Annual Review 2019









# **Contents**

Contents	Page
Welcome	6
Who we are	10
The year in numbers	12
Ready to respond – UK crises	18
The power to save lives	20
Support between home and hospital	24
In search of safety	30
Ready to respond – international crises	34
Our priorities	38
Finance overview	40
Thank you	42
Get involved	44

# **Welcome**Mike Adamson

Side by side with our supporters and partners, we've been caring for people in crisis since 1870. I'm so proud that together, we've now been a lifeline for individuals and communities in need for 150 years. Today, as we face the coronavirus pandemic, that lifeline is more important than ever.

Countless moments of human kindness from people in the UK span two World Wars and many crises since, weaving a tapestry of care through time. From stitching bandages and lending books to hospital patients, to reuniting loved ones parted by war; our history is rich with examples of what kindness can achieve.

The scale and complexity of unmet need – both in the UK and internationally – was growing even before the outbreak this year of the coronavirus pandemic. People who were vulnerable before the pandemic are now facing an even more challenging reality – and future.

Right now, as you stand shoulder to shoulder with them, our teams are supporting those on the front line in the fight against the virus. Around the world, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is working to support coronavirus testing, transport those who are sick and run

health clinics. By July 2020, we had helped with over 180,000 acts of kindness in the UK, from delivering vital food and medicine, to getting people home from hospital safely, to carrying out welfare checks and giving emotional support to people who have no one else.

If we are to support the most vulnerable people through this crisis, then we must keep evolving, focussing where need is most pressing and where we are uniquely placed to have an impact.

Our evolution continues in 2020 with the publication of our new ten year strategy. We'll focus our work on three urgent humanitarian issues: disasters and emergencies, health inequalities in the UK, and displacement and migration. This strategy is a renewed commitment to do our very best for those who need us.



Being ready for the challenges ahead means focussing our resources where they can help most. That can mean difficult choices, such as the decision we took last year to close our event first aid service. Despite the outstanding skill, care and commitment of our staff and volunteers, the cost of continuing this service meant diverting vital funds from our emergency support work, so we took the difficult decision to step back from this area of our work, where we know other charities can step in.

Our role has always been to support those most in need in times of crisis. But we know we can't respond effectively to the complex crises of our time by working alone. We see first-hand through our work that communities connected by kindness are stronger. So too is our sector stronger when we all work together.

Collaboration has never been more vital. We need to share purpose and resources to keep supporting people in their moments of need, around the world and here in the UK.

When I visited Fishlake in Yorkshire in November, I met people whose lives had been devastated by floods. The outpouring of kindness from the surrounding community was incredible; people donated everything they could, and we were inundated with supplies, from clothes and toiletries to mops and buckets.

Each person I met, while affected by the same emergency, had particular, personal needs. Such as George, who desperately wanted to return home to collect his wife's diabetes medication after being evacuated in the middle of the night.

In 2019, the establishment of a new Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership (VCSEP) marked a significant moment in tackling exactly this challenge. The coming together of 15 charitable organisations, to ensure a coordinated and human-focussed approach to emergencies, is designed to help us work better together in a crisis to quickly meet the individual needs of people like George.

The unprecedented health crisis we have since come face-to-face with, in the form of this pandemic, is just the type of challenge the partnership was designed to meet. I could not be more proud to be involved as Chair of the VCSEP during this critical time.

We are also focussed on strengthening the connections within our own organisation and building an ever-better environment for our people to thrive.

We continue to build towards our vision of a British Red Cross where diverse staff, volunteers and supporters feel empowered to be part of the solution to the issues they care about.

We took a step further towards this last year when we achieved accreditation as an investor and leader in diversity. This continues to be a personal priority of mine. Our Fundamental Principles must empower us to be brave and challenge racism and discrimination wherever we see it. Everyone in our society must have an equal stake, with no exceptions. This means equal access to opportunities and equal treatment under government practice and the law. Only then can we say that a community is truly inclusive and fair; one that not only welcomes, but also celebrates every person in it, irrespective of gender, race, disability or sexual orientation.

We are committed to making the cultural and practical changes needed to see real inclusion and diversity among our staff, volunteers and supporters.

We want you, and indeed, everyone who supports us, to feel connected to our values and part of something bigger. We held our first ever supporter celebration week in

2019, sending out thousands of thank you messages, and we have put together a new supporter strategy, to make sure every interaction with you is inspiring, and so everyone in our growing movement sees the positive difference they're making.

One of the most memorable moments of last year for me was at our annual dinner to thank our major donors. I found it very emotional to hear their stories about why they support the Red Cross.

I'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to every supporter, every volunteer and every colleague for your commitment over the year. It is your compassion that has driven this organisation for 150 years, and it is only with your enduring kindness that we continue to be there for people in the darkest of times, every step of the way.

"I'd like to say a heartfelt thank you to every supporter, volunteer and colleague for your committment over 2019."







# Who we are

# We connect your kindness with people in crisis.

Our role as the British Red Cross is to put the power of humanity into action, so that individuals and communities can prepare for, respond to and recover from crises – both at home and around the world.

Your compassion drives us as we strive towards a world where everyone gets the help they need in a crisis. And we believe that every crisis is personal, which is why we provide impartial support to people based on their need and nothing else. Our offer includes emergency response, refugee support, independent living services, first aid education and the development of the capacities of sister National Societies and communities overseas.

We are an organisation made possible by everyday acts of human kindness. We are powered by more than 17,000 volunteers in the UK and nearly 4,000 staff, and it is their determination to support others, along with the generosity of our supporters, that allows us to help people in crisis when they need it most.

We are part of the world's largest humanitarian network, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which has 17 million volunteers across 192 countries. This gives us a unique ability to respond to humanitarian crises around the world – with a local presence responding in almost every country, combined with a global network able to mobilise and coordinate exceptional responses to emergencies.

We are guided by seven fundamental principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality. These commit us to putting people first in everything we do.

# 2019: the year in numbers – thanks to you

People know what to do in a crisis

8,600
people helped
with first aid at
860 events



young people reached with crisis education



adults reached with crisis education



# Enhanced independence and wellbeing for those facing health crises







# people supported to live independently at home

# Kindness through crisis around the world

international emergencies responded to (including 19 new)

delegates deployed to support the movement

29

# Reduced destitution and distress for people who are displaced



people supported through our refugee services



people supported through destitution



people helped to trace missing relatives

# Ready to respond – UK crisis

With your support, we help people prepare for, cope with and recover from crises. Our skilled and caring staff and volunteers offer first aid and practical and emotional support, playing a vital role in supporting our emergency services. We make sure people in crisis get the individual help that's right for them.

