

# The Adventure of Hosting International Volunteers

A Guidebook for Practitioners  
by Practitioners

The International Editorial Team



A civilisation flourishes  
when people plant  
trees under which they  
will never sit.

Greek Proverb

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## Dear Readers,

For many decades now the ICJA Freiwilligenaustausch weltweit (ICJA) has been successfully implementing international voluntary service programmes. ICJA prepares and sends German volunteers for one year to over 30 countries in its international partnership network and receives and prepares volunteers from these countries for a year as well, organizing them into various projects in Germany.

Thanks to funding by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), as well as donations from ICJA volunteers' supporters, ICJA and its partners have been able to introduce an important quality development process in their network. In the last four years, this process—called »Dialoguing«—has promoted a process of mutual learning and development, enabling considerable advances to be made in the quality of the partners' and ICJA's work in voluntary service.

The project goal in 2013 was the further development of professional, educational support of volunteers. To achieve this, ICJA and its partners compiled a guidebook for supporting volunteers in weltwärts host projects. For some years, ICJA's international partner organisations as well as local host projects had expressed the need for such a handbook. So the authors of this handbook were recruited from amongst precisely these organisations and their experienced employees. ICJA sees this handbook for weltwärts host projects as an important step towards quality management in the professional guidance and educational support of volunteers. It assists and guides both experienced and new host projects in the integration of international volunteers.

This book is the result of a year's work by the Editorial Team. First of all, we would like to thank the members of this team: Belen Maria Mora Hidalgo, Christiane Brückner, Jürgen Günther, Judith Antonia Morejón Salazar, Kerubo Josephine Nyaribo, Mercilinus Osiemo Ounde, Robinson Sounder Raj Doss and Sharon Esther Priyadarshini Samuel. They made this book possible! We thank them for their dedication, spirit, humour, creativity—and hard work!

Groups of extremely busy people need somebody who brings them together, helps them work as a team, coordinates, organises and directs them. We can't think of anybody who can develop, structure, and moderate this kind of process better than Susanne Saliger, who has been the coordinator responsible for this international and ambitious project. Our thanks to her as well!

Whenever you write a book, you need somebody who checks the last details, who carefully looks at the language and how things fit together—and put it into print. We were very lucky that we had Tina Schäfer who took on this task on board. Thank you, Tina!

This project needed not only great people, but also money. Here we would like to thank the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) very much for their financial support. And last but not least, a big thank you goes to all those people whose donations made it possible for ICYE to close the funding gap. Thank you for believing in our ideas and in trusting us with your donations!

We hope you enjoy reading this book and that you find it useful along the adventurous path of hosting international volunteers!

**Carl-Heinz Pommer**  
**Frederick Diehte**  
**Gesa Ferger**  
Board of Directors of  
ICJA Freiwilligenaustausch  
weltweit e.V.

## About the authors

### The International Editorial Team

According to the dynamics of ICYE programmes and in order to enable a participative, representative sharing of ideas, codes and ways of working, it was indispensable to establish an International Editorial Team.

Two participants, one from a project and one from an ICYE National Committee from Africa, America, Asia and Europe accepted the challenge to join the work.

This Editorial Team managed the challenge of working in a distance and compiled a handbook to assist projects in hosting volunteers. Thus hoping to make volunteering the »best« experience for all participants involved.

Different persons, different cultures, different backgrounds, experiences and professions gathered together with the same problems and seeking to put all the things that are in daily use into the same language and codes so that the volunteering experience becomes the best possible experience for these young people that share this special part of their lives with the project / host project.

During two meetings in person in Berlin and several online meetings, video conferences and mailings, this multi-culturally different yet similar team composed this guidebook. The participants were always driven by a team spirit, trying to cover all the topics while respecting the opinions of projects and National Committees as well as the feedback and needs of the volunteers, aiming at publishing a guidebook for projects/host projects all over the world, no matter which continent or culture they belong to and giving concrete information, clues and guidelines on how to give support to the volunteers.

### Members of the Editorial Team



#### **Belen Mora**

VASE–Voluntariado para la Ayuda Social del Ecuador/ICYE Ecuador  
Quito, Ecuador

Currently, Belen holds the position of the Executive Director of VASE. Before she became the executive director, she worked for several years as the incoming coordinator and outgoing coordinator as well.

She has lived in Germany, Spain and Morocco.

Belen holds a Master's degree in international cooperation.



#### **Christiane Brückner**

ICJA Freiwilligenaustausch weltweit e.V./ICYE Germany  
Berlin, Germany

Christiane held the position of Incoming Coordinator with ICJA.

She supported the volunteers and collaborated with German projects/host projects, guest families and co-workers.

She has worked with traumatized young girls and women for 10 years and has lived and worked abroad in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Nicaragua.

She did vocational training for offset printing. She studied social work and is qualified as a natural healer and mediator.



**Judith Morejón**

Centro de Referencia Guagua Quinde,  
Fundación Patronato Municipal  
San José, Quito, Ecuador

In Quito, Judith coordinated a social project supported by local government public policies for the promotion and restoration of rights, prevention of abuse and comprehensive protection of children/girls and adolescents with street life experience called »Guagua Quinde«, where they receive the volunteers' help.

Judith is a Doctor of Medicine and specialist in systemic family therapy, expert in project management and also a lecturer at the Salesiana University, Quito.



**Jürgen Günther**

Waldorfschule Everswinkel  
Everswinkel, Germany

Currently, Jürgen holds the position of Executive Director at the school. In 1987/88, he did voluntary service with ICJA/ICYE Germany in Colombia. He worked in a social project in Medellín, helping children who lived on the street.

From 1990-92, he was a delegate of ICJA/ICYE Germany to the ICYE National Committees in Europe as a »European Correspondent«.

Jürgen studied education, sociology, politics and psychology.



**Kerubo Nyaribo**

ICYE Kenya  
Nairobi, Kenya

Currently, holds the position of Director of ICYE Kenya.

Kerubo has worked as a teacher in high school and at university and consults and trains in Change Management. She has participated in and carried out several international workshops/seminars in different parts of the world, has visited projects hosting volunteers in various countries in Latin America, Africa, and Europe. Some of these workshops were for project staff. She has interacted with many international and local volunteers, as well as those managing volunteers.

She was a member of the pool of trainers for the ICYE Federation and is one of the authors of the ICYE Toolkit.

Kerubo holds a BSc in botany and zoology (University of Nairobi), postgraduate diploma in education (Kenyatta University, Nairobi).



**Mercilinus Osiemo Ounde**

Brother Beausang  
Catholic Education Centre  
Nairobi, Kenya

Currently, holds the position of Development Officer of Brother Beausang Centre.

Mercilinus has been the ICYE volunteers' contact person in Brother Beausang Catholic Centre for more than three years. The project is an inclusive Catholic school for both boys and girls (primary and secondary), with a current enrolment of over 800 students and staff of 70. Most of the students are from poor and often displaced families and many are orphans.

Mercilinus holds a Bachelor of Arts (Economics) with IT degree from Maseno University (Kenya).



**Robinson Doss**

ICYE India/ICDE India  
Bangalore, India

Currently, Robinson holds the position of Founder Chairperson of Inter Cultural Dialogue and Exchange (ICDE)–India and is Treasurer of the International Board of Managers of the Federation of ICYE, with head-quarters in Germany.

He has participated as long-term volunteer in Denmark, through ICYE, in the year 1984.

Robinson is an engineer by profession, and a business consultant for an automobile company.



**Sharon Samuel**

EMPACS Charitable Society  
Ashraya Centre for Learning  
Bangalore, India

Currently, holds the position of Director of EMPACS.

Sharon worked as an applied psychologist and educational consultant, English language trainer for international students, special educator for children with special educational needs.

She holds a master's in applied psychology, and a diploma in special education.



**Susanne Saliger**

ICJA Freiwilligenaustausch  
weltweit e.V. / ICYE Germany  
Berlin, Germany

Susanne held the position of Coordinator for Quality and Evaluation and managed the adventure of composing this guidebook.

Susanne has managed several international quality projects in the context of the ICYE Federation. She evaluated the 1st year of the weltwärts programme run by ICJA and its partners worldwide, National Committees, projects/host projects and volunteers. She has acted as consultant on a comprehensive international quality development process with ICYE partners and facilitated conferences and workshops worldwide. She is a consultant, conducts training programmes and is a lecturer at universities.

Susanne studied social pedagogy and science of consultancy.

## Preface

It is the desire of every person to leave a rich legacy behind, an inheritance that is worthy in its value and substance, for the generations to come. Thus volunteerism is significantly instrumental in achieving this goal.

Over the years, many governmental and non-governmental organisations around the world have been working towards promoting this concept amongst the young, the potential leaders of tomorrow. When in the year 2007, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) launched the programme weltwärts, which involves voluntary assignments of young Germans in developing countries, they decided to give the mandate to the already existing German non-governmental organisations to effectively execute the programme with their own network of partners around the world.

Interestingly, statistics prove that an international volunteer involved in any international volunteer service spends the maximum amount of time, effort, and interaction while participating in the process of »learning by serving« at the project/host project.

Much attention is therefore given to research, study and to provide guidelines to projects/host projects who in turn will help in extending the required support, means of integrating into the project, providing mentorship, security, safety and opportunities that will give a sense of belonging to the world community that grows from the roots of intercultural learning, global experience and international voluntary service.

This process seems to be like an adventure. Each voluntary service and each volunteer is different. We never know what comes next. The book shall guide you through the adventure and gives you ideas on how to make efforts out of the adventure.

This guidebook is thoughtfully designed by practitioners to provide guidelines and information to practitioners, the projects/host projects. The purpose of this book is also to assure the quality of support for the volunteers. May this fund of information be entitled– »An adventure of hosting international volunteers–for practitioners by practitioners«.

**The Editorial Team and Susanne Saliger**

If our hopes of building  
a better and safer world  
are to become more  
than wishful thinking,  
we will need the engage-  
ment of volunteers more  
than ever.  
KOTI ANNAI

# Glossary

## **Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit (BMZ)**

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.  
The Ministry which supports the weltwärts programme financially.

## **Contact person**

For the volunteer. He/she is not part of the day-to-day activities of the volunteer. The contact person is someone outside of the project/host project, a person for the volunteer to turn to. In many cases, the contact person is a staff member or co-worker of the ICYE National Committee, also called an external mentor. In this guidebook the term »external mentor« is used for this actor.

## **Coordinator**

Staff member of the ICYE National Committee. He/she can be the external mentor for the volunteers.

## **Co-workers**

Local volunteers/returned volunteers who work for the ICYE National Committee. They can be external mentors for the volunteers.

## **Developed country**

Industrialised country/sovereign state that has a highly developed economy and advanced technological infrastructure.

## **Developing country**

Nation with a lower living standard and underdeveloped industrial base.

## **Exchangee**

Term for a volunteer within ICYE Federation.

## **Host coordinating organisation**

See receiving organisation and National Committee.

## **Host family**

Local family where the volunteer lives as part of the family during the voluntary service.

The family provides food and accommodation throughout the stay, and endeavours to make sure that the volunteer is comfortable in all aspects, physically, mentally and emotionally. In return, the volunteer has to adapt to living with a family and accepting the house rules, as well as respecting the culture. These families are sometimes given stipends to assist in the living expenses of the volunteer.

## **Host projects**

Places or institutions, where the volunteers conduct their voluntary service. A host project is where the volunteer works and lives. The project provides accommodation and food for the volunteer and makes sure that he/she has his/her space away from work, and a definite schedule of activities and free time. Some of the host projects receive a small stipend to assist with volunteer upkeep.

## **ICYE – International Cultural Youth Exchange**

Federation of partner organisations which has organised youth exchanges and voluntary service since 1949. ICJA e.V./ICYE Germany is one of the founders of ICYE. The main aim of ICYE is an international voluntary exchange. Therefore, each National Committee is a hosting and sending organisation at the same time.

## **ICYE – BoM**

Board of Managers of the ICYE Federation.

## **ICYE NC**

See National Committees.

## **Independent living**

In some situations, volunteers want to live on their own, or it is not possible to accommodate the volunteer in a family or project. In this case they are provided with accommodation on their own, or share with other volunteers.

**Job site**

Direct working location of a volunteer within their hosting project. The hosting project can have more than one job site. Hosting projects of the weltwärts volunteers do not usually have more than two job sites.

**Mentor, external**

Not part of the day-to-day activities of the volunteer. The mentor is someone outside of the project/host project, a person for the volunteer to turn to. In many cases the external mentor is a staff member or co-worker of the ICYE National Committee, also titled as a contact person. In this guidebook the term »external mentor« is used for this actor.

**Mentor, internal**

Representative of the project/host project, in charge of assisting the volunteer and contact person for the ICYE National Committee. He/she is responsible for the volunteer's day-to-day activities.

**Minimal conditions**

The minimal conditions are agreed upon within the ICYE Federation and are binding for each National Committee. The ICYE minimal conditions deal for example with the application procedure, the seminars and the supervision during the one year cycle of the voluntary service as well as the collaboration between the hosting project and the host family.

**National Committee (NC)**

The ICYE NCs are the coordinating partner organisations, which host and send volunteers. The NCs are responsible for the educational supervision of the volunteers as well as programme administration. As receiving NCs they are locally connected to the hosting projects and host families.

**NGO**

Non-governmental organisation.

**Project**

Where the volunteer works only; the volunteer lives somewhere else and comes to work every day. The supervisor allocates duties and gives definite tasks to the volunteer so that he/she is meaningfully occupied during the volunteering period. Depending on the situation, the project sometimes provides tea and lunch for the volunteer.

**Receiving organisation**

Organisation receiving and hosting the volunteer.  
See also National Committee.

**Sending organisation**

Organisation preparing and sending the volunteer, for example ICJA/ICYE Germany sends volunteers from Germany to the country of destination.  
See also National Committee.

**Supervisor**

Somebody in the project/host projects, who supervises the volunteer.

**weltwärts** English: out into the world

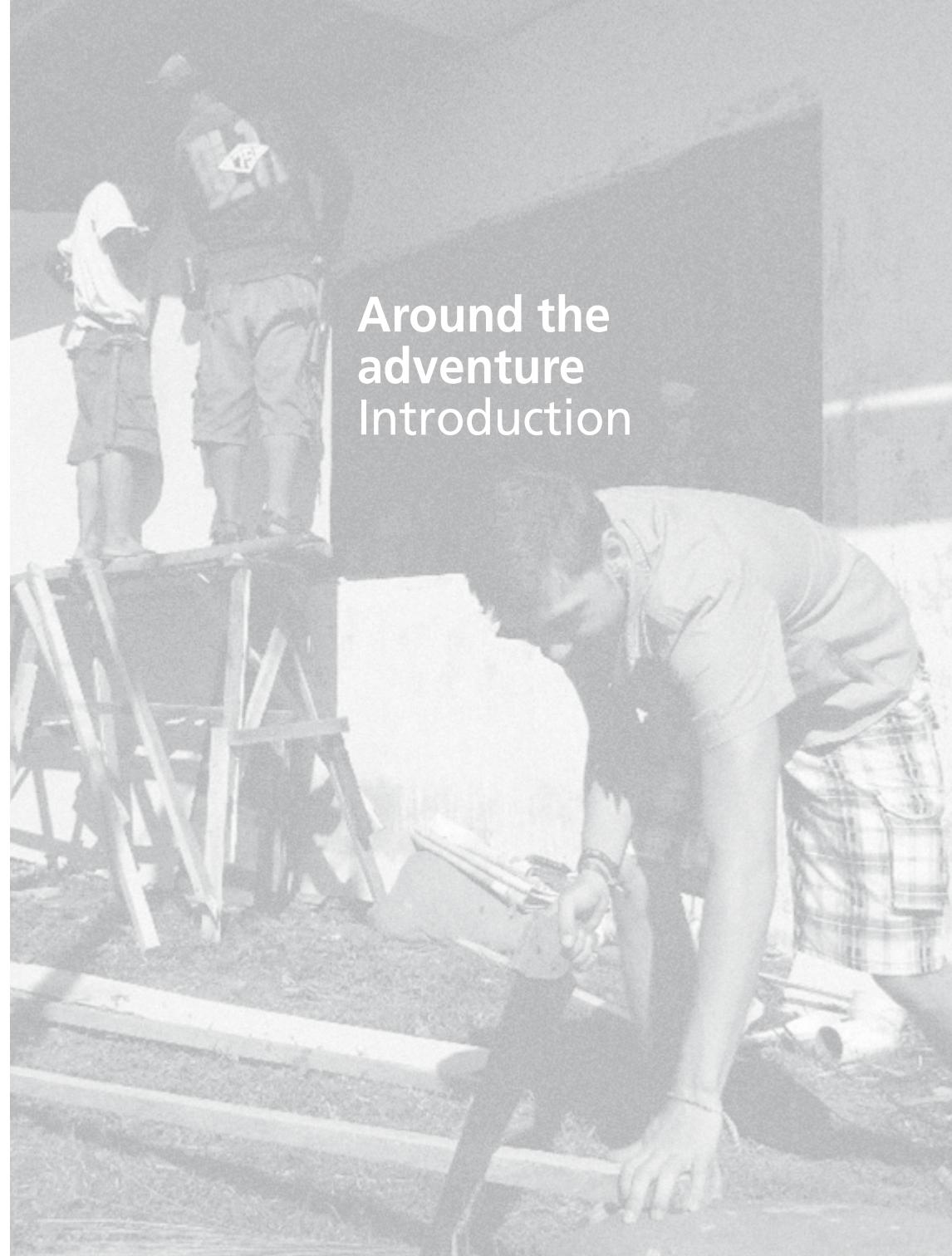
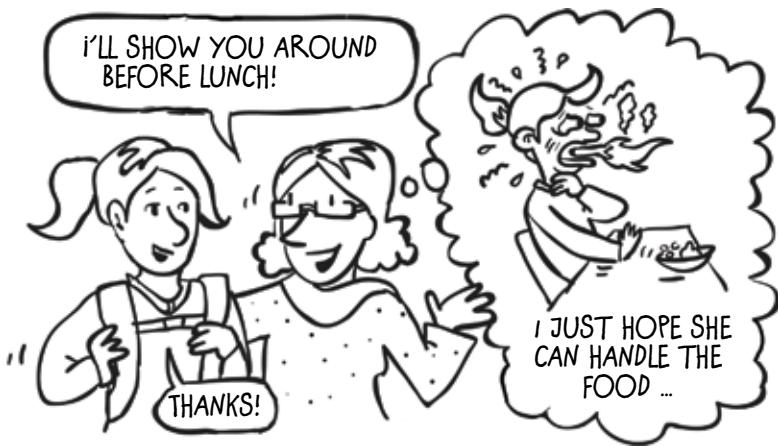
The volunteer programme financially supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

**Work placement**

See project.







## Around the adventure Introduction

# About ICYE and voluntary programmes

The International Cultural Youth Exchange (ICYE) is a leader in international youth exchange programmes with more than 60 years of experience promoting young people's active and global citizenship. ICYE conducts an international voluntary service programme with significant presence across all continents. It is an experience-based programme to enhance young people's intercultural understanding and commitment to peace and justice and has an international network of local organisations providing volunteers with the necessary orientation, training and support.

## The statement of goals in the preamble of the ICYE constitution reads:

ICYE participants and all partner organisations (National Committees) are committed to and will work with others who are committed to:

- Justice for all persons who suffer from social, political, economic, and personal injustice,
- Break through the barriers between cultures and peoples,
- The principle of equality among cultures, nations and sexes.

