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## Red Cross Red Crescent finds value of its volunteer workforce runs into billions.

**Tadateru Konoé, President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and dedicated volunteer today launched a report that calculates for the first time the economic value of its volunteer workforce.**

‘Today I am a very proud Red Cross volunteer. I can announce that our global network of volunteers contribute 6 billion US dollars in economic value through the services they deliver during disasters and every day through community development initiatives’ said Konoé.

The report also quantifies for the first time the ratio of paid staff to volunteers within the humanitarian network indicating significant added value for donor dollars during emergencies and in community development. On average, Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers extend the organisation’s paid workforce by a ratio of 1:20 – meaning that for every paid staff member there are 20 volunteers. This ratio is even greater in regions such as sub-Saharan Africa, where there are 327 volunteers for every paid staff member and in South East Asia, where there are 432 volunteers for every paid staff member.

It also calculates the total number of volunteers worldwide at 13.1 million - more than the population of Greece or Cambodia and twice the population of Singapore.

President Konoé says that the aims of the research - conducted by Dalberg and based on methodology aligned with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Johns Hopkins University Centre for Civil Society Studies - were to highlight the contribution of volunteers in order to lobby governments for legislative change and to factor the value into formal economic indicators and also to foster a culture of volunteering worldwide.

‘This year, during a year celebrating volunteers and volunteering world wide, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is urging governments to formally recognize the economic value of volunteers by incorporating their contribution into key economic and social indicators used in decision-making and planning at the highest levels.

We are also calling on governments around the world to continue to increase protection of volunteers by identifying gaps or barriers in laws and policies related to issues such as liability, insurance and health and safety’ said Konoé.

The swift response by Haitian Red Cross volunteers also illustrated the incalculable social value the volunteer network creates according to Kanoé.

‘Local Red Cross volunteers were active in search and rescue and first aid within hours of the earthquake because they live in and know their communities better than anybody else’, said Konoé.

‘And when cholera broke out, local Red Cross volunteers went door to door, tent to tent to talk to their neighbours about how they could avoid getting sick – they knew where people were living and they were a trusted source of information because they are part of that community’.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has also launched a campaign this year asking people around the world to ‘find the volunteer inside’ by giving their time, creating a safer environment for volunteers, providing workplace opportunities that enable employees to volunteer or by exploring innovative ways to fit volunteering into their busy lives.

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