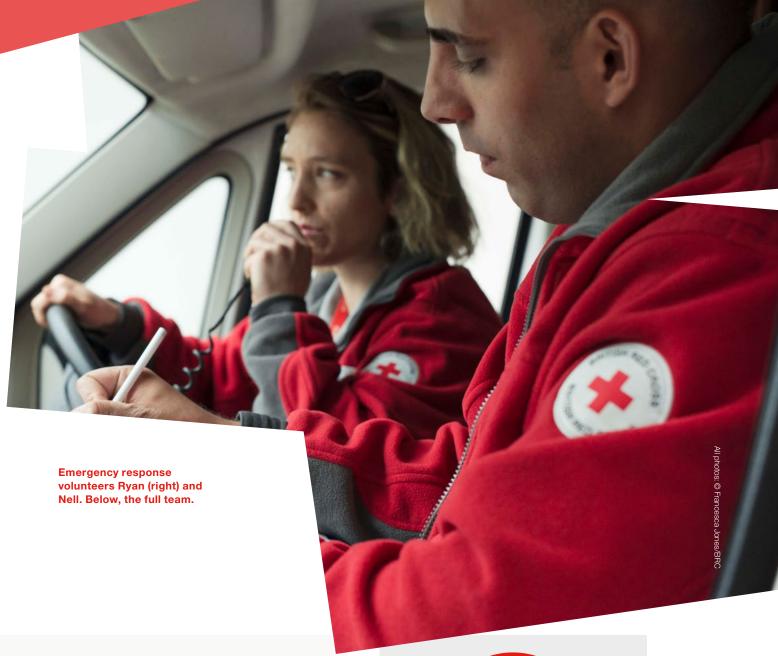
# "Without us, who would have helped her?"

Ryan has been an emergency response volunteer since 2015. He remembers supporting a woman in her 90s whose home flooded – she didn't have any family nearby. "She didn't know what to do, she was quite scared so we reassured her, gave her a cup of tea and spoke

to her insurance company, got her a hotel. She was disabled, so she needed a big room with walking aids, stuff in the shower, so we made sure all of that was done and then we did follow-ups to make sure the work to her house was being done and that she was able to go back home. She really appreciated what we did so it was great to see we'd helped.

Sometimes you think 'without us, where would she be at the moment?'.

He says, while each callout has routine procedures, the people make every incident different. The crew meet and stock a response van, filling up hot flasks and stocking up on the necessary paperwork. They carry a range of supplies: blankets, baby supplies (food, nappies and formula), toiletries, even pet food, bowls and leads. "The most common things we use are clothing and food," says Ryan. "Someone might have been in the shower when their house set on fire... we'll give them somewhere private to get dressed. We can even let them shower on the vehicle, give them something to eat – they might not have eaten for hours."



At the scene, volunteers talk to emergency services to find out the details of the incident, then



gently ask those involved what they need. "They could be the most independent person, but they're now vulnerable," explains Ryan. "The Red Cross provides quite a lot of training so that's really good. It's just about treading carefully, gaining their trust and knowing in the back of your mind: you don't know how they feel, you don't know what they've experienced in the past so just keep that in mind. And not interrupting, just letting them talk."

1,400



We responded to 1,400 UK emergencies, helping 7,200 people



# Working together during the floods

Because of generous support for our Disaster Fund, we were able to release £50,000 to help people in South Yorkshire when an estimated 643 homes in the region were flooded after heavy rain in November.

### **Doncaster Council**

"We can't do this on our own. We don't have the range of skills and expertise. We always talk about the Red Cross as the fourth emergency service... the importance of that partnership role is that one organisation can do something but a collaboration of organisations can do so much more. When people see us working alongside organisations like the Red Cross I think that provides them with some comfort and [they] begin to understand that we are here to help, not to chew the rulebook or put in awkward and unwieldly policies and procedures. That compassionate and caring approach delivered jointly with organisations like the Red Cross is the way that you provide that community support and onward development of the recovery process."

Pat Hagan from Doncaster Council

## **Doncaster Salvation Army**

Emergency response volunteers with residents among mountains of donated clothing in Fishlake, Doncaster.

Volunteers were out in force supporting communities after

the widespread floods.

"The Red Cross have been wonderful, they are part of the team. We've provided the venue and some of the supplies but organisations like the Red Cross bring the expertise. We asked them to take on certain tasks like organising for people to shower, etc. It doesn't help to do anything on your own. We have a set of skills and the Red Cross have a different set of skills – the common sense thing is to bring it all together."

Doncaster Salvation Army commanding officer Alan Bawden



### **South Yorkshire Police**

Assistant Chief Constable Tim Forber said: "In the high-pressure environment of an emergency response, I am pleased that all agencies worked together effectively. This success comes from having strong relationships across the agencies, developing plans and exercising those plans on a regular basis.

"Each agency is equipped with detailed knowledge and expertise, and it is the collective impact of this along with an understanding of the differing requirements of each agency that enabled us each to work as effectively and efficiently as possible."

# Thanks to you

We witnessed again, through our work in 2019, the power of simple, kind moments amid human crisis. These are the moments you make possible. Hand in hand with practical help, the act of just listening to people as they experience some of their worst moments can be a huge comfort.

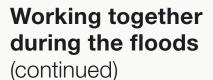
When floods forced people from their homes in Yorkshire, our volunteers welcomed people into rest centres. They went door-to-door checking on vulnerable people, helped with sandbagging, picked up prescriptions and distributed supplies for those having to sleep away from home overnight. In the first week following the floods, 72 British Red Cross volunteers helped over 300 people, using money from our Disaster Fund to help meet the urgent needs of people in the worst affected areas.

In October we supported Essex police when 39 people were killed in an upsetting human trafficking incident involving a lorry in Grays.

We helped give emotional support to emergency responders during investigations. We also worked with colleagues across our international movement to promote ways for people worried about loved ones to make contact with those who could help find out if they were involved.

The UK Solidarity Fund we set up after the terror attacks of 2017, to help all future victims of terrorism in the UK, was ready when the attack on Fishmongers' Hall, London Bridge, happened at the end of November 2019. With your support, our volunteers were able to respond quickly, supporting two bereaved families and three people who suffered injuries.

Our work developing cash grant systems meant we were able to offer cash assistance for the first time in a UK crisis last year. When a four-storey block of flats in Sutton burned down, destroying family homes, our emergency response volunteers were brought in by the council to support those affected. Together with partner organisations we were able to help with cash grants, urgent supplies, and practical and emotional support. By using cash assistance we were able to help people quickly and effectively while preserving their choice and their dignity.



# Amazing volunteers...

Joe has been volunteering with the Red Cross for years but said the scale of this emergency was new to him.

"There was one young family, a mother and two sons who hadn't got their asthma inhalers. Behind the scenes the council arranged for replacement prescriptions to be faxed over to a local supermarket. We then collected the prescription so the boys had their inhalers over the weekend before being due back to school on Monday," Joe said. "It was also the eighth birthday of the youngest son so we collected a cake for him while we were there, so we could sing happy birthday on a day which may have otherwise been remembered only for what went wrong. We lit a candle in the figure of eight. As we walked in singing, the look of joy on his face as he realised this was something special for him and that his birthday hadn't been forgotten in the trauma of the day."

