



Lao Red Cross

Strategic Plan 2011-2015



Saving lives, Changing minds

May 2011, Lao PDR



Foreword by President and Secretary General of Lao Red Cross

The Lao Red Cross (LRC) is a leading humanitarian organization in Lao PDR and is foremost in responding to disasters, providing blood transfusion service, promoting community health and care, and promoting fundamental principles and humanitarian values. It has a mission to support the most vulnerable people in their time of needs by improving their health and livelihoods and helping them to prepare for and respond to disasters in line with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement.

This is the third five year strategic plan of Lao Red Cross. Time frame for the new Strategic plan is 2011-2015. The plan was developed out of lessons following the second strategic plan (2006-2010) and the most recent extensive planning and consultation process. It provides a framework for the Lao Red Cross as it continues to strengthen its work on four core areas: disaster management, health and care in the community, promotion of fundamental principles and humanitarian values, and organizational development.

Lao Red Cross is confident it will remain a leading humanitarian organization in Lao PDR and a valuable contributor to the successful implementation of the Government of Lao PDR's 7th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2011-2015), Strategy and Planning Framework for the Integrated Package of Maternal Neonatal and Child Health Services (2009-2015), the 7th Five – Year Health Sector Development Plan (2011-2015), and the UN Millennium Development Goals.

With a strong commitment from the leadership and staff of LRC at all levels, together with enthusiasm and support of the Partner National Societies, the Federation, International Committee for the Red Cross, Government institutions-private sectors, UN agencies and national and international organizations, Lao Red Cross strongly believes that it will achieve its strategic aims, objectives and expected results by 2015. The full implementation of the strategy will, however, depend on strong commitment and ownership of Lao Red Cross leaderships, staffs, and volunteers at all level by integrating resources mobilizing within the Lao Red Cross to ensure sustainable development and continued sufficient support and resources, a strong commitment from donors, a culture of resource sharing among partners and public support.

We would like to acknowledge and thank all the leaders and staff of LRC, ICRC, the Federation and National Societies who provided constructive advice, analysis and extensive contribution to the planning and development of this strategic plan.

We look forward to continuing to work with all our past, present and future colleagues to support the implementation of this strategy, to share its opportunities and challenges and to contribute towards results of the highest standard.

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Vientiane, 31 May 2011

Contents

Foreword	2
Introduction	3
<u>Chapter One: The Lao Red Cross</u>	
Leading in humanitarian work	4
Trends for the future	4
<u>Chapter Two: The Lao Red Cross of the future</u>	
Challenges for the future	5
Renewing the vision and mission for 2011-2015	7
<u>Chapter Three: What the Lao Red Cross will do</u>	
Core Area 1: Disaster management	9
Core Area 2: Health and care in the community	10
Core Area 3: Humanitarian principles and values	13
Core Area 4: Organizational Development and Strengthening the National Society	14
Conclusion	18
Annex A: Lao Red Cross House Strategy 2011-2015	19
Abbreviations	20
References	20
Glossary	20
Our fundamental principles and values	21

Introduction

This is the 3rd Lao Red Cross Strategic Plan and the time frame for it is 2011-2015. This Strategy 2015 builds on the experiences, progress and successes of the Strategic Development Plan 2006-2010, and provides strategic directions to respond to vulnerability and challenges in the next five years. It was developed through a thorough and extensive consultation with various stakeholders. It is designed to ensure the Lao Red Cross is in line with the Government of Lao PDR's 7th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2011-2015), Strategy and Planning Framework for the Integrated Package of Maternal Neonatal and Child Health Services (2009-2015), the 7th Five – Year Health Sector Development Plan (2011-2015), the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the strategic direction of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which reads, 'all core areas of work are responsive to local vulnerability and focused on the areas where they can have greatest impact'.

In this respect, this Strategy aims to be consistent with the overall vision and strategic aims 2020 of the International Federation. To do this, Lao Red Cross has decided to develop its Strategy in two phases. The first Strategy is for 2011-2015, and the second is for 2016-2020.

