

Together we are *limitless*

IFRC *limitless*

learnings and insights

IFRC LIMITLESS
YOUTH INNOVATION ACADEMY, 2021 | 2022

The **IFRC Limitless Youth Innovation Academy** is part of the Global Youth Mobilization. The Global Youth Mobilization (GYM) is an initiative powered by the Big 6 World Youth Organisations supporting young people in taking action to improve their lives now and in a post-Covid-19 world. Supported by the World Health Organisation (WHO), through the Covid-19 Solidarity Response Fund, and United Nations Foundation, GYM aims to address the negative impact of the pandemic on young people and support them to build back better.



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Overview



In 2020 one of the most significant health challenges of recent times emerged in Covid-19. It deeply impacted every aspect of our daily life and, as usual, vulnerable communities were the most affected. Multiple lockdowns generated emotional, health, social, and economic issues, it also created a narrative that often painted young people as helping to spread the virus.

The Global Youth Mobilisation initiative was designed to change the narrative around youth and to create a support system for them to develop innovative initiatives to face the problems related to the Covid-19 pandemic in their communities.

During the last year, over **1,000 young volunteers** from **72 countries** were part of Limitless, the Youth Innovation Academy of the IFRC. This program was designed with a capability-building approach to identify young innovators with ideas and build a support system for them. Instead of having a single (or select few) winner as is often seen in a traditional innovation challenge, or instead of acting as a simple funding mechanism, the Limitless Academy sought to connect and support as many young people as possible worldwide, providing them with guidance, mentoring, networks, workshops, and financial support at different stages.

Limitless created a safe space where volunteers developed **333 innovative projects** addressing problems related to mental health, gender-based violence, livelihoods, and food security, among others. **364,000 CHF** were dispersed among the teams across all the phases. These youth-led projects have reached over **300,000 people** in urban, rural, and often underserved communities.

The opportunity that volunteers had in prototyping, testing, and validating their ideas gave them a chance to learn and grow in practice. **50+ experts**, (from within and outside the movement) in user experience, product design, innovation, and prototyping acted as mentors, trainers, and facilitators for the volunteers to help translate the theory and principles to practice.

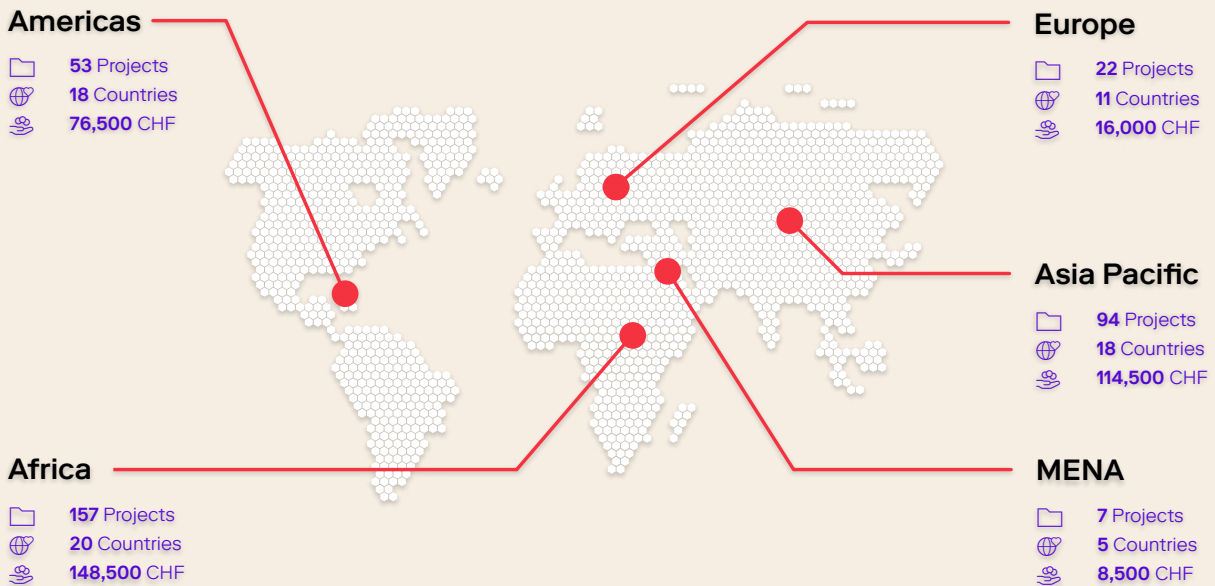
An innovative multimedia production platform designed specifically for the program allowed us to reach people from low-resource environments thanks to extremely low bandwidth functionality and its capacity to support **17 languages**.

The ideas and media products that young people produced went viral. The information, material, and videos of the projects reached over **6 million people**. The YouTube channel has proved extremely popular, young participants' videos have been viewed over a quarter of a million times.

The projects have delivered impact all over the world. Stories have emerged detailing achievements such as reducing anxiety and depression in young people, helping people develop e-commerce and digital livelihoods, reducing stigma, enhancing food security, increasing gender-based violence reporting, and innovatively communicating health messages to young people among many others.

The program has been a great success and has demonstrated, once again, how valuable it is to support young people in developing their ideas to change the world. The following report highlights some of our key insights and learning in the program and then outlines the process we used to deliver it. We hope this is helpful for others considering similar efforts.

Executive Summary of Key Lessons and Insights.



1,000+ youth, **300,000**
community members impacted,
6 million people reached through
promotions of the program.

Numbers only tell part of this story. Young peoples projects tackled issues of food security, mental health, livelihoods, domestic violence, education and many more, [click here](#) to read some of their first hand stories of impact

- Overall, participants reported and demonstrated that they were highly engaged, learned new skills and approaches, built confidence, and were capable of applying their insights into their projects and other work beyond the life of the program.
- Overall the program was highly efficient, the projects impacted over **300,000 community** members with just **364,000 CHF in funding**.
- The impacts of the initiatives were significant and impressive. An overview of these impact stories [can be found here](#)
- Building safe spaces to create, experiment, connect and innovate, and to have autonomy over design and decisions and how to allocate funding, was highly effective at engaging young people and in the development of innovative initiatives at scale.
- A capability-building approach appeared to provide more long-term results and stronger programming overall than previous ‘traditional’ innovation competition approaches facilitated by the Solferino Academy.
- Seed funding is important for volunteers to test their ideas, however, it is necessary to guarantee the rapid disbursement of the money so all participants have a similar time to use the money and develop the idea. Differing bureaucratic processes across the network impeded this.
- The IFRC played an important role in the support system, however, youth volunteers who had strong support systems or a strong innovation focus within their National Societies generally performed better in the program and were more likely to reach the advanced stages.
- Investing in global and IFRC communications of the initiative helped build credibility for youth projects, raise the profile of their initiatives, and supported them in attracting local partners and supporters.
- Combining experts from the Movement with external experts as mentors or facilitators gives volunteers a wider understanding of complicated contexts and brings some fresh ideas to promote innovation in the National Societies.
- Low bandwidth platforms and multilingual approaches (beyond the normal IFRC languages) helped more diverse people, including those from low-resource environments to access this kind of program.
- Efforts to connect youth volunteers globally into a network of innovators were challenging but where successful, helped to facilitate learning, collaboration, and project strengthening.
- Program partners brought expertise, additional support, and new perspectives and skills that could not have been achieved otherwise. Pro Bono partnership support was valued at over **300,000 CHF**.

