

Creeslough Community Support Scheme Final Report



Irish Red Cross

Creeslough Community Support Scheme Final Report

October 2022 - July 2025

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Foreword

This report provides detail of all income and expenditure from funds raised by the Irish Red Cross Creeslough appeal and provides a comprehensive description of the operational structures and methodologies which governed decisions in administering the Fund, consistent with Humanitarian Principles & Accountability Standards which guide Irish Red Cross operations and ensure our commitment to transparency and accountability to the community, our donors and the wider public.



1. Executive Summary

The Irish Red Cross Creeslough Community Support Fund was established as an immediate humanitarian response to the human tragedy that arose following a fatal explosion in the village of Creeslough, County Donegal on 7thOctober,2022. Ten people lost their lives, several were injured and many lost their homes, apartments and jobs.

The explosion demolished a shop & filling station and a block of apartments. The village was closed to all traffic for six weeks, disrupting the lives of all residents and businesses, who experienced widespread travel and transport difficulties. People were traumatised individually, as families, and collectively as a community. This trauma continues to exist and emerge at all those levels today.

The Creeslough Appeal raised €1,957,609 from a range of corporate and individual donors, and community fund-raising activities. This provided financial humanitarian aid to those impacted by the tragedy, with a particular emphasis on support for bereaved families and those injured. Over 6,000 individual donations were made to the fund led by the Irish Red Cross fundraising team and supported significantly by Applegreen, An Post, Optium, AIB, Tesco, Bank of Ireland, the Ireland Funds, Calor Gas, the Celtic Football Club, the Abbey Hotel Donegal and many others.

A National Oversight Committee was established by the Irish Red Cross to provide a governance framework from the outset, and it oversaw all expenditure for individuals and families from the Fund. The committee comprised local representation, an independent finance member and members from Irish Red Cross Board & Management.

A total of €1,745,857 (89.2%) was disbursed in direct ex-gratia payments to those impacted by the tragedy. This comprised emergency payments in the initial phases and transitioned to a more planned spending pattern in the latter phase, including payments of calculated lump-sums to beneficiary groups (bereaved families; injured individuals; those made homeless & those who lost apartments).

An amount of €46,346 (2.4%) was spent from the fund to cover unavoidable third-party costs such as PayPal/Stripe banking charges, as well as necessary professional advisory services to assist disbursement, including tax advice for recipients, travel and accommodation costs to maintain a regular staff presence in Creeslough.

Irish Red Cross waived its standard fee of 7%, normally charged to such fundraising appeals to cover the costs of administration, organisational oversight, governance, management, quality and compliance.

Irish Red Cross donated additional value of more than €70,000 in salary costs for staff engaged in supporting people in Creeslough, including one experienced senior staff member who was on the ground locally a number of days each week for over six months immediately after the tragedy and regularly during 2024 and 2025, ending in July 2025.

Research has established that community resources (including facilities, memorials and memorial activities, art and literature) all serve important functions in the healing process of collective trauma. Consistent with this, a notional amount was allocated from the very start



towards community development over the medium to longer term. Priorities were identified by the community during several community consultation meetings held by Irish Red Cross over the past two years, to plan this expenditure in a manner which best served the interests of the community and those affected by the tragedy.

A locally based Advisory Committee gave valuable guidance on the selection of successful projects submitted in an open competition under three strands identified by the community (trauma support, youth development/support and commemorative projects). This was relevant solely to phase 3, the final phase of the initiative.

The amount of €165,406 (8.4%) remaining in the fund was distributed in funding to 14 community organisations to provide a variety of facilities/activities including creation of reflective spaces, commemorative gardens/walks, mental health supports, youth activities and clubs developing facilities. As all remaining funds are now fully disbursed, the Fund is closed.

Irish Red Cross garnered additional funding of circa €20k from sources outside the Creeslough Fund to enable one organisation to train its members in trauma support therapy. The Irish Red Cross will also make available at its own cost Psychological First Aid training within the Creeslough community. These interventions will provide a continuing legacy of support to people within the Creeslough community and those affected by the tragedy.

Irish Red Cross is very appreciative to so many organisations (commercial, statutory and community) and individuals for their financial support and their hands on co-operation, without whose continuous support our humanitarian aid could not have been provided.



2. Summary Breakdown of Income Expenditure

Income to the Fund: €1,957,609 was donated to the Fund from a variety of sources. One philanthropic major donor and 144 corporate donors contributed €1,332,167. Community organisations held 74 community fund-raising events which raised €127,546.75 for the fund. 5,942 individual members of the public responded to the appeal and donated almost half a million euro through small but very meaningful donations via web, phone, bank and post.

6,161 donations totalling:	€1,957,609.44
5,873 Web Donations from Public (20.7%)	€404,897.36
144 Corporate including 3 Major Donor Donations (68%)	€1,332,167.14
74 Donations from Community Events (6.5%)	€127,546.75
69 General Donations (Bank/Postal/Phone) (4.75%)	€92,998.19

Expenditure from the Fund was made both locally by Donegal Branch of Irish Red Cross and directly from Irish Red Cross Head Office using an Individual Claim Form for the Creeslough Fund for approval, drawdown and recording of each amount expended (see Appendix I).

A National Oversight Committee (see Appendix III) provided governance, set spending and signatory levels, and reviewed all recommended expenditure made to individuals or families.

Spending procedures and permission processes for the initial emergency phase were outlined in a Framework Document drafted on 29th October and updated as required. Planned lump-sum payments were calculated using an Approved Payment Framework (see Appendix IV).

Expenditure on community identified priorities at the very final phase was guided by a local Advisory Committee and subject to an online application, verification and evaluation process.

Summary Expenditure headings were as follows:

EXPENDITURE CATEGORIES	
Direct Emergency Funding & pre-planned lump-sum payments	€1,745,857 (89.2%)
Tax advice and other 3 rd party-specific support costs for certain families to simplify and support their ability to receive the donations (Note 1)	€16,566 (0.85%)
Vouched direct costs (travel & accommodation) to maintain a regular presence in Creeslough (Note 2)	€16,043 (0.82%)
3 rd party online transaction charges deducted by Paypal/Stripe (Note 3)	€13,737 (0.7%)
Community Identified Priorities (Trauma Support; Youth Development & Support; Commemorative Projects (Note 4)	€165,406 (8.45%)
Total expenditure	€1,957,609



Notes to the Expenditure Table:

Note 1. Cost of advice taken to ensure that no tax liability or Social Welfare implication would arise for beneficiaries, particularly in relation to lump-sum payments. This figure also contains circa €11,000 related to cost of mediation services required in this sensitive process.

