



This is the Red Cross



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# THE PRINCIPLES

## Humanity

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

## Impartiality

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

## Neutrality

In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

## Independence

The Movement is independent. The national societies, whilst auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

## Voluntary service

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain. The Movement has volunteers throughout the world who give their time to help people in need.

## Unity

There can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

## Universality

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

*Proclaimed by the 20th International Conference of the Red Cross, Vienna, 1965*



## Dear Reader

*This brochure provides an insight into what the Red Cross stands for, what it does, and how you can get involved.*

*The Red Cross is a humanitarian organisation whose work is driven by a desire to help others. It is committed to, and bound by, the fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and acts as the guardian of the Geneva Conventions.*

*Our work is volunteer-based and organised to ensure that we can reach people in need quickly and efficiently. The Red Cross has local branches throughout Norway, while the Movement has a global reach through its network of volunteers.*

*Given the frequency with which wars break out and the ever-recurring famines, the need may seem overwhelming. Therefore, it is important to know that a lot of people are also working to make things better. Our efforts make a difference.*

*The Red Cross reunites people. Red Cross lorry drivers and ambulance personnel get food and help through to those struck by famine. Red Cross water engineers cross battle lines to repair bombed water supply systems to ensure that people have access to clean water. This is possible because you and others like you care and because the red cross and red crescent emblems protect these volunteers.*

*There are people all over the world who need help, including in Norway. The problems here differ from those in other countries where armed conflicts or natural disasters produce need and suffering. They include substance abuse problems, difficulties adjusting to a new country, getting lost in the mountains at Easter, or the many lonely people who simply need someone to talk to.*

*All Red Cross volunteers do an important job helping others, and that is what this brochure is about: people helping people.*

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# COMPASSION *amidst the weapons*

Even in the brutal reality of a war, rules and compassion are still needed. This was the vision of Henry Dunant, the man who founded the Red Cross and who was behind the idea for the First Geneva Convention – rules for war intended to protect civilians, wounded and non-combatant soldiers, and prisoners of war.



## Emblems that protect

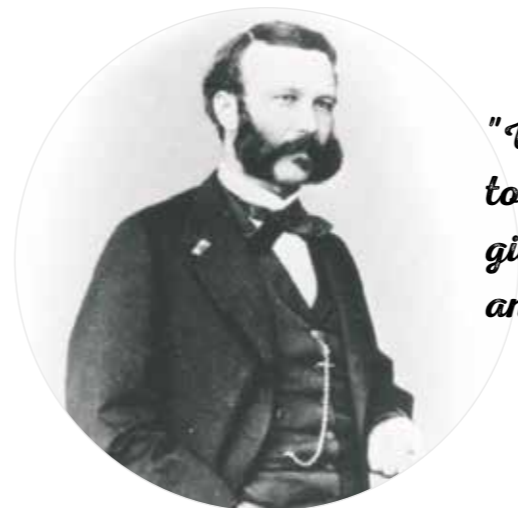
The red cross, red crescent and red crystal are protective emblems. This means that attacking equipment, buildings and personnel marked with these symbols is prohibited. Respect for these protective emblems lies at the core of the rules of war. It is vital that the parties respect these symbols so that victims can receive help.

It started with a business trip. In 1859, Swiss businessman Henry Dunant was on his way through Italy to meet Napoleon III. En route, Dunant passed the battlefields at Solferino near the Italian village of Castiglione. The battle between the French-Italian coalition on one side and the Austrians on the other left more than 6,000 soldiers dead and 40,000 wounded. Dunant was shaken by what he saw. He got the women of Castiglione to help him and organised nursing and care for the wounded, irrespective of which side they were on. Their motto was "tutti fratelli" ("We are all brothers"). Following his experience at Solferino, Dunant wrote a book, *A Memory of Solferino*, which inspired the founding of the Red Cross and provided the basis for the First Geneva Convention. In it he promoted the idea of establishing neutral relief societies that could help the wounded in wars. He believed that it must be possible to get states to agree on some common rules to limit the suffering caused by war. We know the result: the First Geneva Convention and the founding of the Red Cross.

### Rules for all wars

Henry Dunant's friend, a lawyer called Gustave Moynier, became interested in his book and ideas. In 1863, they established a committee of five people. This became the first International Committee of the Red Cross and was the beginning of what would become the world's largest humanitarian movement. The following year the committee invited representatives from many European states to a diplomatic conference. The aim of the conference was to reach agreement on some rules for protecting wounded soldiers on the battlefield. On 22 August 1864, twelve nations signed the ten articles that made up the First Geneva Convention. A further four states, including the union of Sweden-Norway, signed the convention that autumn.

Every country in the world is bound by the four Geneva Conventions (1949) and more than 160 countries have also ratified the two Additional Protocols (1977).



*"Would it not be possible, in time of peace and quiet, to form relief societies for the purpose of having care given to the wounded in wartime by zealous, devoted and thoroughly qualified volunteers?"*

From Henry Dunant:  
*A Memory of Solferino*, 1862

### Network of volunteers

The idea that there was a need for a neutral relief organisation quickly spread around the world. The Norwegian Red Cross was founded in 1865, while the first Red Cross society in Africa was established in the Congo in 1888. Today, more than 100 million people around the globe are members of the Red Cross, or the Red Crescent as it is called in most Muslim countries.

There are 190 Red Cross and Red Crescent societies. The Movement is made up of three parts: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the national societies, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

The activities and methods of the three parts differ somewhat, but they are all based on the same basic ideas: the Geneva Conventions and the fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Despite their different activities, they share the same general goal: to uncover, prevent and alleviate human need and suffering.