### ...with a little help from businesses

Flood clean-up equipment, including mops, buckets and brooms, was donated from Kingfisher PLC, owners of B&Q, to the local authority to support the response.

Volunteer Roy travelled around Worksop distributing the donations from the Red Cross emergency vehicle: "It's bitterly cold, it's chucking it down. We are wet through and tired but it's nothing compared to what the residents have gone through," he said. "This

really is getting towards the extremes of what we've been in. We wouldn't want to be in this situation, if we were we would hope that there was someone there to help us. The response has been fantastic. Even if [people] don't want any of the kit, they're still appreciative that we have taken the time to go there and knock on the doors and just speak to them. It just shows they're not alone and someone does care."

# All to help people like Barry and Sheila, from Fishlake

"I have lived in this village all my life, which is 67 years, and nothing like this has ever happened before." Barry's daughter and her family were also affected by the flooding, and they were able to get supplies from the rest centre. "We've just rented a five-bedroom house, we are a family of seven and we've just taken everything [donations] from here like bedding, sheets, food, cleaning materials, virtually everything you could mention is available if you need it. It is unbelievable what has been donated from everyone. The Red Cross took me for my first shower at one of the hotels in

Doncaster.
Without these people I don't know what we would do," he said.





Thanks to your support, our emergency response volunteers were able to get out and offer hot drinks to community members working in the cold and wet as they helped with flood clean-up in Fishlake.

# The power to save lives

Everyone has the power to save a life. The first aid education you help us deliver builds people's skills and confidence so they're ready and able to act when it matters most.

# Thanks to you

With your help, we're reaching as many people as possible with support to learn simple, life-saving skills. Our Save a Life media campaign to mark World First Aid Day in September reached 40 million people. It inspired over 20,000 downloads of our essential first aid app – over seven times the number in the same period the previous year.

We also marked an important milestone as teachers prepared for the compulsory inclusion of first aid on the curriculum in England from 2020. We piloted a brand new online first aid teaching platform for learners aged 5–18, packed full of practical activities, videos, quizzes and support for teachers delivering first aid education. Around 800 schools signed up to receive this resource.

After ten years of campaigning, we are thrilled to see this finally happen – "we can help to build a generation of lifesavers," said one head teacher. We hope the impact for children's skills and confidence adds weight to our calls for Scotland and Northern Ireland to follow suit, and for further commitment from the Welsh government to make first aid education compulsory.

We've also built on our crisis education services to increase community connections and resilience. Crisis education is tailored to those with particular needs and vulnerabilities that mean they're more likely to need first aid and other skills in a crisis.

One example of this is our
Community Education response to knife crime in the UK. Working with partners, we adapted our training to support at-risk young people. Between April 2018 and March 2019 there were over 43,500 knife crime offences in England and Wales – an 80% increase since 2013-14. And one in five involved under-18s. Over the year we educated over 10,000 young people in the UK, building their confidence and willingness to save someone's life following a knife attack, and increasing the likelihood they'll spread the word to their peers to help reduce the number of young people carrying knives.



School children participate in a first aid skills lesson outside the Houses of Parliament in London.

# "I always thought when someone was choking it would be noisy, but she was just silent."

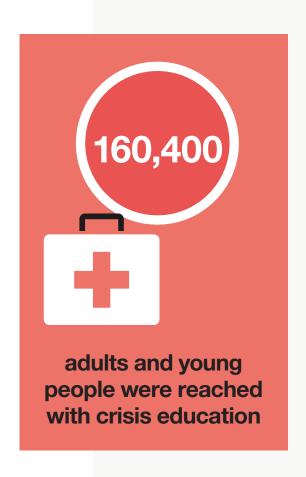
"It was a normal morning at home with my children," remembers mum Gemma. "Suddenly, my eldest daughter, Boo, shouted upstairs that her [two-year-old] little sister, Seven, was choking. I rushed downstairs and saw Seven wasn't breathing. Her eyes were out like dinner plates, her chest wasn't moving and she wasn't making any noise at all.

I remembered a British Red Cross first aid video I'd seen on Facebook, showing what to do if a little one is choking. It just sort of kicked in. I leaned Seven over my arm and

started hitting her on the back, between her shoulder blades. My heart was in my mouth. Boo was crying because I think she thought I was hurting her sister. After a few back blows, Seven still wasn't breathing and had started to turn blue. I phoned 999. I continued to give Seven back blows while speaking to the operator. After a few more, she coughed up a plastic toy brick and started breathing again.

Paramedics checked Seven over and took her to hospital for a full check-up. Once they'd examined her in A&E, they said she was absolutely fine and a very lucky little girl. The doctor said if I hadn't acted so quickly and if I hadn't known what to do, I wouldn't have been taking her home that day.

I think the videos are a brilliant way of showing people what to do in an emergency. Since what happened, I've watched all of them!"





# Support between home and hospital

With your support, we play a unique role in health and social care in the UK. We work closely with the NHS and ambulance services and provide a range of community support services across the country. We transport patients to and from hospital and support older and vulnerable people in their homes. We tackle health inequality and the social isolation that can worsen health crises.

# "I reckon I've personally signed out around 2,000 wheelchairs. That's a lot of small differences!"

Clare started as a mobility aids volunteer 13 years ago. "I was a nervous, shy 18-year-old, and it was a brilliant way of gaining work experience and building skills." She's proud of the work she has done since. "I've lent wheelchairs to people so they can take their uncle to his 90th birthday party, or help their grandad come to graduation. A student borrowed one before final-year exams, which meant he didn't have to retake the whole year. Sometimes borrowing a wheelchair is the difference between cancelling your holiday or managing to go to Disneyland or Glastonbury. I've also volunteered on the 23rd December

before and saved people from having to spend Christmas in hospital. Volunteering was the best decision I could have made. I've learned so much, and I've made a couple of lifelong friends

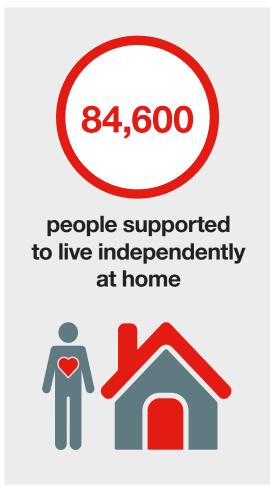
out of it. I always leave the branch feeling like I've helped somebody."

Clare helps a fellow volunteer load wheelchairs ready for loan.



Photo: © Stephen Fyfe/BR





# Thanks to you

Our hospital and community based services supported 84,600 people to live independently at home in 2019.