This document, *Lao Red Cross Strategic Plan 2011-2015: Saving Lives, Changing Minds*, presents the synthesized results and reflection of consultations with key stakeholders. It is divided into three chapters as follows:

Chapter One: The Lao Red Cross describes it as a leading humanitarian organization and explains its mandates and the trends for the future.

Chapter Two: The Lao Red Cross of the future describes the challenges of our society and how we renew Lao Red Cross vision and mission for the next five years.

Chapter Three: Strategic Directions sets out what the Lao Red Cross will do, with focus on four core areas:

1. **Disaster management**
2. **Health and care in the community**
3. **Promoting human dignity and humanitarian values**
4. **Organizational development and strengthening the national society**

Chapter One:

The Lao Red Cross

The Lao Red Cross is a humanitarian organization recognized by the Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR). In its 55 years of existence the LRC has developed itself into a leading humanitarian organization in Lao PDR. It has gained credibility of its works and services over the years.

Leading in humanitarian work

The Lao Red Cross was established in 1955, recognized by ICRC and became a member of the Federation in 1957, whose presence in Laos was established in 1992.¹ LRC remains very close to the government as a 'civil organization auxiliary to the government in humanitarian services'. The government continues to support on governance and management as well as resources throughout the National Society.

It is recognized by the Lao Government as the leading humanitarian organization in Lao PDR in responding to the needs of the most vulnerable people nationwide through its core programmes and services and provincial branches and district chapters.

With its growing role as an auxiliary to the public authorities in humanitarian affairs, there is an urgent need for better collaboration with its partners and for more effective and efficient ways of working to address local vulnerabilities through building strong partnerships, mobilizing sufficient resources, and scaling up activities to work in line with the Federation Strategy 2020.

Trends for the future

The demand for natural resources to meet the demand of economic developments that are characterized by globalization is higher than ever before, which could have potential implications on climate change and global warming. Climate change together with world economic crisis have affected the economic growth at home significantly; with the increasing price of food and oil. The economic, climate and food crises often come along with emerging issues. Climate change, in particular, not only endangers lives and undermines livelihoods, but also threatens to exacerbate the gaps between rich and poor, and amplifies the inequities between women and men. In the region, emerging and other epidemic-prone diseases pose serious public health and economic threats to Lao. The global financial crisis, on the other hand, affecting many countries, including Lao PDR, makes it harder for the RC to obtain foreign and local assistance.

In this regard, Lao PDR will become more affected by climate change, which will bring huge impact of its own such as natural disasters and epidemic diseases. In implementing the 7th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2011-2015), the Government of Lao PDR will also face challenges that could also affect the humanitarian field operation of the LRC.

¹ Other partners (PNS & ICRC) have long traditions of support in Laos.

Chapter Two:

The Lao Red Cross of the future

The Lao Red Cross aims to be a strong leading humanitarian organization in Lao PDR. Understanding the global, regional and national trends, the Lao Red Cross is constrained by several challenges with this end in view. Lao Red Cross needs to work in full preparedness, partnership and cooperation with Government, National Societies, the Federation, ICRC, UN agencies, the private sector and civil society organizations to address these challenges. It also requires a redefinition of what the Lao Red Cross wants to be in the future.

Challenges for the future

The following identifies the challenges that Lao RC faces and needs to address in the coming years.

1. **New legal status and restructuring.** A new revision of legal status ‘decree’ will be a challenge when it comes into enforcement. LRC needs to restructure its operations at all levels. Governing board of LRC needs to be established to ensure the national society is well functioning. Capacity development and resource support are necessary. Sound policies, procedures and systems need to be in place capable of facing challenges in coming years.
2. **Human resources development and strengthening.** Human resources are critical issue within Lao Red Cross. Number of skilled and experience staff, correct deployment and retention are of concern and crucial to delivering quality, effective services. Thus, sound human resource policies for volunteers, youths and staff and capacity development are required.
3. **Ensuring adequate and sustainable funds and resources.** It has been a potential challenge in mobilizing financial resources and fundraising for rescue equipment and other supports to respond effectively to the urgent needs of victims and the day-to-day operations of LRC. Securing and developing resources to enable Lao Red Cross to become less dependent on its PNSs for financial and technical support is of critical importance. Fundraising strategy and income generation and fundraising are needed. This will include capacity on funding proposal development and access to external funding sources. Moreover, sound financial management and reporting systems are also needed.
4. **Taking humanitarian principles and values into practice.** The limited public understanding of humanitarian values and LRC works has made the latter less visible in the perception of the people, due to insufficiency of the dissemination. A strong culture of sharing and encouragement of the influential people to participate and support Lao RC activities remain a potential challenge. The LRC needs to mobilize public to support its work.

