

Youth engagement
as intrinsic to building
strong National
Societies.



Y.E.S.



RC RC volunteerism
as central to youth
engagement and as an
effective and meaningful
way of youth civic
engagement.



Education,
Empowerment, and
Enabling environments
for young people as vital
for youth engagement.



Youth as agents of
change addressing global
humanitarian challenges
pertinent to local
communities.



Youth in decision-making
at all levels of management,
governance, and service
delivery as necessary for
intergenerational transfer of
experiences and continuity.



Y.E.S.

Youth Engagement Strategy

“Strong youth for Strong National Societies and Safe and Resilient communities. Youth doing more, doing better, and reaching further.”

www.ifrc.org
Saving lives, changing minds.



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest volunteer-based humanitarian network, reaching 150 million people each year through our 187 member National Societies. Together, we act before, during and after disasters and health emergencies to meet the needs and improve the lives of vulnerable people. We do so with impartiality as to nationality, race, gender, religious beliefs, class and political opinions.

Guided by *Strategy 2020* – our collective plan of action to tackle the major humanitarian and development challenges of this decade – we are committed to ‘saving lives and changing minds’.

Our strength lies in our volunteer network, our community-based expertise and our independence and neutrality. We work to improve humanitarian standards, as partners in development and in response to disasters. We persuade decision-makers to act at all times in the interests of vulnerable people. The result: we enable healthy and safe communities, reduce vulnerabilities, strengthen resilience and foster a culture of peace around the world.

© International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva, 2013

Any part of this publication may be cited, copied, translated into other languages or adapted to meet local needs without prior permission from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, provided that the source is clearly stated. Requests for commercial reproduction should be directed to the IFRC Secretariat at secretariat@ifrc.org

All photos used in this study are copyright of the IFRC unless otherwise indicated.

Cover photo: Rob Few/IFRC, Daniel Cima/American Red Cross, Marko Kocic/ICRC

P.O. Box 303
CH-1211 Geneva 19
Switzerland
Telephone: +41 22 730 4222
Telefax: +41 22 733 0395
E-mail: secretariat@ifrc.org
Web site: www.ifrc.org

IFRC Youth Engagement Strategy
1263200 10/2013 E

Follow us:



TABLE OF CONTENTS



Backdrop to IFRC Y.E.S.	4
Visioning of youth engagement within RCRC 2020	6
Strong youth for strong RCRC	7
Building blocks of the IFRC Y.E.S.	8
Key IFRC youth definitions	9
IFRC 3Es framework	10
Strategic directions for meaningful youth engagement	11
• Section: Strategic directions for youth as leaders	11
• Section: Strategic directions for youth as volunteers	13
• Section: Strategic directions for youth as beneficiaries	14
Strengthening resilience and the Y.E.S.	16
‘Youth-led and National Society-owned’ concept	17
Implementation of the Y.E.S.	18
Measuring impact of the Y.E.S.	19
Roles, commitment, and ownership of key stakeholders	20
Glossary	24

A BACKDROP TO IFRC Y.E.S.



It is not by chance that the cover of this International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) strategic document features the messages of 'Strong youth for strong National Societies' and 'safe and resilient communities... Youth doing more, doing better, and reaching further'.

Young people are a potent force in the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement representing approximately 50% of volunteers and numbering almost 7 million. Young people however are also disproportionately affected by the rapid and significant changes occurring in the world around them; urbanisation, violence, substance abuse, mental health issues, unemployment and the global economic downturn, with the increasing complexity and spread of health, environmental and social issues all present challenges to our youth at a time in their lives when they are often less equipped to deal with them than adults.

In the face of these multiple challenges some young people also have unprecedented opportunities before them. Increasing access to information, rapid technological advancements, improved mobility and entrepreneurship offer opportunities to excel. Recent events around the world have delivered powerful examples of the potential of young people to mobilise, engage in social, economic, and political issues and to drive the change they want to see around them.

For the IFRC, there are many opportunities to support young people on these journeys. The IFRC Youth Engagement Strategy (Y.E.S.), aims to articulate an approach that supports young people to do more, do better, and reach further in their local communities and beyond.





One hundred sixty one (161) Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) National Societies have been engaged in the development of this Strategy. In addition, there were numerous web-based platforms through which youth, volunteers, and staff of National Societies contributed their input. In total, 1,800 voices contributed to this Strategy through social media and other online avenues. The essence of this Strategy calls for a change of institutional culture rather than heavy investments, it calls on all of us to act both individually and collectively to achieve the vision of furthering youth engagement throughout Red Cross Red Crescent.

The IFRC Y.E.S. reinforces the notion that strong youth engagement is central to strengthening RCRC National Societies and community resilience. The Strategy promotes diversity and reinforces the importance of tailored investment in the development opportunities for 3 distinct age groups of young people: children; adolescents and young adults). Specific attention is given to engaging young beneficiaries whilst supporting them to give back to their communities.

Finally, through the implementation of this Strategy by National Societies, young people will continue to play a key role in both addressing humanitarian challenges and shaping the Post-2015 Development agenda.



