



Finnish Red Cross

The Red Cross is evolving

Operating model discussions Summer–Autumn 2025

**Why is the reform
important right now?**

The Red Cross is evolving to become an even more effective helper

In a changing world, aid work must also be reformed

The world around us is changing in ways that challenge our current methods of helping. Climate change, economic inequality, an ageing population and the rapid development of technology have a direct impact on where, when and what type of help is needed. Meanwhile, social insecurities, the spreading of disinformation and the widening well-being gap break down trust and increase vulnerability.

Crises are, to an increasing extent, local, regional, national and global at the same time. People's needs for help are more complex and various challenges and crises become intertwined. The gaps between people become wider: those who are doing well are equipped with several factors that support their survival. At the same time, others accumulate vulnerabilities and factors that obstruct survival. We support everyone who needs help.

The reform is based on knowledge. By collecting and using information systematically, we can establish an overall picture of where help is needed the most. We are able to collect information from public sources as well as the experiences of volunteers and societies. This information helps us to allocate our resources correctly, monitor the impact of our work and develop our operations on a continuous basis.

The evolving Red Cross is based on an understanding of how the world is changing and what kind of reform is required from us. This allows us to provide effective, correctly timed and accessible aid to everyone. The world is changing faster than ever before. If we want to retain our ability to help, we must have the courage to evolve. The reform is based on our principles and core mission. We must have the ability to accept new things while respecting the past.

**How does the reform
happen?**

Mission: strong, humane, functional and effective Red Cross

The Red Cross is reforming in order to meet the needs of a changing world even better. Together with our volunteers, members and employees, we are building a new operating model for the Red Cross to face current challenges and support us in the future. Our objective is a strong, humane, functional and effective Red Cross that remains close to both helpers and those who need help.

The proposed operating models that we have now prepared aim to find the best way we can meet the changing needs for aid. These are not *options that you can vote for, but rather a way of opening the discussion*. The final operating model is built by applying the best features of different models. The aim is to find the best method of operation for the Red Cross in both daily activities and crises.

You are now needed more than ever before. Because of this, the reform is inclusive: the voices of volunteers, members and employees are heard. The reform is a joint task of the entire organisation.

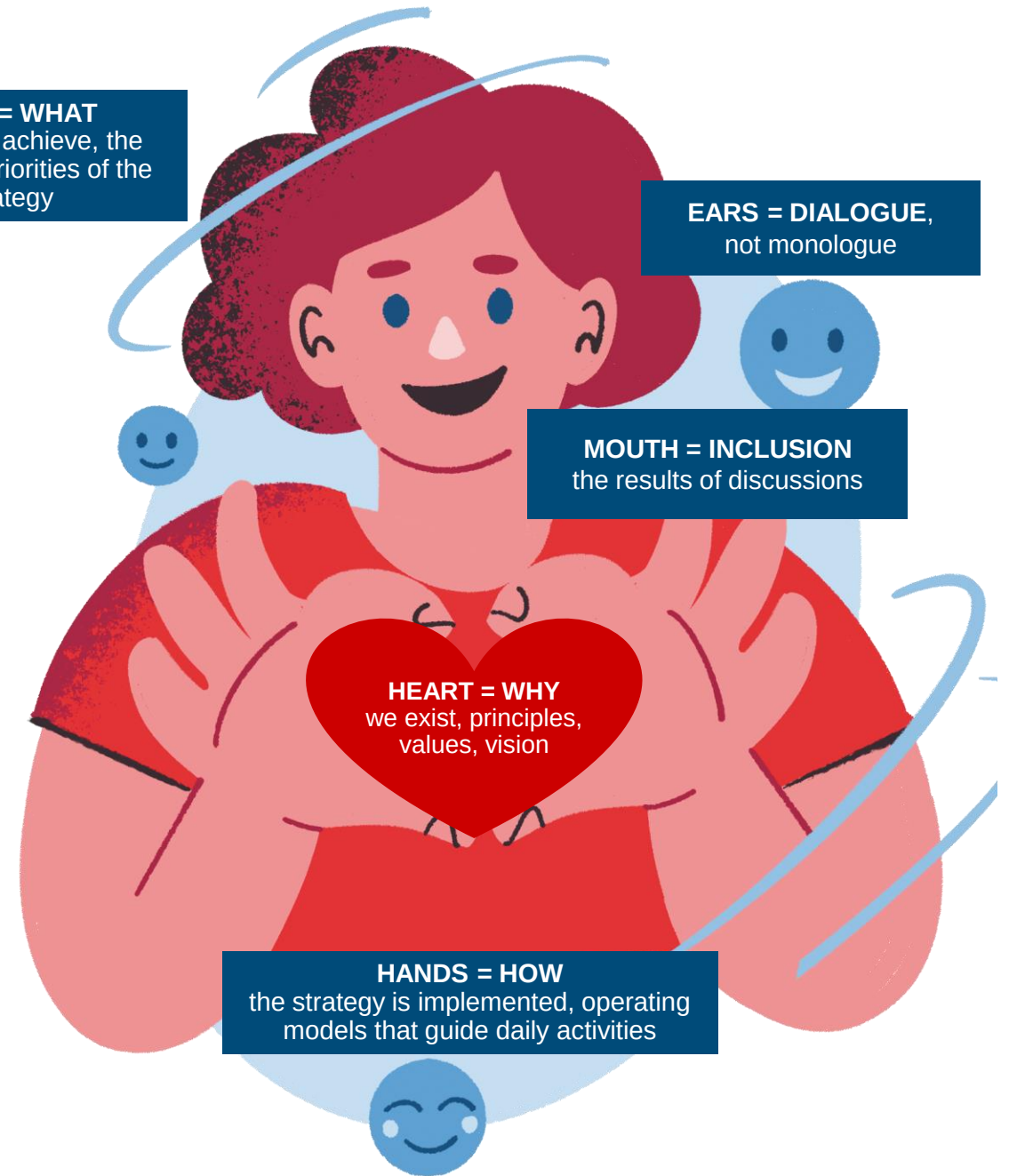
HEAD = WHAT
we want to achieve, the
goals and priorities of the
strategy

