries in their totality of needs and rights.'* [2]

Within the DRC, there is a shared understanding that integrated programming provides a holistic and multi-sector approach to addressing risks, vulnerabilities and needs. Integration is not simply the inclusion of multiple elements within a programme. It is a different approach that combines mutually supportive programme elements which collectively contribute to achieving a common programme objective. The elements within an integrated programme should be influenced by the communities'

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[1] Arup (2013) Integrated Programming Study: Designing and implementing successful integrated programmes.
[2] IFRC (2009) South Asia IPA checklist. IFRC: Delhi

needs and own priorities, as well as more general contextual issues (e.g. a lack of government health care).

To date, successful integrated programmes within the DRC have involved cross-departmentally working between Disaster Management (DM) and Health departments (e.g. the Integrated Community-Based Health and Disaster Management Project in Liberia and the Nepal Community Resilience (CORE) Programme) which reflects the DRC's core competencies. However, more generally, integrated programming brings together a range of elements from traditionally separate sectors; such as health, livelihoods, organisational development, water and sanitation and disaster management.

Single-sector programmes with add-on elements – for example, a health programme containing a minor component of psychosocial activities, or a DRR programme which contains an element addressing climate change adaptation – should not be confused with fully integrated programming which requires a different approach as discussed in this guideline.

2.2   The link between integrated programming and resilience

Alongside integrated programming, there is another new paradigm emerging within the RCRC (and more broadly within the humanitarian and development sector) around the concept of 'resilience'. The IFRC's latest strategic plan explicitly outlines the desire to contribute to sustainable development 'through strengthening community resilience'[3]. The IFRC's current thinking about resilience has been informed by research. Below are the findings of this study summarised.

The characteristics of a safe and resilient community[1]

A safe and resilient community…

1. …is knowledgeable and healthy. It has the ability to assess, manage and monitor its risks. It can learn new skills and build on past experiences.
2. …is organised. It has the capacity to identify problems, establish priorities and act.
3. …has infrastructure and services. It has strong housing, transport, power, water and sanitation systems. It has the ability to maintain, repair and renovate them.
4. …has economic opportunities. It has a diverse range of employment opportunities, income and financial services. It is flexible, resourceful and has the capacity to accept uncertainty and respond (proactively) to change.
5. …can manage its natural assets. It recognises their value and has the ability to protect, enhance and maintain them.
6. …is connected. It has relationships with external actors who provide a wider supportive environment, and supply goods and services when needed.

and is therefore better able to prepare, prevent, respond to and recover from shocks and stresses.

Figure 1: The six characteristics of a safe and resilient community.

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[3] IFRC (2010) Strategy 2020: Saving Lives Changing Minds. Geneva p 15

Integrated programming is an important modality for the DRC to ensure that the key outcome of its community-based programmes is safer and more resilient communities[4]. Through building resilience, the DRC recognises that it can support communities as they address the root causes of their vulnerability, rather than simply managing the effects of shocks and stresses. This requires taking a holistic, rather than sectorial, approach to community-based programming that reflects the prioritised needs of the community; in this way building resilience is closely aligned with an IPA.

2.3 Why does the DRC use integrated programming?

The DRC has been supporting integrated programmes since the late 1990s, recognising the benefits which adopting an IPA can bring for itself, its partners, and the communities in which it works. Benefits of integrated programming include:

- Providing a holistic response to a community's prioritised needs, risks and vulnerabilities;

- The ability to address multiple risks by tackling the underlying causes of vulnerability;

- More sustained and effective programme impacts that contribute to building community resilience;

- Alignment with the shift towards integrated/multi-sector programming by some donors;

- Potential efficiencies as a result of joint activities and reporting, (although integrated programmes may be more resource-intensive if management structures and processes are more complicated as a result of multiple departments being involved).