Key Highlights And Insights Of The Program



Support System: Shifting from a competition or funding mechanism to an academy that invested in capacity

The Limitless Academy was designed with a capability-building approach, which took this program a step forward from traditional innovation challenges. Instead of only asking young people to create a project which we either fund or not, we walk with them side by side on the innovation path. This support system had five main elements: workshops/training, mentoring, funding, peer communication and feedback, and motivation based on the human-centred design approach.

Participants attended a series of workshops/webinars where they learned different innovation tools and methodologies from experienced practitioners. For many, this helped them build confidence in what they could design, and their approach changed. Many shifted from solely reactive or emergency actions and began to ideate innovative, sustainable ways to tackle these problems.

The approach also encouraged people to take more inclusive approaches to design and to use iterative approaches that built on learning and insights as they worked. Being able to practically test and implement the methods they were learning supported a self-discovery and learning process that went beyond theory. Our early evaluations have indicated that this approach has enabled a more sustainable application of insights across projects and ideas.

Prototyping and testing their initiatives before implementing at scale enabled quick feedback, insights, and learning. The early-stage funding provided to the volunteers allowed them to test and develop improvements, to involve intended communities in the design process, and ensure that they were creating something valuable and needed by the communities, or conversely to change direction and approach quickly if needed.

The coaching and mentoring aspects of the program helped participants to discuss problems and challenges they were facing and to work through potential solutions and adaptations to their initiatives. They received personalised and tailored guidance and an accompaniment on what was often a difficult journey where many unexpected challenges arose. The matching process between mentor and mentee is critical here and where we got this right, it proved to be a powerful relationship and success factor for the young person, both in terms of technical skills development but also the motivational support needed. We received very strong feedback from participants to the centrality of this support to the success of their projects.

Each step of this capacity building approach was tied to more funding, ("**Limitless Step By Step — Outlining the Process**" on page 24) participants started with basic training and seed funding, and then as their projects developed they received more intensive support and higher levels of funding. This phased approach allowed a progressive learning journey that moved from basic ideation to more sophisticated development of projects. More advanced training, coaching and

support was provided as the participants grew and developed their skills and confidence. Engagement was extremely strong, large numbers of young people consistently attended training and coaching sessions and drop offs were very low overall ("[Promoting a Community of Innovators" on page 20](#)). The sophistication and impact of the projects also demonstrably deepened as the young people progressed through the phases.

This approach obviously meant a longer process of development than ordinarily seen in innovation competitions and funding mechanisms. It also required much more financial investment in support mechanisms at each stage (beyond the funding provided directly to projects). But it undoubtedly contributed to strong initiatives and a range of other benefits for the youth volunteers, as outlined in the next sections.



“At the beginning of the program my idea was to give humanitarian aid in my community but after the first workshops, I understood that I have to know deeply about the community problems and after that start thinking about innovative sustainable solutions, that is how my innovation was born”

Mike Otieno Odhiambo — Kenya

Trusting our youth and creating spaces to lead



Perhaps the strongest feedback from youth volunteers was that the initiative demonstrated trust in them to develop and implement ideas to improve outcomes for their communities. The autonomy volunteers had to make decisions on the design of their projects and importantly, how to use the funding they received was widely celebrated by participants. This not only communicated a sense of trust and respect from the organisation but also helped them to feel ownership of their work (evidenced by the significant portion still working on their projects beyond their funding provisions) and to develop management and leadership skills.


Volunteers reported that the Limitless program was a safe space to experiment without the fear of failing and the normal repercussions of that. They recognized the value that failing has in the process of learning but also in the journey of designing initiatives alongside and with their communities. Participants reported that they felt more confident in designing and trying other new initiatives.

The investment that IFRC and others placed into communicating about their initiatives (internally and through Social Media) was also highly regarded by the youth volunteers. This resulted in a sense of pride from the recognition of the organisation but it also helped them access local partners and other supporters.

During the process, we recognized that many of the volunteers experienced some feelings of stress, frustration, and demotivation caused by personal issues (some of which related to their own covid situations), complications in the community, and at times insufficient support. We used some basic elements of non-formal education to try to address this but future initiatives would benefit from designing for this eventuality and in particular encouraging local support mechanisms.

The project was globally managed, but worked extensively with regional offices and at times National Societies. This support system proved to be highly efficient in some ways, however, the role of National Societies was crucial. Most of the projects that reached the final stages of the program came from National Societies that had strong support and/or innovation systems for their volunteers.

A major challenge for the program was the disbursement of funds, the internal processes of the network made it complicated to transfer money quickly, particularly for small amounts at scale. In some cases volunteers did not receive their funding for months. Future iterations of a program such as this will need to find more effective and direct disbursement methods.



**"I learned here that my ideas
matter, and it is worth the
effort to make them a reality
because I could prove to myself
that I can lead a project and
make good decisions, even
if I fail I can try again"**

Jennifer Barcenas — Ecuador



Partnering to
build innovative
technology that
promoted inclusion



A global program like this requires a powerful digital platform that enables scale and can process high volumes of information using automated functions. To ensure global inclusivity the platform must also have a sophisticated design that enables engagement in low-bandwidth environments. These types of platforms are normally prohibitively expensive.

Working with our partner Action Lab at Monash University, played an indispensable role. Their team designed pro bono a platform and pipeline that involved three novel technologies to facilitate accessible communication of ideas, multilingual participation, and an efficient and scalable method of promoting feedback and engagement.



A Digital media generator that automated the process to produce stylized and professional media videos that could easily be shared on social media. These videos garnered over 2.5 Million impressions in total.



The media generator's translation pipeline provided automated translation to 17 languages. Translations were verified by students from Monash University's Languages department. This enabled the team to engage with a much wider base of volunteers than we would ordinarily reach through the 4 official languages. Given that most of the RCRC volunteer base do not speak any of these 4 languages this was an essential step for wider inclusivity.