Note 2. Vouched travel & accommodation costs to maintain an on-site staff presence in Creeslough from October 2022 – December 2023, and during 2024 up to July 2025.

Irish Red Cross Society bore, from its own resources, significant salary costs of a senior staff member in Creeslough, and salary/accommodation & travel costs arising from several community consultation visits by the Secretary General; administration costs and the cost of ambulances and volunteers deployed to Creeslough.

In total, the Society covered additional costs estimated in excess of €70,000 as a contribution.

Note 3. Non-negotiable transaction charges charged by the 3rd party agencies listed above.

Note 4. Grants made to 14 community organisations for projects related to three priority themes (Youth Development & Support; Trauma related Supports.

Commemorative/Remembrance Activities) identified in community consultation meetings.



3. Operational Aspects

The Initial Response by Irish Red Cross involved mobilising Irish Red Cross units in Donegal and a corporate response which set up a Public Appeal for funds and put in place structures around its operation and processes. This necessitated holding a public meeting in Creeslough to hear their views. This meeting was attended by the Interim Secretary General, the National Director for Community Support and the Chair of Donegal Red Cross. At this meeting, the Community represented a wish for Irish Red Cross to provide an ongoing regular presence in the village, the outcome of which was appointment of a staff member to the role of Creeslough Liaison.

Volunteer Response: In the immediate aftermath of the explosion, Irish Red Cross deployed its teams of trained volunteers with ambulance support to provide immediate onsite humanitarian support. This accords with our international mandate to respond to humanitarian needs within our jurisdiction.

Creeslough Response Volunteers provided immediate multipurpose assistance as part of a team in careful consideration of other stakeholders. This included support for displaced persons awaiting accommodation, transport provision, First Aid and Psychological First Aid and signposting to other support services available. (see Appendix II Creeslough Response Volunteer - Role Description).

Subsequently, volunteers played a significant role in the quick and accessible provision of financial support, based on the needs of the individual, in line with Red Cross values (see below for further information) and following the permission and sign off parameters issued in the document Operational Framework of Irish Red Cross Deployment at Creeslough Donegal which was in place by 29th October (and subsequently revised and updated as a living document). This enabled immediate on the ground financial support to be provided.

Corporate Response: At corporate level, Irish Red Cross and partners, Applegreen and An Post created the Creeslough Community Support Fund with the broad aim of providing financial support to those directly impacted by the tragedy. The public appeal for funds was followed by a massive volume of corporate and individual donations over the following months, and by numerous entertainment, community and sports groups organising various fund-raising events for a lengthy period after the tragedy.

Irish Red Cross fundraising and accounts departments processed and recorded a massive 6,161 individual donation transactions which came from corporate donations, community groups and individual donations (detailed above).

Sizeable donations from our corporate partners allowed Irish Red Cross Head Office to transfer funds to the Donegal Branch of Irish Red Cross, who were onsite to handle claims for emergency financial support from potential beneficiaries'.

The Fund operated in three distinct Phases:

- 1. Phase 1 Emergency payments for essentials made in the immediate aftermath and initial period after the explosion
- 2. Phase 2 Planned Lump- Sums to certain categories of Beneficiary
- 3. Phase 3 Community Projects & Activities



Beneficiaries of the Fund: In all cases, beneficiaries of support from the Fund were individuals and families directly impacted in different ways by the explosion. Direct payments were made to 85 different recipients. As some received assistance on behalf of their family members, the actual number of beneficiaries was far in excess of this. The main beneficiary groups were:

- bereaved families and those who were injured
- people who lost their homes and possessions
- people who lost their jobs due to the explosion
- people who suffered trauma through being involved in the explosion or from responding to the emergency with humanitarian selflessness.

Selection of Issues supported by the Fund: Financial support was provided for loss of earnings; replacement of clothes and household goods and equipment; temporary transport arrangements; myriad urgent issues needing to be swiftly addressed. In addition to supporting impacted individuals and families, the Fund paid the funeral and related expenses for most of the victims. It also covered meal costs for many responders in the early phase who were fed by local caterers. Financial support was provided for two school-based wellbeing programmes for children in the local schools.

How the Fund Operated: Initial disbursement from the Fund (Emergency Phase) was characterised by rapid response to the immediate needs presented by those directly impacted by the incident. This was of necessity reactive in the initial days and developed into a more planned and systematic process over the passage of time, when supports from statutory agencies could be factored in and coordinated.

€1,745,857 (89.2%) was distributed directly to beneficiaries through a combination of emergency support payments and significant pre-planned lump-sum payments to the various Beneficiary Groups and individuals. €46,346 (2.4%) was expended in indirect supports and the remaining €165,406 (8.5%) was disbursed for community related projects (see Appendix VII).

An Irish Red Cross-National Oversight Committee (see Appendix III) provided governance over income to, and expenditure from, the fund. It comprised local representation, an independent finance person (external to the Irish Red Cross) and members of the Board and Senior Management of the Irish Red Cross. It was Chaired by the voluntary Irish Red Cross-National Treasurer, who is a Board Member. The Committee set and oversaw permission levels and approvals for all expenditure made to individuals and families from the fund.

Professional advice was taken to ensure no tax liability or Social Welfare impediment would arise from any payments made from the Fund.

Agreed Lump Sum Payment Framework: The National Oversight Committee formally adopted an Agreed Lump Sum Payment Framework (see Appendix IV) to ensure equitable and balanced distribution of funds between various beneficiary groups and individuals. In the planning process, meetings were held with the local community and directly with bereaved families and those seriously injured to explain the proposed Payment Framework.



The lump-sum payment made to each family bereaved in the explosion, used the Payment Framework to standardise the calculation based on factors set out below:

- A Bereavement Recognition Payment paid to the next of kin for each loss of life
- Set payments made for any dependents, weighted towards younger dependents
- Set payment where a parent was not in receipt of a Next of Kin Payment
- A set payment to each bereaved sibling of a person lost
- A set Grave Upkeep Contribution

Irish Red Cross recognised the sensitivity surrounding any decision to award a particular payment to any beneficiary, particularly in cases of bereavement. The matter was approached with objective consistency and each lump-sum paid out was calculated using an agreed standard framework and standard criteria. This enabled all lump-sums payments to be calculated in a consistent, objective and balanced manner based on agreed criteria which had been discussed with the families.

Red Cross Fundamental Principles & CHS Accountability Standards guided all decisions on disbursement of the Fund. The seven fundamental principles of the Red Cross (Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity and Universality) provided an ethical, institutional and operational framework to guide the operation and disbursement of this fund. (see Appendix V & VI)

100% of donations were allocated to expenditure related to the Creeslough tragedy, with the Irish Red Cross carrying its own substantial administrative and operational costs.