VISIONING OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WITHIN RED CROSS RED CRESCENT 2020



In the RCRC, young people will be treated with respect and as equal partners to adults. Intergenerational cooperation throughout the RCRC will result in humanitarian actions and extended partnerships that will increase the number of safe and resilient communities around the world.



Young people, knowledgeable and empowered to stay healthy, will assume roles as responsible members of their communities, will care for and engage with those in the shadows and those affected by the “Solferinos of the day”, being motivated by free will, as opposed to a desire for material or financial gain or by external social, economic, and political pressure.



Young people will be living the RCRC Fundamental principles and Humanitarian values and they will excel as key RCRC actors in both alleviating human suffering and advocating for equality.



Young people, including those outside of the mainstream, will have opportunities responsive to their needs, potential, ambitions, and dreams and will be able to evolve personally, and secure livelihoods for themselves and their families.



Through, recognition of youth contributions and creation of space for youth by adults, young people will develop ownership for nurturing their communities and will favour ethical decisions that lead to collective community advancement over decisions of individual gain.

STRONG YOUTH FOR STRONG RED CROSS RED CRESCENT NATIONAL SOCIETIES

The IFRC Youth Engagement Strategy (Y.E.S.) is a global, unifying strategic framework for youth engagement in Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies and is specifically linked to expected impacts of the Enabling Action # 1 'Building stronger Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies National Societies' from the IFRC Strategy 2020.

While the IFRC Youth Policy (2011) informs National Societies on the value of children, adolescents, and young adults as key drivers of action and development, the Y.E.S. represents a specific strategic framework for facilitating meaningful engagement of young people as today's and tomorrow's leaders, as Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies volunteers, and as young beneficiaries of Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies programmes and services.



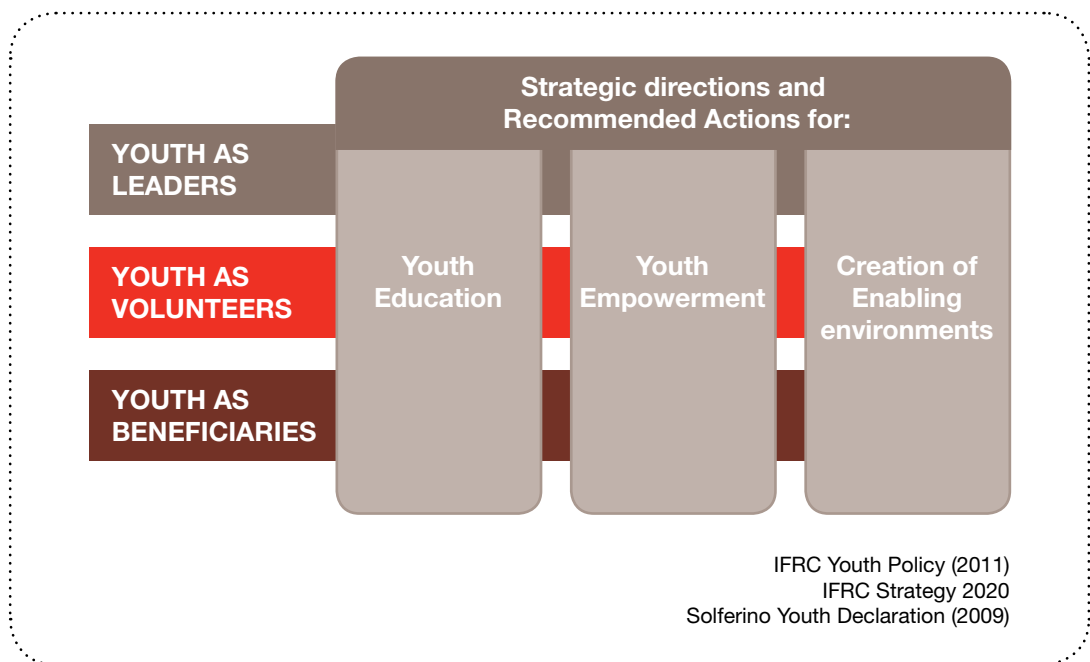
The Y.E.S. reinforces youth participation as intrinsic to strengthening National Societies from within. In this context, volunteerism is critical to the meaningful engagement of children, adolescents, and young adults. The provision of training and educational opportunities, empowerment, and creation of enabling environments are likewise, critical. Only well-equipped, knowledgeable and empowered youth, who are enabled to act, can assume roles of agents of change. As agents of change in local communities, young people have an invaluable position to inform decision-making and should be engaged at all levels of governance, management, and service delivery.

The Y.E.S. is not a strategy only for youth. It needs to be owned and implemented by and throughout the National Society. Senior leadership of National Societies, as key stakeholders, are encouraged to actively engage in dialogue and equal partnership with young people to bring the Y.E.S. to life.

BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE IFRC YOUTH ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Y.E.S. brings together 3 perspectives of meaningful youth engagement within RCRC - youth as leaders, youth as volunteers, and youth as beneficiaries (IFRC Youth Policy, 2011) with components of the IFRC 3Es framework – RCRC Youth Education, Youth Empowerment, and Creating Enabling environments for Youth.

