



redruk
people and skills for disaster relief

STRATEGY

2025/27

FOREWORD

Year on year, the number of people requiring humanitarian support is growing. Protracted, overlapping crises, worsened by the effects of the climate emergency, have compounded humanitarian needs. As the demand for support grows, we need to ensure we have efficient, effective, and progressive disaster response processes in place.

The RedR 2025-27 strategy highlights the need to support disaster response professionals, at both the local and international levels. This strategy confirms RedR's background in the engineering sector, and the ability to apply humanitarian engineering expertise in disaster contexts. Through learning and development, RedR will strengthen the sector's ability to prioritise the needs of people affected by disaster, to act according to recognised ethical and professional standards, and to uphold best practice.

As RedR equips individuals with vital skills, strengthens organisations, and influences reform initiatives, this strategy strives for a sector full of skilled, empowered, and informed professionals, able to respond in a time of crisis. Having been RedR's President since 1988, I look forward to seeing the ongoing impacts of RedR's work in mitigating the impact of crises on the most vulnerable people.



HRH The Princess Royal
President, RedR UK



WHO IS REDR UK?

We are a humanitarian organisation that supports the humanitarian sector, aid workers, and organisations to prepare for and respond effectively to crises within humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding contexts. Our work strengthens resilience, primarily in low and lower middle-income countries (LICs & LMICs) to mitigate the impact of crises on the most vulnerable people.



OUR VISION

a world in which sufficient competent and committed personnel are available and responding to humanitarian needs.

OUR MISSION

to strengthen the capacity and resilience of aid workers, communities and organisations in humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding contexts.

OUR VALUES

drive our day-to-day behaviour and are at the heart of everything we do. They provide guiding principles about the way we work, set the tone for our culture, and identify what we care about. This helps us make important decisions and choose between right and wrong ways of working. Our values are:

- Collaboration Work together towards shared goals
- Excellence Continually improve through listening, and innovation
- Lifelong Learning Never stop learning so that others can also keep learning
- Integrity Be honest, fair and speak up
- Accountability Do what we say we will

We have an energetic and dedicated team of staff, trustees, associate trainers and members who deliver localised services.

Founded in 1980, we have over 40 years of experience, successfully strengthening the humanitarian sector, the capacity of aid workers and organisations to prepare for and respond to crises. We have a deep heritage across the engineering sector. Since 1988, we have been honoured to have Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal as our President.

In 2023, the importance of our work in empowering local aid workers was recognised by the Financial Times who listed RedR as one of “20 Leading Organisations Helping to Rebuild Broken Worlds” alongside the likes of UNICEF, UNHCR and IFRC.

RedR is at the forefront of humanitarian capacity strengthening and contributes to raising learning standards across the sector. We are a founding member of [HPass](#) and led a consultative process to develop the [HPass Humanitarian Learning Standards](#) which define best practice for capacity strengthening organisations. We continue to demonstrate our commitment to these standards by maintaining our status as a HPass accredited organisation verified through an independent quality review.

We are committed to the principles of the [Humanitarian Charter](#), the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement](#) and the [Core Humanitarian Standard](#).

THE GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN CHALLENGE

The United Nations and partner organisations estimate that 300 million people will need humanitarian assistance and protection in 2024. This is an increase of almost 30 million people compared to 2023, which has been driven significantly by conflicts and disasters linked to the climate emergency.



Crises are becoming protracted, resulting in overlapping crises often with conflicts and disasters interacting to create situations with complex humanitarian needs. The cyclical nature of repeated climatic events is also blurring the lines between disaster response and disaster prevention and is requiring closer collaboration across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding contexts.

Despite the increasing rhetoric on localisation in the sector and the overall agreement that it produces better humanitarian and development outcomes, there has been significant dissonance in practice. Key barriers related to donor practices and power imbalances are stalling overall progress of locally-led responses.

Meanwhile, the economic landscape globally means that available funds are decreasing, and the available funding must be used more effectively.