A stated aim when the Fund was established was to provide medium-term support for the Creeslough Community, in addition to more immediate financial support for those bereaved, injured, made homeless or who lost property or jobs because of the tragedy. This is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 6.

The Irish Red Cross consulted the community frequently to ensure that all donations were used effectively, and as needed, to assist those affected by the incident. Seven consultation/reporting meetings were held with the Community (October 2022, February 2023, May 2023, July 2024, November 2024, February 2025 and July 2025), along with numerous meetings with individual bereaved families and individuals affected, and organisations both voluntary and statutory.

An independently facilitated community meeting was held in Creeslough on 1st December 2022 to consult with the victims, families and wider community to ascertain how the Irish Red Cross Creeslough Fund should ideally be spent. Facilitated by Claire Mc Donough, the meeting recognised that parallel processes were operating which focused on the additional economic and infrastructural supports available to Creeslough from various government and agency sources. These processes were separate from and independent of, the Irish Red Cross Creeslough Community Fund.

It was reiterated by the community that the Irish Red Cross Fund should be entirely ringfenced for humanitarian needs of the community in the short to medium term. This focus on humanitarian support framed the Irish Red Cross approach to all phases when operating the Fund.

The Creeslough Community identified three priorities for expenditure of the remainder of the fund: Trauma Support, Youth development & support and Commemorative projects. 14



community projects were funded following an online application process with project evaluation involving guidance provided by a Local Advisory Committee (see Appendix VII).

Outcomes for those directly Impacted: All bereaved families and those injured have received significant financial support from the Fund, in addition to emotional support from Irish Red Cross staff and volunteers. Individuals and families made homeless have been rehoused by Donegal County Council. The Fund contributed significantly towards setting up these new households and towards replacing work tools and other personal property damaged in the explosion.

Creeslough Small Business Humanitarian Scheme: The Irish Red Cross also helped to devise and administer a separate Scheme (funded by the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment) which provided financial support to small businesses affected by the explosion and the subsequent road closure which had disrupted trade for six weeks. 25 small local businesses benefitted from a total amount awarded of over €223,475 (from funds provided by Government).



4. General Principles underpinning Humanitarian Assistance

Humanitarian Assistance in its broadest sense, is intended to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity after natural and man-made disasters. It is usually short term and emergency, thereby allowing statutory and Governmental supports the time to organise and react. Due to the nature of the Creeslough tragedy, Irish Red Cross involvement had a longer than usual, and more diverse engagement, in Creeslough in the aftermath of this tragedy.

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

All Red Cross programmes and activities are guided by the Fundamental Principles of: Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity, and Independence (see Appendix V).

Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality & Accountability (CHS): CHS is a voluntary code describing the essential elements of principled, accountable and high-quality humanitarian action. It places communities and people affected by crisis at the centre of humanitarian action, setting out 9 Commitments to communities and people affected by crises stating what they can expect from organisations and individuals delivering humanitarian aid. (see Appendix VI).

In responding to Creeslough, Irish Red Cross adhered to Red Cross Fundamental Principles and the CHS Standards to guide our internal procedures and decision-making in providing financial, material and logistic assistance to those impacted by the tragedy.



5. Insights from the Irish Red Cross Response

Disaster Response: In responding to disaster – speed is of the essence.

Following the tragic explosion on Friday 7th October 2022, the Creeslough Community Support Fund was launched on Monday 10th October by Irish Red Cross in collaboration with An Post and Applegreen to provide rapid and medium-term assistance to the Creeslough Community. The Fund raised €1,957,609, with final donations amounting to €51,810 being received in August 2024.

Speed and Flexibility: The speed and flexibility with which the Fund was set up and became operational was essential in bridging the assistance gap until statutory services, such as Social Protection, HSE and others, could mobilise. In the days after the tragedy, the funds donated enabled the Irish Red Cross to provide swift emergency financial support – alongside psychological support – to individuals and families suddenly experiencing such tragedy, loss and hardship. This is the essence of Humanitarian Assistance – relevant, effective, timely and appropriate.

Voluntary Status of the Creeslough Fund: The Red Cross Creeslough Community fund was set up voluntarily by Irish Red Cross with the valuable support of **Applegreen** and **An Post** who were also major donors. All donations made to the Fund are treated as Restricted Funds under Irish Red Cross accounting policies and can only to be used for the purpose for which they were donated.

Maintaining clarity that this is not a statutory fund, is not legally mandated and that no contractual obligation existed for Irish Red Cross to make any payment or pay any particular amount for any purpose. Any payment from the fund can be considered an ex-gratia (that is, voluntary and without any legal obligation to pay what is offered). This was important in ensuring that the Fund did not pay where statutory or other legal entitlements existed (eg, Social Welfare entitlement, Insured entitlements etc).

Clarity that any ex-gratia payment is a voluntary payment which has the status of a gift. Use of the term 'ex-gratia' specifies to any party that Irish Red Cross is not under any duty to provide any particular amount.

Fee Waiver: Under Irish Red Cross accounting policy, normal practice is to charge a 7% fee to Restricted Funds as a contribution towards the cost of administering such funds. The Board of Irish Red Cross made a formal decision to waive this charge, ensuring that all funds donated to the Fund were committed for use in Creeslough and its surrounding area.

Emergency Payments were made for items such as clothing, lost wages, replacing household equipment and repairing damaged property; funeral-related costs and travel; trauma counselling, document replacement, medication and other necessities as they presented. Over €700,000 was expended in direct emergency assistance, including support for bereaved families and others mainly over that first Christmas period.

Planned lump-sum payments were also made to certain categories of beneficiary (bereaved families; those injured and those who lost their homes), taking the total direct financial assistance to



individuals and families to €1,75,857. €46,346 was paid in essential support costs (bank costs, professional tax advice etc), giving a total of €1,792,203 expended on individual and family support.

Irish Red Cross Response in Creeslough: Irish Red Cross was on the scene from shortly after the explosion on 7thOctober 2022 until the final community meeting on 15th July 2025. Initial support was primarily provided by volunteers, then involving support from staff on the ground in Creeslough and in Irish Red Cross headquarters.

