Universal App Program: First Aid
Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Universal App program?

The Universal App Program is an initiative sponsored by the Global Disaster Preparedness Center and is focused on providing access to high quality, lifesaving mobile applications or 'apps' to Red Cross and Red Crescent societies for release in their home markets to benefit the general public. The idea is rooted in that both the American Red Cross and British Red Cross have released a free First Aid App that offers simple, easy-to-follow advice for a variety of everyday first aid scenarios.

Recognizing the opportunity to take the concept to scale, the Global Disaster Preparedness Center (GDPC) launched the Universal First Aid App Program in May 2013, introducing a phased approach for rapid expansion of the First Aid App into new markets within the Red Cross, Red Crescent network.

The Universal App Program includes an easy to use Content Management System (CMS) for developing app content and a streamlined agreement model that reduces the time consuming, and costly negotiation common for many inter society agreements. Participation in the program is free to national societies and download of the app is free of charge on iOS and Android.

Why would a national society want to participate in the Universal App program?

The Universal App program provides cutting edge mobile app technology free of charge to National Societies to build first aid awareness by offering a high quality app to the public in their country. The program recognizes the increasing popularity of smartphones and use of apps as a way for people to seek and share information. The program provides opportunity to reach a growing number of people with important life-saving information and appeal to audiences not necessarily touched by Red Cross-- such as younger audiences and urban environments. Additionally, the built-in features of these apps will enable national societies to connect with their public, solicit donations and foster partnerships in support their own preparedness and first aid training programs.

What does the app feature?

The First Aid app uses an Everyday First Aid approach that was developed by the British Red Cross and is based on the 2011 IFRC Guidelines for First Aid. It includes easy, step-by-step instruction that is designed to reinforce first aid concepts. The apps include animations, videos, quizzes and links to the national society's website and services which further help users learn and understand some fundamental first aid guidance. It is fully integrated with common social media platforms and can be linked to existing donation collection tools or websites maintained by the national society.

Can donations from the public be collected using the app?

Donation links within the app will redirect users to an external donate page or a text-to-give service. Additionally, the national society may highlight a partnership with a private corporate partner (i.e. hospital system or telecom) in the app. The app can serve as a tool to enrich the national society's resource mobilization strategy.

How do other national societies get permission to use the app?

The GDPC secured permission to extend the license from the British Red Cross and the American Red Cross to other National Societies that agree to certain covenants and restrictions in a licensed agreement between the national society and GDPC. These include a willingness to offer the app exclusively within their own country's market at no cost to the public and an agreement to make download statistics available to the GDPC for purposes of reporting. Details of the license agreement will

be available in English and may be translated by the national society at their own risk and expense. If a national society contributes to the enhancement of the app (for example – translation into a new language), their license back to all other licensees will be implicit – this is clearly outlined in the licensing agreement.

Can national societies translate the app?

National societies are responsible for translating the app content into their preferred language and have the option of releasing the app in multiple languages.

National Societies may utilize languages already available. For instance, the Chilean Red Cross may choose to modify an existing translation provided by the Mexican Red Cross, but the Colombian Red Cross may decide it prefers to do its own translation from the English version provided by the American Red Cross, resulting in three different Spanish language translations.

What is the GDPC?

The Global Disaster Preparedness Center ("GDPC") is both a resource center and think tank that promotes innovation in disaster preparedness and supports research and knowledge sharing amongst disaster preparedness professionals worldwide. Established in 2012 by the American Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the GDPC's primary aim is to strengthen the disaster preparedness capacities of the global Red Cross and Red Crescent network, while also contributing to wider preparedness efforts in order to help safeguard communities from future disasters. You can learn more by visiting the website at preparecenter.org.

What is the GDPC's role in this process?

The GDPC acts as a singular point of entry for National Societies in development and release of app content. The Center serves in a program management role between National Societies and the IFRC. Throughout the app development process, the GDPC provides National Societies with technical assistance, serving as a liaison between the societies and the identified vendor, 3 Sided Cube.

The GDPC's role as a program manager maximizes the ability of 3 Sided Cube to focus on app development and not the contracting process. The vendor will interface with national societies under specific circumstances such as training.

The GDPC is providing this service on a no-cost basis to the national societies involved in the program that is made possible because of the generous contributions of donors. If a national society would like to contribute to the Universal App Program, please contact the GDPC at gdpc@redcross.org.

How was the app developer selected?

Selection was based on quality, experience and pricing.

What is the timeline for this project?

The Universal First Aid App program entered Phase 2 in January 2014. It will last for two years or until 100 national societies have submitted the app for release in their country.

How long will the app development take?

The timeline for app development will vary by a national society's own internal capacity. The national society will be responsible for the following during the development process:

- Review, translation and adaptation of Universal App content;
- Acceptance of terms in the GDPC license agreement;
- Testing of app prior to release to ensure quality and authorization of release to public;
- Marketing to public.

