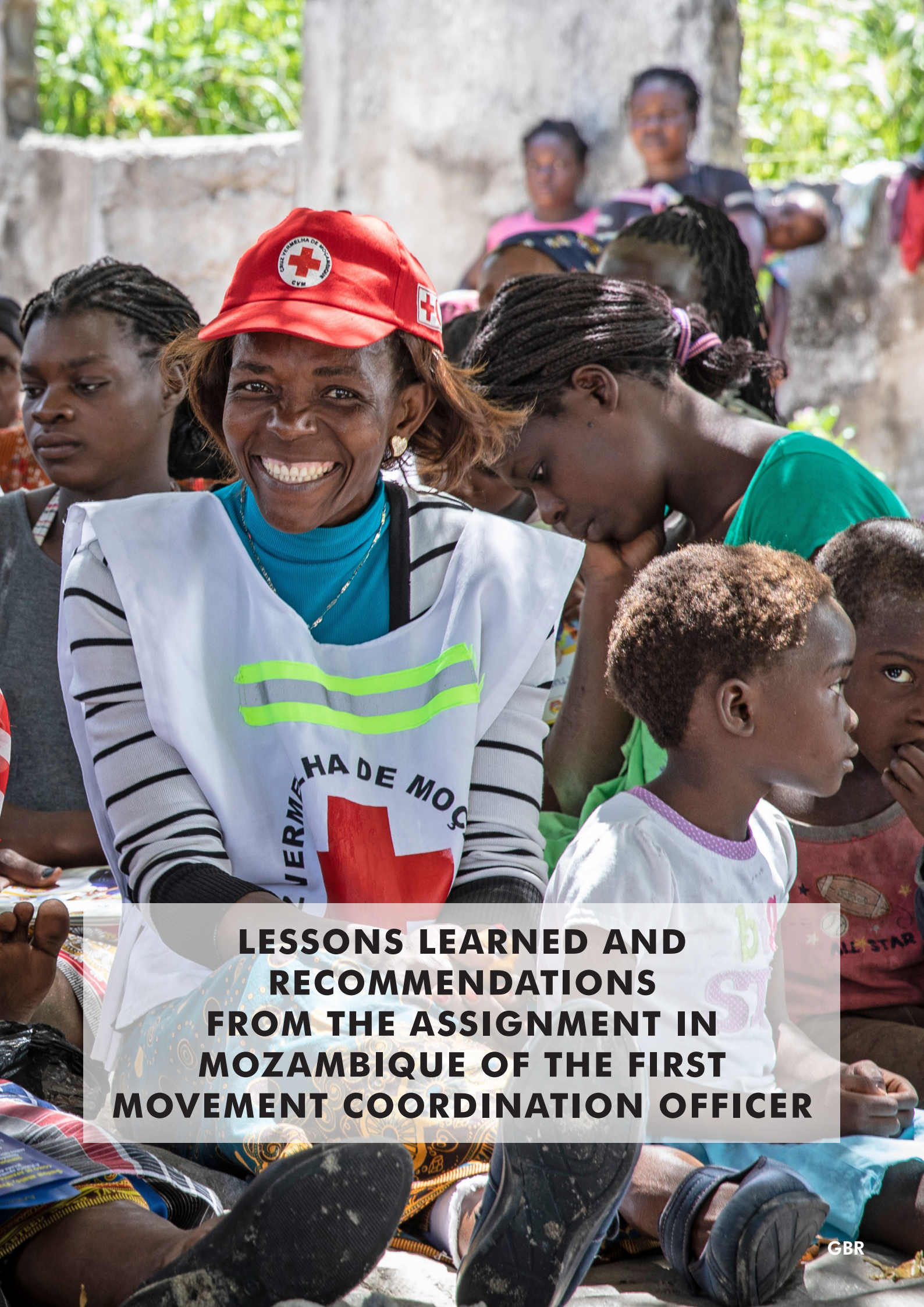




**LESSONS LEARNED AND
RECOMMENDATIONS
FROM THE ASSIGNMENT IN
MOZAMBIQUE OF THE FIRST
MOVEMENT COORDINATION OFFICER**

Photo coverpage: Stephen Ryan/IFRC

The views or information expressed in this guide do not necessarily reflect an official position of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Cruz Vermelha de Moçambique (CVM) and the Swedish Red Cross (SRC).

Table of contents

Executive summary	4
Overview of lessons learned and recommendations	5
1. Introduction	3
1.1 Background and rationale	5
1.2 Piloting the MCO role in Mozambique	6
2. Objectives and expected output	7
3. Results and findings	8
3.1 Lessons learned in detail	8
3.2 Recommendations in detail	13
4. MCO success, competencies and qualities	20
4.1 What success looks like when an MCO is assigned to an operation	20
4.2 MCO key competencies and qualities	20
5. Conclusion	21
Annex 1: List of abbreviations	22
Annex 2: List of interviewees	23
Annex 3: Questionnaire for interviews	24
Annex 4: List of materials used for desktop study	26

Executive summary

Lessons learned from large-scale emergency operations involving different components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (Movement)¹ confirm the importance of sound coordination to ensure that complex emergency operations are successful.

