

Youth in Action

November 2005



A newsletter for the youth of the Red Cross and Red Crescent www.ifrc.org/youth

 International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Young people easily identify themselves with the Red Cross and Red Crescent humanitarian commitment to improve the world and the lives of people in need.

Through their actions, young people significantly contribute to meeting the needs of the vulnerable people within their local communities and beyond.

A unique humanitarian strength

Innovation, creativity, enthusiasm, energy, tolerance and respect for others; the desire to discover, question, listen and understand; to test, try out, plan, redo and rebuild; and to share with joy, smiles and determination - these are the added values of youth!



Youth against poverty in Germany

Poverty in a rich country like Germany, is it possible? The answer is yes. Like many other rich countries, Germany is facing growing inequalities. With an increasing number of underprivileged people, the gap between the rich and the poor is growing. Children and youth are particularly affected, facing bad health and poor education. They are also more likely to remain poor when they grow up. Nevertheless, youth poverty has been an ignored topic in Germany.

German Red Cross Youth (GRCY) does not accept social inequalities. The youth want the public and politicians to open their eyes to the growing problems within their society, and they demand positive changes. Therefore, GRCY started the campaign "Poverty: don't look away!" in March 2004. They raise public awareness through photo exhibitions, films and theatre projects, and develop educational materials. The youth also voice their concern and developed concrete demands to the politicians. Furthermore, GRCY members are providing help to poor children, and establishing partnerships with young migrants. ■



Thanks to Corinna Goebel (GoebelC@drk.de) of the German Red Cross Youth for her contribution to this article.

Youth disaster responders in Morocco

As in many other National Societies, young volunteers in Morocco Red Crescent (MRC) constitute the bulk of the volunteer base and represent a highly trained repository of expertise. The youth involvement in disaster is impressive; around 500 of 700 trained volunteers are below the age of 35. Rachid Yakoubi, MRC Youth Coordinator, explains that initially 65% of volunteers trained to respond to disaster were youth. This figure rose to 82% in the year following the Housaya earthquake, the first disaster response that included a highly visible youth component. ■

Thanks to Darine El Sabeh (darine.elsabeh@ifrc.org), Youth Advisor in the International Federation Regional Delegation in Amman, for her contribution to this article.



SAM* Succeeds in Australia

Save-a-Mate (SAM) is an Australian Red Cross Youth programme. Youth volunteers provide first aid and advice at events where young people consume drugs or alcohol, and also do peer education on the dangers of substance abuse.

Building the capacity to deal with emergencies among staff in nightclubs and other venues popular among youth; SAM saves lives that could be lost to substance abuse. By helping save a mate, Australian Red Cross youth volunteers help their mates save mates.

SAM volunteers spread the values of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement throughout Australia,

tackling dramatic personal interactions and medical emergencies. They reach their peers directly to build a culture of empathy and caring among young people and their own communities, where others often turn their eyes away and ignore the risks related to substance abuse. SAM is currently expanding its reach to the remote Australian outback and detention centres, and expanding its mental health services. ■



Thanks to Sam Reed (sreed@redcross.org.au) of the Australian Red Cross Youth for his contribution to this article.

**Save-A-Mate, mate = friend*



Youth influence

Youth involvement in the general assembly of the International Federation has been greatly increasing over the years. This year we are happy to inform about, and invite National Society delegates to, the following side events organised for and by Youth at the General Assembly:

■ youth orientation session

All National Societies Youth representatives are invited to an orientation session, with the International Federation Youth Commission members, on November 10th in the afternoon (15.30- 18.30 – Room 101), in order to get a better idea on what has been done, where we stand, and where we want to go.

■ partnership exhibition

Don't miss the opportunity! The General Assembly is a unique event for National Societies to share knowledge and build partnership! Youth are invited to show how partnership is adding, or can add, value to the National Society Youth programme!

■ youth and poverty reduction

A thematic meeting will be organised during a lunch break to share knowledge on how Red Cross and Red Crescent Youth is contributing to the global effort to reduce poverty. A National Society will present its experience and an open discussion will follow.

■ youth award

Let's applaud the five regional winners of the first International Federation "Youth Protecting Human Dignity Award"! They have been selected among 69 applications.

Youth representatives profile

This profile was recommended by youth representatives of 27 National Societies meeting in Tarragona, September 2004. It was supported by the International Federation Youth Commission and adopted by the Governing Board in April 2005.

