



**Crois Dhearg** na hÉireann  
**Irish Red Cross**

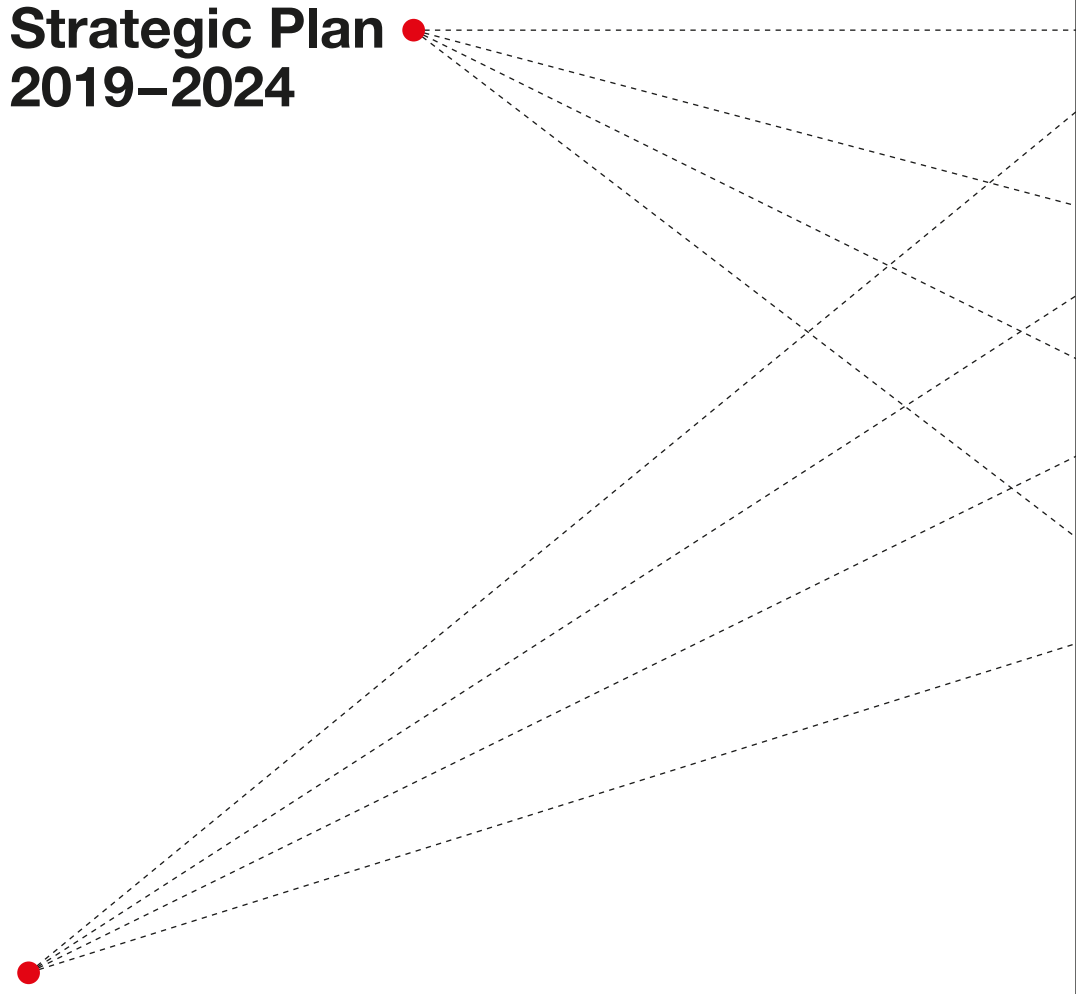
# **Strategic Plan** ●

## **2019–2024**

●

# **Act Today**

# **Shape Tomorrow**



# An Plean Stráitéiseach 2019–2024

• **Support**  
Tacaíocht

• **Readiness**  
Ullmhachta

• **Standards**  
Caighdeáin

• **Membership**  
Ballraíocht

• **Gníomhaigh Inniu**  
**Múnlaigh Amárach**

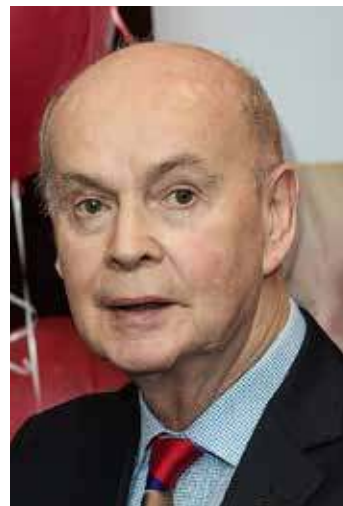
**Contents**

•	<b>Chairman’s Foreword</b>	<b>02</b>
•	<b>Who We Are</b>	<b>04</b>
•	<b>What We Do</b>	<b>06</b>
•	<b>Our Vision</b>	<b>08</b>
•	<b>Our Mission</b>	<b>09</b>
•	<b>Making This Plan</b>	<b>10</b>
•	<b>Planning for Sustainability</b>	<b>11</b>
•	<b>Implementation &amp; Measuring Our Impact</b>	<b>12</b>
•	<b>Support</b>	<b>14</b>
•	<b>Readiness</b>	<b>22</b>
•	<b>Standards</b>	<b>28</b>
•	<b>Membership</b>	<b>34</b>
•	<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>40</b>
•	<b>Priorities</b>	<b>41</b>

## Chairman's Foreword

Ba mhaith liom fáilte a chur roimh an stráitéis nua. Tabharfaidh an stráitéis treoir don saothar dár n-oibrithe agus dár bhfoireann le linn na cúig bliana amach romhainn.

This new Strategic Plan for the Irish Red Cross 2019–2024 sets out the ambition of the Red Cross in Ireland. It is a plan which challenges our organisation to be sustainable as it develops and grows. The plan focuses on key growth areas but especially on our members and their need for support and resourcing to enable their delivery of lifesaving activities on the ground.



As part of the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement we are an organisation which has our focus on the needs of our communities in Ireland and overseas. In Ireland we ensure the protection of people while the desperate situations faced by communities abroad due to conflict natural disasters place a responsibility on the Irish Red Cross to respond by raising concern and funds. In both cases the work of the Red Cross is to save lives and enable communities manage their own present and future.

This plan is about how the Red Cross in Ireland manages its own present and future. The environment for voluntary organisations in Ireland is complex. To deliver on the vision and mission of the organisation, as set out in this Strategy, requires delivery in the context of increased and challenging but welcome regulation. The Irish Red Cross embraces this new context and envisages compliance as the way to ensuring that the services provided by our voluntary organisation are effective and life giving.

