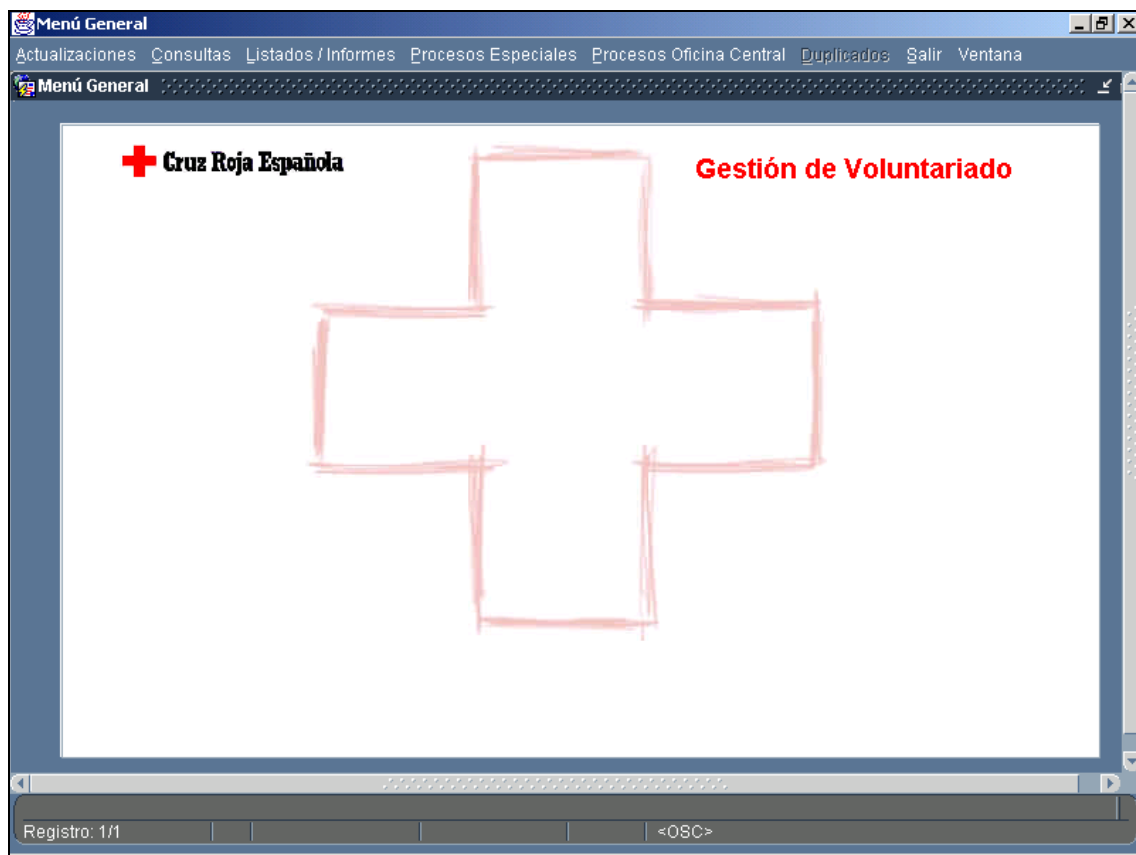




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STUDY CASE

THE DATABASE OF THE SPANISH RED CROSS



**Volunteering and
Organizational Development Department
Spanish Red Cross Headquarters
Madrid, May 2006**

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1. Introduction

Among the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent we find the concept of Volunteering. In this way, the National Societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent express that their activity, aimed at improving the quality of life of those least able to defend themselves, is carried out mainly by volunteers, and at the same time they acknowledge the central role of the volunteers in the framework of the Movement. It is the volunteers who are in the closest contact with the problems of the communities and the districts in which they live, and they are the first to pinpoint the needs, the lack of protection and also the abilities of the people with whom we work to improve their lot.

