



An introduction to the **Red Cross Red Crescent's** Learning platform and how to adopt it

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest volunteer-based humanitarian network, reaching 150 million people each year through our 187 member National Societies. Together, we act before, during and after disasters and health emergencies to meet the needs and improve the lives of vulnerable people. We do so with impartiality as to nationality, race, gender, religious beliefs, class and political opinions.

Guided by *Strategy 2020* – our collective plan of action to tackle the major humanitarian and development challenges of this decade – we are committed to 'saving lives and changing minds'.

Our strength lies in our volunteer network, our community-based expertise and our independence and neutrality. We work to improve humanitarian standards, as partners in development and in response to disasters. We persuade decision-makers to act at all times in the interests of vulnerable people. The result: we enable healthy and safe communities, reduce vulnerabilities, strengthen resilience and foster a culture of peace around the world.

The Red Cross Red Crescent Learning platform in brief

The Red Cross Red Crescent Learning platform is an online learning community for Red Cross Red Crescent National Society volunteers and staff as well as partners and the general public. It delivers free, high-quality, self-directed, multilingual Red Cross Red Crescent and other learning opportunities to support the personal and professional development of volunteers and staff. Alongside the learning materials, the Learning platform has various social learning tools including communities, forums and wikis through which to learn from and collaborate with peers.

The Learning platform's rapidly growing global community of many tens of thousands of learners from all National Societies consistently achieves in-

dustly topping completion rates of above 50 per cent across its courses.

The Learning platform is a core part of the Red Cross Red Crescent Learning Education and Training (LET) Hub (www.ifrc.org/learning) which provides a window to a variety of appropriate, high quality online training and learning opportunities including those found on the Learning platform. All National Society volunteers and staff are encouraged to explore, use and share these as widely as possible among friends and colleagues.

The Course Catalogue for the Learning platform is available online.

Registration, access to and use of the Learning platform is free.

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Strategy 2020 and the Learning platform

A National Society that is self-aware of its strengths and limitations also strives to do better by lifting up the thinking and practice that underpins the relevance, quality, magnitude, and impact of its services. That is why *Strategy 2020* gives strong encouragement to the development of a culture of learning and knowledge sharing.

The Red Cross Red Crescent Learning Education and Training (LET) Hub intends to stimulate new thinking, set standards, and establish curricula of relevance to our core business areas, and then to signpost volunteers and staff towards accredited providers who offer structured and professionalized learning opportunities.

This journey of life-long learning starts with the Red Cross Red Crescent's Learning platform.

The platform is an online, cloud-based service dedicated to expanding access to learning opportunities for all volunteers, staff and members of the the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and beyond.

In addition to the Learning Platform, the Red Cross Red Crescent LET Hub coordinates, develops or delivers other key Red Cross Red Crescent online Learning programmes and opportunities including the following. More detail can be found in the out-boxes below and on the LET Hub website at www.ifrc.org/learning:

- Certified Professional and Vocational Development courses
- Reference Centre Learning outcomes
- A learning community
- A research function
- Project-based Humanitarian Education for Youth



Certified Professional Development courses

The Certified Professional Development courses are a set of key certified professional and vocational development programmes offered by the Red Cross Red Crescent LET Hub in partnership with various academic and other renowned training institutions world-wide. The current set of courses offered include Online Certificates in the following subject areas:

- Social and Voluntary Sector Leadership
- Global Health
- Humanitarian Diplomacy
- Disaster Management

Registrations are taken for these courses at regular intervals throughout the year. For more details and to register for all these opportunities, please visit the [LET Hub website](#).



Learning Community

The LET Hub has tools that enable the creation of local as well as global Learning Communities. These tools include the Learning Blog, forums, wikis etc.

Through these tools, which are available on the [Learning platform](#), learning experiences and expertise are shared between colleagues and peers throughout the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and beyond.



