Volunteers, top priorities in North Africa

National Societies have already launched initiatives to develop volunteering

Following the successful celebration of International Volunteer Day, last December 5th, the National Societies of Morocco, Algier, Tunis, Lybia and Egypt have decided to scale up their initiatives to develop volunteering in their own country. End of December, a regional seminar was organised jointly by Morocco RC and Tunisian RC, to develop Volunteers Management and Volunteers participation in decision making at all levels in the National Societies, regional level and international level.

The workshop focused on issues such as: Initiate a process to share and collect experiences, best practices, and lessons learnt in volunteers’ management within the region; Develop possible volunteers’ management tools and methods in the region in different situations (peace, emergencies, health…).

Draft recommendations for the development of volunteers and youth in the region to be presented during the fifth MENA conference in Morocco 2006.

Contact for further information: Anne Leclerc, ae.leclerc@ifrc.org

Scaling up Volunteer Development

VolunteerPLUS

A scaled up Volunteer Global Program 2006-09 will provide effective and quality support to National Societies to improve their own volunteers’ management capacity.

In the context of Federation of Future, by 2010, National Societies will demonstrate that they have realigned their programmes to meet priority needs, and are implementing appropriate and effective community-based programmes and are effective in mobilizing civil society for voluntary service, and in attracting more volunteers and resources for their work.

The Federation has identified 5 main directions for scaling up:

- Volunteer contribution during all kind of emergencies, especially on disasters response and public health will be effectively and efficiently managed by National Societies.
- National Societies will increase their volunteer management capacity with support from network of accredited International Practitioners
- Federation will Operational Alliances with international organisations on issues, such as community development, poverty alleviation, volunteerism and legislation, insurance and impact measurement
- Global Information Systems for ALL, National Societies, volunteers, staff and other partners will share tools, case studies and profiles. Web portal is developed, including regional initiatives.
- Federation governance will active international advocacy within Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement by organising meeting and conference with support of Ad-hoc Group on Volunteering.
Volunteers campaigning to ban landmines in Poland

A new generation of volunteers are joining the Polish Red Cross (PRC). They are involved in the global campaign to ban landmines, in cooperation with Mines Action Canada.

Together with the International Humanitarian Law Dissemination Center of the PRC are five volunteers; Lidia Szafaryn, Hanna Jodelka, Karolina Walczuk, Marcin Menkes and Ewelina Wojciechowska, all of whom from Warsaw University. These volunteers demonstrate the willingness of university students to give of their time, knowledge and energy for a good cause.

These volunteers, involved with the campaign which targets youth, work diligently in order to produce readily available information regarding landmines. The dissemination tools and information focuses on explaining the landmine problem on a global and national level and how students and youth can get involved in advocacy, awareness and lobbying efforts in their communities and schools.

In addition, Lidia Szafaryn represented youth from Poland at the 6th Meeting of States Party (6MSP) to the Mine Ban Convention, as part of an international youth symposium in Zagreb, Croatia. This experience allowed her to meet youth from mine-affected countries from all over the world, and share their experiences – from landmine survivor stories to creating landmine awareness and mine risk education.

These five volunteers, before being involved, were not fully aware of landmines in Poland and around the world. The enthusiasm of these youth and their recognition of the importance of establishing such a campaign in Poland, serves as a driving force to see this project through to a successful end. They are a shining example of how university students are involved within the Red Cross/Crescent movement, and how volunteers are essential to any campaign.

Accident coverage for volunteers

The secretariat is conducting a survey to analyse current situation regarding accident coverage for volunteers.

National Societies have been contacted to fill a questionnaire to identify their situation and needs. It seems National Societies are challenged and are permanently struggling with the important issue of covering their own volunteers during an activity directed by a Red Cross or Red Crescent National Society. The questionnaire, once analysed should provide accurate information on number of volunteers to cover, number of National Societies already covering their volunteers and number of National Societies interested to join a common initiative. This insurance coverage should be considered only as subsidiary. It means the coverage operates only if the policyholder does not have any other benefit programs or private insurances.

Lucrecia Cruz Mamani
Bolivia Red Cross

Manager Project
“Safe and healthy community”
In the Red Cross since March 1998.

“I always wanted to train people on how to prevent and cope with disasters and emergencies - I’m so proud that we already created many local educational teams in the communities we have been worked during the last years. I hope to be able to implement even more community projects.”

Involved constantly with vulnerable community in the capital city suburbs area (La Paz) where she lives, Lucrecia has joined the Bolivian Red Cross in 1998. She is now a well known community practitioner, with high reputation amongst the communities she assists. Currently, project manager “Safe and healthy community”, Lucrecia wants to do even more. “I always wanted to train people on how to prevent and cope with disasters and emergencies - I’m so proud that we already created many local educational teams in the communities we have been worked during the last years. I hope to be able to implement even more community projects.”
Measuring Volunteer performance in Nepal

Nepal Red Cross has applied the simple but ground breaking performance measurement tool known as VIVA.

Performance measurement and accountability have become increasingly important in the sphere of voluntary action. Volunteer Investment and Value Audit (VIVA) is a measurement tool that assesses the ‘outputs’ in relation to the ‘inputs’. Simply said the method indicates the return of investment of every CHF in a volunteer program in form of volunteer hours. If you invest 10,000 CHF in your volunteer program and get 50,000 CHF in return in form of volunteer hours, your VIVA ratio is 1:5. VIVA provides indicators of the scale and significance of voluntary working.