## The Geneva Conventions state that:

- One must differentiate between combatants and civilians
- The civilian population is entitled to protection
- Those who are no longer participating in combat must be protected
- Civilian property and buildings must be protected
- One must not use weapons that result in unnecessary injury and suffering

## Nobel Peace Prize

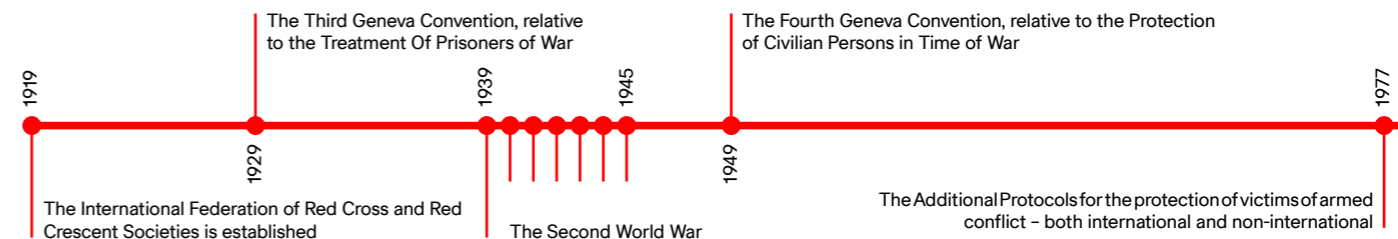
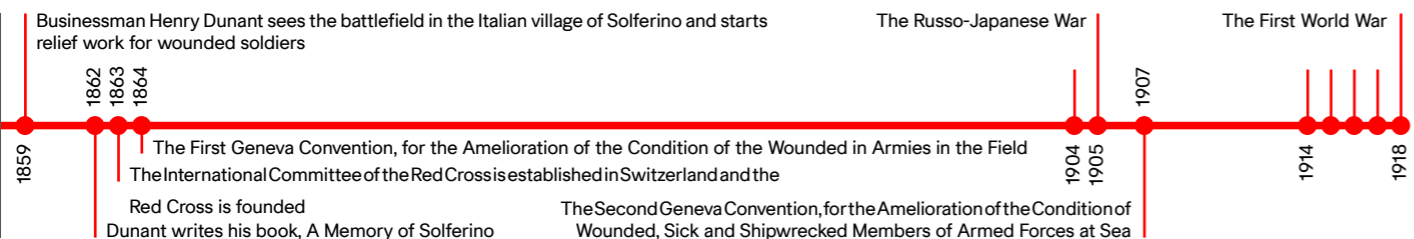
**1901:** The prize was shared between Henry Dunant, founder of the Red Cross and initiator of the Geneva Convention, and the internationally recognised peacemaker Frédéric Passy, founder and president of the first French peace society.

**1917:** The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

**1944:** The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (awarded in 1945)

**1963:** The prize was shared equally between: the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the League of Red Cross Societies (later the IFRC)

Read more on [redcross.no/folkereitt](http://redcross.no/folkereitt)



# THE DESIRE TO HELP – THE STRENGTH TO ACT

The Norwegian Red Cross was one of the first national societies in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It was founded as early as 1865 as the 'Society for the Care of the Sick and Wounded in the Battlefield and for the Support of the Wounded and the Families of those Killed'.



The Norwegian Red Cross was founded in 1865. Norway's delegates to an international conference in Berlin had previously met Henry Dunant in September 1863, just before the International Committee of the Red Cross was founded, and had become very interested in his idea for a neutral medical corps. In 1865, the recommendation to establish such a relief organisation was approved by the King in Stockholm.

### Modest beginnings

For its first twenty years, the Norwegian Red Cross limited its activities to raising money. The money was to be used in the event of war and was administered by the authorities. In 1891, it decided to carry out peacetime activities as well, which led to the release of these funds.

Nurse training became an important part of the Red Cross's disaster preparedness work. It was one of the Red Cross's main activities from the day the first class of Red Cross nurses graduated in 1896 until the university college system took over nurse training in 1973.

### Voluntary efforts

The Red Cross's activities in Norway were gathered under the umbrella of a national organisation in 1915 and it was at this time the Red Cross started organising the voluntary activities for which it is known. The Red Cross Search and Rescue Corps, which became a specialist section in 1932, has attracted more volunteers to the Red Cross than any other department.

Red Cross Youth was founded as early as 1916. In 2002, this specialist section was replaced by a new Red Cross Youth, a youth organisation that is more independent in relation to the national society and which runs its own projects.

In 1931, Heddy Astrup founded the organisation 'Oslo Ladies' Children's Relief for Northern Norway'. Twenty years later, Children's Relief became its own specialist section. The Norwegian Red Cross Visitor Service was established in 1949. It was modelled on its US sister service. Initially, the volunteers visited the chronically ill in hospital, but over time the service expanded to include other types of institutions and home visits as well. The Prison Visitor Service was established in the 1960s as a special unit within the Visitor Service that visits prison inmates.

### In times of war

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) began asking national societies to support projects early on. In 1870, the Norwegian Red Cross raised money for victims of the Franco-German War. This was the first time it had raised money for an international purpose. The First World War (1914-1918) was a turning point in the Red Cross's work. With hundreds of thousands of people either missing or prisoners of war, tracing people and visiting prisoners became key parts of

the Red Cross's work.

In the Second World War, Red Cross medical personnel fulfilled the purpose for which the Movement was founded: to treat those wounded in war. Red Cross volunteers visited prisoners of war and helped them stay in touch with their families. They also distributed food and clothing to the civilian population. Because of its efforts during the war, the Red Cross holds a special place in the hearts of many Norwegians.

### Across all borders

The Red Cross has a long tradition of sending delegations into international conflict zones. A special international office was set up in 1969. A number of development projects commenced at the same time. These efforts coincided with the establishment of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) in 1968, which was tasked with allocating money for humanitarian foreign aid. Today, the Red Cross always has delegations deployed on international operations. They primarily work within health, logistics, organisational development and information.

The efforts of the Norwegian Red Cross have evolved from helping soldiers to helping anyone in need. The range of its activities shows that it is capable of renewing itself and helping those in need at any time.



### In times of peace

In August 2009, the Norwegian Red Cross was recognised by the King in Council for its role as a provider of support in times of peace as well.

Read more about the Norwegian Red Cross:

#### Over alle grenser

by Martin Sæter (1965)

#### Barmhjertighetsfronten

by Dag F. C. Schilling & Kåre Ottersen (1995)

**Medmennesker – den beste medisin** by Knut V. Bergem (1999)

#### Grenseløs omsorg

by Erling Welle-Strand (2001)

#### Ute en vinternatt

by Nina D. Kroglund & Tove Valmot (2007)