As Chairman of the Irish Red Cross I welcome the Strategy and thank the Strategy Development Group under the Chairmanship of Barry O'Donovan our National Secretary. This group ensured the process of developing the Strategy was consultative and that the final plan is faithful to the inputs of our members and staff. Thanks also to the facilitation and advice of both

Dermot McLaughlin our external advisor and Liam O' Dwyer our Secretary General. They, with the Strategy Development Group and the Board of the Irish Red Cross ensured the publication of a plan that is challenging and sustainable. The hope is that the implementation of this plan will build an organisation faithful to the 7 Principles of the Red Cross and an effective support to Government and communities in Ireland and abroad.

Pat Carey,  
Chairman  
Irish Red Cross—June 2019.

## Who We Are

The Irish Red Cross is part of the largest global network of voluntary humanitarian action in the world—the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, founded by Henry Dunant in 1863. There is a national organisation in nearly every country in the world. 17 million people worldwide are Red Cross volunteers in 190 countries.

The Irish Red Cross is recognised in legislation uniquely as having the power to act as an auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field.



# What We Do

The Irish Red Cross saves lives, alleviates suffering and builds capacity and resilience within communities to enable them to respond effectively to emergencies and disasters.

Through our 3,200 members, 86 Branches and 25 Areas, we provide services within Ireland including:

- First-Aid training, which entails accredited training to the highest standards in emergency and pre-hospital care.
- First-Aid cover at sports, cultural and music events throughout the country.
- Community Voluntary Ambulance Services for patient transport.
- Support programmes for older people, vulnerable adults.
- Development and integration services for migrants and prisoners.
- Restoring Family Links service.
- Mountain and Lake Search and Rescue Services.
- Broad variety of Community Based Health & Social Care programmes.
- Developmental and inclusive youth programmes here in Ireland.
- International project management support in livelihoods and disaster risk reduction programmes.
- Emergency aid fundraising for areas encountering war, disease and disaster.
- Policy awareness raising, especially in areas such as International Humanitarian Law and Gender Based Violence.

