

# KNOWLEDGEPOINT

Free expert advice for aid workers in the field

**redr** uk  
people and skills for disaster relief

Shelter construction Thailand Photo UNHCR/J Redfern

The challenges faced by relief workers in the field are immense, and they are regularly called on to provide solutions beyond their own field of expertise and experience. RedR's experts provide free and fast technical advice at the click of a mouse.

To support aid organisations and relief workers on the frontline, RedR provides a free online technical support service, helping address the need for fast, reliable, expert information and technical support in the field.

We aim to answer all emergency enquiries within 24 to 48 hours of receiving the request; as quick, appropriate solutions can help save lives in an emergency.

The service utilises the experience and professional knowledge of experts across a wide variety of fields and offers a cost effective and efficient way of supporting aid personnel on the ground.

RedR has a panel of more than 150 technical experts, including humanitarian and development workers, private sector professionals, and academics who specialise in emergency-related issues, waiting to offer their advice and guidance.

Their areas of expertise include water, sanitation and hygiene, public health, construction and shelter. They also cover fields such as logistics, security, alternative energy, finance, IT, communications, and project management. KnowledgePoint is managed by the RedR Technical Services Manager, who is an engineer and aid worker with extensive field experience.

We receive support requests to help solve real issues as they arise in the field. Past enquiries have ranged from a runway design for a C130 Hercules transport aircraft, to water quality in Haiti following the earthquake which left more than a million people displaced.

The majority of field enquiries relate to water, sanitation and hygiene issues, with shelter, construction and infrastructure, as well as 'management' and 'technology', proving to be areas of high demand.

## FREE

No cost service for aid workers

## FAST

We aim to answer within 24-48 hrs

## EXPERT

Access expertise and experience

## ONLINE

[www.knowledgepoint.org](http://www.knowledgepoint.org)

[knowledgepoint@redr.org.uk](mailto:knowledgepoint@redr.org.uk)



*"I received a range of answers to my query, two of which were very useful because they were from people who had experienced similar problems in the field themselves and could therefore give advice based on sound practical experience.*

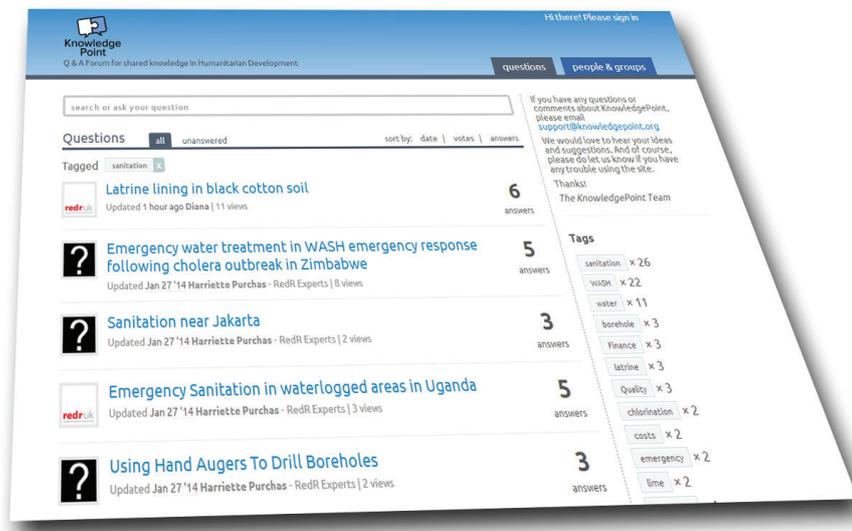
*The responses gave me an 'expert view' to back up what I was proposing to the local engineers and therefore helped me convince them that a re-design of the water system was needed - this will give the water system a much better chance of working and providing a clean water supply for a community of 3000 people."*

- Stephen Jones, working for ACTED in Kyrgyzstan, on the value of the technical support he received

## How does it work?

Aid workers seeking to use the service can do so by emailing [technical.support@redr.org.uk](mailto:technical.support@redr.org.uk) or by posting their enquiry via KnowledgePoint. KnowledgePoint is a web based platform created and supported by RedR, WaterAid, IRC, EngineerAid and Practical Action and can be found at [www.knowledgepoint.org](http://www.knowledgepoint.org). The request will immediately be passed on to the relevant team of experts and the 'problem' is then researched and discussed before appropriate advice is emailed and posted as a response on KnowledgePoint. All enquiries and responses are open access and available to anyone on the internet.

RedR experts typically offer multiple approaches to solving a given 'problem', based on real world field experience. All responses are sent out by RedR for quality assurance and liability purposes. RedR also continues to provide assistance to aid workers or agencies after a response has been sent. Occasionally we have sent out an expert to assess and provide advice in the field.



KnowledgePoint website interface

## Making a difference in the field

Since its launch in 1998, RedR's technical support service has grown significantly; receiving and responding to an ever increasing number of enquiries. Two recent examples of enquiries:

- 1) An aid worker in Ethiopia urgently required a contract for water trucking services to be supplied by a commercial vendor to their NGO and they needed to get it signed within 24 hours. The RedR experts panel was able to provide a variety of sample contracts that could be amended locally and gave key advice on what to specify in the contract and how to monitor the operation to ensure a quality service was provided.
- 2) A charity a few hundred miles north of Nairobi, Kenya, required assistance in finding suppliers to manufacture a steel framed water tower. A number of recommendations of firms to use were provided by the RedR experts panel with company profiles and contacts.

## Interested in becoming a RedR expert?

If you are interested in becoming a part of RedR's panel of experts - and you feel your technical skills and humanitarian experience would contribute to the service - we would like to hear from you. To join the panel you are encouraged to submit your CV, and RedR will evaluate your technical expertise and experience in a humanitarian and / or development context.



## Organisations that have benefited from RedR's technical support

- ACTED
- Catholic Relief Services
- Danish Refugee Council
- Goal Ireland
- Helping Hearts for Haiti
- International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies
- OXFAM
- Norwegian Refugee Council
- Merlin
- Save the Children
- UNICEF
- UN Habitat
- Water Aid

For more information about KnowledgePoint and RedR's technical support service, please contact Harriette Purchas on [knowledgepoint@redr.org.uk](mailto:knowledgepoint@redr.org.uk)

In order to respond to an ever-growing number and variety of enquiries, RedR is always looking to expand our service. You can support RedR by making a donation to enable us to respond to more requests.

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