This is where RedR can play its part – developing capacity of professionals at a local and national level to deliver humanitarian services. We are a small and agile charity, meaning that we can respond rapidly to a variety of needs. We also know that investing in people can improve the efficacy of humanitarian response. At a time when humanitarian funding cannot match demand, efficiency is crucial. Specifically focusing on the WASH sector, the International Development Committee highlights:



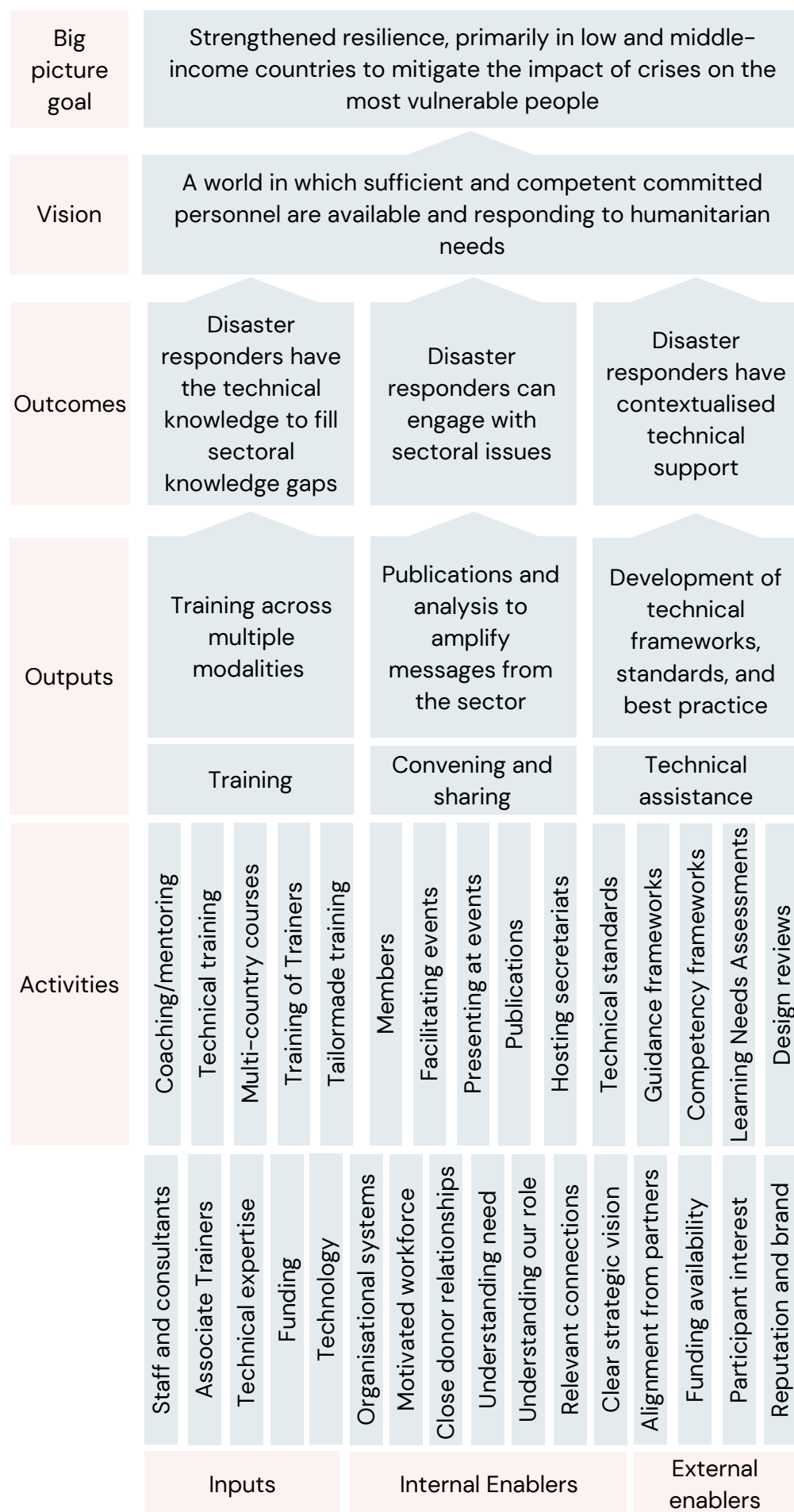
extra money will not automatically ensure universal access to basic human requirements. Capacity at local and national level to implement scaled-up efforts on sanitation and water is a particular source of concern: training far more water professionals who understand local needs and can design and maintain systems, as well as carry out the crucial task of collecting data on progress, is of signal importance to ensuring new aid money is invested sustainably and efficiently.