## National Committees are committed to:

- Providing experiences that will encourage international and intercultural understanding,
- Helping participants to become aware of the issues and problems existing in the local and national community in order to better understand the worldwide socio-economic-political issues and problems,
- Encouraging commitment to act on these understandings, both during the exchange experience and beyond.

## ICYE mission statement

- To provide challenging intercultural learning experiences for young people,
- To promote their social and personal development through international volunteer programmes,
- To promote intercultural understanding, equality of opportunity, tolerance and peace among people in the world.

## Brief history

# 1949

### A programme of peace and reconciliation

After the Second World War, in 1949, the Brethren Service Commission of the Church of the Brethren in the USA arranged for young Germans to spend a year in the USA living with families and attending high school. The programme was designed to restore and develop trust between people in the two countries, starting from the conviction that what the war had destroyed could be built up again with the help of the younger generation.

# 1958

### Development of National Committees

National Committees came into existence in Germany and Austria in 1958, and other countries followed suit. It led, within ICYE, to the growth of national identity and autonomy and the National Committees became independent, cooperating national agencies. At the Annual Consultation in 1965, in Oslo, Norway, internationalisation was the main issue and for the first time there were representatives from Asia, Africa and Latin America.

### The formation of ICYE

The Church of the Brethren realised that the programme had grown and become popular. Therefore, in 1957 they joined with four other denominations to form an independent corporation. This is when the International Christian Youth Exchange came into existence.

# 1957

# 1966

## The internationalisation of ICYE

In 1966, representatives of fourteen ICYE National Committees officially formed the International Committee of ICYE. In 1969, the International Committee voted to become the International Council for the International Christian Youth Exchange, registered as a legal corporation in Switzerland with an international office in Geneva. With the increase of National Committees in the developing world, ICYE responded to changing social patterns and movements for social change around the world. The goal of the programme was to focus on a simple cultural exchange as a means of international education for commitment to, and responsibility for, justice and peace.

## Reorganisation: The Federation

In September 1977, delegates from 15 countries met in Skálholt, Iceland, to reformulate the goals, to reorganise the structure into a federative system, and to reaffirm commitment to the importance and future of ICYE. Thus the Federation of National Committees in the International Christian Youth Exchange was established. Currently, over 36 countries are involved in the programmes of the Federation and in the regions of Europe, Africa, Asia/Pacific and the Americas.

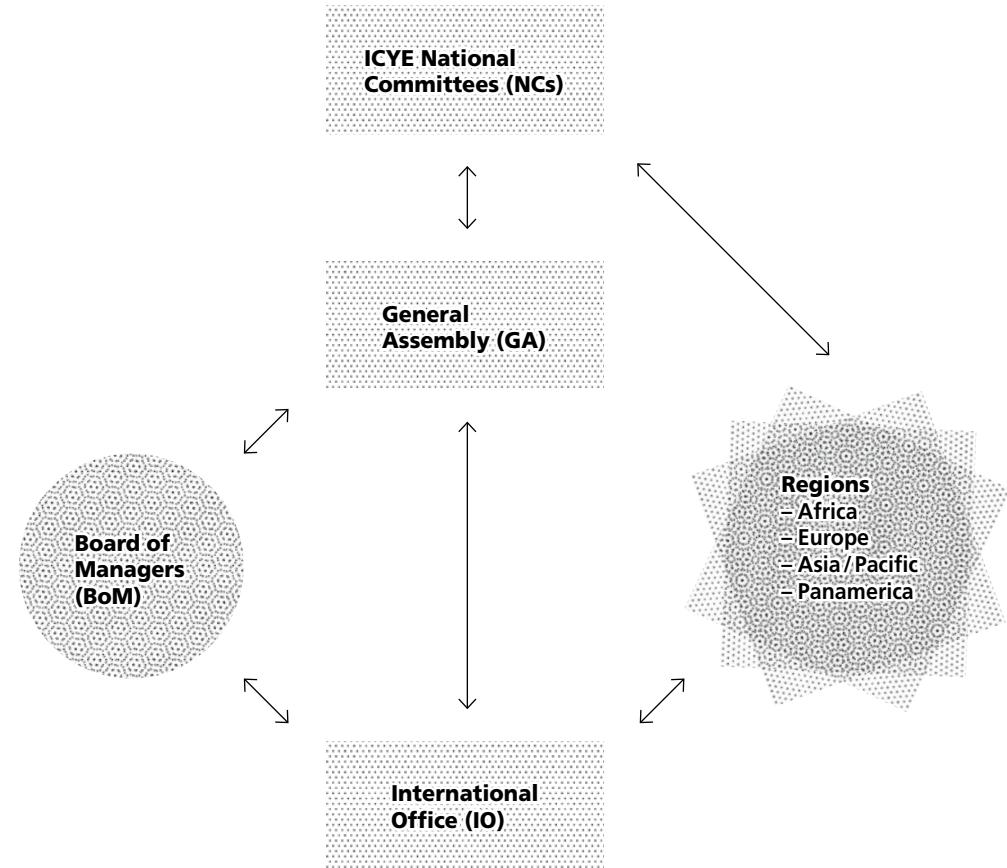
The ICYE Federation is an official partner and

- ... has consultative status
  - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)
  - United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN-ECOSOC).
- ... is a recognised international ecumenical organisation with a working relationship with the World Council of Churches (WCC).
- ... cooperates with EACEA and the Directorate General Education and Culture of the European Commission and the Council of Europe. Association of Voluntary Service Organisations in Europe (AVSO) The European Youth Forum
- ... is a member of the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS).

# 1977

## How the Federation of ICYE works

The ICYE Federation is composed of autonomous full and associate National Committees, each one developing and running the programme according to the needs of young people in their country.



## General Assembly (GA)

The General Assembly is the official governing and highest decision-making body of the ICYE Federation, where programme policies are discussed and decided upon. The GA meets every second year; one delegate from each ICYE National Committee attends. The policies decided by the GA guide ICYE programme management and developments at international and national levels.

National Committees are expected to give their delegate the mandate to act on all matters at the General Assembly. In special cases, the Board of Managers may invite persons other than delegates to attend the GA.

## Board of Managers (BoM)

The ICYE Board of Managers is composed of four members who are elected for a two-year term at the General Assembly. The BoM meets twice a year and acts/decides on behalf of the General Assembly in between General Assemblies.

## International Office (IO)

The International Office is located in Berlin, Germany and acts as international secretariat of the Federation. It has representation and coordination functions with regard to programmes and policies worked out at the General Assembly.

## Regions and National Committees

Africa	Asia /Pacific	Europe	Pan America
Ghana	India	Austria	Brazil
Kenya	Indonesia	Denmark	Colombia
Mozambique	Japan	Finland	Costa Rica
Nigeria	Nepal	France	Ecuador
Morocco	New Zealand	Germany	Honduras
South Africa	Philippines	Italy	Mexico
Tanzania	South Korea	Moldova	Peru
Togo	Taiwan	Russia	USA
Uganda	Vietnam	Spain	
		Sweden	
		Switzerland	
		United Kingdom	

## Quality assurance

All programmes conducted by the Federation of ICYE, its full members, associate members and partners, adhere to a very high level of quality standards. There are three regular evaluations at different times during a volunteer year. All ICYE members agreed on minimal conditions of quality, which are binding. Guidelines, like the ICYE Toolkit, for National Committees and minimal conditions for all stakeholders are defined and upgraded from time to time, ensuring effective and efficient support, mentorship and voluntary services offered to young people, despite the ever growing demands. All partner organisations are involved in meetings, conferences, workshops, trainings and staff exchanges in order to improve the partnership and the quality of work.

## Voluntary programmes

The ICYE Federation conducts a variety of voluntary programmes, short- and long-term, for different target groups and regions.

### ICYE long-term exchange programme

ICYE's main programme is the long-term exchange of young people, aged mainly 18 to 30, with or without qualifications, who want to live in another country with a family or in a residential project, and work as volunteers in a wide variety of voluntary work placements. Each year ICYE exchanges over 900 long-term volunteers between different countries, for periods ranging from six to twelve months.

To be a volunteer with ICYE means to integrate into the life and work of the hosting organisations and wider community. Volunteers are encouraged and supported to get involved in the planning and managing of distinct activities, take part in staff meetings and to take on responsibilities according to their skills and interests, as well as the needs of the project. Volunteers, however, will not substitute the paid staff in the projects/host projects.

Voluntary service placements offered by ICYE include social work projects dealing with children and young people at risk, with the elderly, the disabled, rural and health development projects, human rights organisations, peace associations, ecological projects, women's groups, migrant workers' support groups, fair-trade shops, and solidarity projects.

### weltwärts programme

The weltwärts programme is an initiative by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) that provides an opportunity for young Germans to volunteer in a developing country and acquire some international experience and qualifications that will help them in their own lives and the future, when choosing their career.

The voluntary service has been designed with a successful formula of »learning by serving« and its aims are twofold:

- To achieve added developmental value for the partner organisations/projects, in terms of help towards self-help,
- To spark new interest in developmental issues in Germany.

It is hoped that this volunteer service will make an effective contribution to the development policy, information and education and work in terms of »Global Learning«, towards nurturing a new generation of development workers.

This volunteer service will enhance intercultural understanding and help increase awareness and acceptance within society of how development policy issues will impact on the future.

The Ministry cooperates with a broad range of established sending organisations that have flexible, non-bureaucratic schemes, without special legislation and using simple and easy procedures.

This programme is offered to young German citizens and non-German citizens who have permanent residence in Germany and are between the ages of 18 and 28 years only.

There is an upcoming new part of the programme, which targets youngsters from developing countries to do service in Germany, in order to make the programme reciprocal.

### European Voluntary Service (EVS)

The aim of the European Voluntary Service (EVS) is to develop solidarity and promote active citizenship and mutual understanding among young Europeans. The EVS programme is provided by National Committees/organisations that are based in Europe and most volunteer services take place in Europe. The EVS is financed by the European Union in the framework of the Youth in Action Programme (since 2014 »Erasmus+«).

### Intergenerational programme

To promote an intergenerational approach to volunteering and to make the ICYE programme more age inclusive, this programme has been developed and dedicated to participants who are over 30 years old. It works on the same lines as both the long-term and the short-term programme.

### ICYE short-term exchange programme

Building on ICYE's long-standing and reputed long-term programme, ICYE short-term exchange programme (STePs) is designed to offer volunteers a combination of reliable and meaningful volunteer work with direct exposure to the cultures of the host countries, in a shorter period of time. The short-term exchange programme is normally for a period of 4 weeks to a maximum of 16 weeks.

## Various perspectives of the adventure

### Motivation and benefit of volunteerism

#### Why hosting volunteers?

A child or young adult lives in a complex ecology of homes, schools, farms, shops, roads and factories. Part of the process of growing up is to learn how to act in these behavioural settings; part of the task is also to learn how to move among them, selecting some and rejecting others. The ICYE programme's educational philosophy is to develop free, morally responsible and integrated individuals, equipped with a high degree of social competence.

There are 196 countries, about 6.500 spoken languages and over 7 billion people in the world today. The world is indeed smaller than it used to be. Travel is more accessible and so is learning about and communicating with the rest of the world. Providing young people with an informed, international perspective isn't simply an important educational opportunity which will set them up for success in the long run, but a way to provide greater understanding and empathy for others.

The experience of another culture in a different country gives them another perspective of what else is out in the world and how similar or different we can be from one another. Another skin colour, eye colour, food habits, clothes etc., but in the end we are all human, we all live in this world. The intention is to orient our social behaviour and peer interactions with various cultures, by bringing these cultures closer.

#### Why do voluntary service?

Volunteers enter into voluntary service because they are mainly motivated by their desires and needs. Motivation is the term used to describe that process, both instinctive and rational, by which people seek to satisfy the basic drives, perceived needs and personal goals, which trigger human behaviour (Cole 1995). The perceived needs for a volunteer are the ones that drive them to volunteer. Motivation cannot be seen but can be depicted from the volunteer's behaviour – this makes it a complex process. Volunteers have certain needs that motivate them to do voluntary service for which they receive rewards that satisfy their original need.

A survey report notes that volunteers are not genuinely altruistic persons doing work for nothing, their energy, excitement, enthusiasm and effort (so called E-forces) are not given for free, but in exchange for fulfillment of certain needs. Volunteers mostly look for symbolic or social returns for their contributions, whilst the volunteers' management endeavours to keep volunteers happy. Fulfilling the needs of the volunteers is important to maintain their E-forces. Volunteers benefit more from the intrinsic rewards they get from voluntary service than from the extrinsic rewards. Most hosting organisations have received comments from volunteers like »The six months I spent volunteering were the best time of my life«.

A new volunteer may be stimulated by a former volunteer, being motivated to learn new culture and language skills. Stories from friends and family or any other source about a place or culture may motivate an individual to volunteer. An individual may have a goal of volunteering after such stories. Voluntary service is a human motive directed towards desired ends such as a break from the normal hustle and bustle of one's own country for a certain time, break from school or taking a gap year. In some colleges or countries it is a pre-requisite to certain courses, or part of the syllabus or a requirement for obtaining a job. Volunteers may do that to gain experience and skills in certain areas.

For others, the primary motivator is the desire to work and make an impact in a community without reciprocal financial reward. Fisher and Ackerman (1998) found that the desire to be helpful prompted volunteerism primarily when social reward was also promised, which included socialising with people sharing common interests. Some people volunteer because they want to keep busy, when out of a job or in between schools or after retirement from active duty. While others may want to give back to society and develop the community.

#### Some of the ways one benefits from volunteering

Volunteers gain practical knowledge and experience to complement studies and assist with career decision-making. Volunteering seems like an added advantage in the job market, as it improves one's curriculum vitae. Volunteers develop networking opportunities for interaction with people from different cultures. In this way they expand their social capital across borders and frontiers. The volunteers build on their interpersonal and organisational skills and the ability to adapt to new and/or unanticipated situations through the challenges experienced and overall increase

in confidence. The volunteers gain first-hand appreciation of the relationship between different cultures, practices and ideas. They increase their knowledge of a variety of customs apart from their own and learn to respect them. The psychological need for responsibility and advancement, self-actualisation and self-esteem is increasingly met: volunteers develop to full potential after they realise who they are. It is easier to realise who one is when one is away from friends and family. It enables one to achieve personal satisfaction and an improved feeling of contentment. It also helps a volunteer to have a clearer picture of life and the direction in which he/she is heading.

Volunteering may stimulate interest in the subject matter, encouraging the volunteer to pursue a similar course in future. It may generate an interest in the work undertaken. Increased enjoyment, taking pride in being associated with a certain culture or continent and helping out can be important motivation for some.

## Mutual benefits

Volunteerism is uncoerced help offered formally and informally without financial reward, done for the benefit of the project/host project and the volunteer. Some mutual benefits grow to all stakeholders which cannot be ignored. For people who, for example, have narrowed their focus or career goals to a certain activity, volunteering provides an effective means of filling the gap between where they have been and where they want to be. In volunteering, social capital accumulates as people from different cultures establish networks, creating social trust that facilitates coordination and cooperation. Here, the host and volunteer benefit mutually.

Voluntary service is free. Giving should not be conditional on receiving anything in return, except an expression of gratitude or appreciation. Many actions are known to provide joint rewards. While volunteers derive enjoyment and satisfaction from the experience itself, the benefit is of project/host project as well as third parties (i.e. local community). The project/host project may benefit directly or indirectly. The volunteer benefits may be obvious but the project/host project gains as well. The project/host project benefits from new ideas, and diverse methods of doing things. Material benefits might accrue to the project/host project and volunteers alike. To a certain degree, volunteers can be seen as a collective good or a public utility because of this.

Volunteering addresses the needs of the project/host project as well as the needs of the volunteers themselves. The reward experienced

by presenting a gift to the volunteer or the project/host project can be of benefit to both of them or even the gratitude from either of them, without necessarily getting any material gain. To both the project/host project and the volunteer, it can be for self-fulfillment and visionary achievement. Volunteering may not be as selfish as it sounds (like a service for free).

This explains why projects/host projects and volunteers all enjoy the partnership. If well managed, it results in a win-win situation for all parties.

Voluntary behaviour is hard to explain, but a Christian activist, for example, who volunteers to work in a community fighting Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) does not benefit alone: the families and community as a whole also benefit. The volunteers have the satisfaction of having made a difference. It is said that volunteers make better world citizens than other individuals who do not volunteer.

Mutual benefits increase in instances where a volunteer engages in the project to avoid anti-social behaviour and may be a motivation to the project/host project. It is also said that individuals who are active in several roles are healthier because of power, prestige, resources and emotional gratification. Volunteers have admitted to feeling better as a result of voluntary work. They have a sense of accomplishment and a new purpose in life—their outlook on life changes.

Volunteers may receive non-monetary benefits in the form of skill development, social connections, job contacts, social standing and increased self-esteem. This may produce some services and goods which contribute something of potential value to the project/host project.

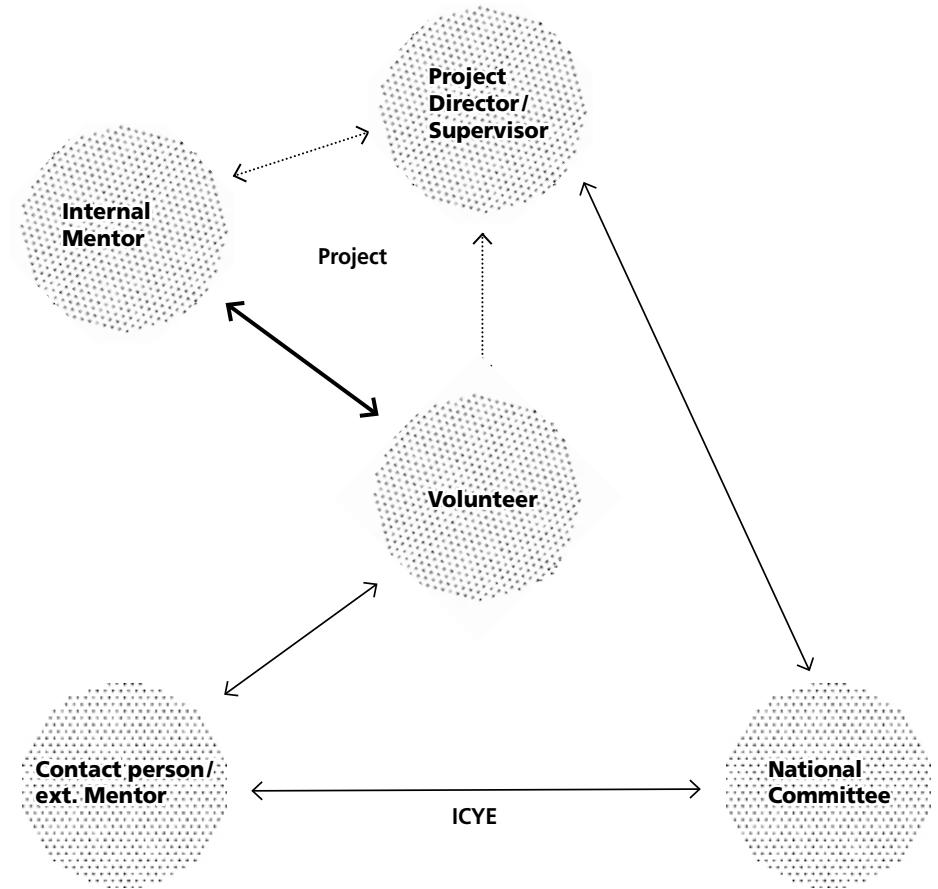
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# Heroes of the adventure

## The stakeholders involved

There are different stakeholders involved in the supporting process of the volunteer (please also refer to the glossary for a detailed explanation). The relationship between them has different characteristics:



**Project/host project**  
Organisation, where the volunteer does his/her service.

**Hosting or receiving National Committee**  
is the ICYE National Committee in the same country as the project/host project. The hosting National Committee also supports the volunteer, provides training and camps for the international volunteers and collaborates with various projects.

