

150 years committed to good health

SRC works to improve access to health in Switzerland and abroad



Swiss Red Cross



The SRC's commitment to good health

The Swiss Red Cross has had a dedicated commitment to health for 150 years, because good health is vital to us all. No matter where they are in the world, in Switzerland as much as elsewhere, people need access to clean water, a healthy diet, but also to adequate healthcare and disease prevention. The Red Cross Fundamental Principle of Humanity inspires us to strive even harder to achieve this in future. At the same time, through this overall commitment, the SRC is helping to put the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into practice.

We are all aware that even nowadays large sectors of the population in many countries are deprived of access to healthcare. In crisis and disaster zones, people's lives and physical integrity are in danger. Additionally, epidemics such as ebola are major challenges to the international community and the Red Cross & Red Crescent Movement. However, even in wealthy Switzerland with its outstanding healthcare system there are still people who have little or no access to healthcare or disease prevention services.

Whether in Switzerland or in the programme countries targeted by the International Cooperation Department, the SRC applies the same principles. We are dedicated to helping the most vulnerable people and strive to ensure everyone has the same level of access to primary healthcare services. All volunteers, staff and honorary position-holders at the Red Cross are prepared to take up future challenges in collaboration with our partner organizations at home and abroad.



Annemarie Huber-Hotz

President, Swiss Red Cross

Swiss Red Cross



150 years providing greater humanity

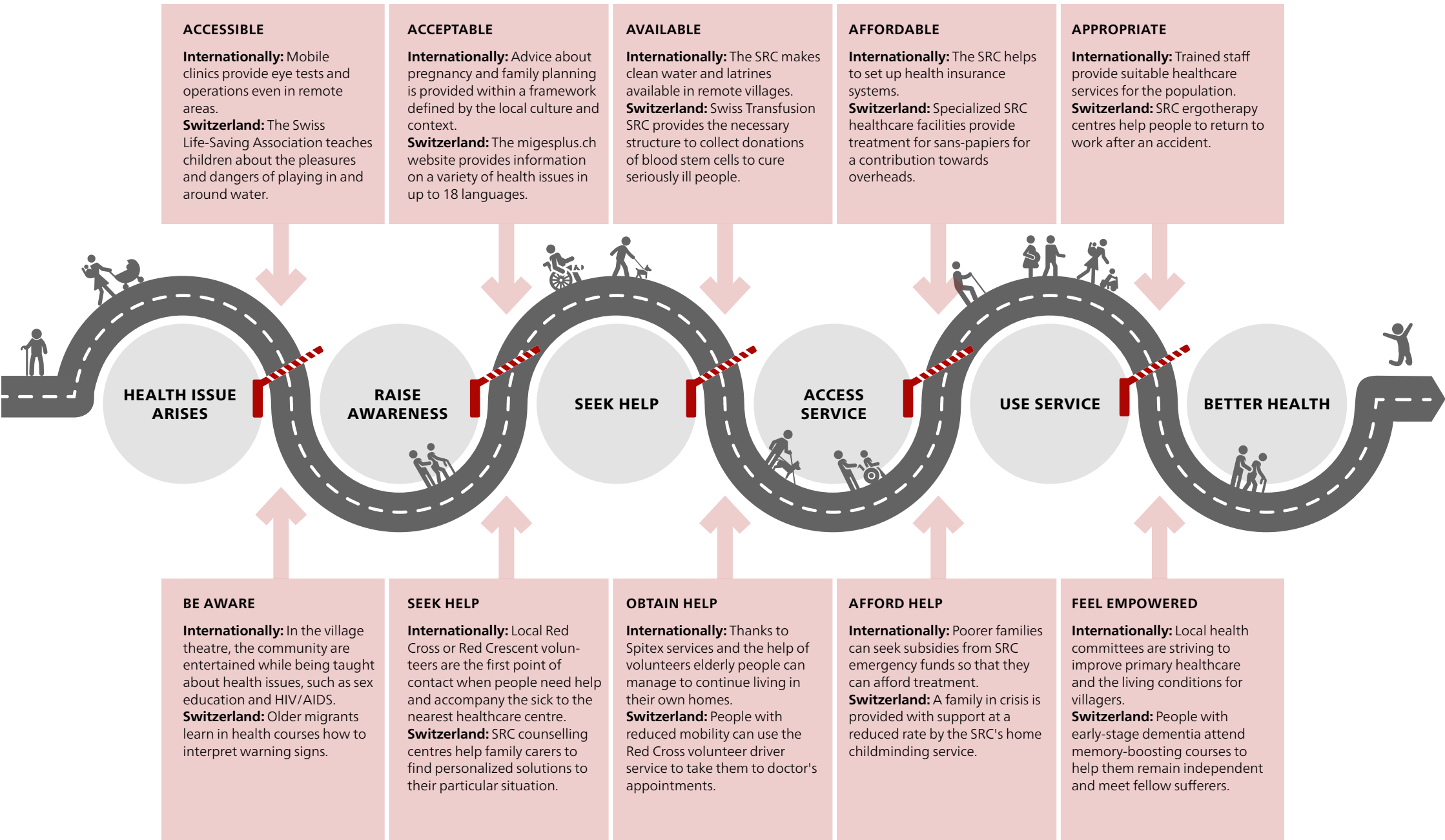
Five barriers to good health

Whenever someone has a health problem, they must recognize it, seek out a suitable place for support or treatment, be able to get there, and be able to use the service. The health system, on the other hand, must ensure that its services are accessible, acceptable, available, affordable and appropriate. This is not only up to the providers of healthcare and prevention services; the individuals and their community must also contribute. Only when both sides manage to break down the barriers can even vulnerable groups have access to health promotion, disease prevention and healthcare.

The diagram shows the barriers people need to overcome before they have access to healthcare services. It also highlights what the service needs to do to facilitate access to healthcare for all. The SRC International Cooperation Department has tested this model as a tool in carrying out its health projects. It is also applicable to our work within Switzerland.

The model is based on: Levesque, Jean-Frederic, Mark F. Harris and Grant Russell (2013), Patient-centred access to health care: conceptualizing access at the interface of health systems and populations, *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 12:18.

PREVENTION AND HEALTHCARE



INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITY

Example: Five steps for social support and assistance at home

The SRC provides and supports visitor and care services for elderly people in Switzerland and abroad. The actual form these services take varies according to the local needs. In general these care services are performed by volunteers and aim to provide social contact, respite for family carers, and a helping hand around the home. In other countries, the Red Cross also provides primary care and support.

