

Discussion and preparation of the “Humanitarian Principles”

Short description	The participants discuss the substance of each of the four Humanitarian Principles, and try to express this in their own words. The interpretations which result are presented in the group.
Topics	Humanitarian Principles, the group and me
Learning objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of what the principles stand for • Recognition of the complexity of their interpretation and application
Setting	Small groups, 3 - 4 participants
Time frame	30 - 40 min
Materials	SRC images concerning the principles (see annex), flip chart paper, flip chart marker (various colours), pin boards, adhesive tape
Instructions	<p>Each of the small groups discusses one of the Humanitarian Principles (humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence). The participants are prepared for the discussion in the following manner: 1. The teacher provides a brief input as to why the humanitarian principles are of central importance as agreements by which all humanitarian aid actors must abide for the success of humanitarian actions. The relevant information can be found in the <i>Introduction for Teachers</i> and <i>the Preparatory Materials for Pupils</i>. 2. For each of the principles the small groups look at a cartoon produced by the SRC. This illustration is to enable participants to orient themselves in the discussion of a given subject. The agreed interpretations are summarised on a poster. Finally, they are presented to the group, each presentation beginning with the showing of the relevant cartoon so that other participants can have a visual impression of the principle concerned. The interpretations presented can be brought into sharper focus by means of questions from the teacher or participants, which are not to be thought of as corrections. At this stage in the learning process, it is out of the question to label the interpretations as either true or false. At this stage it is more a matter of enabling the participants to obtain a first impression of what the principles represent in practice. Contrasting interpretations should be allowed to stand at this stage.</p> <p><i>Outlook:</i></p> <p>The self-formulated (provisional) interpretations will be developed further in the third module.</p>

Humanity



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Humanity

“The Red Cross, 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, co-operation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.”

Neutrality

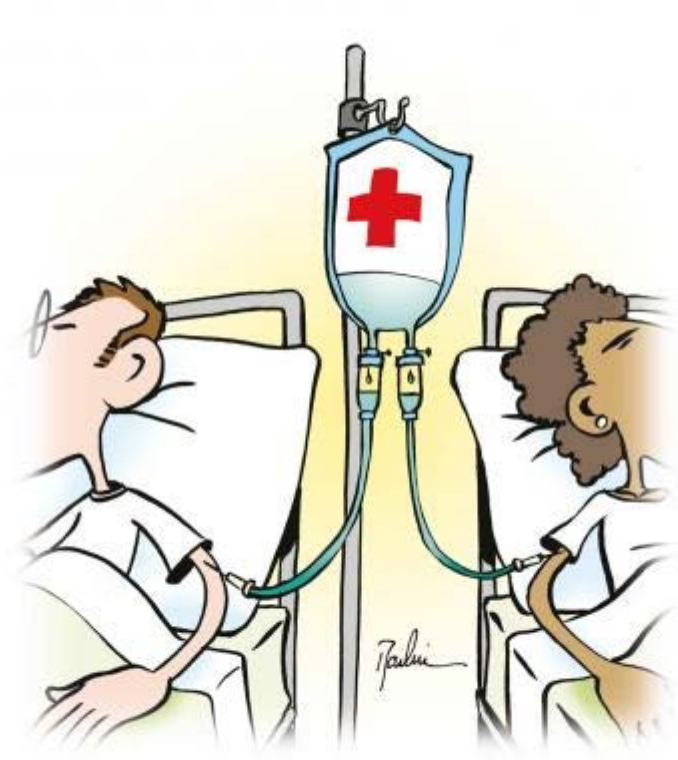


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Neutrality

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

Impartiality



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Impartiality

“It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours only to relieve suffering, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress.”

Independence



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Independence

“The Red Cross 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 Red Cross principles.”