**Sending National Committee**  
is the National Committee of the country from which the volunteer comes. The sending National Committee is responsible for the application and preparation process as well as for the after-return activities of the volunteers.

**Host family/guest situation**  
where the volunteer lives during his/her service.

**Internal mentor**  
is the supervisor belonging to the project/host project.

**External mentor**  
is from outside the project. Quite often a staff member or co-worker of the hosting National Committee.

## Conditions of the adventure

### Rights and duties of the stakeholders

Bearing in mind the interaction of the different stakeholders, it is important to know their rights and duties. As we know, our experiences and those of the other stakeholders change from one country to another and for that reason we have minimal conditions that guarantee the quality of the programme. The following information is a general guide to give a clearer picture of the respective rights and duties between project, ICYE National Committee and volunteer.

Please also refer to the guideline »Outline of the six phases of the one-year-voluntary-service« in the appendix. It shows the administrative perspective according to the one-year-process.

## National Committee

### Rights

- To have information about the volunteer, which includes profile, picture and any other information
- To have the updated information of each project e.g. activities of the project, activities of the volunteer in the project, requirements of the volunteers, important changes that may affect volunteering
- To have an attendance record provided by the project and volunteer
- To have the volunteer vacation period recorded by the project and volunteer
- To be informed of any problem the volunteer may face e.g. health, performance in the project

### Duties

- To provide an external mentor for the volunteer: it should be an external mentor to whom the volunteer can talk in case of problems, questions or for clarification in the course of his/her voluntary service
- To find an appropriate project placement according to the expectations and skills of the volunteer
- To organise project information meetings at least once a year
- To ensure the security and well-being of the volunteer
- To give the volunteer a safe, healthy and secure host situation
- To organise three camps for the volunteers: orientation camp, mid-term camp (for services lasting longer than six months), final camp
- To be responsible for the volunteer immigration status in the country
- To be a mediator between the other National Committees, project/host project and/or host family and the volunteers
- To provide the project with appropriate information about the voluntary programme, camps, events etc.
- To provide the volunteer with appropriate information about the programme and project
- To be accessible at all times to the volunteer (24 hours 365 days) in case of emergency
- To prepare a certificate for the volunteer with emphasis on the experience and task done during the volunteer experience

## Project / host-project

### Rights

- To participate in the project meetings organised by the National Committee
- To ask for support or mediation – in case of conflict – from the National Committee
- To receive a volunteer who is suited to the needs of the project
- To communicate and have support from the National Committee in case of an irregular situation with the volunteer
- To receive a year calendar of the National Committees activities

### Duties

- Commitment to work with the volunteer, which includes training on the work he/she will do during his/her volunteering time
- To conduct an introduction phase, which should include
  - Giving full project information and activities that will help the volunteer to develop
  - Mutual introduction of project staff and the volunteer
  - Set working hours and days for the volunteers
  - Submit schedule of planned activities
  - Show the facilities of the project to the volunteer, especially where he/she will be working
  - Clarify rules and code of conduct to the volunteer
  - Share expectations of the project and the volunteer
  - The calendar of events of the project for the current year.  
A list of public holidays and special days would be helpful!
- Proper planning and coordination with the volunteer to promote active his/her participation
- To assign a role that is worthwhile and challenging to the volunteer
- To record attendance of the volunteer
- To allow vacation for the volunteer and keep record of it

- To provide an internal mentor for the volunteer: The person should be one whom the volunteer can talk to in case clarification is required, questions occur regarding daily activities and who should conduct periodical evaluation of the volunteer's progress
- To give the volunteer defined activities. Lack and inadequate clarity of activities may cause de-motivation
- To respect the privacy, integrity and personality of the volunteer
- To provide the volunteer with an environment conducive to his work
- To give training to the volunteer in case of any new activities on the project
- To prepare a certificate showing the experience and accomplishments of the volunteer in the project
- To offer the volunteers vacation time: for 12 months 24 working days and for 6 months 12 working days

### Note

Under no circumstances should the volunteer do the work of a paid employee, losing the voluntary quality that supports the development of project activities.

## Volunteer

### Rights

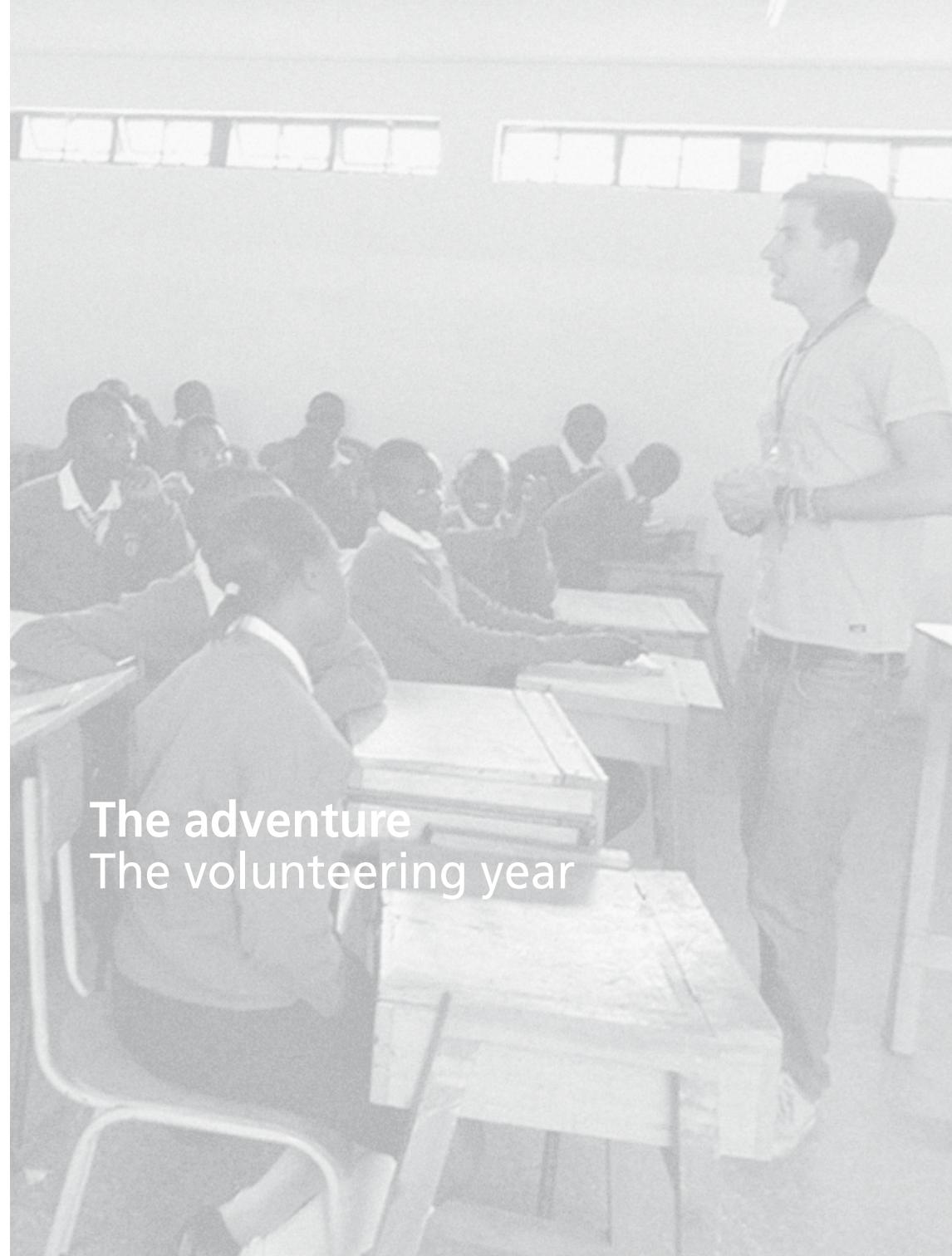
- To work at least 30 hours and maximum 40 hours per week, with two free days per week
- To have a safe and secure host situation which includes the provision of food and basic services during the stay
- To attend three (in case of a short service only two) camps organised by the National Committee: orientation, mid-term and final camps
- To receive from the project the introduction/orientation, training and supervision necessary to do the task assigned
- To be treated with respect and as an equal partner within the organisation
- To be informed on relevant matters within the organisation related to the work allocated
- To have a travel health insurance
- To receive transport expenses, host situation to project and project to host situation

### Duties

- To respect the rules of the country, project, family and National Committee
- Not to compare his/her reality with other volunteers' experience/realities
- To integrate culturally into the society as fast as possible
- To inform the project and National Committee in advance of any vacation to be taken
- To inform the National Committee and the project of any extra activities that may influence daily work
- To perform the tasks assigned to the best of his/her ability
- To inform the National Committee and project of any circumstance related to his/her health and security
- To respect the people of the host country and all members of the National Committee and project as well as their policy and procedures
- To be open-minded and respectful towards opinions shared and respect those confidences







The adventure  
The volunteering year

## The adventure's dynamics

### The one-year-voluntary-service

Young people around the world, today, have found volunteering to be an important part in their own lives. While volunteering has different dimensions, capacities and end results, it still draws attention and interest and is seemingly growing, over the years.

International volunteering is an issue in itself and involves not only servicing but to a substantial degree learning as well. This combination in the international volunteering programme gives scope to more young people to participate without the limitation of having specialised skills and talents or the need to be backed up with experience in specific fields.

The degree of serving or learning varies depending on the background of the volunteers, including cultural, political, social and economic situations. Further, it is also specific to geographical locations and demands. Many young people from developed countries, going to developing countries, have more of a serving concept than learning. On the other hand, volunteers from developing countries, look for a learning experience, while serving. Overall, they all seem to be, if not in the same boat but, similar ones.

Volunteerism is a choice of people who wish to make a difference. It is therefore true that many people have chosen voluntary work, to go through a certain amount of struggle, to give meaning and direction to their lives and the ones they are interacting with. In reality, many venturing out have very little or absolutely no knowledge about volunteering, but take this challenge to make a difference.

## 01

### On arrival

The volunteer has a very high level of enthusiasm. The feeling of going to another country gives him/her joy and happiness. They are well received by the host country committee and attend an orientation/on-arrival camp. At the orientation camp, they get to meet more volunteers (from other countries as well) which is very interesting. In the process of getting to know each other, they are inspired by the feeling of »global citizenship«. The volunteers will normally meet the organisers, the staff and other members involved in the programme which reaffirms and reiterates their desire for safety, security and support. As a part of the orientation camp, the volunteers get an insight into the new country, new language, and new culture etc. and more practical information about their activity in the project/host project and host family. During this time, the volunteers have mentally prepared their playing ground, with a concept which waits only to be »converted to a reality«. Each one is all set to face his/her perceived »challenge ahead«.

### At the beginning at the project / host project

At the end of the orientation camp, volunteers are sent/taken to the project/host project where they find new people with different expressions, spoken language, body language, different environment, work structure, working hours, working method and style, different food habits and timings and a different concept of time. This may result in a »cultural shock«, in which reality and expectations clash.

## 02

## During the first months at the project / host project

When things do not seem to be the way the volunteers expected and had perceived in their minds, they question themselves—»Have I made the right decision?« A survey conducted in India, within the network of the Federation of ICYE, indicated that—in a volunteer programme—maximum weight is attached, amongst other factors, to the kind of work allotted. A gap between the expected work and actual work given decides on the level of voluntary satisfaction. The other factors that follow are sufficient work that's well structured, food and accommodation. The biological cycle in a human being becomes apparent. Communication of their feelings effectively poses a problem since language and lack of cross-communication skills makes things worse for them. Not knowing the system, method or people, to whom they can express their feelings/complaints, prompts them to give up.

The only means of venting their feelings is to talk about it to their friends/family back home. Unfortunately, this method does not solve the problem. It can make things better but more often makes it worse for the volunteer. Imagine a situation where the parent of a volunteer acknowledges the volunteer's frustration and follows up with telephone calls and emails, to ask—»How are you today?«, »Can you cope with the situation?«,

»Do you want to come back home?« or »Should I talk to the organisers?«.

Another observation is the communication through social media contact with friends and relatives from their home country where all of them seem to be enjoying life, party pictures and travel pictures being uploaded while the volunteer is in such a frustrated and confused situation. The volunteer gets discouraged and contact with those in the home country brings misery, more frustration, anger, disappointment and in the process of coping with the situation, he/she tends to lead a double life. Some of the recognisable symptoms that can be seen in the volunteer are: oversleeping and sleeping at odd hours, isolation, homesickness, sadness and crying, nervousness etc. He/she will have physical and emotional discomfort. In some cases, the staff/project/job or the hosting committee becomes the victim of circumstances. The volunteers tend to claim that there is lack of interesting work in the project or insufficient work. Or blame everything on the attitude of staff in the project.

Though unintentional, the project/host project, having seen similar behaviour in the past from other volunteers, does nothing because they think it is normal and the volunteer will be fine after a couple of weeks.

It is highly recommended that the receiving committee should

- Have an informal get-together of volunteers at the regional/local level
- Ask their staff to pay a visit
- Keep close contact with the sending National Committee

## 04

### 3rd month onwards till mid-year camp

The volunteer is encouraged to break barriers and develop new initiatives, strategies to cope with difficulties and feelings and make new friends and to learn to adapt to a new host culture. They achieve some of the initiatives but not all. However, the volunteer begins to embrace and accept cultural differences, to acknowledge living conditions as most appropriate in the host country and to become open-minded to work ethics, team work, leadership, organisational structure etc. In the process, the volunteer gets creative in the workplace and finds that the other staff are very encouraging and supportive and begins to like the work that has been allotted to him/her.

## Mid-year camp

All organisations dealing with long-term voluntary programmes conduct a mid-year camp, to evaluate and review performance of the volunteers, the staff, mentors and the programme at large. The volunteers are more than happy to get away from the work/family and to be with the National Committee and the other volunteers. Often, the volunteers share their thoughts and sometimes their difficulties with the National Committee and with the other volunteers, as well. The main outcome during the mid-year camp is, that the volunteers

- understand that everyone seems to have had the same difficulties and that they are not alone
- realise that someone probably has had a worse situation
- see clearer
- get ideas from others as to how to cope with the situation
- understand that they are »all sailing in the same boat«
- begin to understand that »a different culture« is the root cause for their way of understanding

In some countries, the volunteers travel together during Christmas and New Year Holidays which is in a way a refreshing time for all. It will also be time for them to share their views and opinions and equip themselves to handle their work in a more professional manner and respect it.

## 05

## 03

# 06

## After the mid-year camp and the following months

The voluntary work in its true sense begins NOW. The countdown has begun because they know that half a year has already gone and that they need to achieve so much in the short time left.

The opportunity to be involved in voluntary work probably comes once in their life time and they need to realise their dreams. They find that they need to take stock of what has been done and what impact it has on their own lives and the lives of the others. What is their »take away« from this experience?

Volunteers get deeply rooted in their work. They are once again inspired with a high level of enthusiasm, as much and even more so than when they arrived in the host country. In the process of more effective and efficient work, there is a sense of belonging and they find that there cannot be a better place and a better way to contribute, serve and learn from this action.

They get to understand that the change that they wanted to see actually is the change that they needed to make. Everything seems to be a »bed of roses« and all goes well. Seeing success in their every day work and appreciation from those around, binds them in a new relationship. The time of the voluntary work comes

to a close. At the end, where the time went is rather a difficult explanation. There seems to be a high level of satisfaction, a high degree of achievement and the joy of getting back home—only to tell their relatives and friends what a wonderful time they spent abroad, a time that brought self-realisation, built self-confidence, opened their minds beyond their own beliefs and values, to respect the culture of others and to take up the responsibility of the world as »global citizens«.

Having these dynamics in mind, it helps to give support to the volunteers and try to understand their behaviour better.

## Preparation of the project

There has to be a fundamental reasonably structured programme for the volunteer to be involved in. The accommodation for the volunteer is to be organised and those involved in the hosting situation have to be briefed and prepared to receive the volunteer. A dedicated work space is to be identified for the volunteer in the project/host project. An assigned internal mentor/supervisor for the volunteer helps as he/she can translate the tasks on hand for the volunteer in the project/host project. If the internal mentor speaks a common understandable simple language with the volunteer, and does have know-how about communication and especially intercultural communication it will empower the volunteer. Also the staff must be instructed in how to work with volunteers.

If the project is hosting several volunteers or is hosting in a consecutive way, it requires a lot of flexibility not only of the volunteer but also of the project since every experience is unique and the staff and clients of the project have to deal with a different person every time. A task may fit perfectly for one volunteer and he or she accomplishes it to everybody's satisfaction, while the skills and abilities of the next volunteer may lie in a different field and be completely incongruous with the task assigned.

Please find more information in the appendix »Understanding international volunteerism« and »How to get information about the volunteer's country?«

# Preparation of the volunteer

## Pre-departure preparation

Before volunteers leave their home countries, the sending National Committees organise intensive preparatory training for all outward bound volunteers and also conduct discussions for future volunteers, providing them with information about:

- ICYE as an organisation, its structure, goals and objectives
- Host country and possible projects/host projects
- Intercultural learning
- The concept of volunteering
- Required vaccinations and medical cover
- Practical travel information

## On-arrival preparation

When the volunteers arrive in the host country, the receiving National Committees take them through an orientation which includes general topics which the ICYE Federation has agreed on, but every country also discusses country-specific topics. The projects need to know what the organisation covers, so that they know where to start with the volunteer. Below are some of the topics, which are discussed during orientation:

- Historical and geographical aspects of the host country
- Presentations of pictures, documentaries or video clips of the home countries of the participating volunteers
- Intercultural and intracultural learning
- Host country culture–integration and diversity
- Living conditions within the community, in a host family/ host project
- Gender issues within a culture
- Communication–verbal and nonverbal, written
- Challenges and conflicts along with the resolution of them
- Working details and conditions in a project
- Safety and security of the volunteer during the entire volunteering year
- Relationship and social life in accordance with the societal and cultural norms
- Meaning of volunteerism, motivation, expectation and goals concerning the exchange year
- Rights and duties<sup>1</sup>
- Second life in the internet. The volunteer needs to be guided as to the right amount of time and usage of social network connections so as not to lose a grip on the reality of the host situation
- Administrative issues such as their legal status, stipends, vacations and health insurance, evaluation of seminar
- Health issues–knowledge of common diseases and illnesses, communicable diseases, health and hygiene, and availability of local treatment and health awareness programmes are all of great importance
- Short language course in the local language helps to get around

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the chapter »Conditions of the adventure«

After the orientation camp, when the volunteer arrives at the project, it is important for the project/host project to keep in mind the following when integrating the volunteer:

1. Culture
2. Practices
3. Retention

### **Culture**

Identify the host project's volunteer culture, the utilisation of the volunteer in the project/host project, the staff's expectations on integration, misinformation and past experiences, does the volunteer attend staff meetings and department meetings and how is the input from the volunteer received in the project/host project?

### **Practices**

A brief position description within the project/host project is required for the integration of the volunteer into the project/host project. Personal profiles of the volunteer are to be maintained. The daily timetable, record of work, attendance and tasks are to be prepared. Introductory training and orientation is required to get the volunteer started on the project/host project. Regular feedback meetings are necessary, especially in the first 3 months.