This message is highly relevant to all of the areas of RedR's work.

Amongst these challenges, the humanitarian sector is increasingly acknowledging that dominant global power structures are inherently embedded within the sector and that power needs to be shifted to local actors. International donors and agencies, primarily from the global north, hold a disproportionate amount of funding and decision-making power over local actors, leading to responses that regularly do not recognise the agency of local actors and do not meet core humanitarian standards.

THEORY OF CHANGE



OUR THEMATIC AREAS

RedR works to achieve our mission across three often interrelated and overlapping thematic areas:

1. **Engineering in Emergencies**
2. **Humanitarian Services**
3. **Climate Change**

Engineering in Emergencies

The professional skills of engineers are vital in emergency contexts to support communities hit by disasters. RedR was founded in 1980 from the identification of a gap in engineering skills within the humanitarian sector. Humanitarian engineering applies engineering principles, skills, and technologies to support affected communities. We address this skills gap by strengthening the capacity of engineers for greater preparedness, resilience, and response capabilities.

Key to our approach is working in conjunction with highly specialised technical engineering institutions (companies, universities, professional members bodies) and partnering with organisations responding to disasters to develop and apply highly technical and contextualised expertise. Key areas of work include:

- Post disaster reconstruction
- Shelter
- Water and sanitation
- Environmental engineering
- Civil engineering



Humanitarian Services

The profound increase in the number and scale of humanitarian crises around the globe requires an overhaul of the humanitarian system and addressing capacity gaps to address the full scale of needs. RedR approaches this challenge on three levels. We empower individuals with the expertise, methods, approaches, and opportunities they need to maximise their impact, whatever their role. We help organisations unlock their capacity and fulfil their mandate, supporting them through their unique challenges through tailored learning solutions. We influence the sector developing standards and principles, as well as cross-sector partnerships. Key areas of work include:

- Humanitarian Principles and Practice
- Training of Trainers
- Management and Leadership
- Project Cycle Management
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- Data analysis
- Safety and Security
- Operations (Logistics, Human Resources, Finance, IT)
- Proposal and Report Writing / Fundraising
- Communication, Community Engagement & Accountability
- Equality & Inclusion
- Technical areas such as Protection and Diversity, Camp Coordination & Camp Management, Education in Emergencies, Child Protection in Emergencies, Cash, etc.

Climate Change

Climate change is having an enormous impact on all aspects of the aid sector, particularly by exacerbating the strength and regularity of disasters. This is increasing the global humanitarian need and widening the funding gap. It is therefore crucial to increase the adoption of adaptation measures to increase resilience and mitigate the effects of climate emergencies when they occur. RedR approaches this by targeting the geographical areas which are more susceptible to the effects of climate change, and highlighting the opportunities for the use of technology, novel funding mechanisms, and physical interventions to lessen the effects of extreme weather and climatic events. Key areas of work include:

- Adaptive management
- Disaster risk reduction
- Climate financing
- Early action
- Climate risk and vulnerability

Integrating climate resilience into humanitarian engineering

We're committed to supporting individuals, organisations and the broader sector in transitioning towards greater climate resilience. Our Climate Change Disaster Risk Reduction and Humanitarian Skills for Engineers courses are testament to this.

Training participant Annet Nsiimire received a microgrant from RedR to support her learning. She used this to renovate twelve cooking stoves at the Mahani reception centre in the Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement in South-western Uganda, allowing the residents to cook with clean energy. "Collection and use of fuels is a life-threatening activity [for refugees]", says Annet. The use of clean energy, however, liberates women and girls from this dangerous daily labour, which causes conflict and degrades the environment.



