



# VOLUNTEERING STANDARDS

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SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR  
VOLUNTEERING DEVELOPMENT  
CAPACITIES FOR NATIONAL SOCIETIES





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# VOLUNTEERING STANDARDS SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR VOLUNTEERING DEVELOPMENT CAPACITIES FOR NATIONAL SOCIETIES 2026

## Introduction

The **Volunteering Standards - Self-Assessment Tool for Volunteering Development Capacities for National Societies** has been developed to support National Societies in strengthening their volunteering strategies, systems, and processes. The tool enables National Societies (NSs) to assess their current capacities, identify priorities, and advance volunteering development across the organization.

The development of these standards is the result of a broad and collaborative process involving National Societies in the Americas Region, volunteering focal points, and colleagues from across the IFRC network. In addition to contributions from National Societies in the Americas, the drafting and review process benefited from feedback provided by colleagues from the IFRC Secretariat in Geneva, representatives from other IFRC regions, and technical colleagues from different departments within the IFRC Americas Regional Office. Through workshops, exchanges, and successive review processes, stakeholders collectively identified the need for a practical mechanism to measure progress and guide improvements in key areas of volunteering development.

The standards complement and are aligned with existing organizational assessment and capacity-strengthening mechanisms, including **OCAC, BOCA, PER, SAF, the 13 Standards on Safety, Security and Well-Being**, and other relevant approaches used within the IFRC network. While these mechanisms address important institutional capacities, National Societies identified several areas of volunteering development that were not fully covered by existing tools. The Volunteering Standards were therefore developed to complement these mechanisms and address identified gaps.

## 4 | Self-Assessment Tool on Volunteering Development

National Societies recognized that volunteering development extends beyond the management of the volunteer cycle alone. While volunteer management remains essential, sustainable volunteering development also depends on broader institutional conditions and the creation of an enabling environment that supports volunteers and volunteering at all levels of the organization.

This tool is aligned with the **IFRC Volunteering Policy, Strategy 2030**, and **the Agenda for Renewal**. It promotes a common understanding of volunteering development and encourages continuous learning, peer exchange, and institutional strengthening among National Societies.

Through the implementation of these standards, National Societies seek to strengthen volunteering as a strategic asset for humanitarian action. The standards are intended to contribute to three key outcomes:

- Expanding and diversifying volunteer engagement;
- Strengthening **locally led capacities and community-based action**; and
- Enhancing volunteer **safety, security, and well-being**.

Ultimately, these efforts aim to contribute to broader impacts across National Societies and the communities they serve by:

- Enhancing the **social experience** of volunteering;
- Empowering local volunteers and young people as **agents of change**; and
- Driving adaptive, locally led humanitarian action that responds to evolving community needs.

The standards are designed primarily as a self-assessment tool. National Societies may conduct the assessment independently or with the support of external facilitators from the IFRC or peer National Societies. Regardless of the methodology used, National Society ownership, participation, and follow-up are essential to ensure meaningful results.

The value of this tool lies not in the final score itself, but in the dialogue, reflection, and collective learning generated throughout the assessment process. The results are intended to inform decision-making and support the development of action plans aimed at strengthening volunteering development capacities.

A self-assessment alone does not generate change. Meaningful progress requires **leadership commitment**, follow-up, and the allocation of appropriate resources to address identified priorities. For this reason, National Societies are encouraged to use the assessment as part of a broader process of continuous improvement and to periodically repeat the exercise to monitor progress, identify emerging gaps, and adapt priorities over time.

Ultimately, this tool serves not only as an assessment mechanism, but also as a practical framework for reviewing progress in volunteering development, strengthening volunteer management practices, institutional capacities, and fostering a culture of continuous learning and **improvement** across National Societies.



## Content and organization

The tool is structured around four key capability areas of volunteering development:

1. **WHY - Align Volunteering with Humanitarian Needs and Capacities.** This area focuses on the purpose, value, and strategic foundations of volunteering. It examines how volunteer action is aligned with humanitarian needs, organizational priorities, existing capacities, and the mission and principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.
2. **HOW - Attract, Manage, and Empower Volunteers.** This area focuses on the systems, processes, and practices that support volunteers throughout their volunteering journey. It addresses volunteer engagement, development, participation, inclusion, protection, well-being, and empowerment.
3. **WHAT - Deliver Impactful Volunteer Action.** This area focuses on the humanitarian action delivered through volunteers and their contribution to programmes, services, operations, and community resilience. It emphasizes the quality, relevance, scalability, and impact of volunteer action.
4. **ENABLING ENVIRONMENT - Strengthen the Enabling Environment for Volunteering.** This area focuses on the institutional conditions, structures, systems, policies, partnerships, and organizational culture that enable and sustain volunteering development across the National Society.

Together, these four areas provide a comprehensive approach to volunteering development by addressing why volunteering matters, how volunteers are supported and empowered, what humanitarian action volunteers deliver, and the institutional conditions required for volunteering to thrive.

## 6 | Self-Assessment Tool on Volunteering Development

The tool consists of 27 attributes, each accompanied by progressive indicators organized under these four capability areas. Each attribute includes a definition followed by assessment indicators presented through a scoring matrix. The indicators represent increasing levels of maturity and are intended to support reflection, learning, and continuous improvement.

### Methodology and Process

This tool is designed to be implemented as an internal, voluntary, and participatory exercise led by National Societies themselves. National Societies may invite external stakeholders to support the assessment process; however, leadership, ownership, and active participation by the National Society and its members remain essential.

#### Step 1 – Self-Assessment by Consensus

The self-assessment should be conducted collectively, with ratings agreed through **consensus** among participants. During this stage, each attribute and its indicators are reviewed using the A–E scale described below. After discussing the statements, participants should select the option that best reflects the **current** situation of the National Society and record the agreed rating in the results column located on the right-hand side of the assessment matrix. This process should be repeated for all attributes until a complete picture of the National Society's volunteering development capacities has been established.

At first glance, the self-assessment matrix may appear extensive. However, it is based on attributes and indicators that are widely recognized as fundamental to volunteering development within the Red Cross Red Crescent Network. The exercise is intended to be practical and based on institutional experience and common understanding rather than technical complexity.

If difficulties arise when selecting a rating, participants are encouraged to discuss the issue collectively and seek support from a facilitator, either from the National Society itself or from the IFRC, to clarify questions and support

consensus-building.

The purpose of the exercise is not to generate lengthy debates or focus excessively on technical details, but rather to develop a shared understanding of institutional capacities, aspirations, and the organization's ability to translate them into practice.

It is recommended that the assessment group include:

- National Director of Volunteering or equivalent;
- Representatives of volunteering within governance bodies, where applicable;
- Managers of programmes or departments that engage volunteers;
- National Society leadership and governance representatives;
- Volunteers and staff from different branches and levels of the organization; and
- Other individuals considered relevant by the National Society.

#### Step 2 – Prioritization

Once consensus has been reached on all attributes, the National Society should identify and prioritize those areas requiring further development. For each attribute below the desired benchmark, the National Society should determine its level of priority within a one-year timeframe using a scale from 1 to 4:

1. Not currently a priority;
2. Low priority;
3. High priority; and
4. Critical and requiring immediate attention.

The agreed priority level should then be recorded in the corresponding priority column of the assessment matrix. This process helps National Societies identify and focus on their most important development priorities.

