



Saudi Humanitarian Emergency Aid & Response Team (Saudi HEART)

PROGRAM FACTS

November 2015

Background

The Saudi Red Crescent Authority (SRCA) has placed special efforts in promotion of international humanitarian aid, according to the Council of Ministers' Article No. 213 dated on 07/11/1432 AH. To this end, SRCA has formulated a comprehensive strategy for its role as an international humanitarian body, based on its competitive advantage.

A study commissioned by the Authority was conducted in 2011 for an understanding of the current status of international humanitarian aid in the world, the most important organizations working in this field, the best international experiences as well as an analysis of efforts made by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in general and the Saudi Red Crescent Authority in particular, during the past ten years in the field of international aid. This also includes strategic recommendations on the future role of SRCA in the provision of international humanitarian assistance as well as key areas to be addressed in the short- and long-term.

It is the recommendation of the strategy that SRCA's role should be to provide immediate humanitarian aid to the affected people in disasters and international crises, with a focus – in the short-term – on public health and medical relief, emergencies and related hospitals, field operations, and logistics, in accordance with internationally recognized criteria.

In this context, His Royal Highness, the President of SRCA, has made the decision to establish a specialized and highly qualified team to provide aid and assistance to victims of disasters and crises, and implement of a specialized training program to prepare the team.

Strategic partner

Asian Disaster Preparedness Center serves as strategic partner to the Saudi HEART program. Established in 1986, ADPC supports the advancement of safe communities and sustainable development, through implementing programs that reduce the impact of disasters upon countries. ADPC conducts training programs on Disaster Management, Emergency Public Health, Early Warning Systems, Nutrition in Emergencies and other components included in disaster preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery. ADPC's well-established networks with government line agencies and strong partnerships with regional organizations and development agencies provide the foundation for its work.



Vision:
'We Strive to Save Lives'

Saudi HEART enhances the capacity and impact of the Saudi Red Crescent Authority's humanitarian services nationally and internationally, reduces suffering in disaster-affected communities, and contributes to the future recovery of the most vulnerable populations affected by emergencies and disasters.



Mission and strategic goals

Saudi HEART serves as an international model in qualification and empowerment to provide humanitarian aid to victims of natural disasters and humanitarian crises, without discrimination. The team operates along the best standards and follows international performance criteria.

The team is passionate about its mission, inspired by the responsibility of its national identity, enlightened by the highest human values and committed to the principles of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent societies. The team guards its members and is committed to protecting and always maintaining a helpful and supportive role in this area. The team is thoroughly equipped to meet the call of duty at any time around the world.

Capacity-building initiatives

- Saudi HEART team members trained through comprehensive program, which includes 22– 24 courses on emergency response, provided over six months.
- Training conducted in three batches. Two batches were completed by June 2015 with 56 persons graduating.
- An elite group of industry experts, from ADPC and partners, serve as resource persons and train the team on all types of emergency response to disaster and humanitarian crisis. A specialized team from ADPC oversees the overall course management.
- Participants are provided with the opportunity to attend regional and international courses, managed by ADPC and other renowned training institutions.
- Saudi HEART graduates have attended courses on Nutrition in Emergencies, Public Health in Complex Emergencies, Flood Disaster Management, Geographic Information Systems, Logistics and Supply Chain Management, Leadership and People Management, Inter-Cultural Communication, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) as additional capacity-building.
- On-the-job training, mentoring services and study visits are provided to graduates of the program. In September 2015, Saudi HEART graduates visited Nepal to observe the post-recovery efforts after the devastating earthquake that took place in April 2015.
- Operational guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures for each sector that the team operates in are integrated into the capacity-building activities.
- Training specialists provide materials and technical support to equip the team.
- Capacity building is focused on the sectors that the Saudi HEART team will operate in, including assessment, basic public health, WASH, information technology and communications, logistics and supply chain management.
- The capacity building includes full-scale simulation exercises to practice the skills learned through the program. In May 2015, graduates from batches one and two participated in a simulation exercise held in a desert location 100 kilometers outside of Riyadh. The simulation covered topics including WASH, shelter, basic health care, evacuation, and canine search and rescue. ADPC managed the simulation with support from the Swiss Disaster Dog Association and air ambulance helicopters from Saudi Red Crescent Authority.



Program partners

Asian Disaster Preparedness Center uses its in-house capacity and draws on its wide network of consultants and affiliated experts to support the Saudi Red Crescent Authority in the capacity building of the Saudi HEART team. ADPC brings together resource persons with solid understanding and practical experience within the sectors covered by Saudi HEART, including logistics management, disaster management, humanitarian incident command systems, and communication and coordination systems.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross are key partners to Saudi HEART. Both organizations are actively engaged in the development and delivery of key courses in the program.

Specialized organizations of the United Nations such as the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the World Food Program are also involved in the facilitation of the capacity-building activities. Additionally, ADPC is proud to network and link with other organizations and agencies such as King Saud University, Oxfam and a number of National Societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent around the world as part of the program.



For more information

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