5. **Branch development and support.** Strengthening the leadership and management of branches needs to be consistent with National Society and Red Cross Movement. Time and resources need to be available for LRC branch and chapter development and support. Capacity development and strengthening are essential, so that leadership, staff, volunteers and youth networks have the capacity to do more, do better, and reach further.
6. **Documentation and report systems.** Developing and strengthening a better monitoring, evaluation and reporting system within LRC is one thing, but putting it into action and practice is another challenge that needs further capacity building and financial support to ensure that tools and systems are functioning and leadership is committed to make it happen.
7. **Strengthening relations, cooperation, coordination and partnership.** Coordinating diverse partnerships and collaboration with the Government of Lao and its institutions, the Federation, PNSs, ICRC, UN agencies and other stakeholders in working together to address issues related to disaster, health and humanitarian values is a challenge. The level of relations, coordination and networking established between LRC and external agencies are still weak. This is often amplified by poor resources and limited knowledge. This needs to be strengthened and improved.
8. **Better internal communications and coordination.** Limited communications and coordination within the Central office and branches and vice versa. Given all core areas of LRC are interlinked and will lead the LRC towards its overarching mission and strategic aims, they underpin essential requirements for a better communication and coordination mechanism within LRC.
9. **Ownership and sustainability.** It is often challenging for all partners to consider ownership and sustainability of projects and programmes. LRC and partners need to discuss and agree together at the beginning of project/programme design on the expectation and level of ownership and sustainability, and to ensure that exit strategies are integrated into each project/programme.

The complexity of all these interconnected challenges requires the Lao Red Cross to transform mind-sets and attitudes towards better work performance. In strengthening the **'power of humanity' to do more, do better, and reach further** for the most vulnerable groups, Lao Red Cross must adapt to the challenges and opportunities by renewing the vision and its mission, and key core areas of interventions over the coming years.

Vision and Mission:

Lao RC Vision:

Leading the humanitarian response in ensuring the most vulnerable people live in dignity.

Lao RC Mission:

As auxiliary to the Lao Government in rendering humanitarian services, the Lao Red Cross aims to support the most vulnerable people's basic needs on time.

We work with communities to improve their health and livelihood and helping them to prepare for and respond to disasters in line with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Chapter Three:

Strategic Directions: What the Lao Red Cross will do

Lao Red Cross' work is guided by humanitarian ideals. The Lao Red Cross views it as necessary to dedicate itself towards becoming a leading humanitarian organization that is truly effective, efficient, and available at anytime to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable groups anywhere in Lao PDR. In view of its existing strengths of organizational capacity and the needs of Lao society, particularly the most vulnerable, Lao Red Cross has consolidated the progresses made from implementing its *Strategic Development Plan 2006-2010* and to incorporate the learning into the *Strategic Plan 2011-2015* by continuing to focus on **four core priority areas as the strategic directions**. These priority strategic directions will provide long-term structural support needed to make Lao Red Cross a leading humanitarian organization that is capable of an auxiliary role to the Government to deliver critical services and provide humanitarian assistance in Lao PDR.

Core Area 1: Disaster Management

Core Area 2: Health and Care in the Community

Core Area 3: Humanitarian Principles and Values

Core Area 4: Organizational Development and Strengthening the National Society

These are the core day-to-day works of the Lao Red Cross and of equivalent importance and priority.

The **Organizational Development and Strengthening the National Society** is considered the foundation structure for the Red Cross Movement and for the Lao Red Cross. Lao Red Cross is committed to be with the community people, and helping the people timely and effectively. Lao Red Cross's strategy is presented diagrammatically in Annex A.

