RC3 Long Night of Research, 1st Edition: Volunteer and Volunteerism Development

23 - 24 March 2023 , online

1

Kind reminder:

During the session:
- Rename yourself: Full Name + Organisation
- Mute your microphone
- Keep your video on (switch off if low connectivity)

If you have questions to the speakers:
- **Ideally:** Use the Q&A feature to ask your question
- **Second option:** Use the raise hand feature, the moderator will ask you to unmute yourself.

If you have IT questions:
- Ask your question in the chat, an administrator will help you.

Confidentiality statement and data protection
- Sessions will be recorded
- Participants commit not taking pictures of screen or of other participants without permission
- The slides from this session will be shared afterwards

From Research to Policy Development: IFRC Volunteering Policy

Adjmal Dulloo (IFRC)
Dr Bianca Fadel (Northumbria University)
Carine Fleury Bique (Swiss Red Cross)
Louise Baumann (French Red Cross Foundation)
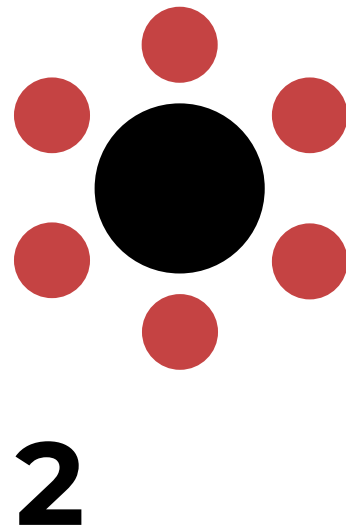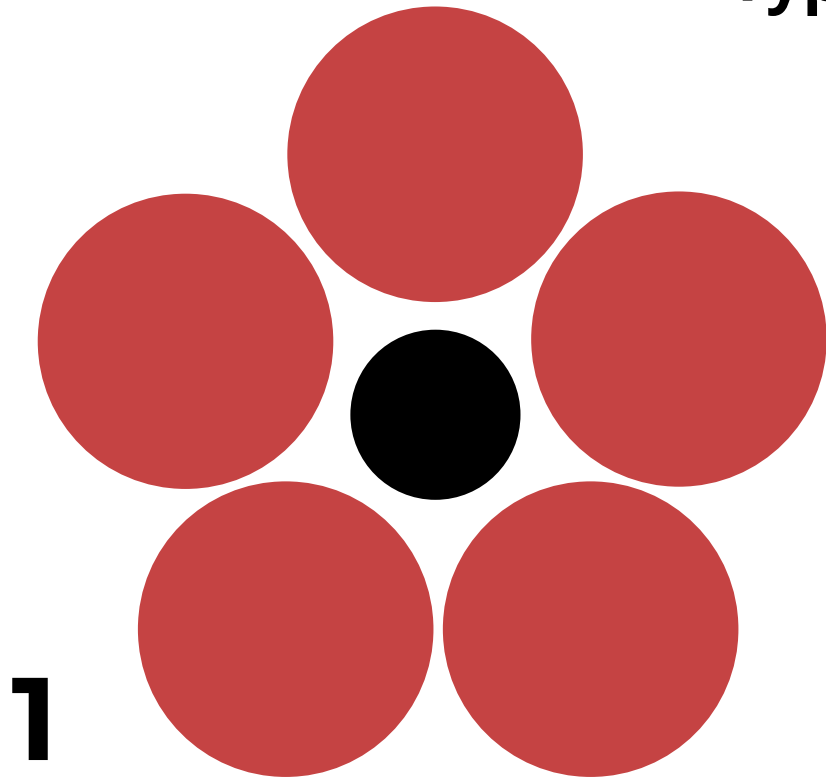**Prof Matt Baillie Smith (Northumbria University)**

What to expect from this session?