Irish Red Cross activities include activities ranging from first responders, psychological & humanitarian support, financial assistance and assistance with community recovery and restoring wellbeing. The task in Creeslough was at three levels:

- Impacted Individuals (within families; 1st responders etc providing for emergency needs and then linking with statutory agencies/services)
- Linking with the Community and Statutory services (Donegal County Council/Health Service Executive/Department of Social Protection and other Government Depts) to help restore functionality (transport, general psychological support in conjunction with the HSE, Social Welfare Support)
- Recovery Support for Homeless/Unemployed/Businesses/Community)

Extended Presence in Creeslough: From the end of October 2022 Irish Red Cross maintained an on-the-ground presence in Creeslough, ranging from several days each week for the first year and less frequent but regular weekly or monthly presence until close-out on 15th July 2025. At the request of the community in October 2022, Irish Red Cross appointed a senior staff member as liaison person to maintain a presence on the ground and in the community. This became a crucial element in providing a coordinated response. Additionally, the Chair and volunteers from the Donegal branch of Irish Red Cross spent many evenings in Creeslough for an extended period, emphasising the local support nature of the wider Irish Red Cross network and ensuring funds were made available directly to those in need.

Coordination at Community level: The ongoing Irish Red Cross presence in Creeslough allowed for a significant level of coordination to develop with statutory agencies (Health Service Executive, Department of Social Protection, Donegal County Council and the Garda Siochana) and for liaison with the local community. It was a good example of state, voluntary sector and community all pulling together, and is consistent with the CHS (Core Humanitarian Standard) which guided the Irish Red Cross response in Creeslough.

Community Led Support: At a Community Consultation meeting in July 2024 at which Irish Red Cross proposed that the final disbursement of funds would be led by the community, the community requested that Irish Red Cross continue to manage and decide on all allocations from the fund – with community input by way of an Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee comprised five volunteers from different local community sectors, who provided valuable local knowledge and input which guided Irish Red Cross decision-making.



6. Final Phase - Community Supports

International Research has established that community resources (including facilities. art, literature. Memorials and memorial activities) all serve important functions in the healing process of collective trauma.

Irish Red Cross, recognising the humanitarian value of community supports in building a resilient trauma-informed community had reserved the residual amount remaining in the fund (€165,406 − 8.4%) for community supports identified by the community.

On 24th May 2024, Irish Red Cross held a consultative meeting in Creeslough to hear the community's ideas for expenditure of the remaining balance in the Creeslough Fund. Bereaved Families were invited to make suggestions directly to Irish Red Cross, and members of the wider Creeslough community were encouraged to contribute ideas either directly to Irish Red Cross, or via the Creeslough Community Association in advance of a final consultative meeting on the 16thJuly 2024.

The outcome of the community consultation was consensus that

- Remaining funds would target three agreed priority areas of trauma support, youth development/support and commemorative projects
- Irish Red Cross would set out a plan, rationale and terms of reference for the use of funds in agreed areas
- That an Advisory Committee is established, drawn from the community, to provide local input. Irish Red Cross continued as the final decision-maker
- Access to the fund was to be via a public website which would receive on-line applications for allocation of monies (Appendix VIII)
- Irish Red Cross would maintain an involvement in Creeslough to oversee achievement and conclusion of these outcomes.

An overarching objective was to enhance the memories of victims of the tragedy and to benefit the Creeslough and surrounding communities affected by the events of that dreadful day.

Irish Red Cross set up a webpage for online applications which outlined in detail the application process, eligibility criteria, the marking scheme and level of award criteria and closing date. This information was widely publicised including locally through Creeslough Community Association and the Creeslough Response Forum (consisting of over 20 community, voluntary and statutory organisations in the area. It was also announced on Highland radio and posted on its website.

The application period was open from December 2024 – early March 2025 (extended from end February to end 2nd week March 2025).

Irish Red Cross received 18 applications for funding seeking a total of €425,000. 16 applications were deemed eligible (two applications were received from outside the area and were unrelated to any aspect of the tragedy).



Each application was reviewed by the Irish Red Cross (IRC) internally to ensure that all eligibility conditions had been met and then forwarded to the Creeslough Advisory Committee (Appendix VII Terms of reference and Membership of Advisory Committee) for their advice and assessment of suitability.

The Advisory Committee evaluation and advice was sent to the IRC Head Office for final review and decision on funding. Irish Red Cross accepted the Advisory Committee's advice that all eligible applications should receive an offer of some funding, with some minor adjustments.

Of 16 eligible applications from 14 community organisations, one was funded by Irish Red Cross itself (not from the Creeslough Fund) to enable training in trauma support therapy. A second application will be offered similar support directly from Irish Red Cross.

The remaining 14 project applications from 14 community organisations have been funded for a range of projects/activities across facilities to create commemorative and reflective spaces and gardens for schools and local community groups, Youth programs and sporting facilities/equipment as well as remembrance events, and wayfinding on a newly developed commemorative walk. (see Appendix VII for details of successful community groups & projects).

Irish Red Cross representatives met formally with the Advisory Committee to enable an open exchange of views, before putting recommendations to a Sub-Committee of the Irish Red Cross Board for final decision and allocation.

A final consultative/reporting meeting was held in Creeslough on 15th July to inform the community of the final allocation and report that the scheme was now fully expended and will be closed upon the transfer of funds to the recipient organizations.

Each recipient organisation signed a Memorandum of Agreement and a signed claim form to Irish Red Cross to enable drawdown of funds allocated and agreed to submit a report on the outcomes from their project by July 2026. (see Appendix VIII).



7. Appreciations and Acknowledgments

The Irish Red Cross is very appreciative to so many organisations (commercial, statutory and community) and individuals for their financial support and their hands on co-operation, without this continuous support Irish Red Cross support could not have been provided.

While funders came from all walks of life both in Ireland and from outside Ireland, several companies made large donations which made a difference to the lives of so many people. Among these critical supporters are An Post, Optium Services, Applegreen, the Ireland funds, the Leeds Irish Centre, AIB, Tesco, Calor Gas, Bank of Ireland, Celtic Football Club, Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, the Abbey Hotel Donegal and many other businesses and individuals. Once again, we are grateful for this very generous support.

We must also acknowledge the extraordinary commitment of Fr John Joe Duffy who selflessly gave so much of his time and of himself to the families of the bereaved and supported our humanitarian work.

Thank you to the members of the Advisory Committee, chaired by Leona Mc Menamin, who took on the unenviable task of advising the Irish Red Cross as to how best the community projects could serve the people of Creeslough and those affected by the tragedy.

Thank you to all members of our National Oversight Committee who worked so hard to ensure relevant delivery of financial support to those who required it.

Thank you to the local statutory services who have gone above and beyond to assist: An Garda Siochana, Health Services, Department of Social Protection and Donegal County Council in particular. Michael Rowsome of Donegal County Council deserves special mention for his role in rehoming all individuals and families made homeless by the explosion.

Critically, the Creeslough Community Association and our own Donegal Irish Red Cross members have been the glue in this community, local people being there for each other.

It would be remiss not to single out Ray Mackey (Chair of Donegal Branch, Irish Red Cross) who kept us focused as an organisation on what was important and who visited each evening in those early awful months the many people suffering the worst loss possible, to offer support.