Our individual person-centred support helps people avoid being in hospital longer than they absolutely need to by ensuring safe and supported discharge from hospital. That could be help on an emotional or practical level to discuss concerns as someone gets ready to leave, or it could be driving someone home or accompanying them in a taxi. We might help get some food in and put the heating on while we sit with someone as they have their first cup of tea at home. We help prevent readmission, by providing ongoing practical and emotional support face-to-face and by phone for up to 12 weeks if needed so that people are able to set their own goals and avoid returning to hospital unnecessarily.

Red Cross support workers and volunteers are present in 122 hospitals around the UK all year round. In winter we offer extra services. A&E departments and wards experience pressure all the time, but winter brings seasonal flu, more slips, trips and falls and the cold and wet weather can exacerbate long-term health conditions, meaning more people need more help from already busy hospitals. In the winter of 2019/20, we provided our winter pressures services in 27 hospitals.

You've made our ground-breaking work to tackle loneliness possible again over the year. As our Connecting Communities partnership with the Co-Op reached its conclusion at the end of 2019, we reflected on some incredible achievements. The partnership helped over 11,000 people facing isolating life changes to re-connect through 39 Connecting Communities services across the UK. It is the first national 'social prescribing' service to measure loneliness before and after social connection, with 76% of users showing measurable improvement in their wellbeing. The model we created demonstrated that there's a financial return to society as a whole when this kind of social investment is made (£1.48 for every £1 spent) and it will have a lasting legacy, with a number of services planned to continue where possible in 2020.

Since our first Connecting Communities service opened, we've helped to reframe loneliness as a key issue, releasing seven highly influential reports to advocate for change. Loneliness is now recognised as both exacerbating and triggering health crises. Since the launch of our first report, Trapped in a Bubble, in 2015, we've convened 60 organisations as part of a Loneliness Action Group, seen the set-up of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Loneliness, the appointment of the world's first Minister for Loneliness, and a strategy from government outlining their commitment to tackle the issue.

# "Loneliness can be a killer."

As a child, Jimmy injured his head and he struggled to learn to read and write. The loving support of his mum and dad kept him going, and he became his dad's carer, while his mum worked. Jimmy was just 15 when his dad died, and when his mum sadly passed away too in 1984, the grief hit him hard.

"That's what done me, when I lost my mum," Jimmy said. "It just changed my outlook. I used to whistle a tune and I don't no more. Sometimes when I sit and watch the telly, I talk to myself. Not because of madness – I [just] wish there was someone there I could talk to." The Red Cross connected Jimmy with support worker Seema in April 2019, when he was recovering in hospital from a fall. She found local activities and groups that would interest him. Now, Jimmy regularly attends chair exercise classes and coffee mornings, which he feels have helped with his loneliness.

"It gets me out. It's good because you're meeting other people and you get to talk."

Jimmy also found a caring confidante in Seema. "I could talk about things if I wanted to, I like Seema, she makes me feel happy. She understood, when I said I couldn't read. She seems to care and I think when you're not feeling yourself she would know."

When their 12 weeks together came to an end, Jimmy gave Seema a card and chocolates. "I got her presents because of what she's done, to show appreciation. People need to be kind to one another because it makes you happy. It's good to be like that."

Seema grew up in Afghanistan, and remembers the Red Cross for its health centres. "Whenever we had health issues, the closest point for us to seek help was the Red Cross. When I was young I got very sick and had an operation. I was given a ten-day course of antibiotics so every day I went to the clinic and they injected me. The staff were so lovely and caring. The Red Cross gave me a lot, so I need to give back." When conflict forced her to flee to the UK, she volunteered with our destitution and Support at Home services, as well as our interpreting service, as she speaks six languages. "I was interpreting for young people from Afghanistan and other countries. It was very sad to hear their stories. During the night, I would think of their stories and the hardships they had been through."

She showed such dedication she was later hired by our Connecting Communities service. She feels that what she's been through helps her empathise with the people she supports. "I never realised that people in the UK are

"We are human beings. We are here to help each other."

homeless – no food, no clothes – especially children. I was thinking London, it's a very rich, nice place. But people are still vulnerable. Volunteering helped me decide that my happiness lay in helping people. We are human beings, we are here to help each other."





# In search of safety

We are the biggest single independent provider of refugee support in the UK, helping tens of thousands of people every year to live in safety with dignity and to reconnect with their family and loved ones. Whatever a person's reason for leaving their home behind, they should get the help they need. Our volunteers offer support across 192 countries. And we advocate for fair, respectful support from the wider international community.

# "I believe the Red Cross was the one hope for me."

Ali, 18, is from Iran. When he arrived alone in London he was isolated and unhappy. Then he came to the weekly British Red Cross Refugee and Befriending (RnB) youth club, for refugees aged 15 to 21, run in five locations across the capital. The sessions might involve yoga, circus skills, first aid or cooking – and it's a chance to meet people with shared experiences and get support with navigating the asylum process.

"I was very depressed before, but after I found the Red Cross I feel much happier. I feel I have brothers and sisters. I love it! People care about me, so I feel less alone. Everyone is very kind. They put a smile on our faces. They want you to have fun, they want you to laugh. That gives me hope, and hope is very important at the moment for me." He says the young people at the club come from all over: Syria, Iran, Iraq, Eritrea, Sudan and Somalia. The project has built his confidence so

much that he has become a youth leader at the club, a role he had to apply and be interviewed for.

Ali, centre, at the RnB youth club.

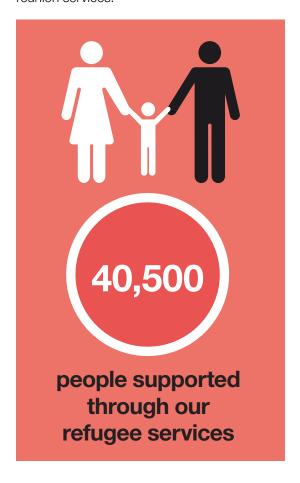


Claudia-Leisinger/BRC

# Thanks to you

In April 2019, we marked a huge milestone in our family reunion programme. In partnership with the International Organisation for Migration, we have now reunited 10,000 people separated by conflict and persecution with their families since the programme began in 2011.

But our pride in the achievement was tinged with sadness: we see so many more families who can't be together due to current legislation, including young refugees who arrive in the UK alone and aren't allowed to bring their parents to join them. We are advocating for this to change, and in 2019 we published a briefing outlining the negative effects of the UK's departure from the EU on already complex, and often unfair, family reunion services.





Refugee services are too often designed by people with no lived experience of what it's like to try to access them. Throughout 2019 we worked to change that. Our AVAIL project employs a co-production approach to devising services. Refugees and asylum seekers work with us to create, design and implement initiatives, making services more relevant for others as they connect with their new communities and countries.

