



Kenya Red Cross

INNOVATION UNIT



HUMANITARIAN INNOVATION

As the landscape of the humanitarian sector rapidly changes, organizations are being challenged to adopt new, low cost and highly effective ways of reaching the most vulnerable of populations.

As a humanitarian organization, the Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) has embraced innovation, exploring different avenues for funding emergency operations and adopting emerging approaches, tools and technologies to improve the service delivery of aid.

At the KRCS, innovation includes processes and products that use locally available resources to provide solutions to existing challenges, risks, vulnerabilities and needs in the communities we serve.

THE INNOVATION UNIT

Innovation is one of the core values of the Society. The innovation unit seeks to spearhead this objective. The mission of the unit is aligned to the KRCS' core value on innovation:

'Creating opportunities and creative solutions as we continue to identify and explore uncharted opportunities for growth and sustainability, mitigating risks and providing the best humanitarian services.'

Established in mid 2018 and administered under the International Centre for Humanitarian Affairs (ICHA), the Innovation Unit seeks to bring together the traditional, determined and passionate approach of the KRCS in alleviating human suffering with the excitement, energy and risk taking nature of new ideas, technologies and processes in order to make a bigger difference in the lives of ordinary Kenyans.

We intend to facilitate and encourage innovation to create and promote independency of communities that will set the pace for growth that will be self-sustainable.

CURRENT PROJECTS AND EFFORTS



Satellite Imagery

Through networks and partnerships with global actors, the KRCS innovation unit has hosted trainings for staff across different departments on satellite imagery and the use of drones for humanitarian activities. The intention of the trainings is to build capacity to improve service delivery in emergency response and preparedness.

Hackathons

Supporting community designed innovative solutions is a priority for this unit. Hackathons allow members of the community to show case their solutions and potentially receive support to refine and scale up these ideas. An urban resilience hackathon in partnership with the KRCS Disaster Risk Management department and the Policy department, supported by the Danish Red Cross was held in April 2019. A hackathon in partnership with TechFugees sought to find solutions to the challenges in refugee camps. The winning solution will be piloted in Kalobeyei Refugee Camp managed by the KRCS.



Water Purification Using Non-Thermal Plasma

Through the partnership with Airbus Foundation, the KRCS are piloting water purification units using non thermal plasma to eliminate 100% of the bacteria in contaminated water. These units are being piloted in informal settlements in Nairobi. Other innovative schemes in the pipeline include piloting the 121 system developed by 510/Netherlands Red Cross and a Digital Identity solution through the Norwegian Red Cross and IFRC to improve cash transfer programming.



THE FUTURE

The future looks exciting and busy for the innovation unit! Between establishing an Innovation Fab Lab in Lamu to ideation spaces in Nairobi and Mombasa, we are looking forward to engaging with youth and local innovators to co-design social impact solutions. We're happy to be partnering with Swahili Pot Hub in Mombasa County to organize Pwani Innovation Week in December 2019 where the KRCS will host a hackathon on urban hygiene and sanitation.

We would be happy to interact and connect with innovation units and departments in the humanitarian field for opportunities for cross learning and collaboration. Feel free to reach out to us on info@redcross.or.ke

