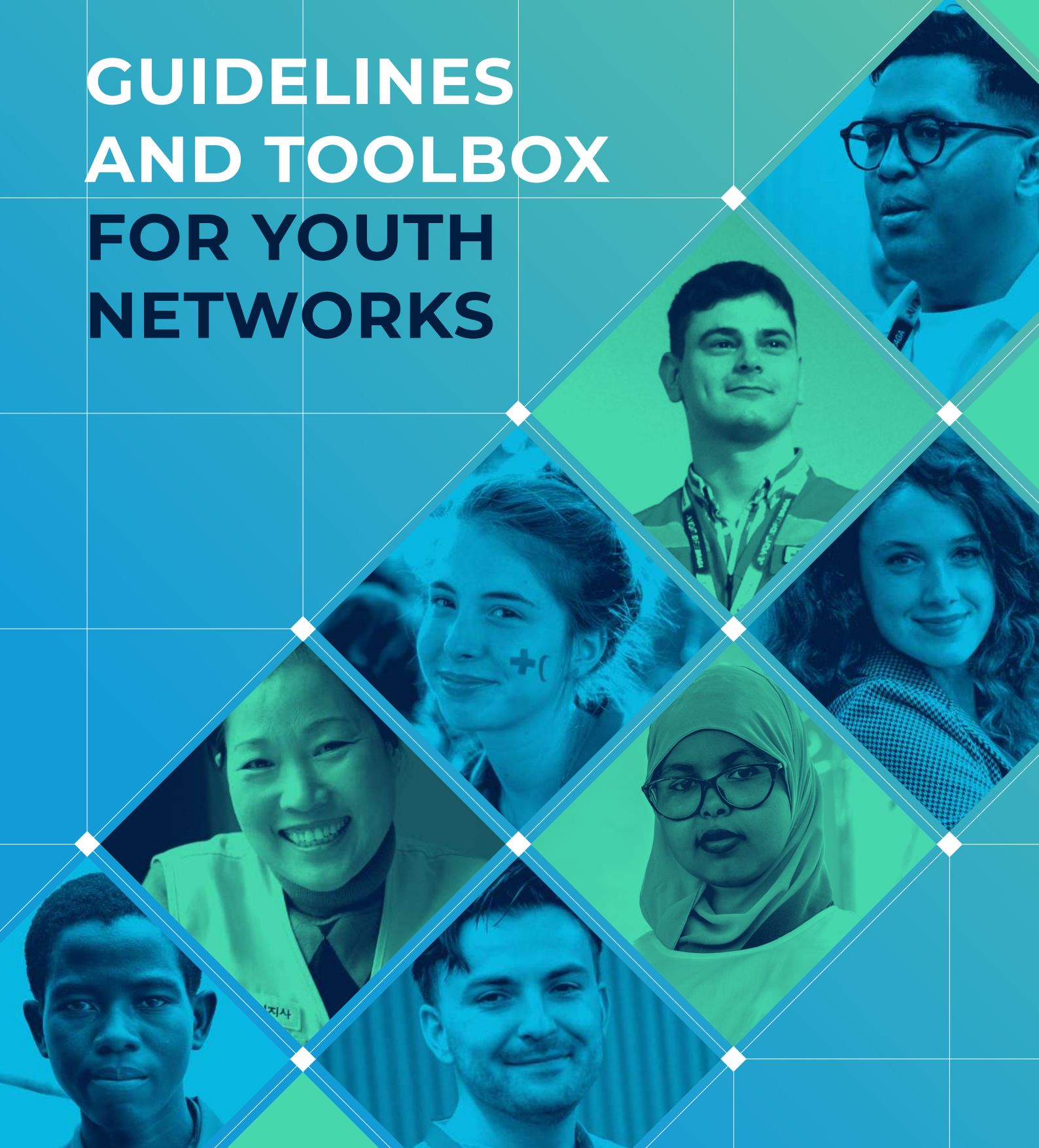




# GUIDELINES AND TOOLBOX FOR YOUTH NETWORKS







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# PART 1

# GUIDANCE ON RCRC YOUTH NETWORKS

**Chapter 1** – Introduction

**Chapter 2** – Main concepts

**Chapter 3** – Youth network governance and structure

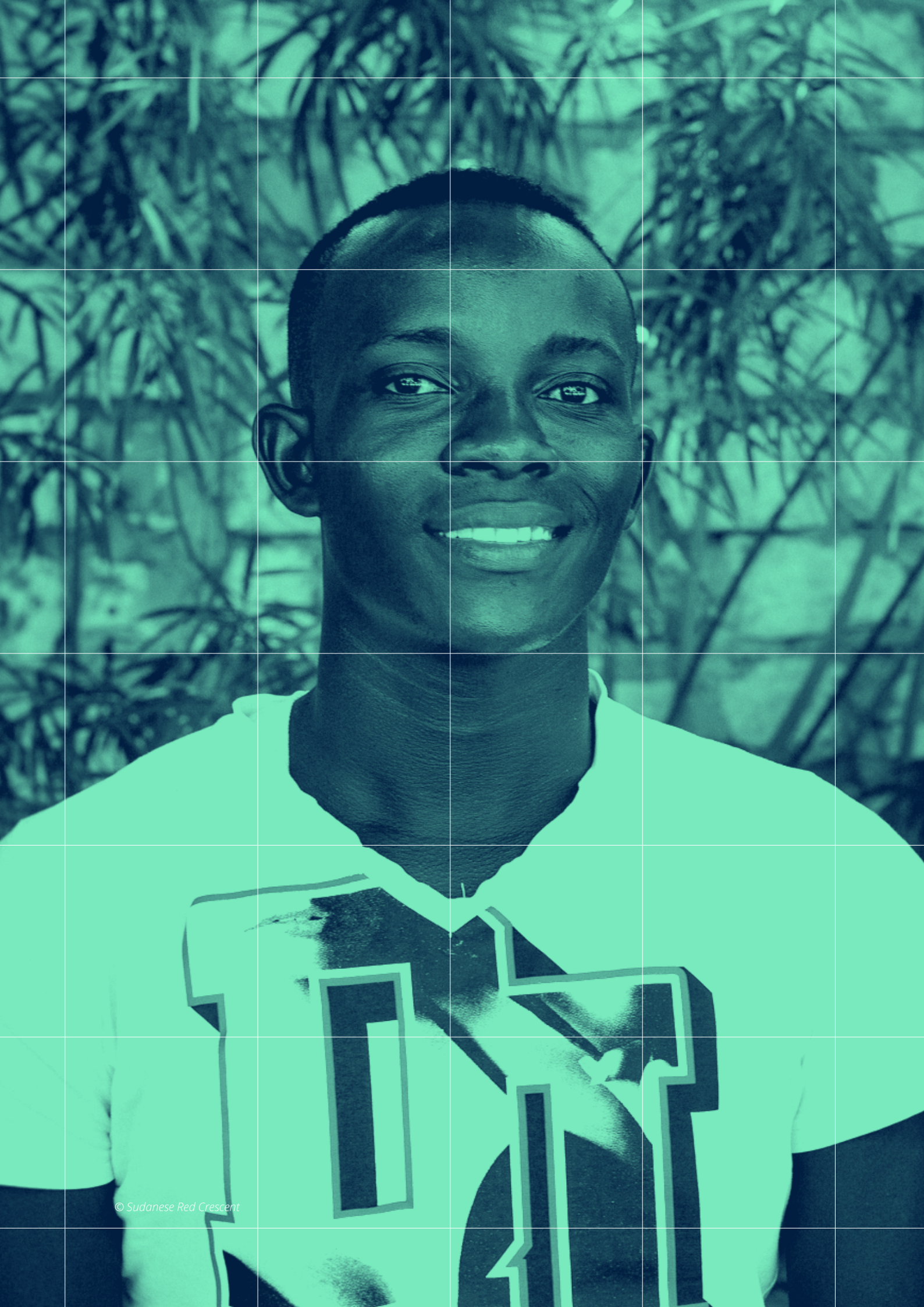
**Chapter 4** – How to build a network from scratch and develop it

**Chapter 5** – Youth networks in the field

**Chapter 6** – Relationships and cooperation









# CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Completed in 2022, this document is an outcome of the IFRC Youth Commission 2019–2024 project led by Ms Milena Chacon, IFRC Youth Commission member for the Americas, and Ms Maryna Kozhedub, IFRC Youth Commission member for Europe.