## Step 3 – Development of a Volunteering Plan

Based on the priorities identified, the National Society should develop a Volunteering Plan that outlines actions, responsibilities, timelines, and resources required to strengthen volunteering development capacities. Particular emphasis should be placed on follow-up after the self-assessment to ensure that action plans are implemented and progress is monitored over time.

### Application of the scale (A-E)

The assessment scale is progressive. Each level represents a higher degree of development than the previous one.

To select a particular level, all requirements of the preceding levels must also be fulfilled. In addition, each condition must be consistently met across the organization.

- If the National Society does not meet all the requirements of level B, it is classified as level A.
- If all requirements of level B are met, level C can be assessed.
- If all requirements of level C are met, level D can be assessed, and so on up to level E.
- If all requirements of levels B, C, D, and E are met, the National Society is classified at level E.

***NOTE: Selection of a higher level implies that all requirements established in that level and all preceding levels are fully met, unless specific requirements are mutually incompatible.***





## Additional considerations

Although this tool has been designed for use by all National Societies, its greatest value lies in the discussions, reflection, learning, and actions generated throughout the process. Depending on available time and resources, the assessment may involve a broader range of participants to enrich the analysis and strengthen ownership of the results.

The tool may also be used periodically as a follow-up mechanism to monitor progress over time and compare results with previous assessments. This enables National Societies to track institutional development, identify areas requiring further attention, and use the findings to inform national improvement plans aimed at strengthening their overall capacities and performance.

## Relationship with OCA (formerly OCAC) and certification

This tool complements the IFRC's new Organizational Capability Assessment (**OCA**) process. While the OCA provides a general assessment of the NS's organizational functioning - including certification - this tool offers a more in-depth and specific assessment of the area of volunteering development.

It can be used in addition to the OCA process:

- **Before the OCA**, to prepare volunteering-related inputs.
- **After the OCA**, to deepen the attributes linked to the development of volunteers.

Unlike the OCA, this tool **is not part of a certification system**, and its application is completely self-managed by the NS.



## WHY

# Align Volunteering with Humanitarian Needs and Institutional Capacities

This area focuses on the purpose, value, and strategic foundations of volunteering. It examines how National Societies understand humanitarian needs, recognize the contribution and value of volunteers, and ensure that volunteer action is aligned with the mission and principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and the realities of the communities they serve.

The **WHY** dimension encourages National Societies to reflect on the reasons for volunteering, the contribution volunteers make to communities and society, and the importance of understanding both humanitarian needs and existing volunteering capacities. It also highlights the importance of volunteer satisfaction and motivation, as well as the need to demonstrate the economic and social value generated through volunteering.

By promoting evidence-based decision-making and a better understanding of volunteering capacities and impact, this area helps ensure that volunteer action remains relevant, effective, and aligned with institutional priorities and community needs.

Ultimately, this area seeks to answer the question:

**Why do we volunteer, and how do we ensure that volunteer action responds to humanitarian needs and creates value for communities and the National Society?**



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## Attributes in the WHY

1. Apply the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross
  2. Assess Humanitarian Needs and Challenges
  3. Analyze Current Volunteering Capacities
  4. Strengthen Volunteer Satisfaction and Motivation
  5. Measure the Value of Volunteering
-

ATTRIBUTE	Status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
<p><b>1. Apply the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross</b></p>		<p>The Fundamental Principles are included in volunteer induction processes.</p> <p>Awareness activities or refresher sessions on the Fundamental Principles are periodically conducted for volunteers.</p>	<p>Volunteers demonstrate knowledge of the Fundamental Principles and apply them in their activities.</p> <p>Materials and communication activities are used to promote the Principles among volunteers and staff.</p>	<p>Formal mechanisms exist to address breaches or concerns related to the Fundamental Principles.</p> <p>Guidance and support are available to help volunteers apply the Principles in practice.</p>	<p>The National Society periodically reviews how the Fundamental Principles are understood and applied.</p> <p>The National Society promotes understanding of the Fundamental Principles among relevant external stakeholders, such as public authorities, emergency services, security actors, or partner organizations.</p>		
<p><b>2. Assess Humanitarian Needs and Challenges</b></p>		<p>Volunteer activities are designed based on humanitarian needs identified through community knowledge, previous operational experience, or contextual information available at branch or National Society level.</p> <p>Volunteers contribute to activities aligned with the National Society's humanitarian mission, even when formal needs assessments are not regularly conducted.</p>	<p>Basic humanitarian needs assessments, such as Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments (VCA) or similar methodologies, are conducted before designing volunteer activities.</p> <p>Volunteers participate in information gathering, community consultations, surveys, or other mechanisms used to identify humanitarian needs.</p> <p>Volunteer activities are periodically adjusted based on identified needs and feedback received from communities.</p>	<p>Humanitarian needs are assessed through systematic, participatory, and documented processes involving volunteers and communities, with records, reports, or assessment findings available.</p> <p>Volunteer interventions are periodically reviewed and adjusted based on monitoring results, lessons learned, community feedback, or assessments of relevance and impact.</p>	<p>The National Society uses contextual analysis, monitoring information, or early warning mechanisms to anticipate emerging humanitarian needs and future challenges.</p> <p>Volunteers actively participate in identifying, analyzing, and prioritizing humanitarian needs and contribute to coordination spaces, local networks, or multi-sectoral platforms where relevant.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
3. Analyze Current Volunteering Capacities		<p>The National Society has a general understanding of its volunteering capacities based on operational experience, branch knowledge, or informal observations from volunteering leaders and management.</p> <p>General information about volunteers is available, even if it is not systematically collected or regularly updated.</p>	<p>A basic assessment or diagnosis of volunteering capacities has been conducted, including information on volunteer numbers, participation levels, and volunteer profiles.</p> <p>Information on volunteers is collected and used to support volunteer management and planning.</p> <p>The National Society periodically reviews the availability and distribution of volunteers to support programmes and services.</p>	<p>Systems and processes are in place to collect and update information on volunteering capacities, including databases, statistics, volunteer profiles, participation trends, and retention levels.</p> <p>Information on volunteering capacities is regularly analyzed and used to identify strengths, gaps, and development priorities.</p> <p>Findings from volunteer analysis inform decisions related to volunteer management and programme implementation.</p>	<p>Analysis of volunteering capacities is integrated into the National Society's strategic and operational planning processes.</p> <p>Volunteers actively participate in the design, implementation, and evaluation of strategies and decisions related to volunteering development.</p> <p>Lessons learned and good practices are documented and shared within the National Society and, where appropriate, with other National Societies or regional platforms.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
4. Strengthen Volunteer Satisfaction and Motivation		<p>Volunteers' opinions, concerns, or feedback are occasionally collected through meetings, informal discussions, or other communication channels, although there is no standardized mechanism or systematic follow-up.</p> <p>Volunteer leaders and staff have a general understanding of factors that influence volunteer satisfaction and motivation.</p>	<p>Periodic mechanisms are used to assess volunteer satisfaction and motivation, such as surveys, focus groups, meetings, or feedback sessions.</p> <p>Information collected on volunteer satisfaction and motivation is documented, even if results are not consistently analyzed or followed up.</p> <p>Volunteers are provided with opportunities to express suggestions and concerns regarding their volunteer experience.</p>	<p>Volunteer satisfaction and motivation are assessed regularly through structured mechanisms.</p> <p>Results from surveys, consultations, or studies are analyzed, shared with relevant stakeholders, and used to adjust volunteer management strategies, plans, or processes.</p> <p>The National Society periodically analyzes factors influencing volunteer engagement, motivation, and retention.</p>	<p>Satisfaction and motivation assessments include dimensions such as volunteer well-being, recognition, inclusion, personal development, and sense of belonging.</p> <p>Results are used to support continuous improvement processes and strengthen volunteer engagement and retention strategies.</p> <p>The National Society regularly applies tools or methodologies (such as the IFRC MOTIRO tool or similar approaches) to better understand volunteer motivation and to adapt engagement strategies based on the findings.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
5. Measure the Value of Volunteering		<p>The National Society recognizes volunteering as a strategic asset and acknowledges that volunteers create value for communities, the organization, and volunteers themselves.</p> <p>Basic information on volunteers, such as the number of volunteers or their areas of engagement, is collected and reported through existing systems.</p>	<p>The National Society collects and maintains information on volunteering activities, including volunteer profiles, areas of intervention, or levels of participation.</p> <p>Information from volunteer databases, FDRS, or similar systems is used to better understand the contribution of volunteers.</p> <p>The National Society documents examples, stories, testimonials, or case studies that illustrate the contribution of volunteers.</p>	<p>The National Society systematically collects information on volunteer contributions, including hours of service, volunteer roles, skills, functions, or areas of expertise.</p> <p>Information on volunteering is used to estimate the economic and/or social value generated through volunteer action using recognized methodologies, such as VIVA studies or similar approaches.</p> <p>Evidence on the value of volunteering is incorporated into reports, advocacy materials, fundraising efforts, or communication products.</p>	<p>The National Society regularly measures and analyzes both the economic and social value generated through volunteering, combining quantitative data with qualitative evidence.</p> <p>Indicators related to volunteering are integrated into planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems.</p> <p>Evidence on the value of volunteering is used to influence decision-making, strengthen partnerships, support resource mobilization, and promote investment in volunteering development.</p> <p>Results are shared with volunteers, communities, public authorities, partners, and other stakeholders to increase recognition and visibility of volunteer contributions.</p>		