The four strategic priorities focus on addressing the needs of present day Lao and gear towards stronger humanitarian organization in Lao PDR in contributing to accelerate the achievements of the UN MDGs and the Government of Lao PDR's 7th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2011-2015), Strategy and Planning Framework for the Integrated Package of Maternal Neonatal and Child Health Services (2009-2015), and the 7th Five – Year Health Sector Development Plan (2011-2015). These priorities will be achieved by extending the current core areas and programs of the past five years on a nationwide basis. Cross-Cutting issues are the driving force of Lao Red Cross such as: members, volunteers, youth, gender, advocacy and capacity building.

Strategic Aim/Goal 1:

Assisting vulnerable people in times of disaster and supporting them to build safer and resilient communities.

Core Area 1:

Disaster Management

Lao PDR is a country severely affected by natural and man-made hazards, the consequences of which have had a devastating impact on poor and vulnerable people. Recently, for example, typhoon XangSane in 2008 and typhoon Ketsana in 2009 hit different parts of Lao severely. Together with these disastrous impacts, the new trend of hazard that challenges Lao PDR to meet the MDGs has been anticipated to come. Indeed it is now clear that vulnerable communities are being exposed to a changing landscape associated with the risk environment that exceeds their capacity to cope within their own resources.



There is still much to be done in disaster preparedness and response by the Lao Red Cross. Despite the fact that Lao Red Cross has been recognized as a leading humanitarian organization, the Lao Red Cross requires a stronger organization to meet new challenges in the coming years, like climate change adaptation, an increasing number of road accidents in the country, and new pandemics. There is a critical need to have trained and well-equipped emergency response teams throughout the country, and to strengthen partnerships at all levels to make communities stronger and more resilient in disaster preparedness and risk reduction.

Under Strategic Aim 1 and Core Area 1, LRC has set the following specific objectives:

- 1. To reduce the risks of disasters and mitigate the impacts by improving the LRC preparedness and response capacity and mechanisms.*
- 2. To cope with disasters by improving the awareness and capacity of communities in disaster preparedness and response to disasters.*

By the year 2015, Lao Red Cross' institutional and technical capacity on preparedness, prevention and mitigation for response and risk reduction to successfully deliver relevant services to community in need will be strengthened. Moreover, preparedness, prevention and mitigation of the community to cope with disasters and emergencies will be improved. Together, this will result in improved knowledge and skills of the targeted communities, local authorities in disaster preparedness, response and risk reduction interventions using community empowerment approaches.

The Lao Red Cross is committed to save lives, contribute to alleviate human suffering, damage and losses, and to protect, comfort and assist people affected by disasters. It is the basic obligation of the National Society to have a well prepared and effective means to help and meet different needs of the most vulnerable people – wherever and whenever possible. Lao Red Cross' work is driven by the key guiding principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement that focuses on an effective and responsible disaster management work along with the global warming issues. In the next five years, Lao Red Cross continues to focus and work on community based disaster risk reduction programme and innovate other activities relating to preparedness, risk reduction, response, and recovery from disaster. Restoring family links and management of human remains will be included as part of the Lao Red Cross Disaster Preparedness Plan.

Strategic Aim/Goal 2:

Contribute to ensuring access to sustainable quality health services, promoting safe and healthy living, and responding to health in emergencies.

Core Area 2:

Health and Care in the Community

The health status of the population in Lao PDR, in general, is very poor. Several diseases are considered to be an important contributor to morbidity and mortality. Widespread poverty, lack of proper sanitation, water supply and poor hygiene practices, malnutrition, spread of communicable diseases and low health awareness go hand-in-hand with inadequate access to quality health care in Lao PDR. Non-communicable disease and road traffic-related injuries are on the rise, posing a major challenge to an already stressed health system. Tobacco and liquor alcohol- like related illnesses, illicit drug use and related crimes reflect the changing lifestyles of the people of Laos. The incidence of dengue has increased significantly in the last decade and is now a major health issue in the country. Though with a low HIV prevalence country (0,2% among aged 15-40, according UNDP Human Development Index in 2010), HIV prevention remains a growing concern, since the country is surrounding by nations with higher HIV rates. Laos' maternal and child health status is a pressing issue, with still high maternal mortality (Maternal mortality per 100,000 live births is 660 in 2010, UNDP Human Development Index) and relatively high child and infant mortality rates (Infant mortality per 1,000 is 46 in 2009, World Bank and children <5yrs mortality per 1,000 is 61, The Status of the World's Children in 2010).

