

Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change in the Austrian Red Cross

Mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and climate change in the international work of the Austrian Red Cross

In 2007, the Austrian Red Cross (Aut RC) International Aid Division defined the cross-cutting topic disaster risk reduction and climate change as one priority for its international work. After an initial internal workshop on the humanitarian consequences of climate change supported by the RC/RC Climate Centre in The Hague, Aut RC started to bring forward disaster risk reduction (DRR) & climate change agendas, namely to mainstream these issues in current and future international programmes and projects in focus regions (Eastern Africa, Southern Africa, South Asia, South East Asia and Eastern Europe/Western Balkans) and to raise awareness about the humanitarian consequences of climate change. Aut RC Secretary-General Wolfgang Kopetzky:

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Climate change is one of the biggest challenges of the 21st century. With every step we take in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, the Austrian Red Cross reduces the vulnerability of communities to disasters worldwide.

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DRR in Pakistan, climate change awareness in Montenegro

Aut RC currently supports the Pakistan Red Crescent Society and the Montenegro Red Cross in implementing DRR & climate change projects. As partner of the Danish Red Cross in an integrated DRR/rural development project in Pakistan/Kashmir, Aut RC plans and implements environmental sustainable and safe

water schemes. In Montenegro, Aut RC supports the national Red Cross Society in conducting a workshop on the regional implications of climate change in South East Europe with regional Red Cross Societies and Montenegro government institutions in May 2009. The IFRC Zone Budapest and the RC/RC Climate Centre take part in this initiative.

Building partnerships

On national level, Aut RC together with the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences in Vienna and the Federal Ministry of the Interior initiated to build networks with NGOs, government institutions and the scientific sector to share experiences, transfer knowledge on climate change and interlink governmental, environmental, technical and humanitarian communities. This so called “Dialogue Forum on Climate impact” has now approx. 30 members and is planned to be the future ISDR platform for Austria (see the link in the newsletter text: “dialogforum klimafolgen”).

In November 2007, the Austrian Alliance for Climate Justice (Platform for the exchange of climate change issues) was founded by 12 NGOs from the environmental, humanitarian and development sector and the Aut RC in the forefront of the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen 2009. As initial activity, the Alliance for Climate Justice published a background paper on climate change from an environmental, humanitarian and development perspective (find the background document attached to newsletter no. of the RC/RC Climate Centre).



ÖSTERREICHISCHES ROTES KREUZ

Aus Liebe zum Menschen.