The profile is relevant for candidates standing for the election of the future Youth Commission as well as for youth representatives in international, regional and sub-regional fora of the International Federation. It is designed to include young people who are still to be considered under the definition "youth", and who are carrying the necessary Movement experience to be fully able to participate as legitimate stakeholders in all governance matters.

■ **age:** from 18 to around 35;

■ **position:** youth president or youth responsible involved in the higher level of governance of the National Society;

■ **experience, knowledge, skills:** Good ownership of the Red Cross / Red Crescent Movement principles and values; good understanding of the International Federation structure (governance and management); consistent experience in the National Society's youth work; strong commitment in improving the work of youth to contribute to humanitarian mission of the International Federation.

Youth in the history of international federation

1892: First official tentative to associate youth with the work of the Red Cross.	1918: Four National Societies with youth sections.	1923: The Youth Bureau of the League Secretariat was established.	1935: 51 National Societies with youth sections.	1969: 96 National Societies with youth sections.	1991: The International Federation Youth Policy was approved by the General Assembly.	2005, most National Societies have Youth Sections/programmes. More than half of the active volunteers are young people.
1906: First contribution of young people in response in time of peace, to assist victims of the San Francisco earthquake.	1922: 16 National Societies with youth sections.	1922: Official recognition and foundation of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Youth programme by the General Council of the League.	1946: The Youth Advisory Committee was set up to advice and guide decisions concerning the Red Cross/Red Crescent Youth.	1989: Youth Supercamp – the first global Red Cross/Red Crescent Youth meeting, 511 youth from 132 National Societies gathered in Italy.	1999: Youth Power in Sweden, the second global Red Cross/Red Crescent Youth meeting, brought together youth from 120 National Societies.	1999: The General Assembly considered the Youth Policy still relevant.



VII regional youth meeting in south america

In July the 7th annual South American Red Cross Youth Meeting brought together Youth coordinators from 10 National Societies to analyze the current situation and make a common work plan.

The main goal of the meeting was to strengthen the youth network to better support the youth volunteers in the National Societies. The discussions were diverse, but helpful, as the overall goal was to create an opportunity for members to discuss and share information in a network truly based on the needs and challenges of youth in the region. The efforts of the youth clearly follow other initiatives at the international level to strengthen the Red Cross and Red Crescent Youth regional networks.

During the meeting the youth leaders also decided to strengthen links with the youth focal point of the International Federation, focusing on closer work strategies and better and more permanent communication spaces.

After four days of working sessions, the participants created a work plan for 2005-2006. In line with the regional priorities, it includes HIV/AIDS anti stigma and prevention activities, peace education and youth violence prevention strategies, and finally promotion of the principles and values of the Movement. One concrete action in the work plan is a regional seminar that will be arranged to share successful experiences implemented in South American countries and to help define the strategic direction of the work of the youth network.

The next regional youth meeting will take place in the beginning of 2006, and the coordinator elected for this period is Pablo Salamone, Youth Coordinator for the Argentine Red Cross. José Ramón González, from the Venezuelan Red Cross, was elected sub-Coordinator. ■

Thanks to Susana Arroyo Barrantes, Information Officer in the International Federation Regional Delegation in Lima, for her contribution to this article.



UNICEF publication now in French and Spanish

The publication *Children & Young People: Participating in Decision-Making. A Call for Action*, published earlier this year in English, is now also available in French and Spanish.



Did you know that...

Youth communicate more

More and more youth are using the International Federation youth web section as their main tool to find information on youth within our Movement, and signing up to FedNet to access the discussion forums, tools and documents available on the extranet of the International Federation. Gaining access is easy, visit fednet.ifrc.org and sign up today!

Southeast Asia Youth Directors' meeting: Youth Directors and Managers of 11 National Societies in Southeast Asia met in Singapore in August, to share experiences and discuss on how to increase the effectiveness of youth programmes and how to measure the impact of youth work.

World AIDS Day

and International Volunteer Day

Do not forget World AIDS Day – December 1st, and the International Volunteer Day – December 5th! These are excellent

Come closer!

opportunities to plan youth activities and raise visibility! The Come closer... campaign is the newest tool in the fight against stigma and discrimination related to HIV/AIDS. For the International Volunteer Day, displaying volunteers' profiles is one of the ways to put the volunteers in focus.

For more information about the above issues, to learn more about the Red Cross Red Crescent youth activities and programmes around the world, to get in touch with other youth, to find training material and to share your information, knowledge and experience, go to www.ifrc.org/youth or email us at youth@ifrc.org.