Project Based Humanitarian Education for Youth

Humanitarian Education for Youth enables young people and other target groups to analyse events from a humanitarian perspective through project based learning across geographies and cultures.



Reference Centres – Learning Outcomes

The Reference Centres are delegated functions of the IFRC and in some cases are hosted in various Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies. Their primary function as “Centres of Excellence” are to develop strategically important knowledge and best practice which will inform future operations of the Federation and National Societies in their key areas of interest and influence.

These centres include:

- Global Disaster Preparedness Centre – American Red Cross
- Red Cross / Red Crescent Climate Centre – Netherlands Red Cross
- The Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support – Danish Red Cross
- The European Reference Centre for First Aid Education – French Red Cross
- Livelihoods Resource Centre – Spanish Red Cross
- Reference Centre on Volunteering – British and Spanish Red Cross

The Learning platform – background

In 2009, following an IFRC Governing Board resolution, the IFRC implemented a Learning platform to:

- host and distribute multi-lingual online courses for Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers and staff (and others) worldwide.
- allow virtual Red Cross Red Crescent communities and beyond to exchange ideas, documentation and knowledge.
- track progress and keep an online training record for all Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers and staff (and others) worldwide.
- manage classroom training registrations.

By providing free, easy to access, high quality learning opportunities based on decades of Red Cross Red Crescent knowledge, insight and experience, the Learning platform, as with all the other learning opportunities and programmes made available through the LET Hub, aims to provide increasingly efficient and effective support to the development of basic competencies of Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers and staff worldwide.

The technical Learning Management System (LMS) solution that was chosen as the software platform behind the Learning platform is provided by Cornerstone, and follows the Software as a Service (SaaS) model. It is a flexible, reliable and complete solution, capable of meeting the present and future needs of all National Societies. The Learning platform, which currently has 100's of Red Cross Red Crescent and other courses (and growing quickly) is fully navigable in 5 languages (English, French, Russian, Spanish, and Swedish). Further languages are expected to be available shortly – see box for further details.

Adoption of the Learning platform: an important opportunity for all National Societies

All Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies are encouraged to make use of the Red Cross Red Crescent Learning platform as extensively as possible to support their own (online) Learning Education and Training (LET) needs and requirements. There are a multitude of ways in which National Societies can do this – these are described below and can be implemented separately or together. We refer to this embracing of the the Learning platform by National Societies as “Adoption of the Learning platform”, and positively welcome the opportunity to discuss the benefits, process and roll-out with all National Societies – many dozens of National Societies are already in discussion.

Languages soon to be fully released in the Learning platform are listed below. Please contact the Learning and Research team for further information:

- Bahasa Indonesian
- Bahasa Malaysian
- Bulgarian
- Chinese
- Croatian
- Czech
- Danish
- Dutch
- English
- Estonian
- Finnish
- Flemish
- French
- German
- Greek
- Hebrew
- Hungarian
- Italian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Latvian
- Lithuanian
- Norwegian
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Russian
- Slovakian
- Slovenia
- Spanish
- Swedish
- Thai
- Turkish
- Ukrainian

1. Registering your National Society Staff and Volunteers

The Learning platform is free and easy to access for all Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers and staff (and others) worldwide. Anyone can individually create an account from the welcome page of the [Learning platform](#) and chose to view the system in different languages. Beyond this, National Societies are choosing to work with the IFRC's Learning and Research team to embrace the Learning platform more fully and among other activities, register certain groups of (sometimes all) volunteers and / or staff onto the system in one go.

Why embrace e-learning?