IFRC Y.E.S. – building blocks “Stronger youth for stronger National Societies”



In Y.E.S., the strategic directions with their recommended actions across the three domains of education, youth empowerment, and creation of enabling environments for youth are two-fold. Firstly, they reflect current realities of youth engagement within diverse National Societies contexts. Secondly, they are to be understood as aspirations for youth development in the years to come that are to be translated into tangible actions at the National Society level.

¹ See page 12 for an explanation of the 3 E's framework

KEY IFRC YOUTH DEFINITIONS



These concepts are crucial for comprehension of the Strategic Directions of this Strategy.

YOUTH AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The terms 'youth' and 'young people' in the IFRC cover people in the age range of 5 to 30 years. This includes children (5 to 11 years old), adolescents (12 to 17 years old), and young adults (18 to 30 years old). This range is a reasonable guide for National Societies who may adapt according to local laws, social norms, and cultural contexts.

YOUTH AS LEADERS

In RCRC, youth can take a lead in their capacity as volunteers, members, and staff. However, RCRC youth leadership is not exclusively about the title and position. It also entails and refers to specific abilities or unique qualities of young people to inspire and influence positive change in others by their own actions.

YOUTH AS VOLUNTEERS

In RCRC, young volunteers engage in planning, designing, delivery, and review of programmes and services. Standard volunteering policies, schemes, and approaches of RCRC are applicable to young volunteers, unless additional specific needs have been identified.

Please note that these definitions are fluid and can be applicable to the same individual in different times and circumstances or all at once. The RCRC strives to enable young beneficiaries to become RCRC youth volunteers and encourages young beneficiaries to assume leadership roles in their communities based on their individual abilities and capacities.

YOUTH AS BENEFICIARIES

Young beneficiaries are those children, adolescents, and young adults who participate in, benefit from, and/or are empowered by RCRC programmes and services. They are not passive receivers of aid. On the contrary, young beneficiaries are involved in the planning, design, delivery, and review of RCRC programmes and services affecting them. RCRC supports young beneficiaries of each age category with opportunities to advance their personal and professional development so they can achieve their aspirations and give back to their communities.

IFRC 3Es FRAMEWORK

The 3Es framework stems from IFRC's Strategy 2020 and it entails education, empowerment and the creation of enabling environments. This framework has been fundamental in the formulation of the Strategic Directions and Recommended Actions of this Strategy, and is central to delivering any Recommended Actions of this Strategy.

RCRC YOUTH EDUCATION

Education is about the Universal access of individuals to knowledge, resources, and opportunities.

Within RCRC, children, adolescents, and young adults are offered opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies needed to lead a healthy, safe and fulfilling life.

In RCRC, all educational and training opportunities with and for young people are to be underpinned by the Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values and are to be provided in formal, non-formal, and informal settings.

RCRC YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment is about behavioural change of individuals and it builds on education.

Within RCRC, empowerment of children, adolescents, and young adults results in their healthier and safer choices, as well as in well-informed decision-making that impacts themselves and others.

In RCRC, all activities and programmes with and for youth should entail the concept / principle of empowerment.



RCRC CREATING ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS FOR YOUTH

Creation of enabling environments is about making action and positive change possible.

Within RCRC, educated and empowered children, adolescents, and young adults will have safe and secure spaces, equitable resource and support to become agents of positive change.

In RCRC, institutional culture, processes, structures, policies, and regulations will be evidenced-based, informed by intergenerational dialogue, and enable youth action throughout the National Society.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR MEANINGFUL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Section: Youth as leaders

Strategic direction # 1: Ensuring youth participation in decision-making at all levels of management, governance, and service delivery

Recommended actions:

- 1 Create environments that recognise and utilise the leadership skills of all individuals, including young people.
- 2 Increase membership of youth within the National Society and create youth-led structures that allow elected youth leaders to represent their peers and voice youth issues throughout the National Society governance structures.
- 3 Establish mechanisms to ensure gender equality in decision-making bodies, taking into account the diversity of volunteers and communities served.
- 4 Actively consult National Society youth leaders to add value in all National Society activities.
- 5 Create and promote environments where youth leaders are deeply connected to a range of youth communities.

Strategic direction # 2: Strengthening the leading role of young people in connecting with vulnerable and marginalized people, advocating for and with them, and identifying and tackling emerging issues together.

Recommended actions:

- 1 Provide relevant educational opportunities and tools for young people so that they embrace humanitarian values, learn how to effectively advocate, and acquire inter-personal and life skills to serve diverse communities.
- 2 Ensure that young volunteers can mutually engage and support their peers in marginalized communities.



Strategic direction # 3: Prioritizing and investing in personal and professional development for current and future leadership roles of young people.

Recommended actions:

- 1** Provide relevant educational opportunities to prepare young people to assume and advance in leadership roles and responsibilities.
- 2** Provide opportunities for youth leaders to learn from the experiences of senior leadership and facilitate a smooth transition between current and future leaders.
- 3** Establish formal and informal mentoring systems as a tool to enhance youth development in the National Society and introduce mechanisms which identify and capitalise on the talents of young people engaged with RCRC.
- 4** Establish specific communication platforms (e.g. discussion meetings, etc.) so that staff and volunteers of all ages can take an interest in and act upon youth opinions in the National Society.