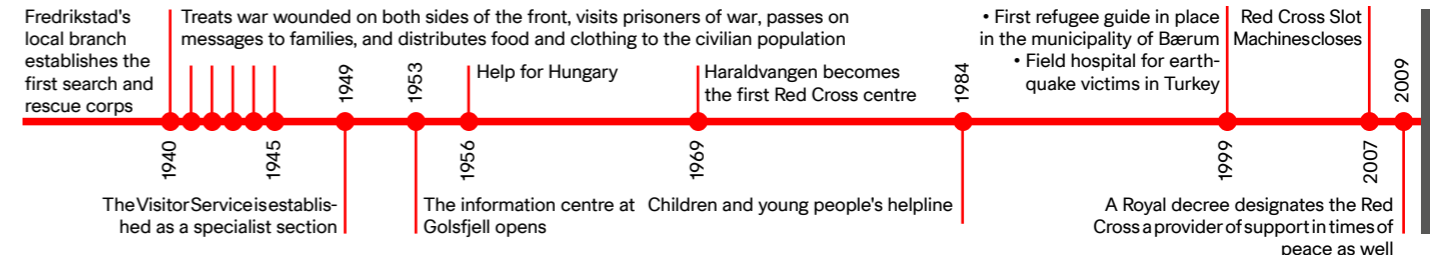
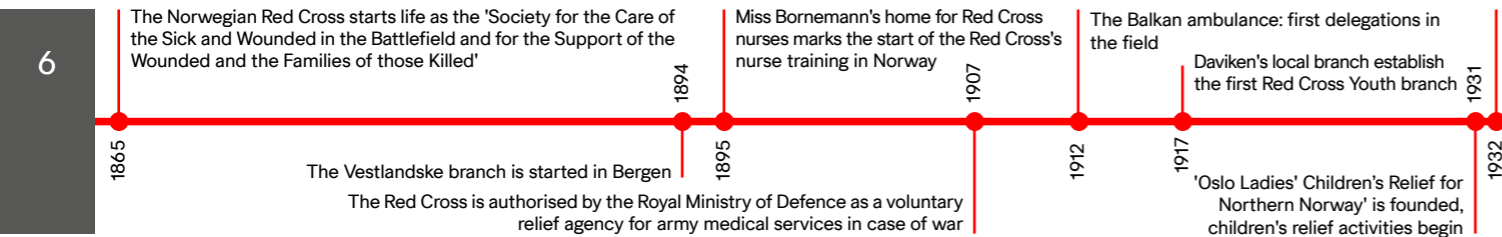
#### Med rett til å hjelpe. Historien om Norges Røde Kors

by Eldrid Mageli (2014).

## Priority areas

- Local disaster preparedness capacity. The Red Cross wants to improve local robustness and disaster preparedness by being in place before, during and after a disaster or crisis strikes.
- Search and rescue. The Red Cross wants to improve its capacity and expertise as an actor in the Norwegian Search and Rescue Service.
- Childhood. Red Cross volunteers want to be there to create safe, open and inclusive meeting places for children and young people. They especially try to organise activities for children and young people in vulnerable situations.
- Migration. The Red Cross wants to be there for migrants who need support and inclusion by helping to ensure their basic humanitarian needs are met.
- Social inclusion. The Red Cross wants to be there for people who need social contact by offering meeting places open to all and contact on a one-to-one basis and via networks.

Source: The Norwegian Red Cross's main programme for 2014-2017.



# THE BEDROCK OF THE RED CROSS

Volunteers are the bedrock of the Red Cross's activities and their contributions are worth more than their weight in gold.

The compassion, commitment and social responsibility associated with volunteering is of value in itself. Reciprocity exists between those receiving and those giving the help - both parties are there for each other. It is about respect, developing an identity and sense of belonging, social cohesion, learning new things, well-being, and a belief in the future.

## The mission

All of the activities of the Red Cross and Red Crescent societies have one main mission: to uncover, prevent and alleviate human need and suffering. Our work is based on the seven fundamental principles - one of which is voluntary service. The drive, commitment, participation and involvement of our volunteers and their contributions are vital to achieving our mission.

## On top of the world

Norway tops the European league when it comes to volunteering. The Red Cross is the largest humanitarian organisation in Norway and is represented in almost every municipality in the country. It had around 43,000 volunteers in 2014.

## The role of the Red Cross

The Red Cross plays a supporting role in the Norwegian welfare state, both in its preventive health and social care work and as part of its disaster preparedness. Our voluntary contribution is intended to supplement and complement the work of local authorities, not be a substitute for it.

For individuals and local communities this means that the Red Cross will be there when accidents and disasters strike, and that it is making an ever greater contribution to the care of children, young people and senior citizens. The Red Cross is also there for those who need new networks after being released from prison, mental illness, and substance abuse. Our volunteers help schoolchildren with their homework, visit inmates in prison, and act as guides to Norwegian society for immigrants and refugees. The Red Cross is thus helping to prevent one of the greatest challenges in our society - loneliness and isolation.

## The value of voluntary service

It is difficult to put a value on the

contribution our volunteers make.

However, according to social experts, the value of all voluntary contributions in Norway is worth more than NOK 77 billion (2013, Statistics Norway). This alone is quite impressive, but in reality the monetary value is less important than the value of volunteering itself.

The help they receive from volunteers is invaluable for many people who find themselves in a difficult life situation. Many of those who participate in the Red Cross's social care activities say that being helped by someone who is not being paid but who is there solely because they want to help feels very good. New connections are made across cultures and these help to break down prejudices and scepticism, thereby strengthening social cohesion. The Red Cross is also an arena in which volunteers feel they receive training and learn new things that are useful both in their voluntary work and on a personal level.

The feeling of being able to help - knowing that you are making a difference - is very important to volunteers. The fact that their voluntary contribution is noticed and appreciated and that they are learning something new motivates them to continue helping.

The contributions made by volunteers are also vital for the existence and development of Norwegian society. Many hospitals and



WE ARE FELLOW  
HUMAN BEINGS  
GIVING  
HOPE



HUMANITARIAN  
RELIABLE



CARES  
ARE GENEROUS  
CREDIBLE  
OPEN



institutions that were started by the Red Cross and other voluntary organisations are now run and funded by the public sector.

## More volunteers

The number of volunteers who want to make a contribution via the Red Cross is increasing. This is good because voluntary contributions are important building bricks in the work of making Norwegian society even better.

Red Cross volunteers can contribute based on their interests, spare time, and expertise. The Red Cross wants to give everyone an opportunity to volunteer, irrespective of their background.

## Training

The Red Cross is determined to maintain the high quality of all of our activities. That is why all volunteers undergo thorough training. The training is provided through a comprehensive, module based, training

programme commonly known as the Red Cross Academy. The programme is based on the 'Introduction to the Red Cross' course; a five-hour course in physical and psychosocial first aid. The training then follows the pathways for the various activities or positions in the organisation. In time, they may be given an opportunity to train to qualify as a leader or instructor.

## Volunteer policy

The Red Cross has implemented a volunteer policy to ensure that volunteers are properly looked after, motivated and followed up. It describes the Red Cross's obligations with respect to volunteers and the volunteers' obligations. The volunteer policy applies to all parts of the organisation and must be followed up by the local, district and national boards.