The IFRC Secretariat and regional Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) youth networks contributed their knowledge and networking expertise in the development of this paper.

The IFRC Youth Commission 2019–2023 would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the following young leaders who actively contributed to preparing these guidelines: Mr Bryan Solis (American Red Cross); Mr Julián Tucumbi Pila (Ecuadorian Red Cross); Mr Cheng Yang Chong (Malaysian Red Crescent Society); Mr Epeli V.T. Lesuma (Fiji Red Cross Society); Ms Samiksha Adhikari (Nepal Red Cross Society); Ms Marlene Iradukunda (IFRC Youth Commission member for Africa, Burundi Red Cross); Mr Felix Willuweit (British Red Cross); Ms Andreea Dumitroae (Romanian Red Cross); Ms Hanan Alsaity (Libyan Red Crescent); and Ms Wanting Yang (Red Cross Society of China).

This document aims to serve as a guide to assist you if you are a new network coordinator or a youth director, especially if you are uncertain about where, how or when to start. If you are an established network leader, it may help you learn about other experiences and provide a basis for continuing to improve the performance of your network.

This document is not a set of regulations and is not mandatory. It is designed to be a summary of suggestions, derived from guidelines and experiences in the field. You can create new processes and inputs, according to your region or sub-region, designed around your own current contexts and necessities. The goal is to develop networking among us, provide time for reflection and, ultimately, enable youth to do their best, take action and change the world.

The first part of the document provides insights taken from different guidelines, and the second part is a summary of the toolbox.



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## CHAPTER 2 MAIN CONCEPTS

### WHAT ARE YOUTH NETWORKS?

The term “network” is used to refer to a combination of persons, usually dispersed over a number of geographically separate sites, with appropriate communications technology. Even though networks are not official IFRC bodies, they allow youth to connect, share and learn in flexible ways. According to the IFRC Discussion Paper Draft on Youth Networks in the RCRC (2012):

- A network is made up of a number of representatives from National Societies.
- These representatives interact to support each other in their work on one or more specific themes (Youth Engagement, Climate Change, Migration, Mental Health, Regional Development, etc.).
- This interaction continues over a long period, although network participants may change and network numbers may grow or shrink.
- The continued interaction benefits individual participants in their National Society roles and also the wider National Society.
- The members of the network decide what the network does and how it is run.
- Network member is a volunteer position, and each National Society decides the level of participation.
- The network does not have legal personality.



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For the IFRC, the terms “youth” and “young people” cover all people in the age range from 5 to 30 years. This includes children (5 to 12 years old), adolescents (13 to 17 years old) and young adults (18 to 30 years old), according to the IFRC Youth Policy.<sup>1</sup>

**The Global Youth Network** is a network that gathers together young people from across the RCRC to represent and advocate for young people at all decision-making levels, ensuring their voice is heard.

Based on the IFRC Secretariat’s operational structure and working regions, the Global Youth Network consists of five main regions: Africa Youth Network, Americas Youth Network, Asia Pacific Youth Network, European Youth Network, and Middle East and North Africa Youth Network. These divisions facilitate the representation of youth leaders globally (Youth Commission elections are based on the IFRC statutory regions (four), while the Global Youth Network is based on the IFRC working regions (five).

**Sub-regional youth networks** are made up of a number of representatives from different National Societies, which are simultaneously part of a larger regional youth network. Usually, sub-regional networks are formed on the basis of location or language. One National Society could belong to several sub-regional networks at the same time.

**Youth networks** are a collaborative platform for National Societies and are often led by elected or appointed youth leaders who apply peer-to-peer approaches in information sharing, coordination and partnership building to reach common goals expressed by the membership, such as generating knowledge, collecting information on experiences and recording lessons learned and best practices from both individuals and National Societies.

**Members in youth networks** can be volunteers from National Societies, youth/volunteer coordinators or youth representatives. Usually, they require permission from their National Societies to participate freely and invest time in network empowerment.

<sup>1</sup> - <https://www.ifrc.org/document/youth-policy>

# CHAPTER 3 YOUTH NETWORK GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE

Governance is defined as “the way that organizations are managed at the highest level and the systems for doing this.”

In the context of RCRC youth networks, governance refers to the way each youth network is structured, which it decides taking the following into consideration: its role, focus, priorities and cultural context and the global and local context.

Youth network governance also represents and links various regions and sub-regions to the global Youth Commission. With the help of the Secretariat, youth network governance supports the work of the region by coordinating the development, adaptation and implementation of global-level strategies and policies and cascading these down to National Societies.



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hosted by the Portuguese Red Cross



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Here are some common structures that can be found in existing youth networks (more detailed examples are provided in the toolbox):

---

**Coordination position:** some networks carry out a nomination process to select one network member to be in charge of meeting facilitation, information sharing and representation of the platform at the regional and global level.

---

**Coordination committee:** a group of members who facilitate action to achieve the goals set according to guidelines and plans and who represent the network.

---

**Subregional network:** a structure where National Societies in a given area form smaller groups, based on geographic location, time zone and language, and work together. It is easier to manage a small network, with five to ten National Societies, than one big network of 33 National Societies.

---

Often, youth networks and subregional networks develop their own terms of reference (ToR) for better management and institutional memory. The ToR describe the purpose and structure of one particular network. In the toolbox, you can find examples of the ToR of different networks.

# CHAPTER 4 HOW TO BUILD A NETWORK FROM SCRATCH AND DEVELOP IT

Management can vary from one youth network to another according to their level of engagement and development. The table below shows the three main stages of youth network development. Additionally,

you can find recommendations below that might be relevant for the network depending on its stage of development.

STAGE	DEFINITION
<b>Start-up/creation</b> (low engagement)	A youth network that is newly established and in the process of setting up its structure and completing formalities. Generally, a few National Societies are engaged in its activities. It is helpful to explain the importance and benefits of being part of a network to leaders and National Societies.
<b>Development</b> (medium engagement)	A youth network that has an established structure and is in the process of building up its capacity to reach out to and involve more young people in its activities.
<b>Continuous growth</b> (high engagement)	A youth network with a stable, self-governing structure that conducts activities and projects on a routine basis. The network is self-reliant and sustainable. Youth members in the region or involved in the thematic area are actively engaged in the development of the network and have a sense of ownership.

## TIER-BASED YOUTH NETWORK MANAGEMENT

### 1. Start-up/creation (low engagement)

If a network is at the creation or low engagement stage, you can consider the following steps to improve it.

#### Identify the needs and interests of the network

Youth networks can conduct surveys or group interviews to better understand members' needs and the expected outcomes that need to be delivered by the network.

#### Create a communication platform

Communication plays a key role in the management of operations. The members of a network need to decide on the language that will be used during official meetings and events. The network steering committee/coordination team should identify a suitable communication platform that works well for its members. A group chat could be created on messaging applications (e.g. WhatsApp or Messenger) for network

members to communicate on the day-to-day operations of the network and to keep everyone updated on the network's development. In addition, regular meetings among network members are important to discuss operations management and share information periodically.

#### Draft ToR or regulations

ToR or regulations define the purpose and structure of a youth network. They also specify a shared set of expectations and clearly defined responsibilities and promote accountability among members. A youth network might need to adapt and localize them according to its specific context to ensure that its purpose and structure are clearly defined and agreed by its members. It is important to highlight that the ToR should be flexible so that they can accommodate new ways of working to foster collaboration and communication among the members of the network. The ToR should not be over-complicated or lay down too many rules as this could limit the operation of the network.