1. Highlights from the importance of strengthening the evidence-base for the new IFRC policy

2. Introduction to the new IFRC policy and key improvements in relation to the previous policy

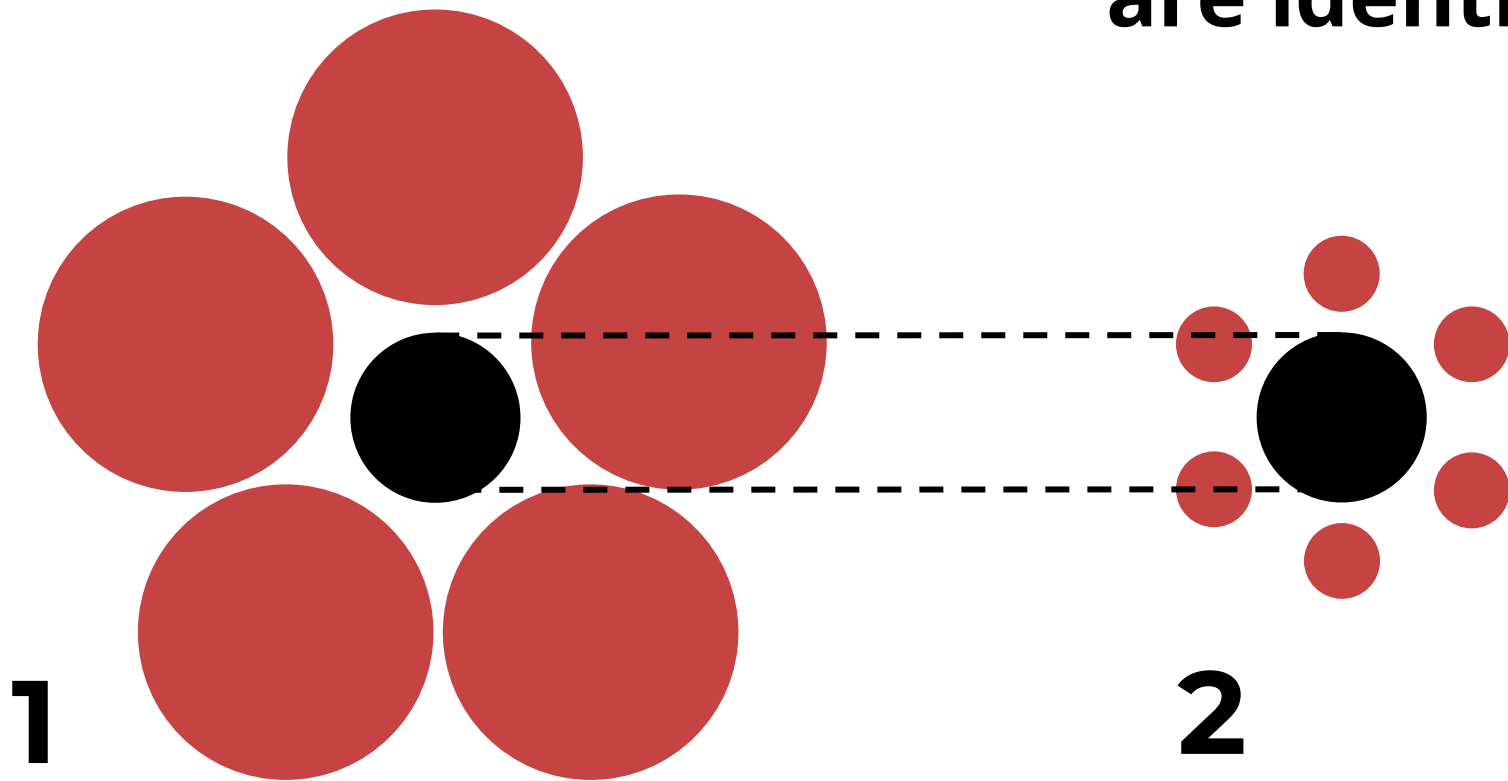3. Facilitated discussion on the importance of connecting the IFRC policy with the National Societies

BUT BEFORE THAT A QUICK QUESTION...

Which of the two black circles is bigger?

Type your answer in the chat...

1

2

Actually... evidence shows they are identical!

1

2

The Volunteering Policy Study gathered learning from...

. 40 National Societies, of which 15 Case Studies (3 per IFRC region)
. 56 Staff Members and 282 Volunteers

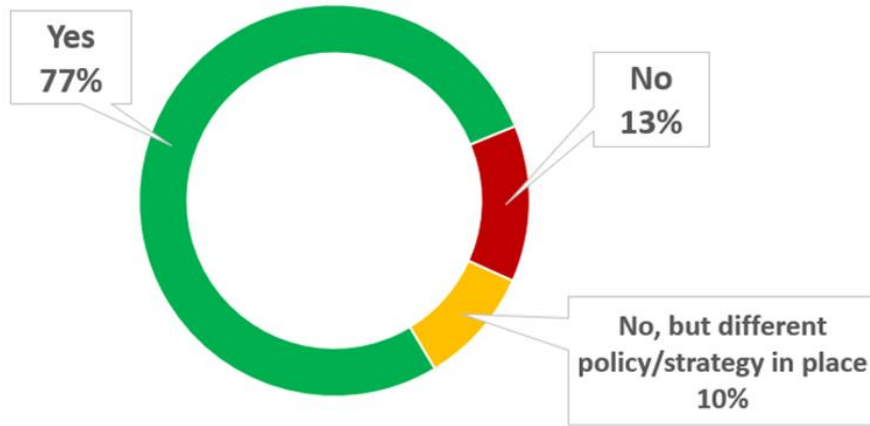## Through online methods from Dec 2020 to Feb 2021...

. Volunteering Alliance Meeting Participatory Discussions
. Staff Survey
. Key Informant Interviews with selected case studies
. Volunteer Survey
. Ideathon Volunteer Survey

VOLUNTEERING POLICY OVERVIEW

Does the National Society have a National Volunteering Policy?