■ Read more about the Red Cross on: [rodekors.no](http://rodekors.no)

## The Norwegian Red Cross

As a disaster preparedness organisation, the Norwegian Red Cross is ready to help those who need it most. In emergency situations, all of the volunteers involved in these three areas contribute:

- Search and Rescue and Disaster Preparedness
- Care Activities
- Red Cross Youth

## Volunteering in Norway

- Norway has more than 100,000 voluntary organisations.
- 61% of the population (older than 16) perform some voluntary work during the year.
- This voluntary service represents around 138,800 person-years.
- The value created in the voluntary sector (including the value of volunteering) amounts to NOK 128 billion per annum (Statistics Norway, 2013).
- Volunteers are usually not members of the organisation for which they are volunteering.

## Volunteering with the Red Cross

- 43,000 volunteers (figures from 2014)
- More 30,000 of them are over 30 years old.
- A volunteer is someone who is registered for an activity/position and who volunteers at least once a year.
- Red Cross volunteers are unpaid, in line with its philosophy.
- Red Cross volunteers who take part in activities are encouraged to become members, although non-members can still volunteer.



# READY TO HELP AT *short notice*

## Volunteers in the Search and Rescue Corps

- The Red Cross Search and Rescue Corps comprises 300 search and rescue teams with around 13,000 members, around 6,000 of which are active with current Search and Rescue Corps certification. They take part in hundreds of operations every year and are ready to help 24 hours a day.
- The Red Cross Search and Rescue Corps offers its members professional development and training within search and rescue, leading operations, demanding terrain, transport and ambulance services, avalanches and landslides, communications, and operations in water.
- The Red Cross's contributions to the Norwegian Search and Rescue Service in times of peace are under the control of the police's command structure just like other search and rescue resources such as the health service, fire service and Norwegian Armed Forces.
- In a war or disaster situation, the Red Cross will make itself available as part of the overall defence system, but with clear restrictions, based on the Red Cross's mandate, concerning the type of tasks Red Cross personnel can perform.

Read more on [rodekors.no/hjelpekorps](http://rodekors.no/hjelpekorps)

One or more rescue teams are involved in searching for missing people or helping accident victims every day of the year.

The Norwegian Red Cross Search and Rescue Corps is the country's largest voluntary rescue organisation and a guiding light in search and rescue. As members of a disaster preparedness organisation, Search and Rescue Corps crews are ready to leave their warm, safe beds, a work meeting, or the dinner table at any time to help save a life. In return the Search and Rescue Corps offers its members a unique environment that offers good support, personal development, physical activity, exciting challenges, and a high degree of expertise and safety in their work.

### Comprehensive disaster preparedness

The Red Cross Search and Rescue Corps is the largest voluntary actor in the Norwegian Search and Rescue Service. It assists the police with everything from searching for missing people to support in the event of major accidents and natural disasters, and in recent years has taken part in around a thousand different operations. Volunteers contributed 38,000 hours of voluntary work in 2014.

Disaster preparedness is not just about rescues, preventing accidents is just as important. Wherever people gather, the Search and Rescue Corps will be there with medical and emergency response teams on standby. You will see us in the mountains, by the fjords, on the beaches, at sports events and concerts, and at other large arrangements. The Search and Rescue Corps also works in local communities teaching people first aid and how to

stay safe in the countryside, in the mountains, and at sea.

The Search and Rescue Corps has set up a youth section in partnership with Red Cross Youth, Red Cross Outdoors and First Aid (RØFF). RØFF is aimed at young people aged 13 to 17 who like the outdoors and want an active lifestyle. Participating in exciting, fun, and challenging activities provides RØFF members with an insight into the Red Cross's work and values, as well as safe training in first aid and rescue work. RØFF teaches young people how to stay safe in the countryside, help others, and exercise good judgement.

### Best at search and rescue from the fjords to the mountains

The Norwegian Red Cross Search and Rescue Corps has around 6,000 operational members throughout the country linked to our alert system. When the alarm goes, the police contact the leaders of the local Search and Rescue Corps, who in turn call out members and other crews as needed. The Search and Rescue Corps has specially trained members who can carry out rescues on glaciers, in the event of avalanches or landslides, on difficult terrain, and in the water. As a member you can train in first aid, communications, orienteering, avalanche and landslide rescue, searching, and leading operations. Everyone who takes part in an operation must satisfy minimum requirements regarding physical capacity and complete the Search and Rescue Corps test every three years.

The Search and Rescue Corps is equipped to assist with rescue operations in difficult conditions. It's members train for operations in the mountains in winter, above the treeline, in rivers and rapids, and in beach zones. Easter in the mountains is the busiest period for the Search and Rescue Corps when almost 140 operational centres are staffed around the clock throughout the country. Around 200 of the almost 1,000 operations a year occur during Easter. These operations can differ greatly. It may be that someone's provisions and energy reserves have been exhausted, they may have broken a leg, or a rapid change in the weather may have given rise to an emergency situation. Whatever the circumstances, the Red Cross Search and Rescue Corps will contribute expert teams and more than 80 years of experience in helping people, whether they just need a helping hand or are in serious trouble.



## The Red Cross's tracing service

**Every year thousands of people lose contact with each other because of war, conflicts, disasters or migration. 189 countries have a Red Cross or Red Crescent society and most national societies provide a tracing service. This network makes it possible to find missing people and put family members and close friends back in touch with each other.**

The Norwegian Red Cross's tracing service assists people who live in Norway and who have lost touch with family and friends due to events in the rest of the world. We also help our colleagues in other national societies who contact us because the

missing person they are seeking is thought to be in Norway. We pass on Red Cross messages to family members and friends if normal postal services have been interrupted due to war, conflict or disaster. Our service is free.

You can find more information on:

[oppspringstjenesten.no](http://oppspringstjenesten.no)  
[familylinks.icrc.org](http://familylinks.icrc.org)



You can contact us at:  
[tracing@redcross.no](mailto:tracing@redcross.no)



# SECURITY AND A SENSE OF BELONGING

People all over the world can be struck by large or small crises that result in them needing extra care.

## Humanitarian challenges and the role of the Red Cross

Many people experience unwanted loneliness. It is one of the greatest humanitarian challenges of our time. Many people find that a lack of contact with others impacts their self-esteem, health and quality of life. The Norwegian Red Cross's social care activities aim to increase its efforts to alleviate unwanted loneliness, whether it is linked to childhood, migration, old age, or the lack of a social network. Red Cross volunteers will be there offering help centred around contact with people.

As the proportion of the population who are senior citizens increases, the need for social care services aimed at this group may grow. That is why the Red Cross is reinforcing its visitor service. At the same time, the Red Cross wants to help release the power that active senior citizens represent. We are doing this by establishing meeting places where positive experiences and fellowship are a genuine alternative to loneliness and isolation.

