

Fundamental Principles

Humanity
Impartiality
Neutrality
Independence
Voluntary Service
Unity
Universality

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Who We Are

We are a national charity
with international reach.



Mission Statement

Our mission is to identify and deliver impartial humanitarian assistance to those who are most in need, offering hope to vulnerable communities both at home and abroad.



Chairperson & Secretary General Statement

The context for reflecting on the work of the Irish Red Cross in 2017 is one of major change in the political, social and economic life of Ireland. While economic progress continues at a pace with unemployment decreasing and our national debt coming under control, we are faced with the social consequences of homelessness and unequal access to health care. As a nation we are increasingly vulnerable to the fluctuations of world markets and new political pressures from thought leaders in other countries whose values have become openly less co-operative and focused on narrow self-interest models of economic and social policy. While Ireland has remained somewhat removed from these trends, it is a concern for the Irish Red Cross whose values focus on working together to promote equality, humanity, solidarity and neutrality—the core principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

In 2017, the Irish Red Cross engaged with Irish society in welcoming Syrian refugees to Ireland, and providing accommodation and integration supports. The Irish Red Cross also ran appeals to raise money to aid people experiencing disasters in Syria, Yemen, Mexico and Donegal. Irish Red Cross volunteers provided first aid support at 900 events around the country, which resulted in a number of life-saving interventions. Irish Red Cross members trained 7,726 people in basic and advanced first aid, empowering them to care for people in their own family, community and work. Much of this training was delivered by the Irish Red Cross members on a voluntary basis and stands as a beacon against the new values of self-interest trending in other societies.

Ireland has a strong tradition in voluntary activity and service. The role of the volunteer is one that adds value to both the volunteer and the community served. Ireland, in 2017, has seen new, more stringent requirements placed on those who volunteer and the organisations they serve. The Irish Red Cross recognises the need and value in these new standards and requirements and in 2017, continued to invest in ensuring the standards of training for staff and members is appropriate, and that governance responsibilities required by the State are met. This new regulatory environment has put additional pressure on voluntary organisations to have resources in place to ensure individual and organisational compliance. This certainly requires additional reserves and operational funding—from existing limited resources—and causes those involved in the governance role to reflect on their responsibilities in a different manner than in the past.

Irish Red Cross members trained 7,726 people in basic and advanced first aid.

The Irish Red Cross has expended significant resources in ensuring the rigours of the Governance code are adhered to. The organisation is exposed to some risks and these have been identified, discussed and as far as possible, mitigated. In this area, 2017 has seen considerable work undertaken in the areas of insurance, reserves, depreciation, the review and updating of all key financial and operational policies, and the preparation for the introduction of the new GDPR data-protection regime. Developmentally, the Irish Red Cross began planning for building a new national strategy with our members. This will, we hope, pave the way for the growth of the Irish Red Cross into the 2020s.

There were important milestones in 2017. The Jasmine Ball, attended by 600 people, raised €90,000 for Syria. Not only was the ball a wonderful event but it raised awareness of breaches in international humanitarian law with the killing of civilians in Syria. In Ireland, the Irish Red Cross set up a migration support infrastructure for Syrian refugees and placed 53 people in accommodation in communities across Ireland during the second half of 2017. Significant work on policy development also took place in beginning the process of designing a new five-year strategy.

The management and administration of two government flooding schemes saw the Irish Red Cross staff working with the advice and support of our members on the ground who had the day-to-day experience of supporting people affected by floods.

Meeting the training and management standards required by PHECC in the design and delivery of member and public-training courses was an achievement again, which required the co-operation of Irish Red Cross staff and volunteers. Another accomplishment was the setting up of a new 365 email communication network for our members and operationalising the course-booker portal for commercial training services which has enabled more efficient ways of communicating with our customers. On the membership front, 2017 saw the design and launch of a new membership pathway for prospective members. It is hoped this new pathway will enable the Society to integrate new members more quickly in 2018.

We wish to thank the members of the various volunteer committees of the Irish Red Cross who co-ordinate the work of the organisation, the members of the General Assembly who guide the organisation, and the Board of Directors who generously give their precious time to the governance of the Irish Red Cross. All of these bodies feed into the decision making of the Irish Red Cross and are significantly supported by the professional advice and expertise of our staff in Merrion Square and our delegates working on our behalf in countries such as Niger, Yemen, Colombia, Iraq, South Sudan and Nepal. Finally we wish to acknowledge the support the Irish Red Cross has received from a variety of Government departments and agencies in terms of funding and guidance, especially the Department of Defence, the Department of Justice, the Office of Public Works, Irish Aid, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the regulatory bodies of the Charities Regulator and Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC).

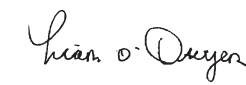
RISK POLICY

The overall risk policy of the Irish Red Cross is to maintain a low-risk operational environment. All key risks to the Society are identified and recorded on a risk register. Risks are categorised under headings such as; severity of impact, likelihood of occurrence, and the risk appetite of the organisation.

The Register is prepared regularly by the management team and reviewed by the Board of Directors.



Pat Carey
Chairperson



Liam O'Dwyer
Secretary General

Réamhrá na Tuarascála Bliantúla

Is é an comhthéacs ina ndéantar machnamh ar obair Chumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann ná ceann de mhóráthru i saol polaitiúil, sóisialta agus eacnamaíoch na hÉireann. Cé go bhfuil dul chun cinn eacnamaíoch ag coinneáil cothrom le laghdú na dífhostaíochta agus le smacht á chur ar ár bhfiachas náisiúnta, tá iarmhairtí sóisialta na heaspa dídine agus na rochtana éagothroime ar chúram sláinte os ár gcomhair. Mar náisiún, táimid leochaileach ar bhonn méadaitheach maidir le luaineachtaí na margaí domhanda agus brúnna polaitiúla nua ó cheannairí smaointeachais i dtíortha eile ar lú comhar anois a gcuid luachanna ar bhonn oscailte agus iad dírithe ar shamhlacha féinleasa cúnga de bheartas eacnamaíoch agus sóisialta. Cé go bhfuil Éire fós ar leithlis ar dhóigh ó na treochoí sin, is ábhar imní é sin do Chumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann a bhfuil a luachanna fócasaithe ar chomhoibriú chun comhionannas, daonnacht, dlúthpháirtíocht agus neodracht a chur chun cinn—príomhphrionsabail na Croise Deirge Idirnáisiúnta agus an Chorráin Dheirg.

In 2017, i rannpháirtíocht le sochaí na hÉireann, chuir Cumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann fáilte roimh dhídeanaithe ón tSiria go hÉirinn agus soláthraíodh cóiríocht agus tacaíochtaí um imeascadh. Reáchtáil Cumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann achainíocha le haghaidh airgead a thiomsú chun cuidiú le daoine i dtubaistí sa tSiria, in Éimin, i Meicsiceo agus i nDún na nGall. Sholáthair oibríthe deonacha Chumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann tacaíocht gharchabhrach ag 900 imeacht ar fud na tíre, a raibh líon d’idirghabhálacha tarrthála ina dtoradh orthu. Rinne baill Chumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann 7,726 daoine a oiliúint ar gharchabhair bhunúsach agus ardleibhéil, agus cumasaíodh iad chun cúram a thabhairt do bhaill a dteaghlach, a bpobal agus a n-áite oibre. Sholáthair baill Chumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann cuid mhór den oiliúint sin ar bhonn deonach agus seasann sé mar rabhchán i gcoinne na luachanna féinleasa nua atá mar threocht i sochaithe eile.

Tá traidisiún láidir ann in Éirinn maidir le gníomhaíocht agus seirbhís dheonach. Is ionann ról an oibrí dheonaigh agus ról lena gcuirtear breisluach leis an oibrí deonach agus leis an bpobal dá ndéantar an tseirbhís araon. In 2017 in Éirinn, chonacthas riachtanais nua, níos déine arna gcur ar dhaoine a dhéanann obair dheonach agus ar na heagraíochtaí dá gcuireann siad an tseirbhís ar fáil. Aithníonn Cumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann an gá leis na caighdeán agus riachtanais nua sin agus an luach atá iontu agus in 2017, lean sí le hinfheistíocht a dhéanamh chun a chinntiú go bhfuil caighdeán na hoiliúna don fhoireann agus do na baill iomchuí. Cuireadh brú breise ar eagraíochtaí deonacha leis an timpeallacht rialála nua chunacmhainní a bheith acu d’fhonn comhlíontacht a chinntiú i leith an duine aonair agus na heagraíochta araon. Teastaíonn cúlchistí agus maoiniú oibríochtúil ón gcinnteacht sin—ó acmhainní reatha atá teoranta—agus mar thoradh air sin ní mór dóibh siúd a bhfuil baint acu le ról an rialachais machnamh a dhéanamh ar a gcuid freagrachtaí ar bhealach difriúil ná mar a rinne siad san am atá caite.

Chaith Cumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann acmhainní suntasacha chun a chinntiú go gcloítear le déine chod an Rialachais. Tá an eagraíocht

Rinne baill Chumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann 7,726 daoine a oiliúint ar gharchabhair bhunúsach agus ardleibhéil.

neamhchosanta ar roinnt rioscaí agus rinneadh iad a shainaithint, a phlé agus, a mhéid arbh fhéidir, a mhaolú. Sa réimse sin, rinneadh obair nach beag in 2017 maidir le hárachas, cúlchistí, dímhéas, athbhreithniú agus nuashonrú na bpríomhbheartas airgeadais agus oibríochtúil uile, agus maidir le hullmhúchán do thabhairt isteach an chórais nua um chosaint sonraí, is é sin an GDPR (an Rialachán Ginearálta maidir le Cosaint Sonraí). Maidir le cúrsaí forbartha, chuir Cumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann tús le pleanáil le haghaidh straitéis nua a fhorbairt lenár mbaill. Tá súil againn go ndéanfar an bealach a réiteach leis sin maidir le fás Chumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann ar aghaidh sna 2020í.

Baineadh garspríocanna tábhachtacha amach in 2017. Thiomsaigh an Bál Seasmhaine €90,000 don tSiria agus 600 daoine i láthair. Ní amháin go raibh an bál ina imeacht iontach ach músclaíodh feachtas leis chomh maith ar sháruithe ar dhlí daonnúil idirnáisiúnta trí mharú sibhialtach sa tSiria. In Éirinn, bhunaigh Cumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann bonneagar tacaíochta um imirce do dhídeanaithe ón tSiria agus chuir sí 53 daoine i gcóiríocht i bpobail ar fud na hÉireann sa dara leath de 2017. Rinneadh obair shuntasach freisin ar thús a chur leis an bpróiseas de straitéis chúig bliana nua a fhorbairt.

Trí dhá scéim um thuille de chuid an rialtais, d’oibrigh foireann Chumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann le comhairle agus le tacaíocht ónár mbaill ar an láthair a raibh an t-eispéireas laethúil acu de thacaíocht a thabhairt do dhaoine a bhí buailte le tuille.

Ba ghnóthachtáil é freisin comhlíonadh na gcaighdeán oiliúna agus bainistíochta a theastaíonn ón PHECC (an Chomhairle um Chúram Éigeandála Réamhospidéil) maidir le cúrsaí oiliúna a dhearadh agus a sholáthar do bhaill agus don phobal, rud óna dteastaigh comhoibriú fhoireann agus oibríthe deonacha Chumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann. Ba ghnóthachtáil eile é ná líonra cumarsáide ríomhphoist 365 nua a bhunú dár mbaill agus an tairseach áirithe cúrsa a oibríochtúil le haghaidh seirbhísí oiliúna tráchtála lena gcumasaíodh bealaí chun cumarsáid níos éifeachtaí a dhéanamh lena gcustaiméirí. Ó thaobh na ballraíochta de, in 2017 dearadh agus seoladh conair ballraíochta nua do bhaill ionchasacha. Táthar ag súil go gcuirfear ar chumas an Chumainn baill nua a chomhtháthú ar bhonn níos tapa in 2018.

Is mian linn ár mbaíochas a ghabháil le baill coistí éagsúla na n-oibríthe deonacha de chuid Chumann

Croise Deirge na hÉireann a chomhordaíonn obair na heagraíochta, le baill an Chomhthionóil Ghinearálta a dhéanann an eagraíocht a stiúradh, agus leis an mBord Stiúirthóirí a thugann a gcuid ama luachmhair chun Cumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann a rialú. Rannchuidíonn na comhlachtaí uile sin le cinnteoireacht Chumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann agus tugtar tacaíocht shuntasach dóibh tríd an gcomhairle shaineolaíoch agus an saineolas ónár bhfoireann i gCearnóg Mhuirfean agus ónár dtoscairí atá ag obair thar ár gceann i dtíortha amhail an Nígir, an Éimin, an Cholóim, an Iaráic, an tSúdáin Theas agus Neipeal. Faoi dheireadh, is mian linn aitheantas a thabhairt don tacaíocht a fuair Cumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann ó éagsúlacht de ranna agus de ghníomhaireachtaí an Rialtais i dtéarmaí an mhaoinithe agus na treorach, go háirithe an Roinn Cosanta, an Roinn Dlí agus Cirt, Oifig na nOibreacha Poiblí, Cúnamh Éireann, an Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus comhlachtaí rialála Rialtóir na gCarthanas agus na Comhairle um Chúram Éigeandála Réamhospidéil (PHECC).

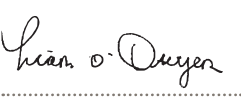
BEARTAS RIOSCA

Is ionann beartas riosca foriomlán Chumann Croise Deirge na hÉireann agus timpeallacht oibríochtúil íseal-riosca a choimeád. Déantar na príomhrioscaí uile i leith an Chumainn a shainaithint agus a thaifeadadh ar chlár rioscaí. Déantar rioscaí a chatagóiriú faoi cheannuidil amhail; déine na hiarmharta, dóchúlacht an tarlaithe, agus inghlacthacht riosca na heagraíochta.

Ullmhaíonn an fhoireann bhainistíochta an Clár ar bhonn rialta agus déanann an Bord Stiúirthóirí athbhreithniú air.



Pat Carey
Cathaoirleach



Liam O’ Dwyer
Ard-Rúnaí

2017

A Review

Strategically, in 2017, the Society sought to develop its profile in the minds of the general public by using targeted press releases, social media, and advertising member-focused activities and events, to give people an understanding of the variety of work undertaken by the Irish Red Cross, especially in Ireland. The communications and social media strategy focused largely on the work of the members at first aid events, and promoting high-profile interventions which saved the lives of members of the general public, and members work in supporting their communities during adverse weather conditions. The Jasmine Ball was a key profile event in 2017 with 600 people present including many public figures and guests from the corporate sector. This was with a view to developing an understanding of the Society and its work in Syria.

The developments of both an International and a Migration strategy during 2017 has also focused the Society, on key areas such as our work with refugees under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme and family reunification, as well as our programmes in countries such as Niger, India and Indonesia. Insufficient funding resources in late 2017 led the board to decide to close the programme supported by the Irish Red Cross in Niger by mid 2018.

In late 2017, the Society decided to prepare for the development of a new strategic plan in 2018. Planning and national consultation began in late 2017 with meetings of the General Assembly, Board and Senior Management. Meetings with membership will take place in 2018. The outcome of these consultations will be the development of a new strategy for 2019 and beyond, which will replace the current plan, "The Way To 2018".

Another key area in 2017 was the reshaping of the structure of the support arrangements provided by the central support office to the membership. This is critical going forward given the many new requirements for not-for-profit organisations in Ireland such as the implementation of the Governance Code, SORP and GDPR.

These priorities reflect the implementation of the vision of the Irish Red Cross to provide quality services to vulnerable people and communities at home and abroad.



Structure, Governance & Management

LEGAL STATUS

The Irish Red Cross was formally established in 1939 under the terms of the Red Cross Act 1938, Statutory Instrument 206/139. The Society's constitution was initially based on this statutory instrument and includes amendments for the Geneva Conventions of 1949, their additional Protocols of 1977 and 2005 (the Geneva Conventions) to which Ireland is a party, together with Acts of the Oireachtas and relevant provisions of the International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies. The Society's constitution was further amended in 2012 by internally-ratified changes. The legal objectives of the Society are to furnish volunteer aid to the sick, wounded and shipwrecked at sea or armed forces in time of war; to furnish relief to prisoners of war and to such civilians as are protected persons; in time of peace or war to carry on and assist in work for the improvement of health, the prevention of disease and the mitigation of suffering throughout the world; to act in case of armed conflict, and in peacetime to prepare to act, in all the fields covered by the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols of 1977 and 2005 and on behalf of all war victims, both civilian and military. Such legal frameworks underline the importance of the Irish Red Cross Society as an auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, be it in situations of armed conflict or natural or man-made disasters. The Society is registered as a charity in Ireland and as such, is answerable to the Charities Regulatory Authority and subject to the requirements of the Charities Act 2009. The Irish Red

Cross operates in its own right, but also as part of the wider International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement which is the world's largest humanitarian network.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The General Assembly is the highest deliberative authority of the Irish Red Cross. It elects the majority of the members to the Board of Directors. Under our Constitution enacted in April 2012, more than 75 percent of the members of the General Assembly are elected as representatives of areas by the local membership of the Society.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is the body governing the Irish Red Cross between sessions of the General Assembly. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary of the General Assembly are automatically elected to the Board. It has a maximum of 14 members. Two are nominated by the Chairperson to add specific expertise and a maximum of four representatives are appointed by Government. Directors can serve up to two terms of three years after which they are obliged to step down for a minimum of three years. A skills matrix has been developed to assist with recruitment of Directors with specific expertise.

MANAGEMENT AND DECISION MAKING

The Board of Directors is vested with all the necessary powers to carry out the aims of the Irish Red Cross. The focus of the Board is more particularly on matters of policy and oversight. It works closely with the Secretary General, senior management staff and the Chairpersons of the various working and advisory groups who together are tasked with the implementation of policy. Strong emphasis is now placed on the induction, training and development of our Board members, and various presentations, updates and training opportunities are provided to ensure they are appropriately prepared for their roles. The Board of Directors met on six occasions in the course of 2017 and conducted regular reviews of the Irish Red Cross' system of internal controls, performance reporting, policies and procedures. This ensured that expenditure was appropriate and reasonable, funds were spent or managed in accordance with approved procedures and a full and accurate account was maintained of all financial transactions. An audit and risk committee is in operation to support the Board in meeting this obligation. The Board is also supported in its work by a number of volunteer working groups.

BEST PRACTICE IN GOVERNANCE

The Board of Directors is committed to implementing best practice in governance throughout the Society and endeavours to comply at all times with the Code of Practice for Good Governance of Community, Voluntary and Charitable Organisations in Ireland (the Governance Code). It recognises that this is an ongoing, continuous improvement process and monitors the Society's adherence to the Governance Code by means of an implementation tool developed by the Irish Governance Code Working Group (See www.governancecode.ie for more information). The Board also convened two general assembly meetings and a strategy day to begin planning for the development of a new five-year strategy.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Irish Red Cross risk management system is managed by the Secretary General and overseen on behalf of the Board by the Audit and Risk Committee. A Risk Register identifies the key risks the Society is subject to and specifies the risk appetite for each item on the register. The Society also assesses relevant internal controls and puts in place risk action plans to mitigate identified risks within Board-approved tolerances. The key risks currently identified for the Irish Red Cross are:

- Major scandal, in Ireland or internationally, which further damages reputation of the sector.
- Material breach of employee-related, health and safety legislative/regulatory requirements.
- Significant information technology failure or a cyber security incident. Identified risks and internal controls are subject to a schedule of periodical reviews. These are carried out by management, internal auditors and by external parties such as major funders or PHECC. Risk is further mitigated by appropriate insurance. The Society has appointed an insurance specialist to advise on the level and extent of insurance cover necessary for our various operating activities. Every three years, an independent broker reassesses insurance cover. The Irish Red Cross is committed to high levels of transparency. To this end, the Constitution, Strategic Plan (and strategy implementation plan), financial reports, and major policy documents are all published on the Society's website (www.redcross.ie). The financial accounts are prepared according to the Financial Reporting Standard (FRS) 102 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 2015 Accounting and Reporting by Charities, issued by the Charity Commissioners in the UK and are audited by BDO, a major Irish firm of Chartered Accountants. The Irish Red Cross' major policy statements cover areas such as delegated authorities; financial management and internal controls; risk management; whistleblowing; complaints; respect and dignity; safeguarding; Garda vetting; and data protection. The Society is subject to Pre-hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC)

Recognised Institution Quality Standards reviews and has published the findings of its latest review (September 2015) on www.redcross.ie. The Society has also implemented the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising and the Dóchas Code of Conduct for Images and Messaging which represent best practice in these areas.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Every member of the Board of Directors signs a Code of Conduct and is asked to identify general business interests and associations of importance. If a matter comes before the Board which may cause a conflict of interest the Director in question is asked to exclude themselves from the meeting.

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

Decisions of the Board are taken on a consensus basis following discussion. All decisions have a proposer and seconder unless it is evident that there is full agreement. If there is a decision which requires a vote, an open vote will be taken and the majority view will be the decision. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson has the casting vote.