The Government of Lao PDR gives priority to prevention of communicable diseases, healthcare and nutrition; and supporting the Ministry of Health Strategy and Planning Framework for the Integrated Package of Maternal Neonatal and Child Health Services (2009-2015) and the 7th Five – Year Health Sector Development Plan (2011-2015) aiming to address health needs of the population and to invest national resources in the social sector.



Under Strategic Aim 2 and Core Area 2, LRC has set the following specific objectives:

- 1. To provide safe and adequate supply of blood nationwide for people requiring blood transfusion services through the promotion of voluntary non-remunerated blood donations.*
- 2. To improve first aid skills among young people and communities by strengthening the first aid capacity of Lao Red Cross.*
- 3. To develop LRC capacity in psychosocial support to meet the needs of communities in emergencies.*
- 4. To provide access to health information, water and sanitation, and community based healthcare services for vulnerable people in normal times and in health emergencies.*
- 5. To support People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) and their families to access relevant health information and services.*
- 6. To increase access to health services for the most vulnerable people through health equity funds and access to maternal services for pregnant women in rural areas.*
- 7. To ensure food security and adequate nutritional status for the most vulnerable households in remote communities.*
- 8. To contribute to a reduction in the number of road accidents by promoting road safety and preparing to respond in emergencies.*
- 9. To provide medical support in emergencies.*



By the year 2015, Lao Red Cross is committed to promote community health and care as one of its core services in order to reduce disease and morbidity among children and women. LRC is also committed to prevent communicable disease and provide skills to meet the challenges for health in emergencies. Prevention and response will be effectively promoted through volunteers and youth of the Red Cross. The collaboration between the core areas of disaster management and healthcare is in immediate need of strengthening. With a mandate to implement the national blood policy, Lao Red Cross has developed the Blood Transfusion Service Strategy 2009-2013.

In the next five years, Lao Red Cross will prioritize and continue to implement the Blood Transfusion Service strategy 2009-2013, and to work on Community Based Health Development programme, communicable disease prevention, water and sanitation, emergency health, Health Equity Funds for vulnerable people, and food security project. Given that road accidents are increasing, Lao Red Cross is paying more attention to road safety awareness education and prevention to reduce road accidents and the impacts. LRC will strengthen its First Aid (FA) response team and scale up the training courses for companies and NGOs, and provide Community Based FA for victims affected by emergencies and disasters through Lao Red Cross staff and network of RC volunteers.

In case of emergencies, the LRC will also provide medical support. Finally, the LRC will be actor of the national response in order to minimize the impact of HIV/AIDS on the socio-economic development notably by supporting people living with HIV.

Strategic Aim/Goal 3:

Promote Fundamental Principles, International Humanitarian Law, social inclusion and humanitarian values.

Core Area 3:

Promotion of the Movement's Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian Values

The disadvantaged groups include women and girls, older people, people living with HIV/AIDS or certain diseases and disabilities, and members of ethnic groups who are subject to harmful cultural and social practices. On the other hand, lack of understanding of humanitarian values and importance of Red Cross work will limit the public participation and support in the humanitarian efforts in Lao PDR. Lao PDR is also affected by remaining landmine and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW).

Lao Red Cross is obligated by its mandate to promote fundamental principles and humanitarian values so that the rights of disadvantaged groups are addressed and guaranteed. To do this, Lao Red Cross needs to do more to create space for public participation and understanding of humanitarian action, to do better in service delivery and to mobilize the power of humanity towards tackling community vulnerabilities. Participating and taking the lead actively by volunteers, e.g. Red Cross Youth and Red Cross volunteers, are the keys to do more and better, especially in reaching vulnerable groups.

Under Strategic aim 3 and core area 3, LRC has set the following specific objectives:

1. To increase public awareness and understanding of Red Cross and Red Crescent Fundamental Principles and International Humanitarian Law.
2. To raise the image of Lao Red Cross as a leading humanitarian organization.
3. To gain support from and secure involvement of general public - morally and financially - so that the Lao Red Cross can serve the most vulnerable people.
4. To improve a strong youth and volunteer network and ensure their participation in humanitarian actions of Lao Red Cross.