Motivation plays a big part in the integration aspect. The challenges confronting the volunteer must be motivating, to encourage the volunteer to get involved. On the other hand, the project/host project should also be prepared to take on the challenge of integrating the volunteer. Integration helps the volunteer to identify with the work on hand and gives the volunteer a sense of achievement!

### **Retention**

Retention is an outcome not an activity! It is the result of good management. A programme that recruits volunteers appropriately and has a robust plan for utilising and recognising the volunteers will retain them. Periodic programme evaluation helps to ensure that the integration of the volunteer into the project/host project is happening in the right way.

Please find a guideline for an orientation session and templates on evaluation questions in the appendix.

## **Integration and recognition**

Integration of the volunteers in the project/host project and the host family is very important for all the stakeholders. Volunteering is good and hosting a volunteer should be a good and memorable experience for the project/host project. The integration of the volunteer plays a vital role in the physiological, psychological, emotional and spiritual domain. A well-integrated volunteer is a happy person and this happiness spreads. The project/host project benefits from the volunteer and everything should work well for all involved.

The benefits of volunteering include the intangibles—pride, satisfaction and accomplishment! Often organisations working with volunteers have little or no choice in their selection. At times, the organisation may have highly skilled enthusiastic volunteers or the skills and other qualities of the volunteer may not be very suitable! Volunteers are not free labour, but they do extend the budget of the project/host project! However, it is unfair for organisers to expect a volunteer to incur financial expenses while working as a volunteer. Other methods of remunerating volunteers include assigning the volunteers with fun or challenging tasks, matching responsibilities and tasks with their interests, providing training, allowing them to go to special meetings or conferences, representing the organisation, providing job references for job applications, listening to and when appropriate applying suggestions made by the volunteer, valuing the volunteer, recognising the special skills of the volunteer, and providing positive feedback.

Determine the role of the volunteer and plan for integration!  
Train, activate, retain, sustain, manage and recognise the volunteer!

## Needs and expectations of the volunteer

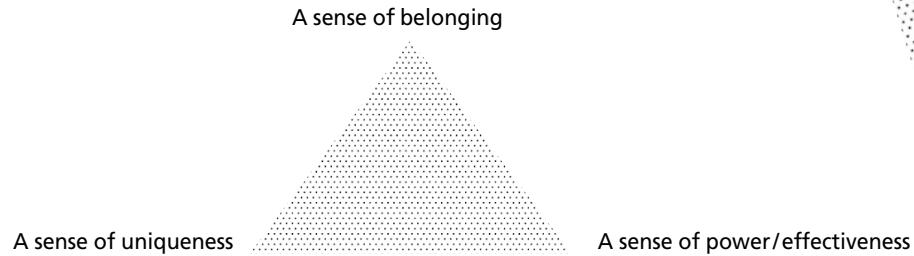
- Volunteers love to have a warm welcome into the new country. Many are very happy to associate immediately with members of the receiving organisation, the project/host project and the host family. They usually love the cultural welcome.
- To get all relevant information, that is: location, type of project and clients, weather, is there electricity, running water, internet access, where is the nearest town, bank, how many people are at the project, working hours, free time/vacation, public transport, living conditions, other people in the project in the same age bracket as the volunteer, their gender ratio, possibilities of social life etc. This information can be forwarded to the volunteer by the ICYE National Committee of your country.
- It is very important for the volunteer to feel orientated and safe to receive clear information about the receiving organisation, the project/host project, the host family/situation and about life in this new environment! In this connection, it is vital to have in mind that everything that is self-evident for the local stakeholders is not necessarily so for the volunteer.
- The vision and mission of the project/host project should be made clear to the volunteer.
- The rules and regulations, roles and responsibilities in the project/host project and outside should be in writing.
- Security of the volunteer is important.
- An internal and external mentor should be identified, known and available.
- Expectations of the project/host project from the volunteer should be clear.
- Rapid acclimatisation to the cultural differences, for which explanations of various customs and situations should be given.
- Cordial relationships between the volunteer and the staff members and within the host family.
- Openness, trust, sincerity and transparency from staff and family.
- Patience while the volunteer settles in!
- To be understood and loved just as they are.
- Clear communication.
- Structured work day.
- Calendar of the project/host project year (e.g. main activities, events and public holidays).
- Regular evaluation meetings.
- Clear job description.
- Good orientation to the country, project and family.
- To be involved in all activities of the project and family as far as possible. To be treated as a family member.
- To be treated as adults.
- To make friends.
- Freedom to travel and move around in free time.
- Language classes to learn the basic local language.
- To be accepted in spite of differences.
- Individuality and rights of the volunteer have to be respected.
- To learn to adapt in spite of homesickness, loneliness, problems in the project or the family, any kind of emergency or even when a change of project or host family is sought!
- The volunteer dislikes being seen as a prospective donor or fund raiser.
- The volunteer wants a great environment conducive to learning and working, in which he/she can develop him/herself to be a better individual, making an impact on the world!
- Availability of internet facilities, skype, mobile phone connections etc.
- Management and counselling of the volunteer should be well handled.
- Possible visits from their families and friends should be allowed, in line with the rules of the receiving National Committee, project/host project and host family.
- The availability of the mentor and/or contact person from the project/host project and the National Committee when the volunteer needs them is of great importance during and outside work and work times.
- To balance work and fun to the maximum extent possible.
- To use skills and talents to improve self, people and situations.
- Recognise good performance of the volunteer, use praise, affiliation, accomplishment, power, influence and knowledge.
- Show your appreciation – personal note, birthday or e-card, newspaper article or an advertisement, donated gift certificates of appreciation and recognition might be helpful!
- It is also vital to offer constructive criticism in an adequate way since this also helps the volunteer to understand, be orientated and improve his/her contribution and well-being.

Examples, guidelines and templates can be found in the appendix.

## Self-esteem of the volunteer

One way of looking at the needs of the volunteer is through the concept of self-esteem. If someone feels good about themselves and the work that they are doing then they are likely to stay around, put more effort in, and create a good atmosphere in the workplace!

Self-esteem can be seen as a triangle, of what may seem to be contradictory concepts:



### Belonging—a sense of »we«

Being part of a group/team/organisation—feeling that you connect with other people and are part of a collective effort. Fostering good team spirit and making volunteers feel that they BELONG in the organisation is very important here.

### Uniqueness

Being special—the only one that can do what you can do. Volunteers should feel that they offer something that is special to the organisation—their work really matters and they are the best person for the job. As a volunteer manager this means encouraging individual development.

### Power/effectiveness

Volunteers should feel that they have some influence in the organisation—a sense that they are working on something that matters and makes a difference. Allow volunteers to make independent decisions: this might just be deciding what colour paper to print the newsletter on (allowing them to take pride in the end result), or it may be something more major (managing a whole project)—according to/depending on the know-how and skills of the volunteer.

Two roads diverged  
in a wood, and I—I took  
the one less travelled  
by, and that has made  
all the difference.  
Robert Frost

## Needs and expectations of the project

The way that projects/host projects empower volunteers depends upon the capabilities and needs of the individuals. Integration of volunteers in projects/host projects is rewarded by a sense of giving back, seeing impact for which communication is the key, formal and informal recognition, social opportunities, learning new skills, forming incentives and other intangible benefits!

- The project/host project needs to receive information about the type of programme (funded/self financed), sending organisation, the receiving organisation and the volunteer and the preparation of the volunteer.
- A motivation letter from the volunteer including all relevant details about him-/herself, academic background, family details, country, language proficiency, health details, handicaps or any other specific characteristics/restrictions of the individual volunteer, allergies, expectations, willingness to work on the project, interests, dislikes, hobbies, skills, training. Pictures help!
- Evaluation reports from the volunteers and the National Committee at the end of the year.
- Good and organised interaction between the project/host project, National Committee, host family and the volunteer.
- Rules and regulations from the sending and receiving organisation regarding the volunteer, including »zero tolerance« rules.
- Standards of conduct.
- Change in project policy and procedures, if introducing volunteering demands it.
- Expectations of the volunteers from the National Committee and the entire experience of volunteering.
- The project/host project should accept the willingness of the volunteer to work on the project.
- The concept of extra hands to help in the project should be taken seriously.

- Explore and maximise the potentials of the volunteer. Match them to the needs of the project/host project.
- Preparation for the cultural and social exchange.
- Have a concept and understanding of troubleshooting, conflict resolution, areas of adjustments and adaptations. Please refer to the chapter »And if everyone is right?«.
- Involvement of the volunteers in all possible activities of the project.
- Encourage support for the volunteer as he/she will support the project!
- Trust in the volunteer is important.
- Get involved in the free time of the volunteer whenever possible, as it establishes better friendship.
- Conduct regular meetings and discussions about project-related work.
- An internal and external mentor is to be made available to address problems and to guide the volunteer.
- Network with locals to help the volunteers to understand the culture and to help whenever possible.
- Get a registration copy of the volunteer
- Local administration should know there will be a foreigner coming to stay within the community.
- Ensure the work in the project matches the age, sex, skills and experience of the volunteer.
- Try to bridge the gap between the volunteer and the culture.
- The project/host project should be ready to receive the volunteer.
- To know the volunteer's value and to make the necessary adjustments.

- Guidelines on how to work with international volunteers.
- To know the rights of the volunteers.
- Clarity of the aim, vision and mission of volunteering.

Examples, guidelines, informations and templates can be found in the appendix.

## Needs and expectations of the staff

In assessing the projects' /host projects' needs for volunteers, it is also important to incorporate the needs of staff—they are the ones who will be working with volunteers and it is important that they don't feel that volunteers are

- replacing them, or
- wasting their time.

Involving staff into the decision-making for hosting volunteers as far as possible and in needs' assessment is therefore an important first step in preparing a volunteer programme. The willingness of the staff to receive international volunteers will raise the understanding, recognition and acceptance of the volunteer. Inform or train the staff about the concept of volunteerism, as well as basic knowledge and understanding of intercultural exchange and learning. More awareness will bring more cooperation and positive results for the volunteer and all stakeholders.

Along with this, addressing the issue of culture shock is very important for the integration of all actors.

## Ongoing support

Once the volunteers are settled in the project, they need continuous support to be productive and happy during the volunteering period. This is especially so since their position in the staff/project is a unique one and working with international volunteers is even more special, since you usually do not share the same cultural background and at the beginning you sometimes do not even share the same language.

All projects/host projects can get support from the National Committees, such as information, conflict resolution, crisis management etc.

ICYE takes the support of volunteers very seriously. And in line with this, all ICYE committees try to give every volunteer a comprehensive pre-service training which prepares them to meet the challenges of their voluntary year and a new environment. During their exchange year, the hosting committee tries to offer the volunteers all the necessary support for them to effectively perform their roles and responsibilities within their projects. This is done through familiarising the volunteers with the project by providing information about the project such as the aims and goals. For example, the project's goals could be to provide activities and rehabilitation for youth at risk, or education at primary school level, or sponsorship and mentoring the past primary, secondary and undergraduate students or the alumni.

After the first one or two months, the volunteers should know what their role and tasks in the project are and can now give feedback to the project about how they feel, and if there are challenges or issues that need to be addressed.

Please find a guideline for feedback rules in the appendix.

### Support, mentoring and evaluation

It is crucial for the project to be continuously monitoring the volunteer so that any problem that arises can be addressed at the earliest opportunity. There are two evaluations offered by ICYE, but the project can also have in-house evaluations, where the supervisor/internal mentor discusses with the volunteers about their well-being, any problems/questions, not only regarding work as such but also the social integration of the volunteer in the project. There should be feedback meetings on a regular

basis once a month and if possible these should be at shorter intervals during the first three months, since these are usually the most difficult ones. Minutes of these meetings should be taken, to have a record for reference.

Please find questionnaires for the supervisor/internal mentor to ask the volunteer in the appendix.

### **Illness, accidents**

In a situation where the volunteer has an accident, or falls ill, the project should ensure he/she receives treatment immediately and also inform the ICYE National Committee and the host family, especially if he/she needs to be hospitalised.

### **Homesickness and difficulties in adjusting to the new environment**

The project needs to be aware that however excited the volunteer is to volunteer in the project, he/she is often confronted with a reality which is different from the dreams he/she had about it before coming. He/she might feel lonely, disorientated and homesick, this is quite natural, especially in the first half of the year. So the project needs to be able to support the volunteer emotionally and psychologically in any crisis situations as is described in the chapter »A ship sailing in the storm«. The supervisor must always keep the communication channels open so that the volunteer feels able to share any situations.

It may also sometimes be necessary to support the volunteer on administrative issues, such as providing materials for work, necessary documentation, logistical and financial support when required.

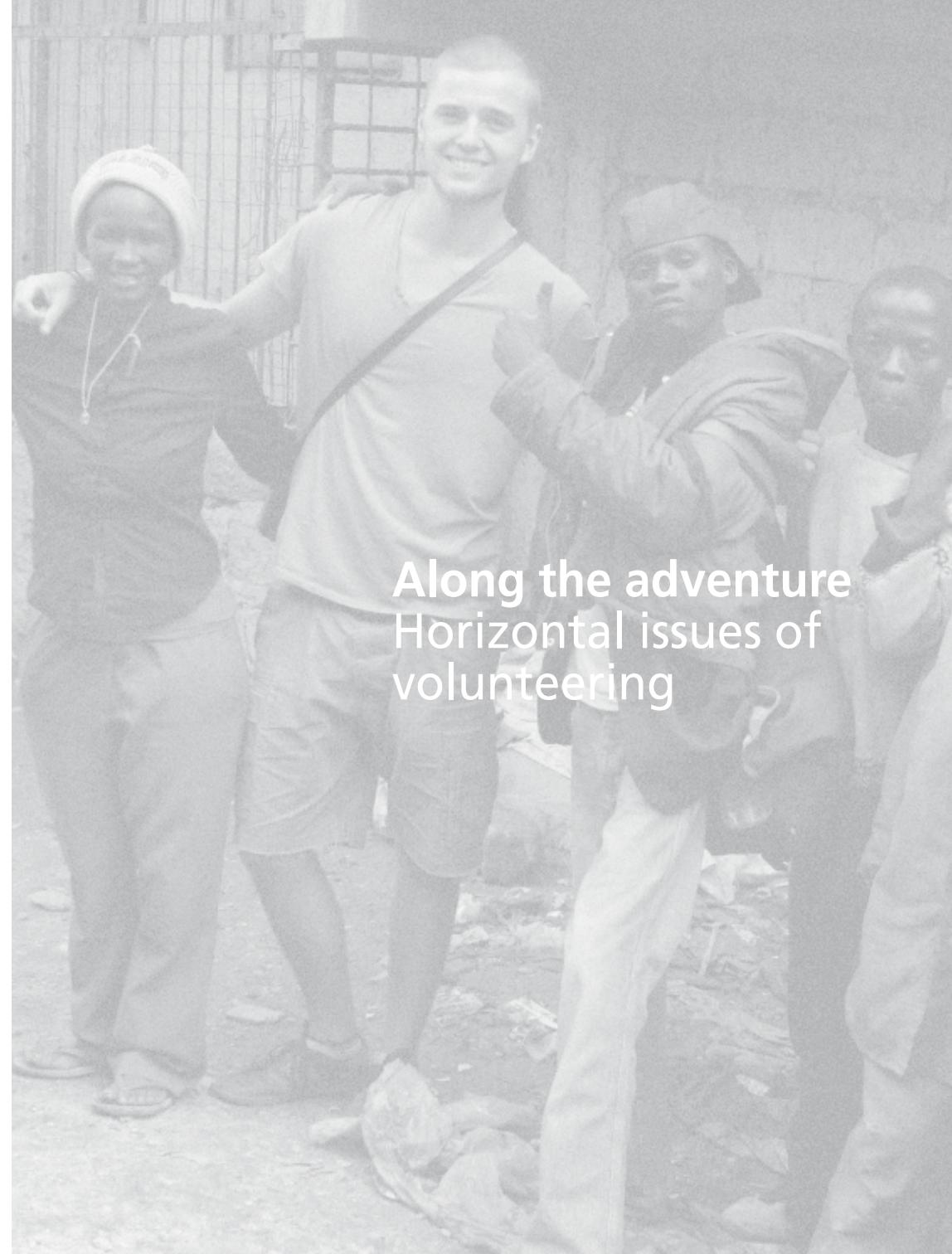
At the end of the service there should be a final evaluation talk between the contact person and the volunteer, if possible also reflecting the feedback of the colleagues the volunteer has been working with during the service.

The project should prepare a report for ICYE during the mid-term and final evaluation, for them to be able to discuss with the volunteer and see ways to improve their stay for the rest of the period or for the next volunteers coming to the project. The report could be built around the following questions:

- Does the volunteer report to work as expected?
- Has the volunteer integrated into the work place?
- What do the colleagues think about the volunteer's work?
- Was the volunteer happy?
- Has the volunteer learnt or attempted to learn the local language?
- What does the community think about the volunteer's work, support?
- What has the volunteer brought to the project?
- What do you think the volunteer has learnt from your project?
- Based on this volunteer's performance, would you host another volunteer in future?







Along the adventure  
Horizontal issues of  
volunteering

## Intercultural learning

Intercultural learning is an area of research, study and application of knowledge about cultures—their differences and similarities. On the one hand, it includes theories and academics and on the other hand, it comprises practical applications such as learning to communicate with people with various backgrounds, living with people from other countries, living in a different culture and the prospect of peace between different cultures and countries.

Culture is very commonly defined as a way of life, a set of social practices, a system of beliefs, a shared history or a set of experiences. A culture may be synonymous with a country, or a region, or a nationality or it may also cross several countries or regions or may be synonymous with a religion. It is possible that a person may not belong to »only« one culture but to various cultures, which makes him/her a unique individual. Therefore, culture has become an instrument for social interpretation and communicative action.

Intercultural learning deepens the knowledge, understanding of and respect for other cultures. It also enables young people to learn more about their own culture, to deepen their cultural roots and to reaffirm their identity. More importantly, intercultural learning raises the awareness of the need for international cooperation to tackle today's global problems, focusing not only on others but on oneself as well. Many young people around the world aim to be global citizens. They dream of travelling across the globe, establishing relationships for social or business purposes. This leads to effective intercultural communication, which is a set of practices requiring knowledge, skills and attitudes, better thought of as competence.

Some of the attitudes and skills that make up competence include observing, identifying and recognising, comparing and contrasting, seeking its meaning by being sensitive to another culture, dealing with or tolerating a different perspective of an idea or an action, effectively interpreting the perceived meaning, limiting the possibility of misinterpretation and defending one's own point of view while acknowledging the legitimacy of others and accepting the differences.

Intercultural learning applies to explicit visible issues, as well as less obvious and important ones, which are »below the surface«. It is a study that requires continuity and cannot really be achieved through isolated »one-off events«, but through lifelong learning.

An international volunteer service, if well accompanied, can have a major impact on acquiring intercultural competences. Not only do the volunteers experience life in a very new and varied environment, but also get an idea of what it means to be in a foreign land.

Today, someone who identifies with being part of an emerging world community and whose actions contribute to building this community's values and practices, identifies as a global citizen, meaning that he/she has a sense of belonging to a world community that grows from the roots of intercultural learning.

It is not a question of abandoning other identities such as allegiance to one's country, ethnicity, or political beliefs. These traditional identities give meaning to their lives and will continue to help shape who they are. However, as a result of living in a globalised world, one finds that one has an added layer of responsibility—the WORLD.

# A ship sailing in the storm

## Crisis and risk management

This chapter introduces the fundamental concepts, theories, strategies and skills needed to understand how to conduct an effective volunteer crisis intervention.