Induction for Board Trustees

All Board Trustees participate in induction training in the areas of governance. This training is delivered by an outside specialist with the intention of ensuring that all Board members are aware of their responsibilities.

An induction pack is prepared for all Board Directors which includes:

- 1. Past Annual Reports
- 2. Statement of Directors Roles
- 3. Code of Conduct
- 4. Respect & Dignity Policy
- 5. Disclosure of Directors Interest
- 6. List of Red Cross Policy Documents
- 7. Irish Red Cross Constitution
- 8. Irish Red Cross Operating Rules
- 9. Governance Code
- 10. Compliance at November 2018 with Governance Code
- 11. IFRC—National Society Guidelines
- 12. Risk Matrix at November 2018
- 13. Contact Details for Board
- 14. Towards 2018 Strategy
- 15. Staff Structure Organogram
- 16. Volunteer Handbook
- 17. IRC Structures
- 18. Working Groups/Standing Committees
- 19. Terms of Reference for Working Groups/Standing Committees

New trustees to the Board also participate in an induction session with each of the senior management team to ensure they are appraised as to the key operations of the Society.

All Trustees sign a Code of Conduct, Respect and Dignity Policy and a Disclosure Relevant Directors Interests.

Future Plans

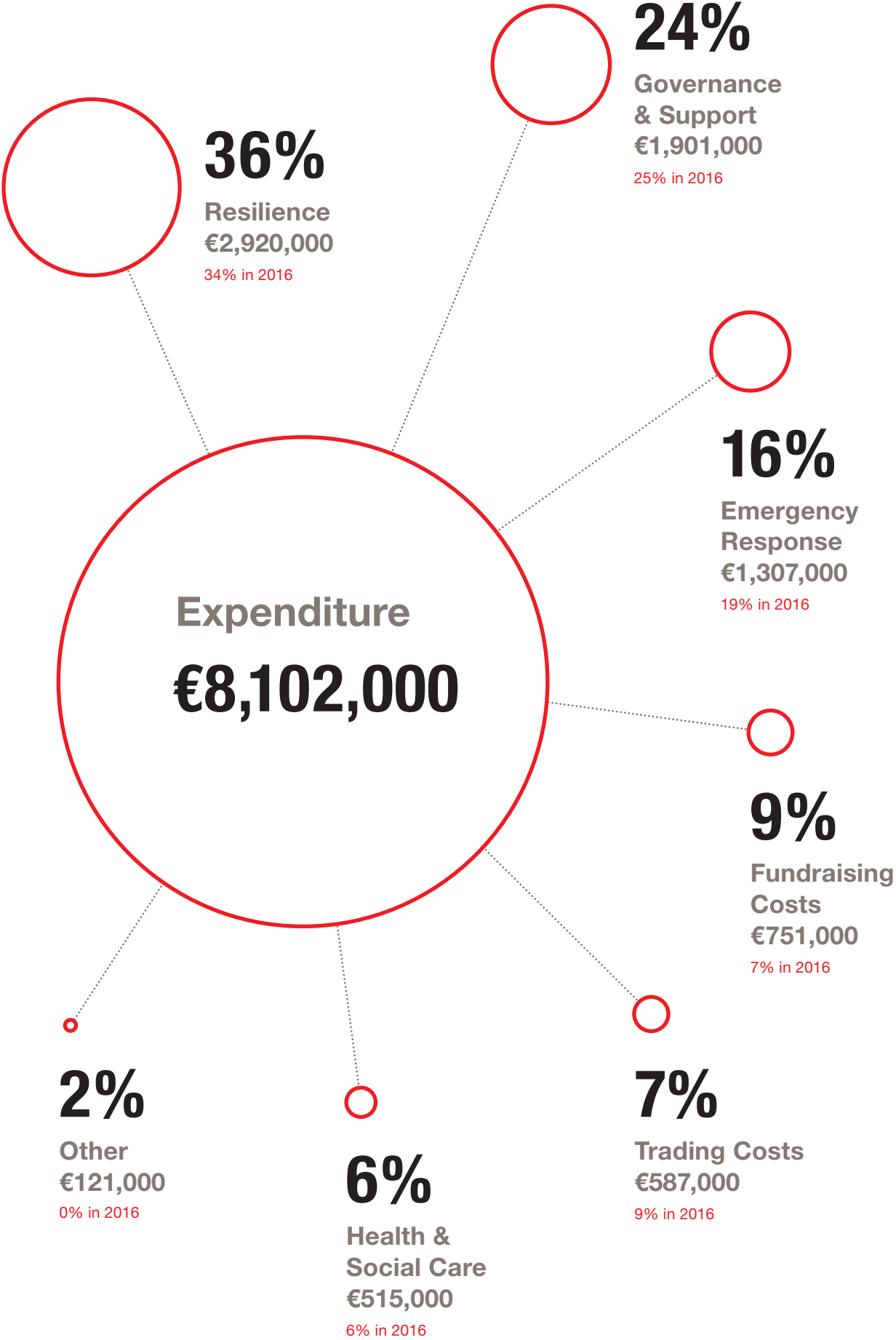
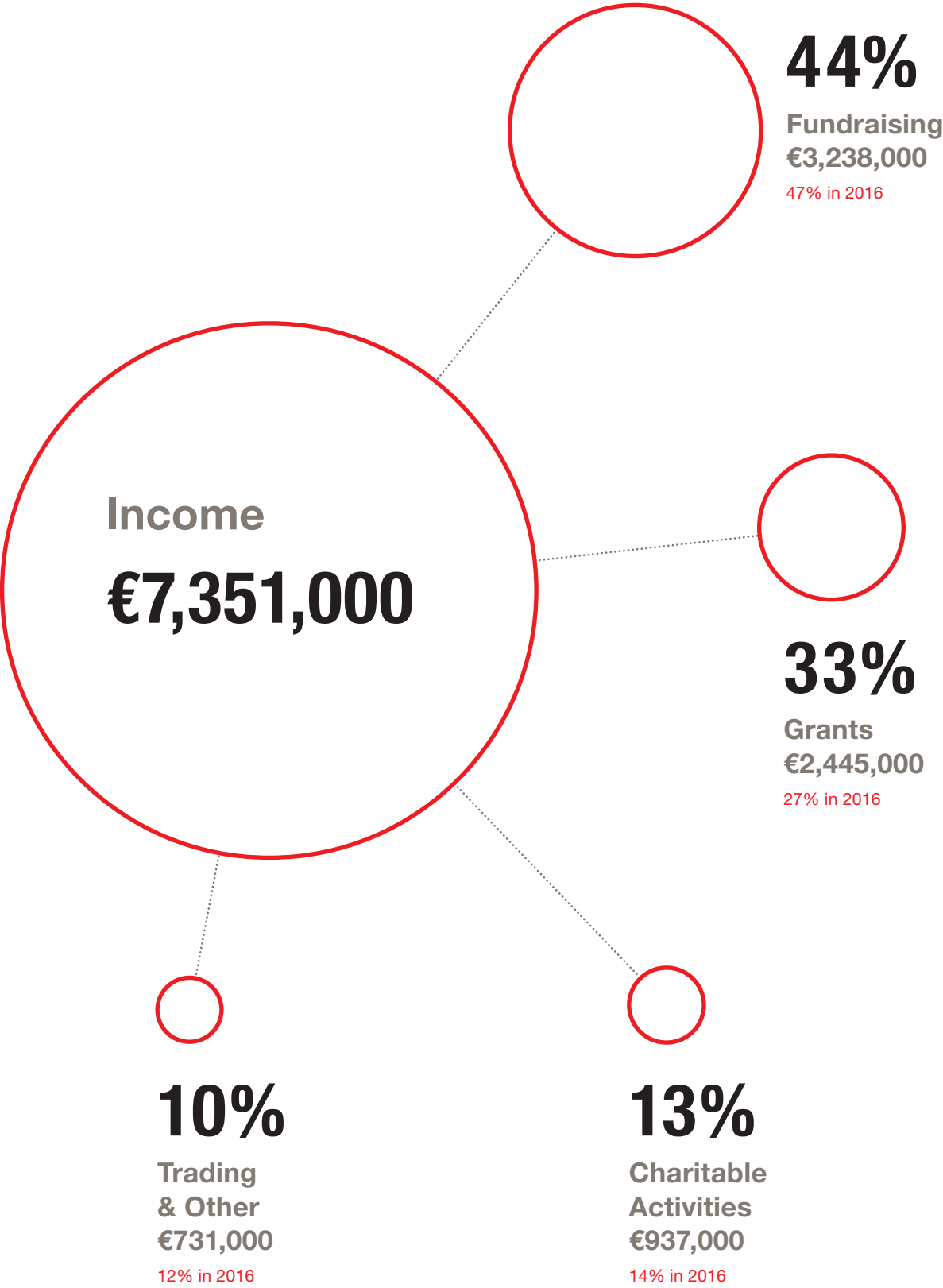
In 2019 the Society is putting in place a new strategic plan. A consultation process with members, staff and stakeholders is to take place to ensure that any new plan reflects the needs of the organisation, members and the communities the Irish Red Cross supports.

The Society also plans to deliver new membership supports with a membership recruitment pathway and a communication platform. This will provide a better communication system for the members, a new e-learning system and will make the experience of becoming a member of the IRC more streamlined. Once in place, the Society will begin a recruitment campaign targeted at encouraging new members to join the organisation at all levels, both frontline and administrative. The Society has planned to enhance its relationship with corporate partners to enable them to become part of the work of the Irish Red Cross both in terms of activity on the ground and funding for the organisation.

A new infrastructure is planned to ensure the needs of the members are adequately supported by the central support team.

Plans are being prepared to begin a new livelihoods project in Nepal and a new programme of policy information on International Humanitarian Law.

Financial Highlights



Report of the Directors

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

INCOME

Total income has increased from €6,945k to €7,351k. This is due to the increased grant from the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) as greater numbers of migrants arrived in Ireland during 2017. There was also an increase in donations specifically to help with the Donegal floods. These donations were distributed in December 2017 and January 2018.

EXPENDITURE

Total expenditure at €8,102k is higher than 2016 at €7,613k. The cost of raising voluntary income is up as we increased the staff numbers in our committed giving programme. Aligned with the greater activity in the IRPP our expenditure has also increased. In 2017 we provided the following International assistance: Syria (€100k), the migration crisis in Europe (€100k), Indonesia (€51k), Gaza (€38k), India (€30k), Yemen (€25k), Hurricane Irma (€16k), Haiti, (€9k) and Mexico (€9k). Details of staff numbers and costs are included in note 6 of the financial statements. In late 2017 the Board decided to close the programme in Niger due to insufficient funding. We expect that the process will be completed by June 2018 and cost €120,000.

RESERVES

To ensure there is funding for working capital, unexpected expenditure or income shortfalls our minimum level of reserves is three to six months of total expenditure. Our available reserves at year-end were €2.1m (2016: €2.0m). This represents 3.5 months' worth of total expenditure from general funds (2016: 3.4) and is at the lower end of the range set by the Board (3 to 6 months).

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO AUDITORS

Each of the persons who are Directors at the time of approving the Directors' Report has confirmed that:

(a) so far as that Director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Society's auditors are unaware and

(b) they have taken all the steps they ought to have taken as a Director in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Society's auditors are aware of that information.

ACCOUNTING RECORDS

The measures taken by the Directors to ensure compliance with the requirements, with regard to the keeping of accounting records, are the employment of appropriately qualified accounting personnel and the maintenance of computerised accounting systems. The Society's accounting records are maintained at the Society head office in Merrion Square.

TAXATION STATUS

Irish Red Cross Society has been granted charitable status under Sections 207 and 208 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997.

AUDITORS

BDO, is eligible and has expressed a willingness to continue as Auditors of the Society.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 11 December 2018.

On behalf of the Board of Directors

Pat Carey
Chairperson

Sheila Callan
Treasurer

Statement of Directors' Responsibilities


The Board of Directors of the Irish Red Cross Society operates through the delegated authority of the Society's General Assembly (formerly Central Council). Its role is to direct and supervise the affairs of the Society on a day-to-day basis, to ensure that it delivers on its goals and objectives, and to uphold the values and principles of the Red Cross Movement in every aspect of its activities. The Board of Directors is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Society and the incoming resources and application of funds, including the net income or expenditure of the Society for the year. In preparing these financial statements the Board of Directors is required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Society will continue in operation.

The Board of Directors is responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the Society and which enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with relevant legislation. The Board of Directors is responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Society and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 11 December 2018.

On behalf of the Board of Directors

Pat Carey
Chairperson

Sheila Callan
Treasurer

Independent Auditor's Report

REPORT ON THE AUDIT
OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

OPINION

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of Irish Red Cross Society for the year ended 31 December 2017, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the Society as at 31 December 2017 and of its net outgoing resources for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'

BASIS FOR OPINION

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISAs (Ireland)). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Society in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of financial statements in Ireland, including the Ethical Standards issued by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA), and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO GOING CONCERN

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (Ireland) require us to report to you where:

- the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the directors have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the Society's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

OTHER INFORMATION

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditors' report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIRECTORS
FOR THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

As explained more fully in the directors' responsibilities statement, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the Society's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the management either intends to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

NON-STATUTORY AUDITORS' RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

NON-STATUTORY AUDITORS'
RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AUDIT OF THE
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the IAASA's website at: http://www.iaasa.ie/getmedia/b2389013-1cf6-458b-9b8f-a98202dc9c3a/Description_of_auditors_responsibilities_for_audit.pdf. The description forms part of our auditors' report.

THE PURPOSE OF OUR AUDIT WORK
AND TO WHOM WE OWE OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

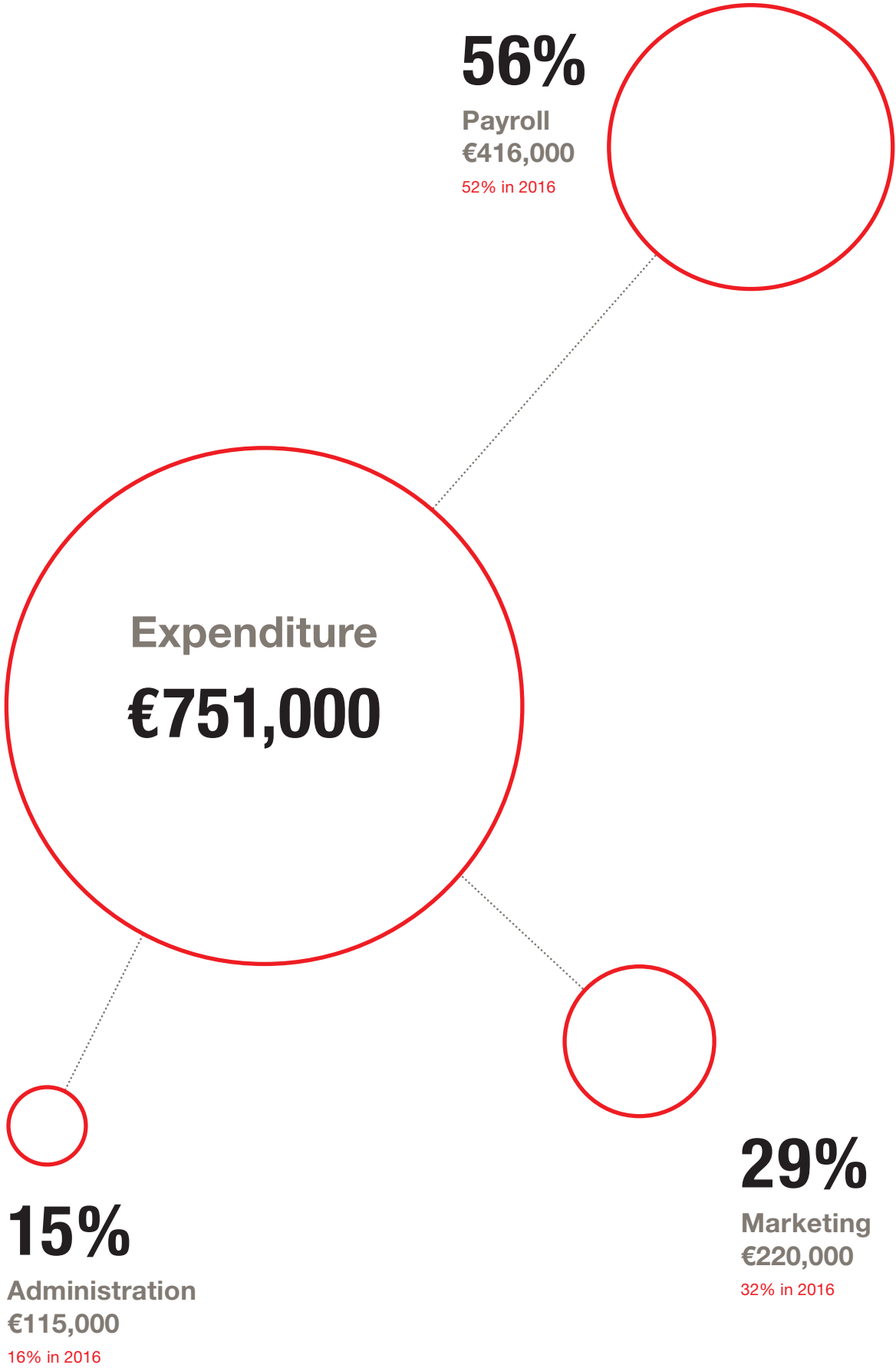
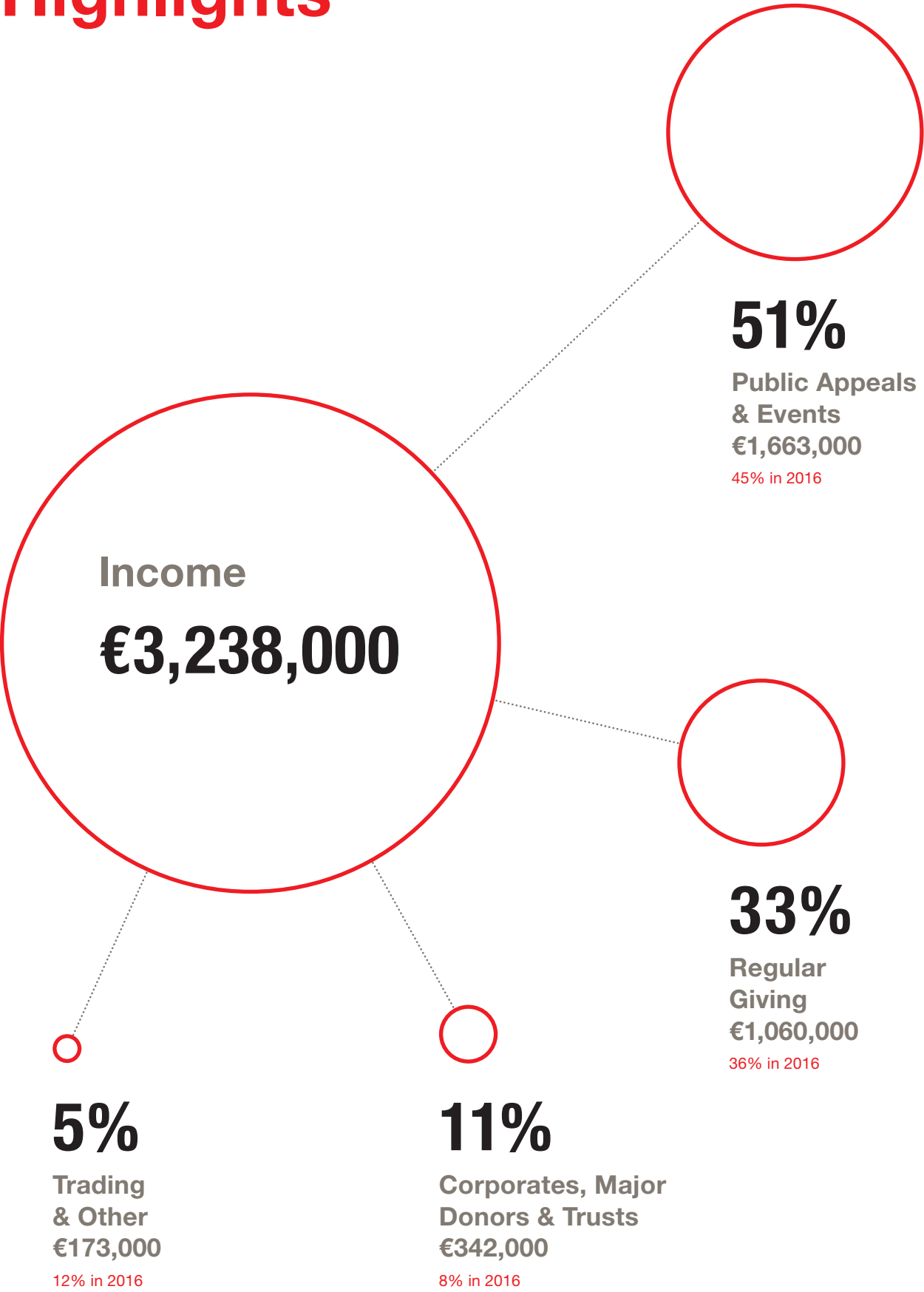
This report is made solely to the General Assembly of the Irish Red Cross Society as a body. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the General Assembly those matters we are required to state to them in an independent auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the General Assembly of the Irish Red Cross Society as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Signed on 11 December 2018

BDO.