OUR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

We deliver services through 3 main types of activity:

- Training programmes
- Technical Assistance
- Convening and Sharing



Training Programmes

RedR's training programmes and expertise is a core part of our offering. Our capacity-building framework, grounded in 40 years of evidence and experience guides our approach. Based on evidence, it builds on best practice in adult learning methodologies, trends and needs of the sectors we work in, as well as initial assessments of our learners' skills, knowledge and needs. Whether working with individuals, organisations or the wider sector, this ensures that our professional expertise complements existing capacities and effectively enhances learning outcomes. RedR's trainings are built around a core of technical content, that is contextualised by local experts and delivered through a variety of modalities, including Face-to-Face, Simulations, Online Facilitated, E-modules, and Self-Paced learning. The Learning & Development team ensures that RedR UK is at the forefront of high-quality learning: leading in instructional excellence at scale, supporting the use of key instructional tools/technologies and supporting Associate Trainer recruitment, onboarding, and engagement.

Technical Assistance

RedR has a significant depth of professional expertise through its staff, a broad and varied Associate Trainer pool and membership, and corporate partners (e.g. Arup, Ramboll, Mott McDonald, Tony Gee, and WSP). By using this expertise and pairing this with highly contextualised local knowledge and skills, effective solutions can be implemented. There is further opportunity for RedR to develop its own capacity for technical reviews, framework development and policy guidance, grants, some of which is already underway within programmes such as the WASH CCI, Humanitarian Skills for Engineers, WASH Roadmap, and engagement with the Afghanistan Shelter Cluster to review some of their technical content for use in shelter provision. These services can be paired with coaching and advisory services.

Convening and Sharing

RedR sits at the crossroads between practitioners, trainers, technical experts and academia. We hear about the immediate challenges being faced in disaster situations, and the ideas to solve sectoral level issues. We are therefore perfectly placed to synthesise this information and provide thought leadership to the humanitarian sector. Through our trainings and technical assistance, we gain a firsthand understanding of the individual and organisational challenges humanitarians face. We consider what this means for the humanitarian sector, and our ability to convene and share informs sector specific improvements. This is further enabled through our facilitation of fora, our engagement in Cluster meetings, development of case studies, publication of sector specific handbooks, and feeding into Standards Setting. This helps to continually iterate improvements across the humanitarian sector in the response to often complex crises.



Helping the Mukwege Foundation care for survivors

RedR works closely with a wide breadth of organisations and agencies to understand their learning needs and deliver tailored learning and development solutions. One of these organisations is the Dr Denis Mukwege Foundation.

The Dr Denis Mukwege Foundation has developed a comprehensive programme to strengthen provision of holistic care to conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) survivors. They identified a clear need for digital resources and learning solutions for service providers and other professionals involved in CRSV response efforts. Following extensive consultations, RedR CRSV and e-technology experts designed four bespoke e-modules that include engaging activities, animations, practical scenarios, and knowledge checks. These modules are being delivered in English, Ukrainian, French, and Burmese (Myanmar).

OUR APPROACH

RedR's mission is to strengthen capacity and resilience within humanitarian, development and peacebuilding contexts. To minimise the effect of crises, the knowledge base of individuals must be maximised, but these individuals must also be working within organisations with adequate institutional knowledge and effective systems. To support this, these organisations must be working within a co-ordinated sector with consistent, adequate and contextually appropriate standards. Therefore, RedR works in different ways at all three of these levels to effect change across the sector.

1

Individual Level

This is primarily achieved through engaging with individuals who may be working in a new area within the humanitarian sector, or simply require a refreshment of the latest practices within an area they are involved. Typically, we tailor training courses to a specific context and enable a group of practitioners to share knowledge and experiences of their challenges to boost the capacity of everyone in the group.

Organisational Level

We strengthen the operational and programmatic capacity of organisations via tailored needs-based services, including improving the robustness of their systems, and enhancing leadership and management. We support these organisations in their advocacy efforts, helping to create an enabling environment for their growth. We focus on policy discussions, influencing decision-making processes, and raising awareness about critical humanitarian issues.

2

3

Sectoral Level

We contribute to developing sector-wide standards and principles for the general delivery of humanitarian projects. We apply our cross-sectoral humanitarian expertise to ensure we can develop cross-cutting capacity in complex humanitarian crises.