By the year 2015, a strong image of the Lao Red Cross with efficient service delivery will translate into more funds and trust and confidence from the public. The key messages of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement are promoted widely; and the understanding of global challenges and issues that will get the attention and support are increased. The Fundamental Principles, International Humanitarian Law and humanitarian values are regularly promoted for staff, core groups, Red Cross youths and volunteers, law makers and other relevant people, effectively promoted. A strong and active youth and volunteer networks is strengthened and expanded in delivering timely and effective humanitarian assistance. Mine and ERW casualties in target areas are reduced, and livelihood of the affected poor community people is enhanced. In the next five years, LRC will strengthen the mechanism and/or create additional means, if necessary, for the dissemination on humanitarian principles and values, IHL and the RCRC emblem to the public and Government officials at all levels. Well planned awareness campaigns are needed, which cover the general public, including the People With Disability and landmine and ERW as well as victim assistance. The Lao Red Cross will encourage volunteer and youth in taking leadership in action and promoting the ideals of humanity, thereby delivering timely and effective humanitarian assistance. Supporting networks of volunteers and youths and their participation in humanitarian efforts is to be further mobilized and strengthened.

The Lao Red Cross is committed to strengthening and supporting existing volunteers and youth as well as recruiting more to participate in all activities of Lao Red Cross at all levels. Lao Red Cross will ensure that all four core areas of LRC integrate volunteer and youth and empower them to participate and take action in appropriate ways. Equally important, Lao Red Cross will ensure that all core programme areas conduct their work in accordance with the basic principles and values of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Strategic Aim/Goal 4:

Strengthening the Lao Red Cross's positioning as a leading humanitarian organization and well-functioning National Society.

Core Area 4:

Organizational Development and Strengthening the National Society

In realizing the four overarching core priority areas, Lao Red Cross seeks to organize itself effectively and efficiently through two key Enabling Actions.

Enabling Action 1:

Building a Well-Functioning National Society

This emphasizes the primacy of a strong Lao Red Cross as the foundation for all its work. Building a strong National Society requires time, resources, strong



commitment from leaders, staff and volunteers, and support for staff capacity development. Existing structures and mechanisms need to be improved with clear working systems and procedures. Lao Red Cross is committed to sustainable growth because the Red Cross wishes to do more for vulnerable people.

Under Enabling Action 1 of Core Area 4, LRC has set the following specific objectives:

- 1. To improve LRC's position by enforcing the legal status as a leading humanitarian organization in Lao PDR.*
- 2. To initiate the process for adoption of the Red Cross emblem and law.*
- 3. To develop the governance and management to ensure Lao Red Cross becomes a well functioning National Society.*
- 4. To build capable human resources (volunteers, youths, members, staff) to carry out effective humanitarian work.*
- 5. To commit and to be proactive for income generation/fundraising and resource mobilization for the LRC in partnership with all stakeholders both domestically and internationally to ensure sustainable development.*
- 6. To improve the overall management systems and facilities for efficient and accountable operations.*

By the year 2015, Lao Red Cross will be on the road as a well-functioning National Society. The society is building well-functioning branches and a strong independent leadership and management with a better and stronger infrastructure in place (from branches to district chapters and to community volunteers). Good governance will be strengthened to ensure that stated strategic aims/goals, objectives and outcomes are fulfilled and achieved. Lao Red Cross' human resource will be strengthened (including youth and volunteer) through a development and management strategy. Systems and policies are developed, and volunteers, youths, members and staff are dedicated and motivated. The administrative and financial structures, systems and procedures are strengthened to build its operational management capacity. More importantly, Lao Red Cross will have effective and sustainable fundraising activities by building a credible image and efficient service delivery. Sustainable fundraising is vital for Lao Red Cross to continuously support its activities. Capacity for strategic plan development improved with Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting systems (PMER) where responsibility within Lao Red Cross Headquarters and branches are clearly developed and strengthened.