An automated multimedia feedback system that drew from a library of modular pre-recorded clips that were assigned by the AI to each volunteer with a customized video containing advice and suggestions on how they can improve as an innovator. These videos were automatically generated based on the scores given by a global panel of judges.

This powerful tool allowed us to reach young volunteers that normally can not participate because of limited access to technology, limited internet access, and language barriers. The surprising result was that more than 70% of the participants belong to low, or low/middle income countries and most of them with limited access to technology. You can learn more about the platform in this [short video](#).

“I don’t own a computer, the internet is unstable in my community and I only have a basic phone but I could apply, It was an amazing feeling once I received the confirmation email from the Solferino Academy. I didn’t have any problems uploading the videos and the best thing was that I did it directly from my phone”

Chimwemwe Lungu — Malawi

تصوير نفسك بهاتفك الذكي:

1	1	Clean your phone lens
2	2	If you can avoid wearing glasses, do it, because of the reflections
3	3	Pick the best light by facing a window, but try to avoid direct sun and avoid shadows on your face
4	4	Tidy your background, people always look at it
5	5	Have as much depth behind you as your location allows it
6	6	Stand up! You will speak with better energy
7	7	Smile and always look at the lens, not at the screen
8	8	Use your hands
9	9	Film in landscape view
10	10	Use the backmost facing camera, it's better than the selfie one
11	11	Stabilise the phone
12	12	Put yourself as the subject. Horizontally centered in the frame
13	13	No colour correction, or black and white mode
14	14	Have the phone slightly lower than your eyes
15	15	You should wear a neutral outfit, ideally no messages or jewellery (you don't want people over focused on those and not looking at what you are saying)
16	16	Learn your lines, and try to improvise
17	17	Film inside to avoid background noise (close the windows)
18	18	Once you film, don't cut, let the camera roll. If you hesitate, don't worry, keep going, with a little and you're safe! If you can
19	19	When you have said all your lines, smile one last time for one second before moving to stop the camera
20	20	Don't watch your video, and don't stop again if it's not good
21	21	If you are saving your phone, click to lock the best one around you, go to settings / Camera / Record Video. There you should be able to select 1080 HD or 720p
22	22	Share the original video file (do not send with WhatsApp or Messenger. It will either be compressed or lose quality. You should try to avoid any compression applied by the messaging system)

TO FILM YOURSELF WITH YOUR SMARTPHONE:

1	1	Clean your phone lens
2	2	If you can avoid wearing glasses, do it, because of the reflections
3	3	Pick the best light by facing a window, but try to avoid direct sun and avoid shadows on your face
4	4	Tidy your background, people always look at it
5	5	Have as much depth behind you as your location allows it
6	6	Stand up! You will speak with better energy
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22	22	Share the original video file (do not send with WhatsApp or Messenger. It will either be compressed or lose quality. You should try to avoid any compression applied by the messaging system)

POUR VOUS FILMER AVEC VOTRE SMARTPHONE:

1	1	Nettoyez l'objectif de votre téléphone
2	2	Si vous pouvez éviter de porter des lunettes, faites-le, à cause des reflets.
3	3	Choisissez la meilleure lumière possible en faisant face à une fenêtre, mais évitez d'être en direct soleil et les ombres portées sur votre visage.
4	4	Nettoyez votre arrière-plan, les gens le regardent toujours.
5	5	Ayez autant de profondeur derrière vous que votre emplacement le permet.
6	6	Levez-vous ! Vous parlerez avec une meilleure énergie.
7	7	Souriez et regardez toujours l'objectif, pas l'écran.
8	8	Utilisez vos mains.
9	9	Filmez en paysage.
10	10	Utilisez la caméra arrière de votre téléphone, elle est de meilleure qualité que la caméra avant.
11	11	Stabilisez le téléphone.
12	12	Placez le téléphone légèrement plus bas que vos yeux.
13	13	Positionnez-vous au centre de l'image.
14	14	Essayez de composer les couleurs et le mode noir et blanc.
15	15	Portez une tenue neutre, idéalement sans messages ou bijoux (vous ne voulez pas que les gens aient trop concentrés sur vous et l'élément sur lequel vous êtes filmés).
16	16	Apprenez votre texte, entraînez-vous et essayez de vous améliorer.
17	17	Filmez à l'intérieur pour éviter les bruits de fond (fermez les fenêtres).
18	18	Quand vous filmez, ne coupez pas en cas d'hésitation. Laissez la caméra tourner. Vous pourrez toujours éditer la vidéo plus tard si possible.
19	19	Lorsque vous avez fini de dire votre texte, souriez une dernière fois pendant une seconde avant de bouger pour arrêter la caméra.
20	20	Entendez-vous ? Regardez votre vidéo et recommencez-la si elle n'est bonne.
21	21	Essayez d'utiliser la meilleure téléphone à votre disposition. Si possible, utilisez dans un premier temps l'appareil photographique principal.
22	22	Partagez le fichier vidéo original (n'envoyez pas par WhatsApp ou Messenger, mais par email ou par un autre moyen de transmission de fichiers pour éviter toute compression appliquée par le système de messagerie).

ЧТОБЫ СНИТЬ СЕБЯ НА КАМЕРУ СМАРТФОНА:

1	1	Очистите объектив телефона
2	2	Если вы можете не носить очки, сделайте это, потому что из-за отражений
3	3	Выберите лучшее освещение. Обращаясь к солнцу, но старайтесь избежать прямых солнечных лучей и теней от предметов на вашем лице.
4	4	Почистите и подберите фон, ведь люди всегда смотрят на него.
5	5	Поставьте себя немного глубже в кадр, чтобы избежать эффекта сжатости кадра.
6	6	Встаньте! Вы будете говорить с большей энергией.
7	7	Улыбайтесь и всегда смотрите в объектив, а не в экран.
8	8	Используйте руки
9	9	Снимайте в ландшафтном режиме
10	10	Используйте заднюю камеру вашего телефона, она лучше, чем камера для селфи
11	11	Стабилизируйте телефон
12	12	Поставьте себя в центре кадра объектива, горизонтально в центре кадра
13	13	Не используйте цветокоррекцию или черно-белый режим
14	14	Держите телефон немного ниже глаз
15	15	Не носите очки без антибликового покрытия, а также украшения, которые могут отвлекать внимание от вас и вашего сообщения, а также от темы COVID-19
16	16	Изучите свои реплики, потренируйтесь и старайтесь говорить уверенно.
17	17	Снимайте в помещении, чтобы избежать шума с улицы (закройте окна).
18	18	Когда вы снимаете, не останавливайтесь, даже если сомневаетесь, не переключайтесь на другую камеру и не останавливайтесь, пока не закончите. Если вы сомневаетесь, продолжайте снимать, и вы сможете удалить ненужные кадры.
19	19	Когда вы закончили все свои реплики, улыбнитесь и посмотрите еще раз в камеру перед тем, как остановить съемку.
20	20	Посмотрите! Посмотрите свое видео и начните все сначала, если вы не довольны тем, что увидели.
21	21	Если вы хотите избежать сжатия кадра, попробуйте снимать с большей глубиной, используя заднюю камеру / Камера / Запись видео. Там вы сможете выбрать разрешение 1080 HD или 720p.
22	22	Поделитесь оригинальным видеофайлом (не отправляйте в WhatsApp или Messenger, а используйте email или другой способ передачи файлов, чтобы избежать сжатия, применяемого к видео в мессенджерах).