Complex emergency operations may involve the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and National Societies – and a central coordination role working across these partners is critical.

The Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) initiative and the Movement Coordination Officer (MCO) role form part of this coordination effort and have been specifically developed to support Movement coordination in emergency operations.

This case study has examined the piloting of the MCO role, which saw an MCO posted to the emergency response operations for Cyclone Idai and Cyclone Kenneth in Mozambique between March and June 2019. The evaluation method consisted of semi-structured interviews with Movement staff assigned to the operation who interacted and worked with the MCO, together with a desktop study of operational documents and information related to the SMCC initiative.

The conclusion of the case study is that the MCO contributed to building an environment that was conducive to the efficient and timely coordination of the Movement's activities, operations and strategies. The MCO played a critical role in supporting an effective Movement approach by avoiding duplication of effort, and by strengthening synergies and complementarity among Movement components. This case study has identified five lessons learned and recommendations from this first MCO assignment.

Overview of lessons learned and recommendations

Lessons learned	Recommendation
1. Establishing a coordination mechanism at strategic level was instrumental in ensuring the Mozambique Red Cross remained central when defining and implementing the response.	1. Establish a link between the strategic and operational levels as a priority.
2. Creating a Movement perspective proved crucial in ensuring the operational response was coherent and complementary.	2. Promote and institutionalize the role of the MCO, and establish a pool of MCO delegates so that an MCO can be promptly assigned to an operation.
3. The sharing of regular updates, particularly at strategic level, between the Mozambique Red Cross, the IFRC and the ICRC enabled smooth information-sharing and collective decision-making.	3. Institutionalize information management at Movement level.
4. The MCO's neutrality was important when addressing interorganizational challenges and resolving problems effectively.	4. Emphasize the MCO's facilitation role given that the MCO should not replace management in coordinating the emergency response.
5. The centrality of the MCO role was enhanced by successful cooperation with other core roles, such as the National Society Development in Emergencies (NSDiE) officer.	5. Update, operationalize and share the SMCC toolkit.

¹ The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is a global humanitarian network of 80 million people that helps those facing disaster, conflict, and health and social problems. The Movement comprises the ICRC, the IFRC and 192 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and rationale

Coordination among Movement components has always been a priority, but it has also presented challenges and requires development. Good coordination and cooperation is essential if we are to fulfil the Movement's roles as effectively and efficiently as possible. The preamble of the Seville Agreement² (1997) describes the aim of Movement coordination as follows:

“To respond with speed, flexibility and creativity to the needs of all those calling for impartial humanitarian protection and assistance, the components must join their forces and capitalize on their diversity.”

SMCC and the MCO role

First launched at the 2013 Council of Delegates,³ the SMCC initiative is the result of a Movement-wide assessment of the coordination challenges experienced in the field. The aim of the SMCC initiative is to improve the way Movement partners work together and to enhance coordination and cooperation, especially when responding to large-scale emergencies.

The first SMCC Plan of Action was presented at the 2015 Council of Delegates and it requested the Movement “to conceptualize and test the deployment of Movement Coordination Officers (MCOs)”. The purpose of the position, as described in the SMCC Plan of Action, “is to serve the common interests of the Movement in large-scale emergencies [...] providing support in helping to build an environment that is conducive to efficient and timely coordination of the Movement's activities”.

The emergency response and subsequent operation

Cyclone Idai made landfall on 14 March 2019, affecting 1.5 million people in the central provinces of Mozambique. It caused the worst humanitarian crisis in Mozambique's recent history. On 25 April 2019, a second powerful cyclone, Cyclone Kenneth, hit Cabo Delgado in northern Mozambique. The response was complex as the areas affected by Cyclone Kenneth were also affected by armed violence. These cyclones were some of the most powerful to have ever hit the African continent and affected around 1.7 million people.⁴

2 The Seville Agreement is the short name for the *Agreement on the Organization of the International Activities of the Components of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement*, which was adopted at the 1997 Council of Delegates in Seville. It provides a framework for effective cooperation and partnership between members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The full agreement is available at the following link: https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2017/07/Seville-Agreement_EN.pdf, accessed 30 January 2020.

3 The Council of Delegates resolutions, progress reports and SMCC Plan of Action are available in the SMCC toolkit at the following link: <https://smcctoolkit.org/background/>, accessed 30 January 2020.

4 IFRC, *Real-Time Evaluation Mozambique: Tropical Cyclones Idai and Kenneth* (2019).



Photo: Denis Onyoti/Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre.

Movement coordination linked to the operation

The Mozambique Red Cross, with the support of Movement partners, was active in responding to both disasters. A mini-summit meeting was held on 16 April 2019 between the Mozambique Red Cross, the ICRC and the IFRC. A joint statement was prepared before the Movement Coordination Framework and coordination mechanisms were established for the response.

On 6 May 2019, in the aftermath of Cyclone Kenneth, the IFRC issued a revised emergency appeal seeking a total of 32 million Swiss francs to reach 172,500 people over 24 months. The same day, a Movement coordination platform meeting was held at the headquarters of the Mozambique Red Cross in Maputo to discuss the Movement's response in Cabo Delgado and to agree on the structure and modus operandi for the response. In line with the SMCC initiative, the Mozambique Red Cross, the ICRC and the IFRC agreed on the importance of a coordinated and coherent joint response that followed the principles of “one response, one team, one plan”, which included the ICRC extending its security support to the IFRC. In parallel, early in the emergency response, the IFRC decided to re-open a country office in Mozambique – a clear sign of strong commitment to improving coordination.