2.4 When to use integrated programming

Integrated programmes may not be suitable in some contexts:

- An IPA may not be relevant where communities face a single dominant hazard;

- As IPA require consistent efforts to succeed, an IPA may not be feasible in a high risk context;

- The hazards the communities face and their needs may not be aligned with the DRC's core competencies; or those of the national society partner;

- There may be limitations in the capacity and motivation of the national society partner;

- The national society partner's organisational structure, standard systems and procedures may not readily support integrated programmes (e.g. if there is limited interaction between departments);

- Funding restrictions may apply which are not compatible with integrated programming (e.g. if funding is sector-focussed);

- The timescale in which the programme has to be carried out, or for which funding is available, may be insufficient to implement an integrated programme which require a long term implementation period.

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[4] IFRC/Arup (2012) Characteristics of a safe and resilient community. IFRC: Geneva.

The decision to pursue an IPA should be made prior to the formulation phase and informed by an analysis of the local context, an assessment of the suitability of the national society partner, and availability of suitable funding. The DRC's Risk Management Tool (RMT) can be used to undertake an assessment of the national society partner (See Box 1 for further details).

BOX 1: DECIDING TO USE INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING

Context
- ✓ Assess the proposed context of implementation using a risk analysis to consider:
- ✓ Is there on-going conflict, or other socio-political issues which may impact on the programme?
- ✓ Does the community face multiple hazards or is there a dominant hazard?
- ✓ How can an IPA contribute to resilience-building in this context?
- ✓ Is an IPA more relevant than single-sector programming?

National society partner
- ✓ Assess the capacity of the proposed national society partner to ensure they are willing and able to implement an integrated programme. Using desk-based analysis or an initial workshop with the proposed partner, analyse and consider:
- ✓ Is the national society partner's strategy supportive of and open to an IPA?
- ✓ Has the national society partner implemented integrated programmes in the past?
- ✓ Does the national society partner have past experience of implementing participatory, community-based programmes?
- ✓ What is the nature of the departmental structure of the national society? Are there strong sector siloes that may make cross-departmental working a challenge? What is the organisation's track record on inter-departmental working?
- ✓ Are their financial and other systems, including M&E, able to support integrated programmes?
- ✓ Is the organisational structure at branch level supportive of an IPA?
- ✓ What is the national society partner's volunteer set-up?
- ✓ Are there any other external partners working in the country using an integrated programming approach or which are supportive of IPA?
- ✓ Hold discussions with management and department heads to assess compliance of the new programme with the strategic objectives of the national society partner.
- ✓ Ensure that the proposed programme will be in line with national society partner's frameworks and manuals (i.e. CBDRR, CBHFA).
- ✓ Consider if DRC have human resources in place to provide sufficient support and technical guidance to the partner.

Funding
- ✓ Consider whether IP will be more cost-effective than single-sector programming in the proposed context:
- ✓ Is there opportunity for combining activities or reporting?
- ✓ Is there scope to share staff, or volunteer, resources?
- ✓ Identify a suitable funding source, considering:
- ✓ Does the funding identified have to be allocated to (or is it 'earmarked for') specific activities or sectors?
- ✓ Is this funding provided over a long-term period (> 3 years)?
- ✓ Can the funding be managed through a number of smaller departmental sub- budgets?
- ✓ Will the donor require sector-specific monitoring and reporting?
- ✓ Take the opportunity, where possible, to engage with donors to educate them on integrated programming.

3   DELIVERING A SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATED PROGRAMME

3.1   Preparing a new programme

A host department for an IP should be found within the existing national society organisational set-up. Considering that the host department usually defines the tools, procedures, and terminology of a new programme, there is a risk that other departments are not sufficiently involved in shaping these. Programme staff not based in the host department may also feel less ownership, or a reluctance to become fully involved in a programme which they see as being part of the work of another department. Therefore, careful consideration should be given as to which department will act as the host for any new integrated programme. It is also helpful to adopt a name for the programme which is not strongly associated with a specific department, as a first step towards developing inclusive language and ownership of the programme.

BOX 2: PREPARING A NEW PROGRAMME

Departments
- ☐ Consider which department will be the host department for the integrated programme:
   - ✓ What effect will the tools and procedures typically used by this department have on the new integrated programme? Will they be suitable for designing and implementing the programme?
   - ✓ Will the terminology used by this department be commonly understood by other departments involved in the programme?
   - ✓ What implications will choosing this department have for budget management?