## HOW

# Attract, Manage, and Empower Volunteers

This area focuses on the systems, processes, and practices that support volunteers throughout their volunteering journey. It addresses how National Societies attract, engage, develop, protect, and empower volunteers, while creating positive and meaningful volunteering experiences.

The **HOW** dimension recognizes that volunteering development goes beyond administrative management and includes nurturing volunteerism, promoting participation and inclusion, supporting well-being, adapting to changing forms of engagement, and ensuring that volunteers have the knowledge, opportunities, and support needed to contribute effectively.

This area encourages National Societies to establish approaches that are flexible, inclusive, and centred on the needs, motivations, and aspirations of volunteers. It also emphasizes the importance of volunteer rights, personal development, psychosocial support, and active participation in decision-making.

Ultimately, this area seeks to answer the question:

**How do we attract, support, develop, and empower volunteers so that they can contribute safely, effectively, and meaningfully?**



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## Attributes in the HOW

6. Nurturing volunteerism and inspiring local action
  7. Manage the Volunteer Cycle
  8. Define Volunteer Programmes and Profiles
  9. Define Training Curricula and Personal Development Paths
  10. Support Volunteering in Emergencies
  11. Empower Volunteers in Decision-Making
  12. New Forms of Volunteering
  13. Diversify & Inclusion in Volunteering
  14. Provide Psychosocial Support
  15. Volunteer Development as a Driver of Retention
  16. Ensure Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities
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ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
6. Nurturing volunteerism and inspiring local action		The National Society promotes the value of volunteering through campaigns, communication activities, public events, or storytelling that highlight the contribution of volunteers.	The National Society offers different forms of engagement, such as long-term volunteering, short-term activities, skills-based volunteering, digital volunteering, or community initiatives.	Volunteers and communities are supported to initiate and lead local actions through access to guidance, tools, training, or other resources.	The National Society is recognized as a trusted platform that enables people and communities to take humanitarian action.		
		Communities are informed about how people can participate in humanitarian action through the National Society.	Activities are implemented to encourage participation by people of different ages, genders, backgrounds, abilities, and experiences.	The National Society recognizes and supports spontaneous or community-led initiatives that contribute to humanitarian objectives.	Volunteerism is promoted as an expression of solidarity, active citizenship, and community participation and is reflected in institutional strategies and practices.		
		Volunteer opportunities are available for people interested in contributing to the National Society's mission.	Partnerships with schools, universities, community groups, or local organizations are used to promote volunteerism and civic participation.	Volunteers are encouraged to take leadership roles and mobilize others within their communities.	Stories, lessons learned, and examples of local action are documented and shared to inspire others and strengthen a culture of volunteerism.		
			Communities and volunteers are consulted and involved in identifying needs and designing local actions.	Spaces exist for volunteers and communities to share ideas, test new approaches, and promote innovation.	The National Society continuously adapts volunteering opportunities to respond to changing expectations, motivations, and ways of engaging.		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
7. Manage the Volunteer Cycle		<p>The basic components of the Volunteer Management Cycle are recognized, and some of them are applied in isolation and not systematically.</p> <p>There is some informal guidance on how to recruit or involve volunteers, but no clear guidelines or formal structure.</p> <p>The role of the volunteer manager in the branches is not clearly defined or is not implemented on a regular basis.</p>	<p>The National Society partially applies the Volunteer Management Cycle, with defined processes for at least the stages of recruitment, admission, basic training and recognition.</p> <p>Personnel or referents have been designated to manage volunteering in some branches, with occasional support from the National Volunteer Coordination Office.</p> <p>There is a basic institutional guide or protocol to guide the implementation of the cycle, although its application is uneven.</p>	<p>The Volunteer Management Cycle is formally established and documented throughout the National Society, including its branches.</p> <p>All components of the cycle are consistently implemented: planning, recruitment, selection, placement, training, motivation, support, recognition, evaluation and transition.</p> <p>Volunteer managers in branches receive continuous training, and follow-up and monitoring is carried out at the national level.</p>	<p>The implementation of the Volunteer Management Cycle is coherent, transversal and adapted to local realities in all Branches.</p> <p>Evaluation and feedback are active mechanisms at all stages of the cycle, and learnings are documented and used for continuous improvement.</p> <p>The National Society promotes innovation in volunteer management, encourages the exchange of best practices among branches and participates actively in regional forums on the subject.</p> <p>Cycle management is seen as a strategic and key process for the fulfillment of the institutional mission, with volunteers at the center of decision making.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
8. Define Volunteer Programmes and Profiles		The National Society implements organized volunteer activities, although they are not always structured as formal volunteer programmes.	One or more volunteer programmes have been defined in response to identified humanitarian needs, although their structure or documentation may still be incomplete.	The National Society maintains a documented portfolio of volunteer programmes aligned with its humanitarian priorities and strategic objectives.	Volunteer programmes are regularly reviewed and updated based on humanitarian needs, branch realities, volunteer feedback, and lessons learned.		
		Volunteer roles are generally understood, but profiles are limited or only partially documented.	Basic volunteer profiles have been developed for some positions and include, at minimum, the purpose of the role, general responsibilities, and estimated time commitment.	Volunteer programmes define their purpose, objectives, areas of work, supervision arrangements, and opportunities for volunteer learning and development.	Volunteer profiles and programme models are adapted to local contexts while promoting diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and opportunities for personal development.		
		Volunteer activities respond to humanitarian needs identified through operational experience or contextual knowledge, even when formal alignment processes are not yet established.	Information about programmes and volunteer profiles is occasionally used to recruit volunteers in some branches or operational areas.	Volunteer profiles are formalized and include essential elements such as title, responsibilities, location, qualifications, training requirements, duration, supervision, and development opportunities.	Volunteers and communities participate in the design, review, and improvement of volunteer programmes and profiles.		
				Volunteer profiles are systematically used during recruitment and selection processes in most branches.	Defining volunteer programmes and roles is embedded within an organizational culture that promotes clarity, transparency, commitment, and shared expectations.		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
<p><b>9. Define Training Curricula and Personal Development Paths</b></p>	<p>Some volunteer programmes provide basic training or orientation activities, although training curricula are not yet consistently defined across the organization.</p> <p>Volunteers receive basic information on the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, the Fundamental Principles, and the Code of Conduct through induction or introductory sessions.</p>	<p>Basic training curricula have been developed for some volunteer programmes and include induction, knowledge of the Movement, the Fundamental Principles, the Code of Conduct, and programme-specific topics.</p> <p>Minimum competencies have been identified for certain volunteer roles to support safe and effective performance.</p> <p>The National Society uses available learning resources and platforms, including IFRC e-learning tools or similar systems, to complement volunteer training.</p> <p>Training activities are delivered through different modalities, such as face-to-face and online learning, depending on operational needs and context.</p>	<p>Each volunteer programme has a documented training curriculum that defines learning requirements from induction to specialized training according to volunteer roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>Training content is adapted to different operational contexts, programme requirements, and local realities.</p> <p>Competencies required for volunteer roles are clearly defined and used to guide learning and development.</p> <p>Training records or other mechanisms are used to monitor volunteer participation in learning activities.</p>	<p>The National Society provides continuous and progressive learning opportunities that accompany volunteers throughout their volunteering journey.</p> <p>Personal development pathways are available to support volunteers in acquiring new competencies, assuming greater responsibilities, and exploring leadership opportunities.</p> <p>Training curricula are periodically reviewed and updated based on operational experience, volunteer feedback, emerging humanitarian needs, and lessons learned.</p> <p>Volunteers are encouraged to manage their own learning and access opportunities that support both their humanitarian contribution and their personal development.</p>			