VIVA has been used in Europe and UK since 1996. The Nepal Red Cross decided to audit two programs: An HIV/AIDS prevention program in Kavrepalanchok District and an earthquake preparedness program in Kathmandu.

The HIV/AIDS prevention program, more than 20,000 beneficiaries, 774 volunteers and 2 staff members, total cost approx. 250,000 Nepali Rupees. The volunteer hours are valued at approx. 2.25 million Nepali Rupees. This gives a VIVA ratio at almost 1:9.

The earthquake preparedness program, more than 250,000 beneficiaries, the ratio of approx: 1:1. This is not a surprise. Disaster preparedness programs do not involve a lot of volunteer, but the preparation of communities is essential when the disaster strikes.

The Nepal Red Cross will now use the VIVA tool, to open up for internal discussion on program efficiency, secondly to show the public and the donors the high financial contribution of the Nepal Red Cross volunteers and finally to scrutinize the two programs to see if further improvement can be achieved.

If you want to know more about the VIVA: http://www.ivr.org.uk/vivahelpguide.htm or contact Nepal Red Cross, Sudarshan Adhikari and Ramesh Kumar Paudel at orgmgmt@nrcs.org

Zakir Soltanov
Azerbaijan Red Crescent Society

“I am 20 years old and I live in Baku where I am involved in the organization of Red Crescent blood donation campaigns as well as dissemination activities. It is almost two years that I am a volunteer of the Azerbaijan Red Crescent.

By my opinion providing assistance to people is one of the best things and when I learned that it is within the principals of the Movement I joined the Red Crescent with great pleasure. In differences with other organizations, here, in the Azerbaijan Red Crescent the volunteers are heard, their ideas are supported and realized as far as possible. I think that this is also the main difference between the Movement and other institutions.

I am a regular blood donor of a person ill and I would like to express my thanks to the Red Crescent people, who created for me condition to provide assistance. I have an opportunity to share my experience and be a real example for the participants of seminars on blood donor recruitment, which I usually carry out. At the same time, I am a trainer on dissemination of International Humanitarian Law. I think that for our country that is in the situation unresolved conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, this kind of seminars has great importance.

I hope that all our activities would not go in vain and we will see benefits in future. At the same time my expectations are that our activities will be more appreciated and the most honorable work – volunteer’s work will be more expanded.”
Volunteers and migration
Permanent office of the Mediterranean Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies

The Permanent Office of the Mediterranean Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies hosted by the Spanish Red Cross is organizing a technical workshop in Barcelona (15th to 17th of March, 2006) entitled “Migrants in the Mediterranean region and the role of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies”.

The issue of Migration has been discussed during seven Mediterranean Conferences (1980, 1982, 1984, 1986, 1994, 1997 and 2000). The creation of a working group regarding migration has been requested. In response, National Societies representatives are invited to participate and the debate over the crossroad of Migration issues.

Amongst important issues to be discussed, sessions will be organised to identify roles and responsibilities of volunteers and their unique value added when it comes to assessment, analysis and response.

Contact for further information: Fidel Font, fidel.font@cruzroja.es, +34 93 542 12 02

Promotion material available for National Societies

Secretariat, with support from British Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross and Swedish Red Cross, has produced promotion material to be used by National Societies to promote volunteer development. Already available on request: badge (see photo), folder, bookmark, sticker, and posters. Stand alone for exhibition are also being produced to be available on loan when organising events.

Do not hesitate to contact us for further information. Lisa Michael (lisa.michael@ifrc.org) and Jean-François Goulay (jf.goulay@ifrc.org)

Please send your comments, photos, profiles and suggestions to:

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Organizational Development Department
P.O. Box 372 - CH-1211 Geneva 19 - Switzerland
E-mail: secretariat@ifrc.org
Web site: www.ifrc.org
Electronic version: volunteering@ifrc.org

Send profiles of your volunteers

Profiles/stories will be published on the Federation website, at different sections. Some will also be inserted in the 4 issues of “Volunteers Newsletter”.

To highlight the Federation diversity, we are gathering profiles/stories from all regions. We would like to present men and women; young and old; project leaders, members of boards and committees and volunteers.

What is needed ? – The text and a photo !!!
Please have a look at the profiles posted at the Federation Website - youth section, http://www.ifrc.org/youth/volprofiles/volprofiles.asp .

Send it as a jpg file, do not make the quality less than Medium when saving the image. Please return text (English, French or Spanish) together with a photo of the volunteer interviewed - maximum 5-10 for each National Society- to: Federation Secretariat – Jean-François Goulay, jf.goulay@ifrc.org

Your contributions are greatly valued.

Sandra Miller
Cayman Islands Red Cross

For over twenty years Sandra Miller has been a volunteer. “The attraction of having First Aid and CPR training and then using this ability to help others was what made me join the Red Cross,” she admits.

As much as she is focused on her community, Ms. Miller has also found a calling in ensuring that volunteers and staff are taken care of.

During the Hurricane Ivan operation in September of 2004 her role was to ensure that staff and volunteers got their meals, water, and sometimes even the occasional cup of coffee.

“I have matured to realize that the Red Cross is not just about the Cayman Islands,” she explains. “It is the positive representation around the world that this movement has influenced. This is the responsibility I have in listening to people in confidence and helping revamp situations.”

Ms. Miller is a single parent to her eight year old daughter Oksana, the Red Cross “has become my hobby”. A hobby she takes very seriously.