Mercy's story

RedR builds individual skills and a stronger humanitarian sector through learning opportunities such as the *Essentials of Humanitarian Data Analysis* training delivered in Amman and Nairobi in 2024. The training provides participants with the skills to collect, analyse, and present data, and to make evidence-based decisions.

Mercy Wanjohi who works in the space of gender and inclusivity in the County Government of Nairobi attended the training. "I was able to understand data sources and how to prepare analysis, as well as the different types of analysis", she says. Now, she can recommend policies in Nairobi that are based on data and which support survivors of gender-based violence most effectively, and mainstream gender issues across the work of the Nairobi County government.



Localisation

Capacity strengthening across the sector will only be effective if it is applied alongside the localisation agenda. Local responders have vital expertise and contextual know-how. They will also be the first responders to any crises which emerge in their context and able to reach areas that international intermediaries cannot access. Local organisations will remain in place after the immediate crisis has subsided, retaining knowledge and building resilience for future events far more effectively than international organisations. At the sectoral level, donors, international NGOs and UN agencies need to have a difficult but necessary reflection on their future role, and how to leave the space to local actors to actually lead localisation in the first place and enable a true shift of power.

At RedR, localisation is at the heart of our approach. RedR seeks to provide the space for local and national actors as drivers of their own learning, through effectively involving them on learning needs assessments, strategic discussions on learning in the sector and encouraging peer exchange and knowledge sharing. RedR will further strengthen the existing partnerships with local learning institutions and organisations and build new strategic partnerships with other local learning and development actors.

RedR consistently works to maximise the number of national organisations staff and national staff taking part in our training modules, making a deliberate effort to reach new and non-traditional local actors involved in humanitarian assistance. The local and contextual knowledge is a critical part of our selection of appropriate associate trainers and all of our training is contextualised to the location that it is delivered in. Through this process, RedR has built a global network of experts and participants who act as a community to share and promote humanitarian skills. RedR will continue to invest in the expansion and development of our pool of Associate pool to reflect the countries we work in. Finally, RedR will exercise through convening and sharing advocacy for a shift of power and approaches in capacity strengthening.