Finally, for their dedication and commitment, to thank our staff member, Niall Keane, for his on-the-ground role as Creeslough Liaison; to our Fund-raising department for spearheading the Creeslough Appeal; and our Accounts department for smoothly handling the additional workload involved in making and monitoring payments from the Fund and Liam O'Dwyer, former Secretary General and subsequent Advisor to the Irish Red Cross..



Appendices

List of Appendices

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Appendix I: Creeslough Claim Form

CREESLOUGH NATIONAL RESPONSESummary of details of affected person(s)

Claim Date	Claim Ref:	
Ву:		
Name:		
Tel:	Details on file	
Email:	Details on file	
Other relevant details:		
Assistance required:		
Assistance given:		
Payment Details		
Claim Payment Method:	EFT/Cash/Cheque (Detail)	
Authorised:		Date:
Authorised:		Date:



Appendix II: Volunteer Role Description (Extract from Operational Framework Document for Deployment at Creeslough)

Cresslough Response Volunteer

ROLE OVERVIEW The Irish Red Cross according to its mandate will respond to humanitarian needs within its jurisdiction. The volunteer will provide multipurpose assistance as part of a team in careful consideration of other stakeholders. Moreover, the volunteer will consider our	Support displaced persons awaiting accommodation or transport provision. Signpost beneficiaries to local or national support services as appropriate. Assistance can be provided based on needs of displaced person. i.e. toiletries, baby
interaction with these people who are tired and potentially vulnerable. The volunteer will deliver support according to our international mandate and values and will do so as along as the need arises.	 supplies, clothes, food etc. Services are offered in conjunction to State Protection obligations, the volunteer will be flexible to requests for support regarding same. On-Site induction protocols should be followed.
LOCATION Cresslough, Co. Donegal	ADDITIONAL HELPFUL SKILLS • Psychological First Aid • First Aid/CPR
REQUIREMENT OF APPOINTMENT Current Membership Current Garda vetting Current Safeguarding	MODE OF SELECTION Volunteers can indicate availability and project lead will discuss rostering.
SUPPORT An appointed team leader will be available on site for every shift. Volunteers will be provided support materials and a site induction. Peer Support is available to all volunteers.	SKILLS REQUIRED Friendly Have good listening skills Professional, volunteers must be confidential and observe interpersonal boundaries. Understanding of our role and Red Cross principles.
TIME COMMITMENT Generally, 4 to 5 hours week	

Record Keeping

Gathering appropriate data allows for the development of services and proactive planning. Irish Red Cross Volunteers are to use the templates provided to log interactions with displaced persons and record distribution of claims.

Volunteer Guide

Thank you for being part of the Volunteer team.



<u>Appendix III: Composition & Membership of National Oversight</u> <u>Committee</u>

Composition of Committee

The committee was composed of Members of the Irish Red Cross Board, Staff members an independent member from outside Irish Red Cross and a local representative appointed at a community consultation meeting in Creeslough on 16th February 2023.

Members

Brian Byrne (Chair) - National Treasurer and Board Member, Irish Red Cross

Aiden Lonergan - National Director Community Services, Irish Red Cross

Michael Purcell – Independent Member, Financial Expert

Ann Marie Boyle – Nominee from Creeslough Community

Deirdre Garvey – Secretary General, Irish Red Cross

Liam O Dwyer - Advisor, Irish Red Cross

Ray Mackey - Chair, Donegal Area, Irish Red Cross Rory O Sullivan -

Head of Finance, Irish Red Cross

Niall Keane – Creeslough Liaison, Irish Red Cross



Appendix IV: Lump Sum Approved Payment Framework

To facilitate the equitable and consistent calculation of lump sums to be paid to bereaved families, to those injured and to those made homeless, a weighted table was devised based on agreed criteria, akin to a points table. To preserve the confidentiality of recipients, only the criteria considered are published here, and not the weighted table.

A. Bereaved Families

- · Bereavement Recognition Payment made to the next-of-kin for each loss of life
- Set payments made for any dependents, weighted towards younger dependents
- Set payment amount where a parent was not in receipt of a Next of Kin Payment
- Set payment to each bereaved sibling of a person lost
- · Set Contribution for the Upkeep of a Grave

B. Injured Persons

A graduated scale of payments was devised as follows:

- Set Payment for serious physical injury with enduring lifelong impact
- Set Payment for moderate physical injury with enduring lifelong impact
- · Set Payment for minor physical injury with enduring lifelong impact
- Set Payment for minor physical injury with full physical recovery

C. Those made Homeless

All who had been made homeless had already received financial assistance to replace household goods. When rehoused by the Local Authority, all qualified for a package of support from the Department of Social Protection, which was augmented by Financial support from Irish Red Cross. These were made as emergency payments. Lump Sum Payments were in addition to these payments.

- Set Payment to those made homeless who had owned their own homes
- Set Payment to those made homeless who did not own their own homes
- Set Recognition Payment to a number who lost their properties in recognition that any Insurance payment would be many years down the road



Appendix V: 7 Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement





Appendix VI: Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality & Accountability (CHS)

CHS is a voluntary code describing the essential elements of principled, accountable and high-quality humanitarian action. It places communities and people affected by crisis at the centre of humanitarian action, setting out 9 Commitments to communities and people affected by crises stating what they can expect from organisations and individuals delivering humanitarian aid (see Appendix VI).

The nine commitments of CHS are that communities and people affected by crisis:

- 1. Receive assistance appropriate and relevant to their needs
- 2. Have access to the humanitarian assistance they need at the right time
- 3. Are not negatively affected and are more prepared, resilient and less at-risk as a result of humanitarian action
- 4. Know their rights and entitlements, have access to information and participate in decisions that affect them
- 5. Have access to safe and responsive mechanisms to handle complaints
- 6. Receive coordinated, complementary assistance
- 7. Can expect delivery of improved assistance as organisations learn from experience and reflection
- 8. Receive the assistance they require from competent and well-managed staff and volunteers
- 9. Can expect that the organisations assisting them are managing resources effectively, efficiently and ethically.

In responding to Creeslough, Irish Red Cross was informed by the Red Cross Fundamental Principles and the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS) to guide our internal procedures and decision-making in providing financial, material and logistic assistance to those impacted by the tragedy.



