



"Always Needed, Always There"

20 September 2017

SARCS: NEW FORMS OF LEADERSHIP FOR AFRICA RISING

As an experienced business executive in public affairs, communications and reputation management, I have vast experience in deal making and strategic market identification for business growth within the African continent. I have also been tasked with reputation and crisis management for multinationals and big business which included operational and change management which results in commercial growth. I have served on several boards, i.e. Transformation Committee Chairperson for Business Unity South Africa, Board member of Accor Services, French Chamber of Commerce and Torque Holdings in South Africa. My expertise are in strategy development, government relations, policy influencing, communication strategy, business management, global issues management, commercial and change management.



In Africa, a continent with high-levels of political and social instability, very often, ordinary citizens suffer the consequences. These consequences can have devastating effects; hunger, starvation, human displacement and family fragmentation. Schooling and access to health care become impossible. In other words; African mothers, fathers, daughters, sons, lose their opportunity and human right to a life of dignity and possibility.

Competing political agenda, ideological positions, and global pressures make it difficult for swift resolution to conflict.

NON-PARTISAN, NON-POLITICAL HUMANITARIAN assistance makes the difference between life and death, possibility and futility, growth and prosperity.

HUMANITARIAN workers are the silent watch-dogs of the citizen. The behind-the-scenes workers caring and soothing the wounds.

At the fore-front is the trusted and respected RED CROSS. Without this organisation, the future is bleak.

If the Sustainable Development Goals are to have a real chance of making a real difference, coordinated humanitarian organisations must be supported.

This is the context within which the South African Red Cross positions itself. These are huge challenges that require a well-functioning, professional, solidly governed and sustainable organisation. Over the past three years, the South African Red Cross has made major changes.



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Currently, it is able to hold its head up high, and claim the space it deserves as a leader of humanitarian care on the African continent.

Despite challenges faced around getting resources, we have continued to deliver in terms of our programmes and during unforeseen disasters.

At present, a team of approximately 450 staff in 34 branches work with 2200 active volunteers in providing support to over 130 000 beneficiaries in terms of our Health and Care programmes. In one of most devastating disasters to ever hit Knysna in the Western Cape region and flooding in other areas of South Africa, SARCS responded to these tragedies by providing immediate and continuous assistance to those affected.

We have also managed to get most volunteers on the Volunteer Insurance Policy as administered by the IFRC. Our training department is being re-developed to make us more competitive as well as increase our capacity for commercial training.

These are our current statistics:

- Disaster Management beneficiaries **150 000**
- Youth capacity building, development and Peer Education **15 000** reached
- Training
Home Based Care **500**
First Aid (individuals and corporates) **7938**
Disaster Management **650**
- Community outreach programmes have reached over **35 000** elderly
- Health promotion campaigns reach and beneficiaries **105 000**
- OVC's **30 000**
- HIV/TB Counselling and Testing **180 000**

There is also greater expectation on us, both from a Governance and Management perspective as Red Cross and Red Crescent organisations across the African continent look to the South African Red Cross for guidance, and leadership.

Africa's voice is critical, and requires a strong and credible organisation to represent it. There is no organisation better placed to provide this, than the South African Red Cross Society.

We, take seriously this role, and have made enormous strides to stabilise the organisation, and make it resilient and sustainable.

The South African Red Cross Society is proving to be very successful in managing change that comes with change:

- We come from a fractured organisation which has left a legacy of non-compliance in terms of governance and financial accountability. However, we have used the crises (pre 2014 era) that faced us as an opportunity for breaking ingrained structures and behaviours that used to undermine the productivity and effectiveness of the SA Red Cross Society. In the main, this included the radical transformation of our founding documents but kept them aligned to the IFRC and international standards.
- We reformed the governing board to include members from the private sector and this has enhanced our ability to cope with change in the age of uncertainty. This has triggered the expected response from the prospective private sector donors and media houses.



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Marshalling several sources of influence at once to get superior results:

- We have identified and redefined our strategic partners and stakeholders (the communities we serve, the media, business community and government institutions)
- We have adopted a global mind-set by making effective use of our experiences as a solid platform for participating meaningfully in the global stage and leading across boundaries

Based on the above, the SA Red Cross Society wants to champion the following:

- Promote the development of learning platforms for Africa and beyond that will use SARCS' experiences of transformation with regards to governance and governing boards.
- Advance the partnerships between the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement with the business community with a view for strengthening dialogue for finding sustainable resource mobilisation solutions
- Meaningful participation of youth and professionalising structures in the Society in order to deliver meaningful services to communities.

I will work with you all to ensure that the Red Cross Red Crescent principles are practised, implemented and upheld not only in the South African context but within Africa at large as well as globally.

As the president of the South African Red Cross Society, I pledge to accept all challenges I am faced with and to execute what is within my power.

Yours Sincerely

Connie Motshumi

President