PARA GRABARTE CON TU SMARTPHONE:

1	1	Limpia la lente de tu teléfono
2	2	Si puedes evitar llevar gafas, hazlo, por los reflejos
3	3	Elige la mejor luz mirando hacia una ventana, pero trata de evitar el sol directo y la sombra sobre tu cara
4	4	Ordena tu fondo, la gente siempre se fija en él
5	5	Ten tanta profundidad detrás de ti como tu ubicación te permita
6	6	Porta de pie. Habla con más energía
7	7	Sonríe y mira siempre al objetivo, no a la pantalla
8	8	Utiliza las manos
9	9	Graba en vista de paisaje
10	10	Utiliza la cámara posterior (hacia atrás), es mejor que la del selfie
11	11	Estabiliza el teléfono
12	12	Colócate como sujeto, centrado horizontalmente en el encuadre
13	13	No corrigas el color, ni filmes en blanco y negro
14	14	Ten el teléfono ligeramente más bajo que tus ojos
15	15	Debes llevar un atuendo neutral, idealmente sin mensajes ni joyas (no quieres que la gente se centre demasiado en ellos y no escuches lo que dices)
16	16	Aprende tus frases, entrena y trata de improvisar
17	17	Filma en interiores para evitar el ruido de fondo (cierra las ventanas)
18	18	Una vez que grabes, no cortes, deja que la cámara corra. Si dudas, no te preocupes, sigue con una pequeña pausa y podrás editar la película
19	19	Cuando hayas dicho todas tus frases, sonríe una última vez durante un segundo antes de moverte para detener la cámara
20	20	¡Mírate! Mira tu video y vuelve a empezar si no estás bueno
21	21	Si estás usando tu teléfono, trata de utilizar el mejor teléfono o la cámara. Si estás en el exterior, entra en ajustes / Cámara / Grabar video. Allí deberás poder seleccionar 1080 HD o 720p.
22	22	Comparte el archivo de video original (no lo envíes con WhatsApp o Messenger, sino que envíalo por correo electrónico o por otro medio de transferencia de archivos grande para evitar cualquier compresión aplicada por el sistema de mensajería)

إرشادات من أجل تقديم الفيديو 2

هذا الفيديو يهدف إلى إرشاد المشاركين في كيفية إعداد الفيديو بشكل صحيح.

1	1	تأكد من أن الكاميرا واضحة (انظر إلى الكاميرا)
2	2	إذا كان بإمكانك تجنب ارتداء النظارات، فافعل ذلك، لأن الانعكاسات يمكن أن تكون مشكلة.
3	3	اختر أفضل إضاءة ممكنة. اواجه النافذة، ولكن تجنب أشعة الشمس المباشرة والظلال على وجهك.
4	4	رتب الخلفية الخاصة بك، لأن الناس دائمًا ينظرون إليها.
5	5	كن على مسافة كافية من الكاميرا، حتى تتمكن من رؤية ما تفعل.
6	6	ارتد ملابس محايدة، على الأقل، لا ترتد ملابس مع رسائل أو مجوهرات (لا تريد أن يركز الناس على هذه الأشياء بدلاً من رسالتك).
7	7	تعلم نصوك، وتدرب، وحاول أن تتحدث بطلاقة.
8	8	استخدم يديك.
9	9	أفهم أن الكاميرا أفضل من الكاميرا الأمامية (الخلفية).
10	10	استخدم الكاميرا الخلفية، فهي أفضل من الكاميرا الأمامية.
11	11	استقر الهاتف.
12	12	ضع نفسك في المركز. أفقياً في المركز.
13	13	لا تصحح اللون، ولا تصحح إلى أبيض وأسود.
14	14	ضع الهاتف قليلاً أسفل عينيك.
15	15	لا ترتد ملابس مع رسائل أو مجوهرات (لا تريد أن يركز الناس على هذه الأشياء بدلاً من رسالتك).
16	16	تعلم نصوك، وتدرب، وحاول أن تتحدث بطلاقة.
17	17	أفهم أن الكاميرا أفضل من الكاميرا الأمامية (الخلفية).
18	18	استخدم الكاميرا الخلفية، فهي أفضل من الكاميرا الأمامية.
19	19	استقر الهاتف.
20	20	ضع نفسك في المركز. أفقياً في المركز.
21	21	لا تصحح اللون، ولا تصحح إلى أبيض وأسود.
22	22	ضع الهاتف قليلاً أسفل عينيك.

Guidelines for Video submission

Duration of video: 5 minutes max (Do not forget to record it horizontally)

Languages: You can submit your video in English, French, Spanish or Arabic

1	1	Take a minute to introduce yourself (or your team) and which National Society you are from.
2	2	Take this opportunity to introduce your idea or solution, mentioning the link to the COVID-19 challenge you are trying to address.
3	3	Spent the next two minutes explaining the process of designing your prototype.
4	4	Mention the innovative tools and approaches that you used to get information that helped with the design process.
5	5	Mention the main innovation or value proposition of your initiative and the possible partners or stakeholders you had in the process.
6	6	Hint: link it back to the academy workshops.
7	7	Take the last two minutes to share with us your findings and savings from testing your prototype.
8	8	Based on the testing process, what is the potential for future impact of your solution?
9	9	If you were to receive further seed funding, what would you use it for? (Consider that the prototyping could last between 4 and 6 months).