1.2 Piloting the MCO role in Mozambique

The new role was trialled with a pilot assignment for an MCO to the Mozambique operation from 29 March to 14 June 2019. The MCO had a triple operational reporting line to the secretary-general of the Mozambique Red Cross, the head of the IFRC's country cluster office for southern Africa and the head of the ICRC's office in Mozambique.

2. Objectives and expected output

At the Fourth Africa Disaster Management Advisory Group (ADMAG) meeting, the ICRC, the IFRC and the Swedish Red Cross confirmed how important it is to support the operationalization of the SMCC initiative in Africa. This was done by focusing on the lessons learned from the SMCC initiative during the response to Cyclones Idai and Kenneth in Mozambique.

This case study aims to look more closely at what was learned from the MCO pilot assignment. The Swedish Red Cross – with input from the Mozambique Red Cross, the ICRC and the IFRC – has captured the main lessons learned and good practice in this case study. The work has focused on the MCO's role and the coordination support it provided among Movement partners involved in the response. Specific objectives aimed at contributing to improved coordination in future large-scale responses and well-prepared and trained delegates are to:

- highlight the experiences from the first MCO assignment
- describe the main lessons learned and recommendations
- share the lessons learned with the wider Movement.

While recognizing the importance of external coordination for an effective response, the latter is outside of the scope of this study.

Methodology

The case study builds on primary data (semi-structured interviews) and secondary data. The list of related documents can be found in the annexes of this case study. In total, 21 semi-structured Skype interviews were carried out with staff who had been involved in the operation, members of the Mozambique Red Cross, the IFRC, the ICRC and other Movement partners. Of the interviewees, there were six women and 15 men. A list of interviewees and their roles is available in Annex 2.

The case study assessed the interviewees' perspectives on the support and assistance provided by the MCO. A set of guiding questions were sent out before the interviews took place (Annex 3). This case study has also been informed by feedback and input received at an SMCC 2.0 consultative conference call held with National Societies in September 2019.

3. Results and findings

The Council of Delegates, through the first SMCC Plan of Action (2015–2017), “requested the Movement to conceptualize and test the deployment of the MCOs... to serve the common interests of the Movement in large-scale emergencies... helping to build an environment that is conducive to efficient and timely coordination of the Movement’s activities”. This case study captures the lessons learned and recommendations from the first MCO assignment to the Mozambique response operation in March 2019.

3.1 Lessons learned in detail



The MCO promotes both the mindset and the practical manifestation of SMCC.”

Robert Kaufman, IFRC Deputy Regional Director, Africa

1. Establishing a coordination mechanism at strategic level was instrumental in ensuring the Mozambique Red Cross remained central when defining and implementing the response.

The MCO helped establish a coordination structure in Maputo with the Mozambique Red Cross at its heart, and she actively worked to strengthen the National Society’s capacity. The MCO worked to produce a draft tripartite Movement Coordination Agreement, and she ensured all Movement components were included in the process to organize coordination and partnership meetings, when necessary.



The MCO facilitated a Movement response in Mozambique. Thanks to the efforts of all Red Cross Red Crescent members, the Mozambique Red Cross’s flag is now flying high.”

*Júlio Armando Mondlane, Regional Operations Coordinator,
Mozambique Red Cross*

Thematic meetings provided an operational forum for discussions among Movement components. The MCO played a central role in helping Movement components understand the benefits of good coordination, and the importance of focusing the response on the needs of the affected people, while avoiding leaving the National Society behind.



The MCO role was critical. Before she left, we had the opportunity to discuss with her and understand our capacity limitations. In Mozambique, there are few people [Staff members], but they are dealing with so many things at the same time. The MCO was a key enabler of the Mozambique Red Cross’s effort to continue its journey along the “coordination road”.”

*Júlio Armando Mondlane, Regional Operations Coordinator,
Mozambique Red Cross*



Photo: Matheus Bizarria/IFRC

Moreover, the review process highlighted the MCO's efforts to facilitate a decision-making process in Maputo that represented the operational reality in Beira as much as possible. For example, while being based in Maputo, the MCO made two visits to the field and was in regular contact with the field operations teams to ensure she had a good understanding of the operational reality. The MCO was able to identify and consult staff members with extensive experience of the context, while efficiently using the coordination tools that were already in place.

“It [having a MCO] allowed us to agree on main strategy bottom lines and take big live decisions. Whatever was agreed in Maputo was followed by a commitment, and we remained consistent to it.”

Felipe Donoso, Head of Mission, ICRC

2. Creating a Movement perspective proved crucial in ensuring the operational response was coherent and complementary.

The MCO had a close working relationship with the leaders of the Mozambique Red Cross, the ICRC and the IFRC, as well as with participating National Societies, often assuming an advisory role. She also worked with technical experts to improve the complementarity of the response. The MCO devoted time and effort to understand the big picture of the Mozambique response and to consolidate divergent information from different Movement partners.



