

Climate change initiative

*Information for National Societies
youth leaders*



Our commitment

In 2007, the IFRC was joined by over 30 National Societies at the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in pledging to empower young people to take further action to respond to humanitarian challenges and to work together to find solutions to today's problems and not wait until tomorrow to address them. In this pledge (pledge 129) we also committed to organizing a world meeting for youth, which led to *Youth on the move* in 2009, where young volunteers of the Red Cross Red Crescent gathered in Solferino to speak on behalf of millions more around the world in calling for greater humanitarian action. These young volunteers drafted and adopted the Solferino Youth Declaration, committing to work together and do more, do better and reach further.

In the declaration, the leadership of our Movement is called on to better support efforts by young people to address the Solferinos of today. The leadership of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is committed to empowering youth to become leaders by providing them with the tools and training needed to advocate strongly on climate change.

The opportunity

This two-year climate change initiative is designed to promote youth involvement in this area and to empower them to act as spokespeople, advocating on climate change related issues. The IFRC wants the voice of young volunteers to be heard from local communities right to global level, as we recognize that it is today's young people who will bear the impact of climate change for decades to come and so deserve to be empowered to present solutions to world leaders and contribute to the climate change negotiations.

This opportunity was launched on **15 July 2010**, with a call for all Red Cross and Red Crescent youth volunteers that are working to address climate change to share what you are doing with us and to communicate your actions online. From tree planting to early warning early action, we want to know what you are doing to make a difference and to engage your community – no action is too small to receive attention.

An objective panel of Red Cross Red Crescent leaders including young people will select ten young people based on their submissions to serve as official spokespeople for the IFRC in Mexico for the **COP16 climate conference**. Submissions will be judged on their ability to effectively communicate what actions are being taking by young volunteers to address climate change.



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Even those who are not selected to act as spokespersons will still have their message of climate action highlighted, as we will use your stories of positive action to highlight through our online networks of social action the work the young people are doing through the Red Cross Red Crescent to respond to climate change.

How to take part

As youth leaders, we need you to take action today to encourage your peers to take part and have their voice heard. Participants must be between 18 and 25 years old. To be effective advocates, they should already be aware of the climate change challenge, and be taking personal action to respond. We are especially interested in local volunteers and will be seeking to represent equally the efforts of young men and women that geographically represent the global nature of the Red Cross Red Crescent.

Young people can take part in many different ways: sending us photos with captions (no more than five per entry), a short video (less than five minutes) highlighting the difference made in your community, or a written account (max 600 words) of what action young people are taking. Remember, speaking on behalf of the entire Red Cross Red Crescent will need a strong voice and message, so applicants should think carefully before they prepare their submissions.

Submission can be made from 15 July 2010; the contest will officially close on **15 September 2010**. All submissions should be sent to youth.climatechange@ifrc.org.

We strongly encourage submissions in English but also welcome submission in: Arabic, French or Spanish.

Resources provided by the IFRC

The IFRC will provide an advocacy toolkit with guidance on how to engage in community action through tree-planting, how to advocate for greater action with your local government and how to effectively communicate your message to the media and the general public. All youth advocacy and communication materials are in-line with the global messaging of the Red Cross Red Crescent.

The IFRC is also providing campaign materials and communication platforms for youth to communicate through [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), www.ourworld-your-move.org and other blogs and traditional media channels. You will find information on further resources on www.ifrc.org/youth/climatechange. All tools and platforms will be available by 9 August.

Those selected to attend the climate change conference will receive formal communication training by expert communicators at a workshop on early November. They will also receive guidance on IFRC messaging related to climate change from IFRC experts in disaster management as well as the Red Cross Red Crescent climate centre.

What will happen in Mexico?

Those selected to act as official spokespersons for the IFRC at the climate conference will have the role of highlighting the human face of climate change in Mexico in November and December 2010. These advocates will lead a tree planting effort in Mexico and will be the public face of the Red Cross Red Crescent at the COP16. From traditional media interviews to social media outreach, these young people will be our key advocates. Our spokespersons should be prepared to write about their experiences, take part in press conferences, give interviews, and more.

What happens after Mexico?

Starting in February 2011, the IFRC will launch a global tree-planting campaign building on the success of the youth actions in Mexico. This global effort will call on all young volunteers around the world to plant one tree and engage others in the community to join them.

The IFRC will again launch a call for submission on youth action to select our youth spokespersons for the UNFCCC COP17 in South Africa in 2011.

How can I find out more?

The first place to check for more information on these opportunities is the IFRC public website. Visit www.ifrc.org/youth/climatechange to find the most up-to-date information. You can also use the youth.climatechange@ifrc.org email address to contact the team.

Young people asked to be heard, this is their chance to bring the Solferino Youth Declaration to life. What youth accomplish in 2010 and 2011, will be part of the communication and advocacy efforts of the Red Cross Red Crescent in support of the International Year of Youth, the International Year of Volunteers and the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in 2011.

Timeline for campaign

15 July	Call for submissions opens
15 September	Deadline for submissions
4 October	Youth spokespersons announced
4-6 November	Spokespersons communication workshop
29 November – 10 December	Climate change conference in Mexico (UNFCCC COP16)
1 February	Launch date for global tree planting initiative

Contacts

This initiative is being lead and supported by a team of people at the IFRC's Geneva office.

→ youth.climatechange@ifrc.org

Links

→ **IFRC public website – initiative web pages**
www.ifrc.org/youth/climatechange

→ **UNFCCC COP16 website**
cc2010.mx/swb/

→ **Facebook**
www.facebook.com/RedCrossRedCrescentYouth

→ **Twitter**
twitter.com/RCRCYouth

→ **International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement community blog**
www.ourworld-yourmove.org

→ **Red Cross Red Crescent climate centre**
www.climatecentre.org



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