Strategic direction # 4: Strengthening the leading role of young people in opening the doors to new partnerships

Recommended actions:

- 1** Support participation of RCRC youth leaders in networking platforms (national youth alliances, youth council, etc.) specifically created for addressing matters of youth development and action.
- 2** Nominate and support youth leaders to represent the National Society in various networks, e.g. national networks of technical experts, thematic networking initiatives, Regional RCRC Youth Networks, including those with external organisations and partners.



Section: Youth as volunteers

Strategic direction #1: Increasing meaningful engagement of young volunteers

Recommended actions:

- 1 Integrate humanitarian education in school curricula and non-formal education settings.
- 2 Offer a wide range of volunteering opportunities for children, adolescents, and young adults that will attract members of under-represented groups and reflect the make-up of the local community.
- 3 Complement traditional forms and ways of volunteering with innovative, non-traditional ways of youth volunteering, including shorter term participation, online volunteering and less formal forms of engagement.

Strategic direction #2: Motivating and retaining young volunteers.

Recommended actions:

- 1 Recognise and support efforts of young volunteers to engage in programs and services delivered by the National Society in their community.
- 2 Adjust volunteer management systems to enhance capacity building and encourage leadership skills in young volunteers.
- 3 Provide coaching and other opportunities for skills development such as training and engagement in roles with increased responsibility and complexity that will result in furthering life skills and increase employability of RCRC young volunteers in the domestic and local labour markets.
- 4 Outline clear pathways and provide support for the smooth transition of children, adolescents, and young adults within the range of volunteering opportunities of the National Society; this would also encourage seamless transitioning of youth into volunteering as adults.

Strategic direction #3: Guaranteeing the well-being, security, and safety of young volunteers throughout, and after their engagement in RCRC programmes and services

Recommended actions:

- 1 Provide young volunteers with the necessary information, training and resources to ensure that they are able to protect their physical health, mental well-being and personal property while engaged with RCRC voluntary programs and services.
- 2 Insure young volunteers through the IFRC Volunteer Accident Insurance or other local insurance.



Strategic direction #4: Recognising young volunteers as contributors to innovation

Recommended actions:

- 1 Invest in the provision of education and skills development for young volunteers to excel in bringing innovative approaches to program design and service delivery.
- 2 Create opportunities for intergenerational dialogue and partnerships between young volunteers and adult volunteers in order to address humanitarian challenges through a combination of tested, traditional and new innovative approaches.
- 2 Create safe environments where young people can propose and pilot test innovative approaches to addressing needs of vulnerable people and the National Society while building on traditions, best practices, and lessons learnt.

Strategic direction #5: Recognising and promoting the social value that young volunteers bring to development

Recommended actions:

- 1 Empower young volunteers to be ambassadors, through their peers, communities and the public, of the everyday humanitarian work they carry out.
- 2 Promote (internally and externally) inspiring practices, approaches, models, and examples provided by young volunteers who are addressing humanitarian needs in their communities.

Section: Youth as beneficiaries

Strategic direction #1: Promoting Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values to all young people as a means of changing minds, saving lives, and strengthening resilience

Recommended actions:

- 1 Establish RCRC Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values as the foundation for the individual's ethical behaviour.
- 2 Promote the Fundamental principles and humanitarian values as the foundation for RCRC advocacy on behalf of and with marginalized groups.
- 3 Incorporate non-formal methods and peer-to-peer approaches in the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values within the National Society and its programmes in communities.
- 4 Incorporate the IFRC framework of strengthening resilience in all programmes targeting or working with young people.
- 5 Engage young beneficiaries as key advocates in changing minds and as agents of change in strengthening the resilience of their communities.



Strategic direction#2: Strengthening personal capacities of young beneficiaries by putting special emphasis on their abilities and developmental needs

Recommended actions:

- 1** Provide training and educational opportunities for staff and volunteers to enhance their capacity to work with young people of all ages.
- 2** Integrate psycho-social support in all programmes with young people.
- 3** Integrate life skills training for young beneficiaries in all programmes where youth are engaged.
- 4** Promote personal competencies that children, adolescents, and young adults acquire through their engagement in RCRC programmes.
- 5** Include children, adolescents, and young adults in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all programmes they participate in.

Strategic direction#3: Developing a culture of young beneficiaries taking action and giving back to their communities

Recommended actions:

- 1** Recognise young beneficiaries as key to RCRC actions and community development and include them as key stakeholders in service delivery bearing their specific needs in mind.
- 2** Apply mechanisms for peer-to-peer mentoring amongst young beneficiaries so that they become empowered and participate in decision-making processes.
- 3** Seek feedback from young beneficiaries on all aspects of National Society's program and service delivery.
- 4** Review internal procedures to ensure the participation of young beneficiaries in bodies that represent the National Society's beneficiaries.