BDO
Dublin
Statutory Audit Firm

Fundraising Highlights



NATIONAL





●
TO BE HONEST WHEN WE
WERE FLOODED I THOUGHT
THE RED CROSS WOULD HAVE
NOTHING TO DO WITH US
DONEGAL FLOODS **P38**



●
WOW...WE WERE SPEECHLESS
REALLY TO BE HONEST
DONOR STORY [P.40](#)



●
THE INCIDENT TOOK KIERAN BY
SURPRISE; HE DOESN'T DEAL WITH
BROKEN NECKS EVERY DAY
MAYO EVENT [P.44](#)



●
RELUCTANCE TOWARDS
SCREENING IS ATTRIBUTED TO
PRISONERS' LACK OF KNOWLEDGE
AROUND THE DISEASE, FEAR OF
STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION
C.B.H.F.A. [P.48](#)



●
WE KNEW IT HAD TO BE DEALT
WITH QUICKLY, WE DIDN'T KNOW
WHAT WE WERE DEALING WITH
CARER OF THE YEAR [P.50](#)



●
 AS A TEENAGE MEMBER OF THE
 LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY IT'S OFTEN
 DIFFICULT TO COME OUT
 IRCY PRIDE P.54



Voluntary Service Overview

The Irish Red Cross' mission is to identify and deliver impartial humanitarian assistance to those who are most in need, offering hope to vulnerable communities both at home and abroad. For the most part, this humanitarian assistance is delivered by volunteers, and the work of Irish Red Cross volunteers was particularly evident in 2017 during the Donegal Floods and Storm Ophelia.

Beginning the night of the Donegal Floods, volunteers assisted members of the community in clearing out their houses. They also visited affected homes in the days immediately following the flooding to determine the support required, and liaised with the local authority on rehousing residents. Volunteers in the region also travelled across the northwest collecting donated furniture and delivering it to affected homes while they also collected, sorted and distributed donated clothes.

€60,000 in emergency cash grants was distributed immediately after the floods to circa 120 households severely affected by the floods. The allocation of this funding was possible thanks to the hard work of the volunteers in Donegal Red Cross. During October, this fund distribution particularly focused on helping ensure people in Donegal would have adequate heating supplies and infrastructure coming into winter. Head office organised a scheme to deliver the remainder of money to people in need on the basis of an application for support.

Just two months later, Storm Ophelia took hold and 38 units of the Irish Red Cross were on standby across the country. Volunteers responded to 17 call outs which included patient transfers to hospital, patient transfers from hospital to nursing homes, and the facilitation of transfers for essential hospital staff to work.

When carrying out this work, the Irish Red Cross drew from its fleet of 144 vehicles which includes road ambulances, off-road ambulances and minibuses. This is the same fleet the organisation uses each and every week when providing first-aid cover at events, such as concerts, sports events and community festivals. First-aid cover at such events is provided by volunteer members who are trained to Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) standards.

The Irish Red Cross is very proud of the broad-ranging skillset of its volunteers. Not only do Irish Red Cross volunteers engage in first aid and ambulance cover, they also meet the demands put on the organisation by its role as an auxiliary to the state. Furthermore, the Irish Red Cross has developed specialist volunteer search and rescue teams to assist people missing, injured, or in other difficulty on mountains and lakes. To give just one example, the Irish Red Cross Glen of Imaal branch responded to 80 call outs in the Wicklow Mountains alone in 2017.

The Irish Red Cross also offers a range of community services and supports, including therapeutic hand care and skin camouflage. The therapeutic hand care service sees trained Irish Red Cross volunteers give free hand massage and manicures to men and women in hospitals, nursing homes, hospices, day-care centres and in their own homes, while skin camouflage is the application of special creams to conceal or improve the appearance of skin blemishes.

3,962 people
volunteered.

141 new
instructors
were trained.

Helped in Donegal by the Irish Red Cross

Inishowen natives Bernard and Bébhinn talk about the help their family received from the Irish Red Cross in the aftermath of the Donegal Floods.

Bernard, Bébhinn and their four children are just one family badly affected by the Donegal Floods. “Basically in a nutshell the entire downstairs of our house was ruined,” explains Bernard. “Everything on the ground floor had to be gotten rid of—we had to take away plaster from the walls and the kitchen units and furniture were ruined. We’ve one bedroom downstairs and that was ruined—the wardrobe, the en-suite, all the tiles had to be taken out. You see these things on television but you really don’t contemplate how much damage water can cause—it seeps up the plaster. It literally wreaks havoc,” he explains.

What makes it worse is Bernard and Bébhinn had just installed a new kitchen six weeks before the flood. “We saved for five years for a new kitchen and within six weeks it was gone,” says Bébhinn.

After the floods, the family had to move out of their home for three months and Bébhinn says she can now barely remember what her new kitchen looked like. “The only memory I have of our new kitchen was that night of the flood. My sister had rung me on my way home from work and said ‘be careful on those roads’ and I said ‘would you stop worrying, it’s grand, what are you talking about’ and I came in and I was cooking my dinner. I had music on, the fire was lit, I had candles lit and I was dancing around the kitchen thinking ‘oh I just love my kitchen’—I was feeling so grateful—and honestly, within about half an hour of that thought, we realised panic was on.”

●
€231,985

RAISED IN TOTAL IN THE
DONEGAL FLOOD APPEAL

I would have assumed the Red Cross was something that was out helping in other countries. It would never have entered my head that they could provide any assistance here...as a family we’re very grateful.

The flooding didn’t just wreak physical havoc on the family’s home, it took an emotional toll too. Bébhinn fears the trauma has affected the family long term, particularly the children. “The four of them actually are quite affected by it so we’re trying to move forward with our lives but it’s difficult because we’ve already had two slight floods since,” explains Bébhinn. “This was their castle, this is where they feel protected by us. We always tell them if the door is locked we’re safe in our home but that night there was a realisation for all of us that we’re actually not able to protect our home from water. It doesn’t matter what you do, it comes in everywhere, you’ve no control whatsoever over the water. Every time it rains we’re petrified,” she says.

Bernard and Bébhinn describe the kindness shown to them by local businesses, neighbours, the Red Cross and St Vincent de Paul as “unbelievable”. The family was visited several times at home by Irish Red Cross volunteers. “My first dealings were with Patrick Doherty,” says Bernard. “I was in the house one day, clearing plaster off the walls and Patrick called to the door and just introduced himself as being from the Irish Red Cross and explained why he was out. I gave him a run-down on the neighbours—on who was affected, and I brought him into the house and showed him the damages.”

Bébhinn adds “even to know that the Red Cross was there, it just felt like there was support there, that they were even thinking of you. In the immediate aftermath the community were all there and they were so helpful but then you also go through a period—a couple of weeks down the line—where you feel a sense of isolation or loneliness and to even know the Red Cross called to the door to check how things were going, or they were interested to see what damage was done, that was supportive.”

Patrick Doherty called to the house twice more after that to check in, and another Red Cross volunteer—Patrick McGonagle—called into the family another night to see if Bernard and Bébhinn needed anything.

Bernard and Bébhinn initially received €500 from the Irish Red Cross. “When something like this happens you don’t expect anything from anybody,” says Bernard, “so when you get handed anything it’s amazing, you’re just grateful for every penny you get, or voucher,” explains Bernard. “It’s been brilliant.”

Bébhinn says help from the Red Cross “was so needed in terms of lifting the morale and helping you to see that there was light at the end of the tunnel or to keep going, to keep moving forward.”

The family received a more significant sum from the Irish Red Cross at a later stage under the discretionary grant scheme. They say that this fund was a big help in replacing many items.

The family never had any dealings with the Red Cross before the Donegal floods.

“To be honest when we were flooded I thought the Red Cross would have nothing to do with us,” explains Bébhinn. “I would have assumed the Red Cross was something that was out helping in other countries. It would never have entered my head that they could provide any assistance here.”

“As a family we’re very grateful,” says Bernard. “If I’m walking past an Irish Red Cross bucket or something I’ll be putting money in—we’ve seen how beneficial they are as an organisation. We’re just very grateful.”

●
64

APPLICANTS TO GOVERNMENT
EMERGENCY HUMANITARIAN
SUPPORT SCHEMES

Donor Story Donegal— Oran McGonagle

“It was a really, really, cool, special event, it was very heart-warming,” says Oran McGonagle on a special fundraiser held in Boston which brought in a substantial proportion of the \$111,000 raised in Boston for the Donegal Flood Appeal.

Oran McGonagle, a Donegal native living in Boston spearheaded a fundraising initiative in the Massachusetts city which brought in €94,369 (approximately \$111,000) for the Irish Red Cross Donegal Flood Appeal. It is a staggering amount of money and suffice it to say when Oran and his friends set out in their endeavours they were not expecting to collect so much. Rather, their goal was \$10,000, but within three days they had collected close to \$30,000!

Why does he think so much money was brought in, so quickly?

“I guess Donegal people have a perception that we’re kind of left alone up the top of the country,” says Oran. “We have a feeling that we have to help out or they’re not going to get what they need.” Oran also attributes the generosity to the personal connection Irish people living in Boston have with Inishowen. “It was the stories of the individual people losing all their stuff and then that community—the Clonmanys, the Burnfoots—many of the crowd over here who were involved in it are from those areas. Everybody knew someone that was involved so we were getting pretty up-to-date, first-hand information on what was actually happening. It wasn’t somebody saying ‘help us out here’ or ‘these people need it’, it was more like ‘Mary needs it, and you know who Mary is.’”

Oran says it wasn’t just people from Donegal who were involved. “It was everybody, we had Derry, Dublin, Cork and Kerry, we had people from all over the island.” The fundraising efforts received a lot of Irish-American backing too, for example from people “who came here maybe 50/60 years ago, their Mum and Dad might have brought them over—we had people who were second generation, whose family came from the area but they have never been there. They wanted to help out, which was a really nice thing to do. One family came and said ‘we just want to help because our great grandparents came from there,’” explains Oran,

•
€60,000

DISTRIBUTED IN EMERGENCY
CASH GRANTS IMMEDIATELY
AFTER FLOOD

It was the stories of the individual people losing all their stuff and then that community... everybody knew someone that was involved.

FUNDRAISER

“Our other idea was to have a night—a dance to celebrate Donegal, celebrate Ireland, our heritage—for people living over here,” notes Oran. The fundraiser was given the name ‘Homes of Donegal’ after the Paul Brady song. Six different bands played all day and there was a silent auction for which they received a lot of very valuable donations such as Moville Pottery, an Irish soccer jersey signed by the whole team, and signed Dublin and Mayo jerseys. They had a live auction as well with five live items including a trip to Ireland and an “actual tractor”—an antique working Massey Ferguson donated by a man from Donegal who lives in Chicago. “That sat outside the venue with the Donegal flag on it,” says Oran. “It looked really cool, it got us \$13,000.”

The ‘Homes of Donegal’ fundraiser received messages of support from Daniel O’Donnell, Nathan Carter and Donegal football captain Michael Murphy.

Oran says that on the day of the fundraiser itself, it all came together really well and they raised a grand total of over \$70,000. “When we finished the fundraiser at the end of the day we didn’t really know anything, or what we had. We went into a room—a kind of safe room in the building and we started figuring out, and counting money and it was just amazing, it was really amazing. We added up what we took in from credit card donations and then we just had a crazy amount of money. We had donation boxes all over the room as well so we’d dollar bills, five dollar bills, cheques, 20 dollars, 100 dollars, all thrown in everywhere so we all just sat around the table and we ate some Irish soda bread and we counted the money up. When we’d finished most of us just sat there for a few minutes just going like “wow...we were speechless really to be honest.”

Oran is keen to stress that there was a very big group behind these efforts—from all over Ireland. “It wasn’t just an individual or two individuals, it was a whole group of people made it successful. The fundraiser was a really, really, really cool special event, it was very heart-warming and it was something that I had never done before, it was just—ah it gave you an amazing buzz when it was all done.”

IRC to the Rescue at Scene of Donegal Cardiac Arrest

Irish Red Cross volunteers successfully intervened at the scene of a sudden cardiac arrest at the National Rowing Championships in Ballyshannon.

The Donegal Area of the Irish Red Cross successfully intervened in a cardiac arrest at the National Coastal Rowing Championships in Ballyshannon on 19 August. The Veteran Men's Heat had just begun when a team supporter came to the ambulance and alerted volunteers to a situation in a team boat; she thought something had gone "horribly wrong". It transpired one of the competitors had collapsed in his boat and had gone into cardiac arrest.

The IRC volunteers had been booked to provide Event First Aid cover at the event and there were two ambulances on duty and four crew members - Patrick McGonagle (EMT), Ciaran Gibson (EFR), Sarah Meagher (EFR) and Feargal Taitt (EMT)

Feargal and Ciaran accompanied Donegal Bay Rowing Club personnel in a safety boat out to the scene of the heart attack. When approaching the team boat, the crew became aware the patient was unconscious. The patient's team mates were shouting that he was turning blue. As soon as Feargal and Ciaran set their eyes on the patient they instructed the patient's team mates to commence chest compressions, and guided them through the procedure.

As the water was too choppy, the safety boat was unable to get alongside the team boat to enable the safe transfer of the patient so it was decided not to transfer the patient onto the safety boat. Instead, the team boat was towed back to the pontoon.

As this was unfolding, back on shore Sarah and Patrick had been preparing the ambulance and had it as close to the scene as possible by the time the patient made it back to the pontoon.

The patient was quickly removed from the boat onto the deck and Feargal and Ciaran sprung into action by continuing CPR while also attaching a defibrillator. One shock was delivered from the defibrillator and CPR was recommenced. Ciaran provided the chest compressions while Feargal, with the help of one of the safety boat members, administered oxygen via the bag valve mask. The whole event was being watched by over 2,000 people but the added stress of such a large crowd watching did not deter the Red Cross crew who were supported on the pontoon by an off-duty advanced paramedic, event doctor and a number of bystanders. Within a few minutes the patient was reassessed and was noted to have a pulse and laboured breathing.

Today that patient
is alive and well
thanks to their
swift intervention.

The National Ambulance Service arrived on the pontoon just as the patient had a return of spontaneous circulation and the Red Cross crew handed over care to the advanced paramedic.

The patient was transferred by the National Ambulance Service while Patrick McGonagle travelled with him at the request of the Advanced Paramedic in case the patient should deteriorate again en route. The crew left behind continued to gather information on the patient from team mates including date of birth, past medical history and current medications. This was then relayed on to Patrick (en route to hospital) so that a full and comprehensive history could be given to the receiving Emergency Department team at Sligo University Hospital.

The Red Cross crew then went back to providing another five hours of duty cover for the remainder of the event that day.

In terms of the outcome for the patient, he was sitting up talking the next day and looking to get back to watch the rest of the rowing championships.

Frankie O'Donnell is a Paramedic Supervisor in Donegal Town Ambulance Station and was very complimentary about the work of the Red Cross volunteers; "the professionalism and skill levels demonstrated were exemplary. The quality of the CPR was excellent and their overall contribution played a huge role in a very successful outcome for the patient."

Seamus Maguire, Chairperson of Donegal Rowing Club said that "without their prompt action and professionalism, the patient's outcome may have been a very different one...today that patient is alive and well thanks to their swift intervention."

The Irish Red Cross crew members were a key link in the chain of survival in this situation and are being recognised for their achievement with all four being awarded the Irish Red Cross Medal of Merit for meritorious service at an incident. This award was bestowed at a presentation evening in An Grianán Hotel in Burt, Co Donegal on 27 October. The then Chief Whip and Minister of State at the Department of Culture with responsibility for Gaelige, Gaeltacht and the Islands, Joe McHugh, was also in attendance on the night. This type of presentation ceremony usually takes place in Dublin but on this occasion, it was held in Donegal as an act of solidarity with the victims of the recent flooding.

IRC Intervention Critical at Mayo Cycling Event

Volunteers from Claremorris Red Cross were faced with a cyclist with an extremely serious injury last September.

When Kieran Connolly, Unit Officer with Irish Red Cross Claremorris goes out on duty he is always expecting the worst. And while this may sound like a pessimistic mind frame, it's a reflection of how seriously he takes his responsibility. "Once we put on a uniform and once we go on a duty, we expect everything," he notes.

Saying this however, the incident which took place at a charity cycle organised by Claremorris Cycling Club on 17 September took Kieran by surprise; he doesn't deal with broken necks every day.

Kieran was following the cycle event in an ambulance together with fellow Claremorris branch members Alan Mortimer and Rose Ward, who is Mayo Area Director of Units. Alan was driving the ambulance but when he came upon a person on the road Alan says he "just literally turned the ambulance to block all the traffic off."

Kieran says he knew "straight away it wasn't good" and the three volunteers got to work straight away.

Rose took the head and Alan got the trauma bag with oxygen. Then Alan switched with Rose, and took the head, allowing Rose to put a collar on the patient.

"The most important thing is we follow procedure—A, B, C—like any medic does," says Kieran. "This means making sure the airway is open and that they're breathing."

The next step, according to Kieran, is to look for a witness. "You look for one particular person because if

you have three or four talking you start getting all sorts of stories, so you look for someone who actually saw it happening" he explains. Kieran's queries brought to light that the patient had gone down on his head first after going over the handlebars.

Rose, Kieran and Alan couldn't transport the patient to hospital as they needed to remain on duty for the rest of the event, so Rose called an ambulance.

The volunteers' next priority was getting the patient packaged properly—and in the right sequence. "When your head is slightly out of alignment, you move it into a position—if there's no pain, neurological deficit or any pins and needles," says Kieran. "He was having pain so we had to keep him in an exact position otherwise you could end up killing him."

The volunteers got the vacuum mattress but all the while they were also monitoring the patient's vitals to make sure he was stable.

The next part has to be done "very carefully. "It's not a log roll," explains Kieran, "it's like a semi log roll, where three or four go to one side and you have to be extraordinarily careful moving the body with the head, all at the same time. It's a job for experienced people, otherwise you could do damage."

The next task was to move the patient from the scoop and onto the vacuum mattress.

Three people stood on each side of the mattress. Some of these people included cyclists taking part in the event who abandoned the cycle so they could stay with the patient. They offered any assistance they could and were a great help to the Irish Red Cross volunteers. "There's a special way of calling the lift and then you place the patient onto the vacuum mattress. You've to shape the mattress in around him to his shape," explains Kieran.

"There wasn't much more we could do then," explains Kieran, "except to monitor him and monitor his pain scale and his vitals."

Alan and Kieran explain the necessity for precautions in every situation; "I thought he might have a broken neck, but we weren't actually sure," says Alan, "so we always treat it as though it is broken. If you treat it as if it's broken you can't do too much wrong."

The volunteers were in the process of loading the patient into the Irish Red Cross ambulance when the HSE ambulance arrived.

"I was blessed not to have any paralysis or neurological damage whatsoever...mainly due to the prompt action of you all on the side of the road that morning and the fact that you got me in to a neck brace safely and quickly and stabilised my condition. I can never thank you enough for what you did for me that morning. You literally saved my life! The job you all do, on a voluntary basis, is simply incredible."

Kieran expands on this; "you might package a couple of hundred people and none of them would have their neck broken, but it's to catch the one that would have a vertebrae crack. These are the precautions you take for those who you suspect would have a mechanism of injury that could cause a spinal injury; it's really to catch the one that really is in trouble...because otherwise he'd end up paralysed from the neck down—or dead."

Alan puts down the successful nature of their careful actions to their training. Claremorris branch engages in two hours of intense training, run by Rose Ward, every Wednesday night.

"With Rose, you come in by 8 o'clock, you've ten minutes maximum to get a cup of tea and then you're talking about and running through different scenarios, so I think the training really did kick in, and paid off. We run a very tight ship, you're here to train and that's what we do," explains Alan.

Are they nervous being involved in such serious incidents? "It's after I go 'phew' says Alan. "It wouldn't get to me now put it that way," says Kieran, "but I never underestimate the responsibility I have, that wouldn't be professional."

Rose says you "just get on with the job to hand. It's like tunnel vision, you do what is needed. Afterwards we sit and talk about the event, and no one goes home until we have spoken about how we are feeling and if there is something we can take from this experience, and would like added to the training for the following week."

The hard work of Rose, Kieran and Alan was gratefully acknowledged by the patient himself in a heartfelt letter he sent after the event—see excerpt, left.

Community Based Health & First Aid Overview

Ireland was the first country in the world to introduce the Community Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA) programme to Irish prisons. The programme runs in 12 Irish prisons and sees Irish prisoners become special status Irish Red Cross volunteer inmates.

These volunteers become peer-to-peer educators within prisons and raise awareness, and implement projects, aimed at improving the overall health, wellbeing and safety of prisoners in their community.