Existing duplication was quickly addressed once the MCO arrived.”

*Suzana Harfield, Team Leader, Operational Movement
Coordination, IFRC*

Interviewees said having an MCO in post was crucial in order to adopt a Movement perspective during the response, which increased the operation’s effectiveness and avoided any duplication of effort. Interviewees stressed the fact that other staff members involved in the response would not have had the time to coordinate effectively with Movement partners. Movement coordination is a full-time job, particularly at the beginning of an operation, and it is essential for an MCO to be posted consistently to large-scale operations.

Lastly, and importantly, the review findings show that the MCO contributed to a change in mindset, with all partners displaying a greater openness towards coordination. The MCO’s assignment to Mozambique demonstrated the importance of the right attitude, which is perhaps even more important than the perfect plan of action.

During the feedback process, interviewees emphasized the importance of the mini-summit meeting, the regular Movement coordination platform meetings, the Movement Coordination Framework and the release of joint statements.⁵ All of these helped to present a unified image of the Movement and demonstrated the maxim of “one Movement, one response”. This is particularly relevant considering a more comprehensible, coherent and predictable view of the Movement may result in increased funding.⁶

By way of example, the completion of the Movement-wide report⁷ also creates a positive image of the Movement, by providing the consolidated figures of people reached within the first three months of the response. Although far from perfect, the Movement-wide report for Mozambique should be considered an important success. It demonstrated the Movement’s impact in responding to the disaster and it is suggested as an important blueprint for future operations.

5 Examples of Movement Coordination Frameworks and joint statements are available in the SMCC toolkit at the following link: <https://smcctoolkit.org/tool-kit/>, accessed 30 January 2020.

6 SMCC Progress Report presented to the 2019 Council of Delegates.

7 Movement-wide reports are also called “Movement Pictures”. Examples can be found in the SMCC toolkit at the following link: <https://smcctoolkit.org/tool-kit/>, accessed 30 January 2020.

3. The sharing of regular updates, particularly at strategic level, between the Mozambique Red Cross, the IFRC and the ICRC enabled smooth information-sharing and collective decision-making.

The MCO fostered collective decision-making and ensured the ICRC, the IFRC and the Mozambique Red Cross regularly shared information. She also addressed unilateral initiatives undertaken by some participating National Societies. Interviewees considered the presence of a neutral MCO facilitator to be valuable because she was able to ensure Movement partners adhered to the coordination processes.

The review findings show how the complementarity of Movement partners can lead to an optimal response operation, and help to link the emergency operation with long-term planning. In order to take advantage of the value of all Movement partners, it is therefore essential for the MCO to have a clear understanding of the specific features, capacities, strengths and weaknesses of all Movement partners involved in a response.

“Trust and willingness allowed coordination to be as smooth as it could have been.”

ICRC staff member

“I have 27 years’ experience working in the field and 16 years as head of delegation. This was my third operation in a complex emergency with an ICRC RDU and multidisciplinary ERUs in a Movement operation led by the IFRC. This was different from my other experiences; a very positive point as the coordination mechanisms that were agreed with the MCO forced us, in a good way, into a process of discipline for a continuous information-sharing at management level in Maputo.”

Felipe Donoso, Head of Mission, ICRC

“We are one family, where each component has its own competencies for the global aim.”

*Júlio Armando Mondlane, Regional Operations Coordinator,
Mozambique Red Cross*

4. The MCO's neutrality was important when addressing interorganizational challenges and resolving problems effectively.



The value of her position was her success in solving interorganizational challenges.”

ICRC staff member

The MCO was fully committed to tackling operational problems. For example, at the beginning of the Mozambique emergency response, the *Volunteering in emergencies*⁸ guidelines were not clear about the per diem payment for food for full-time Mozambique Red Cross volunteers. Movement partners were providing volunteers with different amounts. This is not an issue to be addressed in the middle of an emergency, and partners needed to agree and align their approach quickly. The MCO helped solve the problem by involving the National Society, and sharing the agreed solution with the other partners.

Overall, the MCO was helpful in establishing a better understanding of partners' “negotiable” and “less-negotiable” priorities and constraints during the Mozambique operation, and she eliminated potential misunderstandings about geographical responsibilities. Even when discussions had been tense, reaching a consensus was still possible. Furthermore, the MCO succeeded in ensuring that Movement partners placed their trust in her role. This is particularly notable considering that trust can not only influence the interactions between Movement components, but also the overall performance of the emergency response.



Everyone could turn to her to share information and complaints in confidentiality.”

Florent Delpinto, Head of Emergency Operations, IFRC

Most interviewees highlighted the importance of establishing and maintaining the triple operational reporting line⁹ to the Mozambique Red Cross, the ICRC and the IFRC, which assured the MCO's neutrality. It is important for an MCO to remain neutral and impartial, and to be perceived as such. It is important to note that one interviewee believed that a reporting line to the Mozambique Red Cross would be the most neutral approach, as the National Society's interests should be at the centre of the response operation.

8 *Volunteering in emergencies: Practical guidelines for Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies managing volunteers in emergency situations*, IFRC, 2012.