Crisis can be defined in several ways. It is a stressful life experience affecting the stability of an individual so that the ability to cope or even function may be seriously compromised or impaired. In any case, it influences and has consequences for people's lives. Never mind whether the crisis is caused through a natural disaster, through the death of a loved one, through a violent personal experience or other. The common characteristic is that the situation exceeds the capacity of the individual or society to cope with it. Therefore a crisis often requires external aid. The special characteristics and circumstances of the situation causing the crisis are important for the capability of the individual or society to adapt. The consequences of a crisis can be expressed on a physical, psychological, emotional, interpersonal and social level.

### Assistance for volunteers in crisis

Effective psychological assistance at the right moment gives the volunteers a productive answer. Intervention may be immediate (first aid) or deferred (second instance). First aid covers the precipitating factor of the crisis (emotional or physical situations, see in »The adventure's dynamics«) and second aid covers the consequences of the traumatic event.

When an event develops into a crisis, there may be so many compounding problems that crisis workers (may be the mentor) must intervene directly in a variety of areas. In principal, we can recognise the following factors (stress factors) that develop into a crisis:

- The loss of emotional stability, e.g. emotional losses, somebody dies (you cannot resolve the problems with the resources that are available), lack of communication (sadness, hunger, unsafety, anger, inability)
- Feeling in pain (I miss my family, my country, my friends, homesickness)
- Illness and hospitalisation
- Loss of items

### Crisis in volunteering

When large numbers of people are affected at the same time by a crisis, intervention and help may be required. We can distinguish four kinds of crisis that may be faced by a volunteer and how to handle them.

**Growth and development crisis** Events in the normal flow of human growth and evolution whereby a dramatic change or shift occurs that produces abnormal responses. We have in our project/host project volunteers from eighteen to thirty years old, who could be in a developmental and growth crisis, thinking about their studies, their relationships, peer pressure or their future.

**Situational crisis** Emerges with the occurrence of uncommon or extraordinary events that cannot be controlled. It could be automobile accidents, kidnappings, rapes, sudden illness and death in their families. The key to differentiating a situational crisis from other crises is that a situational crisis is sudden, shocking, intense and often catastrophic.

**Existential crisis** A moment at which an individual questions the very foundations of his/her life: whether his or her life has any meaning, purpose or value: Asking themselves »Am I sure that this is what I want?«

**Natural disaster crisis** Such a crisis may be the result of natural phenomena such as hurricanes, floods, tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tornadoes, blizzards, mudslides or drought, famine and forest or grassland/brush fires. Intervention depends on the nature of the disaster and its consequences.

In order to understand the most common crisis or situations that may be considered as conflicts in our groups, details can be found below in the next chapter on conflict prevention:

- Problems concerning relationships
- Conflict at workplace for various reasons
- Volunteers have permanent health problems including emotional conflicts such as »cultural shock«
- Visits of family or friends
- Life between two continents
- Food quantity–quality
- Administrative issues with ICYE

## How to manage crisis

It is very important when we work with volunteers, families and culture to see the systemic interactions that may occur between the family and community out in the field. There is great value in looking at crisis in their overall social and environmental settings—not simply as one individual being affected by others (Hardy, 1997; James & Gilliland, 2003, pp. 336–368).

»As crisis situations in international voluntary services can never be completely avoided, the development of a well-structured and successful emergency management is of great importance«<sup>2</sup>. It provides helpful instructions to all stakeholders involved to be prepared for diverse crisis situations, such as physical and mental problems, emotional stress, accidents, assaults, civil disturbances etc. and because of the importance of this, good preparation for crisis situations should be included in seminars at the beginning of the process.

### Instruction and training of volunteers on crisis

We need to enforce the importance of giving precautionary safety information to the volunteers and their families prior to departure from their home, at least broadly speaking; safety rules, discussion of fears and reflection on own attitudes towards the project/host project. Then when they have arrived they should know the safety rules and be accompanied to prevent or diminish cultural shock.

The minimal goal of crisis intervention in a project/host project is the resolution of the individual's immediate crisis and restoration to at least the level of functioning that existed before the crisis period.

## Common crisis interventions

Crisis situation	Whom to contact
Common stress situation	Handled by the internal mentor, may be communicated to the contact person of National Committee for advice.
Legal aid in case of criminal prosecution (e.g. arrest)	Contact the National Committee and/or embassy of volunteer's home country.
Life-threatening illness, quick repatriation may be required for better medical treatment	Contact the National Committee. If you can't reach anybody, contact the 24h hotline of volunteer's insurance. Decision on a quick return to home country for better treatment needs a medical report and clearance from insurance!
Outbreak of war, danger of civil wars or violent riots in the region, terrorist attack	Contact the National Committee and/or the embassy of volunteer's home country for advice.
Natural disasters (e.g. flood, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide etc.)	Contact the National Committee and/or embassy of volunteer's home country for advice in case the volunteer is affected.

### Note

The ICYE National Committees have their own crisis intervention steps!

<sup>2</sup> [ivs-quality-toolkit.org/fileadmin/downloads/Loseblatt\\_Mentoring.pdf](https://ivs-quality-toolkit.org/fileadmin/downloads/Loseblatt_Mentoring.pdf)

## How to help and/or intervene in case of crisis

- 1 Contact and engagement**  
Get in touch with the emotional world of volunteers.
- 2 Safety and comfort**  
Provide physical and emotional comfort, create a safe situation.
- 3 Stabilisation (if needed)**  
Provide calmness and support.
- 4 Opportune information**  
Identify immediate needs and tailor psychological first aid intervention.
- 5 Practical assistance and connection with social support**  
Offer practical assistance in order to provide specific aid such as a new family, hospitalisation, get in touch with a special person or friends and community helping resources.
- 6 Call the ICYE National Committee**  
The National Committee decides if the parents should be informed.
- 7 Continue with the steps for the emergency**

## Mid-term intervention

Personal characteristic of the people who help	How to do it
Coolness	Creating a stable and rational atmosphere provides a model for the volunteer in order to regain equilibrium in the situation (tenderness, quiet tone, gentle words)
Creativity and flexibility	In order to adapt to the context (empathy)
Energy and improvisation (resiliency)	The volunteer needs support in an intensive situation (maybe we can get a friend or family nearby)
Quick mental reflexes	In order to protect the volunteers injuring themselves (may be with cuts or pain-killers)
Assertiveness	To reestablish calm and break down anxiety
Other	Should be important: tenacity, courage, optimism, a realistic attitude, calmness under duress, objectivity, a strong and positive self-concept, and faith that human beings are strong, resilient, and capable of moving forward

## Post-crisis support

If the crisis is under control and does not require the preceding steps, the following measures should be taken:

### Establish a helping relationship

The internal mentor (the person who was designed to be close to the emotional world of the volunteer) has to talk to the volunteer to ask what happened in order to understand the situation.

### Assure safety

Depending on the situation they need support, advice and counselling to calm things down.

### Conduct an assessment

The internal mentor should secure information about the factors or events that precipitated the crisis, the information will help in judging the gravity of the consequences.

### Give support

Take a look at what happened in his or her family and inside the organisation. Support the person in daily life and establish what feelings may have induced a crisis situation or even a suicidal tendency and consider hospitalisation.

### Assist with action plans

The internal mentor should help the volunteer to acquire cognitive understanding of the crisis before seeking a solution (Aguilera 1998, Gilliland and James, 1997, Hersh, 1985).  
Arrange for follow-up, maybe they need to consult a psychologist.

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# And if everyone is right?

## Conflict prevention and resolution

Conflicts are »rather a social fact in which at least two parties are involved (individuals, groups, states) and which are based on differences of the social situations or differences of opinions, interests or needs of the parties involved.«<sup>3</sup>

It is a state of disharmony and tension. They can be about issues or about power. They can concern only the parties directly involved or they can spread and have influence on others. Although we feel negative about them and try to avoid having conflicts, they are part of life and a great source of learning.

### How conflicts manifest themselves

#### Conflicts

... can be internal, targeting an individual without others knowing about it.

Example: The lock of the toilet door does not close. The volunteer feels very uncomfortable about the situation but does not know whom to talk to or how to address the issue.

... can be open, in that the people involved are aware of it.

Example: The volunteer did not turn up at the time agreed on several occasions. He has been scolded for his behaviour and everybody in the project is aware of this problem.

... can be big or small.

Example: The volunteer is sick frequently, especially after weekends. Although he/she has been told to inform the project immediately, he/she repeatedly does not do it. This unreliability creates anger and dissatisfaction and might even lead to the expulsion of the volunteer.  
Example: The volunteer is sick and stays at home for 2 days without informing the project. Being told that the project needs to be informed immediately he/she does so next time.

<sup>3</sup> see: Meyers, Reinhard: Begriff und Probleme des Friedens, Opladen 1994, S. 28

... can develop quickly or slowly.

Example: Due to language problems the contact person at the project feels insulted by the volunteer and yells at him/her.

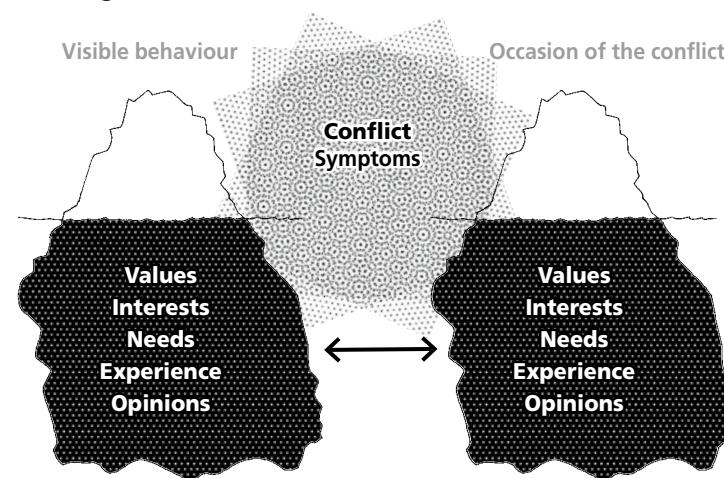
Example: The volunteer is quite unhappy in the project for understandable reasons but thinks he/she has to face the challenges and so tries to cope with the situation. Three months before the end of the service he/she asks the National Committee to be changed to another project.

... can break out with high intensity or it can be lying underneath all our communication.

Example: After having been criticised by the boss the volunteer posts on facebook: »Mr. X is a son of a ...« This will escalate the situation instantly and might lead to serious consequences for the volunteer.

Example: At the beginning of service the volunteer did not turn up for a special event for which the project had paid an entrance fee. Although the volunteer apologised and explained the circumstances, tension remained for the rest of the volunteer's service.

### The »iceberg« model



This model shows what happens between two parties in conflict with each other. On the surface the conflict seems to be about a specific issue! Under the surface the relationship of the two is equally as significant!<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The model is inspired by Funk/Malarski.  
[eu.trainerguide.eu/7-cooperation/c-handling-conflicts.aspx](http://eu.trainerguide.eu/7-cooperation/c-handling-conflicts.aspx) 13.11.2013

## Searching for/getting to the roots

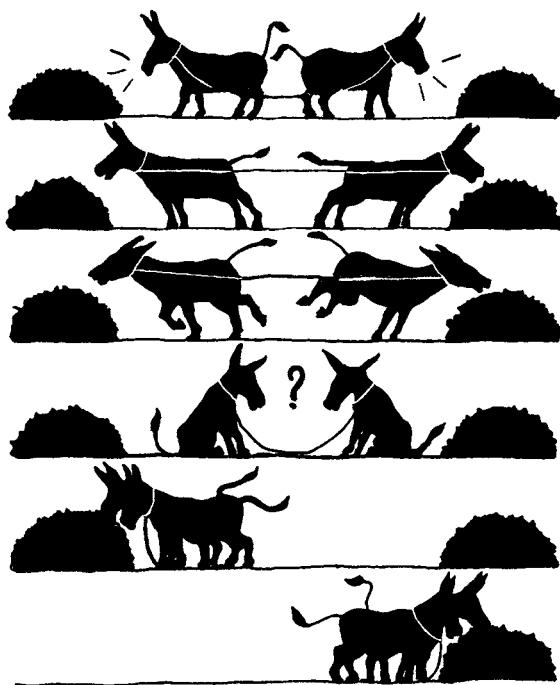
Lying underneath what we recognise as a conflict are usually hurt feelings. The conflict partners felt misunderstood, not respected, treated unjustly, disappointed etc. Yet we tend not to talk about these feelings. Maybe we do not know how to, we are afraid of losing our face or we think it's not worth it. We might even forget about our original feeling and instead keep on quarrelling about other issues.

A conflict does not solve itself alone. If ignored, it tends to grow.

Whether the outcome of a conflict is seen as negative or positive mostly depends on the ability and willingness of the parties to recognise/identify and accept their feelings and those of the others. Only then can we talk about our needs: recognition, attention, justice and more. If we stop the blame game and instead try to describe what we felt, needed and understood and listen to what the other felt, needed and understood, can we try to put ourselves into the other's shoes. Understanding and accepting oneself with our strengths and weaknesses is the key to understanding and accepting others.

### Conflict in the context of a volunteering setting may occur between

- volunteers
- volunteer and project/  
host project or host family
- staff members or  
members of the host family



## Frequent causes of conflicts in a volunteering setting

### Individual differences

The stakeholders may differ in terms of perception, attitudes, ideals, interest and aspirations. Due to these differences, the volunteering stakeholders may fail to adapt, leading to conflicts.

### Cultural shock

Volunteers' values and those of the host project/host family may differ as they come from different backgrounds (different religions, philosophies, education, language, standpoints, stereo-typing).

It is vital that the parties are open-minded and curious to face the unexpected and learn new customs, perceptions and try to find a balance situation instead of insisting on the one and only way. Good dialogue and open communication will be helpful.

### Cultural differences

Cultural habits, approach, behaviour may differ from one group or country to another. But they are often based on the assumptions and prejudices we have about others. We tend to react to these instead of appreciating the individual person. Assuming that all Latinos like to party and dance salsa, we do not even ask whether the Latin American volunteer likes it and feel irritated if this is not so. How we act and think in our everyday life is so normal/obvious to us, that we do not even imagine it being irritating or offending to others. For a French volunteer it will not be surprising to be greeted with kisses on the cheek while a Taiwanese may find it irritating and offending against common decency. Judging behaviour which irritates us instead of accommodating other customs may cause tension and lead to conflict.

### Living conditions, food and work which the volunteer might not find conducive

Many volunteers have so far only lived with their own family before starting their voluntary service. They may not have learned to take care of the daily family chores or to clean or cook for themselves.

The living conditions may be less comfortable than they are used to and missing their familiar food and adapting to the uncommon food is a big issue for most volunteers.

It takes time to adapt and it helps to feel that they are understood and accepted. It might ease them to know that other volunteers before have gone through the same at the beginning.

### **Safe situation**

Being informed about his/her legal situation is essential for making the volunteer feel safe. Likewise unclarified legal or administrative matters, like visa, health security, pocket money can create a feeling of insecurity and threat. The project/host project and host family should have knowledge about the state of these issues and support the volunteer in pursuing the formalities as reliably and as fast as possible.

### **Language problems**

Not understanding the people around you, feeling unsure whether you understand what they want from you and not being able to express yourself properly is a very big issue for every volunteer and an infinite source of misunderstandings and conflict. As in the case of an African volunteer who was convinced that her German colleagues were racists because they sang along when hearing English songs in the radio but refused to talk English to her. It took her months to realise that they knew the words of the song but felt incapable of talking in English. As far as language is concerned, we tend to guess and assume that what was said was understood. Especially if the volunteer has only a small language capacity he/she tends to answer »yes« if asked if he/she understood. It is advisable to let the volunteer repeat in his/her own words or gestures what was understood.

### **Health problems**

Health is a very sensitive and individual topic. Health problems, although seemingly minor to others, might easily cause major stress to the individual. Especially being out of our comfort zone and in circumstances where our habitual guide, doctor and medicine are not available and not being familiar with the language and the local conditions. Getting advice and pressure from the worried parents back home and feeling misunderstood by the local people may cause an internal conflict or even with the surrounding people. It frequently happens that volunteers are sick, especially at the beginning of service.

It is advisable to inform the volunteer about the existing local health facilities right at the start of service. Make sure that language does not present an obstacle and that the volunteer will be advised, guided and accompanied if in need of medical attention.

### **Emotions**

The distance from family and language barriers may cause strong feelings of loneliness, homesickness and frustration, especially during the first three months or towards the end of the volunteering period. The volunteer has to cope with his/her own emotions and with those of family and friends back home who miss him/her and might also have problems in adapting to the situation.

Awareness, understanding and empathy instead of pressure and condemnation will help the volunteer.

### **Family contact**

Intense and continuous communication with friends and family can be a common cause for the volunteer not being able to integrate emotionally and mentally into life in the host country, because he/she stays in close connection with home. It might prevent building up relationships with project or host family members.

Friends and family back home sometimes insist on staying in close contact. This can step up the pressure and create an internal conflict for the volunteer. It happens mostly in the first 3 to 5 months and after the visit of parents or relatives.

Again, awareness, understanding and empathy instead of pressure and condemnation will help the volunteer.

### **Family visits**

Some families use the opportunity to visit their son or daughter during the volunteer year. This may definitely be enriching for the individuals, as well as for the understanding of the parents about what their daughter or son are experiencing. Yet it also bears the danger of putting the volunteer under emotional stress and reactivating feelings of discontent and homesickness.

In any case, family visits should be planned in consultation with the project/host project and host family, as well as with the hosting National Committee. It can be helpful to raise this issue with the volunteer before the visit.

### **Lack of effective communication**

If the members of the project/host project or host family are not involved in the decision-making to host a volunteer or not even well informed about the concept of volunteering, context, position, special needs or tasks of the volunteer, their expectations or attitude may be inadequate.

If the volunteer does not have an assigned internal mentor or contact person or there is lack of clear communication between volunteer and the internal mentor/contact person, this may cause conflict.

All staff members working directly with the future volunteer should be involved in the decision to host, likewise all family members. All round communication is the key!

### **Poorly defined responsibilities**

It often leads to dissatisfaction and lack of interest if volunteers are not given proper direction on what is expected in their daily activities as well as in the long-term. Explanations on how to accomplish the dedicated tasks have to be clear.

A profound initial training, frequent feedback talks as well as an approachable internal mentor are vital to avoid conflicts.

### **Diverging interests/difference in goals**

The host project or the host family might demand behaviour at variance with personal wants and interests of the volunteer. Also this may lead to lack of interest in executing the work allotted or in focusing on the goals of the project if there are goal differences or if the volunteers' rights are not respected.

Flexibility in adapting to the skills and interests of the individual volunteer inside the given scope of project/host project or host family is definitely necessary when hosting volunteers. Personal communication between the stakeholders is vital, as well as dedicating time and effort in order to come to a common ground.

### **Gap between expectation and delivery**

Many volunteers come directly from school and have never been in a workplace before. It may be difficult for him/her to understand the new expectations, company culture and the workflow especially in the first three months. If the volunteer does not accomplish the assigned tasks it might be that he/she does not understand what is expected or the task may exceed or be beyond his/her ability.

Frequent feedback talks as well as an approachable internal mentor are vital to match the requirements of the project with the skills, interests and abilities of the volunteer.

### **Competition/comparison**

Volunteers may compete for recognition or even for power. They might think they know better than the people working in the project. They might compare themselves with fellow volunteers and feel that others are better off. Likewise members of the host family or project/host project might feel threatened through their presence and compete with the volunteer for attention or recognition.

It is important to have a clear and common understanding of the position of a volunteer in the staff and inside the organisation or family. It needs to be transparent to the volunteer. The people in charge should be aware of such situations, which should be sorted out as fast as possible.