EARS = DIALOGUE,
not monologue

MOUTH = INCLUSION
the results of discussions

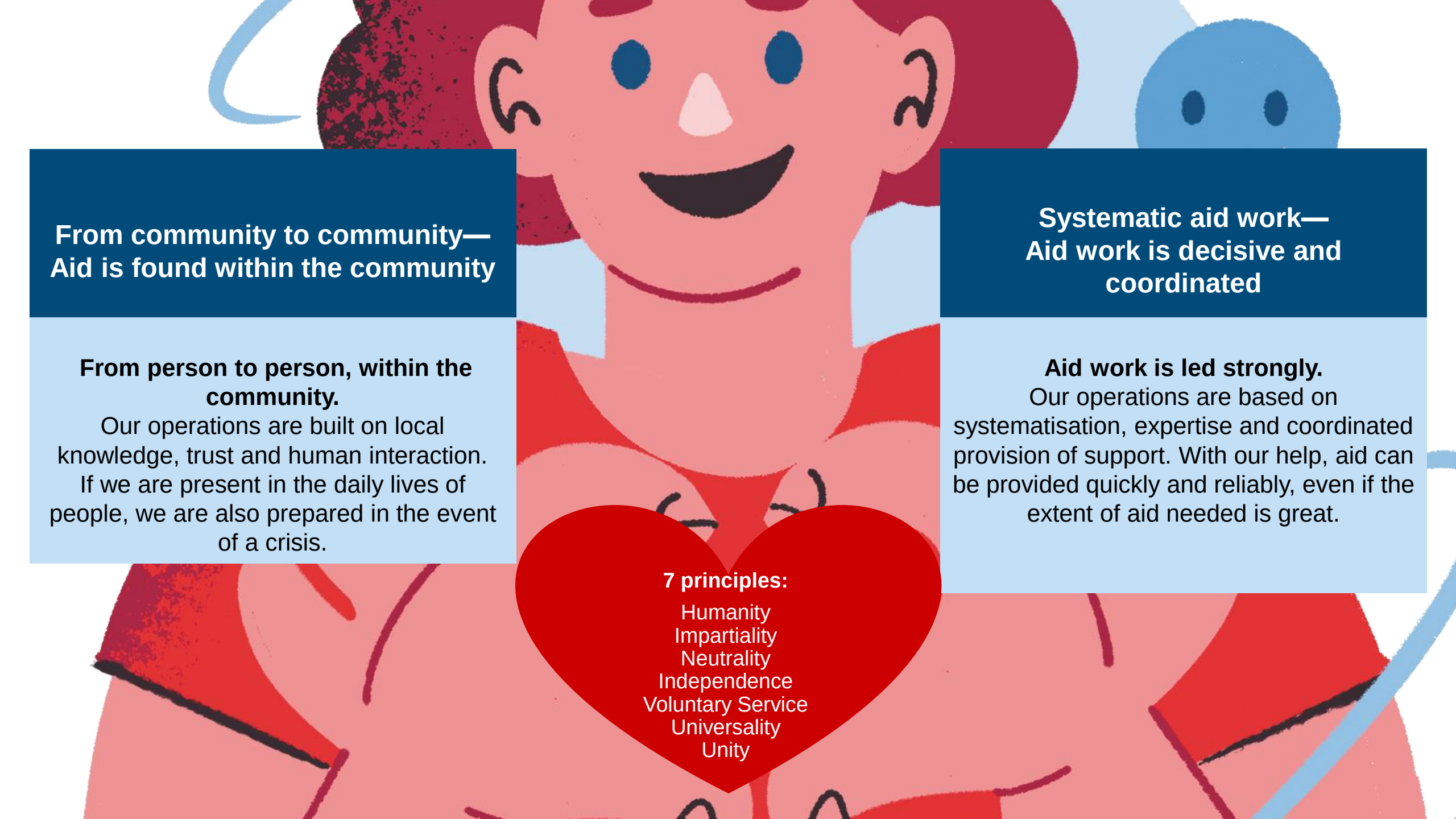
HEART = WHY
we exist, principles,
values, vision

HANDS = HOW
the strategy is implemented, operating
models that guide daily activities



Two operating model proposals

The final model is based on a combination of the proposals



**From community to community—
Aid is found within the community**

**From person to person, within the
community.**

Our operations are built on local
knowledge, trust and human interaction.