9 The MCO had a triple operational reporting line to the Mozambique Red Cross, the ICRC and the IFRC, but it should be noted that the MCO had a single administrative reporting line to the IFRC.

5. The centrality of the MCO role was enhanced by successful cooperation with other core roles, such as the National Society Development in Emergencies (NSDiE) officer.

The MCO worked closely with the NSDiE officer. The NSDiE officer was posted to the Mozambique response for the first time and coordinated the National Society development support provided to the Mozambique Red Cross by the IFRC and pNSs.

When asked about the interconnections between this role and the MCO role, the NSDiE officer highlighted that “development and coordination are at the core of National Society leadership. Therefore, the NSDiE officer and the MCO represent essential and complementary positions in large-scale emergencies and assigning only one of these positions to an operation means one has to take over the other’s tasks.” It is, however, important to note that while the MCO role operates at Movement level, the NSDiE officer role is limited to the IFRC and pNSs. As the NSDiE officer highlighted, it is important for Movement partners to understand these roles in order to avoid duplication of effort and to better support the National Society.¹⁰

A final lesson that can be learned from the Mozambique response is the completion of a level-three security agreement between the ICRC and the IFRC for the response to Cyclone Kenneth in Cabo Delgado. It was decided that the ICRC’s security management systems would be extended to other Movement partners and it is recommended that this decision be considered in future operations.¹¹

3.2 Recommendations in detail

The main recommendation is the need to raise awareness and share information about the SMCC toolkit and the MCO role in general, with a focus on improving clarity about the MCO’s responsibilities.

1. Establish a link between the strategic and operational levels as a priority.

Physical distance between the strategic- and operational-level offices, situated in Maputo and Beira respectively, limited the ability to coordinate and share information. For example, the MCO was unaware of some technical dashboards in Beira, which were not shared or available in Maputo. Another challenge was the fact that the Mozambique Red Cross lacked technical staff and could not match the resources of other Movement partners. There was also some variation between the decision-making structures at the ICRC and the IFRC, which hindered coordination. In addition, there were delays in approving the Movement Coordination Agreement. Stronger links in the Movement Coordination Framework and stronger mechanisms between the strategic and operational levels would have helped alleviate these problems.

¹⁰ The MCO terms of reference and deployment parameters are available in the SMCC toolkit at the following link: <https://smcctoolkit.org/tool-kit/>, accessed 30 January 2020.

¹¹ SMCC Progress Report presented to the 2019 Council of Delegates.



Photo: Corrie Butler/IFRC

An open question is whether assigning more MCOs to the operation would have benefited the response. On this point, the interviewees' views differed. One-third of interviewees argued that the presence of an additional MCO in Beira would have been beneficial in improving strategic–operational links. They believe that the MCO's participation in technical committees and in facilitating forum discussions would have allowed strategies to be better aligned.

On the other hand, most interviewees preferred to see an improvement in existing communication mechanisms rather than more staff being engaged in order to ensure a sustainable response. They believe the MCO role to be more suitable at the strategic level without getting deeply involved in operational details where the leaders of each Movement partner need to activate internal coordination mechanisms. However, this does not exclude the need to find ways to better coordinate among the two levels, such as through a database to connect operational meeting feedback to the preparation of action points.

Secondary recommendations

- Improve existing communication mechanisms.
- Create a database to connect operational meeting feedback to the preparation of action points.

2. Promote and institutionalize the role of the MCO, and establish a pool of delegates so that an MCO can be promptly assigned to an operation.

The first phase of the Mozambique response marked a series of communication challenges related to the MCO's assignment. For instance, one interviewee was not aware that the MCO was present. In addition, interviewees remembered some confusion regarding which organization the MCO was to be administratively assigned to, for an email account and desk space. Interviewees emphasized it was important to be open about the reasoning behind these administrative decisions, which can influence the perception of the MCO's neutrality. One of the interviewees proposed that, in future, MCOs should make initial contact with Movement partners involved in the operation, by sending an email introducing their role and explaining the rationale behind any administrative decisions.

It was also felt important that a pool of delegates should be established to ensure that the MCO being assigned is the most appropriate person for the context and that their assignment is timely. The Mozambique response would have greatly benefited from an MCO with knowledge of Portuguese.

“*The Mozambique Red Cross is at 70 per cent at the moment. For the last 30 per cent, it needs to continue to develop its capacities, train personnel and take ownership. If someone comes to help us, he or she needs to know our structures and processes.*”

*Joaquim Salvador Cuna, Provincial Health Coordinator,
Mozambique Red Cross*

Joining the operation promptly is also important for the MCO role to work effectively. In the days immediately after the cyclone, many Movement partners were operational and already working in different directions, but it took two weeks for the MCO to arrive in Mozambique. This delay made it more difficult for the MCO to assume her role.

The MCO can play an important part in facilitating decision-making at the very beginning of an emergency operation, implementing Movement mechanisms such as the One International Appeal (OIA). The earlier in the operation that the MCO can be posted and the National Society supported, the more effective the operation will be. A degree of risk-taking is necessary; it is far preferable to send an MCO and then recall the delegate if the position is not needed, rather than delay the decision to send an MCO. Finally, the MCO role should be further clarified and operationalized by setting specific benchmarks and indicators.