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
<p><b>10.</b> Support Volunteering in Emergencies (ViE)</p>		<p>The National Society recognizes the importance of volunteering in emergencies and mobilizes volunteers when emergencies occur.</p> <p>Existing volunteer networks, branch structures, or operational experience are used to support emergency response activities.</p> <p>Emergency volunteer mobilization is largely based on existing practices and operational experience.</p>	<p>Basic procedures or protocols have been developed to support the mobilization and coordination of volunteers during emergencies.</p> <p>Measures exist to facilitate the safe and controlled incorporation of spontaneous volunteers when required.</p> <p>Policies or guidance addressing volunteer safety, responsibilities, or legal considerations during emergencies are available.</p> <p>Basic training on volunteering in emergencies is provided to selected volunteers and staff.</p>	<p>The National Society has a documented and implemented system for managing volunteers in emergencies, including activation, recruitment, training, coordination, support, and follow-up.</p> <p>Policies and procedures addressing volunteer safety, legal protection, insurance, compensation, or duty of care are implemented.</p> <p>Mechanisms are in place to support volunteer well-being and reduce volunteer attrition following large-scale or prolonged operations.</p> <p>Spontaneous volunteers are integrated through structured and safe procedures.</p>	<p>Volunteering in Emergencies (ViE) is integrated into institutional planning, preparedness, and emergency response systems.</p> <p>Policies and procedures related to ViE are periodically reviewed and improved based on operational experience, after-action reviews, and lessons learned.</p> <p>Volunteers, staff, and relevant stakeholders contribute to improving emergency volunteering practices.</p> <p>The National Society demonstrates its capacity to mobilize, protect, support, and retain volunteers during complex or prolonged emergencies.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
<p><b>11. Empower Volunteers in Decision-Making</b></p>	<p>Volunteers are occasionally involved in discussions or decisions related to their activities and areas of work.</p> <p>Informal opportunities exist for volunteers to express ideas, concerns, or suggestions.</p>	<p>Volunteers are regularly consulted on issues affecting their work, particularly at branch or programme level.</p> <p>Meetings, surveys, focus groups, or other consultation mechanisms are used to gather volunteers' views and suggestions.</p> <p>Volunteers have opportunities to provide feedback on their volunteering experience and operational activities.</p>	<p>The National Society has mechanisms at different levels to consult volunteers as part of decision-making processes.</p> <p>Volunteers actively participate in planning processes, programme development, strategy discussions, or service design.</p> <p>Feedback received from volunteers is documented and used to improve programmes, activities, or volunteer management practices.</p> <p>Young volunteers and volunteers from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to participate in consultation and decision-making spaces.</p>	<p>The National Society actively promotes a culture in which volunteers are recognized as partners in decision-making and organizational development.</p> <p>Volunteers contribute to the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of programmes and strategies that affect volunteering.</p> <p>Feedback mechanisms are regularly reviewed to ensure that volunteer perspectives influence decisions and continuous improvement.</p> <p>Participation opportunities are accessible, inclusive, and adapted to different profiles of volunteers.</p>			