### Develop a plan of action

Once the network has decided on a goal or thematic area that it would like to focus on, a plan of action needs to be developed to outline the work plan and timeframe. When developing the plan, be mindful to set smaller sub-goals that are manageable and can be measured periodically so that the network is motivated to strive to achieve the final goal.

### Consider establishing working relations with other parties

Identifying partners that are accessible and associated with the thematic areas that the network is focused on will help it to obtain extra references and garner support for its projects. Some examples of partners include National Society departments with a specific area of expertise, the IFRC Secretariat, intergovernmental organizations and international non-governmental organizations.

## 2. Development (medium engagement)

If the network is at the medium engagement phase, you can consider the following steps to maintain this level of engagement and improve on it.

### Prioritize key thematic areas

A youth network may intend to work on many thematic areas, but it might be difficult to develop all the areas at once. It needs to identify and choose one or several areas that are higher priority and most suitable for development taking into account its current situation.

Here are some examples of thematic areas that a youth network may focus on: first aid, climate action, mental health, humanitarian education, Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change (YABC), disaster risk reduction (DRR), school safety, road safety, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), blood donation, HIV/AIDS awareness, etc.

### Recruit and engage more youth volunteers to support network initiatives

Increasing the number of youth volunteers engaged with the network helps in implementing more initiatives and projects. Therefore, it is essential to recruit and engage more youth volunteers to develop and promote the network's initiatives so that more young people can be reached and more leadership capacity

can be developed. Here are some recommendations for achieving this:

- Provide enrichment opportunities for volunteers, such as training and workshops, to improve their knowledge and skills.
- Establish communication with the youth focal person of each National Society to seek their support in promoting and circulating the network's projects.
- Offer proper incentives to motivate network participants. This could be a certificate of appreciation, badge, award or even a newsletter article or social media post featuring outstanding volunteers and their efforts.

### Increase the network's visibility

Highly visible networks can motivate existing members to stay connected and attract more young people, encouraging them to become involved and take part in their activities.

To promote and boost the visibility of a network, consider creating and maintaining social media accounts (Facebook page, Instagram, Twitter, etc.) that are popular and will be widely used by members in the region to post the network's updates. Obtain the support of member National Societies and partners to repost messages and encourage youth members to share them with their friends and personal social circle.



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### 3. Continuous growth (high engagement)

If your network is at this stage, congratulations! You have done an excellent job of developing a stable strategy to engage young people in your network.

#### Review the network's plan from time to time

The situation may change over time, and it is therefore necessary to review your plan regularly. This can be done during regular or annual network meetings to gather opinions and input from the members regarding the network's latest priorities. Here are some guiding questions to help with your plan review:

- Are the previously chosen focus areas still important and relevant for further development in current and anticipated situations in the future?
- Are the actions taken and strategies planned still suited to achieving the network's goals?
- What new needs or interests does the network have?

#### Broaden network membership

It is common for a youth network's membership to consist of official National Society representatives. However, for a youth network that has already established a solid foundation and successfully achieved high levels of engagement, a broader membership base (e.g. including all Red Cross Red Crescent Youth (RCY) in the region) should be considered. This will allow more young people to develop a sense of belonging to the network and strengthen its outreach.

#### Ensure network sustainability

To maintain high levels of engagement with a large membership base, a youth network needs to be self-reliant in managing its day-to-day operations. Therefore, it is essential for the network to have a sustainable structure to handle the workload. Clearly defined and executed ToR, strong information management and continuous professional development for members are some points that need to be addressed to ensure the continuity and longevity of the network.

#### Organize peer-to-peer support within youth networks

Communication among different youth networks should also be established to share best practices and exchange ideas on network management. Online meetings or conferences among different youth networks can be organized for formal and concentrated discussions. For more frequent and casual communication, chat groups on messaging applications (e.g. WhatsApp or Messenger) can be set up.



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## CHAPTER 5 YOUTH NETWORKS IN THE FIELD

Youth networks are set up through the interaction of National Societies for the **purpose of supporting existing meaningful youth engagement**, taking into account the IFRC Youth Policy and Youth Engagement Strategy, as applicable to a regional context.

Why do we need youth networks in addition to existing structures? What added benefits does regional-level youth cooperation provide? This section will answer these questions by looking at the functions of impact, inclusivity and joint advocacy through youth networks within the RCRC.

### a. Impact

By building National Society capacities, supporting youth leaders and youth volunteers and advocating for youth as members of affected communities, youth networks serve as an invaluable resource for enhancing and deepening the impact of humanitarian work on building community resilience. The availability of innovative technologies means that this often involves low-cost opportunities to enhance the impact of the RCRC across communities.

### b. Inclusivity

The IFRC's Strategy 2030 explains that to "re-imagine our work with and through volunteers and in particular with young people, Strategy 2030 will build further on our diversity and promote the inclusion of all those who recognize themselves in the values of the Red Cross and Red Crescent". In this context, regional youth networks act as tools for inclusivity to ensure the increased involvement of RCRC youth leaders and volunteers in driving processes for peer-to-peer learning and exchange and also in the wider narrative on the present and the future of the RCRC.

Youth networks provide spaces for youth leaders to be involved in international discussions and more avenues for local youth volunteers to feed their views into the collective voice of RCRC youth within the RCRC.

Youth networks must also try to encourage the participation and inclusion of women leaders. As regional spaces that develop leadership abilities, increase empowerment and promote teamwork and strategic priorities, they are a practical mechanism for promoting gender equality and real leadership.

### c. Joint advocacy

RCRC youth networks offer legitimate and effective mechanisms to enhance joint advocacy for youth priorities at the international level and beyond.

First and foremost, within the RCRC, networks provide a chance to be in close contact with Youth Commission members and regularly bring the network's voice to debates on topical issues. In addition, youth networks often have democratically elected steering committees, which gives them a legitimate voice and enables them to be involved in discussions with the regional leadership and in regional activities and conferences.

For instance, regional youth networks have worked together with the Youth Commission on sessions during the General Assembly Youth Forums, have been involved in Regional RCRC Conferences and have worked with regional offices on prioritized issues.

Beyond the organization, regional RCRC youth networks have a legitimate voice and can raise the priorities of its members in non-RCRC forums and conferences. For example, the European Youth Network represents the RCRC at the European Youth Forum, an advocacy body for European non-governmental organizations.



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## HOW TO PUT YOUR IDEAS INTO PRACTICE

The principles described below can be put into practice through plans, projects and fundraising.

### Creating a project

Before initiating the process of creating a project, the following questions need to be addressed to stimulate ideas and clarify the purpose of the project:

- Why are you developing this project?
- Who are your target group or audience?
- What will you/the team members be doing?
- How will you/the team members be doing it?
- What resources are needed?
- Who will be implementing it?
- Where will it be implemented?
- How long will it take?
- How long will each project task take?

The primary challenge of project management is to achieve all of the project goals and objectives while honouring the preconceived constraints. The primary constraints are scope, time, quality and budget. The secondary – and more ambitious – challenge is to optimize the allocation of necessary inputs and integrate them to meet defined objectives.



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### Potential sources of funding

Different youth networks have access to different pre-allocated funding from within the Movement. The table below sets out some key potential funding sources for the various networks. These donors may be government or intergovernmental agencies, global humanitarian organizations or development agencies, affluent individuals, philanthropists, global corporations, private-sector organizations or global organizations concerned with environmental conservation, youth development and education.

YOUTH NETWORK LEVEL	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES
<p><b>International/regional</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IFRC regional offices</li> <li>• ICRC regional delegations</li> <li>• United Nations agencies</li> <li>• International organizations seeking to support or with an interest in youth development e.g. the Commonwealth (<a href="https://thecommonwealth.org">https://thecommonwealth.org</a>)</li> <li>• Global environmental donor agencies or organizations, e.g. Global Greengrants Fund</li> <li>• Global youth development agencies and organizations</li> <li>• Global corporations and private-sector organizations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sub-regional</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IFRC country cluster delegations (CCDs)</li> <li>• ICRC offices</li> <li>• Intergovernmental agencies seeking to support youth-led activities</li> <li>• Sub-regional youth councils and organizations</li> <li>• Partnerships and collaboration with different organizations</li> </ul>

The table below shows some challenges that it is important to take in account.