### **Guidelines on how to prevent conflicts**

#### **Be respectful and sensitive in attitude, behaviour and speech**

Conflicts make most of us feel angry. Being angry makes it difficult to be sensitive and to communicate in a respectful way. We face an additional challenge when people with different cultural backgrounds are involved, since behaviour that seems normal to the one might be perceived as offending by the other. So in an international context we need to be even more aware of our own approach and behaviour.

#### **Be as clear as possible when explaining rules, regulations, ethics, dress, hierarchy and expectations of the project/host project or host family**

The way we behave in our daily life, how we communicate by words and body language, existing unwritten rules in our project/host project or host family are self-evident to us. Not so for someone from outside. So try to be conscious about the obvious. If explaining, make sure that the other has understood what you intended to express. It is better to make him/her repeat in his/her own words what has been understood instead of asking: »Did you understand?«

#### **Approach a problem promptly**

Do not accumulate difficult events or situations because they do not seem to be so relevant, because of lack of time or because it is unpleasant to address them. Resentment will make you explode at the wrong time and in the wrong way.

## Guidelines for dealing with the conflict

- Find a suitable environment to facilitate talking: tranquility, privacy, and a neutral space.
- Pay attention to non-verbal communication, e.g. look into the eyes when you talk.
- Be aware of your body language: don't express disdain or condemnation
- Listen properly to the other when talking, instead of assuming you already know the argument.
- Make sure you've understood the point of the other by repeating a phrase or speech. Even when speaking the same native language misunderstandings or misinterpretation occur frequently. Even more so in an international context and if there are language problems.
- Take your time to answer and do not interrupt the other.
- Make notes in order not to forget your point.
- Talk about yourself instead of accusing your conflict partner.
- Ask questions instead of trying to guess the thought, intention and feeling of the other.
- Tackle the problem instead of taking it personally.
- Focus on the issue that is addressed.
- Avoid improper criticism, negative comments, sarcasm or irony. This only responds to the desire to punish or humiliate another, is revenge and not a search for solutions.
- Make a request not a demand, when talking about your needs.
- Try to let the grudge go. We feel it should be the other person who takes the first step or apologises. This is often the main obstacle to solving a conflict. Letting it go, relieves us of a burden and can open up new perspectives for solving the problem.
- Put yourself into the other person's shoes. Understanding the point of view and the needs of our conflict partner, makes it easier to appreciate the why and the wherefore of the other person's behaviour and to find a common agreement.
- Accept your share of responsibility. Don't throw all the blame on the other.
- Express what you like about the other. Highlight what you agree on or where you think in the same way.
- Agree on what everyone can do to improve things, if appropriate in writing.
- Look for help if you are stuck. Especially if the situation is very emotional, it is advisable to get somebody impartial involved. This can be someone from inside or outside the project (supervisor, director, a colleague or the National Committee). Depending on the situation it may even be useful to include the sending committee.
- Not every conflict must have a »happy end«. A conflict is a signal and can prompt us to review and clarify a situation. The outcome should be a better understanding and enable us to improve the situation. This can mean a separation of project/host project /host family and volunteer.

## Formal procedure in case of »aggravation«

- Clear and recorded communication within the parties,
- Involve the regional coordinator/mentor and National Committee in writing,
- If no solution is found, the sending and receiving committees should make a joint decision.

## Some disadvantages of not resolving conflicts effectively

- Conflicting goals can quickly turn into personal dislike and the breakdown of the volunteering partnership.
- The volunteer may experience stress which manifests itself physically in the form of frequent illness.
- Psychological effects among the parties such as anxiety, depression and insecurity.
- Damaged volunteer working/living relationships.
- Talent is wasted as people disengage from their volunteer work.
- The enthusiasm and passion of volunteerism and support may be watered down.
- Violent outbursts may occur.

## Some benefits of resolving conflict successfully

### Increased understanding

Having discussed and resolved a conflict expands everyone's awareness of the situation, giving an insight into how goals can be achieved without undermining those of other parties in the volunteering process.

### Increased group cohesion

When conflict is resolved effectively, parties develop stronger mutual respect and a renewed faith in their ability to work together.

### Improved self-knowledge

Conflict pushes individuals to examine their goals in close detail, helping them to understand the things that are most important to them, sharpening their focus, and enhancing their effectiveness.

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The smallest act of  
kindness is worth  
more than the  
grandest intention.  
Oscar Wilde

# Prevention always includes intervention

## Vulnerable target groups

Vulnerability can be defined<sup>5</sup> as being:

- Susceptible to physical or emotional injury.
- Open to or defenceless against criticism or moral attacks.
- Susceptible to temptation, persuasion, censorship, seduction etc.
- Depending on others to meet the most basic needs.
- Unable to express or defend oneself properly.

All this applies to the main target groups ICYE volunteers are working with worldwide, namely children and young adults, persons with disabilities and elderly people.

Working with people who are especially vulnerable requires a high amount of sensitivity, awareness, understanding and self-reflection as well as specific knowledge about the target groups.

We, the Editorial Team of this guidebook, decided to highlight some aspects about these groups in the handbook with the aim of sharing ethical aspects, raising awareness and improving the quality of our goals and work. We hope to initiate discussion and encourage all stakeholders in the ICYE network to discuss and develop reliable and mandatory standards and regulations concerning the mentioned groups and topics and to include them in the vision and mission statement of their organisations and projects!

## Child protection

### Why a chapter on child protection?

An initial impetus to deal with this issue in the network of ICYE came from ICYE Germany, ICJA.

In 2011, it was revealed that a well known German non-governmental organisation working in Haiti after the earthquake in 2010 was a group of organised paedophiles. Furthermore, in the years 2010–2012 mostly male victims of sexual abuse broke their silence. It became publicly known that in many German schools, boarding schools and institu-

<sup>5</sup> see: [www.thefreedictionary.com/vulnerable](http://www.thefreedictionary.com/vulnerable) 09.11.2013

tions, both clerical and otherwise, boys of all ages had been sexually misused by members of the educational staff for months, years and even decades. Educators with excellent reputations had been amongst the leading perpetrators.

This is not a topic unique for Germany. Girls and boys are at risk of ill-treatment, violence, abuse, exploitation and sexual violence at any time in every country worldwide. »Violence against children cuts across boundaries of culture, class, education, income and ethnic origin and occurs in many different settings. Some of it is allowed by national laws and may be rooted in cultural, economic and social practices. This has devastating consequences for children's health and well-being.«<sup>6</sup> Sometimes it is revealed and scandalised only in most cases to be »forgotten« and left without consequences.

A high percentage of ICYE volunteers worldwide are working with children<sup>7</sup> and young adults. Depending on the circumstances, children and young adults alike<sup>8</sup> need due to their »physical and mental immaturity, (...) special safeguards and care.«<sup>9</sup> They usually do not have a lobby and cannot express or defend themselves and thus are powerless.

Being especially vulnerable makes them possible victims of emotional, physical and sexual harassment, exploitation, abuse and neglect. Therefore those working with them should be especially sensitive, aware and caring about their clients in order »to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse« as stated in Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

<sup>6</sup> [www.unicef.org/violencestudy/whythestudy.html](http://www.unicef.org/violencestudy/whythestudy.html) 08.11.2013

<sup>7</sup> according to Article 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, »a child means every human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.«, see: [www.unicef-irc.org/portfolios/crc.html](http://www.unicef-irc.org/portfolios/crc.html) 09.11.2013

<sup>8</sup> For instance if they were being traumatised.

<sup>9</sup> See: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly Resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989, entry into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with Article 49

## Some examples of ill-treatment children are exposed to

### Mental or psychological violence

If the physical and emotional needs and wishes of a child are neglected or ignored as a means of education, disciplining or punishment. If the child is being humiliated and/or offended by words, gestures or actions. If the child is (mis)used to punish the partner or others.

### Physical violence

Being threatened, pushed by purpose, beaten or caned, being forced to eat beyond hunger or not receiving food or withholding adequate medical treatment as a means of punishment, out of abuse of power or arbitrariness.

### Sexual violence

Sexual remarks about one's body, having to kiss someone, being looked at or touched on any part of the body with open or hidden sexual intention, being exposed to/used for pornographic photos or films, being forced to watch or to commit sexual actions on others, being forced to sexual intercourse.

### Exploitation

Child labour, child prostitution.

### Children's rights are universal!

Irrespective of different approaches and opinions about the upbringing of children in people's minds or social practice in different corners of the world!

To be able to protect and support children and young adults according to their needs and rights, we need knowledge about: Children's rights—how to recognise and understand the signals given by the victims seeking support—specific knowledge of the consequences of corporal punishment and child sexual abuse—strategies of perpetrators and how to recognise them and prevent abuse—abuse in institutions—legal situation in the country—cooperation with information centres or organisations working on these topics in the country or region.

## Some information on sexual abuse of children

### Types of abuse most commonly identified<sup>10</sup>

forced sex	32 %
coerced sex	54 %
kissing	41 %
touching	54 %
verbal abuse	65 %

Verbal harassment is often not even recognised as such, but is disguised in seemingly innocent remarks or jokes or expressed as approval or compliment. Being exposed to it can undermine the self-esteem of the child.

Physical harassment like being touched is often disguised as happening unintentionally or necessarily, for instance when giving assistance in sports. It is often trivialised or regarded/declared as a necessary and/or unavoidable punishment.

Sexual abuse generally includes emotional and/or physical violence. The person uses power or authority over a child, or inducements such as money or special attention.<sup>11</sup> In most cases the perpetrator comes from the social environment of the child and is known to the victim. It is someone the child is supposed to trust, like a father, uncle, friend, schoolmate, teacher or employee. To an overwhelming percentage, sexual perpetrators are adult men. Yet to some extent they are also women or peers. Sexual abuse does not happen coincidentally but is usually planned strategically by the perpetrator. In most cases it is the victim and not the perpetrator who feels ashamed and guilty and does not dare to reveal it to others. On average, a child has to tell six adults about the sexual abuse until the seventh will believe her or him.<sup>12</sup>

10 [www.un.org/en/pseataforce/docs/no\\_one\\_to\\_turn\\_under\\_reporting\\_of\\_child\\_sea\\_by\\_aid\\_workers.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/pseataforce/docs/no_one_to_turn_under_reporting_of_child_sea_by_aid_workers.pdf) 08.11.2013  
source: 38 focus group discussions across Southern Sudan, Cote d'Ivoire and Haiti

11 [civickinder.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Child-Safe-Environment-Policy.pdf](http://civickinder.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Child-Safe-Environment-Policy.pdf) 08.11.2013

12 [www.wildwasser-darmstadt.de/docs/themen\\_verantwortung.pdf](http://www.wildwasser-darmstadt.de/docs/themen_verantwortung.pdf) 08.11.2013

Paedophiles, who's primary or exclusive sexual interest is towards prepubescent children<sup>13</sup>, mostly work at places where they have easy access to their victims, like schools and kindergarten and are often very sympathetic, caring and committed colleagues, respected and liked by those around them. Usually they are very well organised in networks.

#### **General and specific remarks about child protection and how it is related to international volunteers in projects and institutions**

»According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child the rights of girls and boys are to be incorporated on an institutional level. It is advisable to explicitly incorporate the right to privacy of girls and boys, the right to immediate support in case of emergency and security against acts of cruelty and exploitation within the institution's guiding principles. For the purpose of the right to participation the opportunity to equivalently play a part in the commission must be provided to elected representatives of the children, youths or young adults.«<sup>14</sup>

Although knowledge about and management of child protection should be a substantial part of all training of everyone and especially of all professions working with children, it is still not common. Worldwide child protection policies in projects and institutions working with this target group are seldom implemented.

The first step towards developing a child protection policy in institutions is to view children as independent personalities with a dignity of their own. To accept, respect and listen to them and to develop/establish a »culture of mindfulness« inside the institution.<sup>15</sup> An ethical code, whistle-blowing procedures, complaints' procedures and volunteer policies should be developed and installed in the project. Likewise a certificate of good conduct, which is normally issued by the criminal investigation department and renewable on an annual base, should be a must for everyone working with children. In order to be able to instruct, advice and

supervise the volunteers in their work with children and young people properly, a high level of consciousness and professionalism/knowledge of the staff and the contact person at the project/host project is needed. Please see appendix for examples.

International volunteers need special guidance from the projects/ host projects since they are mostly untrained young people from another country, who are not acquainted with the local circumstances, the local culture and do not speak the language. In addition to the training ICYE provides for the volunteers, they should get profound instruction concerning development and needs of children and the local culture and customs concerning social interaction between age groups. The volunteers should be informed about the ethical code and compulsory rules of the project, for instance concerning body contact.

They should know whom to ask and to refer to in case of suspicion or insecurity about behaviour of children, himself/herself, colleagues or other persons. Contact to local or regional organisations working with this topic should exist and regular education and training should be compulsory for staff members. The international volunteers should also have knowledge about these organisations and how to get into contact with them.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pedophilia 09.11.2013

<sup>14</sup> Ursula Enders (2012): Schutz vor sexuellem Missbrauch in Institutionen. Ein Handbuch für die Praxis. Köln

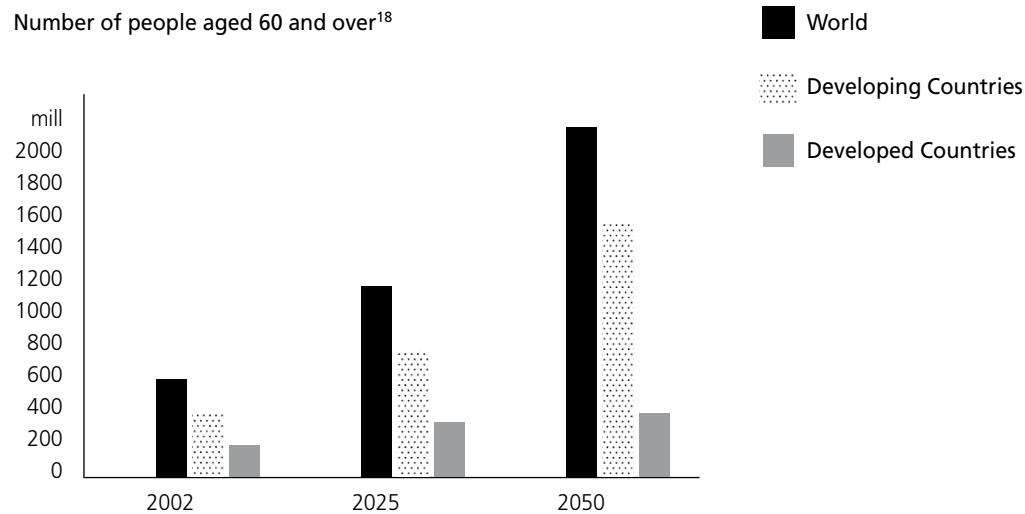
<sup>15</sup> ECPAT Deutschland e.V./aej/Venro (2012): Aktiver Kinderschutz konkret. Schulungsmaterial für Organisationen in der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit und Humanitären Hilfe. Deutschland

<sup>16</sup> In many countries there are local NGOs working in the field of child protection, as for instance, »Wildwasser« in Germany or »RapCan« in South Africa. They can be consulted and can provide materials and support. Another possibility is to consult projects or organisations who have already installed a child protection policy as for instance »civic kindergarten« in Australia: [civickinder.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Child-Safe-Environment-Policy.pdf](http://civickinder.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/Child-Safe-Environment-Policy.pdf) 08.11.2013 Also worldwide working NGOs like »Save the children« can be contacted for support, information or in order to get contact to local organisations: [www.childsafe.org.au/childsafe-poster](http://www.childsafe.org.au/childsafe-poster) 08.11.2013

## Working with the elderly

»A demographic revolution is underway throughout the world. Today, world-wide, there are around 600 million persons aged 60 years and over; this total will double by 2025 and will reach virtually two billion by 2050—the vast majority of them in the developing world.«<sup>17</sup>

Number of people aged 60 and over<sup>18</sup>



Getting old includes losing capabilities, needing help, being in need of care, being dependent, not being able to express oneself properly, depending on the individual and to different extents. Being confronted with vulnerability may evoke empathy but also contempt!

Old people are not always easy to handle, they sometimes behave stubbornly/idiosyncratically or seem childish and for various reasons do not cooperate with those who want to help or support them.

Often the circumstances are not favourable, neither for the old people nor for those working with them, because of lack of personnel and/or financial resources, time, training and knowledge. This makes it difficult for those working with elderly people. It needs a lot of patience, love and understanding, despite existing work pressure.

So contrary to prevailing social norms, old people are often in danger of becoming victims of emotional, physical and sexual harassment, exploitation, abuse and negligence. Worldwide »around 4 to 6% of elderly people have experienced some form of maltreatment at home.«<sup>19</sup> These figures may not seem very high, but since many countries are rapidly aging it is more than likely that abuse of elder people will increase. Verbal, mental, physical and sexual abuse does not only happen at home in the families but also in homes and projects that are meant to take care of old people.

It is the responsibility of institutions supporting, or looking after, the elderly to put in place structures and systems that will protect them from abuse. The project should ensure that all the caregivers are trained and understand the importance of handling the old people with care and respect, at the same time educating them about the signs of abuse. The supervisor should look out for signs of abuse, for example bruises or pressure marks, bed sores, and poor hygiene, unusual weight loss, withdrawal from normal activities, anxiety etc. and intervene.

<sup>17</sup> [www.who.int/ageing/events/idop\\_rationale/en](http://www.who.int/ageing/events/idop_rationale/en) 08.11.2013

<sup>18</sup> Source: [www.who.int/ageing/events/idop\\_rationale/en](http://www.who.int/ageing/events/idop_rationale/en) 08.11.2013

<sup>19</sup> [www.un.org/en/events/elderabuse](http://www.un.org/en/events/elderabuse) 08.11.2013

## International perspective on the rights of disabled people

Disability results from the interaction between persons if impairments, attitudinal and/or environmental barriers hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. People with disabilities continuously face barriers in their participation as equal members of society. Individuals have equal rights and all practitioners need to ensure that the persons with disabilities are protected in all areas of life!

All organisations are required to promote, protect, and ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities and ensure that they enjoy full equality under law. It is important that people move away from viewing people with disabilities as objects of charity, medical treatment and social protection, towards viewing them as full and equal members of society, with human rights.

### There are eight guiding principles that are important when considering these special people:

- 1 Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy, including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons
- 2 Non-discrimination
- 3 Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- 4 Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity
- 5 Equality of opportunity
- 6 Accessibility
- 7 Equality between men and women
- 8 Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities

The elderly and disabled persons as well as their relatives should be counselled and informed about their rights and existing emergency policy and in case of abuse it should be reported to the authorities. It is vital that we start being aware, develop and install protection measures and emergency policies (just like child protection policies) also for elderly and disabled people and that we need to support the volunteers in their work with elderly people.





DEPARTURE



Appendix

# Vision and mission of a project

## San Jose Municipal Foundation, Quito, Ecuador

### Guagua Quinde Project

A social project supported by local government public policies for the promotion and restoration of rights, prevention of abuse and comprehensive protection for children/girls and adolescents with street life experience in Quito, Ecuador.

### Purpose

During the years 1950–1960, the authorities in Ecuador did very little to ease the situation of the vulnerable. Different groups of people emerged trying to provide social support through volunteers and committees who are primarily concerned with the care and protection of children and the elderly people.

### Strategic focus: Mission, values and policies

The San Jose Municipal Foundation is part of an eminently political social inclusion programme. It intervenes by taking social action, in strict observance of the ethical code of human rights. Local government is trying to implement actions involving the state, civil society and families seeking to improve their lives holistically.