## **Our Vision**

**The vision of the Irish Red Cross is to be a leading humanitarian organisation, providing impartial services and support to vulnerable people and communities both at home and abroad.**

## **Our Mission**

**Our mission is to identify and deliver humanitarian assistance, both at home and abroad, to those who are most in need. In achieving this we will be guided by the fundamental principles of the Red Cross and promote these Principles to inspire policy and attitudinal change.**

## Making this Plan

Making this new plan involved an inclusive, open approach that engaged with every part of our organisation. Beginning in late 2017 and throughout 2018–19, we undertook in-depth consultation with our members, staff and stakeholders. We met and listened to hundreds of people, we used surveys and questionnaires, and we organised regional consultation meetings.

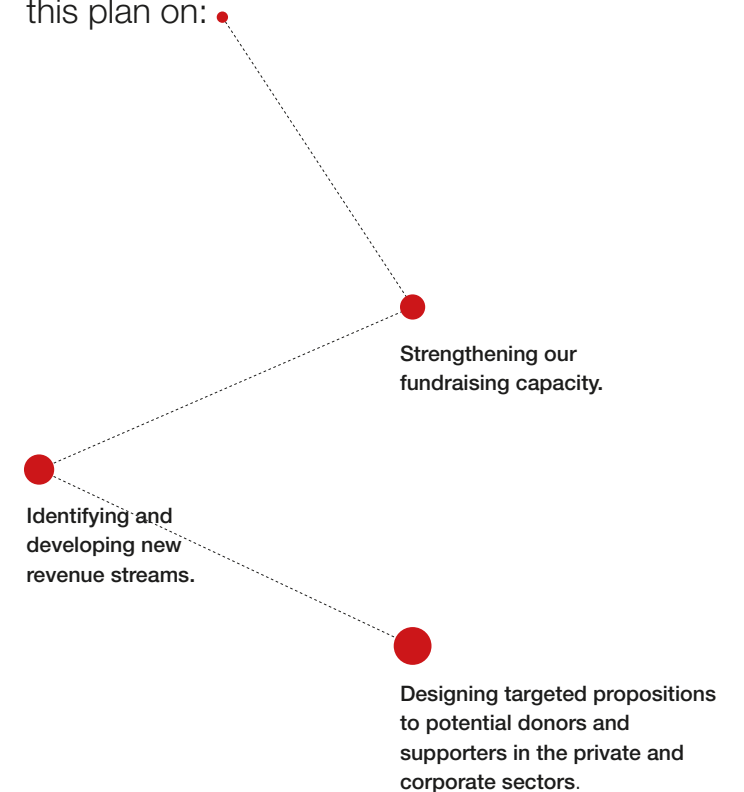
We went back to our members, staff and governing bodies with feedback and with the ideas that emerged from this extensive consultation process. We are proud that this plan has been shaped in such detail by our members and that it reflects the strong sense of common purpose that drives the Irish Red Cross. The full plan, background and analysis is available on the Irish Red Cross website at [www.redcross.ie](http://www.redcross.ie)

## Planning for Sustainability

We work in a challenging environment and we are planning to be a sustainable organisation.

We recognise that we need to prioritise the redesign of our revenue model and our operations so that we can undertake the groundwork that this plan requires across four strategic themes: support, readiness, standards, and membership.

To implement this redesigned revenue model, we will focus during the first phase of this plan on:





# Implementation & Measuring Our Impact

Our strategic themes focus on; Supporting the work undertaken by our members and staff, our Readiness to provide services and promote the Principles of the Red Cross, our commitment to the Standards we will meet in delivering service and ensuring the development and growth of our membership numbers. These strategic themes will be delivered by high-level goals. These goals will be achieved through a programme of actions that will involve every part of our organisation. In delivering this strategy 2019–2024, we will become more effective at showing the impact of our work and describing the difference that it makes.

The main high-level changes that we expect to achieve include saving more lives, increasing our membership and Branch and Area structure, having more effective supports in place for members, upgrading our fleet, rebuilding our international response and policy programmes, and developing a strong, healthy and inviting organisational culture.

This implementation plan will be evaluated in its entirety in 2021 by a team of volunteers and staff and independently by an outside consultant in 2024.