Lineamiento para el envío del Video 2

Duración del video: 5 minutos max (No olvidar grabar de forma horizontal)

Idiomas - Puedes enviar tu video en inglés, francés, español y árabe

1	1	Toma un minuto para presentarte (o presentar a tu equipo) y mencionar de qué Sociedad Nacional eres.
2	2	Aprovecha esta oportunidad para presentar tu idea o solución, mencionando cómo se relaciona con el reto de COVID-19 que estás tratando de resolver.
3	3	Utiliza los próximos dos minutos para explicar el proceso de diseño de tu prototipo.
4	4	Menciona las herramientas y enfoques innovadores que utilizaste para obtener la información necesaria que te ayudó en el proceso de diseño.
5	5	Menciona la principal innovación o propuesta de valor de tu iniciativa y los posibles aliados o actores clave en los que te apoyaste en el proceso.
6	6	Tipo: Puedes guarte con los talleres que recibiste.
7	7	Toma los últimos dos minutos para compartir con nosotros tus hallazgos y aprendizajes del testing de tu prototipo.
8	8	Basado en el proceso de testing, ¿cuál es el potencial de impacto de tu iniciativa en el futuro?
9	9	Si recibieras un financiamiento extra, ¿para qué lo utilizarías? (Considera que el proceso de prototipado podría durar entre 4 y 6 meses).

Instructions pour la soumission de la vidéo

Durée de la vidéo : 5 minutes max (à noter que l'enregistrement doit être en mode horizontal)

Langues - Vous pouvez soumettre votre vidéo en anglais, français, espagnol ou arabe.

1	1	Prenez une minute pour vous présenter (ou votre équipe) et indiquer à quelle Société Nationale vous appartenez.
2	2	Cette minute servira aussi à présenter votre idée ou votre solution et à indiquer en quel elle contribue aux activités que vous menez en lien avec le COVID-19.
3	3	Les deux minutes suivantes seront utilisées pour expliquer le processus de conception de votre prototype.
4	4	Parlez des outils et des approches que vous avez utilisés pour obtenir des informations utiles pour la conception de votre prototype.
5	5	Expliquez la principale innovation ou valeur ajoutée apportée par votre initiative et indiquez, le cas échéant, les partenaires ou parties prenantes avec qui vous avez collaboré dans le processus.
6	6	Aide : rappelez-vous du contenu des ateliers de l'Académie.
7	7	Prenez les deux dernières minutes pour présenter vos constatés et vos enseignements que vous avez tirés de la mise à l'épreuve de votre prototype.
8	8	Sur la base des résultats de la mise à l'épreuve, quel est le potentiel d'impact de votre solution à l'avenir ?
9	9	Si vous étiez amenés à recevoir davantage de fonds de démarrage, comment les utiliseriez-vous ? (Tenez compte du fait que la prochaine phase pourrait durer entre 4 et 6 semaines).

Two examples of guidelines for video submissions or and filming with a smart phone. The guidelines were translated all along the process.

Promoting a Community of Innovators



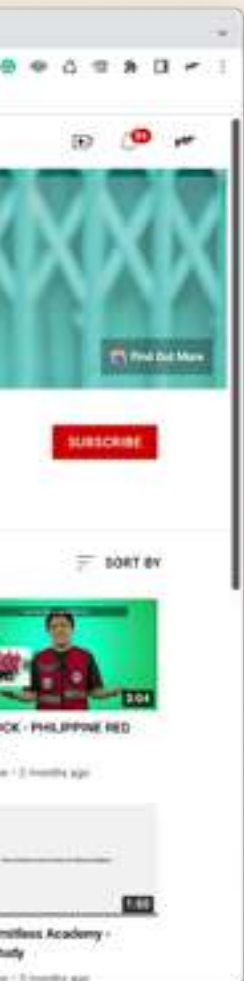
A key design feature of the Limitless initiative was to attempt to build a global network of youth innovators who could collaborate and learn from each other and receive feedback from other peers and experts. This proved challenging but where we were able to succeed the impacts were noteworthy. We explored different online platforms for this that are currently commonly used including LinkedIn, whatsapp, Facebook etc but each had its limitations or barriers.

All videos produced by young people of their initiatives were published on a dedicated YouTube channel and people were encouraged to comment and provide feedback there. Many thousands of comments were received that provided support, encouragement and less frequently, feedback to the youth.

Numerous global workshops were also held to facilitate cross learning, which provided some opportunities for peer discussion and input. We also established a community within the Discord platform which proved successful for some participants, particularly in their relationship with mentors. However over time, volunteers went beyond and started connecting with each other and interchanging ideas, and providing support. Although it was not widespread, some of them created strong ties with volunteers from other countries and in a few cases, they included each other in their projects as part of the team.

Some volunteers responded well to the horizontal dynamic built on Discord and considered it as part of the safe space created on the Limitless Academy and an effective way to communicate and learn from/with people from other countries.

Future iterations of Limitless should consider how the program can more effectively support this networking at scale, as the learning benefits, observable in those able to engage with it, were substantial.



We received over 700 submissions in various languages on the platform or via email. Almost all of these were published on [our Limitless YouTube channel](#). These videos really struck a chord in the network, amassing over 250,000 views, thousands of encouraging comments and gathering over 7,500 subscribers for the Youtube channel.

“After finishing Phase 3 I connected with a volunteer from Nepal, and ask for her support and advice in my project, now she is an external advisor for the Awake project. This wouldn't have been possible without Discord... I want to be a mentor in the next edition”

Meshak Otieno — Kenya



Three levels that recognise the efforts and the development of the help understand the processus better

Limitless Step By Step — Outlining the Process



Phase One: Call To Action

In May 2021, we launched the global call to action for the Red Cross Red Crescent youth to apply for Limitless. With pro bono translation support from our partner Monash University's students, the recruitment materials were translated and shared in 17 languages.

In addition to IFRC, Solferino Academy, and National Societies spreading the word for young volunteers and staff, we also had over 40 young Limitless ambassadors from across the globe sharing the call for applications within their network, helping us to reach young RCRC innovators and encouraging them to apply.

To inspire young applicants and help them to learn basic innovation skills, develop ideas and prepare their submissions, we organized a series of open for all webinars together with innovation experts from the IFRC network and our media partner Al Jazeera AJ+. These webinars included:

- Designing Resilience by the Netherlands Red Cross.
- Innovative approaches for supporting communities during Covid-19 by the British Red Cross.
- How to make compelling short videos that work in social media by AJ+.
- The SPRINT innovation journey — From challenge to action by the Danish Red Cross.
- How to fall in love with a problem and survive solving it by the Ecuadorian Red Cross.
- Limitless Information sessions by Solferino Academy.


These webinars were all offered in English, French, Spanish and Arabic. In total, there were 1,200 participants.

To ensure wider, more inclusive global engagement also from young people with limited access to internet, technology and other related resources, and/or not speaking any of the 4 official languages, together with Monash University Action Lab we developed an innovative and inclusive platform that functioned in low bandwidth and in 17 languages.