Appendix VII: Terms of Reference and Membership of Local Advisory Committee (for phase 3, community grants)

1. Guiding Principles & Terms of Reference

- i. The Fund is no longer making cash grants to individuals and will not accept such applications from individuals.
- ii. Grants may be approved to establish a recommended programme or to support a capital or commemorative project.
- iii. No grant will exceed €40,000 in any one instance.
- iv. Payment for a professional service (such as Trauma Support) may be approved. It may not be a transfer of funds to an individual applicant (save in exceptional circumstances for the vouched reimbursement of a professional service deemed necessary that was already received and paid for by an applicant).
- v. The Advisory Committee will assist Irish Red Cross on application criteria to be communicated on a dedicated website which facilitates Online Application from potential applicants.
- vi. The Advisory Committee will assist Irish Red Cross in ensuring that information is communicated to applicants who reside outside of the Creeslough area but who have been directly affected by the tragedy.
- vii. If the Committee requires professional advice in relation to a particular proposed project, costs for this may legitimately be drawn from the fund, as may any necessary operating cost.
- viii. Irish Red Cross will provide an annual report on: Applications received; Applications approved; Amounts approved for each successful application; and the total amount of drawdown and balance remaining for future application.
- ix. A report of all expenditure (GDPR compliant) will be posted on the Scheme Website. x. Once the Fund is fully expended, the Committee will be disbanded and the website taken down six months after the last payment.

2. Structure, Composition & Membership of the Advisory Committee

- i. To facilitate provision of constructive advice and guidance to Irish Red Cross, the Committee should comprise of not more than five members.
- ii. The Committee will be community-led. Membership will consist of representation drawn from recognised sectors within the wider community.
 - iii. The Committee will ideally be composed of nominees from groups and service providers representative of the community.
 - iv. The Committee will advise on funding priorities, regarding the already identified current needs and those which may emerge.
- v. Nominees should be appointed for a fixed term which concludes when all the remaining funds have been designated for expenditure.
- vi. Nominees are not representatives of their nominating group and should seek to operate on a consensus basis within the Committee, based on its deliberations.



vii. The deliberations of the Committee and the advice it provides to Irish Red Cross are confidential.

3. Members of Advisory Committee for Creeslough Community Scheme

Members of the Advisory Committee are volunteers in their individual capacity. Each has knowledge and experience of Creeslough and the expressed needs of its wider community. None is representing any particular body or organisation in their membership on the committee.

Several members are drawn from the Creeslough Crisis Response Forum, a collective of over twenty community, voluntary and statutory organisations operating in Creeslough and its surrounding area. The Forum was established following the tragedy as a coordination and information-sharing mechanism for the benefit of the community.

Committee Members:

Leona Mc Menamin (Chair) – Participant in Creeslough Crisis Response Forum; Senior Child & Family Support Coordinator, Tusla

Breege Ward – Participant in Creeslough Crisis Response Forum; Family Support Dunfanaghy Family Resource Centre

Reverend David Skuce – Church of Ireland Rector, liaising with Pastoral/Faith Leaders in Creeslough

Con Ferry – Member of the Creeslough Community living in Creeslough; Active Volunteer in Irish Red Cross

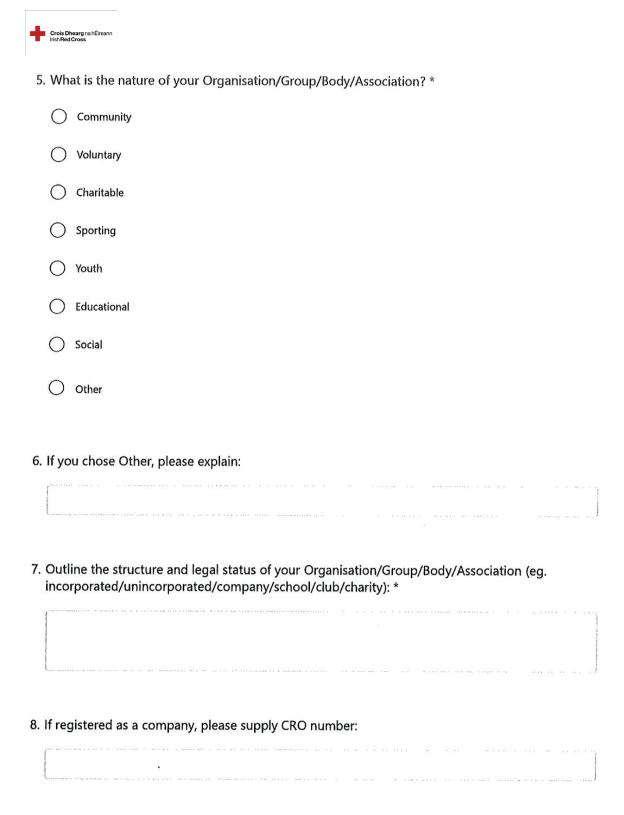
Majella Mc Fadden – Participant in Creeslough Crisis Response Forum; Community Links Manager, Creeslough Community Association

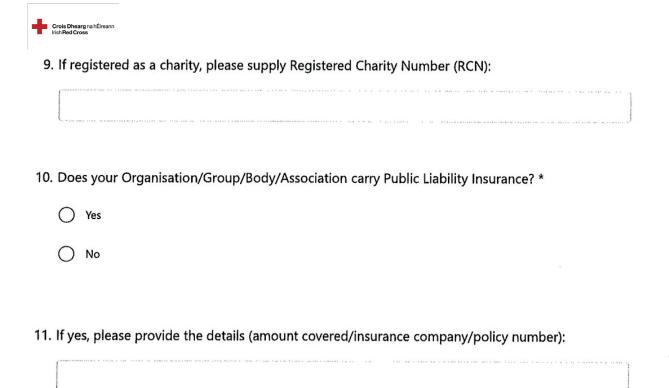


Appendix VIII: Online Application Form for Project Funding

Online Application Form – Irish Red Cross Creeslough Community Scheme

* Required
Section 1 Applicant Details
1. Under which strand of the Creeslough Community Scheme are you applying? *
Strand 1 (Youth Development & Support Activities)
Strand 2 (Trauma Support)
Strand 3 (Commemorative Activities)
2. Name of Organisation/Group/Body/Association: *
3. Address *
4. Contact Details (phone number and email) *
L







Section 2

Details of Application

12.	Briefly outline details of your application, such as the objective, the activity to be undertaken, benefits and beneficiaries, expected outcomes, and any additional information: *
13.	What is the cost of the project or activity? *
	<u></u>
14.	Please attach estimates or verifying documents regarding the cost, if available, by clicking the link and then press OK. https://redcrossie2-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/lodwyer_redcross_ie/Erc-ttltyzhGtlkMSLxdPvQBEYO8xV7XYOsj41M9KkEmbg *
15.	Amount sought: *
	If amount sought is not full cost, please indicate where the balance of the cost will come from:
	Neutrino and the second of the