If we are present in the daily lives of
people, we are also prepared in the event
of a crisis.

**Systematic aid work—
Aid work is decisive and
coordinated**

Aid work is led strongly.

Our operations are based on
systematisation, expertise and coordinated
provision of support. With our help, aid can
be provided quickly and reliably, even if the
extent of aid needed is great.

7 principles:

Humanity
Impartiality
Neutrality
Independence
Voluntary Service
Universality
Unity

**How do the operating
models differ?**

From community to community:
aid is found within the community.

Knowledge-based support from community to community. **The operating model based on the strength of the community** reinforces the ability of local communities to help themselves on the basis of trust. The model anticipates the needs for help and provides aid from one community to another with the roles shifting depending on the situation.

Local volunteers and partners operate close to the people and utilise the resources of the community. Support is provided by Centres of Excellence and a centralised support structure that allows for exchanging information without restricting local decision-making processes.

Expertise based on needs:
aid is provided at the right time in the right manner.

Our operations are determined and coordinated. **The operating model based on systematic aid work** is led with expertise. The model allows for quick and flexible reactions to various needs for help. It aims to provide people with help according to their needs and in an impactful manner.

The operations advance in stages: First, we identify the need for help. After this, we offer help by utilising the skills of volunteers and systematic volunteer work. Our cooperation network and quality requirements guarantee the consistent quality and significance of aid work.

Emphases of different operating models

Theme	From community to community	Expertise based on needs
Identification of needs for help	Constant local analysis and sensors for receiving information about the local area.	Preparation of a situational picture, knowledge-based resource allocation and planning.
Aid recipients seeking aid	They are part of the community, potentially a helper as well. They know how to seek and provide aid.	A person in need of help who is seeking aid actively. The needs are met with a system.
Inviting volunteers to join and their organisation	They are local operators and members of the community.	A systematically guided volunteer path.
Identification, utilisation and development of required expertise	Decentralised and community-based, Centres of Excellence support the needs related to the development of expertise.	Expertise is centrally administrated and the volunteer path is clear and coordinated.
Building and reinforcing trust and continuity	Continuous operations build trust within the community. The aid recipient can always rely on receiving help, even with minor situations in daily life.	The operations build trust in authorities and the system. The aid recipient can rely on receiving help in serious situations.
Partnerships and authority cooperation	Natural and continuous cooperation with local operators.	Systematically managed, high-quality cooperation with authorities and other organisations.
Resource allocation	Resources are allocated according to the needs of communities.	Resources are allocated according to the preparedness plan and situational picture.

**From community
to community model**

From community to community: local, professional and supported

Local helper communities form the core of operations. They act autonomously and react to local needs while reinforcing a sense of community and resilience.

National Centres of Excellence support local teams by distributing expertise and supporting the targeting of aid efforts.

The Red Cross support structure offers tools, knowledge and practice so that volunteers can focus on helping.



**Aid work is local and communality is supported
with Centres of Excellence and other structures**

**Expertise based on
needs model**

Expertise based on needs:
always at the right time and in
the right way

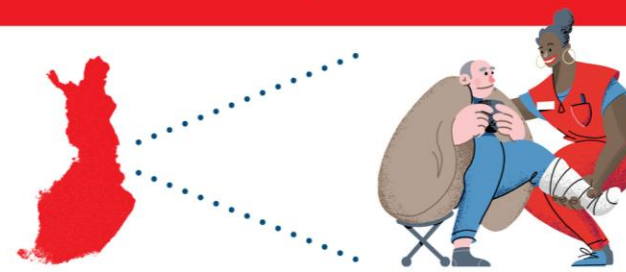
Local volunteers offer quick help at a
low threshold, and the aid recipient can
become a helper in one day.

Long-term support provides resources
to the community as well as security in
daily life and crises.

Expert volunteers—local delegates bring
special expertise in situations where
impactful support is required.



Those who need help can find it locally or online.
The Red Cross aid model ensures that help is
easily available and correctly timed.



**You have a chance to be
heard**

Join us in this reform

The reform is an opportunity to build a sense of community, mutual trust and the feeling that we are part of something bigger.

The reform is an opportunity to build sustainability for the following 150 years.

The reform is an opportunity to become an even more effective helper.

Join the discussion about the reform and new operating models at:

[Take the survey here](#)