To qualify for the programme, the volunteer inmates engage in a six-month training programme where groups of 12-24 in each prison attend a weekly CBHFA training session and learn how to assess their community to identify health risks and hazards and develop projects aimed at improving these issues. The training is delivered by Education and Training Board teachers in the education unit of the prison and allocated healthcare professionals who are employed within the prison healthcare system.

The programme is run in conjunction with the Irish Prison Service and Education and Training Boards Ireland and is funded by dormant accounts.

●
3,500

PRISONERS REACHED
ON A DAILY BASIS BY
CBHFA VOLUNTEERS

●
15

CIRCA 15 VIOLENCE-PREVENTION WORKSHOPS
HELD WITHIN PRISONS AND FOR PEOPLE DEEMED
“HIGH RISK” IN PROBATION SETTINGS



First European Voluntary Hep C Testing in Irish Prisons using IRC Inmate Volunteers

The pilot project under this programme is a mass voluntary viral screening initiative, which between April and July 2017 saw 76% of targeted prisoners voluntarily present for Hepatitis C testing, which was promoted by the volunteer inmates.

Hepatitis C is more prevalent in a prison setting than it is among the general public due to, (amongst other reasons) the sharing of toothbrushes and razors, non-sterile tattooing, and violence where blood-to-blood contact occurs.

Despite the fact prison populations are seen as high risk for Hepatitis C and international and national Hepatitis C guidelines recommend the screening of all prisoners, most prisoners are not screened and are unaware of their Hepatitis C status, something which further increases the risk of onward transmission to other prisoners.

Reluctance towards Hepatitis C screening in prisons is attributed to prisoners' lack of knowledge around the disease, fear of stigma and discrimination, organisational issues related to screening availability and healthcare resources. Therefore, in an effort to overcome these barriers, the Irish Prison Service and the Irish Red Cross partnered with Mater Hospital staff, addiction counsellors, St James Hospital Hepatitis in-reach staff and HepCare Europe to pilot a peer-supported mass Hepatitis C screening initiative at Mountjoy male prison in the form of 'seek' and 'treat' viral screening exercise.

The strategy started with an awareness programme. The addiction specialist doctor and nurse provided classroom-based information to inmate Irish Red Cross volunteers about the initiative. Then inmate volunteers, supported by the Red Cross teacher from the Education and Training Board, designed relevant posters and notices for a 'cell drop' throughout the prison prior to starting the campaign. Posters were placed in all landings and prisoners were encouraged to take part. Throughout the pilot, Red Cross volunteers then promoted the initiative on the landings and accompanied prisoners to the screening sites. This element of the campaign was considered crucial to the engagement of prisoners in the process.

Throughout the pilot, Red Cross volunteers then promoted the initiative on the landings and accompanied prisoners to the screening sites. This element of the campaign was considered crucial to the engagement of prisoners in the process.

The campaign was undertaken in three phases with results given to those tested four weeks after each phase. Fibro scanning was available on site for those found to have chronic Hepatitis C infection. This allowed for efficient assessment of liver disease and referral to the relevant services. Counsellors were also on site and treatment/vaccination plans were put in place where needed.

Feedback from both prisoners and staff during the pilot showed high levels of satisfaction with the pilot and how it was operated.

This particular screening initiative resulted in approximately 76% of the target population being screened during the three phases conducted between April and July 2017. The pilot also diagnosed a number of previously undiagnosed Hepatitis C infections and allowed for all prisoners with known chronic Hepatitis C to be assessed for liver disease. This will allow for the targeting of treatment and will inform Hepatitis C screening and treatment services locally, nationally and internationally.

To the Irish Red Cross' knowledge, this initiative is the first of its kind to involve peer volunteers in facilitating and encouraging prisoners to engage with a mass Hepatitis C screening initiative.

●
76%

OF THE TARGET
POPULATION SCREENED
DURING THREE PHASES.

Carer of the Year Award 2017 Goes to Tipperary

Catherine and John Gleeson were named as the national Irish Red Cross Carers of the Year 2017.

It was early summer 2014 and Catherine and John Gleeson, who live near Thurles, Co Tipperary, had just built a new house where they were living with their three daughters. Catherine was working as a primary school teacher and John as a supervisor in a glass factory. Little did they know that by August of that same summer, both would have quit their jobs to look after their youngest daughter.

Their youngest daughter was born a “great” and “very quiet” baby. But several months later, she started to wake every night, and then she stopped crawling. “She just seemed to be getting sicker,” says Catherine. The family went on holidays to Sligo and Catherine noticed the baby girl was very distressed. This was followed by “a rapid deterioration” and Catherine decided to drive her little girl from Sligo to Our Lady’s Children’s Hospital, Crumlin in the middle of the night.

“We knew it had to be dealt with quickly, we didn’t know what we were dealing with but we went to the A&E and we arrived at around four in the morning,” says Catherine.

It turns out they were dealing with a large tumour on the spinal cord which resulted in several serious operations and chemotherapy. Surgeons finally got rid of the tumour and their daughter is in remission, but she had to learn how to walk again, in the National Rehabilitation Hospital in Dun Laoghaire.

She is now well on the road to recovery.

At the same time as the youngest girl’s cancer diagnosis, Catherine was pregnant with her fourth child, a son. When this bouncing baby boy arrived there was nothing to alarm his parents immediately. However Catherine then noticed “he was sleeping a lot, I couldn’t get him to feed and then he developed this very bad cough.” Their daughter was being admitted into the local hospital as part of her cancer treatment so Catherine and John brought their son down as well “and when we went down, the doctors realised he was quite seriously ill, they couldn’t control his heart rate,” says Catherine. Hospital staff worked through the night trying to control it. The baby boy was transferred to Crumlin where staff realised his heart was in severe heart failure but he battled on, spending quite a while in the ICU, and then in the heart centre, and his heart slowly began to repair.

John and I would like to acknowledge the kindness, support, friendship and generosity of the community and further afield who have been so supportive and carried us many times on our journey.

After a long battle, their baby boy “was beginning to get very well” while their daughter had just come home from Dun Laoghaire. “We thought it was picking up and coming together,” says Catherine. However, in November 2016, their son was diagnosed with another serious, chronic, medical condition called Dooose Syndrome. It has been very difficult to treat and he requires round-the-clock care and supervision.

Catherine explains how “normal family life changed hugely. There’s never time for yourself and you always put the adults furthest down the list because if you have any spare time, you’re trying to pump it into the other children because you feel you’ve been torn and gone away to hospital so much.”

Catherine and John are still out of work and providing 24/7 care to their son. Their priority at the moment is stabilising him. “They have never once complained and that has been said to me by several people,” says Catherine’s mother Josephine. “They never give up and work tirelessly around the clock in the hope that someday they will see their little children well and happy.”

The Gleesons were presented with their award at a ceremony in the Newpark Hotel in Kilkenny on Saturday 25 November. At the event, Aiden Lonergan, National Director of Health and Social Care for the Irish Red Cross said “nominations for the award continue to grow in number each year as awareness of the award grows. We are delighted this year to award the title to a couple for the first time, highlighting the important role families play in caring. It is very humbling to present this award to two deserving winners who were surrounded by family and friends on the night.”

On the night, Catherine noted; “John and I would like to acknowledge the kindness, support, friendship and generosity of the community and further afield who have been so supportive and carried us many times on our journey,” says Catherine. “Thanks also to our families, our absolute rock, and to the wonderful charities, including the Irish Red Cross for their support.”

Irish Red Cross Youth Overview

Irish Red Cross Youth (IRCY) helps young people develop their understanding of the world and the humanitarian needs of vulnerable people and communities. IRCY members are aged between four and twenty five years old and make up 33% of the Society's volunteer network in Ireland.

Around the country, IRCY members meet regularly to learn skills, build friendships, and work to improve social inclusion. IRCY members learn about topics which are important to them, and in recent years they have developed anti-bullying, anti-discrimination and mental health programmes.

In 2017, nine IRCY members represented Irish Red Cross Youth at an international level—two at the German Red Cross International Peace Camp and two at the Austrian Red Cross International Peace Camp. At these peace camps, IRCY members participated in physical activities and humanitarian workshops, and built partnerships with other national societies. In 2017 five IRCY members also represented Irish Red Cross Youth at the German International Youth on the Run. This is an Erasmus programme which facilitates the training of 15 new game leaders for Youth on the Run.

2017 saw Irish Red Cross Youth attend Dublin PRIDE for the sixth year in a row, accompanied by anti-bullying mascot Buddy the Bear while IRCY also had a stand at the three-day Zeminar schools event in the RDS where they raised awareness about IRCY among secondary school students.

Specialised training was provided to IRCY members in 2017 including in the areas of positive mental health, HIV awareness, leadership development, and training on the experiences of migrants. New programmes launched at the National Youth Forum in November 2017 included LGBT Allies, and anti-discrimination training as part of a British Red Cross partnership.

In 2017, Irish Red Cross Youth attended the first independent meeting of the West European Network (WEN) in Amsterdam and selected a candidate for the European Youth Coordination Committee EYCC elections in 2018.

●
225

MEMBERS TOOK PART
IN THE NATIONAL
YOUTH CHALLENGE

●
210

MEMBERS ATTENDED
THE NATIONAL
YOUTH FORUM

●
98

MEMBERS TOOK PART IN THE
NATIONAL T-BEAR CHALLENGE
ACROSS TWO LOCATIONS



Irish Red Cross Pride

Nathan Croft, aged 16 from Irish Red Cross' Santry Branch, writes about his experience of Dublin Pride.

On 24 June, I attended the 2017 Dublin Pride festival where I took part in the Irish Red Cross Youth (IRCY) float in the parade. It was without a doubt, one of the best experiences of my life so far. As a teenage member of the LGBTQ+ community it's often difficult to come out. So going to my first pride was a huge milestone for me and has made a significant impact on my life. We were told to meet at the Irish Red Cross headquarters on Merrion Square at 9 am. Going anywhere, let alone the city centre, at 9 on a Saturday morning is never easy, but I was so excited and eager to attend the parade and join my community. I strutted down to the bus stop at 8 am. Draped in a rainbow, I did draw a few glances on the bus. I met with fellow members of the Santry Branch at Trinity College and the four of us definitely stood out in our rainbow gear. We met up with the other Irish Red Cross Youth members and we decorated the Irish Red Cross bus with banners and flags, which was quite the task, but we worked together to get the job done. We drove down to St. Stephen's Green, where we parked the bus. We mingled with other float members and took pictures of them with our "Don't be a bully...be a buddy!" programme mascot, Buddy the Bear. We did encounter one bump in the road however. Our generator, which powered the speakers, was not permitted in the parade so we had to do without music, but we compensated for the lack of music with an overwhelming amount of singing.

70

MEMBERS ATTENDED THE NATIONAL YOUTH CAMP

36

MEMBERS ACHIEVED BRONZE & SILVER OPTIONS AWARDS

20

MEMBERS TOOK PART IN YOUTH ON THE RUN

12

MEMBERS BECAME PEER EDUCATORS IN YOUTH AS AGENTS OF BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE (YABC)

The day was spectacular and amidst the drag queens and the glitter I found a feeling of safety. A large contribution to this sense of warmth and home was the IRCY, its youth members, its leaders...

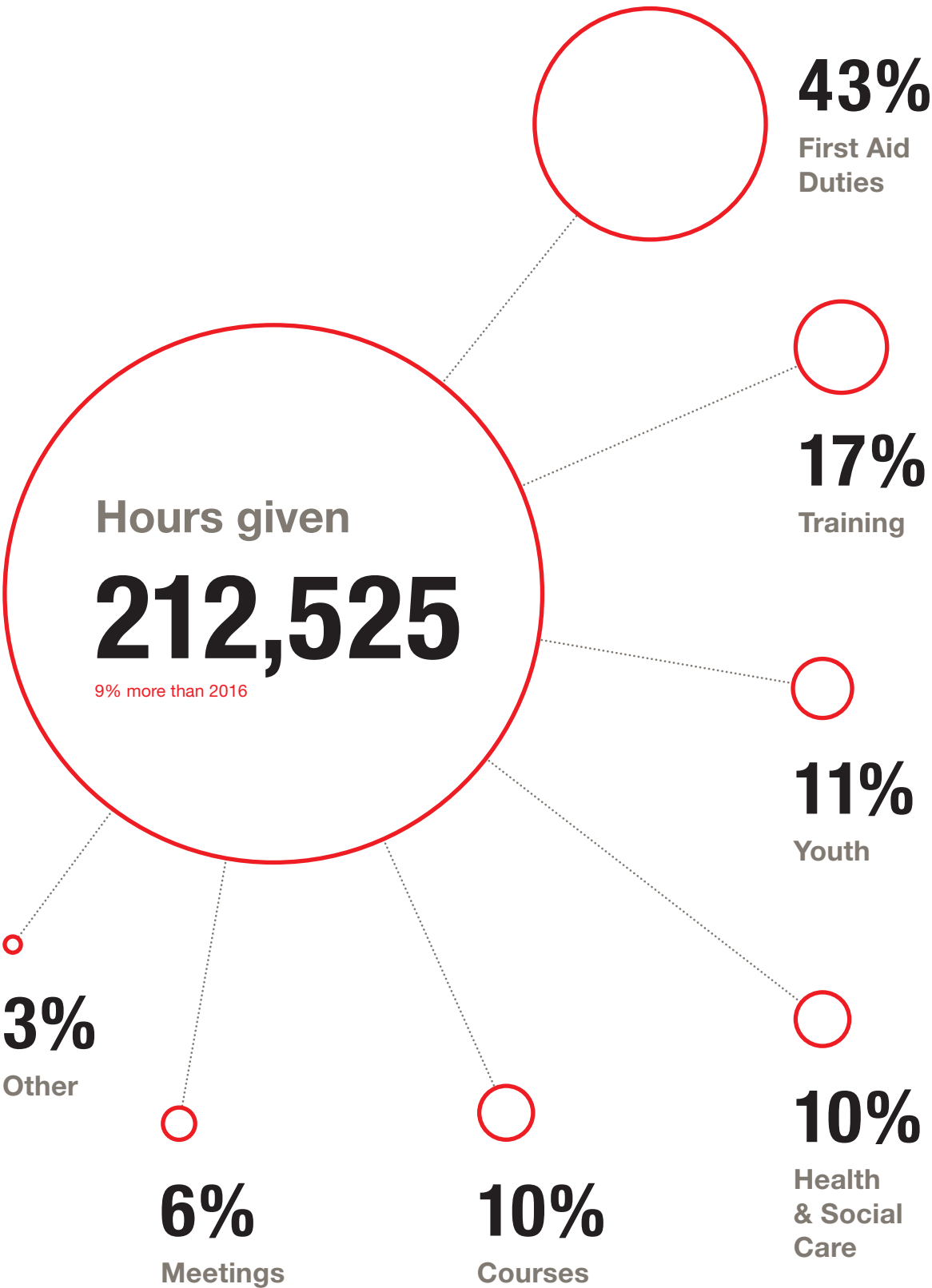
Riding atop the bus was lots of fun. We waved our flags with glee as we sung and waved to the people in the streets. Once the parade was done we drove back to headquarters. My friend and I left to go to the party at Smithfield while the other members sat down and enjoyed a pizza for all their tremendous work. The day was spectacular and amidst the drag queens and the glitter I found a feeling of safety. A large contribution to this sense of warmth and home was the IRCY, its youth members, its leaders, and above all else Catriona Finn (National Youth Development Officer) who I would like to personally thank for the opportunity and the experience, as well as Tom Doyle (Regional Director of Youth, Dublin-Mid Leinster), Niamh Wearen and Keith Hodson (youth leaders, Santry) who made it possible for me to even attend.

I'm awaiting next year with great anticipation and pride.

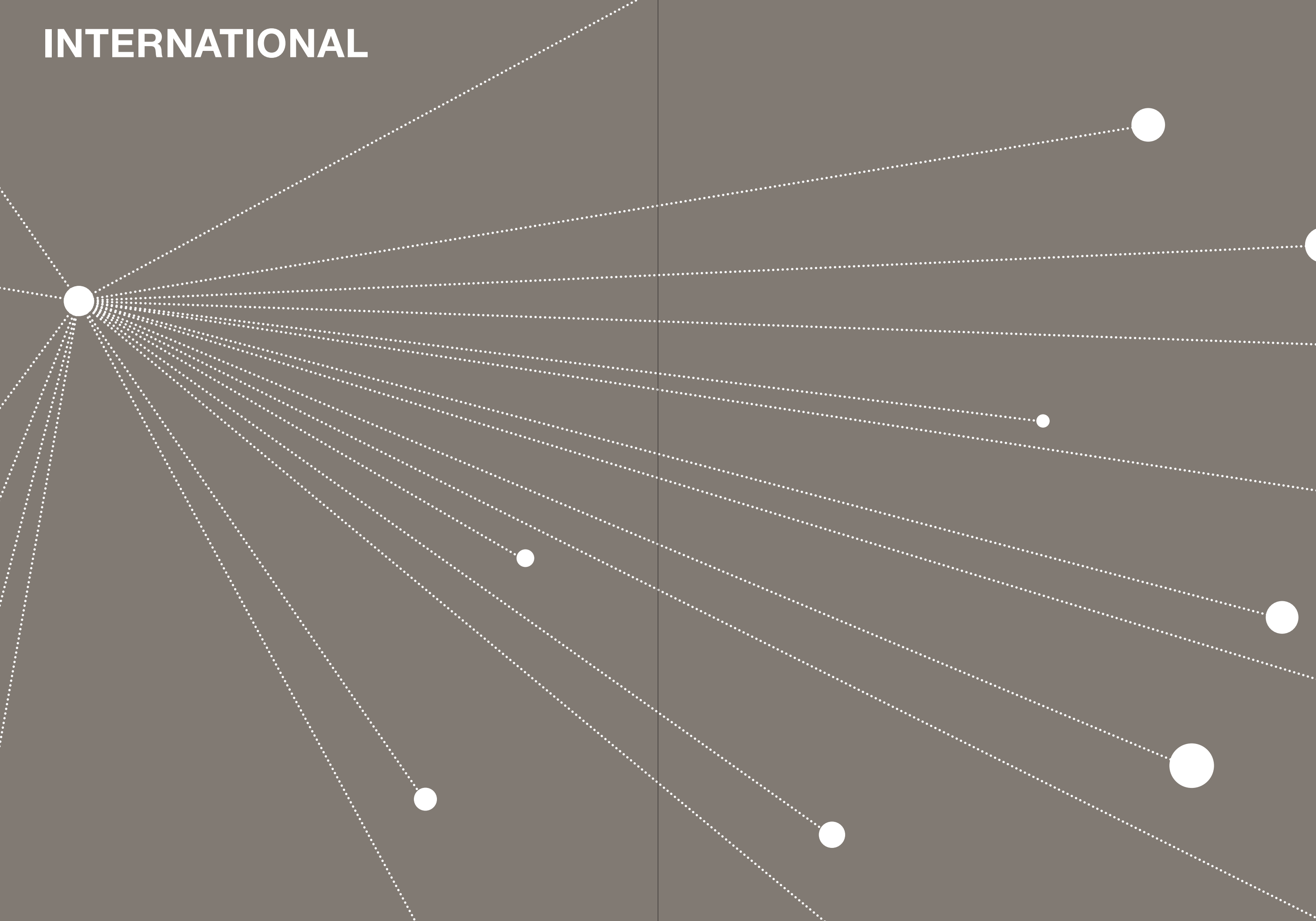
3

MEMBERS RECEIVED NATIONAL VOLUNTEER AWARDS

Volunteering & Training Statistics



INTERNATIONAL





2017 PROVED TO BE A
 PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT
 YEAR IN NIGER WITH 2.3
 MILLION PEOPLE IN NEED OF
 HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE
 NIGER [P.74](#)



© Indonesian Red Cross

●
HELPING TO ENSURE
COMMUNITIES ARE PREPARED
FOR A DISASTER IS ONE OF THE
MOST VITAL THINGS WE DO
INDONESIA P.76



© Indonesian Red Cross



●
WINTER KITS SUPPLIED TO
CHILDREN CONTAINED ONE SET OF
BOOTS AND THERMAL WOOLLEN
SOCKS AND UNDERGARMENTS
JASMINE BALL [P.78](#)



●
EVEN WARS HAVE LIMITS
I.H.L. [P.80](#)



●
I KIND OF FELT THEY WERE
RUNNING FOR THEIR LIVES,
I FELT IT WAS THE RIGHT
THING TO DO, AND I'VE BEEN
BLESSED IN EVERYTHING I HAVE
MIGRATION [P.84](#)



●
IF WE WERE IN THEIR SHOES
WHAT WOULD WE WANT?
MIGRATION **P.86**



●
ALMUTHNA'S VIOLIN WAS LOANED
TO THE RTÉ CONCERT ORCHESTRA
FOR CULTURE NIGHT ON 22
SEPTEMBER IN DUBLIN CASTLE
MIGRATION **P.88**



© Denis Byrne

●
 SIXTEEN YEARS OLD AT
 THE TIME, HE REMEMBERS
 RUNNING THROUGH THE
 CROWD SEARCHING FOR HIS
 12-YEAR-OLD BROTHER
 RESTORING FAMILY LINKS [P.92](#)

International Overview

The complex and challenging humanitarian landscape continued in 2017. Greater numbers of countries are being affected by the impact of climate change and conflict-related situations, hindering their ability to progress towards self-sufficiency. Unprecedented numbers of people are on the move, fleeing conflict, insecurity, or debilitating poverty.

