VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT INCLUDING YOUTH

Taken from: Working with communities: a toolbox IFRC

This section is intended to supplement the more detailed guidance given in Federation documents such as the Branch Development Training Manual, The Federation's Volunteer Policy and Federation Volunteer Service: Volunteer Management Cycle.

What is it?

Most societies have traditions of helping others, such as family, neighbors, and those affected by poverty, sickness or disaster. Developing a volunteer management system at the community level is an extension of this willingness to volunteer and help others. Engaging volunteers is one of the fundamental principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and is essential to our work. The strength and existence of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies depend much on volunteers who offer their time and resources to the Movement for no gain.

A Red Cross and Red Crescent member is a person who has formally agreed to the conditions of membership as required under their National Societies' constitution or rules, and is usually entitled to elect representatives of governing bodies and to stand for elections. Red Cross/ Red Crescent volunteers may or may not be members of their National Society[1].

> Example:
> A member of the public who carries out voluntary activities offering his/her skills, knowledge and expertise to help vulnerable people, not motivated by desire of financial and material gain abiding by the Society's constitution, rules and regulations *(Southern Africa Branch Development)*

Use this tool to…

- Organize a large scale event such as a measles vaccination or immunization campaign, distribution of mosquito nets, or awareness raising on diarrhea; volunteers can assist in all aspects of the campaign
- Reach all areas of the community to raise awareness on an issue such as HIV/AIDS, general health and hygiene, water sanitation, disease prevention and health promotion, disaster preparedness and mitigation measures, community rescue and relief
- Emergency relief distribution such as food parcels, hygiene kits, clothes
- Provide interim care in emergencies through First Aid and Safety Services
- Actively engage youth in community work and recreational activities
- Form committees on disaster management, community contingency plans
- Organize a clean-up campaign in the community to prepare against situations such as Dengue Fever or malaria
- Organize social services which are not available through the government for the elderly, actions with people with disabilities, distribution of second hand articles, or activities for displaced people
- Promote advocacy campaigns against discrimination
- Involve youth volunteers to plan and implement peer-to-peer activities with the younger groups of the community

It is not recommended to use a volunteer management approach if the project is short term and people will be paid including per diems. This can have long term negative impact

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[1] Policy Volunteering, Decision 15, 12th Session of the General Assembly, 1999
http://www.ifrc.org/who/policy/voluntee.asp

not only for the future of Red Cross and Red Crescent activities in the community, but also for other volunteer based organizations that are working in the community. In this case, it is necessary to be honest and transparent about the intention of the project. If people will be paid, for example in a temporary mass-vaccination campaign, make this very clear to all those involved that for this one event, people will be temporarily paid. In this case a contract should also be signed according to the national law.

To promote transparency and reduce tension within the branch and local structures, harmonize administrative support provided to staff and volunteers. For example, according to national law, it may be necessary to provide someone with a meal after they have worked for 6 consecutive hours. What is your branch policy on ID cards? Hotel expenses?

*This is an example and not to be adhered to strictly. It is a suggestion to improve transparency and relationships between volunteers and staff. It should be adopted and adapted as necessary within a branch or national Society.

Expense/ Action	Volunteers	Staff
Transportation	Will be covered up to a maximum of X for a distance greater than Y Km	Will be provided transportation in RC/RC vehicles.
Hotel	Will be covered up to a maximum of X for an overnight stay in a rural community, and W in an urban community.	Will be covered up to a maximum of X for an overnight stay in a rural community, and W in an urban community.
Per Diem	A meal is provided when a session lasts longer than X hours.	X is provided when you are away from the duty station in a rural community, Q when you are in an urban community.
Coffee Break	Is provided when a session lasts for more than X hours and a Per Diem is not provided.	Is not covered.
Uniforms	One will be provided for volunteers who contribute more than X hours per week. The volunteer is expected to maintain it in clean order.	One will be provided for the staff when they are working in the field. . The staff is expected to maintain it in clean order.
Visibility	A budget of 10% of the event costs will be available to the volunteer committee for media publications (radio adds, posters, banners etc).	A budget of 10% of the event costs will be available to the volunteer committee for media publications (radio adds, posters, banners etc).
Work Space	Necessary materials and equipment is prepared in advance for the volunteers use. (eg posters, handouts, photocopies etc.)	It is the responsibility of the staff member to prepare the material that they require for an event.