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
12. New Forms of Volunteering		<p>The National Society recognizes that volunteering is evolving and acknowledges the need to offer different ways for people to contribute.</p> <p>Some branches, programmes, or initiatives experiment with flexible forms of engagement beyond traditional volunteering models.</p> <p>Digital tools or communication platforms are occasionally used to support volunteer participation.</p>	<p>The National Society offers different forms of volunteer engagement, such as short-term activities, skills-based volunteering, digital volunteering, or community initiatives.</p> <p>Partnerships with schools, universities, companies, or community organizations are used to broaden participation opportunities.</p> <p>New volunteer profiles, including professionals, youth, older people, migrants, or other groups, are actively engaged in volunteer activities.</p> <p>Existing volunteer management practices are adapted to accommodate different levels of commitment and availability.</p>	<p>Policies, systems, and volunteer management practices are reviewed and adapted to support emerging forms of volunteering.</p> <p>Mechanisms exist to safely integrate spontaneous volunteers, digital volunteers, or specialized volunteers when appropriate.</p> <p>Technology and digital platforms are used to facilitate collaboration, communication, learning, and volunteer engagement.</p> <p>Volunteers are provided with the tools, guidance, and support needed to participate through different forms of engagement.</p>	<p>The National Society regularly reviews and adapts its volunteering models in response to changing social trends, humanitarian needs, and volunteer expectations.</p> <p>Volunteers and communities contribute to designing new approaches and innovative forms of engagement.</p> <p>Experiences, lessons learned, and good practices related to new forms of volunteering are documented and shared across branches and, where appropriate, with other National Societies.</p> <p>Innovation in volunteering is promoted while ensuring alignment with the Fundamental Principles, volunteer protection measures, safeguarding requirements, and organizational values.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
13. Diversify & Inclusion in Volunteering		Volunteer recruitment and participation are open to all people, and no groups are formally excluded on the basis of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or other characteristics.	Specific efforts are made to encourage the participation of groups that are underrepresented in volunteering.	Mechanisms exist to monitor the composition of the volunteer base and identify gaps in representation.	The National Society regularly reviews whether its volunteer composition reflects the diversity of the communities it serves.		
		The National Society maintains volunteer programmes aligned with its humanitarian mandate and auxiliary role.	Volunteer opportunities are adapted to respond to different community needs and local contexts, allowing branches to develop programmes relevant to their realities.	Information on volunteer diversity is used to improve recruitment, accessibility, and participation practices.	Corrective measures are implemented when imbalances or barriers to participation are identified.		
		Basic efforts are made to create a welcoming environment for volunteers from different backgrounds.	Partnerships with schools, community organizations, private sector entities, or other actors are used to broaden participation opportunities and engage diverse groups.	Barriers to participation are identified and measures are taken to create more inclusive volunteering opportunities.	Volunteer programmes are periodically reviewed to ensure they remain relevant to humanitarian needs and accessible to diverse groups.		
			Communication and recruitment activities seek to reach people with different profiles, experiences, and motivations.	Partnerships, including corporate volunteering initiatives or collaborations with community organizations, are used to engage new audiences and strengthen diversity.	Volunteers from different backgrounds actively contribute to improving inclusion practices and strengthening a culture of belonging and respect.		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A- E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
14. Provide Psychosocial Support		<p>The National Society provides Psychological First Aid or basic psychosocial support to volunteers affected by critical incidents when needed.</p> <p>Informal support is provided through colleagues, team leaders, or peer accompaniment.</p> <p>Awareness of volunteers' emotional well-being exists, even when formal procedures or resources are limited.</p>	<p>The National Society has established psychosocial support mechanisms for volunteers and provides training in peer support or basic psychosocial support.</p> <p>Designated focal points, trained volunteers, or staff members are available to provide emotional support or facilitate referrals when needed.</p> <p>Volunteers are informed about available psychosocial support resources and how to access them.</p> <p>Psychosocial support is considered during emergency operations and critical incidents.</p>	<p>Psychosocial support mechanisms are regularly reviewed and strengthened based on volunteer feedback and operational experience.</p> <p>Psychosocial support is available not only during emergencies but also for volunteers engaged in long-term programmes and services.</p> <p>The emotional well-being of volunteer teams is periodically monitored, and preventive measures are implemented when risks are identified.</p> <p>Referral mechanisms to specialized psychosocial or mental health services are available when additional support is required.</p>	<p>The organizational culture actively promotes self-care, emotional well-being, respect for personal boundaries, and challenges harmful perceptions such as the "hero volunteer" narrative.</p> <p>Psychosocial support approaches are adapted to local contexts and are reviewed with the participation of volunteers.</p> <p>Volunteers, staff, and leadership actively contribute to strengthening well-being practices and promoting psychological safety.</p> <p>Lessons learned and good practices related to psychosocial support are documented and shared within the National Society and, where appropriate, with Movement partners and external organizations.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
<p><b>15. Volunteer Development as a Driver of Retention</b></p>		<p>The National Society maintains a sufficient number of volunteers to provide essential humanitarian services.</p> <p>Volunteer contributions are acknowledged and appreciated through formal or informal recognition practices.</p> <p>Branches are encouraged to recognize volunteers for their service and contributions.</p>	<p>Volunteer turnover remains manageable and volunteer numbers generally correspond to operational needs.</p> <p>Recruitment and onboarding processes are generally accessible and enable volunteers to join without unnecessary difficulties.</p> <p>The National Society has a recognition system in place and formally recognizes volunteers at least once a year.</p> <p>Volunteers have opportunities to participate in activities that strengthen motivation, belonging, and engagement.</p>	<p>The National Society has the capacity to recruit additional volunteers when activities need to be expanded.</p> <p>Recognition systems are progressive and linked to opportunities for learning, leadership, internal promotion, or increased responsibilities.</p> <p>Volunteer development opportunities contribute to long-term engagement and retention.</p> <p>Information on volunteer participation and retention is used to strengthen volunteer management practices.</p>	<p>The National Society periodically analyzes the reasons for volunteer turnover, disengagement, and volunteer exit through surveys, interviews, or other feedback mechanisms.</p> <p>Measures are implemented to address barriers that affect volunteer participation, such as unnecessary bureaucracy, lengthy onboarding processes, or administrative obstacles.</p> <p>The recognition system is periodically reviewed and updated based on volunteer feedback and organizational learning.</p> <p>Volunteer experience, participation, and retention are continuously improved through evidence-based approaches.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
16. Ensure Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities		<p>The National Society recognizes the rights and responsibilities of volunteers, although these are not yet fully standardized or consistently communicated.</p> <p>Volunteers receive basic orientation or verbal guidance on expectations, roles, and standards of conduct.</p> <p>Volunteer leaders and staff generally promote respect for volunteers and responsible volunteer engagement.</p>	<p>Written documents describing volunteers' rights, responsibilities, and benefits are available.</p> <p>Upon joining, volunteers receive relevant information and formally accept the conditions of service, including the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Induction activities explain volunteer roles, responsibilities, expected conduct, the Fundamental Principles, and the proper use of the emblem.</p> <p>Volunteers working with vulnerable groups receive guidance on appropriate behaviour and safeguarding expectations.</p>	<p>Rights and responsibilities are integrated into volunteer management processes throughout recruitment, engagement, and exit.</p> <p>Periodic performance discussions or feedback mechanisms support volunteer development and clarify expectations.</p> <p>Accessible mechanisms are available for volunteers to raise concerns, provide suggestions, or report issues related to their rights and responsibilities.</p> <p>Policies and procedures are in place to protect volunteers' personal information and provide clear guidance on reimbursements, recognition, and confidentiality.</p>	<p>Rights and responsibilities are periodically reviewed with the participation of volunteers and adapted to changing contexts and operational realities.</p> <p>The National Society monitors the implementation of volunteer commitments and identifies good practices and areas requiring improvement.</p> <p>Policies and practices are aligned with relevant Movement frameworks, such as the IFRC Volunteer Charter and other volunteer-related standards.</p> <p>Volunteers actively contribute to strengthening a culture of accountability, mutual respect, and shared responsibility.</p>		



## WHAT

# Deliver Impactful Volunteer Action

This area focuses on the humanitarian action delivered through volunteers and their contribution to programmes, services, and emergency operations. It examines how volunteer activities and programmes are implemented, strengthened, and scaled to respond to community needs and create positive impact.

The **WHAT** dimension emphasizes that the purpose of volunteering development is not only to strengthen systems and processes, but ultimately to improve the quality, relevance, effectiveness, and impact of humanitarian action. It promotes continuous learning, evidence-based improvements, and the adaptation and expansion of successful approaches.

By strengthening volunteer programmes and operational capacities, this area helps National Societies maximize the contribution of volunteers to community resilience and humanitarian response.

Ultimately, this area seeks to answer the question:

**What do volunteers do, and how do their activities and programmes contribute to humanitarian impact and community resilience?**



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## Attributes in the WHAT

- 17. Develop and Scale Volunteer Activities and Programmes
  - 18. Support Volunteer Emergency Operations
-