Terminology
- ☐ Give a new integrated programme a name which does not associate it exclusively with a single department. Avoid including terms such as 'disaster management', 'health', etc., and instead choose a name which recognises the programme's goal   - building resilience. (A good example is that of the Nepal Community Resilience (CORE) Programme.)
- ☐ Develop a common vocabulary to define and discuss the new integrated programme.

3.2   Programme team

An integrated programme team is likely to comprise staff from various departments with a range of skills and experience, as well as volunteers. It should include individuals with technical skills relevant to the programme's likely elements and activities. Equally important, however, is ensuring that the team includes individuals with strong programme management capabilities and experience of working collaboratively, and individuals who have 'soft' skills (e.g. communication and facilitation). It is especially important to identify a programme coordinator with these generalist skills.

Both individual and departmental roles and responsibilities need to be clearly defined at the outset so that members of the programme team are fully aware of their responsibilities and accountability to others. Any changes during a programme should be clearly communicated to all members of the programme team. (See Box 3 for more details).

BOX 3: PROGRAMME TEAM

Programme team
- ☐ Assemble a multi-disciplinary programme team, drawing members from different departments to ensure a broad range of skills (technical as well as programme management/other 'soft' skills such as communication and facilitation).
- ☐ Ensure that everyone involved in the integrated programme, from HQ level down to branch level, is aware of why an IPA has been chosen, and understands that they are contributing collectively to meeting its objective(s). Consider:
  - ✓ Holding a team-building or training session on integrated programming, bringing all programme stakeholders together.
  - ✓ Circulate and/or develop documentation (e.g. case studies) which demonstrates how integrated programmes yield more impact in communities than standard/single-sector programmes.
  - ✓ Convene an inception meeting to ensure that all programme stakeholders are aligned with the programme's objectives, the intended outcomes and proposed implementation strategy.
- ☐ Put in place NoUs between departments and clear ToRs that reflects programme level objectives and indicators.
- ☐ Identify a single programme coordinator as a focal point for overseeing all programme activities. This role should be funded by the DRC, but should be performed as a local programme coordinator (i.e. based locally in-country). When selecting this coordinator, consider:
  - ✓ Whether this individual has professional skills in communicating, facilitating and project/programme management.
  - ✓ Whether s/he is recognised for these skills rather than any particular sector technical skills (i.e. technical sector expertise is not a high priority).

Roles and responsibilities
- ☐ Establish clear roles and responsibilities for all those involved in designing and delivering an integrated programme.
  - ✓ Develop job descriptions based on input from all departments.
  - ✓ Amend departmental job descriptions when possible to reflect requirements for collaboration.
- ☐ Develop an annual plan of action jointly, with clear descriptions of roles and responsibilities at all levels.
- ☐ Communicate any changes in roles and responsibilities to all members of the programme team, as the programme progresses.

3.3   Planning and design

It is crucial that the overall scope of the programme, as well as the systems and procedures for decision-making, financial management, M&E and communication are clearly defined and understood by all those involved in the implementation. This information should be included in the programme document, which is to be shared with the whole team (and possibly other stakeholders also where relevant). A single logframe should be used for the whole programme, rather than separate logframes for different sector activities as this will help promote the principle of collective effort to achieve shared objectives.

The national societies that are responsible for implementation must have the competences necessary to deliver the various elements of the programme successfully. It is recommended that programme elements, and activities respond directly to the core competencies of the DRC (i.e. health and DM), and those of the partner national society. Partnerships may be formed with other RCRC partners or other stakeholders (e.g. government, INGOs) to enable other programme elements to be included.

When deciding on activities, the focus should be on maximising impact in specific communities. Focussed, in-depth activities, which are mutually reinforcing, are preferable to designing programmes with extensive coverage; involving either a large number of communities or a large number of different activities.

In scheduling activities ensure that there is sufficient time allowed to complete them and that appropriate resources (time and budget) have been allocated for communication activities; both within the stakeholders in the national society partner, and between the national society partner and the target communities.