# Support

Our first strategic theme is to design and implement better supports for our members. We want our members to have the best possible experience of being a member, so that they feel part of a positive organisation which is making a difference to people's lives and strengthening communities.







## Goal 1

### To strengthen support for members at Branch and Area level, we will;

Enhance training supports, both face to face and digital, to support the work of Branch and Area members with training focused on the areas of community resilience, development and signposting, as well as ICT, finance and Volunteer Human Resource management.

Introduce a mentoring programme led by three volunteer members to share and strengthen skills and knowledge, to build cohesion and support National Directors in their work.

Organise a national members' convention bi-annually and utilise other national annual events i.e. Competitions, Youth Forum, National Volunteer Awards to provide members with feedback and dialogue opportunities.

Rebuild the first-aid competitions as a method of raising standards and developing a sense of belonging to one organisation.

Support for Branches and Areas to devise and implement an annual work-plan, this support provided by three volunteer mentors with backing from IRC staff.

National review and evaluation of Branch and Area structures to identify strengths, needs and gaps in personnel and activity.

Increase the use of online platforms to deliver communications, information supports, member training and the collection of management information.

Identify development pathways for members, especially younger members to progress into other roles including leadership opportunities and provide supports to enable them to participate more fully in the IRC's governing structures including the General Assembly.

Develop pathways for Youth members into supporting their role as future leaders.

Initiate a review of the effectiveness of the current operational structures of the organisation via the Governance Committee.

Put in place an annual overall member training plan with special emphasis on a cyclical First-Aid/ Clinical member training programme ensuring members are informed each December of the plan for the following year.

## Goal 2

### To address burnout and overload at Branch and Area levels, we will;

Develop wellbeing guidelines, and actions to address burnout and overload; conduct an analysis of Areas and Branches and initiate a recruitment campaign.

Invest in project management and training skills for members and staff.

Identify HR and Communication pressure points among volunteers and implement actions to resolve them within the first 12 months of this plan (i.e. deal with the problem and design it out of the system for the future) using 3 volunteer support personnel.

Check in regularly with Branches and individual members via Area meetings using the facilitation of the GA representatives; reports on Area developments to be presented at each General Assembly meeting.

## Goal 3

### To improve support for coordinating and delivering our work at Branch and Area level, we will;

Strengthen the capacity of each Branch and Area Committee to manage and develop the Society in their Area and Branch by identifying service gaps and providing a work-plan designed in each Area. This will be followed by a National and Regional recruitment campaign.

Recruit members who have specific administrative, financial and volunteer HR skills and experience (facilitated by a team of three volunteer members) see membership section.

Develop a new generic complaints management policy and provide training for its implementation.

Provide additional voluntary support, for the National Directors by recruiting 3 support volunteer members with specific expertise to work with the Directors together with the three HR volunteer members provided and supported by the Membership & Disciplinary Committee

Review staffing levels to see if additional staff or additional training for current staff is required to support National Directors.

Review ICT systems to see if Area and Branch leaders can be better supported.

Design a Health & Social Care plan which sets out national activities to enable members to support older people, migrants and other vulnerable people in their homes and communities.

Pre-plan annually all national training and ensure an online training portal for bookings is in place.







#### Goal 4

**To build capacity in supporting the management of International Projects, we will;**

Provide an appropriate staffing structure to support International programmes as resources allow.

#### Goal 5

**To proactively promote Red Cross policy agendas on International Humanitarian Law, Gender-based Violence and Climate Change, we will;**

Provide an appropriate staffing structure to support International programmes as resources allow.

Deliver four policy and/or promotional interventions in International Humanitarian Law and four such interventions in Gender Based Violence each year.

Review and plan the implementation of environmentally friendly policies in the work of the Red Cross nationally and raise awareness of same in the communities we work in.



## Readiness

Our second strategic theme is that our organisation is ready and prepared to respond to situations of emergency and disaster at home and abroad and to enable the communities we work with put in place their own resilience plans.





**Goal 1**

**To increase the number of people trained in First-Aid, emergency medical care and other related skills, we will;**

Develop, expand and promote our First Aid/clinical training programmes to general public, businesses and community groups.

Develop our clinical training compliance expertise in house.

Utilise the community and commercial training structure of the IRC as a face to face recruiting tool ensuring availability of Branch activity information.