The need for international aid organisations such as the Irish Red Cross to step up their efforts to help communities respond to growing global and local challenges is at its highest level in decades.

As humanitarian workers face ever more complex operational environments, during the course of 2017, the Irish Red Cross deployed staff with expertise in health, organisational development, communications and livelihoods, to support operations in Bangladesh, Yemen, Niger, South Sudan, Iraq, Colombia, Kenya and Somalia.

The Irish Red Cross remained fully committed to living up to its commitments as part of the global Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in order to deliver critical assistance to some of the most vulnerable communities in the world. We continued our work directly with the national societies of countries in need to deliver longer-term development programmes.

SYRIA

The scale of the need in Syria is huge and ongoing. Funds raised from the Jasmine Ball in aid of Syria (including a top-up from Irish Red Cross) were transferred to the Red Cross Winterisation programme. A total of €100,000 was transferred and this provided for the distribution of 10,000 essential winter kits to children. For many, winter 2017 was their seventh consecutive winter in displacement, living in tents or in makeshift settlements in near-freezing temperatures. The kits supplied to children who range in age from 6–14 comprised of one set of boots, thermal woollen socks, inner thermal pants and a shirt.

GAZA

The humanitarian consequences of the ongoing crisis in the Gaza Strip continues to impact the lives of two million Palestinians. More than half of those living in Gaza are children under the age of 18. Despite limited understanding of the scope and extent of violence in Gaza, the few studies undertaken to date show alarming statistics on various forms of violence. As children remain subject to violence and are most likely to resort to violence as adults, the Irish Red Cross is providing €38,000 to support the Palestinian Red Crescent in implementing a violence-prevention project among children and young people. The project will see the Irish Red Cross support interventions in five locations in the Gaza Strip, which will enhance the concept of violence prevention among some 5,000 youths, and encourage them to help build communities without violence.

YEMEN

In Yemen, the worsening conflict further devastated the country, where over 20 million people needed some type of assistance to meet their basic needs. The situation is compounded as this year we saw the country struggle to contain one of the world's largest cholera outbreaks. In response to this, the Irish Red Cross provided €25,000 towards the Red Cross Red Crescent response to Cholera. Through our financial support, mass communication and social-mobilisation campaigns were run which reached millions of Yemenis. Our support package included technical support provided by a health delegate, which strengthened the local capacity to treat and manage cholera cases.

MIGRATION OPERATION—EUROPE

In July the Irish Red Cross contributed €100,000 to the ongoing work being undertaken by the Red Cross assisting those affected by migration. These funds are earmarked towards protection-based initiatives which will be implemented over the next 12 months mainly focusing on our operations in Greece. The factors affecting the migrants' vulnerabilities along migratory routes are numerous: absence of legal status, family separation, impoverishment and socio-economic hardship, violence and ill treatment. Gender and various indicators of diversity play a crucial role, and in many cases exacerbate these vulnerabilities. This emergency of a 'protection-based nature' requires efforts to address safety of unaccompanied, separated minors and victims of trafficking.

The funding provided by the Irish Red Cross contributes toward the production of 2,000 Protection Field Guides. This material will ensure all responders have the specific tools and guidance required to identify someone at risk or who has been violated, and will be distributed to staff and volunteers working in Italy, Greece and other countries along the migratory trail.

HURRICANE IRMA

Hurricane Irma impacted Haiti on the evening of 7 September 2017 and into the early hours of 8 September. The storm mainly impacted Haiti's three northern departments. In the days prior to the arrival of Irma, the Haitian Red Cross and International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) worked with local communities to prepare for the impact and reduce the devastation. The Irish Red Cross transferred over €25,000 to the IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund for Irma and Haiti. As part of the operation, several teams of Haitian Red Cross volunteers were pre-positioned in strategic places around the island prior to the arrival of the hurricane, and they carried out rapid assessments of the needs on the ground in its immediate aftermath. The volunteers were provided with personal protective gear such as rubber boots, raincoats and flashlights. They distributed 2,000 tarpaulins which were used to provide emergency shelter to families who lost their homes in the hurricane, as well as 1,000 hygiene kits and 2,000 jerry cans to store water. The Red Cross reached over 5,000 vulnerable Haitians through this operation.

PHILIPPINES

The final phase of our livelihoods recovery programme concluded in early 2017. The latter phase of this programme saw us provide support to five communities in establishing community-managed livelihood projects which will provide a sustainable supplementary income and benefit 579 community members.

INDIA

Following two years of successful partnership, the Irish Red Cross committed to extend its financial support for the 'Prevention and Management of TB programme' in Punjab, India—for one more year—contributing €30,000.

Spread silently through the air from one person to another, TB is a human tragedy that should not happen because properly managed drug-susceptible TB can be cured. Since the Irish Red Cross began its work in India, 8,382 people have been screened for TB and 177 have tested positive. If these patients were treated later, it is estimated they would have infected more than 3,000 people in their community. Another important element of the programme is raising awareness and education among families and the general population in order to reduce stigma and discrimination. More than 150,000 individuals have been reached with awareness information.

Niger represents one of the ‘forgotten’ crises. Drought is recurring in this landlocked, sub-Saharan country and for years has weakened communities as they struggle to find water and grow crops for food.

5,757

ANIMALS TREATED BY IRISH RED CROSS-TRAINED LOCAL PARA-VETERINARIANS

In 2005, the Irish Red Cross responded to emergency famine in Niger, and since then has been working with the Niger Red Cross to strengthen the resilience of communities in Niger to ensure a food crisis of the magnitude experienced in 2005 does not recur. In 2013, the Irish Red Cross and Niger Red Cross entered into partnership with the Belgian Red Cross, which has enabled us to extend the reach and impact of our work.

Food security is a particularly critical issue in the Zinder region and this is where the Irish Red Cross and partners focused a two-year Community Resilience Programme, which ran from 2016-2017. The programme reinforced food and nutritional security in 15 communities in Zinder, through a multi-dimensional approach to tackle food insecurity and chronic malnutrition. Activities benefited communities as a whole, while also specifically targeting the most vulnerable within them.

The programme was supported by Irish Aid, the Belgian Government Development Cooperation, Land Rover Ireland, Electric Aid and the Irish Courts.

In 2017 we reached 35,377 people in vulnerable, rural and isolated communities. Some highlights of the programme are captured here:

LIVESTOCK, NUTRITION & ENVIRONMENT

- Local para-veterinarians trained by the Irish Red Cross treated 5,757 animals.
- The number of animals within the communities rose by 35% as a result of 1,417 animal births.
- 7 Cereal Banks were constructed, and 180 individual households were growing food in small-scale kitchen-garden plots.
- A total of 10,850 protective nets were constructed on land banks in two communities. 800 cubic meters of ponds were silted in another three communities while 50 additional hectares of sand dunes were stabilized and 67,250 trees saplings planted. These activities to protect vital arable land from desertification and to reclaim land for cultivation were carried out using cash-for-work methodology (enabling community members who undertook the work to earn an additional income). Of the total 771 participants in cash-for-work, 77% were women.
- 2,213 fuel-efficient stoves were distributed in 2017, reducing by 33% the wood used as cooking fuel
- 30 people were trained to act as focal points for improved nutrition and behaviour change in their communities.

10,850

PROTECTIVE NETS WERE CONSTRUCTED ON LAND BANKS IN TWO COMMUNITIES

67,250

TREES SAPLINGS PLANTED TO PROTECT VITAL ARABLE LAND FROM DESERTIFICATION

77%

OF PARTICIPANTS IN CASH-FOR-WORK WERE WOMEN

In 2017 we reached 35,377 people in vulnerable, rural and isolated communities.

WORKING WITH WOMEN

Amongst the beneficiaries of cereal banks 43% are women. Animal husbandry activities particularly targeted women where they represented 100% of the beneficiaries and 56% membership of management committees. Sheep fattening provided 207 women with a means of generating income. Women are generally very active in management committees for all interventions where they regularly fill the roles of administrative secretary and treasurer. 35.3% of the management committees established by the project are led by women. They were also actively involved in Cash for Work activities and in some cases were more numerous than men.

Insufficient funding resources in late 2017 led the Board to decide to close the programme supported by the Irish Red Cross in Niger by mid 2018.

WATER AND SANITATION ACTIVITIES:

- We carried out a campaign to promote family latrines to improve hygiene and sanitation in communities; a total of 35 volunteers took part and have started the process of constructing their family latrines.
- We rehabilitated boreholes, constructed 10 wells, and began the extension of a mini water system, which involved the installation of an eight kilometre pipe network and five tap stands. This infrastructure helps provide water to an extra 4,000 people.

ADULT LITERACY & EDUCATION

- Adult literacy centres were opened in 13 villages in September 2017, and in collaboration with the local authorities we trained locals as ‘literacy facilitators’ to work in their communities. We equipped the literacy centres with materials for the village participants.

VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

- We established and provided support to Village Development Committees in all of the villages where we worked, to enable them to autonomously sustain the benefits of the projects for years to come. We helped them to develop and implement their own action plans. These included support to education by supplying a school with textbooks and supplying spare parts for well construction, placing initial stock at a community store completely managed by women in one community and distribution of goats and sheep to various vulnerable women groups. The construction of classrooms and school latrines and hand-washing facilities was supported by the team.

100%

OF BENEFICIARIES OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY WERE WOMEN

Along with disaster relief efforts, the Irish Red Cross recognises the importance of investing in community resilience and capacity development.

As climate change makes weather patterns increasingly unpredictable and storms more intense, disasters often strike with little or no warning. Helping to ensure communities are prepared for a disaster is one of the most vital things we do, as planning before the next disaster occurs has proven to be an effective approach in saving lives and reducing injuries, and is more cost-effective than recovery work. Moreover, these communities are better prepared to face the next disaster should it occur.

In Indonesia, through an Integrated Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction programme, we are strengthening the capacity of both our sister National Society, the Indonesian Red Cross, and targeted communities, to prepare for, respond to, and cope with the effects of disasters. Indonesia, the world’s largest archipelago is one of the most natural-disaster prone countries in the world. Forming part of the ‘Pacific Ring of Fire’, Indonesia is prone to regular earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, as well as other natural disasters, including flooding and landslides. For disaster-prone countries like Indonesia, preparedness and resilience to overcome disasters is vital.

Over the next few years, with Irish Red Cross support, the Indonesian Red Cross as well as the communities we are working with, will strengthen their capacity to prepare for probable disasters. Communities and local government officials will be empowered in planning, managing and eventually coping with disasters locally, on their own. Activities include delivering first aid training, developing disaster-contingency plans, and conducting early warning and early action stimulations.

In order to do this, together with the community, the Red Cross conducts Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA). This assessment allows community members to evaluate the risks people face, identify their own vulnerabilities and subsequently their own capacity to cope and recover. This year, with the help of the Irish Red

•
€51,000

TRANSFERRED DIRECTLY TO
THE INDONESIAN RED CROSS
FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
MALANG PROJECT

After the training, the community response teams work with the communities in developing their community-disaster plans as well as identifying early warning systems and evacuation routes.

Cross, two communities were selected in Malang District, East Java Province. With a target population of 8,281, both communities now have disaster-management committees, community action plans and contingency plans.

Flooding, landslides and volcanic eruptions are the key natural hazards in the Malang District. As community members are the first respondents in times of disaster, our two targeted communities have formed village-disaster-response teams, called Community Based Action Teams (CBATs). CBAT members are the ones who regularly make members of the community aware of community disaster risks, and are involved in the disaster response operations. Altogether so far, 40 CBAT members have received training from the Red Cross on evacuation site management, disaster response, first aid, basic search and rescue, and response coordination.

After the training, the community response teams develop their community-disaster plans as well as identifying early warning systems and evacuation routes. Team members receive practical experience through a stimulation exercise carried out in the community. They are also equipped with disaster response kits.

It is anticipated that after the successful completion of this project at community level, the local population will be able to respond to emergencies during disasters, activate volcano-warning systems and evacuate affected populations when required.

•
40

CBAT MEMBERS HAVE
RECEIVED TRAINING
FROM THE RED CROSS

Jasmine Ball for Syria

In September 2016 a committee brought together by former lord mayor Michael Mulcahy and leaders from the worlds of arts, business and entertainment organised a once-off fundraiser for the Irish Red Cross—the Jasmine Ball. The event, in support of Syrian children and families, derived its name from the national flower of Syria.

In the run up to the Ball, Lord Mayor of Dublin Cllr Brendan Carr held a gathering in the mansion house for the Irish business community and accounts of the situation in Syria were relayed by a panel of expert speakers.

The Jasmine Ball then took place on 6 May at the Clayton Hotel, Burlington Road, Dublin. Over 600 people gathered to show their support, including politician Heather Humphreys and celebrity guest Rosanna Davison. It attracted a wide range of sponsors, partners and attendees, while there was also a diplomatic presence on the night. Television presenter Lisa Cannon was MC for the evening.

Entertainment on the night was provided by the Bentley Boys and The Line Up Choir, who encouraged guests to enjoy a post-dinner dance following the three-course meal. The Jasmine auction featured artworks by renowned Irish artists—Orla Walsh, Mo Kelly, Jim Fitzpatrick and Steven Mannion Farrell, and boasted an incredible range of prizes from signed rugby jerseys to a luxury five-star getaway to Dubai.

These funds provided for the distribution of 10,000 essential winter kits to children. For many, 2017 represented their seventh consecutive winter in displacement.

Funds raised were transferred to the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) Winterisation Programme in support of children impacted by more than five years of violent conflict in Syria. Including a top up from the Irish Red Cross, a total of €100,000 was raised. These funds provided for the distribution of 10,000 essential winter kits to children. For many, 2017 represented their seventh consecutive winter in displacement, living in tents or makeshift settlements in near freezing temperatures. The winter kits supplied to children aged 6–14 contained one set of boots, thermal woollen socks, and thermal undergarments.

The Jasmine Ball was a tremendous show of support and generosity for the children of Syria, which made a real, practical difference to Syrian children's lives last winter.

Promoting Respect for International Humanitarian Law

**International
Humanitarian Law
(IHL) is a set of rules
aimed at limiting
the effects of
armed conflict and
protecting civilians
in conflict zones.**

It restricts the means and methods of warfare, and was established based on the idea that 'even wars have limits'. IHL provides the mandate for the work of the Red Cross in conflict zones around the world, and the National Societies of the Red Cross play a key role in disseminating IHL to key audiences and promoting its respect, in order to limit the suffering of victims of armed conflict.

In 2017, the Irish Red Cross delivered a series of lectures to promote knowledge of, and respect for International Humanitarian Law to students in numerous universities and at the Centre for Talented Youth of Ireland, at Dublin City University's campus.

A relationship with the Irish Defence Forces was also developed in 2017, in particular with the United Nations Training School of Ireland (UNTSI), at the Curragh in Kildare. At UNTSI, the Irish Red Cross provided regular presentations to newly-commissioned cadets as well as to experienced UN Peacekeepers. The Irish Red Cross also provided support to an International Civil-Military Relations Course and an International Protection of Civilians Course, amongst others.

GRAND BARGAIN SEMINAR SERIES

One of the highlights of the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit was the so-called Grand Bargain: A Shared Commitment to Better Serve People in Need. This agreement by more than 30 of the biggest donors and aid providers aims to see more resources going into the hands of those in need. The Grand Bargain was first proposed by the former UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing, as one of the solutions in addressing the growing humanitarian financing gap.

**This agreement by
more than 30 of the
biggest donors and
aid providers aims to
see more resources
going into the hands
of those in need.**

The Grand Bargain includes a series of changes in the working practices of donors and aid organisations that would deliver an extra billion dollars over five years for people in need of humanitarian aid. These changes include stepping up cash programming, greater funding for national and local responders, and cutting bureaucracy through harmonised reporting requirements. The Grand Bargain commits donors and aid organizations to provide 25% of global humanitarian funding to local and national responders by 2020, along with more un-earmarked money, and increased multi-year funding to ensure greater predictability and continuity in humanitarian response, among other commitments.

Above all, the Grand Bargain is about the need to work together efficiently, transparently and harmoniously, with new and existing partners, including the private sector, individuals, and non-traditional sources of funding. This requires us to innovate, collaborate and adapt mindsets.

In 2017, the Irish Red Cross teamed up with Dóchas, Irish Aid, Trócaire and Action Aid to deliver a series of workshops for Irish humanitarian actors and experts to explore how Ireland, as a signatory to the Grand Bargain, could begin to move the agreement from paper to practice. Three seminars were held in 2017, looking at Gender and Localisation; the Humanitarian/Development nexus; and Cash-Based programming.

Migration Overview

The Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) was established by a Government decision on 10 September 2015. This was in direct response to the humanitarian crisis that developed in southern Europe as a consequence of mass migration from areas of conflict in the Middle East and Africa, particularly Syria. In October 2015, a programme office for the Irish Refugee Protection Programme was opened to carry out the aims of the government decision.

Under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme, the Irish Government has pledged to accept a total of 4,000 persons into the State: 2,622 asylum seekers who are coming from Greece and Italy through the EU relocation programme, and 1,040 programme refugees under the UNHCR-led refugee resettlement programme which is currently focusing on refugees from Lebanon.

The Irish Red Cross supports the Irish Government in fulfilling its commitment by facilitating the resettlement and integration of migrants who come into Ireland under the relocation strand of the Irish Refugee Protection Programme. This partnership came about after the Irish Red Cross received a request from the Department of Justice and Equality in autumn 2015 to manage a register of pledges for accommodation, goods and services made by the Irish public in response to the migration crisis. The call-out had been made to the general public earlier in 2015 and Irish people generously made 832 pledges. A quarter of these were for goods and services while the remainder were accommodation pledges which came in two forms; shared in Irish family homes (this is where people offer a spare bedroom in their home) and vacant stand-alone properties (where pledgers own a holiday home, or a second unoccupied property for example). Vacant properties can be apartments, houses and converted accommodation where no one else is living.

The Irish Red Cross sought accommodation which is available for a period of time which will allow refugees to settle. Short-term accommodation was sought for refugees who are transitioning between placements or to facilitate medical needs, educational opportunities or employment offers.

ARRIVAL OF MIGRANTS

While some migrants, mainly Syrian, started to arrive in Ireland in September 2016 they arrived in larger numbers in early 2017. Between February 2017 and year end 31 December 2017, 16 flights landed in Ireland under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme with 515 refugees.

In 2017, the focus of the Irish Red Cross was on a small group of migrants identified by the Department of Justice. This group was comprised of some families, but mainly single people.

HOW DOES IT ALL WORK?

The overall goal of the migration programme is to enable refugees and asylum seekers in Ireland to live a life to their full potential. To support this, the Irish Red Cross has developed an integrated programme of supports which we provide to asylum seekers and refugees. This includes professional resettlement casework support to individuals and families, housing management including the coordination of housing pledges made by the general public and support to secure private rented accommodation and social housing transfers. There is also support from the Irish Red Cross volunteer network to link refugees with local-level community activities. The focus is to support positive integration and social inclusion of refugees resettling in Ireland.

The Irish Red Cross predominantly seeks to place refugees into pledged accommodation offered by the public, but we have extended our service to also support placement in private rented and social housing. In this regard, the Irish Red Cross has teamed up with Co-operative Housing Ireland (CHI) to provide the physical assessment and identification of housing that is suitable for the needs of the refugees.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

Upon arrival, asylum seekers reside in Emergency Reception and Orientation Centres (EROCs) to benefit from English language education, orientation to Ireland, health supports and await the granting of their refugee status by the Irish State. There are a number of EROCs across Ireland and in 2017, the Irish Red Cross predominantly worked in Abbeyfield Hotel in Ballaghderreen, Co Roscommon and Mosney Accommodation Centre, Co Meath with a number of refugees who were allocated to the Irish Red Cross by the Department of Justice and Equality

While migrants are living in EROCS the Irish Red Cross commences a programme of engagement by carrying out a direct consultation with each individual refugee to identify their needs, aspirations and practical considerations with regard to their housing, health, education and employment needs, to support their integration.

The Irish Red Cross works then to find suitable accommodation which caters to the self-identified needs

of refugees. There is a significant amount of logistics and administration involved in placing refugees into accommodation. The Irish Red Cross must take into account the needs of refugees and the needs of those who own the premises or those already residing in the premises (in the case of shared accommodation), among many other considerations.

Once a match is found, the placement of refugees into accommodation is fully supported by a migration caseworker who works directly with the refugee to provide essential wrap-around supports such as education, health, employment and social protection in the new location. This work is supported by the Irish Red Cross volunteers in the locality.

The Irish Red Cross also facilitates refugees to access language classes, translation services, medical assistance, mental-health services and voluntary pledges of time and friendship. These supports are to link the refugee in with their entitlements, such as social welfare and protection payments, and housing applications—such as the housing assistance payment—to cover any rental agreements. The migration caseworkers also support refugees in accessing the employment market and help link refugees with supports to engage in training, or register in formal education. All these supports are provided for a period of 12 months post placement.