There are five barriers between health issues and good health. The SRC helps vulnerable people to overcome these five barriers.

Awareness | Does an elderly person requiring regular care realize they need support?

Example: The SRC raises awareness that accepting help will relieve them of a burden.

Seek help | Does the person concerned trust the caregiver?

Example: The caregiver is well prepared for their role – for example, by taking the SRC nursing auxiliary course – and adapts to the needs of the elderly person

Access service | Can the person concerned access the services?

Example: Providing care services at home ensures they are accessible.

Use service | Can the beneficiary afford the service?

Example: As far as possible, the services are adapted to the financial circumstances of the people they are intended for.

Better health | Are the services provided appropriate for the people concerned?

The SRC regularly consults the recipients to check whether the care services meet their needs.

Challenges in providing better healthcare for everyone

The health of the world's population has significantly improved since 1990. The average life expectancy has risen from 65 to 72 years, child and maternal mortality rates have halved, the majority of the world's population now have access to clean water, and fewer people now become infected with HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

However, statistical averages conceal growing regional disparities and social inequalities: 400 million vulnerable people, or about 5% of the world's population, have no access to healthcare and disease prevention. This results every day in the deaths of 16 000 children from avoidable diseases, almost 10 000 people from AIDS, tuberculosis or malaria, and 800 mothers from the complications of pregnancy and childbirth.

And that is in addition to the rapidly increasing burden, even in poorer countries, of non-communicable, chronic illnesses, such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes and respiratory diseases. Even in Switzerland, not everyone has the same access to healthcare. And even here there are differences in life expectancy depending on people's level of education and financial circumstances.

The SRC's services and assistance boost people's own resources and provide them with respite in difficult circumstances. The SRC provides help regardless of whether the recipients are elderly, care-dependent, gravely or terminally ill, people who are suffering the consequences of war and torture, or whether they are people without legal residential status (see also our brochure (in German) *Gesundheit 2020 – der Beitrag des SRK*, www.redcross.ch/de/file/14760/download). Through its International Cooperation Department, the SRC supports the health programmes run by National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and other partner organizations in sectors such as the prevention and treatment of diseases, mother and child health, health for the elderly, water, sanitation and hygiene, eye care, blood safety, and emergency medical assistance (see the Access to Healthcare file at www.redcross.ch/zuganggesundheits).

We can advise you.

Swiss Red Cross

Headquarters

Werkstrasse 18

3084 Wabern, Switzerland

+41 31 960 75 75

gi@redcross.ch

iz@redcross.ch

8.2016



Swiss Red Cross