This platform autonomously produced, polished and (with manual moderation) published the application videos submitted by young people. The system also provided the moderators and later the viewers with machine translations, verified by students from Monash University, for submissions in languages other than English. The platform was very popular with over 36,000 views.

Young people would apply for the Innovation Academy through the platform by sharing their innovation story as a short video in any of the 17 languages. Prior to their final application, young people were also encouraged to share their initial ideas online with the hashtag #LimitlessIFRC to get peer support and feedback.

We received over 700 submissions in various languages on the platform or via email. Almost all of these were published on [our Limitless YouTube channel](#). These videos really struck a chord in the network, amassing over 250,000 views, thousands of encouraging comments and gathering over 7,500 subscribers for the Youtube channel.

700 
Submissions

7,500 
Youtube
Subscribers

250,000 
Views

Phase Two: Exploring Innovation

From the over 700 submissions we received, our panel of 32 of internal and external reviewers selected a total of 333 initiatives from 62 countries to join the Innovation Academy (Annex 1). The selected teams were given an opportunity to develop new innovation skills, seed funding to prototype and test their ideas, and document their learnings.

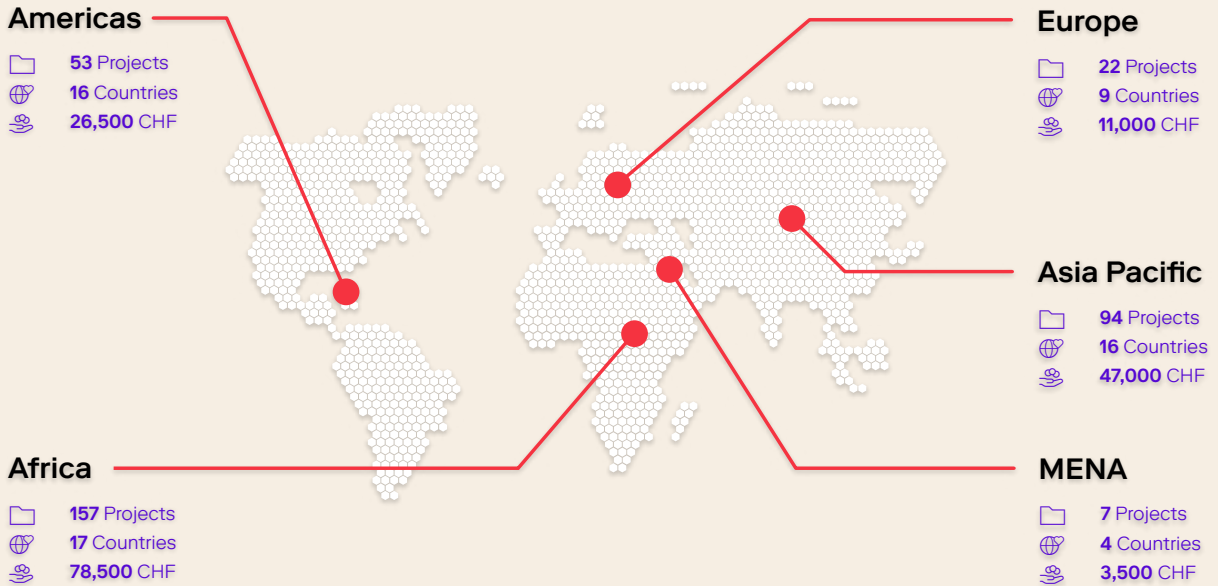
This phase had two parts:

- 1 Innovation Academy participants had access to specialised global workshops on innovation tools and processes, allowing them to strengthen their initial initiative, receive feedback from experts and learn more about the innovation process.

WORKSHOP TITLE	NATIONAL SOCIETY	LANGUAGES	ATTENDEES
Full Circle: Designing with and for Humanitarian needs	510/The Netherlands Red Cross	French, Spanish, English, Arabic	379 participants in six workshops
Are you solving the right problem?	The Netherlands Red Cross	French, English	209 participants in four workshops
Thinking Outside the Box: Ideation	Ecuador Red Cross	French, Spanish, English, Arabic	93 participants
Innovation Wayfinding: Creating a Compass and Map for the Future	Australian Red Cross	French, English, Arabic	109 participants in two workshops
Shape your idea from scratch: Rapid Prototyping	Ecuador Red Cross	French, Spanish	73 participants
Choosing the right path: Validation	Ecuador Red Cross	French, Spanish, English, Arabic	68 participants
The sustainability of your project	Ecuador Red Cross	French, Spanish, English, Arabic	70 participants

- 2 After the workshops finished, the young innovators worked on strengthening their initial idea, and developed a basic prototype to apply as a pilot with their communities. For this, each team received 500 CHF as seed funding. In total we distributed 166,500 CHF to the teams.

This process allowed the participants to test their idea and its potential impacts, as well as receive feedback and insights from the communities for further iteration.



PROJECTS AND FUNDING PER REGION (PHASE 2)

REGION	PROJECTS	COUNTRIES	AMOUNT CHF
TOTAL	333	62	166,500

At the end of the second phase, Limitless teams submitted 5-minute videos detailing how they had used some of the tools and learnings from the workshops; how they designed, built and tested their prototype; what their findings were; what insights their testing provided about the potential impact of their solution; and their next steps. Over 800 young innovators from 302 teams were part of this stage.

Phase Three: Advanced Prototyping

From the 302 videos submitted at the end of phase two, a panel of 25 internal and external reviewers selected 60 projects from 19 countries to go forward (Annex 2). During phase three, the participants learned more advanced skills in innovation, and received personalised support through mentoring, allowing them to:

- 1 Develop a more advanced prototype and improve the value proposition of their innovation;
- 2 Get inspired and learn how to face challenges when designing their project;
- 3 Connect their idea to their NS's ongoing activities to enable implementation; and
- 4 Develop basic sustainability and implementation plan.

This phase had two main elements happening simultaneously to ensure that with the support of their mentors, the participants could apply their new skills and knowledge in their initiatives.

