

## 2011 – Red Cross Red Crescent Year of Volunteering

A Red Cross Red Crescent **newsletter**

2011 marks the ten-year anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers as well as the European Year of Volunteering. Ten years ago, the Red Cross Red Crescent and our partners worked together to enhance the **recognition, facilitation, networking and promotion of voluntary service**. This year we carry that legacy forward by focusing on **protection, recognition, and promotion** of volunteering globally.

This effort is a unique opportunity for the Red Cross Red Crescent to position ourselves as a driving force to advance the spirit of volunteerism to address today's humanitarian challenges.

It is also a unique opportunity to make the Red Cross Red Crescent the first and best option for volunteers, donors and supporters in making a difference .

### A global vision and call to action

Building on our 151-year history of voluntary service to better serve those in need, the Red Cross Red Crescent has rooted volunteering in its values and humanitarian principles. We all have a crucial role and unique capacity to involve volunteers and promote the spirit of volunteering as a unique asset for the cause of humanity. This important year should be considered, first and foremost, as a Red Cross Red Crescent year.

The global call for action encourages all leaders in governments, civil society, private sector, non-governmental organizations, and communities worldwide, to appreciate and celebrate the achievements of volunteers in impacting the lives of people, and in the way we relate to each other on the planet we share.

### The three pillars of 2011 campaign

#### Pillar 1: Protect volunteers

Through legislative advocacy and action, the Red Cross Red Crescent can contribute in creating a healthy environment for volunteering, by specially focusing on the protection of volunteers and their access to the most vulnerable. We have a role in advocating for a legislative framework for volunteers while ensuring that the principles supporting volunteerism are well understood and appreciated by national and local authorities.

#### Resources made available by the IFRC:

- > A legislative advocacy toolkit and guidelines on volunteers (June 2011)
- > A resolution on volunteering at both the International Conference and the UN General Assembly (November/December 2011).

## **Pillar 2: Recognize volunteers**

We will highlight the outstanding contribution of millions of volunteers in tackling humanitarian issues. Our messages will place the focus on the economic and social value of volunteers in order to highlight the savings governments and partners incur by working with National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, as well as the social value that comes from locally recognized volunteers and the impact that brings.

### **Resources made available by the IFRC**

- > A survey on the economic and social value of Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers (December 2010)
- > A global volunteering report (June 2011).

## **Pillar 3: Promote volunteers**

We call on all National Societies to promote the spirit of volunteerism through the participation of volunteers themselves as well engaging in marketing and communication campaign material, including through online platforms. Together, we will motivate, retain and recruit volunteers all over the world.

### **Resources made available by the IFRC**

- > A campaign kit with a global slogan and tailored-made material for National Societies
- > Volunteer development material for National Societies
- > Through the leadership of the Austrian Red Cross, an international song for volunteers featuring singers from around the world.

## **Towards the 2011 Red Cross Red Crescent International Conference, and beyond**

The overall initiative intends to put volunteerism on the top of the agenda of the international community. 2011 is an opportunity for creating a lasting impact in tackling today's most pressing humanitarian challenges while also reflecting the important role of the Red Cross Red Crescent in meeting the Millennium Development Goals and the Hyogo Framework for Action. To support the leadership role of your National Society in addressing these challenges, and opportunities, a resolution on volunteerism will be presented in November 2011 at the 31<sup>st</sup> International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, gathering delegates from 186 National Societies, more than 190 governments, and the IFRC and the ICRC.

The draft resolution will be developed at a volunteers' summit co-organized by the IFRC and key representatives, internal and external, in the field of volunteerism.

### **Resources made available by the IFRC:**

- > A resolution on protection, promotion and recognition of volunteers in June 2011
- > Global communication initiatives at the International Conference.

## Key dates at a glance

### Marketing materials in support of National Societies campaigns

27 October 2010

### The economic and social value of volunteers report sent to all National Societies with legislative guidance, advocacy and communication materials

15 November 2010

### Launch of the global campaign

5 December 2010

### World Red Cross Red Crescent Day events to highlight the impact of our volunteers

8 May 2010

### Partnership summit on protection, promotion and recognition of volunteering

June 2011

### Global volunteer report launch

June 2011

### Resolution on volunteering at the 31st International Conference and the UN General Assembly

November/December 2011

## Tell us what you are doing

Let us know what you are planning for 2011 and we will feature your stories in the coming updates. In the next issue we will tell you more about International Volunteer Day Launch (5 December 2010) and give you some ideas about ways to link your events to global efforts.

## What you can plan from now on:

- > Budget and event planning
- > Joint communication for key events (December 5<sup>th</sup>, 8 of May, International Conference)
- > Engagement plan for involving volunteers and staff in this campaign
- > More information can be found in *The year of volunteers and volunteering: a Red Cross Red Crescent guide* <http://www.ifrc.org/voluntee/publications.asp>

All inquires about this campaign can be sent to:

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Please also engage your IFRC zone communication and development teams as this global effort includes the support of all our resources.