The AVAIL project includes the VOICES Network, set up to change minds, policy and practice in the UK. The network brings refugees and asylum seekers together from across the UK to share their experiences and lobby for change. During 2019 they met with MPs, MSPs and AMs across England, Scotland and Wales, individually and at large scale events held in the Houses of Parliament, including Jeremy Corbyn (then Labour Leader), Thangam Debbonaire (Chair of the APPG for Refugees) and Aileen Campbell (MSP and cabinet secretary for Communities).

# Thanks to you (continued)

The VOICES Network made a very well-received film towards the end of the year describing who they are, and what they do. They are a powerful force for change – they set their own agenda and create their own programme of media and speaking events. They also engage with opportunities presented within the Red Cross to shape and improve our work in this area.

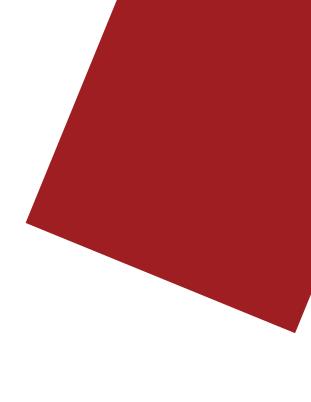
To tackle what can still be negative public discourse around people seeking asylum here, 2019 saw us launch our Every Refugee Matters campaign, rallying our fantastic supporters and connecting them in a Facebook community that now has more than 4,000 followers. Our short film illustrating the reality for people trying to settle here, often while separated from their families, received 44,000 views on the day it launched, and has since reached more than 210,000 people. Our campaign led the conversation during Refugee Week - more than 40 MPs came to our event, our media coverage reached 40% of UK adults, and we raised over £20,000 for our Global Refugee Fund.

Our global work in 2019 saw us work with our National Society partners on the Action for Migrants: Route-Based Assistance Programme in west, east and north Africa to give support over 66,000 times across six countries. This work reached people at critical points along their routes through Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Sudan and Egypt, helping vulnerable people on the move by providing medical care, psychosocial support and food and essential items. It also provides help to trace, restore and maintain family links; critical information about available services and how to stay safe; and referrals to specialist services for survivors of trafficking, sexual and gender-based violence, and other forms of abuse and exploitation.

Your support means we can get essential supplies to those who need them most. This soap distribution helps residents in crowded camps in Cox's Bazar.

We also continued our work in Bangladesh to support the hundreds of thousands of people forced from their homes in Myanmar over two years ago to the world's largest refugee camp in Cox's Bazar. It's still one of the Movement's largest operations globally. While we offer shelter, access to clean water, food, healthcare and emotional support, hygiene remains one of the biggest challenges here – so in early 2019 we ran a project with female community groups to review the toilet and wash-point locations, after we discovered many women and girls were avoiding them. due to fear of violations of their dignity and privacy, and even of gender-based violence. We installed solar-powered lights inside and outside latrines and washing facilities to improve safety and comfort.





# "The Red Cross has been helpful for a lot of families. If I wasn't getting [help] I don't know how I would survive to be frank."

# Nancy arrived in the UK 15 years ago,

having fled Nigeria, but she's still waiting for a decision on her asylum claim, which means she can't work.

"I used to be a support worker, I'm not an outcast. If I had the opportunity, I could be doing the job you're doing. It's just because of the situation I find myself in that I can't." Every fortnight she travels for an hour and a half to the Red Cross destitution centre to get a food parcel for her and her three daughters. "The main things are onions, tomatoes, spaghetti, potatoes - I love them. They give us vegetable oil every month so you have something to make your sauce. At least you bring those things home for the children. They look forward to what I bring. It goes a very long way for us. The hygiene pack helps, you don't have to stress that you haven't got sanitary towels, soap, or a toothbrush, toothpaste."

By working with other organisations we've been able to provide families like Nancy's with coats,

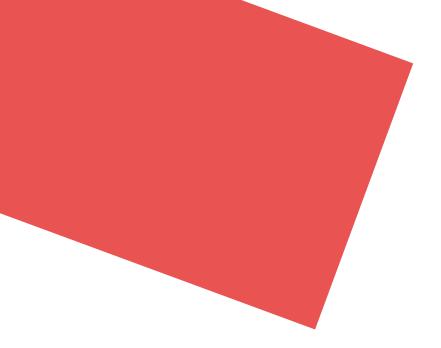
and little extras for special occasions too. "This jacket I'm wearing now is from here, it's very warm. What made me happy was I got jackets for my children." The family took part in our Wrapping for Refugees initiative and got a little gift box in December.



Gloria, centre manager, preparing gifts as part of the Wrapping for Refugees project.

"That's what I put under the Christmas tree for [my children]. They got gloves, hats, lipgloss and other things. They were happy. It makes them feel at home and at least they have something. I need my family to be comfortable. I need my children to say 'mum, I want this' and I can provide it for them, not that I'm going to the Red Cross. I want that life back, where my children can be proud among their peers."

ito: © Amara Eno/BRC



# "It's like the Red Cross rebuilt my life"

Forced to flee his home in West Africa,

**Sidi** was separated from his pregnant wife and two young children. He searched for four years, across five countries. In 2016, he got help from the Red Cross. "They asked me all [my] information – my country, when I last saw my family," Sidi explains.

The team in Yorkshire, where Sidi was living, made a request to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Algeria, where he thought his family would be. "Two, three hours, they checked, checked, checked," Sidi remembers, but it was unsuccessful. Undeterred, Sidi checked in regularly with the team over three years. "The Red Cross said 'every time you change home, [call us]'. All the time they sent me letters – no news." As soon as he got refugee status in 2018, Sidi got travel documents and started searching overseas, all the time keeping in touch with Dave and Helen in the Yorkshire team. It wasn't until 2019, four days after they uploaded Sidi's photo to the new 'trace the face' online system, that they got an alert from Mali.

"We held our breath while Dave carefully checked personal details against case records," Helen says. It matched, but they couldn't celebrate until they told Sidi, and when they called, his phone had broken. It was a nailbiting few days before Sidi called to check in.

"The international family tracing service rightly have a very strict policy of only giving news face to face," says Helen. All they could do was arrange for Sidi to come to the office the next morning. "It felt very strange going to bed that night, in possession of life-changing news." Helen adds.

When Sidi arrived he was, understandably, visibly nervous. "I can't even imagine what it must have been like for him to travel to the office that morning," says Helen. "Knowing that we had news, but not knowing whether it was the worst or the best. Once we were all seated, Dave didn't hesitate; he said, 'We have a message for you from your wife' and passed across the piece of paper with her handwriting on it. This was the moment I hadn't been prepared for," says Helen. "Reading that small piece of paper, he would find out his family were alive and safe."