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
17. Develop and Scale Volunteer Activities and Programmes		<p>The National Society implements volunteer activities or isolated initiatives that respond to humanitarian needs and community priorities.</p> <p>Activities are mainly organized based on operational experience and immediate needs, with limited planning, monitoring, or evaluation mechanisms.</p> <p>Basic coordination arrangements exist to support the implementation of volunteer activities.</p>	<p>Volunteer activities are organized within one or more structured programmes that respond to identified humanitarian needs.</p> <p>Basic planning and coordination mechanisms are used to support programme implementation.</p> <p>Volunteers participate in delivering activities and services aligned with the National Society's mission.</p> <p>Stakeholders, including volunteers or communities, are occasionally consulted during the design or implementation of activities.</p>	<p>Volunteer programmes are implemented through structured approaches aligned with institutional priorities and community needs.</p> <p>Volunteers, staff, and relevant stakeholders actively participate in planning, implementing, and evaluating activities.</p> <p>Monitoring information, participant feedback, and operational experience are used to improve programme quality and relevance.</p> <p>Programmes are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to respond to changing humanitarian needs.</p>	<p>Volunteer programmes are integrated into institutional planning and are periodically updated based on assessments, evaluations, lessons learned, and participant feedback.</p> <p>The impact of volunteer activities and programmes is measured, documented, and used to strengthen programme quality, innovation, and sustainability.</p> <p>Good practices and successful approaches are documented and shared, and where appropriate, adapted or expanded to other branches, programmes, or contexts.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
18. Support Volunteer Emergency Operations		<p>The National Society mobilizes volunteers to support emergency operations when disasters or crises occur.</p> <p>Volunteer participation in emergency response is mainly based on operational experience and local capacities.</p> <p>Emergency operations are implemented through existing structures and available resources.</p>	<p>Basic procedures are available to support volunteer mobilization during emergency operations, including logistical and safety considerations.</p> <p>Some volunteers have received training in disaster management, first aid, community preparedness, or other emergency-related topics.</p> <p>The National Society participates in exercises, simulations, or regional preparedness initiatives when opportunities arise.</p> <p>Operational experience and lessons learned are used to strengthen future responses.</p>	<p>The National Society maintains organized and standardized mechanisms to support volunteer participation in emergency operations.</p> <p>Volunteers participate in national surge mechanisms and, where appropriate, are trained and registered in regional systems such as the Regional Disaster Response Teams (RDRTs).</p> <p>Coordination with Movement partners, regional delegations, and external humanitarian actors is conducted through established operational arrangements.</p>	<p>The National Society actively contributes to national, regional, or international emergency operations through trained volunteers and specialized capacities.</p> <p>Volunteers with deployment experience are available to support surge mechanisms and international response systems when required.</p> <p>The National Society participates in preparedness, response, monitoring, evaluation, and learning processes related to emergency operations.</p> <p>Good practices, operational experience, and lessons learned are documented and shared to strengthen emergency response capacities within the National Society and, where appropriate, across the Movement.</p>		



## ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

### Strengthen the Conditions that Support Volunteering

This area focuses on the institutional conditions that allow volunteering to thrive. It examines the structures, policies, strategies, systems, partnerships, and organizational culture that support volunteer engagement and volunteering development across the National Society.

The **Enabling Environment** dimension recognizes that strong volunteering does not depend only on volunteers themselves, but also on leadership commitment, adequate resources, effective coordination, supportive policies, and a culture that values and protects volunteers. By strengthening these foundations, National Societies can create the conditions necessary for sustainable volunteer development and long-term humanitarian impact.

This area also highlights the importance of collaboration, communication, safety, and relationships within and beyond the organization, recognizing that volunteering flourishes when supported by strong institutions and effective partnerships.

Ultimately, this area seeks to answer the question:

**What institutional conditions are needed to enable volunteers and volunteering to thrive across the organization?**



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## Attributes in the ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

- 19. Establish and Strengthen Volunteer Structures
  - 20. Develop and Implement Volunteer Policy
  - 21. Manage Volunteer Data Systems
  - 22. Strengthen Communication with Volunteers
  - 23. Ensure Legal Compliance in Volunteering
  - 24. Develop and Implement Volunteer Strategies
  - 25. Ensure Safety, Security, and Well-Being
  - 26. Enhance Volunteer-Staff Relationships
  - 27. Cooperate Within and Outside the Movement
-