The integration component of the programme is supported by the Irish Red Cross volunteer network. This is organised by 14 regional migration volunteer coordinators who provide local-level practical support such as accompaniment to community meetings and sports activities, among others.

WHAT NEXT?

Once the tenancy agreement is settled and a refugee is placed in accommodation, they are placed on the local authority housing list with an 18-month lead-in timeframe. When local authority housing becomes available, the refugee can move to longer-term permanent housing or transfer to another pledged accommodation.

On all matters to do with the arrival of Syrian and Iraqi refugees into Ireland, the Irish Red Cross coordinates with housing associations, religious bodies and the local authorities. The Irish Red Cross is very grateful for the support received from these organisations.





Wassim & Mary

Mary from Baldoyle in Dublin has given Syrian refugee Wassim a room in her home under the Irish Red Cross’ Register of Pledges.

515

HYGIENE KITS
DISTRIBUTED
TO MIGRANTS

“I have a house here with a spare room and I heard somebody say—and it was so true—the only difference between them and us is luck and it is, it’s just luck.” Mary O’Reilly is explaining why she decided to take 26-year-old Syrian refugee Wassim into her home. “It could have been me, you know, so it was conscience. I kind of felt they were running for their lives, I felt it was the right thing to do, and I’ve been blessed in everything I have.”

Mary owns a beautiful home which looks over Dublin Bay in Baldoyle, Co Dublin. Wassim has never lived beside the sea before and he likes to go outside with a cup of coffee and admire the view. Wassim has been living with Mary and Lolly the Tibetan Terrier since July 2017 and has really settled in. “I have two buses—the 32 and 29—which go into town from here and the train station is very close as well,” says Wassim. “Mary’s house is very lovely, it’s by the sea and it’s very nice inside.” When he first arrived, Mary says Wassim was giving his family tours of her gaff via FaceTime. “He was walking around the house showing them the sea, showing them me!” she laughs.

Mary has a lot more to give than just her home. She took redundancy from working with Irish Life to look after her mother, but her mother died four years ago and Mary says “I’m here all the time so it means I can be here to help him.”

Wassim enthuses “for example if I have letters Mary tells me where to go and she helps me with many other things.”

Mary is enjoying having an injection of Middle Eastern culture into her home; Wassim loves cooking and Mary “has” to sample all the food he makes, not least Wassim’s fatteh (a chickpea dish) and home-made hummus with Syrian bread. “I love different cultures,” says Mary, “and I would love to have gone to Damascus.”

Wassim comes from Al-Zabadani, a city located high in the mountains on the Lebanese border in southwestern Syria.

Wassim’s father ran a construction and agriculture business where they grew apple and peach trees. Wassim had been working as a manager with his father and was going to take over the family business but his home and the business have since been destroyed. In fact, the entire village they lived in has been destroyed.

Wassim explains the war took its toll on Al-Zabadani; war planes bombed everything and Wassim says that now, “nobody lives in my city—all the houses

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BABY KITS WERE
DISTRIBUTED

I have a house here with a spare room and I heard somebody say—and it was so true—the only difference between them and us is luck and it is, it’s just luck.

and everything are gone.” There are 35 towns around Al-Zabadani and Wassim and his family left for one of these towns, but then bombings took place there too, so he and his family moved to Lebanon.

The family left for Lebanon in 2013 and in January 2016 Wassim and his 17-year-old cousin Rami left Lebanon for Turkey. Wassim and Rami made their way to Greece via the treacherous crossing of the Mediterranean by boat. When they arrived in Greece they were in a camp for 16 days. They then moved into a hotel on the island of Samos before heading to Athens.

Wassim wanted to come to Ireland because he wanted to come to a country that spoke English. When he arrived, he stayed in Baleskin reception centre. He was then resident in the former Jesuit university—Hatch Hall, in Dublin 2. Wassim lived there for a year, and he started to study English.

Wassim now works in an Arabic restaurant in Temple Bar. This not only gives him an income but provides him the opportunity to clarify queries he has about the English language with other Arabic speakers. He looked for work in restaurants because he has college in the afternoons so he needs to work by night. Wassim is very keen to complete his school study because he wants to do a degree in IT but first, he needs to get a Level 5 in English.

Mary doesn’t think welcoming Wassim into her home is a big deal. “One man said to me ‘good on you’, he said a lot of people ‘talk the talk but you’re walking the walk’. I don’t think it’s a great thing to do, I really don’t. Maybe it’s just me, maybe it’s my nature, but lots of people take in an Irish person. What’s the difference, are we not all the same?”

WASSIM LIKES HIS NEW HOME.

“Before I came to Ireland I didn’t know anything about Irish people, but when I arrived I found Irish people are very friendly. A man on O’Connell Street started speaking to me because I was looking to the river—I was lost. He asked; ‘where are you from?’ and I told him ‘I am from Syria’ and he said ‘oh you’re welcome in Ireland’ and he hugged me. That was very nice, so after that I felt very lucky that I came to Ireland, because of the friendly people.”

Ahmad, Martin & Roisin

Syrian refugee Ahmed has found a new home in Rathgar with Martin and Róisín thanks to the Irish Red Cross' Register of Pledges Programmes. They tell us their story.

AHMED'S STORY

Ahmed had an idyllic life in the ancient and much-visited city of Aleppo. He spent his days with his cousins, swimming and playing football.

Then the war came and changed everything. Soldiers disturbed him when he was going to university, and again when he was going to work.

Ahmed decided to leave and went back to his original neighbourhood but it was subject to constant gunfire from military planes. Along with this he was in constant fear military forces would, at any time, come into his home and take him away.

Ahmed decided to get out, and headed for Turkey. "I wanted to travel and to do something useful for my life, for my future and for my family as well," says Ahmed.

He got to Istanbul and then embarked on the treacherous crossing of the Mediterranean to Greece.

The boat trip took place at 2am and Ahmed says it was scary. He was with 40 people, the vast majority of whom were women and children while there were some old people too. He says "criminal people" took a lot of money from them to transport them to Greece. On the boat, Ahmed gave his life jacket to a woman "because I knew, myself, I could swim but she had a small baby and was scared and really stressed," he explains.

Ahmed says his group was "lucky" to reach the Greek island safely. He spent 10 months in Greece before he was contacted by the Irish embassy who arranged for him to come to Ireland.

MARTIN'S STORY

Months before that, Martin and Roisin were watching television in Rathgar, Dublin when the Irish Red Cross call-out for pledges of accommodation for Syrian refugees came up on the news. "I think it was almost an instantaneous sense on both our parts," says Martin. "We don't have kids, we've got a house, plenty of space, this is no big deal; we felt it was the right thing to do in the situation. We asked ourselves, 'if we were in their shoes what would we want?' We just said we should ring up and put our names down, which we did."

At the end of August last year, Róisín and Martin got a call from the Irish Red Cross. Ahmed had been in direct provision for nine months and the Irish Red Cross wanted to introduce them.

This was a piece of history I had never heard of until Ahmed told us...it gave him a sense that this country has been through an experience not unlike his own and there might well be an empathy and a welcome for his situation.

"The Red Cross brought him along for an interview, just a get-to-know you session," says Martin. "He had an interpreter and that went very well. We liked the cut of his jib and he didn't have any objections to us, so we said yes and within roughly a week or ten days, Ahmed had landed with us.

"People said to us 'does it not change the dynamic?', continues Martin, "and of course it does, but we have had nephews and nieces transitioning from university to work who have stayed a few months and you get used to that disruption. I like my routine so it's actually good to be upset from your routine occasionally and to have to make some adjustments, but once you get over the kind of 'how is the laundry going to be done' and 'when are you joining us for meals', you get into a routine," says Martin.

THEIR STORY

"The Red Cross set out an agreement at the very start which sets out the rules of the game," explains Martin.

"Part of that is an anticipated 12-month period, the intention being that during it, Ahmed will perfect his English, he will learn about Irish customs, Irish ways and then hopefully transition smoothly into the world of work, so he has been preparing for that since the moment he landed with us."

As a fully recognised refugee, Ahmed has all the rights of an Irish citizen. He works in a hotel in Dublin as a porter and is doing a Level 4 Office skills course. "I'm doing this course to improve my English and to get better opportunities," says Ahmed.

He has also picked up other skills since arriving in Ireland. "When Ahmed arrived he couldn't cook to save himself," says Martin, "but two weekends ago he prepared a dinner for ten people. His friends from Mosney came and we had this feast and Ahmed—by ringing up his mammy in Aleppo—got these recipes, and was creatively able to turn out an excellent dish."

It's a far cry from the disruption Ahmed experienced back home where he lost family, neighbours and friends. "I lost my cousin," says Ahmed. "A plane bombed the building and he was under rubble. We took him out and he was rushed to hospital and he was unconscious for five days. Then he came around but after a few hours he died.

He was not just my cousin he was my friend as well. We grew up together and we did most of our activities together like going to the swimming pool or playing soccer."

Ahmed is now building a life in Ireland but what made him choose Ireland over other countries in Europe? "I heard about Ireland and I read about Ireland and I read as well about the Irish famine and how Irish people crossed to America—they were in a bad situation like we are, so I felt they would understand our suffering," says Ahmed. Furthermore, Ahmed had discovered that a donation was made to the Irish people by his own country (then in the form of the Ottoman Empire) during the famine though Queen Victoria sought to prevent it.

"This was a piece of history I had never heard of until Ahmed told us about it," notes Martin, "but it gave him a sense that this country has been through an experience not unlike his own and there might well be an empathy and a welcome for his situation."

In conclusion, Martin notes that "in life, when you give, you typically get back more than you give and in this case we are learning a great deal about Ahmed's culture, about the Koran about Islam and its heritage."

Martin also talks about experiencing what was a far-way conflict through the eyes of somebody who has lived through it. "You begin to get a sense of what it feels like to be on the inside of that news story," says Martin. "Looking out from Ahmed's perspective, there are very few friendly faces."

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HOUSEHOLD KITS
WERE SUPPLIED
TO MIGRANTS

The Syrian Refugee Who Made a Violin for the Irish President

In Syria, Almuthna Loulah was a lecturer in Agricultural Engineering. His speciality was Food Science and he had just begun a PhD in Food Science when the war broke out and disrupted his studies.

In 2016 he left with his brother and cousin, and travelled across the Mediterranean in a “plastic boat” to Greece. However, when they reached Greece, the border to Europe was closed so they couldn’t go any further. They stayed there for a year, firstly in a small camp on Lesbos Island for two months before moving to Athens where they lived in an apartment with three other Syrian men.

Almuthna registered his name with a reunification programme and then did an interview with the relocation office before he was given a decision to come to Ireland. “I was so proud, I was very happy,” he notes. His brother and cousin (both named Muhammad) also came to Ireland through this programme.

Almuthna arrived in Ireland in February 2017 and moved to Ballaghaderreen in March where he stayed until January 2018. He then moved in with Mary in Blackrock through the Irish Red Cross Register of Pledges programme. “She is very nice and very welcoming and she helps me with everything,” says Almuthna. “She gives me advice. I feel I have known her for a long time, I’m very happy.”

Alongside his career as a lecturer in Syria, Almuthna trained as a carpenter under his father (also a carpenter) and helped him in his workshop growing up. Almutha had a particular interest in violins and wanted to make one in Syria, but he didn’t know where to start.

That all changed when he came to Ireland. In Ballaghderreen, an Irish friend put him in touch with someone who had a bandsaw (a machine used to cut wood). That person, in turn, put Almuthna in touch with a violin maker—Dave Teehan, from Co Mayo.

Dave gave Almuthna wood and chisels and full access to his workshop. Almuthna was shocked at this generosity and says “I am lucky man. When I met Dave he gave me everything—the original template for the measurement of the thickness of the wood pieces, for example. My work on violins was a hobby in Syria but here, my work is professional.”

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PEOPLE HOUSED.
8 FAMILY UNITS &
20 INDIVIDUALS

I feel the real peace again...I feel all the people around me are helping me.

Almuthna decided he wanted to make a violin for the Irish President and Dave agreed to help him.

It took Almuthna two months to make the violin and he presented it to President Michael D. Higgins in Áras an Uachtaráin in September 2017.

Almuthna describes Michael D. Higgins as a “very good man.” Following this, Almuthna’s violin was loaned to the RTÉ Concert Orchestra for Culture Night on 22 September in Dublin Castle where it was used for a solo performance of the ‘Lark in the Clear Air’. Almuthna was at the performance.

Almuthna now has set up his own small workshop for making violins in his bedroom in Blackrock.

He says he feels very relaxed now. “I feel the real peace again,” says Almuthna. “I feel all the people around me are helping me. I got a very bad cold and Mary helped me with food, with medicine and with hot lemon. She made sure I was ok, so I felt she was like my mother. So I’m not alone.”

Things are going well for Almuthna and now he wants to bring his family to Ireland.

“My father and my mother wish to come to Ireland because I told them a lot about the Irish people, about the life, and that everyone says ‘welcome’ and ‘hello’,” explains Almuthna. No doubt he also wants to introduce them to his wife Diala, a Syrian he met when he moved to Ireland. Almuthna hopes that someday he can complete his PhD in Ireland as doing a PhD is not just his dream but his parents’ dream too. His priority now, however, is to find work.

“I’m happy in Ireland because I can feel my life start now because I have official papers, I have real friends and I have my life. I believe everything will be ok in future and I feel I am a lucky man.”

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FLIGHTS WERE
SUPPORTED

Restoring Family Links Overview

The Irish Red Cross is part of the International Red Cross Restoring Family Links (RFL) network which traces separated relatives, restores contact, and reunites families. This is a free service provided all over the world by the Red Cross.

The RFL global network has succeeded in tracing hundreds of thousands of people who have left their country of origin, sought asylum abroad, disappeared, or are in prisons, hospitals, refugee camps and shelters. This service has also prevented separation, disappearance and provided clarification on the fate of persons reported missing.

In 2017, the Irish Red Cross RFL team helped 271 people. This department worked on 101 tracing cases in 2017, and opened 57 Family Reunification and Travel Assistance cases. 41 of these were completed and saw families arrive to Ireland. One case was cancelled and seven cases were self-paid. The remaining eight cases were still open on 31 December 2017.

The top four nationalities of those initiating travel assistance cases were Syria (35%), Afghanistan (10%), Somalia (10%) and Democratic Republic of the Congo (8.7%).



271

PEOPLE HELPED
ALTOGETHER



101

TRACING CASES



57

FAMILY REUNIFICATION
TRAVEL ASSISTANCE CASES



Serge's Story

In 2017, the Irish Red Cross, in partnership with UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) Ireland and IOM (International Organization for Migration) Ireland, helped two young brothers from the Congo—Serge and Giresse Kanyamuhanga.

Not long after Serge and Giresse arrived in Ireland, the brothers approached the Irish Red Cross looking for help in finding their relatives, and initiated a tracing request with the Society for their missing family members. The Irish Red Cross is part of an international network which traces separated relatives, restores contact, and reunites families. This free service, known as Restoring Family Links (RFL) is co-ordinated by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Serge then submitted an application for family reunification to the Irish authorities to bring his mother and siblings to Ireland. After being granted family reunification he applied to the Irish Red Cross for help with funding the travel through the Irish Red Cross' Travel Assistance Programme, which is operated with partners UNHCR Ireland and IOM Ireland. The Irish Red Cross later helped bring Serge and Giresse's father to Ireland as well once his family reunification permission was granted, via the Travel Assistance Programme. On the Travel Assistance Programme, UNHCR and the Irish Red Cross pay the costs of travel on a 50:50 split and the Irish Red Cross administers the scheme. IOM Ireland organises the travel, transit and pre-departure medicals for family members, if applicable.

The Irish Red Cross also liaised with the International Committee of the Red Cross in providing Serge and Giresse's mother, father and siblings with travel documents so they could travel to Ireland.

Read Serge's story below, which was written and published by The Irish Times (article by Sorcha Pollak).

REACHING DREAMS IN THE CONGO WAS IMPOSSIBLE, IN IRELAND IT'S EXCITING

Serge Kanyamuhanga was halfway through a normal afternoon at school when suddenly the sound of gunshots began echoing through the building. Panic spread as students and teachers began to run for cover, trying to escape the clutches of armed rebel soldiers. Sixteen years old at the time, he remembers running through the crowd searching for his 12-year-old brother Giresse.

"There was no way to escape, everywhere was surrounded by soldiers. The boys were taken away and teachers were arrested. We were brought to a camp and were so scared because we knew we were there to join an army. We were taught how to hold a gun, how to fire a gun, how to fight against the Congolese army."

Kanyamuhanga had heard about the violence spreading across the North Kivu province where his family lived in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. However, he had hoped their hometown would be spared the brutal violence and kidnappings witnessed across so many parts of the DRC.

"The violence started far away; we didn't realise it would hit us. Life was ordinary up until then, we were just a normal family living together. Until the violence arrived in our province we didn't realise how serious it was."

After a couple of weeks in the camp, himself, his brother and a group of other teenage boys formulated an escape plan after they heard the training area lay close to the Ugandan border. "We realised that if we had the opportunity to run, we could make it to the other side. We waited until some of the soldiers had gone out on a mission to fight and then started running. It was the middle of the night and we were so scared because we knew the minute we were found we were dead."

CAMP CONDITIONS

The teenage boys successfully crossed the border into Uganda and made their way to a refugee camp. However, conditions in the camp were poor and Kanyamuhanga was worried about his younger brother's health and safety. "It was very stressful knowing I was the only person there to look after him. There were thousands and thousands of refugees in that camp. We stayed for a while but realised we had to leave because it was too difficult to survive, there was no food. It wasn't a safe environment and there were diseases everywhere so we went to Kampala."

Once they reached the Ugandan capital, Kanyamuhanga and his brother began searching for a Catholic Church. "I hoped the church could be a safe place for us. We went to the morning service and explained our situation and they gave us a place to stay." The boys spent three months in Kampala and in March 2013 the parish priest arranged to bring them to Ireland. The teenagers were brought straight from Dublin airport to a centre for unaccompanied minors.

In August 2013 the boys were transferred to a foster home in Portlaoise and the following September they began school. Kanyamuhanga went into fifth year while his younger brother began first year at Portlaoise College. "Getting used to the foster family wasn't easy at first but it was just a matter of trying to fit in. The only thing we wanted was to be in a safe place where there was no war, no killing and no violence."

Kanyamuhanga loved being back in school and says his fellow students were very friendly. "Studying in Congo was very difficult with the violence. Reaching your dreams was almost impossible but here it was exciting. I had always dreamed of becoming a doctor and working in a hospital. It was my dad's dream for me."

FACEBOOK CONTACT

It was around this time that Kanyamuhanga eventually contacted his family after he found his uncle on Facebook. He discovered that his mother, three sisters and three brothers had fled the country shortly after the boys were kidnapped and travelled to South Africa. Kanyamuhanga's father, who also left the DRC, went missing en route after he returned to the Congolese border in the hopes of finding his two missing sons.

"He was trying to see if there was any way he could find us in a refugee camp. At that point they thought we were probably dead. There was no hope, so many people had been killed."

Kanyamuhanga's social worker suggested he apply for family reunification to bring his mother and siblings to Ireland. The process took three years but in May 2017, the family was reunited in Dublin airport.

"We were so excited to see them again. We hadn't even met my youngest brother because he was born after we left. The social worker helped us get emergency accommodation in Blanchardstown and we had three months to find a place to live."

Shortly before the family arrived in Ireland, Kanyamuhanga's mother tracked down her husband in Mozambique. Kanyamuhanga submitted a second application for his father and in December 2017 he arrived in Ireland. The family is now living in Portlaoise and Kanyamuhanga, who is in his second year of studying science, has taken a year off college to help his family settle in.

COLLEGE FEES

Even though the family are finally back together, life is still challenging for Kanyamuhanga. After scoring 400 points in his Leaving Cert in 2015, he was initially unable to accept his place at Trinity College because of the cost of international fees. As a refugee, he needed to have spent three years or more in Ireland to qualify for free third-level education.

Kanyamuhanga, who had already secured a scholarship from the One Foundation, was eventually accepted at the cost of an EU student after pressure from a number of student-support groups. However, it took until December of his first year to finalise his enrolment.

"I kept going to classes even though it took three months to sort out the fees. I didn't want to fall behind but I couldn't access the library. I also had no student card and had to commute from Portlaoise every day, it wasn't easy."