Initiate annual pre-planning for our National Member First-Aid/Clinical and other training.

**Goal 2**

**To make sure our members have access to appropriate equipment, vehicles, facilities, we will;**

Prepare a fleet management and replacement strategy for presentation to Government and private donors  
Produce a definitive overview and gap analysis of our emergency response equipment.

Design and implement a fund-raising strategy that identifies and develops new revenue streams and expands our funding base especially in corporate giving to deliver required assets.

Produce an audit and map identifying all equipment and emergency response resources to enable a sharing of same across the organisation.

Design a community transport plan to enable the best use of vehicles for non-emergency hospital transport, and for older and vulnerable people and refugees, as well as usage for all IRC member activities in compliance with PHECC regulations.

**Goal 3**

**To develop IRC's influence and contribution to disaster and emergency preparedness and policy development, we will;**

Develop a national IRC policy and plan for readiness and response to disaster and emergency, this will include an IRC support plan for each Area Committee. Propose overall plan to Government.

Strengthen community capacity and resilience to deal with flood management via an IRC Community Resilience Plan; send to Government seeking support and funding.

Improve public awareness and understanding of major issues such as migration, family reunification, prisoner rehabilitation, the impacts of climate change, International Humanitarian Law and the issue of gender-based violence.

Support our youth members in playing a lead role in promoting policy initiatives such as resilience building, social inclusion, diversity appreciation and the promotion of International Humanitarian Law.

Encourage collaboration with other organisations to achieve policy initiatives.

Help to shape the State's approach to caring for refugees, migrants, prisoners, older people, carers and other vulnerable groups.

Appoint a staff member with responsibility for delivering on international policy as resources allow.





#### Goal 4

**Build our capacity to welcome migrants and provide support to help vulnerable people reach the services they most need and provide clear guidance and pathways to our migration services and Restoring Family Links programme. To make this happen, we will;**

Initiate regional internal workshops to promote interest and understanding of the needs of refugees.

Appoint additional regional refugee coordinators from among the membership and the external community.

Build capacity at staff and volunteer level to enable the IRC to become a signposting agency for refugees and other vulnerable groups.

Build capacity of youth members in working with vulnerable people via training and mentoring.

#### Goal 5

**Build and train a professional staff team to ensure the organisation is prepared to act in international emergencies, has international delegates with expertise, and can respond quickly to emergency fundraising and communications situations. To make this happen, we will;**

Fund, build and train a professional staff team to match international strategic priorities to ensure the IRC is prepared and ready to support in emergencies at project management level.

Fund and build, as resources allow, a staffing unit with international project management expertise at Head Office.

Work proactively with ICRC and Irish Aid to recruit delegates.

Ensure the quick-response capacity of our Fundraising and Communications Departments to international emergencies.



# Standards

We are in the business of saving lives. Our third strategic theme is to ensure we have the capacity in place to maintain compliance with the relevant regulatory and statutory requirements via our volunteer leaders and staff.





**Goal 1**

**Ensure the Irish Red Cross has the capacity and systems in place to meet CRA governance standards and other compliance requirements, including those from Pre-hospital Emergency Care Council, Governance Code, Road Safety Authority, Data Protection Commission, the Standards in Public Office Commission, National Safeguarding guidelines, Charities Institute of Ireland Fundraising guidelines and other relevant standards and quality assurance frameworks. To make this happen we will;**

Undertake a review of compliance with governance code and financial compliance via the Audit and Risk Committee.

Review the IRC constitution and operational rules via the Governance Committee.

Review the operational structures of the organisation and prepare recommendations for the Board and the General Assembly.

Undertake an annual review of clinical training and operational standards to meet compliance with PHECC together with a bi-annual review of non-clinical training.

Implement a support programme to help all Branches attain, maintain and review compliance with the regulatory areas as set out in Goal 1 above .

Research the feasibility of working towards external accreditation in quality management of service provision such as ISO 9001:2015.

**Goal 2**

**Deliver high-quality Youth development education and training to enable our young members to develop as active citizens, as engaged members of the Irish Red Cross and as future leaders. This means we will;**

Provide training in leadership, management, and community development targeted at Youth members.

Seek financial assistance to support the development of the Youth Section.