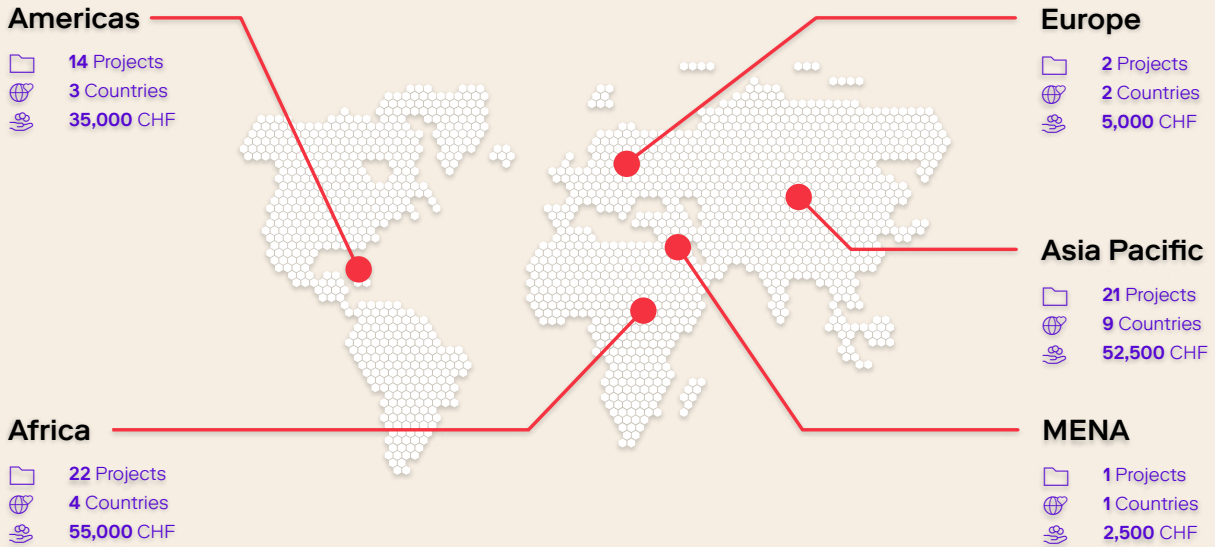
- 1 A series of innovation workshops, giving the participants better tools to understand the feedback received from the communities and turn it into valuable insights to improve their project. Participants also got useful advice about how to “pitch”, present and showcase their innovations, aiming at helping them to gain support from their National Societies or other potential partners.

In addition, the participants had the chance to join an inspirational and motivational session with a young social innovator and entrepreneur. 287 young volunteers attended 5 workshops by one National Society, two universities, and an independent consultant.

WORKSHOP TITLE	NS/ORGANISATION	LANGUAGE	ATTENDEES
Advanced prototyping and value proposition	Australian Red Cross	Arabic, English, Spanish, French	67 participants
Advanced Prototyping: prototyping logic	Catholic University of Chile	Arabic, English, Spanish, French	53 participants
Motivation and Inspiration	York University	Arabic, English, Spanish, French	65 participants
Pitching: The whole world is a stage	Francien Stigter	Arabic, English, Spanish, French	102 participants in two workshops

- 2 We designed a mentoring process to provide personalized support to the teams and to help them improve their initiatives. 26 experts on UX design, design, innovation, prototyping, and entrepreneurship joined as mentors.

For five weeks, each team received 1-hour mentoring sessions once a week. During this time, with the support of their mentors, the teams designed a more advanced prototype, a basic budget, and an implementation plan. They then tested their initiatives in the communities for further feedback and iteration. Each team received 2,500 CHF as seed funding. In total, we disbursed 150,000 CHF among the teams.



PROJECTS AND FUNDING PER REGION

REGION	PROJECTS	COUNTRIES	AMOUNT CHF
TOTAL	60	19	150,000

The 60 teams prepared a 3-minute video presenting the results of their second prototype and the next steps for their initiatives. 208 young volunteers were part of this phase.

Phase Four: Implementing The Ideas

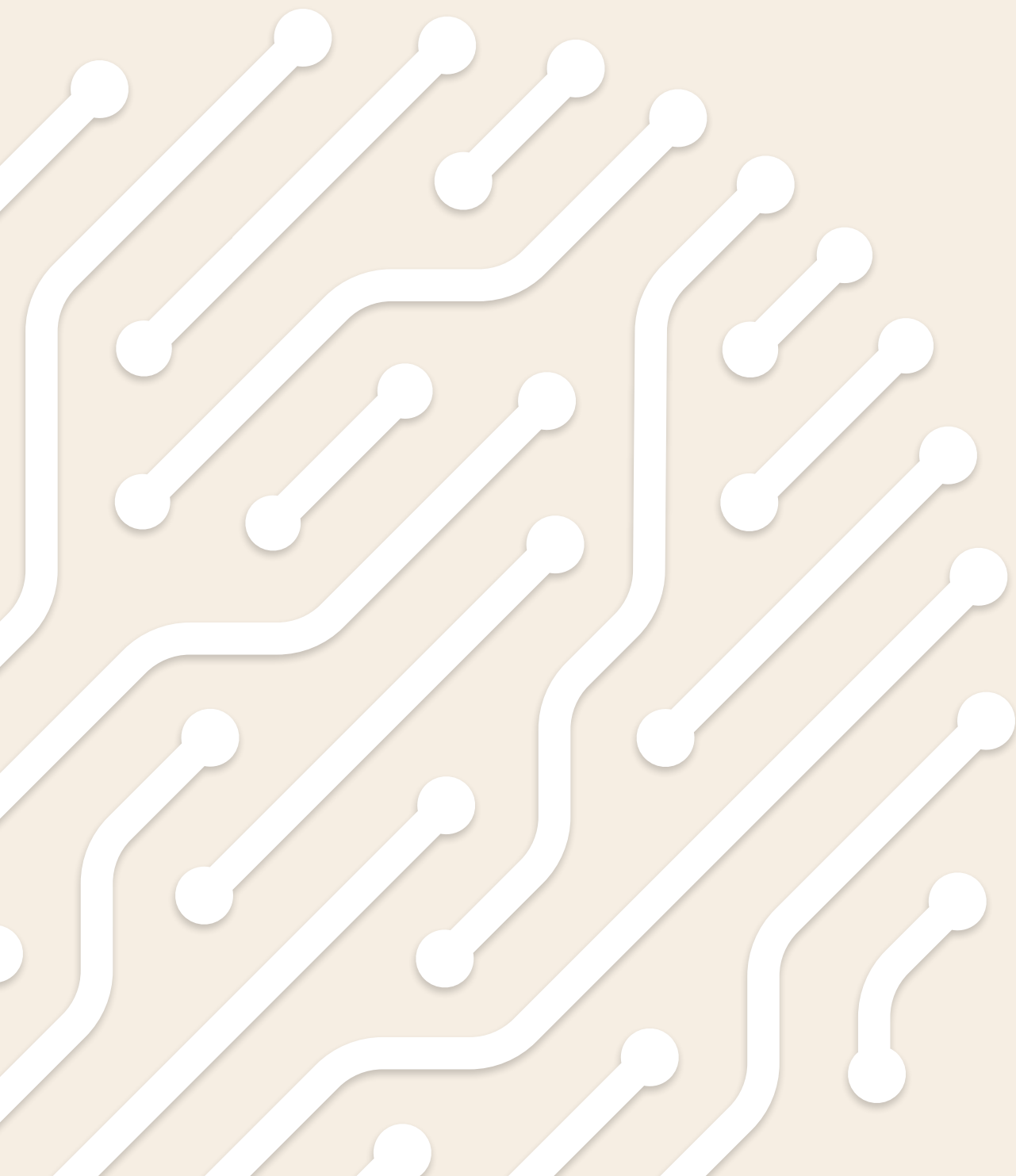
A panel of 12 reviewers from within the RCRC Movement selected 10 Finalists from 8 National societies. These ten teams had the opportunity to pitch their projects during the 23rd session of the IFRC General Assembly in June 2022. During both the live GA event and in a virtual side event, people from around the globe voted for their favorite initiatives. Projects receiving the most votes were selected as the top three innovations of Limitless.

