**IT Think Papers – Questions to Frame the IT Strategy**

Strategy is about setting a destination and having a clear vision about what that destination looks like. My vision for technology across the RC/RC Movement is simple and ambitious: *One Village.* In a village, location does not matter for the conversations and the work to take place. Individuals and families are respected, and yet everyone participates in understanding problems, collaborates on reaching and funding solutions, and celebrates the measurable impact that is realized, all in a transparent way.

One of the ways to frame a strategy is to think about the questions that we cannot answer today, or find difficult to answer, that our implemented strategy will make easier to answer. So here are the questions I’ve heard or thought about that in three to five years I envision IFRC using technology to answer:

1. How can we double or triple our impact on the lives of vulnerable people in all regions of our work without doubling or tripling our staff or budget?
2. How can we deliver new programs in disaster relief, preparedness, and health for less cost and greater reach?
3. How can we take out steps and approvals from our business processes to speed the delivery and lower the costs of our internal and external services?
4. How can we report the impact of our programs more quickly, with better data, as well as more transparently to our stakeholders?
5. How can we reach people with the technology they have already adopted? (e.g., mobile phones)
6. How do we include the survivors of disaster as members of the team, participating in the assessment and delivery of relief services?
7. How can staff in all offices and other stakeholders readily find each other based on expertise and interests?
8. How can our people move easily from one office to the next and feel part of one organization?
9. How can our Secretary General and senior management team reach out to all employees and National Societies with one email, podcast or video broadcast?
10. How can all our National Societies reach more of their donors for less cost to raise money? How can they leverage online fundraising applications and be able to raise funds via cell phones and the web?
11. In how many member-locations do we operate for each sector of program delivery and each area of fundraising? How many offices are there in the Federation? How many have improved their operations and use of technology?
12. How can National Societies afford current technology and learn how to use it? How can we level the playing field more for the “haves” and “have-nots” among our National Societies?
13. How can we deliver on the raised capacity building expectations from our 2020 Strategy? (Bekele’s comments: “We need to (a) raise the standards of what the societies can do, (b) create a National Society database , (c) develop criteria for society excellence, with metrics on which we report, (d) gather knowledge and transfer knowledge into learning, and (e) strengthen decentralization. All this requires technology")
14. How can we increase the sharing of technology solutions (applications, infrastructure, support and training) among our National Societies? How can we find and scale the applications already being used on the front lines of our program delivery?
15. How can we gather, aggregate and report critical management information (financials, program status, key metrics like beneficiaries reached) in hours and days rather than weeks and months?
16. How can we increase the speed and scale of our relief efforts to be the first and most responsive organization in emergencies?
17. How can we more connect our Volunteers, National Societies and IFRC using social networking and other web 2.0 technologies to strengthen and increase relationships?
18. How can we develop a low cost technology infrastructure, provided by technology partners, that can be shared and scale across the Federation for large and small National Societies, large and basic field offices.
19. How can we use more of the consumer applications (e.g. SKYPE, Flickr, LinkedIn, Google calendar, etc.) so our employees can better conduct their daily work with technologies that are already familiar to them?
20. How can we collaborate more with other INGOs and other partners sharing basic commodity IT services like help desk and procurement?
21. How do we motivate the greater use of technology, with a converging set of standards to increase our ability to Move Forward Together?

These questions suggest technology goals that are achievable if we can imagine solutions together and commit to an exciting shared vision that inspires us to invest in new ways of working as a nonprofit.