**Goal 3**

**Develop project management tools for use in applying for grants and monitoring the use of monies received and the outputs of our work in Ireland and abroad. To make this happen we will;**

Research appropriate project management tools that are sensitive to IRC's needs on the ground, informed by input from Branches and Areas and utilised to access funding.

Ensure these project management tools provide results-based management analysis in line with best international practice.

Provide training for staff and members in using these project management tools.

Ensure that evaluation is built into all IRC projects.

**Goal 4**

**Implement a policy to increase environmental sustainability in our work. This means we will;**

Design, adopt and mainstream a plan with targets to ensure our operations are as environmentally friendly as possible.

Design and deliver environmental impact awareness training across IRC.

Develop and deliver education and awareness programmes on climate change, and its impacts as well as resilience, and disaster prevention to local communities.

Increase use of IT solutions for meetings, online training and other core activities where effective (365 teams).



# Membership

Our fourth strategic theme is to expand the Irish Red Cross membership and become a more responsive and effective organisation, geared to meet the demands and opportunities of being a volunteer and member-led organisation.





## Goal 1

**Make sure the Irish Red Cross is easy to join and smart at using technology. To make this happen we will;**

Simplify membership processes by reviewing and adjusting our current pathway to membership.

Ensure that all pathways to membership can be securely delivered electronically e.g. vetting, safeguarding, online training etc.

Establish an online resource for members, providing a one stop shop for training resources, support materials and policies.

## Goal 2

**Make it easy to remain a member of the Irish Red Cross. To assist with this we will;**

Strengthen volunteer HR roles, with support and training to enable issues to be dealt with speedily and effectively via a new generic complaints management process.

Provide access to all training via e-learning and face-to-face engagement where required.





**Goal 3**

**To be a top choice organisation for people looking to volunteer. To ensure this we will;**

Develop and implement a plan to promote the IRC story and integrate calls to action to become a member into IRC communications.

Develop a communications campaign setting out what the work of the IRC is and how to join IRC.

Implement a long-term National and Regional recruitment strategy, starting in 2019, that is designed to take into account identified skills gaps, geography, age profile, diversity, and life experience.

Identify potential partner organisations, particularly for youth and older people, as part of the strategy for recruitment

Ensure that members' perceptions of IRC's organisational culture help to shape the organisation into one that members are proud to belong to.

Target recruitment programmes in schools led by our youth members.

**Goal 4**

**Plan and deliver a national recruitment and enrolment strategy that addresses identified gaps in Branches and Areas. To make this happen we will;**

Set up and deliver a recruitment plan to be promoted nationally but delivered, targeted and supported locally.

Use technology in smarter ways for membership renewal and retention.

Utilise IRC commercial and community training to recruit new members using local information about all IRC activities.

Assess the capacity of each Area to develop its services and grow its membership and on the basis of this analysis target the recruitment campaign locally at specific goals, needs and gaps.

Have active Branches or, at a minimum, a planned programme of Red Cross activities in each of the 26 counties by 2023.

Encourage and resource Areas to recruit members who have specific skills in administration, Human Resource management and finance supported by the team of three volunteer facilitators.

Target recruitment programmes in schools led by our youth members.

# Evaluation

This strategic plan will be evaluated in its entirety in 2021 by a team of members and staff and independently by an outside consultant in 2023 prior to the development of the next Irish Red Cross strategy.

# Priorities

This Strategy sets down the key priorities for the Irish Red Cross namely:

Sustainability.

Recruitment of 10% more Members each year.

Delivery of enhanced member support services.

Pride in being part of a global and national humanitarian organisation.

Being a leader in the voluntary sector in compliance standards.

Being prepared, resourced and trained to save lives at home and abroad.

Being a leader in public awareness raising around core Red Cross/Red Crescent Principles.

Being a provider of first choice to the general public for first aid event cover and training.

Encouraging young people to develop within the organisation.

Promoting a community development and support approach to vulnerable people in our communities.

**Act Today, Shape Tomorrow**

Strategic Plan 2019–2024

Published by  
The Irish Red Cross  
16 Merrion Square,  
Dublin 2, D02 FX85, Ireland

T +353 (0) 1 642 4600  
[www.redcross.ie](http://www.redcross.ie)

Design by UNIT.  
[www.unitdesign.ie](http://www.unitdesign.ie)

Printing by Print Media Services

© The Irish Red Cross, 2019

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owners.



**redcross.ie**