Strategic direction#4: Maintaining relevance and responsiveness of all RC/RC programmes and services to the needs of young beneficiaries and marginalized youth groups

Recommended actions:

- 1** Conduct vulnerability and capacity assessments with a specific focus on involving young people, especially in programmes and services targeting young beneficiaries.
- 2** Set mechanisms for self-assessment of the National Society's outreach to young beneficiaries.
- 3** Partner with external expert stakeholders to identify and address needs of vulnerable youth and marginalized youth groups.



STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE AND THE Y.E.S.

For the IFRC, strengthening resilience on the individual or community level bridges humanitarian and developmental work. As cornerstones of the Y.E.S., education, empowerment, and creation of enabling environments provide the framework for promoting resilience.



Well-educated, empowered, healthy, and enabled young people will be:

- 1 Central to building both well-organised RCRC and local communities with sufficient capacities to carry out assessments and to address identified risks and challenges through meaningful actions and in a sustainable manner.
- 2 Key players in social networking, able to create connections that will benefit the RCRC and the whole community.
- 3 Able to actively participate in maintaining and developing RCRC services and community infrastructures that benefit individuals, and thus the communities they form and live in.

The following factors are important for both the IFRC Y.E.S. and our work on promoting resilience;

- 1 Acceptance of young people for who they are (their heterogeneity, etc.).
- 2 Ownership of key National Society stakeholders towards increased youth engagement.
- 3 Participatory and holistic approaches in all aspects of the development of strategic plans for youth engagement and their implementation.
- 4 Long-term perspective in planning for increased youth engagement with allocation of adequate and equitable resources.
- 5 Networking and building partnerships for meaningful youth engagement.
- 6 Awareness of realities within the National Society while aiming for increased youth engagement.
- 7 Willingness to change institutional cultures and perceptions of the value that young people bring.

YOUTH-LED AND NATIONAL SOCIETY-OWNED CONCEPT

The Y.E.S is closely related to the ‘youth-led and National Society owned’ concept, built on an openness and dialogue that ensures whole-of-National Society’ ownership in youth initiatives.

Very importantly, as shown in the figure above, processes of strengthening youth engagement need to be appropriately resourced. Managerial allocations of resources (human, space, time, financial, etc.) to effectively implement the Y.E.S. are to be made by each stakeholder. This approach is in line with internal guidelines for the development and implementation of all IFRC strategies.



“Youth-led and NS-owned” concept

Young people are key actors in building-up and sustaining strong National Societies and thus equal partners of adults.

Youth is not a homogenous group - intra-group dynamics, gender, age, and diversity are key factors to access to resources and equal opportunities.

Working with RCRC does not inherently benefit only young people, but also the communities they reside in.

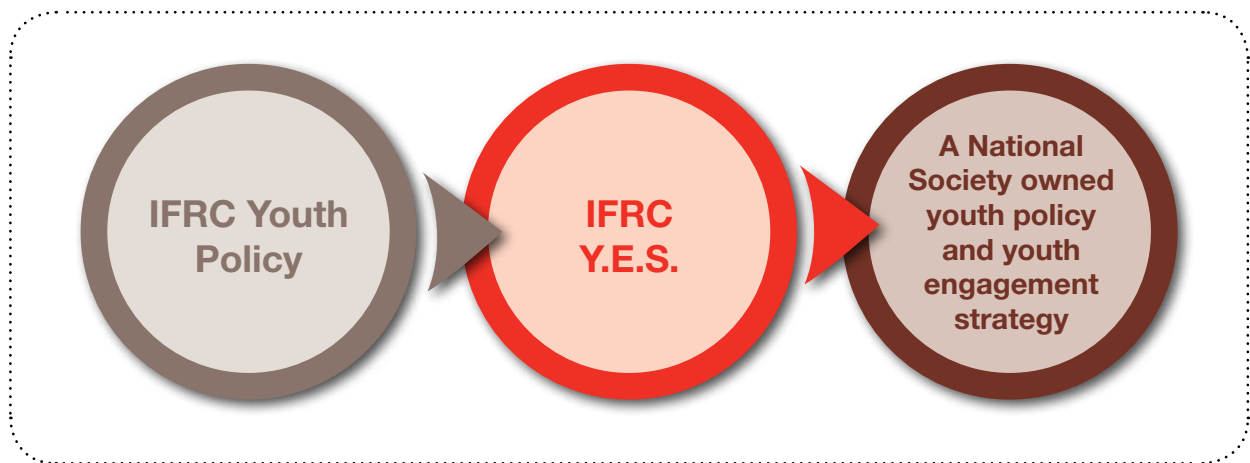
Youth in RCRC is a threshold for inclusion and engagement of other vulnerable and marginalized groups.

LACK of SUPPORT to and INVESTMENTS in youth development ARE SHORT-SIGHTED.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE Y.E.S.

National Societies are encouraged to refer to both the IFRC Youth Policy (2011) and Y.E.S. (2013) for the development or review of their policies, strategies, and implementation guidelines for increased youth engagement.