CHALLENGES OF A YOUTH NETWORK	
<b>Different structures</b>	When a new youth network is set up, it is important to determine how it will be structured, how its members will be chosen, the roles that the members will have, the different levels of work, lines of communication, responsibilities and priorities in work, budget, etc. Networks may differ from each other, but this is not necessarily a disadvantage; however, it should be taken into account that there are various forms of organization.
<b>Language barrier</b>	Language can be a barrier to communication, especially among countries where different languages are spoken. Currently, we use English as a universal language and train young people in the networks to use it (e.g. courses, exchanges, etc.) or identify volunteer translators within the National Society to help with translation when there are international meetings.
<b>Different priorities</b>	The priorities of youth networks may vary according to cultural context, local issues, thematic agendas, number of members and available resources. The important thing is to define the work to be done and develop it according to the Movement's principles and guidelines
<b>Resource requirements (funds)</b>	When organizing a youth network, it is important to think about fulfilling the network's objectives and to ask ourselves: How can we achieve this? What resources do we need? What resources do we have? In addition, you can devise fundraising strategies, seek support from other youth networks or have resources allocated in National Society budgets.
<b>Differences in who is considered a young person (age)</b>	Who is considered a young person depends on cultural and social differences in each region. It is important to establish who we include as young people in our particular region or network. For example, in the Americas, anyone up to age 35 is considered a young person.



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# CHAPTER 6 RELATIONSHIPS AND COOPERATION

## 1. Relationship between youth networks and youth as volunteers and members of affected communities

In a global context, youth networks benefit from maintaining multiple communication channels, such as different social media accounts and an official email address where network leaders can be contacted. An official email address with an email list of all the region’s National Society youth leaders is a good way to organize communication from the network to the focal points. Ideally, the IFRC could assist the network in setting up the official email and in maintaining the mailing list. Promoting the youth network at youth camps and youth conferences, such as by inviting international youth leaders, helps to give the network publicity and raise awareness about its importance among young volunteers.

Virtual events are a low-cost way to engage youth and promote exchanges between leaders and volunteers. Some networks have launched different working groups that give young volunteers the chance to apply to support the network’s actions in some of its priority areas.



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## 2. Relationship between youth networks and youth leaders

With the aim of developing leadership abilities, intercultural communication and the exchange of ideas, most youth network activities focus on youth leaders. With this in mind, the youth network’s initiatives should be guided by youth needs, as expressed by youth leaders through internal national consultancy processes. Therefore, the youth network should use its communication channels to regularly consult with youth leaders on their priorities for network activities and cooperate with them in organizing relevant initiatives. For example, youth networks have helped youth leaders, through their communication channels, to link up for joint actions on specific topics and have helped organize sessions for the presentation of best practices.

## 3. Relationship between youth networks and National Societies

As a group that brings together youth representatives from different National Societies in the region, youth leaders will have the responsibility of communicating the activities, actions and decisions of the youth network to the governance of their respective National Societies. Similarly, as youth networks need to be locally relevant, youth leaders also need to be able to provide input on their National Society’s priorities. For example, having a coordination team or committee as the network’s focal point is crucial so that youth leaders have a team of volunteers to communicate their National Society’s perspectives to.

## 4. Relationship between youth networks and the Youth Commission

The Youth Commission serves as the link between the regional and the global agenda on youth and provides networks with valuable information. Moreover, an active relationship between youth networks and the Youth Commission ensures that the realities of the networks are considered at the global level. Some





© European Youth Cooperation  
meeting hosted by the Portuguese Red Cross

ways to maintain this relationship could include inviting members to network meetings and to regional events (in-person or virtual). Youth Commission members can participate as volunteers, observers, listeners, speakers or facilitators, depending on the kind of event it is. Another good practice is to hold accountability sessions on achievements, challenges and the running of projects between the Youth Commission, volunteers and youth networks.

## 5. Relationship between youth networks and IFRC Secretariat offices

A youth network is linked to the IFRC Secretariat through regional offices. These IFRC Secretariat structures are sources of support and advice to youth networks and may be able to provide technical assistance, support for fundraising and links to other regions and networks. Youth networks should maintain close contact with the IFRC regional youth and volunteering coordinator in particular. If no such position exists, youth networks should advocate for permanent staff support from the regional office in order to optimize their performance and impact.

## 6. Relationship with non-RCRC organizations

Beyond the RCRC, there are a variety of other youth and humanitarian organizations with priorities similar to those of RCRC youth networks. As part of the largest humanitarian organization in the world, RCRC youth networks can also be a voice in regional youth advocacy and collaborate with other non-RCRC networks and organizations. It is important to keep the IFRC regional office informed of any formal outreach to external organizations. For example, there may be opportunities to collaborate on joint workshops, advocacy events and best practice events concerning topics such as climate change, emergency response and humanitarian education. Other organizations could also prove to be funding sources. Networks should consult the IFRC regional office before acting on opportunities for collaboration or funding from outside the RCRC in order to ensure compliance with regulations and the Fundamental Principles.



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# PART 2

## TOOLBOX FOR RCRC YOUTH NETWORKS

The examples provided were collected from different regions and youth networks. Feel free to change templates and create new tools and share them with us with a view to compiling good practices to build institutional memory.

1. Terms of reference template
2. Network action plan
3. Best RCRC youth initiatives and their achievements
4. Important documents and training available for youth network development.





# TOOL 1 TERMS OF REFERENCE TEMPLATE

The ToR set out the working arrangements for your network and vital information about it. Below is a ToR template you can use for your RCRC network.

This template includes the following articles:

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## Article 1: Background

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## Article 2: Context

---

## Article 3: Definitions

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## Article 4: Mission

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## Article 5: Network

---

## Article 6: Language

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## Article 7: Finance and funding

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## Article 8: Revision of the terms of reference

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For each article, there are examples from the European Youth Network's ToR (adopted by the 23rd European Youth Cooperation Meeting of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies).

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### Article 1: Background

---

This is an introduction or a general description of your RCRC network. The information provided should include:

- the full name of the network;
- its mission statement, when the network was created, who created it (which National Societies and for what purpose);
- region and National Societies;
- a summary of its goals and functions;
- the network's most notable achievements, including any awards or special recognition it has received;
- a brief statement about the members (board, staff, volunteers, etc.).

### Example

The European Youth Network was established in 1975. It brings together young volunteers from the 53 National Societies in the Europe and Central Asia region. It facilitates the sharing of good practices and the exchange of experiences and advocates on behalf of its members within the network and beyond. The platform functions as a tool from which everyone can benefit through active participation.

At present, the following National Societies are members of the European Youth Network: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

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### Article 2: Context

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The context of the network refers to the environment in which it operates and internal and external factors relevant to its activity:

- describe the external factors that determine your network's activity (legal, financial, social, regulatory, cultural, etc.);
- write about your network's internal environment and how it is determined by internal factors (internal structures, governance, resource capabilities, etc.).

### Example

Young people are key drivers in humanitarian action and development. Meaningfully engaged as today's and tomorrow's leaders, volunteers and members of affected communities, they foster community resilience. As contributors to the IFRC's vision to prevent and alleviate human suffering and promote and protect human dignity and peace, they enable the targets of the Agenda for Humanity and the Sustainable Development Goals to be achieved.

The number of young people in the population has consistently risen over the last decade, and they have become a growing group in communities affected by humanitarian crises. Their specific needs, rights and potential are, however, often overlooked and, most importantly, they are missing from the decision-making tables where the communities they live in are being shaped.

The IFRC recognizes meaningful youth engagement as a strategic vehicle for transforming institutional cultures that directly and positively impacts the Red Cross Red Crescent operational capacity to deliver on our humanitarian mission. Adequate investment in meaningful youth engagement is therefore crucial to ensuring the transfer of experiences, leadership renewal and overall progress.