Benefits
Volunteers are generally highly motivated individuals who are willing to dedicate large amounts of time to a project or specific area. It is not possible to run a program by one person. The engagement of the community to work with the community is essential to achieve effective programming.

Gender issues

Ensure the diversity of the community is represented when recruiting volunteers. Reflect on the relevance of volunteers' roles with respect to the needs and attitudes of the community. For example, if a woman wants to be attended by a woman health care provider. Volunteers should be managed so that there are both men and women to provide services to community members.

How to use this tool

Step 1

Planning the volunteer position

The first step when deciding to incorporate volunteers in community programming is to have a very clear idea of what the volunteers will do. Think about all the different positions, duties and responsibilities that the volunteers can cover. Discuss with the volunteers about the expectation of the volunteers and their contributions to the Red Cross/ Red Crescent and make sure they understand what they need to do.

Use this information to create position descriptions.

Recruitment, screening, training, supervision and evaluation of the volunteers will have to be based on these descriptions.

For example, the role of Community Volunteers in an Epidemic or disease outbreak may be to:

- Coordinate with the health authorities (either inform them of the outbreak or be informed by them)
- Immediately informing the community members about the outbreak of the epidemic in the community
- Keep the healthy people away from the infected patients without discrimination. Specially take care of the vulnerable groups like infants, children and old people.
- Advise the community members and try to provide clean drinking eater, safe food and proper usage of the latrines and their personal hygiene.
- Provide help in caring for patients
- Make plans for immediate referrals for health care services
- Control spreading rumors in the community. If the causes are known, help to reduce or prevent them. Make the community aware of the facts.
- Update the community members with the latest epidemic scenario in the community
- Investigate the causes of the epidemics
- Train with key messages and promote community hygiene and engage in disease prevention.

Step 2

Recruitment

Once you are clear on what the volunteers can do, the next step is to find the people to fill the positions. When recruiting leadership positions, approach people who have abilities and are influential in the community.

If recruiting people for financial assistance, make sure they have experience with technical matters such as familiarity with tax deduction.

Think about what criteria is necessary of that person. This might include the following:
- gender
- minimum/ maximum age
- physical ability (good health?)
- psychological conditions
- special considerations. Eg they like to work with the elderly, children, outside... etc.

Step 3

Interviewing and placing

Once volunteers express interest in volunteering for Red Cross, it is crucial to screen, interview and place them quickly. Connecting them with the networks of practitioners or other volunteers will help them get oriented and feel part of the Red Cress Red Crescent. This is to ensure that their abilities match the areas where support is needed whether it is as a community resource person, a relief response person, or someone to undertake regular work in the community such as mobilizing volunteers in blood donation or doing house visits.

Step 4

Orienting and training volunteers

As soon as a decision is made to 'place' the volunteer, the volunteer should be provided with Red Cross orientation particularly on the Fundamental Principles. The volunteer should also receive appropriate training on promotion of community action with focus on their area of interest. An induction course of 4-5 hours is recommended. *Avoid unnecessary training*.

Providing appropriate skills and community-based training is the key to success of the volunteer program. Successful training helps volunteers feel more satisfied with their experience, and it helps volunteers do a better job for Red Cross.

When volunteers are trained, consider if they can gain skills across sectors. For example, a training program may want to include advocacy on disaster preparedness at the same time as raising awareness on Ebola or malaria.

Step 5

Supervising

Competent supervision and support is essential to the effectiveness of volunteers. The quality of supervision can determine the success or failure of a volunteer program.

Step 6

Recording and Reporting

The volunteer manager has responsibility for establishing a file similar to personnel record that includes:
- Information from references
- Completed and signed Volunteer Registration Forms
- Copy of personal identity document
- Signed copy of Volunteer Agreement
- Signed copy of Code of Ethics and Fundamentals of Voluntary Service
- Record of orientation and training received
- Volunteer Time Sheet and Training Log

- Copy of accident reports, correspondence etc.
- Performance Evaluation
- Record of recognition
- Exit interview

Step 7

Evaluating

Providing evaluation and feedback is a crucial part of supervision. Evaluation is not about the organization evaluating the volunteer. To create a positive environment for volunteers and in order to do things better, volunteers are encouraged to express their opinions and suggestions.