The IFRC Policy and the IFRC Y.E.S. for NSs



More specifically, National Societies are encouraged to select from the suggested strategic directions and recommended actions in this Strategy for increased youth engagement, which are relevant for their own contexts and realities. These are then to be holistically reflected in operational and institutional frameworks of National Societies. Therefore, it is highly recommended for National Societies to develop their own guidelines for the implementation of the recommended actions from the menu of suggestions.

MEASURING THE IMPACT OF Y.E.S.

Measuring the impact of the Y.E.S. implementation by National Societies will be aligned with the 2017 IFRC Youth Policy review.

Measuring the impact of the IFRC Youth Policy and Y.E.S. will enable the tracking of progress in strengthening youth engagement.

The impact of the IFRC Youth Policy (2011) and Y.E.S. will become an integral part of the evaluation of the impact of the IFRC Strategy 2020 and the Solferino Youth Declaration (2009).



ROLES, COMMITMENTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

This section aims at clarifying main roles and commitments of the key stakeholders within RCRC in order to facilitate the successful implementation of strategies for youth engagement in the national context.

RCRC Youth

Young volunteers and members:

- 1 Promote the Fundamental Principles, humanitarian values amongst their peers and broader community.
- 2 Provide services and support to their peers and to the rest of their community.
- 3 Challenge their National Societies by leading as active partners, to adopt new and innovative ways to reach and address the needs of their local communities.
- 4 Are well-connected in their communities so that they understand their unique contexts and are better able to support RCRC programs with their communities.
- 5 Are informed of the current developments and emerging needs.
- 6 Mobilise communities and bridge the mainstream society to diverse and emerging groups and communities.

Youth formal (positional) and non-formal (non-positional) leaders:

- 1 Help other young people to identify their own needs and those of their communities.
- 2 Enable access of young people to necessary training and resources to be ready to deliver on the needs of their communities.
- 3 Advocate for vulnerable and marginalised groups.
- 4 Share information, transfer skills and knowledge to their peers and to adults.
- 5 Encourage other young people to take a leadership role in their National Society and communities.
- 6 Act as the link enabling young people to work with others at different levels of the National Society.



- 7 Act as role models in changing the institutional culture and mind-sets of individuals in RCRC.
- 8 Represent their peers among the adults.
- 9 Represent voices of young beneficiaries in their communities, and National Societies.
- 10 Share inspiring practices and experiences within various networks.
- 11 Partner with their National Society in policy formulation and program development in all areas.

National Societies individually

To enable children, adolescents, young adults their meaningful engagement, each National Society will:

- 1 Provide support for youth in a form appropriate for the structure and resources of the National Society.
- 2 Work with its young members and volunteers to develop a national youth policy, which will provide the basis for all of its work in engaging children, adolescents, and young adults.
- 3 Conduct analysis of the needs and potential of young people in its membership, volunteer base, and wider community, and apply this information to:
 - a. involve young people fully as key stakeholders in the decision making processes and of the National Society's services and programs, and;
 - b. design educational, dissemination, and training programs for children, adolescents, and young adults which promote and reinforce youth engagement in RCRC.
- 4 Ensure that young people are involved in decision-making at every level of management, governance, and program and service delivery.
- 5 Implement Youth leadership training programs or other actions to ensure that young people acquire the skills to implement the National Societies' Youth Engagement Strategy.
- 6 Establish partnerships and participate in networks with sister National Societies to share resources, learn from, inspire one another, and to support and encourage youth engagement for greater humanitarian action and development.
- 7 Support and invests in regional platforms for youth development.
- 8 Make special efforts, wherever possible, to encourage diverse youth participation especially in leadership positions and the National Society's representative functions.
- 9 Advocate with government for inclusion of humanitarian education in formal curriculum or partner with governments in promotion of Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values to youth in the country.



ROLES, COMMITMENTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Regional RCRC Youth Networks

In accordance with the Guidelines for RCRC Youth Networking:

- 1 Coordinate advocacy and joint initiatives of their members.
- 2 Facilitate partnerships for generating knowledge, collecting experiences, and recording lessons learnt, and best practices of both individuals and National Societies.
- 3 Contribute to sharing knowledge and innovation across the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.
- 4 Participate in framing IFRC global policies and strategies through elevating and voicing regional contexts.
- 5 Ensure global decisions and discourse are relevant and applicable at the regional and national levels.
- 6 Facilitate communication between the IFRC global level and National Societies – in both directions.
- 7 Strengthen cooperation among their members and elevate their shared RCRC identity.
- 8 Promote youth leadership and exchange of concrete ideas, innovations and activities that benefit RCRC programmes and services for vulnerable groups.

The IFRC governance

In accordance with its constitutional mandate, the IFRC Youth Commission:

- 1 Promotes the IFRC Youth Policy and Y.E.S. as global tools to National Societies.
- 2 Monitors progress in National Societies in adapting the Y.E.S. to their context and circumstances.
- 3 Seeks youth opinions worldwide on RCRC global youth and non-youth related issues and ensures that these opinions are considered in the Statutory Bodies of the Movement.
- 4 Identifies and voices emerging global youth issues pertinent to local communities, and reflects these in its own work plan which is adopted by the IFRC Governing Board.
- 5 Proposes priority areas of work for the IFRC Secretariat in line with the content of the IFRC Youth policy and the Y.E.S. while taking into account all other global IFRC policies and priorities of the Movement.