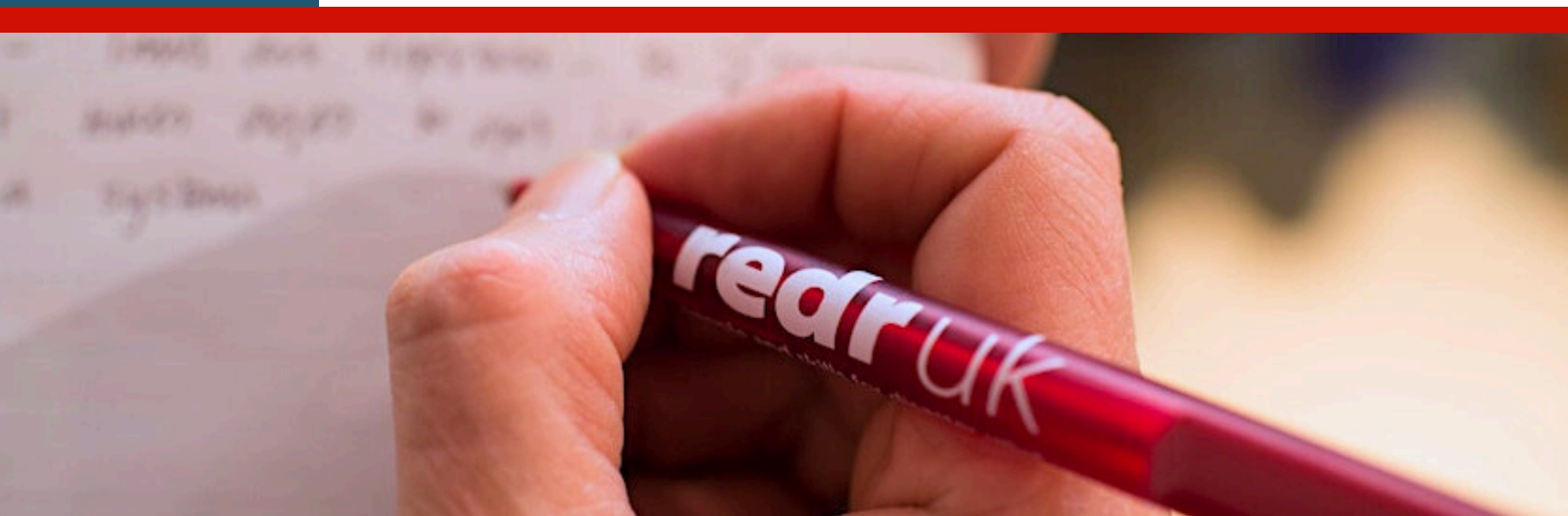
Gender, Equity & Social Inclusion

RedR recognises that marginalised groups experience crises in different ways and despite being disproportionately affected, are often underrepresented. We foster inclusion by designing and delivering services that promote standards, trainings, tools and processes that enable inclusion of marginalised groups, making reference to the different needs of people in different at-risk groups – including gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity and disability. Our material development process includes an inclusion audit to ensure that case studies, photographs, and role plays are representative of a wide range of perspectives. We will strive to ensure that our workbooks, handouts, and PowerPoint slides (if applicable) are fully accessible to people with learning difficulties by using accessible fonts, colours, and text placements.

In addition to mainstreaming inclusion as a foundational tenet through all our work, we develop comprehensive services for humanitarian practitioners and leaders who want to encourage behaviours and activities that increase equality, inclusion and diversity and reflect on power, privilege, and intersectionality in their programmes.

Excellence and quality assurance

Quality assurance measures are woven into all stages of RedR's work and practices, from our organisational structure to the design, development and delivery of our offerings, and the selection and onboarding of trainers. RedR's Learning and Development team together with our Associates who hold years of experience in their fields of expertise, ensure that our work adheres to the latest thinking in adult learning theory, that they meet RedR quality standards, as well as sectoral best practice, principles and standards. We will continue to enhance the quality and excellence of our services and how we deliver them to ensure our services are relevant, timely, and contextualised.



Our Humanitarian Training Competency Framework not only informs our own practice but provides a tool to improve the standard of capacity building in the sector. We continue to demonstrate our commitment to the HPass quality standards, which we were instrumental in creating, through an annual process of assessment and accreditation against the standards by Pearson International. Finally, RedR is committed to the Humanitarian Charter, the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross & Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief, Humanitarian Inclusion Standards, and the Core Humanitarian Standards.



WHERE REDR SITS WITHIN THE HUMANITARIAN SECTOR

RedR is a capacity strengthening organisation. We recognise that investing in skills strengthening has a multiplier effect, reaching more people, enabling cost reduction, and allowing faster implementation. The capacity building we provide improves outcomes at a number of levels, which enhance humanitarian effectiveness. These include:

- Increasing self-efficacy.
- Reducing disparities and improve accessibility.
- Returns on investment through preparedness

Other partners offer some overlap to our work. The Humanitarian Leadership Academy and the Humanitarian Academy for Development are the respective training providers of Save the Children and Islamic Development Relief. Other partners like the International Rescue Committee have internal training departments dedicated to their staff. Some specialised academic providers like the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative offer courses to humanitarians.

WHAT SETS US APART

The underpinning principle of RedR was that it should never be an operational agency in its own right, but a means by which implementation agencies could improve their response with the inclusion of qualified and experienced people. Through 44 years of working in the humanitarian sector, we have a unique position that sets us apart by connecting parts of the humanitarian ecosystem to enable the more effective response to humanitarian needs.

Our connections to expertise, particularly within the engineering sector, allows us to bring the right level of technical expertise to respond to crises. Through our work, we gain an immediate understanding of the needs of individuals and donor organisations and NGOs responding to humanitarian crises globally. Through our partnership model we work with experts who are leaders in their respective fields, often from our corporate partners, to develop best in class, timely, and contextually relevant technical services.