In 2000, the Metropolitan Mayor Paco Moncayo inaugurated the Metropolitan Health Directorate (Ex Municipal Department of Health) which brings together health entities functioning as trustees in the north, south and centre of the city, »administrative space called Chairman of the Board«, a foundation that holds the name of San Jose Municipal, impact and implement projects aimed at people in vulnerable situations and high risk socially. Since its inception the foundation welcomed vulnerable groups who were primarily cared for by the trustees of Social Amparo i.e. children and elderly. Currently through the implementation of increasingly specialised programmes and projects and inclusive vision, Guagua Quinde serves to protect the rights of those parts of the population who are vulnerable and at high risk.

## Municipal Policy Social Inclusion

### Elimination of child labour

- Promote the progressive reduction in numbers of children and adolescents living on the streets
- Children and adolescents return and remain in the school system (Guagua Quinde is an important project that works with them and has received many volunteers who help with its work)

### Inclusion for youth

- Social inclusion of young people from the arts
- Enhancing the experience of Metropolitan Home Youths
- Citizen participation

### Gender

- Applying a gender perspective in all programmes
- A city safe for women

### Life of dignity for older adults

- Promotion of the principle of active citizenship/inclusive city
- Extension service and continuous improvement

### Dignified life for people with disabilities

- Inclusive public spaces
- Implementation of specialised services
- Active citizenship

An important point of the foundation is to support participation in the formulation and implementation of public policies with active citizen participation, generating action through their projects.

## **Vision**

»Solidary and inclusive Quito for people and groups who are vulnerable and at high risk, who are recognised as having rights to equal opportunities and who are actors of the present and future of the city and their own lives«.

## **Mission**

»Integral development of protective actions for persons and groups who are vulnerable and at high risk, based on an approach to further restitution and fulfillment of rights, providing the highest level of quality and warmth in delivery of services«. This is achieved through projects with high social impact. To do this, permanent consensus processes with civil society and local government are imperative. Likewise, the foundation's institutional learning experience contributes to the implementation of the municipal social policy.

## **Mission statement of a project** **Brother Beausang Catholic Education Centre,** **Nairobi, Kenya**

### **Mission statement**

Brother Beausang Catholic Education Centre is an inclusive catholic day school, faithful to the vision of Edmund Rice, serving the needs of young men and women from Embulbul and surrounding areas.

We welcome students of all tribes, cultures and religions from neighbouring communities, especially those who might not otherwise be able to access secondary education due to personal circumstances. Because of this we aim to keep our fees as low as possible and actively seek sponsorships for financial support.

We engage the hearts and minds of young men and women. At the heart of the centre is the belief that good teaching and learning empower the individual to strive for excellence in all aspects of his or her life. Therefore we strive to offer the best education possible for all our students.

We aim to ensure that students with special needs will be provided with appropriate educational opportunity, in partnership with families so that students can develop their skills and be prepared to accept the challenge of meaningful participation in society.

We strive to live justly in all our activities in a spirit of compassion and understanding. We seek to live in the right relationship with God, ourselves, our neighbour and indeed with all creation.

## Weekly work plan

Working hours	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday & Sunday
From/to	Description of foreseen activities					
Morning						
8:30 – 10:00	Teaching children in class	Weekly meeting with the senior teacher	Number work	Mentoring and consultation	Monitoring manual work, cleaning the school compound	Free
10:30 – 11:30	Number work	Mentoring and consultation	Teaching children in class	Physical education	Physical education	Free
Noon						
11:30 – 12:30	Helping children learn how to read	Number work	Helping children learn how to read	Number work	Number work	Free
Afternoon						
14:00 – 15:30	Counselling and mentoring the children	Counselling and mentoring the children	Physical education	Helping children learn how to read	Games and sports	Free

## Rules and regulations Concerning child protection

Rules and regulations should be developed with all stakeholders inside the organisation including the children. They should be adapted according to the specific necessities and conditions of the project. The principles should not be worded as strict prohibitions, but they should be phrased as a positive voluntary agreement and self-commitment of the institution and they should be demonstrated by examples close to everyday life.<sup>20</sup>

Every full-time, part-time and voluntary staff member is obliged:

- To respect individual and cultural boundaries of shame, and the right to (sexual) self-determination of girls and boys
- Not to lock rooms, in which staff stays with youths or young adults, so that doors can be opened at all times by third parties
- To agree and communicate with the team on preference or disadvantage, reward or punishment (e.g. special arrangements, gifts, transfer and compensation of private services to youths and young adults); to communicate within the team the receipt of money or gifts from children, youths and their families
- To avoid all actions of a sexual character (e.g. kissing, touching of chest and/or genital area) and also sexual speech (e.g. sexually toned nicknames or sexist »jokes«) when in contact with girls and boys
- To avoid verbal aggression and sexual devaluation
- To avoid body contact without clear professional indication
- To inform the team about unintentional contact of girls' or boys' chest or genital area (entry into the team register!)
- Not to wear clothes that contribute to a sexualization of the atmosphere (e.g. provocative clothes, that show too much skin or outlines genital areas)
- To avoid the support of border-violating and violent contact and/or a sexualised atmosphere between children, youths and young adults
- To follow and respect the laws of the country or region with regard to regulations in dealing with children and youths
- To name offences and violations of colleagues against these regulations within the team and report violations to the facility's management or an external expert service, and reflect on possibilities for further action

<sup>20</sup> [www.zartbitter.de/.../6020\\_praevention\\_von\\_sexuellem\\_missbrauch\\_in\\_institutionen.pdf](http://www.zartbitter.de/.../6020_praevention_von_sexuellem_missbrauch_in_institutionen.pdf) 08.11.2013

## Commitment for staff members / ethical code

### Concerning child protection

Intended as proposal and set of building blocks from which every organisation can take the parts that are useful and appropriate for them.

- 1 I respect the identity and dignity of my fellow human beings, their cultural and individual perceptions of boundaries.
- 2 My work with the girls and boys, young women and young men entrusted to my care is shaped by respect and trust. I respect their rights and their dignity and will make an effort to support them in their development towards self-dependent and socially competent personalities. I respect and protect their right to self-determination and encourage them to effectively advocate their right to mental and physical inviolability and their right to receive help.
- 3 I handle closeness and distance with care and responsibility and build the relationships transparently. I respect the private sphere and the personal boundaries of modesty of the girls and boys, young women and young men entrusted to me. I also respect this when dealing with media, particularly regarding photos and the use of mobile phones and internet.
- 4 I am aware of my function as a role model for the children and youths in my care. My actions in my role as figure of authority are plausible and honest. I do not exploit dependencies.
- 5 I commit myself to always presenting myself correctly and taking care not to wear clothing that would contribute to a sexualisation of the atmosphere. I also act responsibly regarding my use of alcohol and tobacco and do not allow any kind of addictive behaviour to influence my work.
- 6 I am aware at all times that no circumstance and no behaviour of a girl or boy would justify or excuse a sexual address, sexual harassment or even worse, severe sexual assaults.
- 7 I commit myself to not beginning sexual relationships with children and youths, even if they might not be in violation of the law. This includes intimate relationships with young adults who are over 18.
- 8 I promise to never physically, emotionally or sexually abuse or exploit a child/youth, particularly to never carry out sexual acts, to request these or to expose any child/youth to pornographic materials.
- 9 I commit myself to respect the private sphere in shared living and work spaces (e.g. knocking before entering the children's rooms, no invasion of privacy). I will take care that any rooms in which I am on my own with the young people entrusted to me are not locked, so that they can leave the room at any time.
- 10 I will make an effort to avoid any kind of violation of personal boundaries, to pay attention to violations carried out by others and to not ignore these. I commit myself to doing everything in my power so that nobody emotionally, physically or sexually abuses the girls and boys, young women and young men in my care.
- 11 I commit myself in general to avoiding discrimination, violent and sexist behaviour, in word and deed, and to actively taking a stand against any such behaviour that I witness.
- 12 I will take a stand for the protection of the girls and boys, young women and young men if any persons working with children and youth commit sexually abusive or physically violent acts. I will also intervene when those in my care attack others in the same way.
- 13 I will listen when a child or youth wants to communicate to me that he/she experienced or still experiences emotional, physical or sexual violence. I am aware that emotional, physical and sexual violence is predominantly carried out by male perpetrators, but also by female ones. I am also aware that girls as well as boys can be victims.
- 14 I participated in an x-hour training session about child protection, organised by my organisation/the organisation responsible for my project. I will take any violations against this commitment seriously, particularly any contact between adults and young people that seems conspicuous. I am aware of the limits of my capacity to act, and will request professional support in case of suspected danger to the wellbeing of a child/youth.
- 15 I know the procedure and the respective (first) contact persons for my workplace/institution. I know where I can get advice or if necessary get support and help with investigation, and will make use of this.

## Outline of the six phases of a one-year-voluntary-service from an administrative perspective

A voluntary service year can generally be divided into six phases. In each phase there are certain administrative tasks to be done<sup>21</sup>.

### Participants of the phases

V: Volunteer

HP: Host project

HO: Host organisation

SO: Sending organisation

### Phase 1

#### Information / application

Host project descriptions: Update information about host project situation, e.g. staff members, contact person and tutor. Description of the host project: details of the organisation, a brief history and introduction of the nature of the HO, the target group, location with google map, proximity to host family and a general description of the work assigned to volunteers.

Participants HP–HO

Report on special needs: Special requirements of volunteers for specific target groups and the intake of foreign volunteers, e.g. number of volunteers accredited vs needed, special skills etc.

Report on specialisation: Matching of volunteers by the HO to the HP according to their skills, training and knowledge.

Participants HP–HO

Realistic and task focused project description.

Participants HP–HO

### Phase 2

#### Preparation / confirmation

The HO has to send the volunteers' application to the HP according to the needs of each project.

Participants HP–HO

Confirmation to the host projects: Number of volunteers expected, profiles of the volunteers, dates of volunteering. Brief introduction to the manual/guidelines for projects from the host organisation in order to create consistency and transparency, clarity regarding roles and responsibilities, rules and regulations for the volunteers and insurance service of the volunteers.

Participants HP–HO

Confirmation of agreement of special needs, e.g. vegetarian, vacation time, allergies, medication etc.

Participants HP–HO

Confirmation of dates of arrival, host situation, dates of orientation camp, reporting date at the HP.

Participants HP–HO

Contact details of staff members of ICYE HO and HP.

Detailed information is required.

Participants HP–HO

### Phase 3

#### Orientation phase

Contact details for ICYE HO staff members (mentor): Detailed information is required.

Participants HP–HO

Introduction of the volunteer to the HP staff members.

Participants HP–V

The calendar of events of the HP for the current year. A list of public holidays and special days will be helpful!

Participants HP–HO–V

Orientation in conflict and crisis resolution. All stakeholders have different duties in case of conflicts. For the projects/host projects please refer to the section »Along the adventure«. The National Committees have their own manual.

Participants HP–HO–SO

21 ICJA e.V. 2012: Working and dialoguing together, Quality development at ICJA e.V. and its partners worldwide.

#### **Phase 4**

##### **Voluntary service**

General information about the volunteer's life in the HP, at least three times per year (phone call, mail, skype, project visit etc.) informal meetings at convenient venues, availability of feedback forms/reflection tools and reports.

##### **Participants HP–HO–V**

Information on critical situations requiring HO intervention e.g. change of host family/situation, health problems, accidents, abuse, bad news from back home etc.

##### **Participants HP–HO–V**

Last day working and return flight.

##### **Participants HP–HO–V**

#### **Phase 5**

##### **Evaluation and pre-return**

Final evaluation and brief report: Forward to the sending organisation if required.

##### **Participants HP–HO–V–SO**

Evaluation results from seminars, brief reports of reflection and feedback of volunteers/host organisation/host project.

##### **Participants HP–HO**

Details of returning flights. Changes if required.

##### **Participants HP–HO–V**

Certification of voluntary service from HO and HP

##### **Participants HP–HO–V**

#### **Phase 6**

##### **After return**

Evaluation of the volunteering year and results of the after-return seminar.

##### **Participants SO–HO**

If SO requests, HP to send a detailed report of the volunteering year.

##### **Participants HP–HO–V**

## **Orientation session and example for a day-work-plan**

In order to make this guideline as clear as possible we have used the following example:

Imagine you have a new volunteer in your project. She is a German girl without any experience taking care of children. It would be really useful and motivating to welcome her with clear instruction on the work, like for example:  
»Welcome Patricia, I hope you get used to the children between one and two years with whom you will be working. Your work will start at 8 and will be until one o'clock. Then you have an hour's lunch after which you continue until 4 o'clock.«

An orientation session will try to impart four things to new volunteers:

##### **What to do**

What is expected of them as new volunteers?  
What will their responsibilities be?

##### **How to do it**

You can tell someone to »pour cement for the porch«, but if you don't explain how to do it, things will likely be very messy indeed. Explaining how volunteers can best accomplish their tasks is the crux of training, and will probably take up the largest chunk of time.

##### **What not to do**

Are there certain things volunteers are not allowed to do? For example, should they not talk about clients, for the sake of confidentiality? Are there situations in which they should automatically call for staff back-up? Training should make a volunteer's (and the agency's) limits very clear.

##### **What to do in an emergency**

If the volunteers had an orientation session before training began, they will have already heard this information, but it's worth going over it again. The location of the first aid kit (and possibly some first aid techniques as well) should be known by everyone, as well as what to do in case of a fire or a severe storm.

Time	Activity	What to do	What not to do	How to do it	What to do in an emergency
8:00	Welcome the children, check how they arrive and check if they have food for the day	Be polite to the parents Be punctual	Be late Pay attention to one child only	Ask parents if the child has everything or if there is something special you need to know, e.g. medicine, diarrhoea, an injury	Ask the person responsible for the area
8:30	Go to the classes depending on the age and help the teachers with the activities that are planned for the day	Follow the daily plan of the teacher	Intervene without asking the teacher	Talk to the teacher about the weekly plan	Ask the person responsible for the area
10:00	Help the children to eat some fruit	Organise the dynamics with the teacher team	Give food to one child	The volunteer has to give back up and help	Ask the person responsible for the area
10:30	Continue working with the teachers Help prepare material	Ask the teacher for the existing material to be elaborated according to requirements	Get any material without asking the teacher	With the coordination of the teacher responsible	Ask the person responsible for the area
12:00	Take the children to the dining room	Coordinate with the teacher to take all the children in order	Try to do it by yourself Stay alone with a child	Place each child in its place and give them their meals	Ask the person responsible for the area
12:10	Be with the children while they are eating	Organise the dynamics with the teacher team	Give food to one child	The volunteer has to back up and help	Ask the person responsible for the area
12:30	Eat lunch		Take some children with you Take more time	Eat near where the children are, so you can be aware in case of emergency	Ask the person responsible for the area
13:00	Take them to sleep	Prepare a nice environment	Stay with the children while they are falling asleep	Do not sleep during the children's sleep	Ask the person responsible for the area
14:00	Help to prepare some didactic material and the planning for the next day	Ask the teacher for the existing material to be elaborated according to requirements	Do not do anything without asking the teacher	With the coordination of the teacher responsible	Ask the person responsible for the area
14:30	Wake the children up and clean them				
15:30	Give the children to their parents	Be polite to the parents Be punctual	Be late Attend to only one child/parent Talk to the parent about something important that happened during the day, e.g. if the child did not eat well	Do it one by one Take care that the child has all his/her belongings	Ask the person responsible for the area
16:00	Clean the class room	Put the things in order as they should be	Do not put everything in a different order	Ask the order and if you do not remember, ask the teacher again	Ask the person responsible for the area

## »Golden rules« for giving feedback

To give and to receive feedback helps to improve communication and mutual understanding and to enhance personal learning. It can prevent conflicts and in case of conflicts or misunderstandings, it can help to solve the situation.

Feedback can also be reciprocal: giving the volunteer feedback on his/her performance and behaviour and also getting a feedback from the volunteer in order to improve collaboration.

The following »ten golden rules« make the feedback effective:

- 1 Describing, instead of judging: Describe your individual perception and reaction. Leave it to the other to assimilate it, or not.
- 2 Express clearly and accurately: Feedback needs to be comprehensible.
- 3 Factually correct: The observation needs to be as objective as possible.
- 4 Without moral judgment: Thereby you lower your opposite's impulse to defend him/herself and to reject feedback.
- 5 Precisely, instead of generally: If you tell someone he/she was unkind, he/she can do very little about changing his/her behaviour.
- 6 Refer to observations, instead of assumptions, fantasies, or interpretations.
- 7 Address changeable behavioural patterns instead of deficiencies on which the person concerned has little or no influence.
- 8 Requested, instead of forced: Feedback is the most effective, when requested by the addressee. If you approach someone with feedback without warning, you cannot hope for a trusting relationship during the conversation.
- 9 Appropriately consider the addressee's needs: If you do not care about whether it is of use to the addressee or even harm him/her, you destroy your position of trust.
- 10 At the right time or as soon as possible: no digging up the past!  
The shorter the period between the problematic behaviour and the information on the behaviour's effect, the more effective the feedback.  
However, also consider other aspects, such as the extent of current agitation or confusion. In such situations, the willingness to receive feedback will be low.

How wonderful it is  
that nobody need  
wait a single moment  
before starting to  
improve the world.  
Anne Frank

## Understanding international volunteerism

International volunteers are (in our programme) young people from different parts of the world, brought up in different economic, cultural and social backgrounds, (mostly) taking a break from their regular academic studies, to do voluntary service in another country with the object of becoming acquainted with a new culture, new language and living in another country for a year to gain experience that will help them in their own lives and in their future careers. International volunteers are involved in such service with the aim of serving, sharing and learning.

### Highlights

- 1 The project/host project must understand that the support extended to an international volunteer is not a »one time« activity but an ongoing, consistent and continuous one, throughout the year.
- 2 In the event that the project/host project has hosted international volunteers in the past, they should not expect all international volunteers, year after year, to be the same. In addition, it is inappropriate to compare two international volunteers for whatever reason. All international volunteers are individuals and each one has a mind of his/her own, a background and life style that will differ from others and of course has his/her own personal priorities and preferences.
- 3 International volunteers are not substitutes for the paid staff and cannot replace the staff of the project/host project.
- 4 International volunteers come to a project with a purpose, a purpose to serve while they learn. It is extremely important that such opportunities are provided for them.
- 5 The international volunteers' contribution must be seen not just as serving in their project but rather serving the community and the society through their project.
- 6 International volunteers may not have specialised skills or previous experience in a specialised field of operations/work, however, it is the spirit of their contribution that counts, which needs appreciation and recognition.
- 7 It is extremely important that projects/host projects and the staff associated in the place of work understand that some volunteers can cope with situations much faster than others, but the ones who take longer, should not be regarded as »less interested or not fit«.

## How can a project make a volunteer's participation a success?

Projects/host projects must have clarity as to why they need or have international volunteers with them. Many times, projects/host projects only see the benefits they get from hosting an international volunteer. At a certain point in time, it's imperative to look at it from the international volunteer's point of view and to see how they can help the international volunteers to realise their dreams.

### Does the work in the project provide ...

- Sufficient work which is meaningful and objective?
- A sense of bringing a change for themselves and those in situ?
- An impact that could help in influencing a community at large?
- A realisation that »material things are to be used and people are to be loved«?
- However big or small, any and every contribution is a step forward?
- A feeling of oneness and that the future grows with the concept of togetherness?
- An arena for justice, peace, equality and global understanding?
- For the promotion of global citizenship?
- Guidelines and a framework that international volunteers can adapt to?
- A sense of satisfaction while being involved?