In the next five years, Lao Red Cross will continue to modernize its working methods and systems. This will ensure that its entire infrastructure at branches/chapters is in place for the delivery of the day-to-day operations and management. It ensures sound management policies and systems, functioning governance, PMER systems are in place using Federation wide reporting system as one of the tools; and requires a good benefit package for staff and volunteers. The Lao Red Cross needs to develop sustainable and systematic fundraising that provides for sufficient financial resources. Lao Red Cross has prioritized the organizational development as key and foundation of a well-functioning of National Society. Priority is

given to strengthening responsible governance and management of cabinet, branch/chapter development, human resource (including youth and volunteer), capacity development, financial and administrative development, a better resource mobilization strategy, and setting up the PMER unit.

The Lao Red Cross will have a higher profile and stronger image through its legal base by adopting the Red Cross law. The Lao Red Cross will assist the government of Lao to adopt the emblem law.

Enabling Action 2:

Building partnerships and strengthening cooperation

The issues and challenges facing us every day, and the pressing needs of vulnerable people in Lao PDR cannot be overcome by LRC alone. It needs support and partnership with all stakeholders. As a member of the Red Cross Movement and as part of the collective of all National Societies, LRC is responsible for delivering the Strategy 2015 towards contributing to the Federation Strategy 2020. Being an active member of the Movement, LRC will maximize access and delivery to the



best results possible for those in needs and the people it wants to reach. It seeks to prevent and reduce vulnerability by using appropriately its auxiliary role and making partnership and co-operations with all Government institutions, the Federation, ICRC, Partner National Societies, UN agencies and international organizations.

Under Enabling Action 2 of Core Area 4, LRC has set the following specific objective:

- 1. To improve relations and communications for better coordination and cooperation with partners e.g. Lao Government, UN agencies, RC Movement, INGOs and NGOs.***

By the year 2015, Lao Red Cross will undertake its auxiliary role effectively to inform the country and other actors about humanitarian agenda in preventing and reducing vulnerabilities. Collaboration and coordination with the Government of Lao PDR, national and international institutions internal communications within Lao Red Cross as well as externally with the public and beneficiaries, are of high priority and strengthened.

In the next five years, Lao Red Cross will focus on creating and strengthening relations and dialogue with public institutions and authorities at all levels on matters within its competence. This includes consultation on major humanitarian issues, participation and resourcing for domestic and international disaster relief and preparedness, and in health, social and other competent fields. LRC with related Government institutions will review and revise, if necessary, its legal cooperation status as auxiliary role. LRC will persuade the

decision-makers to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people, and with full respect of our Fundamental Principles. It will work with relevant Lao Government institutions, both national and provincial levels, to encourage them to act and make decisions that are in favor of the poor and which address the needs of vulnerable people. Lao Red Cross will ensure the development of public relations and communications strategy aimed at raising the profile and understanding of Lao Red Cross locally, nationally and regionally.

Lao Red Cross welcomes cooperation with external partners in accordance with the Movement's Fundamental Principles. Strengthening collaboration and coordination with the International Federation, ICRC, PNSs, UN agencies and other organizations is key to effective functioning as a member of the Movement in response to the needs of the Lao Red Cross. Lao Red Cross welcomes any support from the Movement partners, UN agencies and others in a long-term partnership based on its Strategy 2015 and beyond.

Conclusion

This Strategic Plan 2011-2015 is a broad and ambitious vision for where Lao Red Cross aims to be in 2015. The core priority areas and strategic aims are set and put into action recognizing the challenges that lie ahead. The overall aims/goals, objectives and expected results of Lao Red Cross set for the next five to ten years are realistic and achievable.

The achievement of these will require a high commitment of Lao Red Cross leadership and staff, volunteers, members, as well as skills, resources, teamwork, and a well-managed and clear Development Plan. Lao Red Cross will set up a Planning Committee with the primary responsibility of formulating the Development Plan, which contains expected results, success indicators, key activities, timeframes, resources required and assigned responsibilities and monitoring tools.

