Global Volunteering Alliance meeting

7 – 9 March 2018
Madrid, Spain

Opening remarks by the IFRC President

Francesco Rocca, President of the IFRC, welcomed the 62 participants, from 33 National Societies, the IFRC, academia and other volunteer engaging organizations at the 2nd Global Volunteering Alliance meeting, hosted by the Spanish Red Cross in Madrid.

He characterized the Volunteering Alliance as one of the most important initiative in the recent years at the Federation, initiated by the Spanish Red Cross at the IFRC Governing Board, bringing National Societies from across the world to support each other in the development of volunteering. Underlining that volunteering is very different from country to country and sometimes even within a country, he stressed the importance of working together to share our experiences, challenges and solutions. “Is the problem of the Italian Red Cross the same as South Africa Red Cross is facing or is the Bolivian Red Cross facing the same problems as the Turkish Red Crescent? The same cultural background, the same economic growth, the same job opportunities for the youth? – these are things we need to understand when we talk about volunteering”. Speaking about societal changes and increasing competition from other organizations, he stressed the need of empowering individuals to make changes at their local level and impacting their own communities “Volunteering is the expression of our civil society […] How can we engage them? Are we able to read the need that they see when they walk around in the street and they look at what is happening around them in their own society where they live? Because sometimes I think as a leader of a National Society we think that we understand everything that is happening on the ground without being able to read with the eyes of the people that is living the difficulties and the challenges that they have on the ground every day.” The President emphasized the need of reading the social dynamics at the local, national and international level. “What does it mean to be a well-functioning organization? It is not just about the administrative and financial part which of course are two pillars but these two pillars are not enough to sustain our organization. Henry Dunant thought about us as a volunteers based organization […] our duty is to adapt our organization to the change of the civil society but being aware that volunteering is crucial for us to survive”. He reiterated his commitment as the President of the IFRC to support the work of the Volunteering Alliance.

Click here to watch his address to the Volunteering Alliance at the meeting.
Motivation of Volunteers

Assuming that we want volunteers to be engaged in our organization for as long as possible, this technical team of the Volunteering Alliance will look at the following:

• What influences voluntary service at the country level?
• What motivates people to volunteer and remain volunteers? What discourages them to volunteer?

• How can National Societies increase and sustain volunteer engagement over time?
• Developing a tool, a common benchmark and a common understanding to monitor and manage volunteer motivation among the RCRC Movement and with other volunteer organisations -> iMotivate tool

Based on qualitative research and preliminary quantitative results, the iMotivate tool will be used to measure the social and motivational quality of volunteer projects. The tool monitors the following elements of motivation:

• Volunteers’ satisfaction of basic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness
• Overall satisfaction with the activity
• Organizational commitment and identification
• Intent to remain with the organization or the project
• Quality of supervision using Self Determination Theory
• Social support among volunteers and between volunteers and professionals
• Respect and appreciation

What’s in it for your National Society?

• If your NS provides more than 50 questionnaires, you get statistics and preliminary results of analysis for discussion in your NS and within the Volunteering Alliance
• The iMotivate tool is free for National Societies wishing to join the Volunteering Alliance
• If conducted on regular basis, it helps improve the quality of coordination and supervision of volunteers

Desirable outcomes:

• Training for volunteer coordinators on volunteer management
• Guidelines on how to use the iMotivate tool
• Happier volunteers willing to stay in the organization and committed to the organization
• Support from sister National Society
• Stronger National Society

To join the team or to learn more, visit the Motivation of Volunteers page or contact the Technical Team Lead: Carine Fleury, Head of Volunteering and Youth, Swiss Red Cross (Carine.Fleury@redcross.ch)
The technical will:
• Offer guidelines to NSs who are in the process of initiating the design and purchase of their own volunteer data management systems
• Share lessons learned around data management by National Societies in different situations with regards to the implementation of a volunteer data management system

Volunteer data management
This technical team of the Volunteering Alliance is producing a set of deliverables aimed at exploring and analysing the possibilities to ease the production of volunteering data management tools and solutions in National Societies, as well as identifying possible options to automatically share aggregated data on volunteers between National Societies and the IFRC.