Secondary recommendations

- MCOs should make initial contact with Movement partners involved in the response operation by sending an email introducing themselves and their role, and explaining the rationale behind any administrative decisions.
- Establish a pool of delegates to ensure that the MCO being assigned is the most appropriate person for the context and that their assignment is timely.
- Ideally, send an MCO with knowledge of the local language.
- A degree of risk-taking is necessary; it is far preferable to post an MCO and then recall the delegate if the MCO position is not needed, rather than delay the decision.
- Further clarify and operationalize the MCO role by setting specific benchmarks and indicators.

3. Institutionalize information management at Movement level.

There was no IFRC delegation in the country at the time the cyclone hit, so it was particularly important to share information among Movement partners in order to understand the potential challenges in coordinating the response.

“

ICRC field teams had a lot of information and knowledge available before the cyclone and immediately afterwards, but found it challenging to connect with field personnel due to ICT issues. Furthermore, we did not invest enough in a good and rapid capacity to centralize our own information, to synthesize regular information and report quickly, both internally and with Movement partners. The IFRC's teams and leadership, on their side, arrived with somewhat pre-cooked solutions rather than being more open to the realities on the ground. Here, I feel we failed on both sides in terms of communicating and coordinating swiftly from the beginning. This was significantly improved with the MCO's constructive and facilitative role to support the leadership of the Mozambique Red Cross, the ICRC and the IFRC in Maputo to put in place the necessary ad hoc platforms and mechanisms for information-sharing and coordination.”

Felipe Donoso, Head of Mission, ICRC

Partners' information differed significantly and this presented a data-collection challenge at field level and made it difficult to produce a Movement-wide overview of the response.

“*The MCO role is critical in connecting the different partners involved in the operation through regular information-sharing and meetings. In Mozambique, I felt complementarity among Movement partners could have been enhanced at the operational level. For example, meeting invitations were usually late and did not allow us to adequately prepare.*”
*Boavida Chambal, Head of Disaster Management,
Mozambique Red Cross*

One interviewee felt that information-sharing could have been improved with better processes to capture meeting minutes and lessons learned, and with more realistic and systematic timescales for contributing to shared documents. For example, Movement partners were only included in the process to produce operations updates towards the end of the process, which limited the time allowed for their input. Establishing pre-agreed timescales at the beginning of the operation would possibly allow partners to contribute more meaningfully, allowing them to align their own planning with the Movement-wide timescales.

An interesting initiative is the development of guiding principles, a protocol and templates to provide a standardized view of the Movement-wide response – the “Movement Picture”. The idea is to provide an overview of the Movement’s response to an emergency at a particular time.

Secondary recommendations

- Improve mechanisms to capture meeting minutes and lessons learned.
- Systematize communication timescales, such as pre-agreeing a time frame for sharing updates and reports.
- Increase investments in Movement-wide initiatives, such as the “Movement Picture”.

4. Emphasize the MCO’s facilitation role given that the MCO should not replace management in coordinating the emergency response.

It is important to clarify that the MCO’s role is not to substitute management in coordinating the emergency response. During the emergency response in Mozambique, the new National Society leadership was under significant pressure, and this compromised their ability to assimilate the different approaches to the operational response. The Mozambique Red Cross itself, and other Movement partners, described the National Society’s state of preparedness to lead the response as low. The Mozambique operation highlights how beneficial the MCO’s facilitation role is when a National Society is in a reduced state of preparedness. The MCO can strengthen the coordination capacities of the National Society and all Movement partners, but not coordinate on their behalf.

Once coordination agreements and information-sharing mechanisms are mainstreamed in the operation, the MCO's facilitation role is no longer needed and coordination should be provided collectively by Movement partners. This is why the National Society should not only be informed and involved in the operational decision-making, but it must be at the heart of it. However, an important assumption is that all Movement components are suitably staffed.

“

The overall process should be bottom-up, not the other way around. Delegates should take time to be with the National Society and see the problems they have. It is important to involve people from all levels.”

*Joaquim Salvador Cuna, Provincial Health Coordinator,
Mozambique Red Cross*

The question of a proper handover and debrief when the MCO leaves the operation prompted differing and interesting views among the interviewees, which is a clear sign that further discussion is needed on this subject. One interviewee commented that a staff member from National Society headquarters could have been identified early on to coordinate with Movement partners. Another interviewee proposed a rotating MCO, with someone from the Movement's partners appointed to lead the coordination each month.

Secondary recommendations

- The National Society should be a central part of decision-making during the response.
- Clarify the MCO's role and responsibilities, and discuss further the MCO's handover.

5. Update, operationalize and share the SMCC toolkit.

The SMCC toolkit¹² is the main tool for MCOs. It has great potential, but little practical application at the moment as it suffered technical problems during the MCO's assignment. The toolkit could not be updated for several months and could not be shared. Practical templates, as well as experiences from other operations, need to be included in the toolkit. According to one interviewee, the toolkit should include both successful and less successful cases of coordination. It is crucial to be open and honest about lessons learned in order to improve future MCO assignments. However, in order to maintain its relevance in emergency operations, the toolkit should not be overloaded with too many documents.