Step 8

Recognizing and retaining

Retaining volunteers also means recognizing their efforts.

Formal recognition can be achieved through initial registration and identification. This can be followed with certification after trainings such as First Aid certificates, or a community special event.

Informal recognition can occur through attending events planned by the volunteers or acknowledgement by community members, friends or families.

Tip!

In some National Societies, volunteers are selected and trained, but some are not active in regular activities. Instead, they are kept on reserve for specific purposes. For example, someone has been trained in the Fundamental Principles and has skills in Swahili-English translations. A database of these volunteers, their skills and contact information is kept and regularly updated by the branch.

These volunteers should be contacted and included in an update-training every 6 months.

Pitfalls

At the outset of recruitment the motivation of volunteers may be very high. They are clear on their role and have a lot of energy and enthusiasm to contribute. Over time however, this may decrease and they are no longer very interested. It is important to find ways of continuing to motivate and recognize volunteers openly in the community.

Some ideas to do this include:
- A community (bulletin) board which announces the names, maybe the pictures, and achievements of the volunteers
- Profiles of the volunteers can be posted on the Volunteer Website under FedNet
- Motivation packages such as receiving rubber boots, a flashlight, or Red Cross/ Red Crescent hat at various stages such as # of hours volunteered or # workshops/ information sessions delivered
- Taking time during a special event such as in a polio vaccination program to recognize the individual volunteers
- Provide space and opportunities for volunteers to come together, share their experiences and support one another regularly

- If necessary provide debriefing and psycho social support to volunteers who have been involved in disaster response and health in emergencies
- Organizing annual meeting/congress to bring them together from the various branches and help them share ideas and learn from each other.

People should not be forced to volunteer by external pressures. For example, some governments require that people work for voluntary organizations as a substitute for military service or when they are unemployed. The Red Cross Red Crescent does not regard this kind of work as volunteering. People should a volunteer because they want to do the work, and not because they want to earn money or other privileges

Federation Examples
þ ARCHI 2010 Volunteers and Community Health
þ Branch Development Training Manual
þ Code of Conduct
þ Federation Volunteer Policy
þ Federation Volunteer Service: Volunteer Management Cycle
þ Guidelines for Youth Policy and Strategy: A Step-By-Step
þ Indian Red Cross Society ToT Curriculum for CBDM
þ Principles and Values
þ Southern Africa Branch Development

Next Steps
Look at the *Characteristics of Well Functioning National Societies* and *Local CAPI* to ensure that you are meeting the benchmarks for success. For example:

Indicators for CAPI volunteers
(*****Adapted from the Lake Victoria Project on Local CAPI**)**

9. Volunteers	Baseline Year:	Year:	Year:	Variance	Remarks
Baseline					
Volunteer code of conduct exists					
Volunteer policy exists and is used					
-Clear distinction between members and volunteers					
Recruitment					
Formal recruitment process is carried out					
* Job description issued					
* Application forms filled in					
* Interviews conducted					
* Selection made					
Volunteer training tailored for specific needs is carried out					
Volunteers selected for emergencies					
Retaining					
What is the total number of volunteers registered with the branch					
Of this number, how many are active(i.e. give at least four hours service a week)					
Volunteer deployment structures exist i.e. Action/Service Teams					
Database of emergency volunteers in hibernation is kept and maintained every 6 months					
Supervision of volunteers carried out in					

accordance with existing structures and guidelines
Administrative support such as workspace, materials, communication (phone & internet access), bathroom, transportation and authorized reimbursements are provided where appropriate and necessary.
Records on volunteers are kept
Innovative methods for motivating volunteers are in use
Volunteers performance appraisal is systematically carried out
Reward/ Recognition
Volunteers are rewarded
If rewarded give details:
1.13 Volunteer retention rate is high