Migrants live in a very vulnerable situation characterised by great uncertainty. The

Red Cross helps to alleviate the loneliness and psychological consequences such as uncertainty can cause. Many refugees and immigrants find settling into Norwegian society a challenge. This may be because they lack a good social network or because their Norwegian is not good enough. The Red Cross helps them through measures and activities that can lead to better integration and a stronger, more diverse community.

Children and young people need safe arenas to meet in where they are respected, included and understood. Taking part in activities together with others gives them room to breathe in their everyday lives and a valuable opportunity to just be. Red Cross volunteers are there to create safe, open and inclusive meeting places for children and young people. They especially try to organise activities for children and young people in vulnerable situations.

All of the Red Cross's social care work is based on our humanitarian values and people's need for security and to feel they belong. Our presence in local communities means we can meet the needs for social

care today and tomorrow. You will recognise our social care activities wherever you see them in the country, even though the activities are the seldom the same in each place. Local needs determine what we offer.

Some social care activities are based on two people meeting, a volunteer and a participant. For example, a resident of a nursing home, an inmate, or a refugee meeting a volunteer from the Red Cross to chat or simply spend time together. The Red Cross organises a number of group activities and meeting places in which the aim is to help participants develop a social network, have fun, and learn new skills together with others, giving them room to breathe in their everyday lives.

The Red Cross is a recognised support organisation for the Norwegian authorities in times of peace. This support role represents a partnership between the Norwegian authorities and the Red Cross aimed at carrying out humanitarian work within the framework of the fundamental principles of the Red Cross. The government understands that some of its humanitarian





tasks can be better performed by the Red Cross because we are a voluntary, universal organisation with an independent, neutral mandate.

Personal commitment is the lifeblood of the Red Cross. Red Cross volunteers help to improve the lives of people in vulnerable situations and provide insight, awareness and compassion. One of the important tasks of volunteering in general and especially in the Red Cross is to facilitate good interactions between people and through this help to improve their health and quality of life. At the same time, volunteering gives people a chance to be part of a team, to stay active and to experience being there for others. Volunteering must be encouraged and maintained through systematic recruitment, organisation, training, motivation and follow-up. The Red Cross is proud of the work we do and sets strict requirements for volunteers to ensure high quality.

#### **There for migrants who need support and inclusion**

The reasons why people cross national borders are many and complicated. Some are fleeing from brutal conflicts, natural disasters, and difficult economic conditions. While by far the majority move to a neighbouring country, this also affects immigration into Europe and Norway.

Some groups, especially undocumented migrants and those with limited access to the welfare state's safety net, may experience an acute need for shelter or access to health and medical services. Other groups, for example resettled refugees, may have more long-term needs such as gaining a foothold in the Norwegian labour market, learning Norwegian, or establishing new social networks.

The Red Cross is in a unique position to help improve their everyday lives and alleviate the humanitarian needs of migrants in Norway. Many of them are familiar with and/or have been in contact with the Red Cross or Red Crescent in either their homeland or while they were fleeing, and know and trust us. Many also trust us

because of our neutral, independent and impartial mandate. One of the key factors in our work is that we help migrants based on their needs, irrespective of their legal status or other factors such as citizenship, religion, ethnicity, etc.

The Norwegian authorities cannot alone ensure immigrants a good start to their lives in Norway. We all have a responsibility to help, both as individuals and as a society. In our experience, any sense of dignity and belonging to Norway that refugees and immigrants feel is generated through positive, compassionate interactions with the 'ordinary people' in a local community. Taking part in our activities helps immigrants acquire relevant skills, expand their network, increase their self-confidence and learn the language faster.

#### **Examples of activities:**

The Red Cross Refugee Guide Service connects refugees who have been granted residence in Norway with a volunteer guide who knows the local community. This provides refugees with a unique opportunity to establish a network in their local community, learn about Norwegian culture, and practise the language.

The life of an asylum seeker in a reception in centres is often marked by passivity, isolation and exclusion from working and social life. Many spend years in a reception centre waiting for an answer to their application for asylum or to be assigned to the municipality they will be resettled in. The Red Cross has a presence in many reception centres and provides a variety of activities that make everyday life more meaningful for the residents.

Norwegian language skills are the key to a meaningful, dignified life in Norway and are a prerequisite for taking part in and feeling a sense of belonging to society, as well as getting a job. Red Cross Norwegian lessons are a low threshold service that allows refugees and immigrants to practise their Norwegian in an informal setting. It is a supplement to, and not a replacement for, formal Norwegian tuition.

The Red Cross arranges emergency accommodation and medical services as needed and helps with access to healthcare in those cases where the health service is not meeting people's basic healthcare needs.

#### **There to create safe meeting places for children and young people**

Children and young people in Norway grow up in one of the world's richest countries with one of the world's best developed welfare systems. But not everyone has an easy childhood. Some lack adult contact and the follow-up from home necessary to play an active part in the local community. Others grow up in some degree of poverty that makes taking part in recreational activities on equal terms with others difficult. Many have difficulties with school-work that are not caught by schools or home. At a time of life when people find not fitting in especially difficult, many children and young people experience loneliness and exclusion. This can be difficult to detect in a society in which social networks are looser and more complex than before. Urbanisation brings with it the problem of violence, which requires innovative approaches to conflict resolution.

Safe, inclusive local communities are important to ensure children and young people a good environment in which to grow up. Many children and young people experience stress and difficulties in their everyday lives. They report problems such as sleeping, feelings of hopelessness and low self-esteem. The Red Cross can offer a breathing space for children and young people through existing and new activities and give them a chance to just be. The Red Cross has long experience of offering activities for children and young people, and has a large, wide-ranging network. The Red Cross Search and Rescue Corps, Red Cross Youth and Red Cross Care Activities view childhood as a shared responsibility and want the various activities and services to be seen as part of a whole.

Young people want free recreational activities and preferably ones where their



#### **Cross My Heart**

**Cross My Heart is a free, anonymous counselling service that lets children and young people talk about whatever is on their mind.**

**Telephone no.: 800 333 21 is free and open every weekday from 14:00-20:00, including public holidays.**

- Chat is open every weekday from 17:00-20:00.
- Emails are replied to within 48-72 hours.
- Forum posts (where young people can support each other) are moderated by Cross My Heart and published consecutively.
- The Red Cross is a disaster preparedness organisation and Cross My Heart extends its opening hours when the need arises.