- 6 Represents interests, actively communicates with, and monitors work of respective Regional RCRC youth networks and directs attention to where interventions and support are needed in the development for the regional RCRC youth networks to fulfil their functions according to the Guidelines on RCRC Youth Networking (2013).
- 7 Facilitates creation and utilization of external partnerships for the benefit of Regional RCRC Youth networks and their members National Societies.
- 8 Advises the Secretary General of the IFRC Secretariat as stipulated in the IFRC Constitution.
- 9 Advocates for youth representatives having a seat across all bodies established by the decisions of the IFRC Governance or stemming from the Constitution of the IFRC.
- 10 Promotes coordinated approach of regional RCRC youth networks to submission of applications for the Youth Commission members.

The IFRC Secretariat and its Zone offices

- 1 Ensure that youth issues are considered in relation to each of its operations, capacity building, and plans for development.
- 2 Encourage development of the National Societies' youth programs and services as a part of building strong National Societies.
- 3 Assume the responsibility to ensure sufficient financial and human resources for IFRC youth activities and programs in order to:
 - a. enable Youth Commission members to carry out their constitutional mandate,
 - b. implement the work plan of the Youth Commission,
 - c. promote and disseminate the IFRC Youth Policy among National Societies,
 - d. ensure implementation of Y.E.S. by National Societies.
- 4 Provide support to National Societies as required in the development of their youth services and structures.
- 5 Coordinate the exchange of programs, ideas and resources worldwide to enhance knowledge development and to avoid unnecessary duplication of work between National Societies.
- 6 Participate in the development of model programs and resources relating to key youth issues, which can be adapted or used directly by National Societies.
- 7 Provide technical assistance and support to international meetings and events, which are organised on a National Society or regional level.
- 8 Ensure youth engagement is a cross-cutting issue in the work of all technical departments of the IFRC Secretariat.
- 9 Support the Youth Commission members in implementing their constitutional mandate and their work-plan.



GLOSSARY



Agents of change	A concept where a person is a catalyst for positive change, which will add value to society.
Beneficiaries	Individuals or groups who participate in, benefit from, and/or are empowered by RCRC and programs and services.
Changing minds	A process in which people realise and value what is good for themselves, good for others, and good for the world.
Community mobilizers	Individuals or groups who inspire and motivate others within a community to take specific actions for a positive change.
Decision making	Process of taking active part in identifying available options, weighing, analysing, and considering advantages and disadvantages of each option, and envisioning the impact of each alternative bearing the particular situation and common good in mind.
Disseminator of best practices	Individual committed and motivated to share best practices.
Diversity	A value of accepting and respecting variability. In RCRC context this includes, but is not limited to, representation of various groups in RCRC work, decision-making, etc. Representation of marginalised groups is a true reflection of diversity, be those groups based on gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, HIV status, socio-economic status, religion, nationality and ethnic origin (including minority and migrant groups), etc.
Early adopter of communications	An early user of new communication technologies who establishes new personal relations easily and is able to utilize up-and-coming communication technologies in both traditional and unconventional contexts.
Education	Life-long process which enables continuous development of a person's capabilities as an individual and as a member of society and is based on the four pillars: Learning to know, Learning to do, Learning to live together, Learning to be. Relevant substance and engaging methodology with a focus on the development and practice of relevant life skills, values, and technical and administrative competencies are at the core of educational opportunities (non-formal, formal, and informal) within National Societies. Formal education is defined as hierarchically structured, chronologically graded, and organised educational system (e.g. any type of schooling system).

	Non-formal education entails organised educational activities, outside the established formal system, that are to prepare young people to cope with social changes through acquisition of life skills and development of attitudes based on an integrated system of values. In the RCRC context, these values are represented by the Fundamental Principles and Humanitarian values. Informal education includes processes whereby individuals acquire attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience, such as from family, friends, peer groups, the media and other influences and factors in the person's environment.
E-learning	Process of learning in the virtual online web-based spaces (incl. formal, non-formal, and informal settings) built on the use of internet and other means of digital communications, e.g. smartphones, tablets, and personal computers.
Empowerment	Actions (what) and approaches (how) National Societies should work for and with children, adolescents, and young adults to ensure that they acquire the ability and authority to make decisions and implement change in their own lives and the lives of other people (youth and adults).
Enabling environment	Enabling environments represent a set of interrelated conditions – such as organisational, financial, informational, decision-making, legal, and cultural – that impact on the capacity and capability of stakeholders to engage in development processes in a sustained and effective manner through their meaningful actions.
Engagement	Active and meaningful participation in humanitarian voluntary work at the levels of governance, management and/ or service and program delivery.
Entrepreneurship	Process of identifying a challenge, finding unconventional ways of acting on it and thus addressing it.
Gender	Term that refers to the social differences between females and males throughout their life cycle. Gender takes into account “all those who are vulnerable to inequality, harm and loss of basic rights” because of their gender.
Governance	Structures and modalities that National Societies and IFRC approved to govern themselves and to give directions to the management in delivering humanitarian programs and services.
Healthy world	State of physical, mental, and social well-being.
Humanitarian education	Education that enables young people and others to critically analyse events and phenomena from a humanitarian perspective and prepares them for humanitarian actions through voluntary services in the spirit of Red Cross and Red Crescent Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values. It can include and cover basic rules of IHL and other relevant bodies of law.
Intercultural ambassador	An individual that promotes and champions exchange and acceptance of various cultures through their own actions.