It is worth noting that volunteers are gradually gaining greater competence and responsibility within the National Societies. In the Spanish Red Cross, all the regional and provincial Presidents are volunteer members of the organization.

As an organization that forms a part of the network of associations, the Spanish Red Cross tries to discern the needs of the population so that action may be directed towards spheres that are not covered by the government nor by civil society. This has meant a constant evolution and adaptation of the activity of the organization, and one of the structures that is seen to need special attention is the management of the volunteer sector. By this we mean the standardization and uniformity of the way in which a person interested in becoming a Red Cross volunteer is incorporated and takes part in the life of the organization throughout his membership. In 2002, the Spanish Red Cross set up its Plan of Volunteering for the period 2003 – 2007 and specified its Process of Volunteer Management. This was to ensure that all the Local branches of the organization would follow the same system of management which would be of two stages:

- 1 The stage of promotion of volunteering, and
- 2 The stage of incorporation and participation.

At present the Spanish Red Cross has 160,189 volunteers. The effort made by the 700-odd Local branches to insert this process of management has had beneficial results, such as:

- 1 The genesis of a homogeneous management of volunteering in the Spanish Red Cross, which ensures that all those interested in becoming a member of the organization receive the same consideration, no matter where they live.
- 2 Real-time information of important details of the volunteering, which can serve the general purposes of organization.
- 3 The coordination on a nationwide scale of different aspects of the management cycle, such as the preparation of a catalogue of volunteer posts throughout the Spanish Red Cross so that the organization may know the posts to be covered all over the country, or the implantation of recruiting campaigns where these are most needed.

Of course the setting up and implantation of a system of management of volunteering calls for tools to facilitate this task, and one of the most effective is the data-base of the human resources of the Spanish Red Cross.

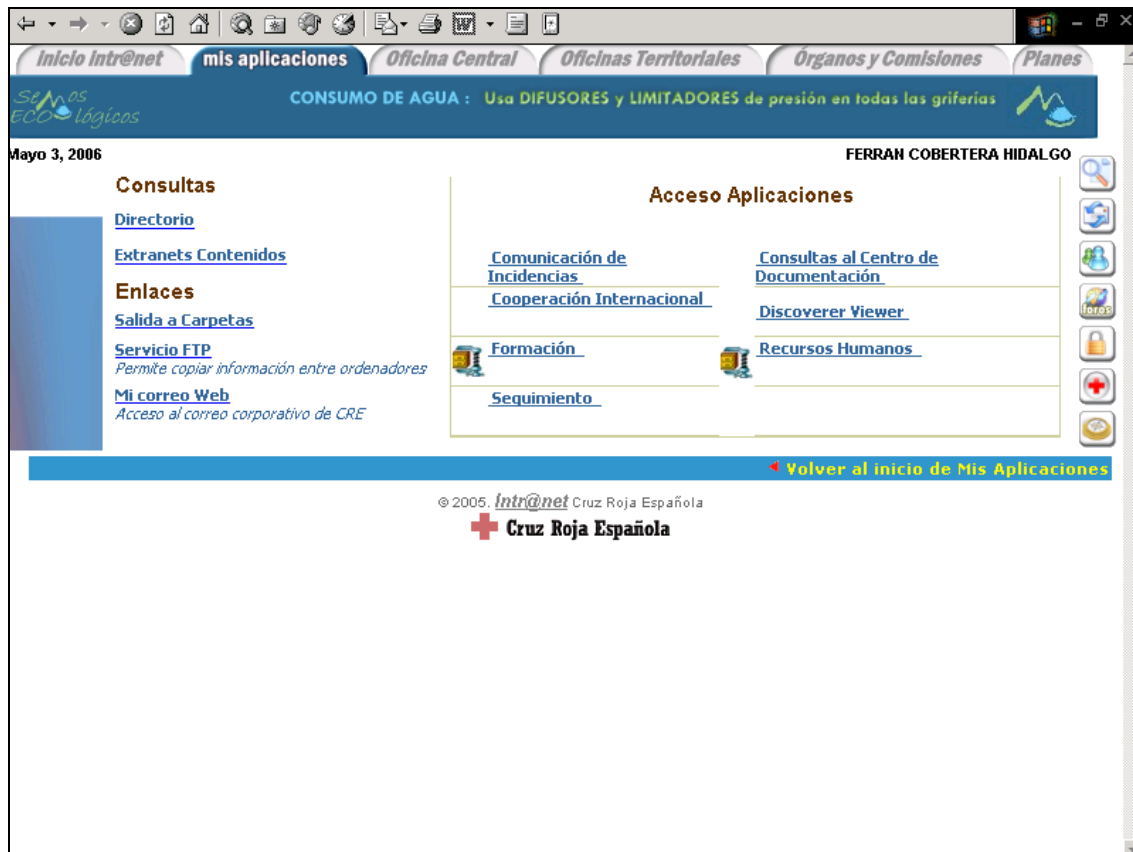
The data-base of the Spanish Red Cross provides the characteristics of all those related to the organization – be they volunteers, paid staff, members or trainees – and for the handling of these sectors various applications have been modelled for the utilization of the data - one for members, one for trainees and one for volunteers.