Stunned, Sidi fell silent. "When Dave gave me the message that [my wife] was found in Mali, I couldn't speak. I just cry, cry, cry for so many minutes," says Sidi. "That day I was happy," he adds, smiling.

"When Sidi did speak, he couldn't stop saying thank you," Helen says. "His joy was overwhelming. Dave and I were doing our utmost to keep it together ourselves."



The team lent Sidi a phone to take home and call his family in private. "I spoke to my wife on 13 June," Sidi remembers. "At first [it] was a bit sad, I was worried about [her], the children." His wife had given birth to a baby daughter, who was now three years old. "I first ask[ed] about the newborn, a lot of questions about this," Sidi says.

Sidi's wife had been to the Red Cross for help too, in Senegal and then Mali. After four long years, the family was finally brought together again. Sidi says he never lost hope. "Life is hard. But I am an optimist at all times. If you

feel defeated, you're going to lose. Life is [obstacles]; you cross this [one], after another. My mind never let me live without my family. So until you die you do all [you can to find them]."

After the first phone call with his wife, Sidi called the Red Cross and left a voicemail.

"He was calling from his new phone with a message for everyone at the Red Cross: bless you all, and thank you," says Helen. "I've never smiled so much listening to a voicemail message in my life, I could listen to it again and again."

# Ready to respond – international crisis

Thanks to you we are able to support people affected by crisis around the world. Sharing expertise across the Movement and National Societies, we help build resilience within communities, basing our work on individual needs so people can prepare for, withstand and recover from disaster.

# "I couldn't do this before but I am capable now."



### **Bangladesh**

At just 17, Munia started a tailoring business thanks to our livelihoods programme. After ten days' training she was given a sewing machine. "It started from there," she says. Her family is proud.

Munia left school at 13. "I have hardship in my family so I thought I could help my parents," she says. Munia's mother, Shahanaj, is the family's main earner, preparing spices for events, and is a volunteer with a Red Cross-supported Community Disaster Management Committee (CDMC), which works to improve drainage, sanitation and hygiene: all important in a



densely populated area prone to flooding. "CDMC helps a lot of people," Munia explains. "When they install a water pump, [or] set up a toilet, they let us know."

Now, while her mother helps the community, Munia helps her family. "I'm contributing Tk 500 [around £4.75] every month, supporting my younger brother's education. My mother benefits, my father benefits. I feel really good. When a customer wears a dress I made, I feel stronger."

# Thanks to you

Right from the start of 2019, with you by our side, we were taking action for people caught in some of the world's worst crises. The scale of human need continues to grow. We're focussing our work where it will make the biggest difference, and galvanising global will and resources behind the biggest humanitarian issues.

In January we joined with 13 other international humanitarian organisations to rally efforts for people in Yemen. As 14 million people teetered on the brink of famine we came together in an urgent call for more open access for aid workers and supplies to stem the death toll of extreme hunger.

In March, Cyclone Idai hit Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi affecting millions, many of whom were already experiencing chronic hunger. We launched an appeal, and also released emergency funds through our community resilience programme in Zimbabwe. We supported the Movement in distributing aid and securing facilities for temporary camps. Our ambassador Ben Fogle helped draw attention to our ongoing efforts amid a new cholera risk, visiting Mozambique, to see how the Movement had already helped over 200,000 people and were setting up safe toilets and washing facilities to help a further 20,000. The response also reached 10,000 people in Malawi and 20,000 in Zimbabwe with cash grants and help with food security and livelihoods.

In September, the colossal Hurricane Dorian hit the north of the Bahamas. Its 185mph winds battered and destroyed homes, contaminated water supplies and separated families. Over 200 Red Cross volunteers supported relief efforts, which included distributing tarpaulins, shelter tool kits, blankets, kitchen sets, buckets and hygiene parcels.



Photo: © Corrie Butler/IFRC

# Thanks to you (continued)

In October we called for increased international support for more than 7,000 refugees and migrants trapped in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in desperate need of help before the winter.

The Red Cross was the only organisation supporting people in the unofficial Vučjak camp in northwest Bosnia, and – as well as providing funding and deploying delegates – we helped push for greater progress on finding a more suitable location where people would more likely survive the bitter cold.

While the media spotlight doesn't always fall on it, our work to build resilience in communities facing some of the world's worst ongoing crises has been a priority in 2019.

In the face of chronic food insecurity in Zimbabwe and across the Sahel region including Niger, we are helping communities with cash grants to build their livelihoods, and giving training in climate-responsive farming and irrigation techniques that can help make the difference between having a meal or not, as well as ensuring that families get nutritious and healthy food. In Zimbabwe we helped communities set up gardens in hospital grounds to improve nutrition. We are also helping establish Mother's Clubs, for example in Niger and Chad, as a way to fight food insecurity. In these co-op groups, women are offered training to help their livelihoods so they can provide for their families. They can share knowledge and skills with each other and develop solidarity savings - shared funds each member can borrow when times are toughest.

Women in vulnerable communities in Bangladesh, living in crowded neighbourhoods prone to regular monsoon flooding, can find themselves coping with ill health, loss of income, abuse or abandonment. These women want to boost their skills, knowledge, and incomes to provide for their families. So we're supporting women's small businesses, giving vocational training and setting up apprenticeships. We're also bringing women together in Women's Squads to lead the changes they want to see in their communities.

2019 also saw us help Syrian refugees and vulnerable local families through our Lebanon livelihoods programme in Arsal, and support survivors of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo with our Social Safety Nets programme.



# "Now I have a reason to wake up every morning."

### Lebanon

Raweya, 29, from Syria, lives in Arsal with her husband and two children. Since 2013, some 45,000 people have sought safety here, more than doubling the town's population. Refugees' working rights are restricted, and families have exhausted their savings. Raweya's husband has a serious medical condition, but the family hadn't had any support until Raweya got a grant through our livelihoods programme to open a hairdressing salon. In one room of her tent, she now cuts hair for other camp residents. "It is a relief for me not asking people for support any more."

## Niger

Tabou, 40, lives with her daughter, Aicha, 3. She is part of a women's co-op running a Red Cross-funded mill and cereal bank in her village. Women here used to set off at 4am on the long walk to the nearest food market. "It was difficult, I tell you," says Tabou. "We were so tired of walking."

Food is often scarce in this part of rural Niger – temperatures here are rising faster than anywhere else in the world. Across the Sahel, there is a hunger epidemic. "You brought us a mill, and you built us a store. We thank God, you've really improved this place."



# **Bangladesh**

With our support, Josna has become a force for good in her community.

"I would watch the political leaders address the problems of the community and stand beside them. I felt determination inside. But there was no opportunity to raise my voice. Then suddenly like a dream Bangladesh Red Crescent Society project arrived." We offered group training on issues they wanted to tackle.

"Now, we know so much." When they hear about a proposed child marriage, or that someone is sick, they go to see how they can help. "We also visit pregnant women and help if they need anything. Many things have changed in our community over three years. I'm proud with myself for that."