Leadership identity development model	A stage-based model of leadership identity development (LID) that resulted from a grounded theory study on developing a leadership identity (Komives, Owen, Longersbeam, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005). The model with its 6 stages has implications for working with individuals, as they develop their leadership identity, and for facilitating groups, as they develop empowering environments for shared leadership.
Life skills	Set of behaviours reflecting ability of an individual to manage personal affairs, address daily challenges and situations responsibly and appropriately. They may vary depending on social norms and expectations.
Local community	Usually heterogeneous group of people interacting together in an environment/territory. Herein heterogeneity refers to diversity in race, gender, sexuality, socio-economic status, nation, ethnic background, age, etc.
Marginalized groups	Group of young people stigmatized, excluded, and isolated from the main political, social, and also economic mainstream. E.g. young prisoners, people living with disabilities, migrants, people living in 'shadows' of our communities, single mothers, other 'forgotten' groups, etc.
Non-cognitive approaches	Approaches and methodologies that do not primarily and exclusively rely on thought processes and reasoning concepts for learning and perceiving the world and self. Affections, experience, and / or the physical body, rather than intellectual analysis, are the entry points for learning.
Non-formal education	A way of life-long learning that is usually people-centred and places a strong emphasis on the commitment and responsibility of each individual in pursuing his or her personal growth process. It reinforces the individual's motivation to take an active part in the learning process.
Peer educator	Individual who has advanced experience on peer education and promotes peer education in the broader community not limiting it to organised workshops or formal educational settings.
Peer to peer facilitators	An individual who is able to support, assist, and encourage their own peers. A peer is someone that you see as your friend or colleague or someone that you can support.
Psychosocial support	Process of facilitating resilience within individuals, families and communities by respecting the independence, dignity and coping mechanisms of individuals and communities. Psychosocial support promotes the restoration of social cohesion and infrastructure.
Resilience	Ability of individuals, communities, organisations, and countries to anticipate, reduce the impact of, cope with, and recover from adversity without compromising their longer-term prospects. Local ownership and participation, capacity strengthening, partnership and sustained engagement are intrinsic to how the IFRC works and these are integral to strengthening resilience.

Social inclusion	Process aimed at strengthening the bond of people with their community and members. It entails aspects of mutual respect and adaptation.
Trend setter	An individual who is able to recognise emerging issues in the context of the bigger picture and at the same time is able to make others follow his consequent actions.
Volunteer management systems	Systems that effectively mobilise and retain existing volunteers and recruit new ones to engage them in specific programmes and services of National Society that are responsive to local needs of vulnerable communities.
Vulnerable	An individual who is unable to withstand or incapable of and/or susceptible to effects or shocks of a 'hostile' environment stemming from social, cognitive, and military circumstances.
Youth-led programs, projects, and activities	Programs, projects, and activities run with and by youth and that are particularly aimed at meeting those needs of communities, which were identified by young people themselves.
Youth action	Young people being meaningfully engaged in activities resulting in or striving for a positive change.
Youth advocates for vulnerable people	Young people who voice and act upon needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups in their communities.
Youth as agents of behavioural change	This term refers specifically to the program 'Youth as agents of behavioural change'.
Youth as holder of positive heritage	Young individuals who are the keepers and transmitters of institutional memory for the purpose of transfer of knowledge through intergenerational dialogue.
Youth as innovators	Individuals able to transform an unconventional idea into an action.
Youth development	Progress by which young people become resilient, enjoy fuller and more productive lives, and become less vulnerable. On an organisational level, it refers to the strengthening of youth engagement in order for the National Society to better carry out its humanitarian mandate.
Youth networks	Networks of RCRC youth formed at regional and sub-regional level and established and maintained for the primary benefit of National Societies' youth actions targeting vulnerable groups in local communities. Youth leaders lead RCRC youth networks and ownership of youth networks is shared between youth leaders and the National Societies' leadership.
Youth programmes	Institutionalized, continuous projects focused on youth engagement.
Youth representatives	A young individual (see the Youth Policy, 2011) who represents interests of and/or provides a youth perspective at either the local, national, regional, and/or international level of the Movement.
Youth structure	The ways in which youth are formally organised in the framework of National Societies.



THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Humanity The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary service It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

For further information on volunteering development, please contact:

Youth Action and Volunteering
Development team, IFRC Secretariat
Tel.: +41 (0) 22 730 4222
E-mail: youth@ifrc.org