E-learning implies the use of computer, tablet or mobile technologies to deliver learning materials. It confers many benefits including the following:

- Volunteers and staff can theoretically learn from anywhere on earth, as long as there is an internet connection and a suitable device.
- Volunteers and staff can learn at anytime, there is no need to wait for a session to be organized in a few months, or take leave from work. One can also study at one's own pace, independently of other students.
- E-learning offers unprecedented possibilities of economies of scale: once a course is developed, it costs virtually nothing to distribute it to one, a hundred or one million people, thus making learning accessible to all.
- E-learning does not replace face to face learning but instead complements it; it offers the ability to deliver key generic training and learning elements enabling face to face training to evolve into more customised, deeper training opportunities

2. Free online courses

A selection of high quality online Red Cross Red Crescent and other third party courses are currently provided for free. More will be added to the catalogue of courses once developed and shared by subject matter experts in both the IFRC as well as in National Societies. All National Societies are actively encouraged to promote the opportunities available on the Learning platform to their volunteers and staff.

Below is a small sample of courses currently available in various languages; the complete, up-to-date Learning platform course catalogue is available on the [Learning Network](#) website.

Global Red Cross Red Crescent courses currently include the following:



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→ **The World of Red Cross and Red Crescent (WORC)**

This 20-hour orientation module (10 modules covering history, Fundamental Principles, components, cooperation, emblem,...) is the first tool available to present all the core dimensions of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement to National Societies. It is often the first element of international staff training in National Societies and some have already made it compulsory for all staff, e.g. the Irish Red Cross, the Australian Red Cross and the Monaco Red Cross.

→ **Strategy 2020**

An introductory module, explaining the IFRC's strategic aims for 2020 and enabling actions, and guiding Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies in tackling the major challenges that will confront humanity in the next decade.

→ **Stay Safe – personal security / volunteer security / security management**

These two interactive courses introduce all the essential principles of security in the field for volunteers, staff and managers. The completion of each course is validated by a test. These courses are used by many National Societies, as well as some UN agencies and NGOs (WFP, UNHCR, World Vision).

→ **Influenza Pandemic Preparedness**

A very dynamic and interactive course introducing what the pandemic is, how to take care of infected persons, and how to prevent the disease. The course is completed by a simulation and a quiz.

→ **Project / Programme Planning (PPP)**

This course provides a thorough introduction to key skills and methods in project management focused on results-based project planning.

→ **Introduction to cash transfer programming**

The aim of the training is to raise awareness of the issues associated with cash transfer programmes and build knowledge of emergency managers and others who will be responsible for running cash transfer programmes in emergencies. It targets those who need to take decisions on the appropriateness of cash programmes after an emergency and those who need to plan and design a cash programme.

→ **Gender equality in programme planning**

An online course on Gender equality in programme planning, developed by the IASC.

→ **Introduction to International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL)**

International disaster relief and recovery operations can raise a number of thorny legal issues, both for foreign responders and for domestic authorities. This no-jargon introductory module is for anyone who wants to gain a better understanding of the regulatory issues in international operations, the key international instruments, and the steps that governments can take to prepare.

→ **Volunteering Basic Course**

This course provides basic information to new and actual volunteers/paid staff, on what a volunteer is and what their motivations are, the Red Cross Red Crescent environment in general and how to become a volunteer in a local branch. It supports the implementation of the Volunteering development programmes, introducing standard procedures to attract and retain active volunteers in the branches. This course is rooted in the Fundamental Principles, the Volunteering Policy and the Youth Policy approved in November 2011 in order to facilitate engagement and training for new volunteers and paid staff.

→ **Community-Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA)**

This CBHFA course has 4 modules; these include an introduction to the approach to CBHFA, volunteer action around CBHFA, information around training volunteers in CBHFA and explaining the steps for the implementation of CBHFA programmes at national and community levels.

3. Connect – Linking communities of learning together

Linking communities of learning together is an important dimension of the Learning platform. The tools available within the Learning platform will allow learners from National Societies all over the world to gather in virtual communities to...