2. Keynotes of the data-base of the Spanish Red Cross

The main features of the data-base of human resources of the Spanish Red Cross are the following:

1. All the data of the personnel of the organization are assembled in a single server in Madrid.
2. The applications of the data-base are conveyed by the Intranet of the Spanish Red Cross.
3. Different levels of access are available, in accordance with the profile and privileges of the user, the lowest level being that of consultation.

Access to the data of the application is segmented regionally, which means that although all the regions have access to the data of all the volunteers of the Spanish Red Cross, each region can work with and modify only the data that come under its jurisdiction. (The Central Office, The Autonomous Committees in their Autonomous Community, the Provincial Committees in their province and the Local branches in their locality).



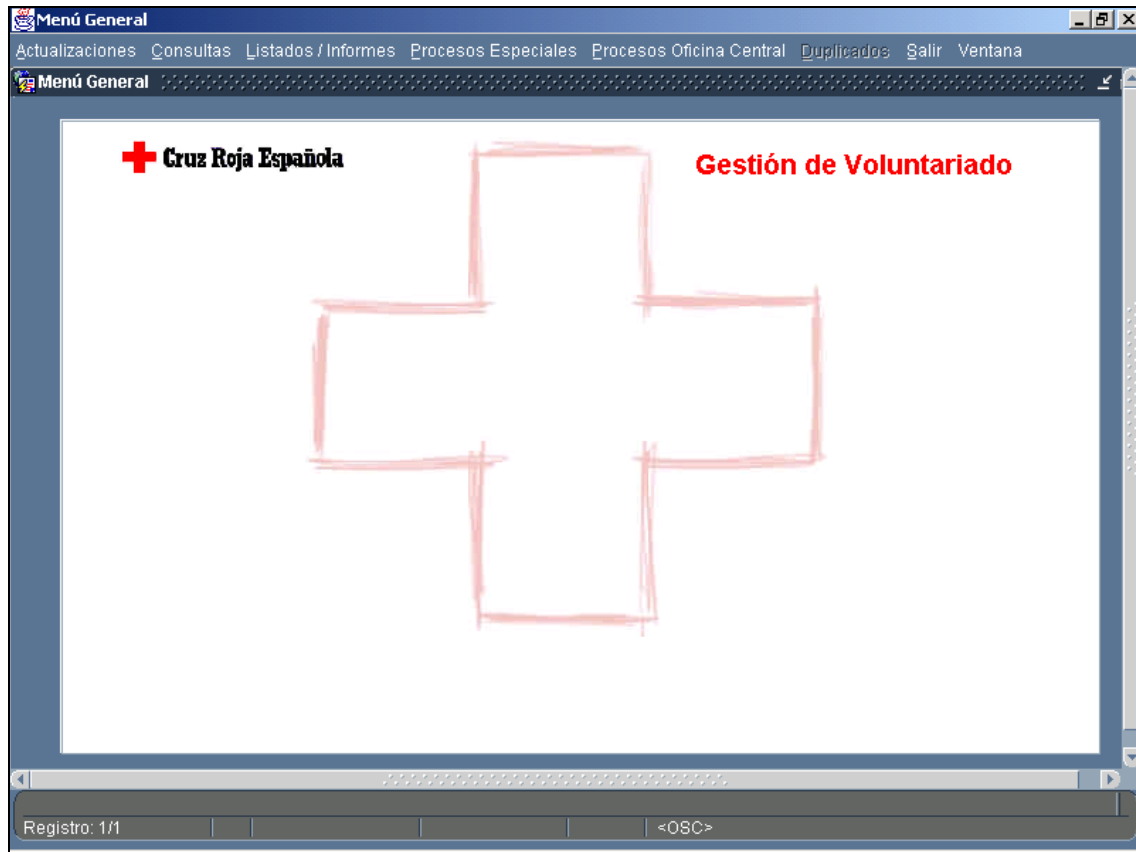
View of the Intranet of the Spanish Red Cross, from where the application can be accessed.