Strengthening close cooperation and coordination with the Federation, ICRC, PNSs, Government institutions, UN agencies, NGOs, private sectors and other stakeholders is needed. With the help of its partners and donors, the Lao Red Cross intends to become a strong and leading provider of humanitarian work in Lao PDR. Where there is suffering, the Red Cross leaders and staff, members, youths and volunteers will work toward **'saving the lives'** of vulnerable people and **'changing minds'** of us all. The full implementation of this Strategy will depend on sufficient resources. Lao Red Cross will ensure there are adequate long-term resources available for the effective sustainable delivery of the strategy. This Strategy document will be used as a basis for discussing with the Government of Lao PDR, the Federation, PNS and other donors to seek their financial support.

In the next five years, there will be effective, objective monitoring and impact assessments to inform the Government of Lao PDR, the Federation, ICRC, PNS and donors and future activities, to ensure the organization is meeting the Strategy goals, and to act as factual evidence for humanitarian action on the proposed core areas. Regular monitoring, evaluating and reporting will be developed to measure the progress of service delivery. This Strategy aims to conduct a final review in October 2015 and new Strategy formulation for the next phase, 2016-2020, starting November 2015.

LRC Vision

Leading the humanitarian response in ensuring vulnerable people live in dignity.

LRC Mission

As auxiliary to the Lao Government in rendering humanitarian services, the Lao Red Cross aims to support the most vulnerable people in their time of need. We work with communities to improve their health and livelihood and helping them to prepare for and respond to disasters in line with the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement.

Strategic Aim 1:

Assisting vulnerable people in times of disaster and supporting them to build safer and resilient communities.

Core Area 1:

Disaster Management

Strategic Aim 2:

Contribute to ensuring access to sustainable quality health services, promoting safe and healthy living, and responding to health in emergencies.

Core Area 2:

Health and Care in the Community

Strategic Aim 3:

Promote Fundamental Principles, International Humanitarian Law, social inclusion and humanitarian values.

Core Area 3:

Promotion of the Movement's Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values

Strategic Aim 4:

Strengthening the Lao Red Cross's positioning as a leading humanitarian organization and well-functioning National Society.

Core Area 4:

Organizational Development and Strengthening the National Society

Enabling Action 2: Building partnership and strengthening cooperation

Enabling Action 1: Building a well-functioning National Society

Abbreviations

LRC – Lao Red Cross
ICRC – International Committee for the Red Cross
IFRC – International Federation of the Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies (referred to as the 'International Federation')
IHL – International Humanitarian Law
MDG – Millennium Development Goals
Movement – International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners
NGO – nongovernmental organization
NS – National Society
PNSs – Partner of National Societies
PDR – People's Democratic Republic
UN – United Nations

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3. Lao RC Strategy Development Plan 2006-2010
4. Lao RC's Blood Transfusion Service Strategy 2009-2013.
5. International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters
6. The 7th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2011-2015)
7. Strategy and Planning Framework for the Integrated Package of Maternal Neonatal and Child Health Services (2009-2015)
8. The 7th Five – Year Health Sector Development Plan (2011-2015)
9. Projects and programmes of PNSs

Glossary

Changing minds – refers to changing the minds not only of the vulnerable groups who often depend on humanitarian assistance, but changing minds of all people in the society to act together for humanity. Changing the way we live, the way we act towards humanitarian actions. We are aiming to changing minds of us all. The Red Cross works to change their minds through promoting the livelihoods projects, and other means.

Do more, do better, and reach further – refers to encouraging all National Societies, youths, volunteers and members to do more, to ensure that all services are effective and have high quality results, and to reach further to meet the needs of vulnerable groups.

Expected results – defines as covering the **output** and **outcome** and likely to cover the **impact**.

Saving lives – refers to the National Societies' mandate to prevent harm, and to protect and rescue the most vulnerable peoples, saving their lives from natural and man-made disasters and crises.

Strategic aim – goal that sets direction within the global strategy, through which the organization will progress towards fulfilling its mission.

Strategy – the **direction** and **scope** of an organization over the **long-term**, which achieves **advantage** for the organization through its configuration of **resources** within a challenging **environment** to meet the needs of vulnerable groups and to fulfill **stakeholder** expectations.

Vulnerability – the conditions determined by physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes that increase the susceptibility of a community to the impact of hazards.

The Fundamental Principles Of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Humanity. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality. It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality. In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence. The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary service. It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity. There can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.