



Extreme temperature preparedness - lessons for action in the Nordic countries

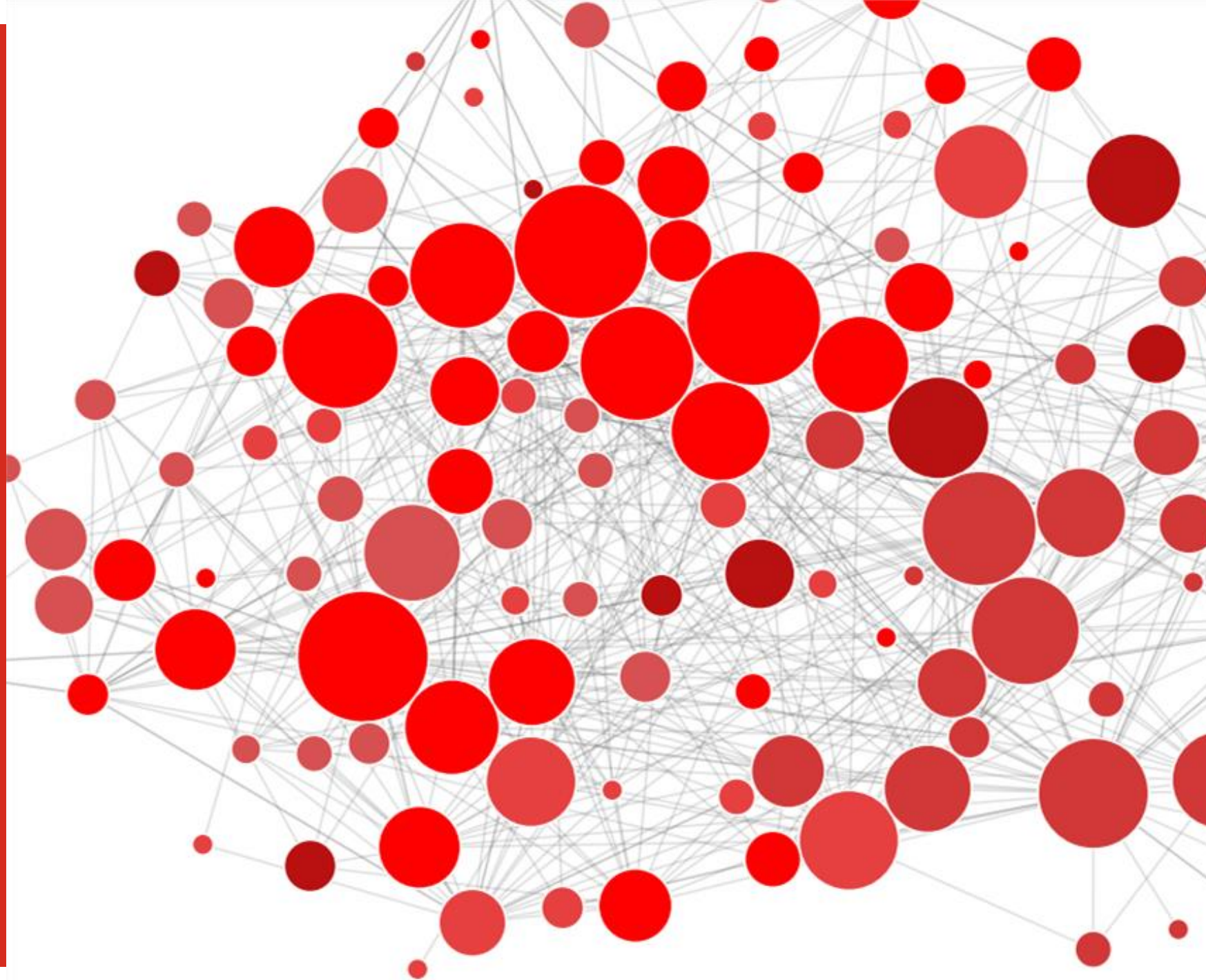
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Red Cross and extreme temperatures

- 192 National Societies:
 - Disaster management and first aid
 - Health and care
 - Inclusion and participation
- Climate change – the greatest humanitarian challenge of our time
- Extreme heat preparedness – essential to prevent loss of life and health



Inclusive risk mapping and preparedness planning



- **British Red Cross: Community Resilience Program**
 - Includes different communities and groups in preparedness planning
 - Facilitates dialogue with the local authorities, emergency services, and organizations.
 - Trains community advocates
 - Temperatures: mapping «heat islands».

Look beyond “civil protection” mode of preparedness planning to plan for differential impacts – and involve the most vulnerable groups in managing risk and preparing for consequences.