Existing preparedness mechanisms and processes should be improved. These can range from pre-disaster information-sharing on SMCC processes to information or training on Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) approaches and National Society development plans. Movement partners consider the formalization

12 The SMCC toolkit can be found at the following link: <https://smcctoolkit.org/>, accessed 30 January 2020.



Photo: Corrie Butler/IFRC

of Movement coordination procedures (such as joint statements, agreements and frameworks) as important areas for improvement in order to increase the efficiency of response operations.¹³

Finally, the MCO should be familiar with the main coordination documents, and the different approaches taken by Movement components. Time is critical at the beginning of an emergency operation and any MCO should be fully prepared before their assignment.

Secondary recommendations

- Include practical standard templates and experiences from other operations in the toolkit.
- Do not overload the toolkit with too many documents so that it remains relevant during emergency operations.
- Improve existing preparedness mechanisms.
- Formalize Movement coordination procedures (such as joint statements, agreements and frameworks).
- The MCO should already be familiar with the main coordination documents, as well as with the different approaches of the Movement components.

¹³ IFRC, Real-Time Evaluation Mozambique: Tropical Cyclones Idai and Kenneth (2019).

4. MCO success, competencies and qualities

In order to inform future MCO assignments, interviewees were asked to explain what success looks like when an MCO is assigned to an operation. They were also asked to list the key competencies and qualities of an MCO.

4.1 What success looks like when an MCO is assigned to an operation

- The disaster-affected population receives aid in the most efficient and coordinated way possible.
- There is proper use of Movement resources to enhance complementarity and avoid duplication.
- The National Society is at the heart of the operation.
- All Movement activities are considered in one coherent plan that the National Society has approved and manages.
- Specific achievements can be measured as a result of coordination.
- The MCO is able to establish and maintain trust among Movement partners.
- The MCO leaves behind improved coordination in the country after the operation.

4.2 MCO key competencies and qualities

While MCO key competencies and qualities are specific to the context of the operation, a number of skills are considered necessary to carry out the role effectively, particularly given the type of issues that are common to large-scale emergencies:

- Strategic skills and the ability to develop an overview of the response
- Knowledge and understanding of Movement components
- Ability to work independently and proactively
- Facilitation and negotiation skills
- Cultural awareness
- Ability to build trust through integrity and confidentiality
- Ability to manage stress and tolerance for long working hours
- Combination of technical and soft skills
- Problem-solving skills
- Sound experience of complex emergencies and communications strategies
- Knowledge of the local language
- Flexibility.

5. Conclusion

The posting of an MCO to the Mozambique emergency response operation confirmed the importance of the MCO's role in conducting a successful and effective emergency response operation. The MCO's role contributed to creating a conducive environment that allowed for the timely and efficient coordination of the Movement's activities, operations and strategies. The MCO played a crucial role in supporting an effective Movement approach that avoided duplication of effort, while strengthening synergies and complementarity among Movement partners.

This case study summarizes the main review findings in five lessons learned and five recommendations. While most interviewees emphasized the importance for an MCO to have knowledge and experience of the Movement, the main recommendation was the need to improve awareness about the SMCC toolkit and the MCO's role, both of which could be achieved by mainstreaming the role and clarifying the MCO's roles and responsibilities.

“*If an international delegate is sent to Mozambique, the delegate should understand the Movement and the National Society's structure and processes in order to respect them. The Movement is beautiful, and this beauty needs to be adequately represented.*”

*Joaquim Salvador Cuna, Provincial Health Coordinator,
Mozambique Red Cross*

Annex 1: List of abbreviations

ADMAG	Africa Disaster Management Advisory Group
CoD	Council of Delegates
CVM	Cruz Vermelha de Moçambique / Mozambique Red Cross Society
HoD	Head of delegation
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICRC RDU	ICRC Rapid Deployment Unit
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IFRC ERU	IFRC Emergency Response Unit
MCO	Movement Coordination Officer
NSD	National Society Development
NSDiE	National Society Development in Emergencies
PER	Preparedness for Effective Response
PMER	Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
pNS	Participating National Society (a National Society operating internationally)
SMCC	Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation
SMCC PoA	SMCC Plan of Action
SRC	Swedish Red Cross
ToR	Terms of reference

Annex 2: List of interviewees

The case study focal points were instrumental in providing the list of interviewees below.

Name of interviewee	Movement partner	No. of people
Penny Elghady	Mozambique Red Cross / ICRC / IFRC	1
Júlio Armando Mondlane	Mozambique Red Cross	3
Boavida Chambal		
Joaquim Salvador Cuna		
Rabih Al Fakih	ICRC	5
Cynthia Brassard-Boudreau		
Felipe Donoso		
Nicolas Luyet		
Hicham Mandoudi		
Nicolas Stéphane Boyrie	IFRC	10
Nelson Castano		
Michael Charles		
Florent Delpinto		
Natalie Edblad		
Maraki Grunitzky		
Suzana Harfield		
Robert Kaufman		
Jamie Lesueur		
Bernd Schell		
Hanne Roden	German Red Cross	1
Wouter Rhebergen	Belgian Red Cross	1
Total		21

Annex 3: Questionnaire for interviews

The following list of questions was used as a guide for the case study interviews.