Now we examine the application of management of volunteering of the Spanish Red Cross which was put into operation in its present form in 2001.

One of the keystones of any data-base is its up-dating. This is of particular importance because it determines in great part the knowledge provided by the structure of the volunteer sector of the Spanish Red Cross to the organization when decisions must be made without delay.

The system and the method of introducing data must therefore be protocolized, and this has been done in the following way:

1. The task of up-dating to include information of the volunteers is assigned to the Provincial Committees of the Spanish Red Cross.
2. The Provincial Committees are free to pass this responsibility at their discretion to the Local branches of their area.
3. The Central Office conducts a monthly assessment of the success of this up-dating by each Provincial Committee, and if necessary it demands a speeding up of this task.



Initial screen of the volunteer management application

3. Data to be incorporated into the application of volunteer management

The application of management allows the incorporation of the following elements :-

- 1 Personal data. This covers not only the data of the volunteers but also of those requesting information.
- 2 Data of the process of management of volunteering. Information about certain incidents in the service life of a volunteer may be introduced.
- 3 Data of the activity. Managers of an activity introduce information about the volunteer posts in each Local Assembly of the Spanish Red Cross.

The information incorporated provides a data-base of 160,189 volunteers, which allows us to adopt data-mining for certain purposes. And the availability of information not only of the persons but also of the activity means that the application of volunteer management becomes a means of ensuring more efficiency in the activities.

3.1. General data of the petitioner/volunteer

The following items may be included as personal information referring to the petitioner or the volunteer:

- 1 Name
- 2 Date of birth.
- 3 Sex.
- 4 Address, phone number and e-mail address.
- 5 Identification documents to help identify the volunteer in the data-base.
- 6 Level of education.
- 7 Profession.
- 8 Languages, driving license.
- 9 Local Assembly to which he belongs.
- 10 Any change of address to another region.

The two categories of petitioner and volunteer are intended to include, alongside the volunteers, those who have asked for information with a view to joining the Spanish Red Cross. The idea is to have the fullest data of the person's contact with the organization.

Datos Generales
pers0010 Ventana

Personas

Apellidos: COBERTERA HIDALGO Código: 1.311.111
Nombre: FERRAN

D.GENE... JUVEN... SOLICIT... VOLLUN... RESPO... ALUMN... FORMA... TÉCNIC... COLAB... DELEG... OBJET... CUPO

Sexo: HOMBRE
Fecha Nacimiento: 17/02/1970 (DDMMYYYY)
Centro: Ofic. Territorial Gracia-Barcelona
Grupo Sanguíneo:
Estado Civil:
N° Hijos:
Idioma: CATALÁN
Pais Nacimiento: ESPAÑA
Empresa trabaja:
Situación Laboral: Trabajador en Activo
N° Revistas:
Reside en España: ☒
Certificado Hacienda: ☒
Recibir Correo: ☒
Recibir Mail: ☒
Facilita NIF/DNI: ☒
Lista Robinson: ☐
ONG'S CON LAS QUE COLABORA
Amnistía Internacional

Registro: 1/1 <OSC>

Screen where the personal data are incorporated

3.2. Data of the process of volunteer management

Other data may be included, such as the communications addressed to the volunteer, the training courses he has followed, and the way he made contact with the Spanish Red Cross.