**The adults who respond are Red Cross volunteers and anonymous to those who get in touch. They have received training in how to listen and communicate with children and young people.**



efforts are not measured and they are not required to perform well. Many of the activities arranged by the Red Cross act as meeting places for children and young people. This is important with respect to inclusion, network building, and developing an identity. The Red Cross also arranges meeting places for young people in which they can develop on their own terms. All children and young people need safe arenas in their local communities in which they can meet others and be respected, included and understood.

**Examples of activities:**

Holiday for All gives financially disadvantaged families with children an opportunity to enjoy a unique holiday experience for the whole family. Families are given a chance to enjoy good experiences together and create shared memories through a wide variety of activities that include both the children and the adults. Cross My Heart is a free, anonymous counselling service that lets children and young people call, email and chat about things that are important to them. The aim is to ensure that those who contact Cross My Heart feel supported and heard, and that those who need it will receive help changing a difficult situation.

In Children's Red Cross (BARK) we emphasise fun, diversity and learning new skills outdoors. BARK is for all children and is about using your local environment and creating local magic where children and young people live.

Red Cross Homework Support helps pupils with their schoolwork after school. The idea behind Homework Support is create a meeting place that is designed by volunteer support staff to promote success, motivation and a supportive learning environment. The Red Cross has also developed a Digital Homework Support service that

supplements the ordinary Homework Support service and helps young people throughout the country who, for various reasons, cannot make use of, or do not have access to, ordinary homework help.

Red Cross Street Mediation equips young people with the tools they need for non-violent communication, creative conflict resolution, and mediation. These are skills that many of them make use of in their own lives and communities as active conflict resolvers and positive role models.

The members of Red Cross Night Patrols are adult volunteers who are present in places where young people meet. The presence of mindful, sober adults helps keep the streets safer.

**There for people who need social contact**

Many people feel lonely; they miss close relationships and being part of a community. Loneliness is painful and can be detrimental to people's health. It can strike at any time of life, although research shows that young people and senior citizens are especially vulnerable. Four out of ten senior citizens who live alone say they lack social contact.

Mental health problems are often referred to as the new public health issue. The most common effects are anxiety and depression. Around half of the Norwegian population is expected to experience minor mental health issues or problems during their lives. At the same time, young people are increasingly suffering psychological issues such as stress and worrying about the future. (FAFO 2014)

**Examples of activities:**

The Visitor Service is the Red Cross's oldest and largest social care activity. Our volunteers visit people in their home or in institutions throughout the country. The Visitor Service also arranges excursions, exercise clas-

ses, and various events and initiatives based on local needs and opportunities. Its activities include, for example, visits with dogs and visits to elderly immigrants by visitors who speak their first language.

The prison visitor service arranges for Red Cross volunteers to visit inmates in prison who experience a high degree of loneliness and isolation within the prison walls. The visitors are someone to talk to with whom the inmates can share what is on their mind.

The Red Cross also offers resettlement services upon release. The Post-Release Networking Service offers former inmates opportunities to build up a network and follow-up during the difficult phase of reentering society and establishing a life without crime and substance abuse.

The Red Cross is the only humanitarian organisation in the field of substance abuse and mental health that is not affiliated with a specific religion or user organisation. Its focus on social inclusion therefore fills a gap. The Red Cross Network Service has initially chosen to focus its efforts on people who are struggling with substance abuse and mental health issues and on former inmates who have been released/completed their sentence and their families. It offers a wide range of activities, local solutions and variants in order to reach out to these vulnerable groups in local communities. The initiatives are based on the participant's wishes and needs.



**Nationwide core activities and other activities**

Red Cross Care Activities are a set of core activities that are quality assured on a national basis and which the National Council for Red Cross Care Activities continually reviews. If a need for such activities arises, local branches can get practical help and support with starting them. This results in predictability and ensures expertise and recognisability.

In addition to its nationwide core activities, Red Cross Care Activities works locally on many activities that reinforce a sense of belonging and security for people in vulnerable situations.

**Do you want to get involved?**

Read more about volunteering and membership on pages 26-27 or on: [rodekors.no/engasjer-deg](http://rodekors.no/engasjer-deg).

# PRIORITY AREAS 2014-2017

The Red Cross's main programme defines five priority areas, four of which relate to Red Cross Care Activities,



## Local disaster preparedness capacity

- The Red Cross wants to improve local robustness and disaster preparedness by being in place before, during and after a disaster or crisis strikes.

As a disaster preparedness organisation, the Red Cross complements the local authorities' statutory health and social disaster preparedness. Volunteers from Red Cross Care Activities play an important role in disaster preparedness in local communities. All Red Cross volunteers are offered basic training in physical and psychosocial first aid.

## Childhood

- Red Cross volunteers want to be there to create safe, open and inclusive meeting places for children and young people. They especially try to organise activities for children and young people in vulnerable situations.



## Migration

- The Red Cross wants to be there for migrants who need support and inclusion, and help ensure their basic humanitarian needs are met.



## Social inclusion

- The Red Cross wants to be there for people who need social contact by offering meeting places open to all and contact on a one-to-one basis and via networks.

The Red Cross wants to offer a variety of activities that can meet the needs of lonely people in today's society.

### Examples of activities:

BARK (Children's Red Cross), Holiday for All, Homework Support, RØFF (Red Cross Outdoors and First Aid), Digital Homework Support, Night Patrols, Street Mediation, Cross My Heart, Flex-ID, the mentor scheme for young people, resources centres, and meeting places.

Refugee Guide Service, activities in refugee reception centres, Norwegian lessons, the 'Til Topps' integration event, various activities for women with minority backgrounds, humanitarian measures for impoverished visitors, health services for undocumented migrants, and the visiting scheme at the police's immigration detention centre in Trandum.

The Visitor Service, Network Service, Post-Release Networking Service, Prison Visitor Service, Witness Support Service, and social meeting places.



# TOGETHER FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

As Norway's largest volunteer disaster preparedness organisation, the Red Cross has a responsibility to ensure that our overall capacity and efforts are well coordinated with society's other resources before, during, and after disasters and crises. A Royal decree recognises the Red Cross as a provider of support to the Norwegian authorities and we must therefore be ready to provide assistance to local authorities and the emergency services when crises strike. The Red Cross is not just on standby for extreme events. Our volunteers are there every day in all of our activities. When an unexpected and unwanted incident occurs, the Red Cross can mobilise a large network of volunteers. In addition to teams trained in search and rescue and physical and psychosocial first aid, Red Cross volunteers can do an important job within logistics and other practical tasks. Through daily meetings with people in vulnerable

situations, Red Cross volunteers acquire unique skills that are especially important in handling difficult situations in which there is a great need for compassion. Volunteers can help with evacuations or establishing and running evacuee and family centres. Volunteers who have received training and are on notification lists, and who can help with everything from tractors to preparing food or talking to someone in distress, make a great difference in managing crises. Local cooperation agreements with municipalities provide confidence in, and a good overview of, the role the Red Cross can be expected to play in local communities.