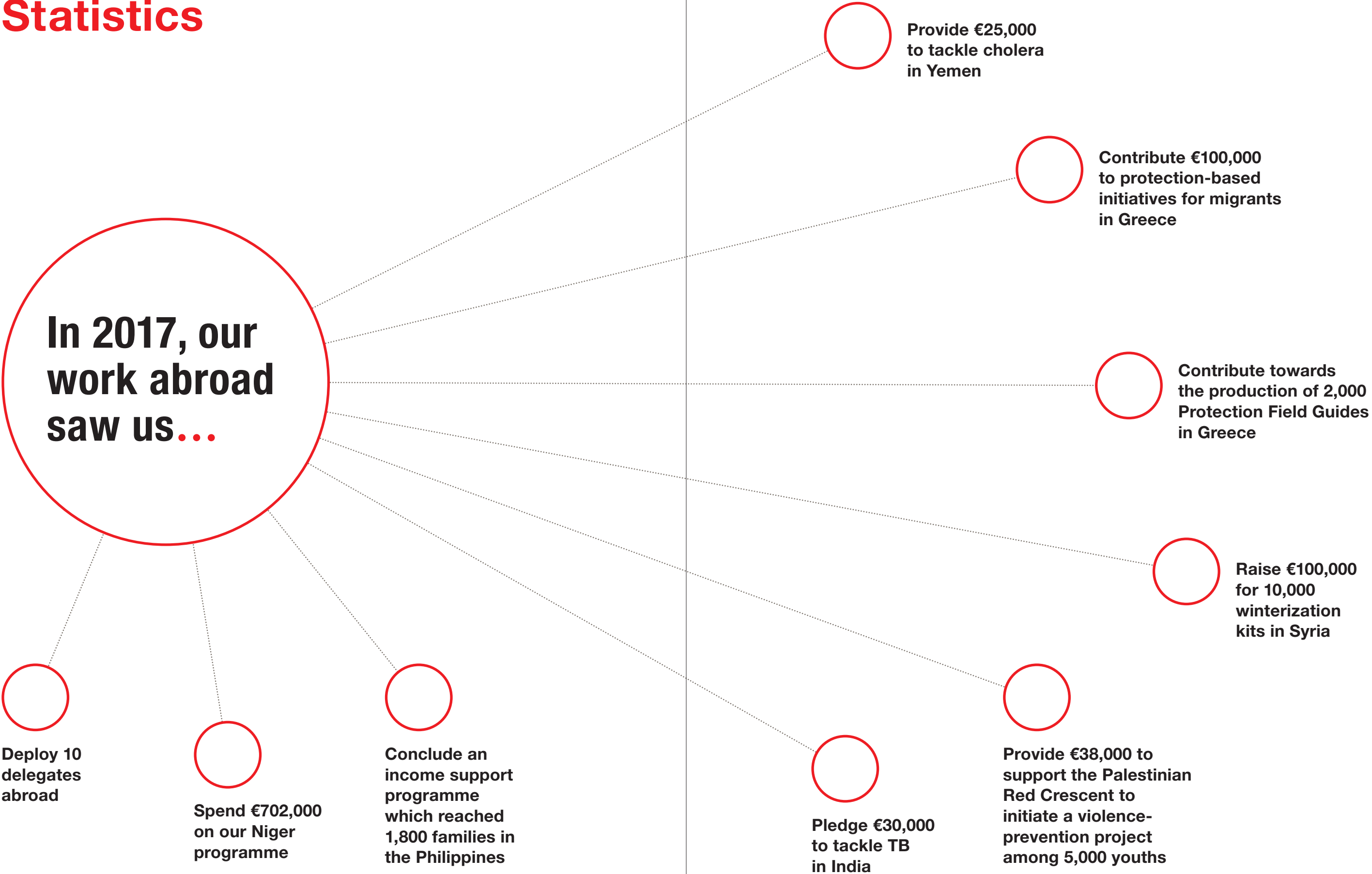
Two years on, Kanyamuhanga is eager to complete his degree followed by a masters and PhD. His younger brother Giresse will sit his Leaving Cert in June and hopes to study business at college.

"When my family was separated we were always worried about each other, we never knew if the others were alive. We can now help each other if there's a problem. The fact that we're together now is a relief, we don't need to worry about what happens next."

Life was ordinary up until then, we were just a normal family living together.

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ATTESTATION OF
DETENTION &
TRAVEL DOCUMENTS



Administrative Information

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Name: Pat Carey
Role: Chairman
Term: Ends 2021 (2nd Term)
Attendance: 6/6

Name: Tom Horwell
Role: Vice Chairperson
Term: Resigned in October 2018 (end of his 2nd term)
Attendance: 5/6

Name: Sheila Callan
Role: Treasurer
Term: Ends 2021 (2nd Term)
Attendance: 6/6

Name: Barry O'Donovan
Role: Secretary
Term: Ends 2019 (3rd Term)
Attendance: 4/6

Name: Colin Wilson
Role: Board Member
Term: Ends 2018 (1st Term)
Attendance: 4/6

Name: Cepta Dowling
Role: Board Member
Term: Ends 2021 (2nd Term)
Attendance: 4/6

Name: Darren Ryan
Role: Board Member
Term: Resigned in May 2018 (2nd Term)
Attendance: 4/6

Name: Cliona Lehane
Role: Board Member
Term: Ends 2017 (2nd Term)
Attendance: 3/6 (term ended July '17)

Name: Sean Mason
Role: Board Member
Term: Ends 2018 (1st Term)
Attendance: 3/6

Name: Maura Lowry
Role: Board Member
Term: Ends 2018 (1st Term)
Attendance: 5/6

Name: Kieran Meehan
Role: Board Member
Term: Ends 2019 (2nd Term)
Attendance: 5/6

Name: Brian Byrne
Role: Board Member
Term: Ends 2019 (1st Term)
Attendance: 6/6

Name: Julie O'Brien
Role: Board Member
Term: Ends 2019 (1st Term)
Attendance: 4/6

Name: Ted Noonan
Role: Board Member
Term: Ends 2020 (1st Term)
Attendance: 2/6 (term began July '17)

Name: Mareike Eccleston
Role: Board Member
Term: Ends 2020 (1st Term)
Attendance: 1/6 (term began July '17)

Name: Olivia Mitchell
Role: Vice Chairperson
Term: Ends 2021 (1st Term)
Attendance: Term began October 2018

Name: Dr Muiris O'Ceidigh
Role: Board Member
Term: Ends 2021 (1st Term)
Attendance: Term began October 2018

Name: Conor Molloy
Role: Board Member
Term: Ends 2021 (1st Term)
Attendance: Term began October 2018

Name: Claire Rushe
Role: Board Member
Term: Ends 2021 (1st Term)
Attendance: Term began October 2018

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Liam O'Dwyer
Secretary General

John Roche
Head of International Relations & Co-operation (left in September 2018)

Danny Curran
Head of Fundraising & Commercial (left in October 2018 and we are currently recruiting his replacement)

Sandra Stanley
Head of National Volunteer Network Services & Development

Rory O'Sullivan
Head of Finance

SOLICITORS

Mullaney Walsh Maxwells
19 Herbert Place, Dublin 2

Byrne Wallace
87–88 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2

AUDITORS

BDO
Registered Auditors
Beaux Lane House
Mercer Street Lower
Dublin

PRINCIPLE BANKERS

Bank of Ireland
2 College Green
Dublin

Allied Irish Bank
1–4 Baggot St. Lower
Dublin

ABOUT US

The Irish Red Cross Society is registered in Ireland as a charity.

GOVERNING DOCUMENT

The Irish Red Cross Society was established in Ireland in 1939 and is governed under the terms of the Red Cross Act 1938, (SI) 206/139.

Charity Number: CHY3950
Charity Regulatory Authority Number: 2000946

National Office: 16 Merrion Square, Dublin 2

Partners

The Irish Red Cross continues to collaborate with like-minded groups to promote community resilience and well-being.

Likewise, to ensure that the Irish Red Cross meets the highest standards of governance, transparency, accounting, fundraising and messaging, the charity follows a number of set guidelines and codes of conduct.

The Irish Red Cross would like to extend its thanks to the following groups and organisations for their support and guidance in 2017:

- Irish Aid
- International Federation of the Red Cross
- International Committee of the Red Cross
- Niger Red Cross
- British Red Cross
- Belgian Red Cross
- Netherlands Red Cross
- Indonesia Red Cross
- India Red Cross
- Department of Defence
- Department of Justice and Equality
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- HSE
- Irish Prison Service
- Road Safety Authority
- University College Cork
- Quality and Qualifications Ireland
- TUSLA
- Charities Institute of Ireland
- Dóchas
- The Wheel
- Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council

- Merchants Quay Ireland
- CLÁR
- Pobal
- HIV Ireland
- Gaisce
- National Youth Council of Ireland
- Foróige
- United Nations Youth Delegates
- Electric Aid
- Fleming Medical
- Land Rover
- National Lottery
- Care Alliance Ireland
- La Cooperation Belge Au Development
- Irish Consortium on Gender Based Violence
- Irish Refugee Protection Programme
- Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service
- Reception and Integration Agency (RIA)
- The Irish Refugee Protection Programme
- Co-operative Housing Ireland
- Irish Refugee Council
- Nasc Ireland
- United Nations High Commission for Refugees
- International Organisation for Migration
- Amnesty International Ireland
- Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
- Your English Language School
- e-Frontiers
- PERCO—Peace IV—Promotion of Reconciliation and Integration Through Safe Mediation
- AVAIL—Amplifying the Voices of Refugees and Asylum seekers for Integration and Lifeskills
- Dublin City Council
- City and County Management Authority
- Clúid Housing
- Niamh Phelan
- Túath Housing
- Crosscare
- Canon
- Healthy Ireland
- Code Blue
- Festimed

The Irish Red Cross would also like to extend a special thanks to the pledgers who have participated in the Register of Pledges programme.

The Movement

The Irish Red Cross is a society of The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The Movement is made up of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the National Societies.

The International Committee of the Red Cross is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance. The ICRC also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the Geneva Conventions and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It directs and coordinates the international activities conducted by the Movement in armed conflicts and other situations of violence.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world’s largest volunteer-based humanitarian network, reaching 150 million people each year through its 190 member National Societies. Together, the IFRC acts before, during and after disasters and health emergencies to meet the needs and improve the lives of vulnerable people. It does so with impartiality as to nationality, race, gender, religious beliefs, class and political opinions. Guided by Strategy 2020—a collective plan of action to tackle the major humanitarian and development challenges of this decade—the IFRC is committed to ‘saving lives and changing minds’.

National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies embody the work and principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in more than 190 countries. National Societies act as auxiliaries to the public authorities of their own countries in the humanitarian field and provide a range of services including disaster relief, health and social programmes. During wartime, National Societies assist the affected civilian population and support the army medical services where appropriate.

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is guided by seven Fundamental Principles; humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

All Red Cross and Red Crescent activities have one central purpose: to help without discriminations those who suffer and thus contribute to peace in the world.

CONSOLIDATED
FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

INCORPORATING THE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

	Notes	Restricted Funds 2017 €'000	Unrestricted Funds 2017 €'000	Total 2017 €'000	Total 2016 €'000
INCOME & ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations & legacies	3 (a)	2,606	3,077	5,683	5,137
Charitable activities	3 (b)	2	935	937	957
Other trading activities	3 (c)	–	610	610	650
Investments	3 (d)	1	17	18	17
Other	3 (e)	–	103	103	184
TOTAL INCOME & ENDOWMENTS	3	2,609	4,742	7,351	6,945
EXPENDITURE ON:					
Raising funds	4	7	1,331	1,338	1,164
Charitable activities	5	2,605	4,159	6,764	6,449
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		2,612	5,490	8,102	7,613
NET (OUTGOING)/INCOMING RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR					
		(3)	(748)	(751)	(668)
Transfer between funds	15	(151)	151	–	–
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit scheme	14	–	–	–	1,053
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	17	(154)	(597)	(751)	385
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:					
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD		1,514	8,161	9,675	9,290
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	14	1,360	7,564	8,924	9,675

- All the activities relate to continuing activities.
- There are no recognised gains and losses other than as stated above.
- The financial statements were reviewed by the Board of Directors and approved on 11 December 2018.

On behalf of the Board of Directors

Pat Carey

Pat Carey
Chairperson

Sheila Callan

Sheila Callan
Treasurer

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2017

	Notes	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible fixed assets	7	5,417	5,501
		5,417	5,501
CURRENT ASSETS			
Stocks	8	175	187
Receivables	9	609	390
Cash and cash equivalents	10	3,720	4,471
		4,504	5,048
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Payables	11	(910)	(750)
		3,594	4,298
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
Total Assets less current liabilities		9,011	9,799
Payables: (Amounts falling due in more than one year)	12	(87)	(69)
		8,924	9,730
Net Assets Before pension Scheme			
Defined benefit pension liability	17	(-)	(55)
		8,924	9,675
TOTAL NET ASSETS			
Funds:			
Represented by			
Unrestricted funds	14	5,892	7,530
Restricted funds	14	1,360	1,514
Designated funds	14	1,672	631
		8,924	9,675

- The financial statements were reviewed by the Board of Directors and approved by the General Assembly on 11 December 2018.

On behalf of the Board of Directors

Pat Carey

Pat Carey
Chairperson

Sheila Callan

Sheila Callan
Treasurer

CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

	Notes	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities		(31)	(4,879)
Return on investments:			
Deposit interest income		2	3
Capital expenditure and related grants:			
Payment to acquire fixed assets	7	(788)	(524)
Receipts from sale of fixed assets		48	–
Net cash (used in)/provided by financing activities			
Loans received/(repaid) in year		18	(29)
DECREASE IN CASH		(751)	(5,429)
RECONCILIATION OF NET CASH FLOW			
Decrease in cash		(749)	(5,429)
Bank balances at beginning of year		4,471	9,900
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		3,720	4,471

RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RESOURCES TO CASH (OUTFLOW) FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	Notes	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources		(751)	385
Depreciation	7	703	417
Deposit interest income		(2)	(3)
Decrease in stocks		12	33
(Increase) in receivables		(219)	(95)
Increase/(Decrease) in payables		105	(5,619)
Loss on disposal of fixed assets		121	3
Net cash (outflow) from operating activities		(31)	(4,879)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

1 Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies of the Irish Red Cross Society, which are outlined below, have been applied consistently throughout the current and prior year:

1 (a) Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis with reference to the recommendations of the revised Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice, applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with Financial Reporting Standards applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

The preparation of financial statements in compliance with FRS102 requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise judgment in applying the society’s accounting policies as outlined in note 2.

The Irish Red Cross is a public benefit entity. There are no material uncertainties about the charity’s ability to continue in operation for the foreseeable future. The consolidated financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. Following the Boards review of the Irish Red Cross Society’s financial results for the 2017 financial reporting period, the Board’s review of the current financial position of the Society and the Board approved forecasts and budgets, the Board unanimously believe that the Society has sufficient resources to fulfil its operational objectives for the foreseeable future. The Board believe there are sufficient resources to manage anticipated operational and financial obligations and any potential commitments.

The following principal accounting policies have been applied:

1 (b) Incoming Resources and Endowments

Income is analysed as restricted, unrestricted or designated. Restricted funds represent income recognised in the financial statements which is subject to specific conditions imposed by the donors or grant making institutions. Unrestricted funds represent amounts which are expendable at the discretion of the Society, in furtherance of the objectives of the charity. Such funds may be held in order to finance working capital or capital expenditure. Designated funds are income received without restriction but allocated to a specific project area by the Board of Directors

Income from legacies

Income from legacies is accounted for when receipt is probable, and is recognised in full in the financial statements in the period in which probate is granted and where the amount can be reliably ascertained.

Subscriptions/Donations & Royalties

In general subscriptions, donations and royalties are recognised on a cash receipts basis when the money is lodged in the bank.

Bank Interest

Bank interest receivable is accounted for on an accruals basis.

Properties

Properties donated for use by, and now owned by, the Society are recognised in the Society’s financial statements as income and the equivalent amount capitalised on the balance sheet. This is in line with the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (2015).

Grant Income

Grant income is recognised in full once entitlement, certainty and measurement are met.

Commercial Training

Income from Commercial Training activities is recognised as earned i.e. as the related training services are provided.

Donated Goods, Facilities & Services

Income from donated goods, facilities and services is included at fair value, unless it is impractical to measure this value reliably.

Deferred Income

Deferred income represents receipts in the current year for services to be provided in the future.

Tax Efficient Giving

Income tax rebates on donations received is recognised on notification from Revenue Commissioners of the confirmation of the amount and when there is certainty of receipt.

1 Statement of Accounting Policies (Continued)

1 (c) Resources Expended & basis of allocation of cost

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred and is recorded as part of the expenditure to which it relates. Cost of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes including the charity’s shops. Expenditure on charitable activities are those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them. Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity. They include the costs of subscriptions related to membership of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, as well as the costs of trustee meetings and internal and external audits. Where costs cannot be directly attributed, they have been allocated in proportion to estimated benefits received. Expenditure on overseas programmes is recognised as charitable expenditure in the month it is incurred in Ireland.

1 (d) Tangible Fixed Assets

All tangible fixed assets are initially recorded at historic cost. Capital Expenditure in excess of €500 is capitalised and depreciated over its useful economic life. Expenditure less than this amount is charged to the Statement of Financial Activities.

Properties are stated at original cost where purchased. Donations or Gifts of properties are valued at open market value at the date of donation.

Properties donated for use by, and now owned by, the Society are currently recognised in the Society’s financial statements as income and the equivalent amount capitalised on the balance sheet. This is in line with the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (2015).

The carrying value of tangible fixed assets is reviewed annually for impairment if events or changes in circumstances indicate the carrying value may not be recoverable.

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets with the exception of land, so as to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful economic life on the basis below at the following annual rates:

Freehold and Leasehold premises—2% Straight Line
Ambulance, sea rescue & equipment—6% Straight Line
Fixtures, fittings & equipment—10% Straight Line
Computer equipment—20% Straight Line

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing the proceeds with the carrying amount and are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

1 (e) Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the balance sheet date.

1 (f) Receivables

Short term receivables are measured at transaction price, less any impairment.

1 (g) Operating Leases: Lessee

Rentals under operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term, even if the payments are not made on such a basis.

1 (h) Stocks

Stocks are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Provision is made for obsolete, slow-moving or defective stock where appropriate.

1 (i) Payables

Short term payables are measured at the transaction price.

1 (j) Foreign currencies

Foreign currency transactions are translated at the rates ruling at the date of the transaction.

Monetary assets and liabilities arising in foreign currencies have been retranslated at the rates ruling at the balance sheet date.

Exchange differences have been included in the statement of financial activity for the year.

1 (k) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are highly liquid investments that mature in no more than three months from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

1 (l) Financial Instruments

The Society only enters into basic financial instrument transactions that result in the recognition of financial assets and liabilities like trade and other accounts receivable and payable. Basic financial instruments are recorded at transaction price.

1 Statement of Accounting Policies (Continued)

1 (m) Holiday Pay Accrual

A liability is recognised to the extent of any unused holiday pay entitlement which is accrued at the Balance Sheet date and carried forward to future periods. This is measured at the undiscounted salary cost of the future holiday entitlement so accrued at the Balance Sheet date.

1 (n) Pensions

The Irish Red Cross Society ceased contributions to the defined benefit scheme on 15 October 2016 and the scheme was wound up at that date.

1 (o) Taxation

No charge to current or deferred tax arises as the Irish Red Cross Society has been granted charitable status.

1 (p) Value Added Tax

Irrecoverable value added tax is allocated to the category of expenditure to which it relates.

1 (q) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Irish Red Cross Society has a legal or constructive financial obligation, that can be reliably estimated and for which there is an expectation that payment will be made.

1 (r) Funds held as Agent

Where the society agrees to administer funds of another entity, the society will act in line with the instruction of the entity that acts as a principal. Where the society has control of the funds at the year end, it will recognise it as an asset with a corresponding liability recognised. The receipt of funds as an agent is not recognised as income nor its distribution as the agent’s expenditure. Any receivable by the society for acting as an agent will be recorded as income in the Statement of Financial Activities.

1 (s) Reserves Policy

The reserves policy aims to ensure our work is protected from the risk of disruption at short notice due to the lack of funds, whilst at the same time ensuring we do not retain income for longer than required. The policy is reviewed periodically to ensure the reserve level reflects changes in the risk environment. The Board of Directors agreed the minimum reserves level should be three to six months of total expenditure. Designated funds are set aside for specific purposes. They represent funds for use by the areas and branches at the sole discretion of the Board.

2 Judgements in Applying Accounting Policies and Key Sources of Estimation Uncertainty

The directors consider the accounting estimates and assumptions below to be its critical accounting estimates and judgements.

Useful Lives of Tangible Fixed Assets

Long-lived assets comprising primarily of freehold property and ambulances represent a significant portion of total assets. The annual depreciation depends primarily on the estimated lives of each type of asset and, in certain circumstances, estimates of residual values. The directors regularly review these useful lives and change them if necessary to reflect current conditions. Changes in the useful lives can have a significant impact on the depreciation and amortisation charge for the financial year. Following a review of our ambulance fleet the depreciation rate was changed to 6% straight line as this was more in line with their useful life. The net book value of tangible fixed assets subject to depreciation at the financial year end date was €5,417,000 (2016—€5,501,000).