- Exchange ideas, debate (forum, blog,)
- Share information (videos, documents, websites...)
- Submit ideas to a vote
- Collaborate on projects (through wikis)
- Find people sharing similar interests
- Exchange contact details

4. Communication material / brochures

A range of brochures and other presentation materials are available to National Societies who want to communicate about the Learning platform to their staff and volunteers. Please feel free to contact the Learning and Research Department in Geneva for further discussion and support: support.learning@ifrc.org

5. Additional courses: course catalog

The IFRC Secretariat has contracted some of the leading providers of online courses world-wide, to make available hundreds of courses in different languages in the Learning platform. National Societies can also benefit from offering these online courses by making these available to their own staff and volunteers.

These courses include:

- Languages skills: the most modern online learning tool, provided by Auralog (Tell-Me-More Corporate). A 12 month license fee to have full access to the most comprehensive online language learning package.
- Personal Development, by Cegos: a selection of more than 50 courses on many subjects covering Communication, management, administration, coaching, facilitation skills, They are available in English, French, Spanish (and for some also in Chinese, German, Portuguese and Russian).
- Computer skills: over 50 courses on Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Internet Explorer, for all levels. These courses are aligned to ICDL curriculum (International Computer Driving License) allowing students to prepare for an official certification (provided in most countries around the world).

Contact the IFRC's Learning and Research Department for further information on these courses.



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6. Custom page design

It is possible to highly customize the Learning platform to your needs. We can add your logo, pictures of your choice, change the design of your login and landing pages, add or remove functionalities, tailor the catalogue, add welcome text of your choice, add approval processes, automate emails triggered by specific actions and last but not least blog functionality to be able to message your learning community directly.

7. Hosting of online courses

If you want to host additional courses, you can contact the IFRC's Learning and Research Department, whether you have developed those courses or attained them from other sources, whether you agree to share them with other National Societies or want to restrict the access.

8. Access to reports

The Learning platform offers extensive reporting functionalities. You can monitor in real time how many of your volunteers and staff are taking courses, which courses are most followed in your country or region, what is the profile of users based in your country and so on. It is possible to report on all information contained in the system which allows National Societies to better understand the dynamics of their learning communities and have further insight into learning needs.

9. Support for translation of online courses

Existing Red Cross Red Crescent courses can be translated and localized. If you are interested in getting a course translated into your national language – for instance the WORC, Volunteering, CBHFA or Stay Safe course – please contact the Learning and Research Department.

10. E-learning course development advice

Creating quality e-learning content can be challenging and costly. But once an e-learning course is developed, it costs virtually nothing to distribute it to one, a hundred or a million users. Therefore we have a common interest in ensuring that all the material we produce can be shared with partners.

This can be achieved by making sure that:

- The developing organisation owns all copyrights and can share the content (copyrights on content and on the use of the technology)
- Content can be easily customised or translated into other languages (can be easily achieved with the right open source technology)
- Content follows technological norms and standards which ensure a high level of compatibility, allowing distribution through most Learning Management Systems, websites or CD Roms and has an eye on future developments.

Action

To take full advantage of the Learning platform as a number of National Societies have already started to do, we strongly encourage each National Society to discuss the options and opportunities in greater depth with the IFRC's Learning and Research team including as soon as possible. This will include a practical discussion around

- National Society Resource allocation (both personnel and financial)
- Implementation process, planning and timelines

We very much look forwards to hearing from you shortly, and to supporting you and your National Society as fully as possible in embracing the power of the Learning platform.



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The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

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

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

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

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

Voluntary service It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

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

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

Why should National Societies fully embrace and adopt the Red Cross Red Crescent Learning platform?

- Access to 100's of high quality multilingual Red Cross Red Crescent and personal development courses for volunteers and staff – all available now.
- A significant pipeline of further high quality courses currently in development within the IFRC as well as in National Societies creating Learning opportunities reflecting both global and local contexts.
- Access the global Red Cross Red Crescent learning community and at the same time build your own National Society Learning community – share and use Global and local knowledge now.
- 3rd tier technical and customer support from IFRC Learning and Research team is available to National Society Learning platform administrators.
- Benefit from economies of scale and therefore reduced costs.

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