Prioritize action to mitigate impacts on most vulnerable populations

- In the **Netherlands and Luxembourg**, the Red Cross address the higher risk elderly people face during heat waves:
 - Door to door campaign - wellness checks and advice.
 - Scheduled home visits to particularly vulnerable people during summer – extra visits during heat wave.

Ensure that health administrators, professionals, assistants and others working with particularly vulnerable populations are aware of which of their patients or beneficiaries are at heightened risk, what the symptoms of hyperthermia and hypothermia are, and that they receive an alert when dangerous temperature levels are reached.



Leveraging technology

- **Spanish Red Cross: phone information campaign and follow-up system**
 - July to September, every year.
 - Provinces facing the highest temperatures.
 - Phone conversation:
 - Assesses the health of the vulnerable person.
 - Provides information and advice on what to do.
 - Three calls in the course of one summer.

Consider how technology can help compensate for human resource gaps in “health in the home” services during extreme temperature events that coincide with vacations and holidays (i.e. summer and Christmas).

Involving local volunteers to increase reach of government activities

- **French Red Cross:**
 - Drinking water distribution.
 - Running cooling centres.
 - Wellness checks and visits to vulnerable people.
- **North Macedonia Red Cross:**
 - Manning a crisis hotline activated before and during heatwaves.
 - Home visits to the elderly and other vulnerable people.
 - Wellness checks on homeless people and others sleeping rough.
 - Drinking water distribution.

Build on strong tradition of voluntary work in the Nordic countries to strengthen preparedness.



Making cool spaces available free of charge to the population in urban areas

- Austrian Red Cross: first Red Cross cooling centre in Europe.
 - Cooling centre: Air-conditioned area where anyone can come to cool down during heat waves.
 - Visitors can cool down, rest or nap, and access drinking water and information
 - Approximately 40 visitors per day
 - Available during the warmest months – activated when temperatures >30 °C are forecast for several consecutive days

Work with commercial actors to make spaces accessible – and with public institutions (e.g. libraries) to make their spaces more attractive and welcoming during extreme temperature events.

