International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

Water, Sanitation and Emergency Health Unit (WatSan/EH)

Geneva Secretariat

Concept Note:

**‘Flagship’ Projects as a framework and platform for more harmonised and larger scale programming - the Ghana ‘Flagship’ Project.**

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**1.0 Background:**

The needs of vulnerable people are often many faceted, in most cases very context specific, can be in rural, peri-urban and urban settings and not restricted to less developed countries or fragile states.

The reasons for their vulnerability are also commonly very broad, complex and context specific and if we intend to reduce their vulnerability, improve their lives and dignity and contribute further to their resilience we must take a more holistic view of the challenges they face and indeed decide carefully what we may be able to offer them as participatory, long-term, developmental interventions.

Unfortunately, and it has been recognised for many years, the RC/RC and indeed many other development actors have tended to deliver programming that is geographically scattered; silo orientated; lacking overall coherence; not always driven by the priority needs of the target populations themselves while lacking in scale and replicability. All these factors contributing to less impactful programming and at times duplication of efforts and lessened cost effectiveness and sustainability.

This concept note intends to build further upon previous and on-going attempts to deliver more holistic programming from the ‘ground-up’ by establishing a way forward for larger scale broad spectrum programming.

**2.0 Challenges to more harmonised programming:**

Development actors, technical departments, donors and other stakeholders prefer to promote or focus upon particular areas of interest, often technical areas or specific headline programming. For example, in the RC/RC context CBHFA; WASH; RMNCH; DRR; CC…..the list is almost endless.

***However, and it is not surprising, this focus or branding seldom applies to target communities themselves, who do not have a preference for a projects name or title as long as it contributes to assisting them in a manner relevant to themselves.***

Of course it is natural, especially for technical departments or sectors that require the knowledge and skills inherent to delivering such programming, that they wish to champion and prioritise their areas of interest. It is also in their comfort zone.

We should also note that funding streams are almost exclusively sector or technical area specific and mostly from the same sources, and therefore there is whether we like it or not a healthy but restricting competition for resources which does not create the best enabling environment for cross-sectorial harmonisation.

A further complication is that funding. In the RC/RC context, is broadly available from three sources:

1. internal (in-house IFRC funding);
2. internal (RC/RC especially PNS funding), both bilateral and multilateral;
3. external funding.

Or less commonly combinations of the above, where, if collective programming and fund-raising can and should be increased, larger scale programming is possible with all the advantages of economies of scale and increased relevance and where scale and quality of impact is more likely to potentially reach a greater number of people.

**3.0 *‘Flagship’* as a new brand:**

What we propose first is to ***rebrand*** our developmental programming, and at least in this early stage refer to ***‘Flagship’*** projects or programmes that may contain elements or components of more than one or preferably several technical sectors or areas of interest that are intended to contribute broadly to increased resilience. This can hopefully defuse sectorial competition to some extent. As far as funding goes, it can act as an umbrella to bring diverse funding streams together in a more cost effective way.

***‘Flagship’*** projects or programmes should meet with some key criteria as follows:

* ***‘Flagship’*** projects must be demand driven, and we mean ***target population*** ***demand driven***, not sector or funding source driven.
* ***‘Flagship’*** projects should have a minimum scale of 100,000 **direct** targeted population, and be potentially replicable.
* ***‘Flagship’*** projects should be for a minimum of five years, extendable and able to evolve over time increasing or decreasing scope as appropriate.
* ***‘Flagship’*** Projects will be collectively owned and managed by the stakeholder group.
* ***‘Flagship’*** technical or sectorial components should be decided upon based on target population needs and priorities, country context, HNS capacities and Governmental priorities in consultation with target populations. Such projects may not be all inclusive, or delivering every component at the same time, this depends upon context, priorities, the practicalities of delivery and funding availability and time frames.
* ***‘Flagship’***  projects should be consortium projects either multilateral (IFRC led and coordinated) or bilateral consortiums. In both cases consortiums should bring together RC/RC NS’s and external stakeholders with government.
* ***‘Flagship’*** projects may benefit from sectorial entry points (e.g. where a well-established sectorial project can be used to broaden its scope and scale to evolve into a ***‘Flagship’*** Project).
* ***‘Flagship’*** projects will automatically benefit and use new technology for data collection; full project or programme cycle management; transparency and interaction with target populations.
* ***‘Flagship’*** projects will automatically include mid-term, end line and ‘look back’ studies, evaluations and reviews, with external participation as means to better capture quality programming, impact and sustainability.

**4.0 The Ghana ‘Flagship’ Project:**

We have begun to formulate a project that we hope will meet most of the above criteria, as an entry point we have a GWSI project fully funded for the next four years in Ghana, and have just completed the first round of base line work where we have:

* Using RAMP/Magpi, created a base line system incorporating GWSI WASH elements; CBHFA Elements; DRR and CC elements.
* This new model will be further rolled out in new project areas in Ghana over the next two months.
* This will lead into a ***‘Flagship’*** project proposal preparation exercise to be ready before the end of 2015, and as the WASH project component commences we will fund raise and seek partners to expand the core WASH project into fully fledged ***‘Flagship’*** project.

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