Roadmap

To join the team or to learn more, visit the Volunteer data management page or contact the Technical Team Lead: Ferran Cobertera, Volunteering Senior Officer, Spanish Red Cross (fch@cruzroja.es)
New forms of volunteering

This technical team of the Volunteering Alliance has 2 main objectives:

1. To explore good practices regarding new forms of volunteering to be shared among National Societies; and

2. To develop a simple prototype of an online volunteering platform to be used by National Societies globally.

The very nature of volunteering is changing, with volunteers wanting different types of opportunities, including flexible and ones that harness the use of digital technologies. At the Volunteering Alliance meeting in Madrid, the technical team built a roadmap for the development of an online volunteering platform aiming at attracting, engaging and retaining volunteers striving for the following outcomes:

- To strengthen skills, knowledge and information exchange between volunteers and their National Societies
- Using various social networks or digital platforms to connect people and sharing challenges and best practices
- Contribute to empowering volunteers to learn from peers from other Nationals Societies
- Potential for online services to help support with emergency responses
- To allow for flexible volunteering opportunities
- To attract non RCRC volunteers to be able to volunteer their time for National Societies bringing in their specific skills (including corporate volunteers)
- To attract skilled/professional volunteers for specific projects or programmes

To join the team or to learn more, visit the New forms of volunteering page or contact the Technical Team Lead: Dr Solomon Ali, Head of Humanitarian Diplomacy Governance and membership Affairs Department, Ethiopian Red Cross (solomon.ali@redcrosseth.org)

During the Volunteering Alliance meeting, a Market Place was organised where National Societies were invited to present promising volunteering programmes, initiatives aimed at ensuring safety and wellbeing of volunteers, or other initiatives intended to motivate, retain and recruit volunteers. Others presented “failures” or initiatives that have not been realised. Find out more here. If you want to learn about specific projects or get in touch with the representative of the National Society who presented an initiative, contact Adjmal Dulloo, IFRC Global Volunteering Coordinator (Adjmal.Dulloo@ifrc.org)
Volunteering in dangerous situations

The discussions surrounding the safety and security of volunteers can only be meaningful when placed in context. This Volunteering Alliance technical team is being led by the ViCE Hub whose purpose is to contribute to, in times of conflict and emergencies, improved organizational provision of volunteer involving action and services to the humanitarian needs of people and communities affected, while also strengthening their resilience.

The objective of the working group is to contribute to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of humanitarian volunteers.

Expected achievements

- A report to the International Conference on the Implementation of the International Resolution “The safety and security of humanitarian volunteers” (32IC/15/R5)
- Theory of Change for Volunteering in Dangerous Situations
- Minimum and maximum standards for volunteer programmes
- Support to and coordination with other Volunteering Alliance Working Groups
- Engagement of external stakeholders

The main activities in 2018-2019

- Develop and implement a mapping matrix to facilitate prioritizing countries to engage with by the technical team,
- Develop a theory of change and communications strategy
- Develop minimum and maximum standards for volunteer programmes
- Produce a report on the National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies views on commitment to invest in volunteering development
- Produce a report on National Red Cross Red Crescent Societies implementation of the resolution on the safety and security of humanitarian volunteers (32IC/15/R5)
- Advance the work on establishing insurance and safety nets for volunteers by identifying models and examples, mapping local solutions and legislations, and developing an advocacy and guidance material.
- Explore the need for a Corporate Identity Guide for Volunteering in Dangerous Situations.
- Present the work of the group in to the IFRC General Assembly and the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in 2019.

To join the team or to learn more, visit the Volunteering in dangerous situations page or contact the Technical Team Lead: Stefan Agerhem, Sr. Advisor and Initiative Lead – Volunteering in Conflicts and Emergencies (ViCE), Swedish Red Cross (Stefan.Agerhem@redcross.se)
Organisational Learning

As National Societies across the Red Cross and Red Crescent have identified Organisational Learning as a key area for opportunity and improvement, the Volunteering Alliance has established this technical team which seeks to ensure that the movement learns from the knowledge, experience and perspectives of its volunteers.

The purpose of the organizational learning technical team is:
- To contribute to the analysis of how national societies learn as organisations
- To engage national societies in the challenge
- To define lines of action

Why is Organisational Learning important to the RCRC Vision?
Learning from our experiences and exchanging knowledge capital (among individuals, intra-organisationally, and across the movement) enables the RCRC to be: more effective and efficient in alleviating human suffering; more adaptable in meeting and anticipating local needs; and ensures survival and future relevancy of the Movement.

The OL Technical Team seeks to assess the current state of organisational learning through a survey administered by National Societies. The technical team will develop a diagnostic toolkit for National Societies to use and adapt in surveying their volunteers.

Projected outputs and next steps
Technical Team experts will support in:
- Compiling data from National Societies on the current state of learning
- Analyzing the data to create a baseline that illustrates state of organisational learning globally
- Identifying the areas of strength and potential opportunities for development globally.
- Identifying best practices which can be adopted and adapted globally

To join the team or to learn more, visit the Organisational Learning page or contact the Technical Team Lead: Fernando Rivera Munoz, National Volunteer Coordinator, Mexican Red Cross (crmcoordvolnal@gmail.com)

Do you want to learn more about or join the Volunteering Alliance?
Visit the Volunteering Alliance page or write to Adjmal Dulloo, Global Volunteering Coordinator (Adjmal.Dulloo@ifrc.org)