All ten finalists received extra funding to implement their innovations. The top three received 10,000 CHF each, and the seven others received 2,500 CHF each.




























LIMITLESS FINALISTS

REGION	NATIONAL SOCIETY	TEAM LEADER	AMOUNT CHF
ASIA PACIFIC	Nepal	VERTICAL HIDROPHINIC FARMING	10,000
	Philippines	ECO BRICK	2,500
	Thailand	YOU DEE	2,500
AMERICA	Colombia	DOMPI	2,500
	Ecuador	RUAH	2,500
	Ecuador	TU DILO	10,000
AFRICA	Kenya	AWAKE	2,500
	Kenya	VIJANA TUPO	2,500
	Uganda	OPEN STREET MAP GBV	10,000
MENA	Egypt	JQA	2,500
TOTAL			47,500

Annexes



Annexe 1: Phase 2 Number Of Selected Submissions Per Country And Funding Provided

NATIONAL SOCIETY	SUBMISSIONS	AMOUNT CHF	
American RC	2	1,000	
Antigua and Barbuda RC	1	500	
Argentina RC	1	500	
Armenian RC	6	3,000	
Australian RC	2	1,000	
Bangladesh RC	15	7,500	
Bolivia RC	1	500	
British RC	1	500	
Burundi RC	2	1,000	
Cambodia RC	1	500	
Cameroon RC	1	500	
China RC	6	3,000	
Colombia RC	3	1,500	
Comoros RC	1	500	
Costa Rica RC	2	1,000	
Danish RC	1	500	
Democratic Republic of Congo RC	2	1,000	
Ecuador RC	22	11,000	
Egypt RC	2	1,000	
El Salvador RC	2	1,000	
Fiji RC	6	3,000	
French RC	2	1,000	
Gabon RC	1	500	
Georgia RC	1	500	
Ghana RC	2	1,000	
Grenada RC	1	500	
Guatemala RC	2	1,000	

NATIONAL SOCIETY	SUBMISSIONS	AMOUNT CHF	
Haiti RC	2	1,000	
Honduras RC	5	2,500	
Indian RC	4	2,000	
Indonesia RC	9	4,500	
Iran RC	2	1,000	
Italian RC	1	500	
Japanese RC	2	1,000	
Kazakstan RC	1	500	
Kenya RC	48	24,000	
Laos RC	1	500	
Lebanon RC	1	500	
Lesotho RC	1	500	
Malawi RC	2	1,000	
Malaysia RC	2	1,000	
Mexico RC	3	1,500	
Mozambique RC	1	500	
Namibia RC	1	500	
Nepal RC	8	4,000	
Nigeria RC	3	1,500	
Pakistan RC	9	4,500	
Philippines RC	24	12,000	
Portugal RC	7	3,500	
Rwanda RC	7	3,500	
Sri Lanka RC	3	1,500	
Sudanese RC	1	500	
Suriname RC	1	500	
Syrian RC	1	500	
Thailand RC	1	500	
Trinidad and Tobago RC	2	1,000	
Turkish RC	3	1,500	
Uganda RC	76	38,000	
Uruguay RC	3	1,500	
Vietnam RC	1	500	
Zambia RC	2	1,000	
Zimbabwe RC	6	3,000	

Annexe 2: Phase 3 Number Of Selected Submissions Per Country And Funding Provided

PROJECTS AND FUNDING PER COUNTRY

REGION	NATIONAL SOCIETY	PROJECTS	AMOUNT CHF
ASIA PACIFIC	Australia	1	2,500
	Bangladesh	2	5,000
	Indonesia	3	7,500
	Japan	1	2,500
	Nepal	2	5,000
	Pakistan	2	5,000
	Philippines	8	20,000
	Sri Lanka	1	2,500
	Thailand	1	2,500
AMERICA	Colombia	1	2,500
	Ecuador	12	30,000
	Surinam	1	2,500
AFRICA	Burundi	1	2,500
	Kenya	10	25,000
	Nigeria	2	5,000
	Uganda	9	22,500
EUROPE	Denmark	1	2,500
	Portugal	1	2,500
MENA	Egypt	1	2,500
TOTAL		60	150,000

Appendix: Feedback Process

In order to get as much feedback as possible and capture learnings and insights from the program we organized a series of meetings with

- **Feedback session with phase 2 participants:** 47 team leaders were part of this session, we talk about the platform, innovation journey, application process, workshops, funding, and impact.
- **Feedback session with Phase 3 participants:** 31 team leaders were part of this session, we talk about the platform, innovation journey, application process, workshops, funding, impact, mentoring process, and communication platform.
- **Individual feedback session with phase 4 participants:** 8 team leaders were part of this individual session, we talk about the platform, innovation journey, application process, workshops, funding, impact, mentoring process, communication platform, and pitch in the IFRC General Assembly
- **Feedback session with mentors:** 19 mentors attended this session, we analyzed the mentoring process, communication with volunteers and platforms for this task.
- **Feedback session with Monash University:** This session was a 1-1 meeting with one member of the team who developed the limitless platform. In this meeting, we explore the insights about the platform during the whole program. They also provided feedback from the judges of the projects.

The IFRC Limitless Youth Innovation Academy is part of the Global Youth Mobilization.

The [Global Youth Mobilization](#) (GYM) is an initiative powered by the Big 6 world youth Organisations supporting young people in taking action to improve their lives now and in a post-Covid-19 world. Supported by the World Health Organisation, through the Covid-19 Solidarity Response Fund, and United Nations Foundation, GYM aims to address the negative impact of the pandemic on young people and support them to build back better.



Together we are *limitless*