After a national society expresses interest in participation, the GDPC will give a copy of the licensed content for translation and localization to the culture and language of that particular country. The national society must review and change procedures to reflect the cultural practice of that particular country. This first stage will depend on a national society's internal capacity to devote to translation and review. Any clinical changes will then be reviewed by the Global First Aid Reference Center (GFARC).

Once this step has been completed the national society will be assigned to a "development pool," which will follow a one month cycle for app development. A point of contact in the national society will be granted access to Content Management System (CMS) to review content and make changes to language, video and images. A national society will be given specific milestones with deadlines (e.g. the last day of the first month) to submit their approved content to the GDPC. A period of testing that lasts approximately one week will be done by the GDPC and the vendor, 3 Sided Cube, and will allow time for testing before releasing the app to stores.

The national society will then be able to determine the day they want their app to be released. If the national society misses an important milestone or if the content review requires more time, they will have to wait until the next available release cycle before their app is ready.

How can national societies learn about smart phone usage in their countries?

A general Internet search using Google will yield a number of data sources related to trend in growth of smart phones and mobile-dominant internet access.

To start, here is a helpful web address with valuable mobile/smart phone information:
http://mobithinking.com/mobile-marketing-tools/latest-mobile-stats

Following the app release, what is expected by each national society?

After the app is released, the national society will be responsible for the continued monitoring of the app's performance, including review of app store comments and any updates to content that is desired by the national society. Additionally, the national society will be responsible for continued marketing of the app to support dissemination.

What is the cost involved in participating in the Universal App Program?

The GDPC is providing use of the Universal App platform and deployment, maintenance and hosting of the apps on a no-cost basis to the national societies involved in the pilot and Phase 2 of the program. The national societies are in turn responsible for any costs associated with translation and localization of content.

Are there licensing costs?

Participation in the Universal app program is free of charge for National Societies. There are no licensing costs, but there are licensing conditions.

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Can the national society change content if they choose to? Even after the app is released? If so, how long will it take for changes to update once made in the Content Management System (CMS)?

The CMS will give the national society broad control over its own app's content. Even after the app is released, national societies will be able to make changes to the content and images using the CMS. When the content is updated and "published" in the CMS, it will be available to all users the next time they open the app in an area with a data connection (within an hour). The content does not get submitted to the app store. The app continually attempts to connect to the server to query for any updates when it is first opened. If it cannot secure a data connection, it will just function as it had previously.

It is the expectation that once the app is released, the content will be owned and managed by the national society.

How will the national society share marketing successes and efforts? And where can the national society learn more about what others have done to promote their apps?

The GDPC has prepared a document with marketing tips and best practices for national societies to use as a starting point. The GDPC will continue to capture and share different ideas and experience using this same format enabling national societies to both learn from others' experience and contribute their own ideas and examples.

Can a national society add additional content beyond just linking to its website?

The Content Management System (CMS) facilitate the addition of new app related content.

Does the Universal App Program allow for language translation? If so, whose responsibility will that be?

Language translation is the responsibility of the national society. It will be completed online using the CMS or offline using either a spreadsheet or java based tool.

Is the app only available for smartphones?

The app is available on iOS and Android devices.

Who will be able to download the app?

Anyone with an iOS or Android device in the country where the app is released will be able to download the app to their device. If the device was purchased outside the country, or linked to a credit card from another country, a user may need to change the app store in order to access the app for that particular country's store.

Do all images and videos need a global license?

Yes. The use of still images and videos must include a global license. This is particularly important for cases depicting actors or other people.

Will videos be available without a data connection?

Yes. First aid videos are bundled in the app and will work when a data connection is not available after it is installed on a user's device.

Apps available in more than one language can have only one language bundled in the app. The national society will select the most used language in that country to be bundled in the app. This language will be available offline. All other languages will stream from YouTube and will require an Internet connection.

 Bundling of videos creates a larger app. Alternately, the videos can be streamed from YouTube or a similar streaming service. This would require a data connection but reduce the size of the app on the device. The GDPC will work closely with the national society to determine which model will be most effective for their country and their users.

Can the app push notifications to users?

Yes. Using the Content Management System, national societies will be able to push notifications to app users by using the Content Management System—the same system used for content development. For example, they can remind their user base of upcoming Red Cross events or trainings. This feature will be closely monitored and will include some built in controls to ensure that notifications are not overused.

Is the universal app regularly updated? If so, are updates also available for national societies?

The national society fully controls updates to content, which includes images and video, through the Content Management System. Once the app is released, the national society can add content or make updates without intervention of the GDPC or the vendor. Enhancements to the app itself will be infrequent and carefully considered by a broad group of stakeholders.

What tool is used to monitor the app? Is it a Red Cross tool?

The CMS used for content development provides access to a web-based platform that allows the national society to monitor downloads, usage and comments to the app stores. Further, all apps have Google analytics integrated and each national society is given access to a portal to view data.

How does the app release actually work? Under what name is each app released?

The Universal App program utilizes a common format and set of tools that enable apps to be released individually under a name selected by the national society. For example, "First Aid by Myanmar Red Cross", will only be available to Myanmar app store shoppers. The apps are released under a single developer account to increase efficiency and cost effectiveness.