Questions about the MCO's role compared with key objectives

(Please do not use the draft generic MCO terms of reference.)

1. On a scale of 1 to 5 (see table below), how would you rate the following aspects during the MCO's assignment in Mozambique?
 - The Movement's coordination response to the large-scale emergency was transparent, effective and impartial.
 - The planning was inclusive.
 - Information-sharing was participatory.
 - Decision-making was appropriate.
 - Problem-solving was timely.

Scale	Rating	Definitions
5 Points	Excellent	Should ensure extremely effective performance
4 Points	Very Good	More than adequate for effective performance
3 Points	Good	Should be adequate for effective performance
2 Points	Weak	Insufficient for performance requirements
1 Point	Poor	Significantly below the criteria required for successful job performance

If possible, please give specific examples (positive or negative) to support your rating.

Could more have been done and, if so, what?

2. During the MCO's assignment in Mozambique, was it possible to ensure that coordination mechanisms and tools were in place at the strategic, operational and technical levels?

- Were they used in the most efficient manner, enabling the best possible and most coherent Movement response across the board?

If possible, please give specific examples (positive or negative).

Could more have been done and, if so, what?

3. During the MCO's assignment in Mozambique, was it possible to ensure all Movement components took part effectively in the coordination process?

If possible, please give specific examples (positive or negative).

Could more have been done and, if so, what?

4. During the MCO's assignment in Mozambique, was it possible to further develop the coordination skills of the Mozambique Red Cross?

If possible, please give specific examples (positive or negative).

Could more have been done and, if so, what?

5. According to the MCO assignment parameters, the MCO is accountable to the Strategic Movement Coordination. Who, in your view, should the MCO report to?
6. Linked to the objectives contained in the job description, can you describe examples of what you consider to be “what success looks like” when an MCO is assigned to an operation?
7. What competencies and qualities are the most important for an MCO to possess?
8. How did coordination benefit from the MCO’s presence?
9. How well did you perceive the MCO on a scale of 1 to 5 (please see table above)?
10. During the MCO’s assignment in Mozambique, was it possible to ensure a proper handover?
*If possible, please give specific examples (positive or negative).
Could more have been done and, if so, what?*
11. During the MCO’s assignment in Mozambique, was it possible to ensure smooth and efficient contact, communication, exchange of data and information between Movement components in relation to the common response?
*If possible, please give specific examples (positive or negative).
Could more have been done and, if so, what?*

Other coordination or SMCC-related questions

- What structures already exist that support cooperation and coordination?
- How functional were these structures in providing support to the Mozambique operation?
- What do you think of the SMCC toolkit?
- How can we ensure that the National Society is at the heart of coordination?
- How can we ensure that the National Society is provided with the tools and capacity to take this leading role?
- Are there situations where there are any justifications for a lack of coordination?
- How do we ensure that individual Movement components coordinate in line with the vision of the SMCC initiative?

Overall questions

- What worked well?
- What did not work well?
- What lessons can be learned for other operations?
- What are the main recommendations?

Annex 4: List of materials used for desktop study

1. Joint statement by the Mozambique Red Cross, the IFRC and the ICRC on the Movement response to humanitarian needs in Mozambique after Cyclone Idai (17 April 2019).
2. Joint statement by the Mozambique Red Cross, the IFRC and the ICRC on the Movement response to humanitarian needs in Mozambique after Cyclone Kenneth (24 May 2019).
3. Agreement for the joint response to Cyclone Kenneth in Cabo Delgado between the ICRC and the IFRC (2019).
4. Mozambique Cyclone Idai and Cyclone Kenneth Response, International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement Coordination Framework (12 June 2019).
5. IFRC, Real-Time Evaluation Mozambique: Tropical Cyclones Idai and Kenneth (2019).
6. MCO Terms of Reference and deployment parameters.
7. End of Mission Report, Penny Elghady, Movement Coordination Officer, Cyclone Idai and Cyclone Kenneth Response Mozambique (19 June 2019).
8. Terms of Reference ADMAG (as per August 2019): Response operation's EA, EPOA and Ops update.
9. SMCC newsletters.
10. SMCC Resolution adopted at the 2019 Council of Delegates.
11. SMCC Plan of Action 2015–2017.
12. Seville Agreement (1997) and its Supplementary Measures (2005).
13. SMCC Progress Report presented to the 2019 Council of Delegates.
14. Case study Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh: Effective and Efficient Humanitarian Response, Lynette Lowndes and Anna Dobai (2019).
15. IFRC, Mid-Term Review, DPRK Red Cross Cooperation Agreement Strategy (CAS), 2018.
16. IFRC, Case study 3: An intersection between conflict and disaster: Myanmar, 2015.
17. Investing in National Societies to Strengthen Local Action for a Global Response to Crisis, National Society Investment Alliance, 2017.
18. Assessment Cell: Mozambique Tropical Cyclone Idai. Lessons learned, recommendations and actions (October 2019).
19. Mozambique Movement-wide publication (July 2019).



Photo: Benjamin Suomela