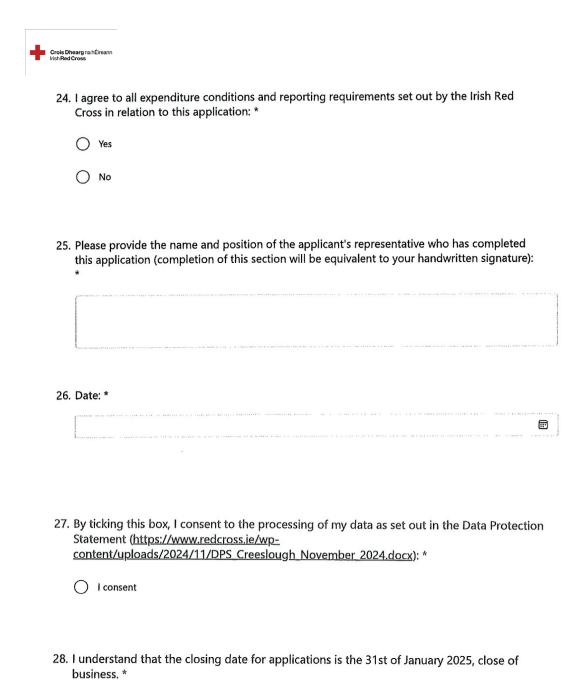
17. 1	Provide a timescale for the project/activity (from beginning to completion): *
The experience and approximation of security	
18. I	If necessary, provide any other relevant information supporting your application:
19.	. If necessary, provide any other documentation supporting your application by clicking the link and then type OK: https://redcrossie2-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/lodwyer redcross ie/Erc-ttltyzhGtlkMSLxdPvQBEYO8xV7XYOsj41M9KkEmbg
20.	Provide bank details (Name of account, address of bank, IBAN): *
	Large care a second



Section 3

Declarations and Verifications

21. I am authorised to make this application on behalf of my Organisation/Group/Body/Association: *
○ Yes
○ No
22. The costings/financial details outlined above have been approved and verified by the Organisation's/Group's/Body's/Association's (select what applies): *
O Board of Directors
Finance Officer
Accountant
○ Treasurer
Other
23. Please provide the name and position of the verifier for your organisation: *



This content is neither created nor endorsed by Microsoft. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner.

Microsoft Forms



Appendix IX: Community Organisations & Projects funded in Phase 3

1. Donegal Youth Service

Project Description – Youth Work and related Activities, including support for sessions, trips, activities, equipment, transport and related overhead costs as outlined in the application form submitted. Amount Funded: €12,000

2. Mulroy College, Milford

Project Description – Towards development of a student-centred quiet space where students can go when overwhelmed throughout the school day, as outlined in the application form submitted. Amount Funded: €27,865

3. Ards Men's Shed

Project Description – Purchase of large and small tools (estimated at c.€5,000) and continuation of activities of Ards Men's Shed. Amount Funded: €7,000

4. Faugher National School

Project Description – Selected children's activities and setting up a nurture space in the school (including bean bags, mindful colouring exercises, board games, soft- lighting and music). Amount Funded: €2,600

5. Creeslough Community Childcare

Project Description – Erection of a lean to in front of the building to shelter children and parents in adverse weather and/or to extend existing lean-tos in the children's play areas to enable outdoor play in all weather. Amount Funded: €7,000

6. <u>Dunfanaghy Family Resource Centre</u>

Project Description – To establish a supportive, social healing space for individuals in Dunfanaghy, Creeslough and neighbouring areas based on developing a Community Garden and reflective space. Amount Funded: €21,000

7. <u>Dunfanaghy Football Club</u>

Project Description – To assist the Club in its wider development plan (particularly Club & Dressing room improvement) to improve its social amenity. Amount Funded: €15,000

8. Creeslough Community Association

Project Description – To assist CCA with aspects (such as way-finding signage, for example) of the cost of developing a commemorative looped-trail connecting the village of Creeslough with Duntally Woods through extension of an existing trail, passing the site of the explosion. Amount Funded: €16,941



9. St Michael's GAA Club

Project Description – To assist St Michael's towards the addition of floodlights for their playing fields and associated works as part of a larger development, which will improve the social amenity for the community. Amount Funded: €15,000

10. Foroige

Project Description – To provide a programme of activities, including summer projects & trips; group and individual interventions, and activities based on need for young people in the Creeslough area, to build resilience. Amount Funded: €10,000

11. Scoil Mhuire, Creeslough

Project Description – A develop a programme of activities, including summer projects & trips; group and individual interventions, and activities based on need for young people in the Creeslough area, to build resilience. Amount Funded: €18,000

12. <u>Letterkenny Rugby Football Club</u>

Project Description – Various commemorative activities/projects in memory of Leona Harper (including such projects as development of a 'talk & meet' marked area; provision of marked kit; high profile player activities; standalone Rugby Tournament etc). Amount Funded: €12,000

13. Local Youth & Family Service (LYFS) & Donegal Men's Health

Project Description – To organise an all-men equal event in Creeslough in 2025/6. Amount Funded: €700

14. DOE Amateur Swimming Club

Project Description – To assist DOE Swimming Club with costs towards a club event (for example a gala night or towards competition costs). Amount Funded: €300



<u>Appendix X: Memorandum of Agreement between the Irish Red Cross and</u> the Parties

1.	This Memorandum of Agreement concerns the relationship between the Irish Red Cross Society ('IRC'), a registered charity (RCN 20005184) with Head Office at 16 Merrion Square, and (the Beneficiary), of, Co. Donegal ('the parties').
PURP	OSE
2.	The Parties wish to enter into an agreement whereby the IRC will provide funding to
	such funding having been approved under the IRC's programme to expend funds in accordance with agreed actions supporting community projects associated with the Creeslough tragedy.
DURA	TION AND NATURE OF AGREEMENT
3.	The agreement is for the period of one year. During this period IRC agrees to contribute to the cost of activities set out at paragraph 4 up to an amount of €
4.	The specific activities to be carried out by the Beneficiary are:
as ou	tlined in the application form submitted.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 1. The Beneficiary warrants that:
 - a. It is solely responsible for carrying out (or causing to be carried out) all activities under this agreement
 - b. All activities under this agreement will conform to the requirements stated in this agreement and to all legal requirements
 - c. All services will be performed in a professional manner, and all deliverables will be provided within the deadlines set forth in the agreement
 - d. Any and all funds received will be used solely for the purposes as set out in this agreement and have not or will not be reimbursed by another entity
 - e. All funds expended under this agreement will be compliant with good procurement practice and in particular with the national procurement guidelines for goods and services



- f. Full access will be provided to IRC or its agents on request for all records of procurement and expenditure for the purposes of audit and ensuring good financial governance.
- 2. The Beneficiary shall refrain from any action which may adversely affect the IRC and shall fulfil their commitments with the fullest regard for the interests of the IRC
- 3. The Beneficiary may not represent the IRC, unless explicitly requested to do so by the Secretary General of the Irish Red Cross
- 4. The Beneficiary shall not, in any manner whatsoever, use the name, emblem or official seal of the IRC or any abbreviation of the name of the IRC in connection with their business or otherwise, except as required for the fulfilment of their contractual duties hereunder
- 5. The Beneficiary shall not communicate at any time to any other person external to the IRC any information known to them by reason of their association with the IRC which has not been made public, except as required by law, in the course of their duties or by authorization of the IRC Secretary General or her designate, nor shall the Beneficiary at any time use such information for their private advantage

The obligations set out in 6, 7, 8 and 9 above shall continue upon termination of this agreement.

