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## Cheat Sheet

# How to better understand your volunteers

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**Do you want to enhance the way you work with volunteers? Do you want to have a knowledge base for strategic decision making? An annual volunteer engagement and satisfaction survey can be of help and should be one crucial activity in a volunteering development plan. This cheat sheet helps you to find a way to create this good resource for your National Society volunteering development efforts.**

Each National Society should have an ongoing commitment to ensure that as an organization, a good and safe working environment is provided to all volunteers. All involved need to be clear about their roles and responsibilities and have the necessary training and equipment to work in a productive and efficient manner. A survey brings together essential data on volunteers within the National Society.

The volunteers have an opportunity everyday to impact on your activities and services. A survey is a great opportunity to recognize the volunteers and give them a chance to express their opinions. The results of the survey can then be compared against future surveys. This becomes a good monitoring function to track progress in achieving continual improvement as well as highlighting excellence and problem areas.

The result and analysis will also contribute to giving you a knowledge pathway that leads to improving your organizational effectiveness and professionalism.

### Get Started

On the following pages, you will find different sections with questions that can be used when designing a survey. These survey questions are grouped to cover topics that will create a knowledge base for you. However, the questions are also designed to give an opportunity to recognize and appreciate the individual volunteer.

Use the questions on the following pages as a base. Use it in full. Add or take away. It is advisable to not have too many questions. Only ask for information that you need. Minimize open-ended questions. However, the survey should include at least one: How can your volunteer experience be improved?

Do not forget to ensure the volunteers that the answers will remain confidential and will only be used as part of an overall summary report. You should emphasize the value of the comments and views and hope by learning through the volunteer's experiences that improvements can be made throughout the organization.

## Core volunteer questions

### Are you male or female ?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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### How old are you?

<input type="checkbox"/>	15 or younger	<input type="checkbox"/>	16 - 25	<input type="checkbox"/>	25 - 34
<input type="checkbox"/>	35 - 44	<input type="checkbox"/>	45 - 54	<input type="checkbox"/>	55 - 64
<input type="checkbox"/>	65 - 74	<input type="checkbox"/>	75 and over	<input type="checkbox"/>	No answer

### Do you consider yourself to be disabled and/or have a long term limiting illness?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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### Employment Status

<input type="checkbox"/>	Employed - full time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employed - part time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Primary career
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student or attending longer course	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unemployed - between jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not working due to sickness or incapacity
<input type="checkbox"/>	Retired	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never in paid employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	No answer

### Education and qualifications

<input type="checkbox"/>	Masters or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bachelors or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>	PhD or equivalent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Technical / trade school	<input type="checkbox"/>	High School	<input type="checkbox"/>	School certificate
<input type="checkbox"/>	No formal qualifications	<input type="checkbox"/>	No answer	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### Do you lead and organize other volunteers ?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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### How long have you been volunteering with the Red Cross Red Crescent?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than one year	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 - 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	3 -5 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	6 - 10 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	11 years or more	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### How often do you volunteer with the Red Cross Red Crescent?

<input type="checkbox"/>	One day a week or more	<input type="checkbox"/>	One or two days a month	<input type="checkbox"/>	A couple of times a year
<input type="checkbox"/>	Very occasionally	<input type="checkbox"/>	Once only	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	A	B	C	D	E	F
About my volunteering experience	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not relevant
I am satisfied with my volunteering experience.						
I am clear about what my National Society expects from me						
I am clear about how my volunteering contributes to the achievement of the Red Cross Red Crescent mission.						
I have been successfully trained to carry out my volunteering role.						
I think that my personal well-being and health has improved since I started to volunteer for the Red Cross Red Crescent.						
I am clear about what learning and development opportunities are available to me in my National						
I believe that there are opportunities for my own personal development and growth in Red Cross Red Crescent Society.						

	A	B	C	D	E	F
Protect	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not relevant
My National Society						
Complies with relevant laws and provides just payment when employing volunteers as casual or contracted labor,						
Provides an appropriate insurance protection to all volunteers,						
Provides appropriate equipment to me and other volunteers so we are able to undertake agreed tasks or roles,						
Does enough to support me in my volunteer role						
Provides me with a safe environment and cares about my and other volunteers' well-being.						
Provides a positive atmosphere for all volunteers						

	A	B	C	D	E	F
Promote	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not relevant
My National Society						
Actively recruits volunteers irrespective race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, disability or age						
Works to remove barriers to make it possible for many different people to volunteer,						
Encourages and supports me to reach my full potential						
Encourages self development amongst volunteers						
Provides a good supporting structure for volunteers						
Has good local leadership and supervision for the volunteers						

	A	B	C	D	E	F
Recognize	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not relevant
My National Society						
All pre-approved expenses I incur as a volunteer are reimbursed						
Gives me recognition for the time I give and my achievements,						
Is genuinely interested in seeking my feedback						
Enable the volunteers to participate in decision-making, and in designing and improving the work						
Gives me feedback on my performance as a volunteer						
Work with governments, the corporate sector and other partners to promote the spirit of volunteering widely in civil society.						

## Make it happen

Use these questions as a base. Develop your own questions based on what you want to explore. If you plan to repeat this in the next year, decide what questions you would see as important to follow on a longer perspective. This gives you a chance to track changes in the future that can guide you in your planning and decision making.

Should you use an internet based or paper survey? Clearly, a paper version is more labor intensive. Internet might limit outreach to some people. A combination is always a safe option. The good thing with internet is that you can use for example SurveyMonkey ([www.surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com)), which is an economically good alternative. It is also a good help when you will analyze the material.

Did you reveal things that were a surprise to you? Do not miss the opportunity to follow up on this with for example focus groups. Bring together a small group of volunteers and let them discuss the issues in-depth.

Share the findings. It is important to report back to the volunteers about the findings. It does not have to be a complicated report with many graphs and tables. Make it simple and report back as soon as possible while the volunteers still have the survey fresh in mind.

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