Yes 77%

No 13%

No, but different policy/strategy in place 10%

How much is the National Society's policy/strategy influenced by the IFRC's Voluntering Policy?

Partially influenced 59%

Strongly influenced 41%

*"The other challenge of volunteering is that of financial and human resources, **I told you that I am alone, so... One person for volunteering at the national level is a bit weak**. [...] So funding challenge, human resources challenge. That's it."*
[Interview, Staff from NS in Africa]

*"**We have translated IFRC Volunteer policy which gave as a frame and inspiration** [...] We have developed the Red Cross Volunteering Strategy and Operational Plan taking into consideration and based on some parts of Volunteering policy (e.g. Promotion of volunteers and volunteering, Protection and support)."* **[Survey answer, Staff from NS in Europe]**

KEY CHALLENGES RAISED BY PARTICIPANTS

1. Listening & Decision-making

- Worst-ranked statement by volunteer respondents in the Ideathon Survey involved volunteer participation in decision-making processes at the NS

"In some rare situation yes, like when proposing online activities for all volunteers and things on small scale at centre or volunteer level, but on strategical things, we only know about the decisions." [Survey answer, male youth volunteer from NS in MENA region]

2. Youth Engagement

- Youth as both an area of work (e.g. department) and category of volunteer

*"The role of young people is very hard to track; they've got a **very distinct voice and a very distinct set of expectations that we are not meeting**." [Interview, Staff from NS in Asia and Pacific]*

*"**The youth is a lab; an innovation lab for whole National Society**." [Interview, Staff from NS in Europe]*

3. Technology

- Over 90% of volunteer respondents in the Study's Survey reported on the use of digital technologies or platforms, but also recognition of challenges/ limitations

*"It is sometimes **limiting in some communities where access is difficult** and should be **more interactive**."*

[Survey answer, male youth volunteer from NS in the Americas]

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THE STUDY

☑ **Different ways of using/perceiving the need of a policy**

☑ **Emphasis on volunteer participation in decision-making**

☑ **Need to account for new forms and flexibility in volunteering**

☑ **Centrality of youth participation**

☑ **Emerging forms of technology in volunteering**

☑ **Need of indicators for implementation and measuring impact of the policy**

"*That is what volunteering is really about, offering your time to do something extraordinary.* So I think the challenge we face is that all of the future trends, this Strategy 2030 for the Federation, particularly the transformations, so looking at volunteering, [it] talks about re-imagining and recognising the changing nature of civic action. *What is it we need in this future policy at that high level that starts to call this out?*"

[Interview, Staff from NS in the Asia and Pacific Region]

Madelena, South Sudan Red Cross volunteer © IFRC/Corrie Butler

WHAT'S NEW??

VOLUNTEERING POLICY

IFRC Volunteering Vision

A global network that nurtures voluntary action

Supported by a leadership that creates enabling conditions for inclusive, safe and secure, and innovative engagement

Provides opportunities for a diverse group of volunteers, to learn from each other and act together, locally and across the globe

data management

safe and secure

motivation

innovative volunteering

pariticipation

national legislation

fair engagement

learning opportunities

FACILITATED GROUP DISCUSSION

miro | Volunteering Policy, Long night of research

RC3 Long night of Research, Volunteering Policy Session, Facilitated Discussion

Why is the IFRC Volunteering Policy useful to you?

It is a good resource for advisors and practitioners to guide us and inform senior management decision-making

When working with volunteers in the local branches, and with local leaders, it reminds us that we are part of the IFRC and across our global organisation there are lessons to be learnt

The IFRC Policy gives an overall framework and definition of volunteering

Why is your NS Volunteering Policy useful to you?

It specifies the volunteering types

The connections between the IFRC and NS policy shows how the policy drives the NS policy framework

It reflects details about the volunteer journey in our NS from recruitment until exit

How does your policy support your volunteers in the activities they carry out? Are there any challenges?

Policy is key to prioritise safety, security and well-being of volunteers

Existing challenge for some NS is still the lack of insurance to volunteers

There can be pressures that stretch and push against the boundaries of a policy in situations of conflict, for example, and this needs to be taken into account

Protecting the RCRC logo while in the field can be a challenge, to make sure that volunteers only wear the uniform when assisting people only, and not engage in other unrelated activities. Some volunteers will give the uniform to their families to just wear it, without considering the NS Code of Conduct.

It is challenging to cover all areas of volunteering in a policy document

The impact and measurement indicators of the policy could still be strengthened to account for volunteers' activities

It is still challenging to understand the roles of a global policy within the diversity of volunteering in the Movement

As a challenge, our NS policy is not always aligned with ongoing development. For example, it does not include online volunteering

For us the challenge can also be that you want to connect globally but also want to be in touch with the volunteer that is working locally. The ideas of the two are not always the same and it is a challenge to make a policy that connects to both

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