3 Income From Charitable Activities

	Notes	Restricted Funds 2017 €'000	Unrestricted Funds 2017 €'000	Total 2017 €'000	Total 2016 €'000
Donations & legacies	3 (a)	2,606	3,077	5,683	5,137
Charitable activities	3 (b)	2	935	937	957
Other trading activities	3 (c)	–	610	610	650
Investments	3 (d)	1	17	18	17
All other sources of income	3 (e)	–	103	103	184
Total		2,609	4,742	7,351	6,945

3 (a) Donations and legacies

	Notes	Restricted Funds 2017 €'000	Unrestricted Funds 2017 €'000	Total 2017 €'000	Total 2016 €'000
Regular Giving		2	890	892	964
Public Appeals and Events		646	1,017	1,663	1,448
Tax Efficient Giving		–	168	168	189
Legacies		90	33	123	180
Donations in Kind		–	50	50	199
Corporates, Major Donors and Trusts		181	161	342	252
Grant Income	3 (a) (i)	1,687	758	2,445	1,905
Total		2,606	3,077	5,683	5,137

3 (a) (i) Grant Income

Unrestricted Grant Income		Total 2017 €	Total 2016 €
Granting Authority			
Department of Defence	Contribution to the Admin costs of Head Office	739,000	739,000
	Flooding Admin	–	71,097
Health Service Executive	Various Projects	10,512	29,941
Various County Councils	Various Projects	4,724	18,248
Education and Training Boards	Various Projects	3,512	750
Pobal	Security Phones	–	83
Department of Defence	Flooding Admin	–	300
NYCI	One World Week	205	–
Total		757,953	859,419

3 (a) (i) Grant Income (Continued)

Restricted Grant Income		Total 2017 €	Total 2016 €
Granting Authority			
Pobal	Scheme to support National Organisations in the Community and Voluntary sector.	–	17,561
	Care for the Aged.	78	–
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Grant via Irish Aid for Niger.	400,000	400,000
Department of Defence	Grant for ICRC funding.	130,000	130,000
Department of Justice & Equality	Irish Refugee Protection Programme.	640,000	154,452
Department of Environment	Community Based Health and First Aid Programme Development and Maintenance in the Irish Prison Services.	200,000	188,075
County Council	Annual Youth Service Grants.	6,768	9,373
	Towards the provision of search and rescue services.	5,000	–
Education and Training Board		650	500
HSC		–	1,000
HSE	Community Grants—care for the aged.	3,807	–
	Resilience Process and Operational Duty Taskings.	10,500	–
Department of Health National Lottery	Purchase of Ambulances.	–	123,684
	Radio Grant.	79,723	–
Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport	Coastal Inshore Mountain and Cave Grant.	19,890	19,890
William Grant and Sons	Youth Grant.	–	1,370
Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaelteacht	First responder Supports—IRC Glen of Imaal.	48,861	–
SSE Airticity	Insulation for the building in Doon Co. Limerick.	2,000	–
Glaxo Smith Kline “Making a difference scheme”	Volunteering.	500	–
Knockgriffin community enterprise	Health and Social Care.	2,000	–
Department of Rural & Community Development	Funding for two replacement ambulances.	137,000	–
Total Grant Funding		1,686,777	1,045,905
		2,444,730	1,905,324

3 (b) Charitable Activities

Charitable activities	Restricted Funds 2017 €'000	Unrestricted Funds 2017 €'000	Total 2017 €'000	Total 2016 €'000
Training	–	101	101	148
Membership fees	–	24	24	24
Duties	–	773	773	709
Community support services	2	28	30	52
Sundry	–	9	9	24
Total	2	935	937	957

3 (c) Other Trading Activities

	Restricted Funds 2017 €'000	Unrestricted Funds 2017 €'000	Total 2017 €'000	Total 2016 €'000
Products and Manuals	–	6	6	10
Medical and First Aid Services	–	98	98	98
Retail	–	70	70	76
Training	–	436	436	466
Total	–	610	610	650

• All income from trading activities relates to third party activities. Income from retail relates to the shop in Newbridge.

3 (d) Investments

	Restricted Funds 2017 €'000	Unrestricted Funds 2017 €'000	Total 2017 €'000	Total 2016 €'000
Bank Interest	1	1	2	3
Rental Income	–	16	16	14
Total	1	17	18	17

• Income included in investment income comprises bank interest received and receivable together with rental income received and receivable. Rental income relates to the letting of properties on an informal basis.

3 (e) All Other Sources of Income

All other sources of income	Restricted Funds 2017 €'000	Unrestricted Funds 2017 €'000	Total 2017 €'000	Total 2016 €'000
Royalties income	–	103	103	184
Total	–	103	103	184

• Royalties comprise income earned from the works of French writer Joseph Kessell who bequeathed the royalty rights of his books to the Irish Red Cross Society.

4 Expenditure on Raising Funds

	Direct Costs 2017 €'000	Support Costs 2017 €'000	Total 2017 €'000	Total 2016 €'000
Voluntary income	751	–	751	505
Trading activities	587	–	587	659
Total	1,338	–	1,338	1,164

5 Expenditure on Charitable Activities

	Notes	Direct Costs 2017 €'000	Support Costs 2017 €'000	Total 2017 €'000	Total 2016 €'000
Emergency Response and Recovery	5 (a)	1,307	–	1,307	1,484
Resilience	5 (b)	2,920	–	2,920	2,613
Health and Social Care		515	–	515	452
Supporting the Movement		–	1,218	1,218	1,168
Governance costs	5 (c)	–	683	683	735
Other—Loss on Disposal		121	–	121	(3)
Total		4,863	1,901	6,764	6,449

5 (a) Emergency Response and Recovery

	Direct Costs	Support Costs	Total	Total
	2017	2017	2017	2016
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Ireland: Floods	148	–	148	39
Refugee Resettlement	595	–	595	228
International	564	–	564	1,217
Total	1,307	–	1,307	1,484

5 (b) Resilience

	Direct Costs	Support Costs	Total	Total
	2017	2017	2017	2016
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
Ireland				
Training	493	–	493	414
Membership & volunteer development	228	–	228	207
Youth programmes	167	–	167	155
Unit management	474	–	474	594
Branch operational costs	856	–	856	615
International				
Niger	702	–	702	628
Total	2,920	–	2,920	2,613

5 (c) Governance Costs

	Direct Costs	Support Costs	Total	Total
	2017	2017	2017	2016
	€'000	€'000	€'000	€'000
External audit	–	74	74	75
Subscriptions to IFRC & ICRC	–	285	285	285
Staff	–	166	166	251
Other governance costs	–	158	158	124
Total	–	683	683	735

• Support costs also include insurance for management and corporate liability of €236,250 (2016: €236,250), and governance costs.

6 Employees and Staff Costs

(a) Number of employees	2017 No.	2016 No.
Fundraising	9	7
Finance	8	8
Services & Commercial	33	33
International services	5	5
Governance	2	2
Utilities	2	1
Communications	2	2
International delegates	9	8
Committed giver	–	1
Newbridge shop	2	2
Migration dept	9	3
Fundraising door to door (casual)	4	5
Total	85	77

(b) Total staff costs	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
Wages & salaries	2,569	2,272
Social welfare costs	242	224
Pension costs	101	188
Total	2,912	2,684

(c) Senior staff remuneration	2017 No.	2016 No.
The number of staff earning salaries over €70,000 is:		
Band: €70,000–€79,999	4	3
Band: €80,000–€89,999	–	–
Band: €90,000–€99,999	1	2
Band: €100,000–€109,999	–	–
Band: €130,000–€139,999	–	–
Total	5	5

• The Board of Directors approve salary scales for all staff.

6 Employees and Staff Costs (Continued)

(d) Key Management Remuneration

Key management personnel include senior management and received remuneration of €395,000 (2016: €404,000) in the year. The cost of employer pension contributions for key management in 2017 was €35,000 (2016: €32,000).

(e) Staff Emoluments and Director's Expenses

	2017 No.	2016 No.
<hr/>		
The average number of volunteers working for the Irish Red Cross Society during the year was as follows:		
National Services	3,800	3,819
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3,800	3,819
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
<hr/>		
Directors expenses:		
Expenses incurred by directors and reimbursed by the Irish Red Cross Society	23	19
Expenses incurred by the Irish Red Cross Society on behalf of directors	21	13
Directors' indemnity insurance cover cost	2	2
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	46	34
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2017 No.	2016 No.
<hr/>		
Number of directors receiving expenses	10	9
	<hr/>	<hr/>

- The Irish Red Cross Society relies substantially on voluntary services provided by its members across the country. It is not possible to quantify, in monetary terms, the value of these services to the Irish Red Cross Society.
- Directors' expenses are for travel, meetings and accommodation costs incurred.
- None of the directors received any remuneration during the year (2016: € NIL).

7 Tangible Fixed Assets

	Freehold/ Leasehold Premises & Land €'000	Ambulance Sea Rescue & Equipment €'000	Fixtures Fittings & Equipment €'000	Computer Equipment €'000	Total €'000
<hr/>					
Cost					
At 1 January 2017	3,036	6,543	646	704	10,929
Additions	306	440	15	27	788
Disposals and write-offs	(147)	(108)	(14)	(5)	(274)
At 31 December 2017	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	3,195	6,875	647	726	11,443
<hr/>					
Depreciation					
At 1 January 2017	676	3,872	443	436	5,427
Charge for the year	62	454	56	131	703
On disposals	(18)	(73)	(8)	(4)	(103)
At 31 December 2017	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	720	4,253	491	562	6,027
<hr/>					
Net Book Value					
At 31 December 2017	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2,475	2,622	156	164	5,416
At 31 December 2016	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2,360	2,671	203	267	5,501

- The Society's properties are included at historical cost. A property was bequeathed to the Society on condition that ownership is retained for 25 years. This condition will be fulfilled in 8 years' time.
- The Society's properties include national, regional and training centre offices.

8 Stocks

	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
<hr/>		
Supply stocks	106	115
Manuals	69	72
Total	<hr/>	<hr/>
	175	187

- There are no material differences between the replacement cost of stock and balance sheet amounts.
- It is not considered practical to value stock sold on donated goods at year end.

9 Receivables: (Amounts falling due within one year)

	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
Trade receivables	189	205
Accrued income	63	90
Prepayments	357	95
Total	609	390

10 Cash & Cash Equivalents

	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
Cash at bank and on hand	3,718	4,457
Short terms investments	2	14
Total	3,720	4,471

- Short term investments have a maturity of less than 90 days.

11 Payables: (Amounts falling due within one year)

	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
Trade payables	190	109
Accruals	292	325
Other payables	83	161
Deferred Income	78	124
Bank loans (Note 13)	31	31
Flood Relief Fund (Funds held as an Agent)	236	–
Total	910	750

	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
Deferred Income:		
Opening balance	124	209
Amounts received	585	494
Amounts released	(631)	(579)
Total	78	124

- Included within other payables is an amount for PAYE/PRSI of €68,000 (2016: €54,000).
- All deferred income as at 31 December 2017 relates to amounts received in advance of entitlement.
- Agent funds represent funds received from the Department of Defence to distribute to small businesses and community, voluntary and sporting bodies that have been unable to secure flood insurance and have been flooded by exceptionally heavy rainfall events.

12 Payables: (Amounts falling due in more than one year)

	Notes	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
Bank Loans	13	83	65
Other Payables		4	4
Total		87	69

13 Bank Loans

	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
Current		
Bank Loans	31	31
Total	31	31
Non-current		
Bank Loans	83	65
Total	83	65

- Bank overdrafts are unsecured and repayable on demand.
- The bank loan is secured over a first legal mortgage/charge over the leasehold interest in the property at Unit 3, Ashbourne Business Park, Limerick, registered in the name of Irish Red Cross, which are carried in the Balance Sheet at €264,000 (2016: €270,000) at the financial year end date.
- It carries a fixed interest rate of 3.23% (2016: 3.23%). It is repayable by instalments over the next two years and will be repaid in full by the 30th November 2019.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

14 Movement in Funds

	At start of year 2017 €'000	Incoming Resource 2017 €'000	Outgoing Resource 2017 €'000	Transfers between funds €'000	Pension Surplus/ Deficit €'000	At end of year 2017 €'000
Restricted Funds	1,514	2,609	(2,612)	(151)	–	1,360
Unrestricted Funds	7,530	4,639	(5,459)	(818)	–	5,892
Designated Funds	631	103	(31)	969	–	1,672
Total	9,675	7,351	(8,102)	–	–	8,924

- As part of the regular review of reserves and funding the Board decided that all funds in area and branch bank accounts should be designated for use in the areas and branches.
- Designated funds are set aside for specific purposes. They are for use by the areas and branches at the sole direction of the Board.

14 (a) Movement in prior year

	At start of year 2016 €'000	Incoming Resource 2016 €'000	Outgoing Resource 2016 €'000	Transfers between funds €'000	Pension Surplus/ Deficit €'000	At end of year 2016 €'000
Restricted Funds	1,883	1,882	(2,251)	–	–	1,514
Unrestricted Funds	6,907	4,879	(5,309)	–	1,053	7,530
Designated Funds	500	184	(53)	–	–	631
Total	9,290	6,945	(7,613)	–	1,053	9,675

14 (b) Analysis of Net Assets

	Restricted Funds 2017 €'000	Unrestricted Funds 2017 €'000	Designated Funds 2017 €'000	At end of year 2017 €'000	At end of year 2016 €'000
Tangible Fixed Assets	–	5,416	–	5,416	5,501
Current Assets	1,407	1,426	1,672	4,505	5,048
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(47)	(863)	–	(910)	(750)
Creditors: Amounts falling due after one year	–	(87)	–	(87)	(124)
Total	1,360	5,892	1,672	8,924	9,675

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

14 (c) Analysis of Restricted Funds

	Notes	Restricted Funds 2017 €'000	Restricted Funds 2016 €'000
Floods Fund		103	79
Carers Courses & Alarms for the Aged		9	16
Ambulance Fund		22	22
National Humanitarian Fund		18	79
EU Storm Damage		–	1
J Williams Bequest		–	39
Migration Crisis		32	157
Gaza		3	40
Nepal	(i)	276	326
Ukraine		–	(1)
Syria		113	108
Pakistan		3	3
Yemen		31	22
India		–	7
Italy		11	10
Southern Africa		2	1
Haiti		–	9
Philippines		44	43
Niger		–	24
Sudan		3	1
Appeal–Tsunami	(ii)	47	100
International Response Fund		71	53
Sierra Leone		2	–
Somalia		4	–
Bangladesh		3	–
Myanmar		10	–
Iran		1	–
Canon H&SC Fund		75	–
IRC—Irish Refugee Protection		29	–
Other Restricted Funds	(iii)	448	375
Total		1,360	1,514

(i) The roll out and implementation of recovery programming in Nepal has been considerably delayed, due to both external and internal factors. We anticipate that recovery and long term programming in Nepal will continue into 2018 and beyond. It is expected that remaining funds will be allocated primarily in the programme area of livelihoods.

(ii) The remaining funds are fully allocated to the implementation of a three-year Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction programme, in Indonesia. This programme is due to be completed on 31 January 2019.

(iii) Other: These are projects of a capital and operational nature in our branches.

15 Net (Outgoing)/Incoming resources for the year

	2017	2016
	€'000	€'000
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources for the year is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Directors remuneration—for services as directors	–	–
Directors remuneration—for staff services	–	–
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	703	417
Loss/(Profit) on disposal of tangible fixed assets	121	3
Auditors' remuneration	74	75

- As explained in Note 6, members of the board of directors do not receive remuneration for their services as directors.
- While the Society is charity and does not incur corporation tax, it does remit significant payroll and incurs a significant costs in irrecoverable VAT.

16 Taxation

The Society, charity number CHY3950, is exempt from taxation on Income under Section 207 Taxes Consolidation Act 1997, as it is for charitable purposes.

17 Pensions

The Society operates a defined contribution scheme.

(a) Defined Contribution Pension Scheme

The Society operates a defined contribution scheme for certain employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the Society in an independently administrated fund. The defined contribution pension charge for the year was €100,980 (2016: €46,000). The amount owed at the year-end was € Nil (2016: € Nil).

(b) Defined Benefit Pension Scheme

The Irish Red Cross Society operated a funded defined benefit pension scheme. The Irish Red Cross gave notice to the Trustees on 17/06/2016 that the Society would cease to make further contributions to the scheme effective from 15/10/2016. The Scheme was wound up at that date. The assets of the scheme were vested in independent trustees for the benefit of the employees. The effective date of the last triennial actuarial valuation was the 1st of January 2014. The actuarial report is available for inspection by the scheme members but not for public inspection.

Employer contributions to the scheme are charged to the Statement of financial activities as they are incurred. The cost of employer pension contributions in 2017 was €Nil. (2016: €46,000).

17 Pensions (Continued)

	2017	2016
	€'000	€'000
Fair value of scheme assets	–	3,453
Present value of funded obligations	–	(3,508)
Net liability	–	(55)

The amounts recognised in the profit and loss account are as follows;

	2017	2016
	€'000	€'000
Interest on pension scheme liabilities	–	30
Current service cost	–	91
Past service gain	–	12
	–	133

The amounts recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income:

	2017	2016
	€'000	€'000
Costs of curtailments	–	2,433
Actual return less expected return on pension scheme assets	–	(63)
Experience gains and losses arising on the scheme liabilities	–	–
Change in assumptions underlying the present value of the scheme liabilities	–	(1,317)
Actuarial gain/(loss) recognised in Other Comprehensive Income	–	1,053
Actual return on scheme assets	–	1,053

Movements in the present value of the defined benefit obligation were as follows:

	2017	2016
	€'000	€'000
Opening defined benefit obligation	–	(4,471)
Current service cost	–	(91)
Changes in assumptions underlying the present value of the scheme liabilities	–	(1,317)
Interest Income Costs	–	(126)
Cost of Curtailment	–	2,433
Benefits paid	–	64
Closing defined benefit obligation	–	(3,508)

17 Pensions (Continued)

Changes in the fair value of scheme assets were as follows:

	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
Opening fair value of scheme assets	–	3,413
Contributions by scheme participants	–	7
Death in Service	–	96
Interest Income	–	(63)
Expected return on assets	–	–
Value at 31/12/2017	–	3,453
	2017	2016
Equities	–	0%
Bonds	–	51%
Cash	–	49%
Other	–	0%
Total	–	100%

- Scheme assets do not include any amounts invested in the Society's own financial instruments or any amounts invested in property occupied by the Society.

Basis of expected rate of return on assets

To develop the expected long term rate of return on assets assumption, the Group considered the current level of expected returns on risk free investments (primarily government bonds), the historical level of the risk premium associated with the other asset classes in which the portfolio is invested and the expectation for the future returns of each asset class. The expected return for each asset class was then weighted based on the current asset allocation to develop the expected long term rate of return on assets assumption for the portfolio.

The valuations of the defined benefit plans used for the purposes of FRS102 disclosures have been based on the actuarial valuations, using the projected unit credit method, of the plans as at 31 December 2015.

The major assumptions used by the actuary were as follows:

	2017	2016
Discount rate at 31 December	–	1.70%
Inflation	–	1.75%
Future salary increases		
Minimum	–	2.75%
Maximum	–	5.00%
Pension Increases	–	1.75%

18 Commitments

(a) Capital Commitments

At 31 December 2017, the Society had not entered into contracts for the construction or purchase of properties (2016: €Nil).

(b) Operating Lease Commitments

At 31 December 2017 annual commitments under operating leases were as follows:

The amount payable within the next 12 months on leases expiring:	Property €'000	Other €'000	Total 2017 €'000	Total 2016 €'000
Within one year	88	–	88	57
In two to five years	249	–	249	295
After five years	72	–	72	76
Total	409	–	409	428

- The Irish Red Cross Society has a number of properties which it sub-leases, where there is no formal lease agreement in place. Therefore the above analysis is an estimate of such leases.

(c) Programme Commitments

	2017 €'000	2016 €'000
Niger Food Security Programme	–	32
Total	–	32

19 Related Party Transactions

The nature of the Irish Red Cross Society's activities means that it has connections to a number of organisations. However, none of these relationships have the ability to exercise influence or control over the activities of the Irish Red Cross Society.

During the period, the Irish Red Cross Society provided income received from the Department of Defence to the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) of €130,000 (2016: €130,000). The ICRC, together with the National Societies and the International Federation of the Red Cross, make up the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

During the year, the Irish Red Cross Society reimbursed expenses to Director's amounting to €23,310 (2016: €19,140).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017

20 Post Balance Sheet events

No significant events have occurred since the balance sheet date which would require adjustments to the amounts as disclosed in the financial statements.

21 Contingent Liabilities

At 31 December 2017, the Society had no contingent liabilities (2016: €Nil).

22 Financial Instruments

	2017	2016
	€'000	€'000
<hr/>		
Financial Assets		
Financial assets that are measured at amortised cost	3,909	4,676
Total	3,909	4,676
<hr/>		
Financial Liabilities		
Financial Liabilities measured at amortised cost	509	284
Total	509	284
<hr/>		

- Financial assets measured at amortised cost comprise cash at bank and in hand and trade debtors repayable within one year.
- Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost comprise of trade creditors, bank loans and agent funds.

23 Comparative figures

The comparative figures have been regrouped, where necessary, on a basis consistent with the current financial year.

24 Approval of signing of the Financial Statements

The financial statements were approved for signing and authorised for issue by the Board on 11 December 2018.