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
19. Establish and Strengthen Volunteer Structures		<p>The National Society recognizes the importance of having dedicated structures and responsibilities for volunteering.</p> <p>Individuals or teams provide support to volunteering activities, even when these functions are combined with other responsibilities.</p> <p>Basic coordination for volunteering exists at national or branch level.</p>	<p>A person or focal point responsible for volunteering has been designated at national level.</p> <p>Some branches have individuals or teams supporting volunteer management and development activities.</p> <p>Roles and responsibilities of the volunteer managers are defined, although their implementation may vary across the organization.</p> <p>Volunteer coordination mechanisms exist between some branches and national level.</p>	<p>The National Society has an established and functional structure for volunteer development and management, with individuals or teams responsible for supporting implementation across the organization.</p> <p>Branches have local volunteer managers, focal points, or teams appropriate to their context and capacities.</p> <p>Roles and responsibilities are documented and aligned with institutional policies and procedures.</p> <p>Training and development opportunities are available for volunteer managers and coordinators, including learning related to volunteer management and leadership.</p>	<p>Volunteer management and development are fully integrated into the National Society's organizational structure and supported by appropriate competencies and resources.</p> <p>Volunteer managers and coordinators contribute to institutional decision-making and collaborate across programmes and departments.</p> <p>Processes for selecting, developing, and supporting volunteer managers include competencies related to leadership, knowledge of the Movement, and volunteer management.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
20. Develop and Implement Volunteer Policy		<p>The National Society has a volunteer policy and basic volunteer regulations or guidance documents.</p> <p>The policy provides general principles and expectations for volunteer engagement.</p> <p>Volunteer-related practices are generally guided by these documents.</p>	<p>The volunteer policy has been reviewed or updated within the last five years.</p> <p>The policy and regulations are aligned with relevant Movement frameworks, including the IFRC Volunteering Policy.</p> <p>The policy and related regulations are communicated to volunteers, staff, and relevant stakeholders through induction, training, or other communication mechanisms.</p> <p>Supporting regulations and procedures are consistent with the volunteer policy.</p>	<p>Volunteer policies are actively considered during the development and revision of institutional strategies, programme documents, procedures, and operational plans.</p> <p>Volunteer-related priorities are reflected in programme proposals, project documents, and reporting processes.</p> <p>Different departments and programmes apply volunteer policy principles consistently in their work.</p> <p>Mechanisms exist to support implementation of the policy throughout the organization.</p>	<p>The National Society periodically reviews the implementation and effectiveness of its volunteer policy and regulations.</p> <p>Internal assessments, evaluations, or monitoring mechanisms are used to identify areas requiring improvement.</p> <p>Volunteers and other stakeholders participate in reviewing and updating policies and regulations.</p> <p>Lessons learned and evolving contexts are used to strengthen volunteer policies and ensure their continued relevance.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
21. Manage Volunteer Data Systems		<p>Branches maintain basic records or lists of volunteers and update them periodically, at least once a year.</p> <p>Volunteer information is used to support local volunteer activities and communication.</p> <p>Basic information on volunteers is available, even if records are maintained separately by branches or programmes.</p>	<p>The National Society consolidates volunteer information at national level at least once a year.</p> <p>Basic demographic information on volunteers, such as gender, age, and other relevant characteristics, is collected where possible.</p> <p>National-level information is used to support planning, reporting, and operational decision-making.</p> <p>Processes exist to improve the consistency and quality of volunteer records across the organization.</p>	<p>The National Society maintains a centralized volunteer information system or database with updated volunteer records, such as the IFRC VDMS (Volunteer Data Management System).</p> <p>Volunteer information includes demographic data, contact details, skills, areas of expertise, volunteer hours, training records, and other relevant information used for volunteer management.</p> <p>Volunteer information is consolidated and reviewed regularly, at least twice a year.</p> <p>Information generated by the system is used to support volunteer mobilization, programme planning, and institutional reporting.</p>	<p>Volunteer information systems provide timely access to information and generate statistics that support decision-making and organizational learning.</p> <p>Volunteer data can be analyzed and disaggregated by characteristics such as gender, age, disability, or other relevant variables in accordance with national regulations and organizational needs.</p> <p>Data protection, confidentiality, and information management practices comply with national legislation and applicable standards.</p> <p>Volunteer information is regularly reviewed to improve data quality, strengthen reporting, and support the strategic development of volunteering.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
22. Strengthen Communication with Volunteers		<p>The National Society regularly communicates relevant information, activities, and opportunities to volunteers through available communication channels.</p> <p>Volunteers are informed about important institutional developments, programmes, and operational activities.</p> <p>Basic communication channels exist between volunteers and the National Society.</p>	<p>The National Society gathers feedback from volunteers to understand their communication preferences and improve communication practices.</p> <p>Surveys, meetings, focus groups, or other mechanisms are used to identify how volunteers prefer to receive and share information.</p> <p>Communication channels are periodically reviewed and adapted based on volunteer feedback.</p> <p>Volunteers know how to contact relevant focal points and communicate concerns or suggestions.</p>	<p>Communication systems support regular interaction between national, branch, and local levels.</p> <p>Digital tools, mobile applications, social media, internal platforms, or information management systems are used to facilitate communication and information sharing.</p> <p>Communication mechanisms promote collaboration, transparency, and timely information exchange across the organization.</p> <p>Volunteers receive training or guidance to strengthen their communication skills and support effective engagement with communities and stakeholders.</p>	<p>All volunteers are aware of and regularly use official communication channels.</p> <p>Volunteers have opportunities to strengthen their communication skills and act as advocates for humanitarian values and volunteerism.</p> <p>Communication systems are periodically reviewed and improved to ensure they remain accessible, inclusive, and responsive to volunteers' needs.</p> <p>The National Society promotes a culture of open, horizontal, and participatory communication that values local experiences and volunteer perspectives.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
<p><b>23. Ensure Legal Compliance in Volunteering</b></p>		<p>The National Society maintains basic knowledge of national laws and regulations relevant to volunteering.</p> <p>Volunteer activities are generally implemented with consideration for applicable legal requirements.</p> <p>Leadership and volunteer structures recognize the importance of legal compliance.</p>	<p>Changes in legislation and mandatory requirements are periodically communicated to branches and relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>Access to legal advice or technical support is available when required.</p> <p>Policies, procedures, and volunteer practices are reviewed to ensure compliance with applicable legislation.</p> <p>Volunteers receive information on legal requirements relevant to their roles.</p>	<p>The National Society regularly reviews and strengthens its volunteer practices to ensure continued compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.</p> <p>Volunteer-related policies and procedures are updated when changes in legislation or operational contexts occur.</p> <p>The National Society actively identifies opportunities to facilitate and strengthen volunteer action within the existing legal framework.</p> <p>Legal considerations are incorporated into the design and review of volunteer programmes and institutional processes.</p>	<p>The National Society participates in relevant coordination, consultation, or regulatory spaces related to volunteering and civic participation.</p> <p>The National Society promotes and advocates for legal frameworks that protect and strengthen volunteering and the rights of volunteers.</p> <p>Technical collaboration with public authorities, academic institutions, and other stakeholders contributes to the development or improvement of volunteer-related legislation and policies.</p> <p>Experiences and lessons learned are used to strengthen the enabling environment for volunteering at national level.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
<p><b>24. Develop and Implement Volunteer Strategies</b></p>	<p>The National Society has developed and approved a strategy, plan, or strategic priorities for volunteering development.</p> <p>The strategy provides direction for strengthening volunteering and supporting institutional objectives.</p> <p>Volunteer development priorities are recognized within the National Society.</p>	<p>The volunteer development strategy has been developed with the participation of volunteers and relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>The strategy guides volunteer development activities and supports decision-making.</p> <p>Volunteers and branches are aware of the strategic priorities related to volunteering.</p>	<p>The implementation of the volunteer development strategy is periodically monitored and reviewed.</p> <p>Corrective actions are taken when priorities, contexts, or implementation challenges require adjustments.</p> <p>Resources and budgets are allocated to support the implementation of volunteer development priorities.</p> <p>Volunteer development priorities are reflected in institutional plans, programmes, and annual work plans.</p>	<p>The volunteer development strategy is periodically updated based on evaluations, lessons learned, and changing humanitarian needs.</p> <p>Volunteering development is integrated into broader institutional strengthening efforts and organizational development processes.</p> <p>The National Society uses relevant frameworks and approaches, such as the IFRC Branch Development Framework or similar methodologies, to strengthen implementation and sustainability.</p> <p>Good practices and lessons learned are documented and shared to strengthen volunteer development across the organization and, where appropriate, with other National Societies.</p>			

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
<p><b>25. Ensure Safety, Security, and Well-Being</b></p>	<p>Volunteers receive basic safety information and training appropriate to their roles.</p> <p>Volunteers have access to essential equipment and materials necessary to perform their activities safely.</p> <p>Volunteers have access to security information, guidance, and operational instructions relevant to their work.</p> <p>The National Society has mechanisms to support volunteers who suffer accidents or injuries while carrying out their volunteer service.</p>	<p>The National Society applies elements of the IFRC Standards on Safety, Security and Well-Being or similar approaches to strengthen volunteer protection.</p> <p>Volunteers participating in prolonged activities or emergency operations receive appropriate support, including transportation, accommodation, food, and rest arrangements when required.</p> <p>Refresher training and critical incident training are provided to maintain volunteers' knowledge and preparedness.</p> <p>Insurance or other protection mechanisms are available for some volunteers according to operational needs and national contexts.</p>	<p>The National Society has systematically applied and reviewed the IFRC Standards on Safety, Security and Well-Being, including through learning processes such as study circles or similar approaches.</p> <p>Comprehensive medical and accident coverage is available for volunteers in accordance with national contexts and operational risks.</p> <p>Additional mechanisms exist to support volunteers when costs related to accidents or injuries are not fully covered by insurance.</p> <p>Safety, security, and well-being considerations are integrated into volunteer management and operational planning.</p>	<p>The National Society systematically implements and periodically reviews all relevant elements of the IFRC Standards on Safety, Security and Well-Being.</p> <p>Safety, security, and well-being are embedded in organizational culture and considered a shared responsibility across the institution.</p> <p>Sustainable mechanisms, such as solidarity funds or equivalent support arrangements, are available to assist volunteers when exceptional needs arise.</p> <p>Reimbursement systems ensure that volunteers are not financially disadvantaged by their service and clearly distinguish reimbursement from remuneration.</p>			

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
26. Enhance Volunteer-Staff Relationships		<p>The National Society recognizes the importance of constructive relationships between volunteers and paid staff.</p> <p>Volunteers and staff work together in delivering activities and services, although collaboration may rely primarily on informal arrangements.</p> <p>Basic understanding exists regarding the different contributions made by volunteers and paid staff.</p>	<p>Basic role descriptions for volunteers and paid staff help clarify responsibilities and reduce overlap.</p> <p>Guidance on collaboration, mutual respect, and expected behaviours is included in induction processes, manuals, or other orientation materials.</p> <p>Opportunities for dialogue and coordination between volunteers and staff are promoted, although they may not yet be systematic.</p> <p>Volunteer and staff perspectives are considered in operational discussions when relevant.</p>	<p>Policies, procedures, or mechanisms promote respectful and collaborative relationships between volunteers and paid staff.</p> <p>Participatory planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes involve both volunteers and staff.</p> <p>Communication channels, feedback mechanisms, and conflict-resolution approaches support effective collaboration.</p> <p>Volunteer coordination structures actively facilitate integration and cooperation across programmes and organizational levels.</p>	<p>Relationships between volunteers and paid staff are characterized by trust, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to the National Society's mission.</p> <p>Volunteers and staff contribute together to strategic processes, institutional learning, and organizational development.</p> <p>Opportunities exist for joint learning, mutual recognition, and shared leadership.</p> <p>The National Society values and promotes the complementary contributions of volunteers and paid staff as part of its organizational culture.</p>		