## **The Red Cross Emergency Response Guard**

The Emergency Response Guard is a low threshold concept in which local branches run courses for the public in a municipality on disaster preparedness and

psychosocial and physical first aid. The job of the Emergency Response Guard is to provide local communities with access to extra organised human resources who have at least some training should a serious incident occur. Red Cross emergency response guards receive a minimum of one evening's training per year, are registered in the Red Cross's notification systems, and are ready to assist in both the immediate and the secondary phases of a serious incident or crisis.

Emergency response guards can perform all of the duties covered by the Red Cross's mandate, principles and guidelines. For example, emergency response guards can support the Search and Rescue Corps if the Corps is on a search and rescue operation or they can assist a local authority if a crisis situation occurs.





# YOUNG PEOPLE COMMUNICATE BEST *with young people*

Red Cross Youth is the Red Cross's youth organisation. Its members and staff are aged between 13 and 30 and work directly with other young people on activities, run awareness campaigns, and try to influence policy. We are for, of and with young people and resolve humanitarian challenges through commitment, democracy and knowledge.

#### 'På flukt' role play

The 'På flukt' role play game lets you physically feel what it is like to be a refugee. The game lasts 24 hours. Red Cross Youth arranges 'På flukt' throughout Norway to improve understanding and tolerance.

#### Activities in refugee reception centres

Living in a refugee reception centre can be both lonely and boring. In Red Cross Youth you can make the everyday lives of young refugees easier, while getting to know exciting people from around the world.

#### International youth programmes

Do you want to travel abroad and work with Red Cross Youth? The youth delegation programme is an exchange programme involving mutual exchanges of young

volunteers. Every year, new volunteers travel to different places in the world to work for nine months.

#### Social meeting places

Red Cross Youth arranges various social meeting places for young people where everyone is welcome to meet others, contribute, and learn something new. As one of our volunteers, you can help to arrange social meeting places where you live.

#### Sex education

It is important that young people have a healthy relationship to sex and sexuality, with good attitudes, good self-esteem, and confidence. As a Red Cross Youth volunteer you can help to create safe, informal arenas in which young people can talk about sexual health and learn from others.

#### Campaigns

Red Cross Youth runs a major campaign every year in which we focus on a topic of current interest to young people. Working on a campaign gives you an opportunity to do things like arrange seminars, produce films or theatre, write letters to editors, and take part in fundraising campaigns, stunts, and collecting signatures for petitions.

**In Red Cross Youth you can help make a real difference in people's lives. We have many meaningful activities you can get involved in.**

■ Read more on [rodekorsungdom.no](http://rodekorsungdom.no)



**Røde Kors**  
**ungdom**  
Norwegian Red Cross Youth



## This is Red Cross Youth

Red Cross Youth works towards improving the lives of young people through voluntary work. We are a spokesperson for young people in vulnerable situations and work to increase understanding, compassion and tolerance.

# ALWAYS THERE

All of our international work is based on our main goal of improving local robustness by being in place before, during and after a disaster or crisis strikes.

## The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has international, national and local roots. This affords it both legitimacy and representativeness in relation to the target groups and those on whose behalf the Movement speaks. Red Cross and Red Crescent societies are natural parts of civil society in their country, while they perform their work in cooperation with the authorities at a national, regional and local level. The Red Cross prioritises supporting the development of Red Cross and Red Crescent societies because this improves disaster preparedness, including prevention and risk reduction, and thus the capacity to act.

### Emergency help

The fact that the Red Cross and Red Crescent are already in place in 189 countries means that the Movement is well-placed to act quickly and get help to where it is needed when crises and disasters strike. The ICRC and IFRC have a global network that coordinates the relief work and assists with funds through the Red Cross's disaster fund. Teams of specially trained personnel have also been established that can leave at short notice to carry out the initial searches after a disaster. The Norwegian Red Cross has specialised in health with equipment (field hospitals) and personnel who are specially trained in surgery, general medicine, public health, water, and psycho-social services.

### Rules of war

Rules of war. The Red Cross has a mandate through the Geneva Conventions to visit prisoners of war and to work to protect civilians in war zones. It is the red cross or red crescent emblems that enable our volunteers to reach the victims so they can render aid, whether this involves those wounded in war or getting medical assistance, food and water to an area in need.

Attacks on health personnel are an increasing threat in many of the conflicts around the world today. The Red Cross actively works to ensure that the protection of humanitarian workers is respected so they can work safely to deliver vital assistance to everyone affected by conflicts.

The Geneva Conventions give the Red Cross the right to visit prisoners of war and to ensure compliance with the international rules for the treatment of such prisoners. They must be protected from humiliating and degrading treatment, violence and threats, and they must be treated with respect. The Red Cross also passes on messages between prisoners and their families so that the families know that they are alive and can stay in touch during their detention. People who have lost contact with each other because of war, conflict, disaster or migration can get help with searching, finding and restoring contact. If normal mail services are interrupted, Red Cross messages can be sent between family and friends so that contact can be maintained.

Wars often leave many people with permanent injuries. International agreements that prohibit the use of certain types of weapon also oblige states to provide the necessary help to survivors who are affected by these weapons, such as landmines and cluster bombs. The rehabilitation of people injured in war is an important task for the Red Cross in many conflict zones where the local authorities

cannot cope with the demand. Many people with other types of injury and physical disabilities also receive help improving their mobility and other necessary treatment. The Red Cross actively works to improve the inclusion of people with disabilities in all of our work and throughout the organisation.

### Natural disasters and climate change: prevention and disaster preparedness

In the period 2004-2013, a total of 6,525 natural disasters affected around two billion people on a global basis with a total estimated cost of almost NOK 1,000 billion. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement works to prevent and alleviate the humanitarian consequences of both natural disasters and climate change, primarily through improving preparedness so it can respond when a disaster strikes and preventing the consequences of disasters through risk reducing programmes.

Good preparedness means having good, national organisations that have the capacity and expertise necessary to help when a disaster strikes and who work on result-oriented prevention programmes that reduce the negative consequences natural disasters and climate change can have on both affected communities and individuals. Local communities and their knowledge and actions are key when it comes to successfully reducing risks in advance of a disaster and vulnerabilities in the long-term. Investing in prevention work produces socio-economic benefits by reducing the humanitarian and economic consequences of a disaster.