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### Article 3: Definitions

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The primary reason for including definitions in your document is to avoid any misunderstanding with your audience. In this article, you should include statements to explain the meaning of essential words, word groups, signs and symbols that you use in the document.



When to use definitions:

- when your document contains a term that may be key to audience understanding and that might be unfamiliar to them;
- when a commonly used word or phrase has a particular meaning within the description of your network or its activities;
- when it is necessary to clarify details about key terms.

Formulate the definition in simple and familiar terms. Your definition of an unfamiliar word should not result in the reader having to look up more words in order to understand it. Do not repeat part of the defined term in your definition.

#### Example

Networking is a process of meeting people, making contacts, building informal, mutual relationships and utilizing them as required.

Networks are structures that harness the process of networking to articulate and attain goals of benefit to member organizations over a period of time.

We use the term “networks” here to refer to formal networks which are planned and managed, as opposed to the ad hoc and personal networks that also flourish within the IFRC. In this context, networks are not intended to be regarded as permanent structures.

RCRC youth networks are formed at the regional and sub-regional level and operate horizontally with varying degrees of institutionalized formality.

Youth networks within the IFRC are established and maintained for the primary benefit of National Society youth actions targeting vulnerable groups in local communities.

Youth networks are led by youth leaders who apply peer-to-peer approaches in information sharing, coordination and partnership building to achieve the common goals of generating knowledge, collecting information on experiences and recording lessons learned and best practices from both individuals and National Societies.

Ownership of RCRC youth networks should be shared between youth leaders and National Society leadership.

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#### Article 4: Mission

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A mission statement is a concise explanation of the network’s reason for existence. It describes the network’s purpose and its overall intention.

The following questions should be answered in the mission statement:

- “What do we do?” – The mission statement should clearly outline the main purpose of the network and what it does.
- “How do we do it?” – It should also mention how it plans to fulfil the mission.
- “Who do we do it for?” – It should clearly specify who the mission’s target groups are.
- “What value are we bringing?” – The benefits and values of the mission should be clearly outlined.

If your network has several missions, you can divide this article into paragraphs in order to describe each one, as in the example below.

#### Example

The European Youth Network (EYN) provides a space at the regional level for actions aimed at empowering young people to be a strategic resource in the member National Societies and in the Movement, bridging the gap between senior

and youth structures in order to ensure the full and meaningful participation of youth at all levels. The EYN exists so that National Societies can inform each other of their activities, promote good practices, discuss common concerns and carry out relevant joint activities.

The member National Societies have identified three cross-cutting areas of focus for all actions and decisions of the Network:

#### 4.1. Knowledge management – supporting and strengthening knowledge by:

1. Facilitating the exchange of good practices, experiences and areas for improvement between National Societies
2. Contributing to the training and support of youth leaders at the local, national and international level
3. Ensuring that information from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the IFRC Youth Commission and other relevant actors is disseminated to all members of the Network

#### 4.2. Advocacy – strengthening the advocacy role of the National Societies and the Network itself by:

1. Contributing to the enhancement of youth-led advocacy within National Societies
2. Supporting National Societies in empowering youth to be actively and effectively involved in decision-making processes
3. Representing the voice of youth from member National Societies
4. Providing and maintaining channels of communication between member National

Societies, the IFRC, the IFRC Youth Commission and other relevant stakeholders

5. Contributing to the implementation of the IFRC Youth Policy and the IFRC Youth Engagement Strategy in National Societies

**4.3. Cooperation – fostering cooperation and strengthening capacities by:**

1. Fostering the exchange of expertise and peer-to-peer support
2. Enhancing the sense of ownership of the Network among members, based on common and shared values
3. Promoting cooperation and facilitating partnerships with other youth networks and other relevant actors
4. Facilitating informal meetings of members at international events of the Movement
5. Enabling and facilitating relevant common actions, campaigns and joint activities

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**Article 5: Network**

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The network structure is a system that establishes how certain activities are conducted in order to achieve the goals of the network. These activities can include rules, roles and responsibilities. We suggest you include the following sub-articles:

**5.1. Membership**

Who are the members of your network? What are their roles and responsibilities?

*Example*

The members of the Network are the National Societies from the Europe and Central Asia region that are part of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

The members, through their representatives:

1. Approve the Terms of Reference (ToR) and any subsequent amendments, the Rules of Procedure (RoP), which are a part of the ToR, and any other relevant documents
2. Identify goals, objectives, activities and priorities for the network
3. Review the progress of activities against agreed objectives
4. Identify policy and practice matters that have a European dimension and support relevant transnational projects
5. Promote the objectives of the EYN by seeking to maximize the involvement of National Societies and other components of the Movement in the EYN
6. Participate on the basis of individual knowledge and expertise in delegated activities

**5.2. Observers**

Your network may grant non-members the role of observer for meetings to allow them to monitor or participate in the network's activities.

*Example*

Observers of the Network are:

1. Recognized National Societies
2. The IFRC
3. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
4. The members of the IFRC Youth Commission
5. Other Red Cross Red Crescent networks
6. Other partner networks

**5.3. Meeting**

How often do the members of your network meet and for what purpose? How do they

vote? Who is responsible for organizing the network's meetings?

*Example*

The members of the Network meet once every two years at the European Youth Cooperation Meeting of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (EYCM).

**5.3.1. Aims and tasks of the EYCM:**

1. To define priorities for the following two years
2. To review and evaluate the work carried out by the members and the European Youth Coordination Committee (EYCC) over the previous two years
3. To hold the EYCC elections
4. To elect the Drafting/ Reporting Committee of the EYCM, upon the proposal of the EYCC. The Drafting/ Reporting Committee ensures that the report of the EYCM is compiled
5. To provide updates to and receive updates from the IFRC Youth Commission members
6. To appoint working groups (see the RoP)

5.3.2. In the EYCM, each member (National Society) has one vote.

5.3.3. The quorum for the EYCM is 51% of the membership.

5.3.4. The EYCM is organized by the EYCC, with the support of the IFRC, and hosted by a member National Society.

5.3.5. National Societies can co-host the EYCM, following the application procedure outlined in the ToR and RoP of the Network.

5.3.6. The process to select the host member, the selection criteria and other questions regarding the network and the tasks of the EYCM are described in the RoP.

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### Article 6: Language

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In this article, you determine the working language of your network. A working language (or procedural language) is one that is given a unique legal status in a network as its primary means of communication. Here you should also include the essential rules and procedures regarding the use of languages in your network.

#### *Example*

The working language of the EYN is English. Whenever possible, through working groups, volunteers or other means, the working documents of the Network should be translated into other EYN languages.

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### Article 7: Finance and funding

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Financing is defined as the act of obtaining or furnishing money or capital for a purchase or enterprise.

Funding is the act of providing resources to finance a need, programme or project.

In this article, you should talk about money management and the process of securing the required funds for your network. You should also mention who provides funding for your network's programmes and how.

#### *Example*

Member National Societies and observers are expected to meet the costs of participation of their nominated representative(s) at the EYCM and their elected EYCC members. The member National Societies are strongly encouraged to provide funding for EYCC meetings and activities. The EYCC, the Federation Secretariat and the Europe Regional Office will actively seek funding for activities.

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### Article 8: Revision of the terms of reference

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This article explains the procedure for revising the terms of reference of your network. It should include the answers to the following questions:

- **How often can the ToR be amended?**
- **Who approves amendments and revisions to the ToR?**

#### *Example*

The Terms of Reference can be amended every two years. A review of the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure is recommended every four years. Amendments and revisions to the Terms of Reference must be agreed by member National Societies.



# TOOL 2 TEMPLATE FOR NETWORK ACTION PLAN

## NAME OF NETWORK

<b>Period</b>	<i>(1 year, 2 years, please specify)</i>
<b>Methodology</b>	<i>(Explain how this work plan was created – through consultations, surveys, aligned to IFRC goals, etc.)</i>
<b>Monitoring frequency:</b>	<i>(Every 3 months, 4 months, etc.)</i>

(We recommend setting three major goals, which can include internal and external goals). Here are some examples.