ATTRIBUTE	Current status					A-E	1-4
	INDICATORS						
	A	B	C	D	E		
<p><b>27. Cooperate Within and Outside the Movement</b></p>	<p>The National Society maintains relationships with external actors such as local authorities, community organizations, academic institutions, companies, or other stakeholders.</p> <p>Joint activities or initiatives are occasionally implemented with external partners.</p> <p>Collaboration is mainly based on operational needs and personal or institutional relationships.</p>	<p>Partnerships have been established with external actors, including local governments, universities, private sector entities, community organizations, or other civil society actors.</p> <p>The National Society participates in volunteer networks, coordination spaces, or multi-sectoral forums related to volunteering or humanitarian action.</p> <p>Occasional exchanges of experiences and learning take place with other National Societies or Movement partners.</p> <p>Cooperation contributes to the implementation of volunteer programmes and activities.</p>	<p>The National Society implements a strategy for cooperation and partnerships that supports volunteer development and humanitarian priorities.</p> <p>Formal collaboration agreements exist with relevant partners from government, academia, the private sector, civil society, and the Movement.</p> <p>The National Society actively participates in national and regional volunteer networks and promotes peer learning among National Societies.</p> <p>Joint initiatives and partnerships generate measurable benefits for volunteers, communities, and the National Society, contributing to increased impact, visibility, or resource mobilization.</p>	<p>Cooperation and partnership development are integrated into the National Society's institutional strategy.</p> <p>Sustainable partnerships operate with shared objectives, defined responsibilities, action plans, and mechanisms for monitoring progress.</p> <p>The National Society leads or facilitates multi-sectoral spaces related to volunteering, community development, or humanitarian action.</p> <p>Experiences, good practices, and lessons learned are shared to strengthen cooperation within the Movement and with external partners.</p>			



## Frequently Asked Questions (Q&A)

### **Is the purpose of this tool to obtain a score?**

No. The purpose of the tool is not to achieve a specific score, but to promote dialogue, reflection, and institutional learning. The assessment results should help National Societies identify strengths, gaps, priorities, and opportunities for improvement.

### **Is this tool mandatory for National Societies?**

No. The tool is voluntary and intended to support National Societies in strengthening volunteering development according to their own priorities, capacities, and contexts.

### **Can the assessment be facilitated by external actors?**

Yes. National Societies may conduct the assessment independently or with the support of the IFRC, peer National Societies, or external facilitators. However, ownership of the process and its results should always remain with the National Society.

### **Does every branch need to be at the same level?**

No. Different branches may have different levels of development depending on their capacities and context.

### **Can a National Society reach higher levels without having sophisticated systems or large resources?**

Yes. Higher levels do not necessarily depend on financial resources or complex systems. They reflect the degree to which volunteering development is integrated into the organization and continuously improved. Many good practices can be implemented with limited resources.

### **Must all the examples or tools mentioned in the standards be used?**

No. References to specific tools, methodologies, or frameworks are intended as examples and sources of inspiration. National Societies may use alternative approaches that achieve similar objectives and are adapted to their context.

**What if the National Society does not meet all the conditions of a level?**

The National Society should select the highest level for which all the requirements are substantially met. Since the levels are progressive, each higher level assumes that the requirements of previous levels have already been achieved.

**How often should the assessment be conducted?**

National Societies are encouraged to repeat the assessment periodically, preferably every two to four years or whenever significant organizational changes occur. Repeating the exercise helps monitor progress, identify new priorities, and support continuous improvement.

**Can this tool be used together with other organizational assessments?**

Yes. The Volunteering Standards complement existing mechanisms such as OCAC, BOCA, PER, SAF, the IFRC Standards on Safety, Security and Well-Being, and other institutional assessments. They are intended to strengthen areas of volunteering development that may not be fully covered by other tools.

**Does this tool replace the Volunteer Management Cycle?**

No. The Volunteer Management Cycle remains an important operational tool. However, volunteering development goes beyond volunteer management and includes broader institutional and enabling environment factors. This tool complements, rather than replaces, existing volunteer management approaches.

**What should happen after the self-assessment?**

The assessment should ideally be followed by a prioritization exercise and the development of a Volunteering Plan. Sustainable change requires leadership commitment, follow-up, and the allocation of appropriate resources to address identified priorities.

**Can a National Society score lower in a future assessment?**

**Yes.** Organizational capacities may improve or decline over time due to changes in leadership, resources, volunteer numbers, emergencies, or institutional priorities. The purpose of repeating the assessment is not to demonstrate constant progress, but to obtain an honest understanding of the current situation and adapt actions accordingly.

**Where can National Societies find support to implement the standards?**

National Societies do not need to undertake this process alone. Support is available across the IFRC Network through colleagues working on National Society Development (NSD) and volunteering development.

National Societies are encouraged to contact their respective IFRC Country Delegation, Cluster Delegation, or Regional Office for technical support and guidance. Additional support is also available from the IFRC Secretariat in Geneva and from specialized colleagues working in volunteering development and NSD.

National Societies are also encouraged to learn from and collaborate with other National Societies. Peer-to-peer exchange, sharing of experiences, and mutual support are important elements of volunteering development and have been central to the development and implementation of the standards.

Support may include facilitation of the self-assessment process, sharing of tools and good practices, development of action plans, and connections with other National Societies that have experience in specific areas of volunteering development.

## Conclusion

Volunteers are the foundation of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. Their commitment, knowledge, skills, and presence in communities enable National Societies to deliver humanitarian action, strengthen resilience, and promote solidarity.

The **Volunteering Standards - Self-Assessment Tool for Volunteering Development Capacities for National Societies** has been developed to support National Societies in understanding, strengthening, and continuously improving the systems, structures, and conditions that enable volunteers and volunteering to thrive.

The standards recognize that volunteering development extends beyond volunteer management alone. Effective volunteering depends not only on attracting and retaining volunteers, but also on leadership, organizational culture, institutional systems, partnerships, community participation, and an enabling environment that supports volunteer action at all levels.

The value of this tool lies not in the score obtained, but in the conversations, learning, and actions that emerge from the assessment process. By identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement, National Societies can make informed decisions, prioritize investments, and strengthen their capacity to respond to humanitarian needs.

Volunteering development is not a one-time exercise, but a continuous journey. As communities, humanitarian challenges, and forms of participation evolve, National Societies are encouraged to regularly review their progress, adapt their approaches, and continue investing in volunteers as one of their greatest strengths.

Ultimately, these standards seek to contribute to **stronger** National Societies, more **empowered volunteers**, and more resilient communities. By nurturing volunteerism, strengthening institutional capacities, and fostering collaboration across the Movement and beyond, National Societies can ensure that volunteer action continues to remain at the **heart** of humanitarian service.





# The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

## **Humanity**

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

## **Impartiality**

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

## **Neutrality**

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

## **Independence**

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

## **Voluntary service**

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

## **Unity**

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

## **Universality**

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