### Preventive health work

We still have a long way to go before everyone has access to healthcare services. Needs are also changing as the global situation changes. Population growth, urbanisation, and changing eating habits combined with increased migration, including refugees and internally displaced people, are creating new health challenges. Many countries also face a double health threat in which their population has high rates of both infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis and non-infectious diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and challenges associated with mental health.

One of the UN's stated sustainability goals is to ensure and promote good health for all. The Red Cross is supporting this goal by carrying out preventive and health promoting work through locally based health education initiatives and first aid, and helping to ensure that health services are extended to difficult to reach places by acting as a liaison between local communities and public health services. Through this work we prevent and identify diseases that often strike populations and refer patients for further medical help where possible. Local volunteers and community leaders are together building stronger systems and services to deal with common health challenges such as emergency transport for pregnant women. In some cases where there is no functioning health service the Red Cross can ensure access to the necessary services until the authorities are able to take over the task. At the same time, local communities are increasingly gaining access to technology

that provides great opportunities for more locally run, needs-based initiatives, such as reporting cases of infectious diseases like cholera or the Ebola virus. In addition to traditional education and information work, the Red Cross is increasingly using technological tools such as mobile phones, outdoor cinemas and radio programmes in its health work, as well as social mobilisation, to ensure that people learn more about how to prevent diseases, vital vaccines, and medical treatment so they are better equipped to protect themselves and actively seek out the help they need.

### Gender and diversity

All people are different, with differing needs, aptitudes, and challenges, depending on their gender, sexual orientation, age, language, functional ability, religion, nationality, ethnicity, and socio-economic background. The Red Cross, together with the Federation and the ICRC, tailors all of its work to ensure that help and activities are available to everyone, especially the most vulnerable. National societies often have specific activities for groups that suffer discrimination and stigmatisation in society.

The work of preventing and responding to gender-based violence is also important, both in times of peace and in conflict situations. National societies work in local communities to change attitudes and help those subjected to this. The ICRC specifically works to prevent and respond to sexual violence in conflicts, which is often used as part of strategic warfare and is a clear breach of international humanitarian law.



## Make a difference!

If you want to get involved in the Norwegian Red Cross as a member, regular donor, or to support a special activity, see [rodekors.no](http://rodekors.no) for information on how you can make a difference and help others.

# HELPING COSTS

The Norwegian Red Cross needs good supporters so it can continue helping, both in Norway and abroad.

Its local relief work is largely funded by donations from private individuals and companies. The Norwegian Red Cross receives support for most of its international activities from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and NORAD.

### Funding sources

Its most important sources of funding are membership subscriptions, donations from regular donors, and fundraising campaigns. Membership subscriptions go to the local Red Cross branch, while regular donors can choose between the donor programmes 'Barn i Norge' ('Children in Norway'), 'Nødhjelpsgiver' ('Emergencies Donor') or 'Røde Kors-fadder' ('Red Cross Sponsor'). Local Red Cross branches also secure funding through their own fundraising efforts such as street collections, jumble sales, lotteries, bingo, etc.

### Door-to-door campaigns

When a major disaster strikes, we immediately organise a fundraising campaign to

raise funds for the victims of that disaster. Members and other volunteers across the country will take collection boxes and go from door to door.

### Valuable gifts

We greatly appreciate the fact that many people remember the Red Cross in their wills, in bequests, or make donations in connection with funerals. The Norwegian business sector is increasingly focusing on its corporate social responsibility. The Red Cross has a number of long-term corporate partners who make significant financial contributions to the organisation and who we also work together with in many socially beneficial areas, nationally and internationally. Many companies also make one-off donations or donate royalties or sponsorship support.

### Panto, Grasrotandelen and Norsk Tipping

The Norwegian Red Cross has, together with the Thon Group, established a new

lottery, Panto, in which the deposit on returned bottles is your stake. In the years ahead, this lottery will make a steadily more important contribution to the Red Cross's funding. These funds benefit both local and national activities. At the same time, the Red Cross has, thanks to Norsk Tipping, the national lottery operators in Norway, become one of many causes you can support via football pools cards. 'Grasrotandelen' where players can choose to support a local organisation focuses squarely on local affiliation and provides support to local initiatives.

The Norwegian Red Cross is always developing new sources of funding and greatly appreciates all of the funds that are raised. Every kroner helps to ensure we can help as many as possible.

■ If you want to become a member of donate money, see [rodekors.no](http://rodekors.no) or text 'medlem' to 2221.

# MORE TO GIVE...



Red Cross volunteers make an enormous contribution by giving their time to help others. The Red Cross is seeking even more volunteers willing to do their bit and make a difference so that it can reach those who need someone to care.

### Do you want to make a difference to someone?

The Red Cross always needs new volunteers who care. Being a volunteer is both educational and rewarding. You will gain useful life experience and at the same time helping others feels great.

### Have a few hours to spare?

If you want to volunteer for a few hours a month, you have lots of options. As a homework volunteer you can help children and young people. The Red Cross helpline for children and young people always needs people who can listen. If you join the Night Patrols, you will be helping to make the night safer just by being there.

Some of the Red Cross's activities require specialist knowledge that can be acquired by taking courses over a longer period. The Red Cross Search and Rescue Corps will provide you with useful training in first aid and great outdoor experiences, while you are also helping to save lives.

Contact your local branch and ask how

you can make a difference.

The main criteria are that you care and want to do something for others.

### Get started

The Norwegian Red Cross consists of, and was built by, volunteers. We are constantly evolving as pilot projects reach new disadvantaged groups.

If your local branch does not have any activities in areas that interest you, they can help you start them. Our projects are often started by a few enthusiastic people like Heddy Astrup's sewing club that inspired the children's relief efforts or the refugee guide service in Bærum that is now nationwide.

### Become a member

Being a member costs a bit, but you will be helping the efforts of the Red Cross that you have read about in this brochure.

As a member of the Norwegian Red Cross, you will receive the Red Cross magazine in the post. You will also receive

membership benefits from a number of our sponsors.

■ Join us now on:

[rodekors.no/medlem](http://rodekors.no/medlem)

### rodekors.no

Our website, [www.rodekors.no](http://www.rodekors.no), is updated daily. Here you can read humanitarian news, view films and photos, browse our archive, and see what the Red Cross is up to where you live.



The Red Cross magazine is the Red Cross's membership magazine and comes out four times a year. The magazine takes the pulse of the organisation and contains articles on the Red Cross's national and international work.



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