

Dear Distinguished Chair, Honourable President, Director General, and Distinguished Delegates,

In 2022 IFRC published the World Disaster Report, the report highlights that all countries remain dangerously underprepared for future outbreaks. The lessons from COVID-19 emphasize the need for improved preparedness and response strategies.

Key lessons are the importance of trust, equity, and local actions in disaster response. Top-down decision-making fails to build trust; trust is fostered through community ownership and presence with close proximity to both the event and the response. Therefore, building local capacity and trust beforehand is essential. As a global community we are working toward this but not at the pace needed!

Equity is another pillar to preparedness and response. Ensuring fair access to both off-the-shelf and novel, safe countermeasures build trust and engagement. This will address the demand for countermeasures across all of societies, especially for the most vulnerable marginalized conflict affected.

Local action is the bedrock of the Red Cross Red Crescent network. The complexities of local emergency management require again a whole-of-society approach. We must place community actors at the heart of the response, leveraging local knowledge and capacities while prioritizing the safety and protection of frontline workers is paramount.

To truly enhance preparedness and response, these needs and approaches must be translated into measurable objectives. This means setting clear, quantifiable goals for building trust, ensuring equitable access, and enhancing local response capabilities. In conclusion, we urge governments to prioritize trust, equity, and local actions to better prepare for future disasters. We urge the member states to immediately take concrete actions to make the landscape for the next pandemic better than the last.