BOX 4: PLANNING AND DESIGN

Programme document
- ☐ Develop the programme document (or similar) based on input from all departments. This should pay special attention to:
  - ✓ Organisational and decision-making structures, programme leadership and management, including roles and responsibilities;
  - ✓ Making sure that an integrated programme approach is reflected in the activity plans and M&E plan;

Timescale
- ☐ Plan the programme with a sufficient timescale to undertake an integrated programme:
  - ✓ Is the programme period at least three years?
  - ✓ Is there scope to extend the overall timeline if activities take longer than planned, or to accommodate unforeseen events which might disrupt the programme?
  - ✓ Has sufficient time (and budget) been allowed for team-building, training and communication both within the national society partner, and between the national society partner and communities?

Activities
- ☐ Plan activities that reflect the capacity and competences of the DRC and the national society partner; for example health and DRR activities. This will maximise the potential for success and depth of impact.
- ☐ Develop partnerships with other stakeholders to support elements of the programme in which the DRC and national society partner may have less experience.
- ☐ Consider whether there is a balance between the scope of the programme and the depth of engagement. For example:
  - ✓ Would implementing activities in more depth, or with stronger linkages to other activities, have greater impact than running a greater number of different activities?
  - ✓ Would implementing activities in fewer communities have a greater impact than running activities in a larger number of communities?

3.4   Objectives, outputs and indicators

Defining objectives for the programme is a critical step in designing a new integrated programme. This process should be completed in a participatory manner with inputs from the whole programme team and relevant partners; this should ensure common understanding and generate shared ownership. Programme objectives should relate to the entire programme, rather than being sector-specific.

Existing frameworks, such as the IFRC's *characteristics of a safe and resilient community*[5] could be used to inform the development of these objectives and related outputs. It is recommended that specific outputs relate to one or more aspects (or characteristics) of resilience (e.g. X communities in location Y exhibit improved quality of health; or greater awareness of the risks they face).

In the absence of a current set of agreed IP indicators, indicators associated with the specific objective – building community resilience – should relate directly to the characteristics of resilience. For inspiration see ´t*he characteristics of a safe and resilient community*` listed in part 2.2 in this guideline.

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[5] IFRC/Arup (2012) Characteristics of a safe and resilient community. IFRC: Geneva.

BOX 5: OBJECTIVES, OUTPUTS AND INDICATORS

Objectives and outputs

☐   Establish a specific objective that reflects the outcome of the programme – to build community resilience. (e.g. by date X communities in location Y have improved their resilience).

☐   When identifying outputs reflect *the characteristics of a resilient community* in the outputs and make that they are achievable within the duration of the programme

     ✓   Do these relate to one or more characteristics of a resilient community?

Indicators

☐   Develop indicators that enable the objective and the outputs to be measured directly and/or indirectly.

     ✓   Use the DRC generic indicators for inspiration (output level)

3.5 Communication and collaboration

Collaborating across a sector-based departmental structure requires a commitment from all departments to communicate with each other and work together to achieve a shared goal. At inception and programme planning stages sufficient time and budget should be allowed for additional activities that facilitate collaborative working. For example, team-building workshops, or training team members in 'soft' skills such as facilitation or communication. Specific measures should be taken to encourage a culture of communication and collaborative working. An 'open-door' policy, for example, can support this type of working environment, by encouraging informal coordination and communication.

Mechanisms also need to be established which ensure effective communication between the DRC and its national society partner, and between the national society partner's HQ and branches, and communities. This will require regular communication, both formally via regular meetings (such as steering committees) and more informally, on an ad hoc basis.

BOX 6: COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

Mechanisms

☐   Develop a communication plan to be in included in the programme document.

☐   Establish steering group (strategy) and co-ordination (operational) meetings with clear ToRs at all levels of the programme team (national, district, branch etc.) which should meet regularly.

Culture of communication

☐   Invest in team-building activities and training that promotes collaborative working, from programme inception stage.

☐   Encourage informal coordination and co-ordination. Consider establishing or supporting:

     ✓   An 'open-door' policy;

     ✓   Ad-hoc informal 'break-out' meetings;

     ✓   Co-locating the programme team, where possible.