### **Zimbabwe**

Tarisai is a single mother of four, living with HIV. "The day my husband was buried, I gave birth. It was very painful." As a farmer, she relies on the food she can grow to feed her family. "To get enough food without the rains is close to impossible." Her bad leg means she often can't get to her field.



"The Red Cross taught us about making holes in the field for water harvesting, and gardens we can have at home – I can grow vegetables using water from washing dishes. I was able to sell tomatoes and spinach, and buy books for my children's education."

# Our priorities for 2020

### Our new strategy

Since 1870, the British Red Cross has been helping people who need it most, no matter who or where they are. We have adapted over the years to keep up with the external world, the changing needs of the people we help, and advances in digital technology. Now, we need you with us more than ever as we look ahead once again to see how we can evolve and transform how we help people.

We've now set out our vision for the next decade in our new strategy. We will focus on three urgent humanitarian issues, where we can make a real difference: disasters and emergencies, health inequalities in the UK and displacement and migration.

Connected communities are resilient communities. Through our strategy, we'll strengthen meaningful connections between people, within communities and across different organisations. We'll work alongside others at grassroots, national and international level so that people receive coordinated support that puts their needs first. We'll influence and convene others so that systems don't create vulnerability, and so that scarce and stretched resources are used effectively.

We are committed to helping people through each stage of a crisis, so they are able to take early preventative action, are better prepared and receive timely support when crisis does strike, and are able to recover in ways that leave them stronger for the future.

# Living the strategy in a global pandemic

The work of our organisation continues to be critical to the lives of people hit by humanitarian crises. The global coronavirus pandemic has affected people indiscriminately, but has hit hardest those who were already made vulnerable by inequality.

We're now putting our new strategy into action through our response to the coronavirus pandemic, both in the UK and around the world. Our services and capabilities have never been more relevant, and we're renewing our focus on those facing the greatest unmet need, the role of collaboration and the harnessing of new technologies.

# Our response to the coronavirus pandemic:

### Our response in the UK is four-fold:

Responding in communities: supporting communities facing the greatest inequalities, delivering food and medicine; ensuring refugees and asylum seekers have access to practical and emotional support including secure accommodation and maintaining links with loved ones; running a national support line; providing those facing economic insecurity with cash assistance through a new Hardship Fund; and advocating to protect vulnerable groups.



**Supporting the NHS:** alleviating pressure on hospitals through our discharge service so that people can return home with the right support in place rather than having to stay in hospital, and providing medical equipment to people at home.

#### **Voluntary Sector Emergencies Partnership:**

working alongside other Voluntary and Community Sector providers to coordinate support – mapping unmet needs and working together to help those most in need, as well as engaging with the government to ensure financial support to the sector as a critical part of the wider response.

Digital education programme: reaching people with vital information, from how to stay safe during a pandemic, to mental health support and advice to help combat loneliness. We are also holding virtual meet-ups for people who may be vulnerable or feeling isolated, as well as providing resources to help people adjust to homeschooling and working from home during lockdown.

As the pandemic unfolds overseas we will work through the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to reach those in need of help and protection. Our existing work on strengthening livelihoods and food security, building the Movement's capacity to deliver cash assistance, and supporting refugees and asylum seekers and other people travelling along migration trails, has all become more critical now. We will work to make sure these programmes can continue as delivery of aid and humanitarian assistance is disrupted.

## Our <u>priorities</u> for 2020 (continued)

## What we will deliver in 2020 beyond the pandemic response

Responding to the coronavirus pandemic has meant that we've had to adjust what we can deliver in 2020 from our original plans. We have had to pause some work, either to redirect resources, or because it just hasn't been possible – some of our income-generating activities such as running our shops and Red Cross Training have had to stop temporarily.

The impact on our finances is described below in the Finance Review. We've had to invest in some key areas in the first half of the year as part of our response, accelerating some of our 2020 plans:

- Systems and technology that enable our people to work in agile ways and from home, as well as providing us with the data and insight we need to allocate our resources in the best ways in a rapidly shifting context.
- Understanding need through the development of new approaches for identifying vulnerability and gaps in provision, so we are clear who needs our help the most and can work effectively within those communities through partnership and collaboration.
- Revolutionising engagement so that we can
  mobilise and deploy support around a cause during a
  national and global emergency, harnessing funds for
  our response in as many ways as possible.

In the second half of the year we'll now review our original 2020 plan and reset what we'll deliver over the rest of the year. We'll pick up the most crucial work we've had to pause, but must balance this with the reality that we'll need to continue to respond to the impact of the coronavirus for some time to come.



With your support, we will continue to help people who are at risk of exploitation, or who have been or continue to be exploited throughout 2020.

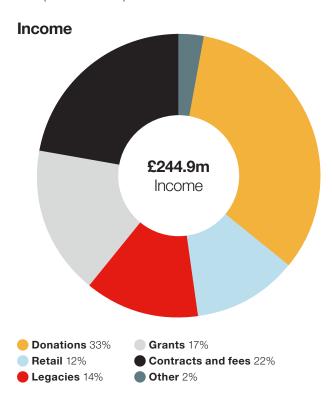


### Finance overview

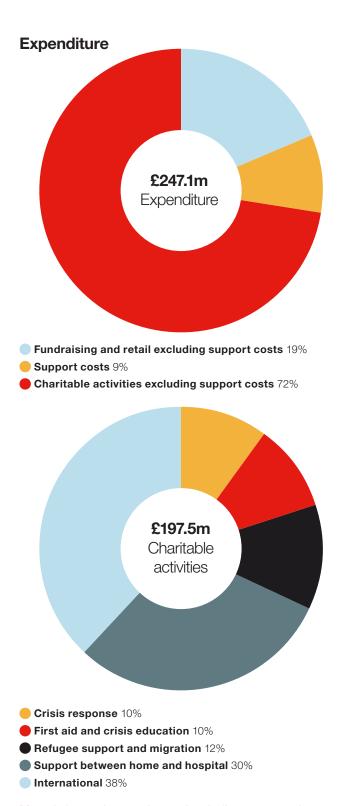
Our work is mainly funded by donations, income from our shops, legacies, grants and income from services for which we charge fees.

In 2019, our total income held up well at £244.9m (2018: £243.3m). Our total expenditure in 2019 was £247.1m (2018: £243.9m), which comprised £197.5m (2018: £190.6m) spent on charitable activities and £49.6m (2018: £53.3m) on fundraising costs.

We are in a stable financial position, where overall net income for the year was £5.1m (2018: £0.2m net expenditure). Free reserves were £56.7m at the year end (2018: £57.8m).



Following the year end, the coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on our activities and this is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. However we are confident the mitigating activities we have taken or will take in light of the unprecedented circumstances of the pandemic will ensure the British Red Cross remains a viable going concern.