### GOAL 1 Establish communication channels for networks

<b>Action</b>	<b>Implementation period</b>	<b>Resources required</b>	<b>Person/bod responsible</b>
1.1 Open social media pages	January	Instagram site- FB site	Network communication committee
1.2 Design communication plan	February–March	List of important dates Portfolio of existing videos and flyers	Communication committee inconsultation with other National Societies
1.3 Implement communication plan	March–November	Statistics monitoring report	Each month a different National Society creates content

### GOAL 2 Indicate the goal (established output)

<b>Action</b>	<b>Implementation period</b>	<b>Resources required</b>	<b>Person/bod responsible</b>
Define three mandatory actions to achieve this goal	Use months, seasons or other periods, according to each region	Describe what you need, including IT, reports or technical help	Could be one person or a committee, even someone outside the network

### GOAL 3 Promote mental health awareness

<b>Action</b>	<b>Implementation period</b>	<b>Resources required</b>	<b>Person/bod responsible</b>
3.1 Educate through campaigns	Whole year	List of important dates Volunteer team for design and technical content	“X” National Society and “Y” National Society
3.2 Promote exchange of experiences	Twice a year	Virtual platform Flyer for event Receptions or exhibitions	Network leader and sub-leader with help of IFRC mental health officers
3.3 Seek funding resources	First quarter	List of sites and organizations that promote funding resources	“X” National Society and “Y” National Society





# TOOL 3 PORTFOLIO OF BEST PRACTICES

## MENA NETWORK

### Pioneering experience of holding online elections | 2021

#### A. Background

The youth network is managed by young people, who elect the president and vice-president themselves. This is done by holding elections at one of the network's periodic meetings. If an in-person meeting is not possible, the election takes place online.

A successful example of holding youth network elections online is the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Youth Network. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the MENA Youth Network successfully implemented the procedure and held the first virtual election to choose its representatives.

#### B. Development

##### The steps followed

- A call was issued for nominations for National Society representatives.
- Members of the network were asked to arrange an introduction session for the candidates.
- One of the neutral members was chosen to manage the discussion between the candidates and the network members.
- It was arranged for members to talk about their electoral plan, with the order being determined by a live draw conducted in a fair manner.
- A window was opened for any participants wishing to submit an objection.
- The steps to be followed in the elections were announced via Google Form.
- A letter was drawn up with the names of the representatives who have the right to vote the day before election day.
- A committee was formed consisting of the MENA regional youth director and the IFRC global youth director.

##### Division of committee roles

1. Regional youth director: send out a message to all young people who have the right to vote, providing each one with a code that must be used during voting.
2. Global youth director: create the Google Form with the list of names.

##### A meeting was held on the morning of election day to explain all the steps in detail

- The link for the election was activated one hour before the election, and the polling space was open for voting for a full hour.
- The neutral member was the global youth official who was only responsible for the Google Form and did not know the meaning of the symbols; the only one who did was the regional youth official.

##### Vote counting process and presentation of results

- The votes were counted by the global youth official, who made sure that the same code was not repeated twice, that all the codes had been entered and that the voting was carried out correctly.
- The global youth official presented the results during the Zoom meeting which took place immediately after the voting, lasting half an hour.
- During the meeting, the global youth official announced the number of people who voted and the participants who got the highest votes. The 24-hour challenge period was opened, after which the results were posted on the internet.





جمعية الهلال الأحمر السوداني  
Sudanese Red Crescent Society

## ASIA PACIFIC

### RCY Virtual Café | June to December 2020 (monthly)

#### A. Background

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, National RCRC Societies and youth networks had to limit their in-person activities. Social isolation and disruptions to education and livelihoods were among the many challenges stemming from the coronavirus outbreak that young people have had to face. They have led to increased mental health issues among youth volunteers (both frontliners and those stuck at home).

Inspired by the European Youth Network “Tea Party”, the Asia Pacific Youth Network (APYN) Working Group came up with the idea of the Asia Pacific RCY Virtual

Café to engage grassroots youth leaders during the pandemic. Our café aims to create a safe space for RCRC youth to connect virtually beyond borders and build a strong peer support system among APYN members. It also provides a platform for young people to share knowledge, experiences and best practices. The café meetings begin with learning sessions, followed by breakout rooms that allow young people to offer input and discuss different issues in small groups. The café model fosters peer-to-peer learning and the exchange of ideas among RCRC youth in the Asia Pacific region.

#### B. Development

B.1.1	Target group (describe population), partnerships established inside and outside work and the Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grassroots RCRC youth members/volunteers – everyone and anyone can join</li> </ul>
B.1.2	Location of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online – Zoom meetings</li> </ul>
B.1.3	Human resources required (quantity, professional background)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Technical staff member – to handle Zoom technical issues during café meetings</li> <li>Organizing team – led by APYN Working Group and Asia Pacific sub-regional youth networks on a rotating basis</li> <li>Speaker(s) – depending on café theme</li> <li>Facilitators – depending on the number of attendees (approximately one facilitator for every six to seven attendees – one for each breakout room)</li> </ul>

## B.2 LESSONS LEARNED

PROBLEM OR OPPORTUNITY	ACHIEVEMENT	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
<p>RCRC youth members have little opportunity to connect with their peers from other National Societies</p>	<p>Reached out to grassroots youth by encouraging National Societies to disseminate the initiative to all youth members – circulation via youth network leaders and social media.</p>	<p><b>Technical difficulties:</b></p> <p>On the participants’ side: unavoidable due to access restrictions in certain geographical locations, the unfamiliarity of the platform and unstable internet connections.</p> <p>On the organizers’ side: can be improved based on experiences and feedback from participants, by having a facilitators’ briefing and dry-run sessions, etc.</p> <p>Show-up rate is around 50% (this is satisfactory as success is not measured by quantity but by the quality of the experience and participant engagement).</p>
<p>RCRC youth members have minimal access to topics/thematic areas that are not a priority for their National Societies and that may be considered “taboo” owing to their cultural background.</p>	<p>Established an informal education and peer exchange platform for young people.</p> <p>Young people are more willing, to attend these café sessions than long-winded webinars as they are given the opportunity to share their personal experiences, opinions and thoughts on the topics discussed.</p> <p>Feedback from young people can also be channelled towards the appropriate stakeholders.</p>	<p>For better follow-up and to help participants maintain the connections made after sessions, the creation of common chat groups is proposed to enable participants to continue interacting post-café.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenge: difficult to determine a common platform for everyone, due to access restrictions in certain geographical locations. Maintenance of groups to ensure they do not lose their sense of purpose.</li> </ul>
<p>Difficult to involve youth from other regions, due to time zone differences/ language barriers.</p>	<p>Influence on other regional youth networks (RYNs) to adapt the café model internally.</p>	<p>Cross-regional collaboration: to engage in discussions with other RYNs and explore feasible models that would allow RCRC youth to interact beyond regions.</p>



### B.3 FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL RESOURCES

AREA	SOURCE OF FINANCE
Research activities	Speakers/resources for learning sessions according to themes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Typically no cost; speakers/resources are contacted/obtained through the IFRC and the connections of RYN members. Speakers attend the café voluntarily.</li> </ul>
Promotional materials	Through the social media channels of RYNs, sub-RYNs and National Society Youth and by word of mouth. Design of promotional materials by volunteers/staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No cost</li> </ul>
Technology	Video conferencing channel: Zoom meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No cost, premium account provided by the IFRC</li> </ul>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>No financial cost incurred</b>

### B.4 LIST OF ASIA PACIFIC RCY CAFÉS ORGANIZED

	LEAD	THEME
1st	APYN	Sharing experiences/feelings during COVID-19
2nd	APYN	Reimagining volunteering (speaker: IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office Volunteering Officer)
3rd	Pacific YN	Climate action (speaker: RCRC Climate Centre)
4th	Southeast Asia YN	YABC online (speaker: YABC peer educators)
5th	East Asia YN	Mental health and self-care (speaker: Red Cross Society of China Hong Kong Branch psychologist)
6th	South Asia YN	Exploring gender – Promoting equity (speaker: IFRC CCD Bangkok youth and volunteering delegate)