3.6 Tools, procedures and training

A common set of tools and procedures should be shared by all departments involved, rather than adopting those associated with a single department. This creates joint ownership of the programme and avoids replication of activities or assessments. An understanding of available tools and a discussion on procedures should be initiated as part of a preliminary sensitisation and joint training

session, and the decision as to which tools (VCA or CBHFA) are most appropriate in this context should be made jointly.

Implementation of any programme relies heavily on Red Cross volunteers. It is important to consider how to strike a balance between volunteer capacity, time and skills and the ambition to deliver an integrated programme with many elements. This is likely to mean merging trainings and tasks of volunteers, rather than to carry out, for example, separate trainings in first aid and search and rescue. Alternatively, it may mean training different types of volunteers (for example water committee members and CBHFA volunteers) while setting in place appropriate coordination mechanisms at the community level. In either case, it should be explained why the chosen volunteer set-up is the most efficient and volunteers should be briefed on their role so they understand the ultimate objective of a programme, and how they are contributing to its achievement.

Community-based organisations (CBOs), including RC committees are a key feature of DRC's integrated programmes. Wherever possible these should build on existing community-based organisations. The establishment of excessive numbers of sector specific sub-committees should be avoided. Establishing and supporting many RC committees can be time-consuming and communities do not have the time and resources to sustain them after the programme has phased out.

BOX 7: TOOLS, PROCEDURES AND TRAINING

Tools and procedures

☐　　Agree jointly a common set of tools and procedures that can be used by all departments involved in the programme for example for working community based or doing assessments.

☐　　Work with existing community-based organisations wherever possible, and avoid creating a large number of sub-committees within a single community.

☐　　Do they reflect the available time, capability and capacity of field staff/volunteers?

Training

☐　　Balance volunteer capacity, time and skills with ambition to deliver integrated services

☐　　Initiate a common vocabulary and understanding of tools and procedures through an initial training session for the programme team.

☐　　Deliver integrated training to RC staff and volunteers, rather than sector-specific training sessions. Conduct refresher training sessions where necessary.

3.7   Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

The success of integrated programmes relates to the extent to which the various programme activities collectively achieve the intended outcome. DRC's monitoring and evaluation standards for single sector programmes also apply to integrated programmes. However, for integrated programmes involving all relevant departments is important; both when setting up monitoring systems and plans and in terms of conducting joint monitoring. Monitoring systems and plans should be reviewed to check that they are not too complex for use in the intended context; this has created challenges in previous integrated programmes. In this regard, it is also important that data collection tools are kept simple.

Programme reports, mid-term reviews and evaluations, should be produced for the whole programme, written by a multi-disciplinary team working in collaboration, rather than compiling single sector reports into one report. This latter approach is inappropriate for integrated programmes as it does not consider the inter-relationships between different programme elements and their mutual support which is essential in achieving the programme outcome. In mid-term reviews and

evaluations of integrated programmes, specific emphasis should be on reviewing collaboration and coordination mechanisms. Documenting experiences and lessons learnt in this regard is also notable.

BOX 8: FINALISATION - MEASURING SUCCESS

Monitoring and Reporting
- ☐ Develop joint programme monitoring systems, plans and formats.
- ☐ Identify and undertake joint monitoring visits.
- ☐ Monitor risks in relation to the collaboration between different departments/stakeholders which contribute to the programme.
- ☐ Produce single narrative monitoring reports rather than multiple reports for different sector activities (quarterly or annually). This should not simply be a composite report developed by bringing together different sector reports, but a holistic review considering how all activities are contributing to meeting the programme's shared objective(s).
- ☐ Undertake a joint mid-term review (MTR) which considers:
  - ✓ How are different sector elements working towards achieving the programme's objectives?
  - ✓ To what extent is there effective coordination and collaboration across technical departments?

Final evaluation and beyond
- ☐ Undertake a joint final evaluation which considers how all sector interventions or activities have working towards achieving the development and immediate objectives of the programme.
- ☐ Undertake an internal learning review.
- ☐ Institutionalise joint lessons learned.