By linking these parties together and combining it with local situational knowledge through our Associate network, RedR is uniquely placed to deliver cutting edge content which is contextually appropriate, using the latest learning and development techniques to deliver this content effectively to those that can make the most use of it.

Additionally, by utilising our close contact with humanitarian responders we are also able to feed this knowledge back into organisational and sector level improvements, ensuring that local actors are core and can influence sector level change. RedR's individual level training is as much about listening and sharing the experiences of participants, as it is about imparting knowledge, and we must utilise this resource to assist in the improvement of a sector in its entirety.



Connecting disparate actors in emergencies

RedR responds to emergencies with agility, bringing together disparate actors in the development, humanitarian, and peacebuilding sectors.

Working with the Shelter and WASH Clusters, we've trained engineers, technical experts, and disaster responders in conducting damage assessments to determine the safety of damaged buildings, in multiple emergency contexts.

From our blast-induced damage assessments work in Iraq and Syria in 2021, we've adapted and delivered damage assessment training in several contexts, including blast-induced damage in Ukraine from 2022, seismic damage in Türkiye, Syria, and Morocco from the earthquakes in 2023, and flood-induced damage in Pakistan in 2022 and Libya in 2023. In each case, our response is built on our rapid needs assessment among local engineers and humanitarian responders on the ground, to assess where capacity gaps might exist and seek addressing those training needs.



RECOGNISING THE VALUE OF PEOPLE

RedR Staff

At the heart of our strategy is our people and culture; a motivated, diverse core team of staff and consultants, equipped with a broad range of humanitarian and technical skills. Supported by our values and a robust competency framework that guides each person's growth and progression we prioritise continuous professional development. By fostering a culture of knowledge sharing, we constantly strive to enhance our collective expertise. Our core value of 'lifelong learning' not only ensures high-quality service delivery but also acknowledges and harnesses the value of upskilling within our organisation, ultimately enabling us to better meet the evolving needs of the communities we serve.

Associate Trainers

Associate Trainers are a critical part of RedR, working in collaboration with our L&D and programmes team to design, develop and deliver learning programmes, drawing on their expertise as humanitarians, learning specialists and experts in their specific contexts. Ensuring that associates who are in our pool are utilised and engaged with RedR on a regular basis, we aim to expand our Associate pool in tandem with the programmes that we are delivering and the gaps that we see to ensure quality, impact and relevance. Associates represent one key pillar of our localisation strategy.



Members

RedR's 44-year history of involvement in the humanitarian sector, and specifically our link to capacity building and training means that we have interacted with a huge number of humanitarian responders. RedR's vision for the membership over the coming years is of a thriving community of engaged and active contributors who share knowledge and experience, engaging with external stakeholders to support humanitarian responders with high quality, up-to-date, and relevant contributions, highlighting best practice in the humanitarian sector. We will extend our engagement with members to further amplify the voice of RedR and facilitate the sharing of expertise.



RedR Federation

RedR is a network of national accredited RedR organisations comprising of the UK, India, Indonesia, Australia, and Malaysia, sharing a common vision and mission. Each is an established, independent humanitarian learning provider in their own national and regional context. We will work together to enhance collaboration, benefitting from our respective geographical, thematic, and client strengths.



External Engagement

RedR's unique positioning is reflective of our relationships with key external stakeholders – each, leaders in their respective fields. These include patrons from the engineering and insurance sectors; bilateral agencies including USAID and FCDO; multilateral UN agencies; Her Royal Highness Anne as our President; international, national, and local NGOs; technical partners including Arup and Ramboll; academic partners including the University of Makerere and University College London; and media outlets like the Financial Times and New Civil Engineer.

Externally RedR's history has given us a great deal of exposure within the humanitarian sector. We must continue to use this breadth of reach, and trust in our quality to bring people together and create consensus across the sector. RedR's institutional and private sector partners – as well as the trusts, foundations and individual donors who support us – strengthen and equip the humanitarian sector through us.

We will continue to develop our relationships with external stakeholders aligned with our vision to ensure a balanced portfolio of delivery, to enhance our ability to deliver, to inform our convening and sharing priorities across the sector, and to communicate to those passionate about the work of RedR.



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