IZ Roja  
malteca

## SEA (SOUTHEAST ASIA)

### Youth in action: COVID-19 response | April to June 2020

#### National society mutual support: COVID-19 webinar series

##### 9 APRIL 2020

Youth raising awareness about COVID-19

##### 16 APRIL 2020

Disinfection activities by youth volunteers

##### 23 APRIL 2020

PPE (personal protective equipment) production by youth volunteers

##### 30 APRIL 2020

Other COVID-19 youth responses

##### 7 MAY 2020

Sexual and gender-based violence and COVID-19 – The RCY contribution

##### 28 MAY 2020

Regional sharing: COVID-19 youth response: East Asia Youth Network (EAYN)

##### 11 JUNE 2020

Regional sharing: COVID-19 youth response: Pacific Youth Network (PYN)

#### Advocacy: support through social media

To reach out and support youth volunteers in the region, we advocated for the following on our Facebook page:

1. Photos
  - a. Information on COVID-19 transmission
  - b. Blood donation
2. Videos
  - a. Online Qigong for personal resilience and inner peace (six-part series)
  - b. Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and COVID-19 (three-part series)

All the material can be found on our official Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/RCRCSEAYN>



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## A. Background

The Southeast Asia Youth Network (SEAYN) was officially revitalized on 19 March 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the cancellation of our annual General Meeting and the urgent need to support each other, it was evident that online platforms would be the dominant means by which we would conduct our activities for the year.



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**Therefore, the following steps were taken:**

**Step 1:** The SEAYN Coordination Team agreed on and created an Excel sheet to compile needs and requests from National Societies, in response to the questions:

- a) What COVID-19 response activities is your National Society implementing?
- b) What would you like to learn from other National Societies?

**Step 2:** From the responses, we grouped and classified National Societies with similar activities to share information on them each week. Time was also provided for Q&A.

Qigong series: it was important to build our personal resilience and inner peace as our emotions could easily be affected during the COVID-19 outbreak. YABC peer educators from Southeast Asia recorded a series of videos to demonstrate Qigong, an oriental exercise to cultivate the life force within us. The video series aims to introduce this technique to our peers as a new method for managing emotions.

## B. Development

B.1.1	Target group (describe population), partnerships established inside and outside work and the Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEAYN and support from the IFRC</li> </ul>
B.1.2	Location of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online (Skype, Microsoft Teams, Facebook page – <a href="https://www.facebook.com/RCRCSEAYN">https://www.facebook.com/RCRCSEAYN</a>)</li> </ul>
B.1.3	Human resources required (quantity, professional background)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEAYN Coordination Team, no specific professional background required except some experience in organizing webinars</li> </ul>

## B.2 LESSONS LEARNED

PROBLEM OR OPPORTUNITY	ACHIEVEMENT	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
<p>Not all online platforms are the same (i.e. some require better user internet connections).</p>	<p>Webinar series: inspired National Societies in our region to have similar learning webinars for their youth.</p> <p>Qigong series: it has thousands of views in SEA and beyond. Young people and teachers share the videos and encourage their peers to practise together. We have also received inquiries from our friends outside the region who have been inspired to implement YABC activities in their country.</p>	<p>Microsoft Teams and Zoom were found to be the most suitable platforms.</p>
	<p>SGBV webinar and series: SEAYN Communications Task Force developed Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials on SGBV and COVID-19 as a follow-up activity for the webinar on SGBV and COVID-19. Three videos were developed with the aim of introducing the fundamentals of SGBV to young people and explaining the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on SGBV. National Societies are encouraged to translate the materials, adapt them to their national context and disseminate them through the National Society's communication channels.</p>	

## B.3 FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL RESOURCES

AREA	SOURCE OF FINANCE <i>(existing funding, donation, items purchased, international cooperation and approximate cost in dollars)</i>
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online platform support provided by the IFRC</li> </ul>
TOTAL	Zero-cost activity

ERMELHA





## SEA (SOUTHEAST ASIA)

### YES Self-Assessment Toolkit online workshop (by SEAYN)

#### National society mutual support: covid-19 webinar series

##### FIRST SESSION

3 November 2020

Interactive introduction to the Youth Engagement Strategy (YES) and YES Self-Assessment Toolkit

##### SECOND SESSION

10 November 2020

Workshop – Step-by-step implementation guide on YES Self-Assessment Toolkit

##### PREPARATION OF PLANS

Internal discussion at National Society level to prepare an Asia Pacific plan for implementation of the YES Self-Assessment Toolkit

##### THIRD SESSION

February 2021

Internal discussion at National Society level to prepare an Asia Pacific plan for implementation of the YES Self-Assessment Toolkit. Interactive discussion of National Society action plans for implementing the YES Self-Assessment Toolkit



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## A. Background

To encourage young people to do more, do better and reach further in their local communities and beyond, YES brings together three perspectives of meaningful youth engagement within the RCRC – Youth as Leaders, Youth as Volunteers and Youth as Members of Affected Communities (MoACs). This is done with the IFRC 3Es framework – RCRC Youth Education, Youth Empowerment and Creating Enabling Environments for Youth.

The YES Self-Assessment Toolkit was launched at the IFRC General Assembly in 2019. The self-assessment is designed to measure levels of youth engagement within your National Society's context through various questionnaires. These questionnaires have a list of value statements grouped according to three engagement pathways for youth.

SEAYN decided to roll out the YES Self-Assessment Toolkit and introduced it to network members in mid-2020.

## B. Development

B.1.1	Target group (describe population), partnerships established inside and outside work and the Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All SEAYN members (youth leaders and youth staff)</li> </ul>
B.1.2	Location of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online platform (Microsoft Teams meeting)</li> </ul>
B.1.3	Human resources required (quantity, professional background)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth focal persons from the IFRC Secretariat, IFRC Youth Commission members as speakers</li> </ul>

### B.2 LESSONS LEARNED

PROBLEM OR OPPORTUNITY	ACHIEVEMENT	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
<p><b>Opportunity:</b> YES Self-Assessment Toolkit as a tool to measure and reflect on youth engagement in the National Society</p>	All eleven National Societies in the sub-region attended the event.	To stay connected within the network, learn from each other and provide peer support in implementing the self-assessment.
<p>The network is structured. The youth engagement working group led this initiative.</p>	Some of the National Societies are at the preparation stage in the self-assessment process.	To have more workshops to receive guidance on the National Society's plan of action from the technical expert team.

### B.3 FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL RESOURCES

AREA	SOURCE OF FINANCE <i>(existing funding, donation, items purchased, international cooperation and approximate cost in dollars)</i>
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online platform support provided by the IFRC</li> </ul>
TOTAL	<b>Zero-cost activity</b>

## PROJECT FROM THE AMERICAS

### Campaign within the framework of International Youth Day

#### A. Background

Within the framework of International Youth Day and in conjunction with the Central American Youth Network, a campaign was launched on social networks called Las Juventudes Movemos Américas (youth drives the Americas). It had its own visual identity and a statement from both sub-regions, accompanied by a series of key messages and hashtags to be

disseminated on institutional networks and through the personal accounts of volunteers. The group sought to encourage collaborative work between youth networks. The following hashtags were used: #CruzRojajuventud, #LasJuventudesMovemosAmérica and #JuventudesenAcción.

