

Report on Communication and Resource Mobilisation Workshop 03-05 September, 2019 at New Delhi

Dr Vanshree, Director Blood Bank, Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) welcomed the participants. She stressed upon the importance of consistent and powerful public communication across all Red Cross branches. She emphasised on the significance of visibility of Red Cross work across different media channels, especially as IRCS completes 100 years in 2020. During the workshop, participants shared success stories, challenges, and ideas for cooperation to bring uniformity across the country in what and how branches communicate about their activities and programmes.



The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and IRCS together facilitated sessions on social media, its available platforms and how each of these is suitable and could be optimally used for better engagement with people in different situations and scenarios. Various messaging techniques, usage of photos and videos were discussed.

Suggestions: Maintain good engagement within the movement by sharing and actively promoting each others' social media messages and sustain external engagement by tagging relevant stakeholders in key messaging.

States/UTs shared their best practices and challenges related to internal and external communications.. Odisha, Telangana, Tamil Nadu informed that they have very good linkages with Government departments. The government officials are represented on their various committees. They maintain strong internal communications with district branches through regular reporting and quarterly meetings which the



government machinery is also a part of. In addition to regular and timely support from the State branches, well laid out communication plans play an important role in better coordination with district and sub district branches.

Suggestions: Develop a uniform communication policy – for all IRCS branches – identifying long-term institutional priorities and goals, and the communication strategies to achieve the same .

Some of the challenges faced by branches pertain to the impact on telecommunications in times of disaster, reaching remote areas, difficult terrain and lack of funds.

An introduction and overview of branding and visual identity was shared with the participants to underline its importance for the visibility of the Red Cross. The first look of the visual identity guidelines – being created on the occasion of the centenary of IRCS – was also shared with participants. Branch representatives talked about the need for consistency in the quality of relief items in different parts of the country.



Suggestions: Identify and empanel vendors for each item, with specifications, in order to allow states to procure through these empanelled vendors.

In view of the 70th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions this year, a special session on IHL and the Emblem was conducted as part of the workshop. Participants shared challenges related to misuse of the Emblem and best practices from the field to address the issue.

Suggestions: Work towards the inclusion of the subject of Red Cross and Emblem in school curriculum. The fine imposed for misuse of the Emblem should be raised and the mode of collection should be decided by NHQ and uploaded on its website.

Media and live interview simulation exercise was carried out with participants where they were given different scenarios to respond to. Many good practices were shared such as providing factual information backed by numbers, preparing anticipated questions and answers on specific situations that can be used in emergencies and at the time of disasters.

Media search tools were also taken up focusing on how to use different platforms and keywords to know the relevant topics trending for any Red Cross branch and related to its activities.



Dr. Veer Bhushan, Joint Secretary, IRCS, spoke about the 100 years celebration of the national society. Participants were informed regarding formation of a committee for Centenary celebrations and initiatives such as building a museum, Republic Day tableau, launching a postage stamp, and coffee table book. Participants were invited to share success stories, pictures, and activities at State/District level that can be showcased during the celebrations. Dr. Bhushan also talked about the importance of communication and dissemination of the work done by Red Cross volunteers at the State/District level. The importance of generating funds at State/District level was underscored by him.

Participants were informed that in the State Secretaries meeting, the NHQ proposed to contribute 80% of project cost for every State provided the State branch contributes 20% and has requisite funds to do so. For this, a detailed proposal from the State with complete financial, technical and social implications with measurable output and outcome indicators will be required. In relation to fundraising, he stressed on how Melas can help in greater community awareness and involvement. For CSR funding, evidence-based data is important and the demand should come from States. States were suggested to take the opportunity to create a pool of master trainers at the district level through the SERV (socio-economic response volunteer) programme.

Suggestions for Centenary Celebrations included sharing of the activity calendar of all States with the NHQ, ensuring uniformity through standardisation of design of communication material such as posters. creation of souvenirs for this occasion, and having a brand ambassador.

Participants shared sources of funds such as CSR, MoU with universities, NGOs and corporations, cultural exchange camps, and government grants.



The representative from Telangana shared experience of efficient mobilisation of resources for sustainability of the branch through CSR funding, assets, tapping government funds and first aid trainings. He made participants aware of various CSR components such as identification of area of funding, detailed proposal making, showing credibility to partners through regular reporting, sending promotional material, newsletter, budget plans. He added that the legal and ethical issues should be considered before taking up any

project under CSR.

External resource persons, Ms. Jyotsna Bhatnagar from World Food Programme and Ms. Manjusha from Charities Aid Foundation threw light on various tools and approaches that can be adopted to mobilise the resources and informed participants regarding purpose and goals of CSR funding in the Indian context.



Sh. N.K. Singh, Deputy Secretary, IRCS, facilitated the closing session in which participants brainstormed and documented the takeaways and learnings for resource mobilisation in relation to key activities.