More information on the society's finances can be found in our annual Trustees' Report and Accounts.



## Thank you to our partners

# Everyone at the British Red Cross would like to thank each individual and organisation who supported our work in 2019.

You were compassionate and swift in your response during emergencies and your generosity enabled our vital ongoing work in the UK and overseas to continue and grow. We particularly want to thank everyone who supports us regularly, giving us the confidence to plan ahead.

We gratefully remember each and every one of our supporters who thoughtfully left us a gift in their will. We would also like to say thank you to all our local fundraising committees and volunteers for their hard work and commitment, which we could not do without.

#### We would like to give special thanks to:

Aline Foriel-Destezet

AstraZeneca

Aviva Plc

Barclays

British Airways

Delta Air Lines Inc.

Department for International Development

Di Moody Legacy Fund

**European Commission** 

Fort Trustees Limited

Glencore UK Ltd

InterContinental Hotels Group Plc

Isle of Man Government

Jaguar Land Rover

Jane Thompson

Jersey Overseas Aid

John Lewis Partnership

Kingfisher Plc

Lizzie and Mark Philip-Sorensen

Marsh & McLennan

Moondance Foundation

National Lottery Community Fund

Nesta

Penguin Ventures

Players of the People's Postcode Lottery

Robin Kinross and Nicolette Moonen

Tesco Plc

The ELMA Relief Foundation

Tiffany Circle Steering Committee and Membership TK Maxx and Homesense Foundation

Welsh Government

### Thanks also to members of the following committees:

International Fundraising Committee
International & Medical Fundraising Board

#### Thanks also to:

Arup

A B Charitable Trust

Barrow Cadbury Trust

BBC Children In Need

Birrane Foundation

British Red Cross Presidents' Network (local

Presidents, Vice Presidents and Patrons)

CB and HH Taylor 1984 Trust

Chapel Trust Maryton Carmel

Comic Relief

Constance Travis Charitable Trust

Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Dowager Countess Eleanor Peel Trust

Duncreggan Trust

Esmee Fairbairn Foundation

Festival Republic

Garfield Weston Foundation

Green Hall Foundation

Guernsey Overseas Aid and Development Commission



H&M

Hatfield Davis Family Trust

Herd Lawson and Muriel Lawson Charitable Trust

Hugh Symons Charitable Trust

Sir James Reckitt Charity

**JCDecaux** 

Jordan Foundation

Linbury Trust

Masonic Charitable Foundation

Megan Van't Hoff Charitable Trust

National Lottery Heritage Fund

Nationwide

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for

Norfolk

Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Paula Hawkins

Peter Dixon Charitable Trust

**Philips** 

Pimco

Primark Stores Limited

Scottish Government

Spirit of 2012

Sport England

Swire Charitable Trusts

**Tanner Trust** 

The Cotton Trust

Three Oaks Trust

**Unbound Philanthropy** 

**Underwood Trust** 

Visa Europe Ltd

## **Get involved**

## Are you part of the growing movement of kindness? Get connected to people who need your skill, care and support.

#### **Volunteering**

However much time you have and whatever your experience, there are UK volunteering opportunities at the British Red Cross.

Meet new people, learn new skills and help people get the support they need in a crisis – become an emergency response volunteer, deliver mobility aids or support our shops. You could also become a community connector, helping people in your area by having a chat over a cup of tea, going for a stroll or to a community group together.

#### Community reserve volunteer

Sign up to help your community in case there's ever a big local crisis – such as widespread flooding or a large fire. It takes just a few minutes to sign up and you don't need to do any training in advance.

During an emergency, you can help with practical tasks like preparing kit and equipment, filling sandbags, sorting supplies and making refreshments. Being a community reserve volunteer is perfect if you naturally feel the urge to help in an emergency, but don't have the time to commit to volunteering all year round.

Find out more at redcross.org.uk/reserves

#### **Fundraising**

Get active, fundraise and have fun: there are many ways you can help raise money for people in crisis.

If you're taking part in a national event, join Team Red Cross. Our national events team will be on hand to support you, answer any questions and let you know your hard work is appreciated. Simply tell us which event you're taking part in, and we'll help you raise as much as you can. Every step you take and every pound you raise will help someone in need.

#### As part of Team Red Cross you will receive:

- a fundraising pack full of tips and advice to help you reach your target
- dedicated support, including training advice
- a British Red Cross running vest or T-shirt if you raise over £100
- updates on how the money you raise could help people.

#### Connect to our online community

- facebook.com/BritishRedCross facebook.com/EveryRefugeeMatters
- witter.com/BritishRedCross
- O Instagram.com/BritishRedCross
- youtube.com/BritishRedCross



## **Get involved** (continued)

#### **Education resources**

Our free online resources for teachers and parents have been created to help inspire the next generation of humanitarians. We have activities based around kindness, empathy and topical events, which are designed to build resilience, awareness and critical thinking among 5-18 year olds.

#### redcross.org.uk/get-involved/teaching-resources

First aid champions is a new resource which supports the addition of first aid on to the English curriculum from September 2020. The site supports teachers and parents in teaching first aid to children and young people through a range of activities including quizzes, videos and lesson plans.

firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk

#### Collaborate for change

Support from philanthropists, trusts, statutory funders and corporate partners makes a lasting impact on the lives of people in crisis in the UK and around the world.

We have a wide range of ways you can get involved: support a specific project or partner with us to tailor an opportunity that suits you. You can become a real catalyst for change.

Our dedicated teams work closely with you to develop ideas that best make use of your time and donations. To find out more about joining with us to make a difference to the lives of people in crisis, contact us today.

#### Companies:

corporatepartnerships@redcross.org.uk 020 7877 7597

#### **Philanthropists:**

philanthropy@redcross.org.uk 020 7877 7093

#### **Trust and Statutory:**

trust&statutory@redcross.org.uk 020 7448 4434

#### **Donate**

We rely on the generosity of people like you. Your donation can change lives.

You can help someone who's struggling to cope at home after a hospital stay, a family that has been torn apart by conflict, or a community struck by disaster. You can bring comfort to someone when they need it most.

#### redcross.org.uk/donate

**Phone:** 0344 871 11 11

From overseas: +44 20 7138 7900 **Textphone:** 020 7562 2050

Email: contactus@redcross.org.uk
Visit: 44 Moorfields, London, EC2Y 9AL

#### Legacies

If you would like to find out more about supporting the British Red Cross by leaving a gift in your will then go to **redcross.org.uk/legacy** or call 0300 500 0401.



#### Where we are:

44 Moorfields London EC2Y 9AL

#### redcross.org.uk/annualreport

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The British Red Cross Society, incorporated by Royal Charter 1908, is a charity registered in England and Wales (220949), Scotland (SC037738) and Isle of Man (0752).