#### B. Development

B.1.1	Target group (describe population), partnerships established inside and outside work and the Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth within the National Societies of the Americas</li> </ul>
B.1.2	Location of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>South American region</li> </ul>
B.1.3	Human resources required (quantity, professional background)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Society coordinators and graphic designers</li> </ul>

#### B.2 LESSONS LEARNED

PROBLEM OR OPPORTUNITY	ACHIEVEMENT	AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT
<p>This strategy was the most effective since our regional networks are very diverse and not all National Societies have the means to carry out some types of activity within this framework. However, it was possible to carry out a joint campaign on social networks</p>	<p>The campaign that we carried out on social networks in conjunction with the Central American Youth Network within the framework of International Youth Day was successful.</p>	<p>This initiative had a significant impact, and the result was good; however, the limited time for planning was a weakness. This short planning time meant that the team members had to overextend themselves to meet tight deadlines. The time required to disseminate messages to regional networks also increased time pressure.</p>
		<p>Another flaw was that the need to carry out activities in Portuguese was overlooked (not all the National Societies involved speak Spanish).</p>





# INTERVIEWS FROM THE FIELD

When you are involved in youth networks, it is easy to feel lost sometimes. Here are some interviews with youth coordinators. Feel free to get in touch with IFRC delegates or Youth Commission members to find out more about their regional experiences.

## Interview with Carolina Coronel

South American Network Coordinator (2021)

### 1. How long have you been involved in a youth network?

*“After becoming the National Youth Coordinator in Argentina in 2017, I began to participate in meetings hosted by the South American Network. I continued to take part in these meetings over the years and, in October 2020, I became the Network Coordinator.”*

### 2. What do you think are the biggest challenges when a network is starting?

*“I consider handling frustration a challenge, especially after the “resurgence” of the internet. It is a challenge to reflect on what we did well and what we did wrong and use that information about our shortcomings, reframing them as a lesson to be learned. Another challenge, then, is to improve the planning process for the next year.”*

### 3. What do you think are the challenges for the sustainability of a network?

*“It is a challenge to have all members of the network participating at a given time. This is complicated because each National Society is working on its own projects, so it is difficult to coordinate among us all due to the particular situation of each National Society. And this also means that it is challenging to agree on which topics to prioritize because we do not all have the same priorities.”*

### 4. What do you think were the most significant achievements in your network and how did you achieve them?

*“The most outstanding achievement was starting and building the network. In the beginning, only a few National Societies were involved and gradually we invited more to join – even those that did not have a Youth Division. Many National Societies who joined without a Youth Division see it as a positive and helpful network, which I consider an achievement as well.”*

### 5. What negative experiences do you think could be learned from?

*“Lack of participation by members can be worrisome. It is very difficult logistically to arrange a time and space where all members can meet and participate.”*

### 6. What do you think are the key elements for facilitating the transition between old and new network members?

*“First, I believe that creating opportunities for new members to participate is important. To do this, members need to welcome newcomers.”*

*“I think it is important that we develop and use support tools for this transition. It is important to move from the spaces where we have already given our best in order to provide opportunities to others and to support them through that transition.”*



## Interview with Fátima de León

Central American Network Coordinator (2021)

### 1. What do you think are the biggest challenges when a network is starting?

*“One significant challenge is the fact that each country, and therefore every National Society, prioritizes issues differently. This makes it difficult for fluid dialogue between National Societies.*

*Additionally, presenting projects or programmes with external funding is difficult due to the lack of standardization for regional content.”*

### 2. What do you think are the challenges for the sustainability of a network?

*“Each of our National Societies works on different topics, making it difficult for us to work in a unified way within the Network. I believe that we need to move in a similar direction.”*

### 3. What do you think were the biggest achievements in your network and how did you achieve them?

*“We generate audiovisual material on health and the environment and other issues to distribute among the National Societies that make up the Central American Network.”*

### 4. What negative experiences do you think could be learned from?

*“I have not had any negative experiences, but sometimes events with the network’s member National Societies are not so enriching because we all prioritize different topics.”*

### 5. What do you think are the key elements for facilitating the transition between old and new network members?

*“I see one of the key elements as working on training them and facilitating communication about what is done online by hosting meetings with youth leaders at the local level. Thinking about the network as a union of forces.”*



## Interview with Caitlin Karijokromo Caribbean Network Coordinator (2021)

### 1. How long have you been involved in a youth network?

*“I started in 2009/2010.”*

### 2. What do you think are the biggest challenges when a network is starting?

*“Support and communication. We did have support, but it is a challenge to get projects running. In addition, finances are always an issue; candidates in the Caribbean were not getting the support they needed as others in the Americas were”*

### 3. What do you think are the challenges for the sustainability of a network?

*“There has been some slacking recently due to difficulties with the current situation.*

- *Communication has been quite difficult between National Societies.*
- *Overseas branches work within their own territories but still have support for projects from their headquarters.*
- *This is an advantage that most National Societies do not have, especially support in the form of funding. National Societies must find their own donors or have sponsors.*
- *Communication is difficult.*
- *Focal points exist, but youth members always need to go back to governance.*
- *Need negotiation to get projects done.*
- *Gaps between governance and young people who have ideas and want to get things done.*
- *Culture of young people not being able to go against the views of older people with higher positions in the National Society.”*

### 4. What do you think were the biggest achievements in your network and how did you achieve them?

*“The main successes are regional camps. They are hard to organize due to the island locations and airfares. Still, every year people ask if there will be a regional camp. A camp was planned for the Bahamas in 2020, but COVID-19 happened.”*

### 5. What do you think are the key elements for facilitating the transition between old and new network members?

*“The background is there; all the guidance is laid out in a Drive.*

- *The last team before the current Chair led for four to five years despite the term limit being two years.*
- *She isn't technically supposed to be Chair right now.*
- *Everything is down on paper from his time.*
- *Works with secretary to convert to email correspondence.*
- *Now working on the Buenos Aires Declaration from 2019 and Strategy 2030*
- *Those will be the main bases for succession along with whatever the Youth Commission has in store.*
- *Seeing what is in store for the Caribbean (main focus for the islands is climate change; main focus for the mainland is migration issues and blood supply/STDs/COVID-19).”*



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## TOOL 4 RESOURCES: COURSES AND DOCUMENTS TO HELP WITH YOUTH NETWORK BUILDING

### Leadership

- **Leading and managing people-centred change**

Learn how to effectively manage change that affects people in your organization with this online course from Durham University Business School.

<https://ifrc.csod.com/ui/lms-learning-details/app/externalContent/bbb7d5fc-c39d-4c7c-a4c2-c191db202833>

- **Leadership identity development online curriculum (LIDOC)**

This course includes topics such as assertiveness, the art of apology, emotional intelligence, well-being, embracing failure, team decision-making and conflict resolution.

<https://ifrc.csod.com/ui/lms-learning-details/app/curriculum/209fa78f-d3dd-4c94-ac46-cda8b4218aae>

- **Essentials in leadership for RCRC decision-makers, volunteers, youth and staff (English)**

This course includes key topics relating to global volunteering, youth, security – “Stay Safe”, community health programmes, branch development, Strategy 2030, Code of Conduct and other humanitarian and development areas.

<https://ifrc.csod.com/ui/lms-learning-details/app/curriculum/783061ca-fcf7-44b6-9ab6-5233793e0a64>

### Team-building

- **Jamie’s kitchen: Fifteen lessons on teamwork**

This energetic online course follows Jamie’s young trainee chefs as they move through the four stages of team development – forming, storming, norming and performing – to come together as an effective unit.

<https://ifrc.csod.com/ui/lms-learning-details/app/course/4c90e785-e0f4-4604-98a7-ec8106fdefd8>

- **Building trust/conflict resolution**

- **Using similarity**

This course will show you how similarity can breed contentment in our decisions when we see others doing the same thing and how being and acting the same can help build rapport and trust.

<https://ifrc.csod.com/ui/lms-learning-details/app/course/81205f38-f16f-43ef-bd48-58c9b1c97088>

- **Talking through conflict**

This course explores the early warning signs of conflict and how to deal with it when it occurs.

<https://ifrc.csod.com/ui/lms-learning-details/app/course/9f71f1bc-efa4-445e-b54f-9a4ce7c90c21>







# **GUIDELINES AND TOOLBOX FOR YOUTH NETWORKS**

For further information please reach out to us through this form :  
[www.ifrc.org/contact](http://www.ifrc.org/contact)