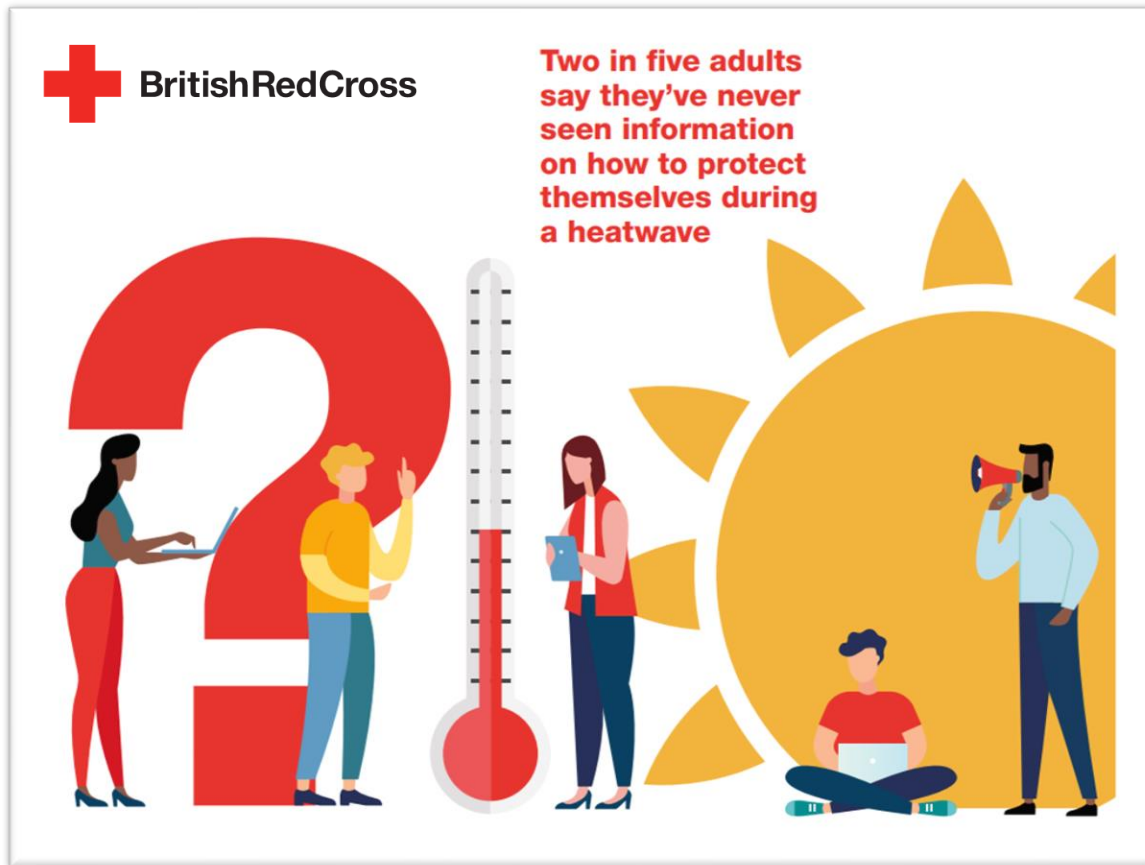


Increasing awareness and strengthening household preparedness

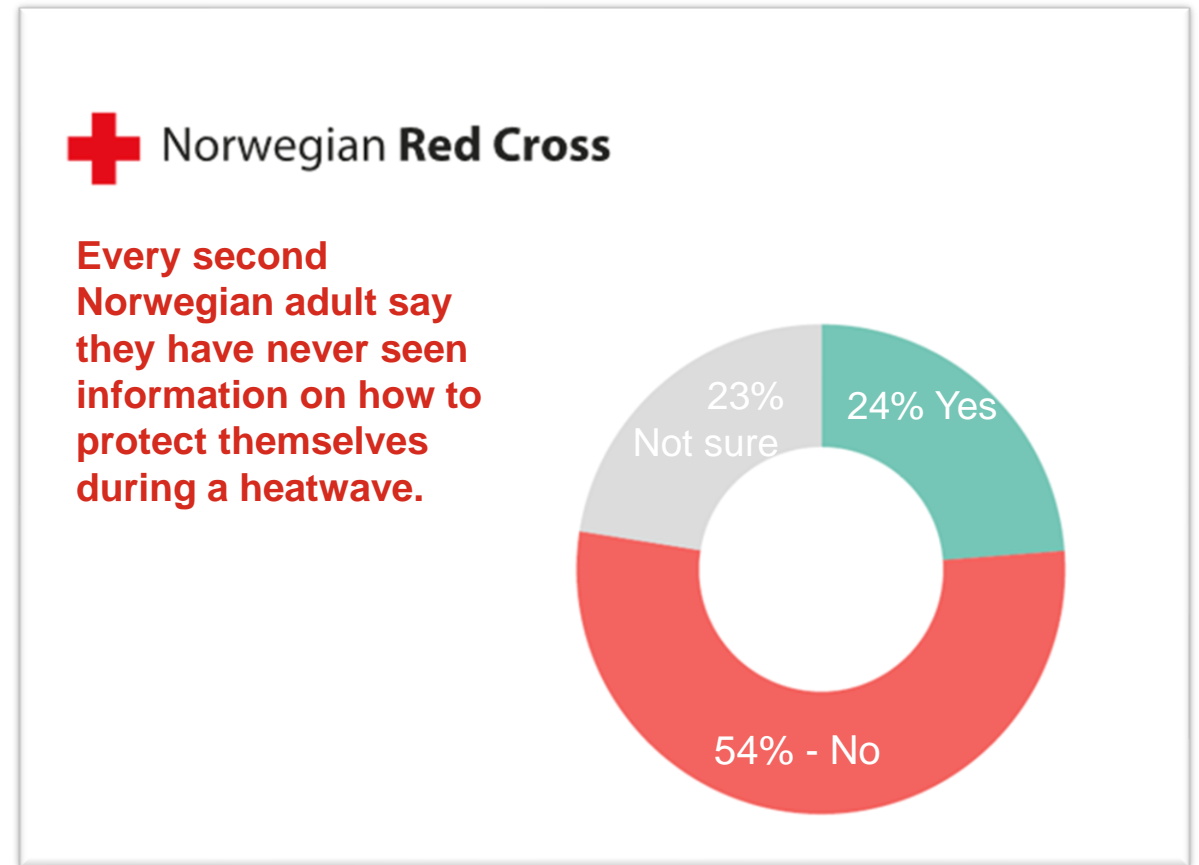


Source: «Feeling the heat. A British Red Cross briefing on heatwaves in the UK»
Survey among 2,000 UK adults from 11th to 15th June 2021. Weighted to be nationally representative of UK adults by age, gender, region and social grade. Conducted by Opinium for the British Red Cross.

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Unpublished.
Survey among 1,054 Norwegian adults from 19th to 30th September 2022. Weighted to be nationally representative of Norwegian adults by gender and region. Conducted by Opinion for the Norwegian Red Cross.

Ensuring evidence-based preparedness and early action



- Knowledge is everything!
 - What impacts do we plan to mitigate?
 - Who is most at risk?
 - Where do we need to be ready to act?
 - When do we activate our plans?
 - Who can help
 - What advice do we give?
 - Where can we (and the public) find more information?

Work together – research scientists, meteorologists, health practitioners, disaster preparedness agencies, and volunteer organisations – to make sure we have:

- a) a common understanding of localized risk, and**
- b) mechanisms for disseminating early warning and acting together when temperatures become extreme.**



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