DISBURSAL OF FUNDS

6. The IRC will disburse the total amount of € in one lump sum.IRC will make payment by EFT to the Beneficiary at the following bank account:Bank:

Account Name:

IBAN:

BIC:

Payment terms are 30 days from receipt of claim form confirming acceptance of amount offered and the terms of this agreement.

DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

7. Unless otherwise required by law, the parties will not disclose any confidential or commercially sensitive information received from the other except with the written consent of the other party. If disclosure is required by law, each party will take all reasonable measures to ensure that the information received from the other will be disclosed in a manner that protects the information from any disclosure that is not required or authorised by law.



- 8. Unless otherwise required by law, neither party will use the information disclosed to it by the other for any other purpose than the performance of its obligations under this agreement.
- 9. Before transferring or sharing any information which involves the personal data of third parties, the parties will first ensure that there is a suitable agreement in place, separate to this one, which satisfies the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation

TITLE RIGHTS

10. All materials and deliverables under this agreement shall be the Beneficiary's original work and will not contain any libelous material or infringe upon or violate any patent, copyright, trademark, license, proprietary information, intellectual property or other right of any third party. The Beneficiary will not incorporate any third-party materials or third-party intellectual property with any limitations to any materials or deliverables produced under this agreement, unless the IRC has provided written approval; or the Beneficiary will at his/her own expenses defend any and all claims charging such infringement and will hold the IRC harmless in such cases of infringement.

TERMINATION, RENEWAL AND AMENDMENT

- 11. This agreement shall remain in force until 30/06/2026 with the understanding that it may be terminated by either party giving one months' notice to the other party in writing, or by mutual agreement between the parties at any time.
- 12. This agreement may be amended by written agreement between the two parties. Such amendments, once approved by both parties, will become part of this agreement. Neither party may assign this agreement or any right or obligation under this agreement without the prior written consent of the other party.
- 13. In the event of the agreement being terminated by the Beneficiary prior to its due expiry date, and without the agreed activities having been carried out, the Beneficiary shall return to the IRC the total of all funds received.

INSURANCE

- 14. The Beneficiary shall indemnify and hold harmless, the IRC, its Officers, Agents and employees from and against all suits, claims, demands and liability of any nature or kind, including costs and expenses, howsoever arising, to the greatest extent permissible by law.
- 15. In signing this agreement, the Beneficiary represents and warrants that it will ensure full compliance with the any regulatory requirements for the activities, including insurance. The IRC assumes no responsibility for the insurance coverage of the Beneficiary.



TAXATION

16. The Beneficiary is an independent entity and is solely responsible for its own tax affairs. IRC assumes no responsibility for payment of any tax, social or other charges which may be owed by the Beneficiary on account of receipt of the funds.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- 17. The Parties must attempt to settle amicably any dispute between them arising out of or relating to the agreement, initially between the designated contact persons.
- 18. In the instance that this process is unsuccessful in resolving the dispute, the parties agree to engage a mutually agreed third-party arbitrator to resolve the dispute. The costs of any arbitration process shall be shared between the parties.
- 19. The parties agree that the governing law of this agreement is the law of Ireland.

FORCE MAJEURE

- 20. If a Party is prevented from performing any of its material obligations under this Agreement (in whole or in part) by reason of a Force Majeure event (the "Affected Party") it must immediately notify the other (the "Unaffected Party") in writing of the circumstances constituting the Force Majeure event and must keep the Unaffected Party regularly informed of the progress in resolving the Force Majeure event.
- 21. The Affected Party must take all reasonable steps to minimize the adverse effect of Force Majeure event on the performance of its obligation under this agreement.
- 22. If the Force Majeure event continues for longer than one month then the Unaffected Party may at the expiry of such one-month period, provided the Force Majeure event is still subsisting, give notice in writing to the Affected Party terminating this agreement immediately.

DESIGNATED CONTACTED PERSONS

23. The following are the IRC contact persons under this agreement:

a. Liam O' Dwyer: <u>lodwyer@redcross.ie</u>b. Niall Keane: nkeane@redcross.ie

FINAL CLAUSES

24. The parties understand and acknowledge that the discharge of IRC's obligations under this agreement is subject always to availability of funding.



- 25. This agreement does not form, and nothing contained in this agreement may be deemed to constitute, join venture, partnership, or similar business arrangement between the parties. Neither party has any authority to make any contract, whether expressly or by implication, in the name of the other Party, without that party's written consent.
- 26. This agreement represents the entire agreement between the parties. In the event of any conflict or inconsistencies between this agreement and any other documents, this agreement shall prevail
- 27. The terms of this agreement represent the current intentions of the parties as at the time of signing.
- 28. All monies must be spent within one calendar year. You are obliged to confirm this to Irish Red Cross and submit a short impact report by end June 2026.

Signed for and on behalf of Irish Red Cross by its duly authorised officer:

Name:	Deirdre Garvey
Role:	Secretary General
Date:	6 th June 2025
0. 16	
	nd on behalf of the Beneficiary:
Name:	
Role:	
Date:	



Appendix XI: Irish Red Cross Creeslough Community Projects Fund Claim Form

Claim Date:		
(finance will comp	olete)	
Name & Address of		
project organisation:		
Tel:		
iei:		
F		
Email:		
A (1.14)		
Activities, products		
and services to be		
delivered by project funds as outlined in		
application		
Takal Farma analom ka ba		
Total Euro value to be		
paid:		
Key outcomes		
expected from the		
project:		
Other details:		
Other details.		
Claim Payment		
Method:		
motirodi		
GL Code (for		
tracking)		
u u u u u u u u u u u u u u u u u u u		
Authorised:		
Final		
Authorisation		
		



by Secretary General:	
Applicant Signature & Title	Date:

Notes

Notes

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