### Does the host project/host family provide ...

- Reasonably decent and comfortable accommodation?
- Food that is suitable for international volunteers?
- Facilities such as internet access, basic communication equipment?
- Sufficient free time and space for themselves?
- Planned weekend breaks, whenever possible?
- Enable short visits to other neighbouring towns/cities, historical places and places of tourist interest?
- A calendar of events?

## Topics recommended for the host projects / families to discuss when an international volunteer arrives

- 1 Get as much information as possible about the volunteers including their interests, hobbies, purpose of their participation etc. Each one has a talent like singing, playing musical instruments, dancing, teaching, handicrafts, sports, cooking and so on. Unless you and your staff know about their interests and talents, you may not be in a position to see and use their potential.
- 2 Inform them about the rules in the project and explain to them the reason and purpose. Understanding will help them to adhere and follow.
- 3 Encourage the international volunteers to be involved in all the activities of the project. It is a way of helping them to integrate and have a feeling of belonging.
- 4 The international volunteers must be told that they must not use the family like a hotel or a guest house.
- 5 Motivate the international volunteers to be adaptable and flexible to new ideas and a new life style. However, give them the freedom to continue to believe in their own principles and values while they are also expected to respect the principles, values and beliefs of the host country and its people.
- 6 Discuss with the volunteers your ideas and plans and they will be more than happy to be a part of the agenda.
- 7 Inform the volunteers that they are a role model and that the children in the project/family/community, are always looking up to them as their »hero«. They must be warned about their »words and actions«.
- 8 International volunteers must be instructed to refrain from being involved in the administration of the project, because each project has its own style of administration and reasons for it.
- 9 There is always a tendency for international volunteers to get close to some staff and NOT all. The first reason being the language barrier.
- 10 There is a distinct possibility that the international volunteers speak about and discuss topics and issues concerning human rights, freedom of speech, labour laws or other such issues. They do not understand that these issues are pretty sensitive in some cultures.
- 11 Volunteers must be informed that by LAW, they CANNOT be involved with activist groups and they, as a foreigner, neither have the right to be anti-governmental nor anti-national.
- 12 Advise the volunteers, not to give their email address, telephone numbers and the address of the project to strangers. This may cause unnecessary disturbance and trouble to all concerned.
- 13 It is also important to warn them not to make friends with people who probably may be indulging in drug trafficking etc. This could be very dangerous for them.
- 14 Host projects must explain to the volunteers the need for them to request permission if they stay away from work. It is advisable to have an attendance register as well.
- 15 International volunteers must be discouraged from travelling every weekend. Host families and projects should plan accordingly.
- 16 Host families and projects must tell the volunteers of their un/willingness, if they want to bring another volunteer or a friend home.
- 17 Encourage all volunteers to maintain discipline, keeping in mind that safety and security is the most important factor.
- 18 Ensure that international volunteers are provided with a facility where they can keep their belongings safe. Most importantly, their money and their passport.
- 19 All host projects and families should have an open discussion about their health and be familiar with the insurance policies.
- 20 Host families/host projects must ensure that they are in constant touch with the ICYE National Committee and keep them updated regularly.

## How to get information about the volunteer's country?

International volunteers come and go to different countries all over the world. Whereas the volunteers get preparation and information about the country they are going to (about its people, culture and traditions), the host family and projects may know little or nothing about the volunteer's country or region of origin.

Yet, similar to the volunteers, they might also be irritated by the behaviour of the volunteers which can be due partly to their cultural background. To receive information about the volunteers' country or region of origin before arrival might be helpful and reduce misunderstandings in different cultural practices.

It is important to note that in many developing countries it is common and not necessarily a sign of wealth to have a domestic worker in the house. It is also important to understand that hugging or even eye contact between the opposite sex is very unusual in some countries and common in others. The knowledge that nodding the head from an Indian volunteer does not necessarily mean a »yes« and a spoken »yes« from a Chinese might not have the same meaning as that from a German volunteer, prevents misunderstanding.

It may be helpful to know if the volunteers' society of origin is community-oriented or individual-orientated. This will give an idea about the volunteers' cultures and traditions. It is useful to have some basic knowledge about the geography, history, economy, political system and structure of the society of the volunteers' country of origin and about its current affairs.

How could people living and working with the future volunteer acquire such information? One possibility could be that the local committee provides the local stakeholders with such information. Every National Committee of the ICYE network provides future volunteers with a so-called »national profile«. A printed version with information about the home country of the volunteer could be given to the project/host project and host family if no other material is available. The National Committee could be asked to provide them with such information.

Another possibility would be for the volunteers themselves to prepare a presentation on their country. In some countries they have to do it during the on-arrival camp anyway, so they could also present it to their colleagues and family members if they are interested. It does not necessarily require a lot of effort or technical expertise.

## Possible steps to make your project a safer place<sup>22</sup> Concerning child protection

The process of implementing a child protection policy in the project needs to be taken by the project management. It should initiate an internal discussion on all levels about the reasons and usefulness. Then the decision to start the process should be taken and realised, ideally in a participative process.

### Transparency of institutional structures

In order to be transparent, the set-up of institutional structures needs clearly distinguished competencies/responsibilities on all levels of the hierarchy: staff members' tasks as well as the limits of their respective competencies need to be clear internally and externally, and be communicated as such towards children, youths and young adults. For this, a distinction should be made between pedagogical staff and non-pedagogically acting staff members.

### Information /training for staff members

Establishing binding institutional norms following a »culture of respecting boundaries« implies that all volunteers and all salaried staff members receive basic information and all pedagogical staff receive training.

### Participation

The team, the management and the children and young people should be involved in the development of the rules.

UNICEF, the children's rights organisation of the UN, states that children should be informed, be able to express their views, be heard and be able to assemble. It is a right of the children to be involved.

### Institutional rules

According to the UN-Convention on the Rights of the Child, the rights of girls and boys are to be codified on the institutional level. It is recommended to explicitly include the following rights in the mission statement/guiding principles of the institutions: right to have the personal

<sup>22</sup> see: Ursula Enders: prävention\_missbrauch\_institutionen\_pdf  
[www.strohthalm-ev.de/kunde/pdf/1/Sexueller\\_Missbrauch\\_in\\_Institutionen.pdf](http://www.strohthalm-ev.de/kunde/pdf/1/Sexueller_Missbrauch_in_Institutionen.pdf)  
09.11.2013

boundaries of girls and boys respected (right to privacy), the right to receive immediate help in emergencies and the right to be protected from cruelty and exploitation. On the project level, a commission is to be formed that develops a set of rules that is binding for all institutional levels.

Rights that are only written down on paper and that are not communicated tend to receive little attention in everyday life. Therefore, a fundamental part of a »culture of respecting boundaries« is the commitment of projects to regularly inform the children, youths and young adults about their rights. This information should be given in regular intervals in oral and written form but at least once when starting at the project and once a year at a roughly set point in time.

Effective local complaints' mechanisms should be set up in the project to enable people to report abuses against them.<sup>23</sup> Inside and outside the project, contact persons need to be named to whom children, youths and young adults as well as staff members can turn in case of suspected, witnessed or experienced assault or violent acts that took place within the project.

#### **Prevention workshops for girls and boys, mothers and fathers**

When offering prevention workshops, age-appropriate ways to counteract assault and severe forms of violence have to be conveyed and practiced (for example actively calling on other youths or adults to help). Giving boundary-respecting norms! Setting clear limits in case of sexual assault by young perpetrators!

#### **Code of conduct**

Following a »culture of respecting boundaries« a code of conduct should set binding rules of behaviour.

All staff members of the project should sign a self-commitment regarding child protection that needs to be developed. Criteria need to be developed for newly appointed persons.

#### **Contact to local or regional organisations**

Contact to local or regional organisations working with this topic should be established and regular education and training should be compulsory for staff members.

## **General information on persons with disabilities and how to work with them**

### **Concerning rights of disabled persons**

#### **Definition of persons with disabilities**

Those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

#### **Reasonable accommodation**

Reasonable accommodation is to be provided in the organisations, with the necessary and appropriate modifications made. Care should be taken to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy and exercise all human rights, along with the fundamental freedom in all aspects of life including inclusive education.

#### **Prevention of discrimination**

In and through the organisation it is possible to raise and foster respect for the rights and dignity—and thus fighting discrimination against disabled—in the following ways:

- Raise the awareness throughout society, including at the family level, regarding persons with disabilities, and foster respect for their rights and dignity.
- Combat stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices, including those based on sex and age, in all areas of life.
- Promote awareness of their abilities and contributions.
- Initiate and maintain effective public awareness campaigns designed:
  - To nurture receptiveness to their rights.
  - To promote positive perceptions and greater social awareness towards persons with disabilities.
  - To promote recognition of skills, merits and abilities of persons with disabilities, and of their contributions to the workplace and labour market.
- Encourage all organs of the mass media to portray persons with disabilities in a manner consistent with a meaningful intent and purpose.
- Promote awareness-training programmes regarding persons with disabilities and the rights of persons with disabilities.

<sup>23</sup> [www.un.org/en/pseataforce/docs/no\\_one\\_to\\_turn\\_under\\_reporting\\_of\\_child\\_sea\\_by\\_aid\\_workers.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/pseataforce/docs/no_one_to_turn_under_reporting_of_child_sea_by_aid_workers.pdf) 09.11.2013

## Accessibility

Organisations should ensure that persons with disabilities should be able to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life. The organisations should take appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications technology, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public.

## Access to justice

Ensure the effective access to justice for disabled persons, stating that:

- All organisations shall ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others. This includes the provision of procedural and age appropriate accommodation in order to facilitate their effective role as direct and indirect participants, including as witnesses, in all legal proceedings, including at investigative and other preliminary stages.
- In order to help to ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities, the organisations should promote appropriate training for those working in the field of administration of justice, including police and prison staff.

## Right to education

The organisation should be aware that persons with disabilities should be guaranteed the right to inclusive education at all levels, regardless of age, without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity.

They should ensure that:

- Children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education.
- Adults with disabilities have access to general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning.
- Persons with disabilities receive the necessary support, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education.
- Effective, individualised support measures are put in place to maximise academic and social development.

All organisations should take appropriate measures, such as:

- Endorsing the learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication and orientation and mobility skills, and facilitating peer support and mentoring.
- Supporting the learning of sign language and promoting the linguistic identity of the deaf community.
- Advocating that education of persons, particularly children, who are blind and/or deaf, is delivered in the most appropriate languages and means of communication for the individual.
- Employing teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or Braille, and training education professionals and staff about disability awareness, use of augmentative and alternative modes and formats of communication, and educational techniques and materials to support persons with disabilities.

## Right to health

Persons with disabilities in any organisation have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability.

## Protecting the integrity of the person

Every disabled person has a right to respect for his/her physical and mental integrity on an equal basis with others. They should not be discriminated!

## Habilitation and rehabilitation

It is essential that all organisations ensure that effective and appropriate measures are taken, including peer support, to enable persons with disabilities to attain and maintain maximum independence, full physical, mental, social and vocational ability, and full inclusion and participation in all aspects of life. They should organise, strengthen and extend comprehensive habilitation and rehabilitation services and programmes, particularly in the areas of health, employment, education and social services. These services and programmes should:

- Begin at the earliest possible stage, and be based on the multidisciplinary assessment of individual needs and strengths,
- Support participation and inclusion in the community and all aspects of society, be voluntary, and available to persons with disabilities as closely as possible to their own communities, including in rural areas,

- All organisations should promote the development of initial and continuing training for professionals and staff working in habilitation and rehabilitation services,
- All organisations should promote the availability, knowledge and use of assistive devices and technologies, designed for persons with disabilities, if they relate to habilitation and rehabilitation.

### **Participation rights**

Participation of the disabled is an important principle. The organisation should ensure that full and effective participation and inclusion in society is available to such people, which will incorporate the right of the disabled to participate fully and equally in the community, education, all aspects of life (in the context of habilitation and rehabilitation), political and public life, cultural life, leisure and sports.

### **Work and employment**

All organisations are to recognise the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. And all organisations should safeguard and promote the realisation of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during the course of employment, by taking the appropriate steps like the following:

- Prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions.
- Protect the rights of persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, to just and favourable conditions of work, including equal opportunities and equal remuneration for work of equal value, safe and healthy working conditions, including protection from harassment and the redress of grievances.
- Ensure that persons with disabilities are able to exercise their labour and trade union rights on an equal basis with others.
- Enable persons with disabilities to have effective access to general technical and vocational guidance programmes, placement services and vocational and continuing training.
- Promote employment opportunities and career advancement for persons with disabilities in the labour market, as well as assistance in finding, obtaining, maintaining and returning to employment.

- Promote opportunities for self-employment, entrepreneurship, the development of cooperatives and starting one's own business.
- Ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided for persons with disabilities in the workplace.
- Promote the acquisition by persons with disabilities of work experience in the open labour market.
- Promote vocational and professional rehabilitation, job retention and return-to-work programmes for persons with disabilities.
- All organisations should ensure that persons with disabilities are not held in slavery or in servitude, and are protected, on an equal basis with others, from forced or compulsory labour.

### **Adequate standard of living and social protection**

All organisations should recognise the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions, and shall take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote the realisation of these rights without discrimination on the basis of disability.

All organisations recognise the right of persons with disabilities to social protection and to the enjoyment of those rights without discrimination on the basis of disability, and shall take appropriate steps to safeguard and promote the realisation of these rights.

## Calendar of activities for a 12 month volunteer period

It is important to enter all the national holidays into the calendar as well as, special days when the project will be closed and, if applicable, the vacation time of the project.

Dates	Activity	Relevant information for the volunteer
1	Volunteers arrival, orientation camp, language classes	Participation is mandatory
2		
3		
4		
5		
6	Mid-term camp	Participation is mandatory
7		
8		
9		
10		
11	Final camp	Participation is mandatory
12		

## Code of conduct for the volunteers

To be communicated to the volunteer

### Prior to departure

- Read and sign the contract and terms and conditions yourself.
- You must attend a pre-departure training course, unless there is a good reason not to. If such a situation is likely to occur, please contact us and discuss the problem with a member of ICYE staff.
- You have the responsibility to inform ICYE sending committee of any circumstances that may influence your compatibility/suitability for certain ICYE projects/host projects.
- You have the responsibility to provide accurate information to ICYE about health-related issues.

### During the exchange period

#### Safety

- You must not act in any way that could put others or yourself at the risk of being injured.
- You understand that being under the influence of alcohol may interfere with our ability to deliver service. You know that the influence of alcohol can remain in the body for many hours after consumption. You therefore agree not to perform your volunteer duties while under the influence of alcohol and not consume alcohol with the staff, students or clients of your project/host project.
- You will respect and use all equipment in the way in which it was intended. In particular, you will always make use of any safety equipment provided.
- You will follow all procedures to the best of your ability at all times.
- You will promote healthy and safe work practices by ensuring that co-workers adhere to a similar approach and taking appropriate steps in relation to those who do not.

#### Legality

- You must respect and comply with the law of the host country and the laws of your own country.
- You are expected to respect the organisational policy of the local/receiving committee as set out in the contract with them, if any.
- You are expected to respect the organisational policy of the host organisation. This includes the health and safety regulations as well as any regulations outlining relationship boundaries.

## Respect and integrity

- You should seek to promote integrity by being honest, fair, and respectful to others.
- You must always respect the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of all people, including the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality, self-determination, and culture.
- You are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which you are exposed while serving as a volunteer. Such information includes, but is not limited to, information regarding a staff person, volunteer, member, client or third party.
- Use ICYE and your host projects' resources in an appropriate manner.
- You must take good care of the accommodation that has been provided for your use.
- You must keep the local National Committee and host project informed about your whereabouts during the exchange period, including notifying them of travel plans according to the rules of the receiving committee.

## Commitment to host organisation and ICYE programme

- You have responsibility towards the family/project/host project and should show willingness to adapt to their surroundings and to carry out agreed tasks. While you will be involved in interesting activities, some of the tasks could be routine but nevertheless be important to the running of the organisation.
- You should strive to maintain high standards of competence in your work. You should also recognise the boundaries of your particular competencies and the limitations of your expertise.
- You must attend all activities foreseen by the programme and events organised by the local committee (on-arrival-camp, mid-term meeting and final evaluation).
- You have the responsibility to remain in the project for the agreed duration unless there is a good reason to leave the project. You should discuss such reasons with your project/host project and your hosting and sending committee before deciding to leave.
- If you decide to leave the ICYE programme, notify the local committee and the sending committee of your intention to withdraw from the exchange programme and sign the contract of dissolution if relevant.

## Complaints

- You should use the grievance and complaint procedure as outlined in the terms and conditions of your hosting committee.
- You have the responsibility to seek guidance when necessary. If you have a problem you should discuss it with your external mentor, as the National Committee can only act if it is aware of a problem.

## Representing ICYE

Prior to any action or statement that may significantly affect or obligate ICYE, you should seek prior consultation and approval from appropriate staff. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press, coalition or lobbying efforts from other organisations, or any agreements involving contracts, resources, finances, or other obligations.

## Non-compliance

You understand that failure to adhere to any or all parts of this code may result in suspension or cancellation of your participation in the programme.

## Evaluation questions

### Orientation period

1 Why did you decide to do voluntary service?

2 Why did you decide to come to this country?

3 What were you doing at home before you joined the volunteer programme?

4 How was the orientation?

5 How do you feel with the support from us (receiving organisation)?

6 How do you feel with the group of volunteers?

7 How is it going with your host family/situation (or accommodation)?

8 How is your health?

9 Have you experienced homesickness?

10 What has been your best experience so far?

11 What has been your worst experience so far?

12 How are you doing with the language?

13 Comments

## Evaluation questions

Mid-term period (before mid-term camp)

1 How do you feel about the project and with your work?

2 How do you feel about your colleagues?

3 How is your cultural integration? Language?

4 How is it going with your host family/living situation?

5 How do you feel about the support you are receiving from us?

6 How is your health so far?

7 What has been your best experience so far?

8 What has been your worst experience so far?

9 What challenges have you faced?

10 How can your situation be improved?

11 Is there anything else you would like to discuss?

12 Comments

## Evaluation questions

Final period (before final camp)

1 How has it been with us as your project? How was your work?

2 How have you felt about the rest of the staff?

3 How has your cultural integration been?

4 How has it been with your host family/living situation?

5 How do you feel about the support you have got from us?

6 What has been your best experience so far?

7 What has been your worst experience so far?

8 How do you feel about going home?

9 What do you feel you have contributed to the project?

10 What's your general feeling about your exchange experience?

11 What personal changes have you noticed?  
Do you feel you have developed as a person?

12 Comments

## Imprint

Publisher  
**ICJA Freiwilligenaustausch weltweit e.V.**  
Stralauer Allee 20e  
10245 Berlin  
Germany  
phone +49 30 20 00 716-0  
fax +49 30 20 00 716-1  
icja@icja.de  
www.icja.de

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Text  
**Belen Maria Mora Hidalgo**  
**Christiane Brückner**  
**Jürgen Günther**  
**Judith Antonia Morejón Salazar**  
**Kerubo Josephine Nyaribo**  
**Mercilinus Osiemo Ounde**  
**Robinson Sounder Raj Doss**  
**Sharon Esther Priyadarshini Samuel**  
**Susanne Saliger**

Photos  
**ICYE Archive**

Design and visual concept  
**Nayeli Zimmermann**  
**SV Associates**

Illustrations  
**Ka Schmitz**

Editing  
**Susanne Saliger**  
**Tina Schäfer**  
**Wendy Streitparth**

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ENJOY THE ADVENTURE!