This section would include non-personal information, from his first contact with the organization and the events of his period as a volunteer, until his leaving. The main events to be recorded are as follows:

- 1 The date on which a person first seeks information, in whatever way, about volunteering in the Spanish Red Cross.
- 2 Date of the first interview or informative session with the organization.
- 3 Date of the first institutional Basic Training.
- 4 Step from petitioner to volunteer. The person interviewed must state explicitly his wish to become a volunteer and his incorporation must be handled by the volunteer management which enters his data automatically into those of a volunteer.
- 5 Date of incorporation as a volunteer in the Spanish Red Cross.
- 6 Degree of availability of the volunteer.
- 7 The campaign, ways and means, or channel by which the person made contact with the organization.
- 8 Date of the specific training for the eventual activity and the nature of the training course.
- 9 Date of the signing of the undertaking of voluntary service.
- 10 Any possible sanctions imposed on the volunteer, which would prevent his carrying out his activity.
- 11 Date and motives for leaving.

The screenshot shows a software interface for managing volunteer data. The main window is titled 'Datos Generales' and contains a sub-window 'Personas'. The 'VOLUN...' tab is selected, showing various fields for recording volunteer information. The fields are organized into sections: personal data (Apellidos, Nombre, Código), contact and training dates (Fecha Solicitud Alta, Fecha Llamada, Fecha Entrevista, Hora Entrevista, Fecha Formación Básica), and other details (Tipo Formación Básica, Dispone de Vehículo, Estado, Solicita Baja, Campaña, Medio, Canal, Conocimientos, Observaciones). A toolbar on the right side of the form contains icons for different actions. At the bottom of the form, there are three buttons: 'Tabla de Entrevistas', 'Plazas', and 'Incorporar a Voluntariado'.

Screen where the main dates of the practitioner are incorporated

Screen where the main dates of the practitioner are incorporated

3.3. Data of the activity

This section of the application of management deals with the activities undertaken by the volunteer, which will be recorded by the Local branches of the Spanish Red Cross from the local data-base:

- 1 Name of the activity.
- 2 Number of volunteer posts assigned to this activity.
- 3 Number of volunteer posts already occupied in the activity.

The following information will be recorded:

- 1 The name of the activity undertaken by the volunteer.
- 2 Date of the beginning of the undertaking to perform this activity.
- 3 Closing date of the undertaking.
- 4 Days and hours to be devoted by the volunteer to this activity.
- 5 Actual number of days and hours devoted by the volunteer to this activity.

Gestión de Voluntarios

RRHH0030 Ventana

ACTIVIDADES

Actividades del Voluntario

Voluntario: 2185979 HERVERA, MENE, OBDULIA MARIA

ACTIVIDAD	F.INICIO	F.FIN	OBSERVACIONES
AYUDA URGENTE	03/10/2005		
FORMACIÓN EN SOCORROS	03/10/2005		

DIA	H. INICIO	H. FIN	OBSERVACIONES

Listado de Actividades

Registro: 1/2 <OSC>

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Gestión de RECURSOS". The address bar displays "RRHH0090 Ventana". Below the address bar is a toolbar with various icons for file operations and navigation. The main content area has a title bar "Disponibilidad Voluntarios". Inside, there's a section titled "Disponibilidad del Voluntario". It contains a form with the following fields:

- "Codigo del Voluntario:" followed by a text box containing "2185979".
- A button labeled "Listado de Disponibilidad" to the right.
- "Apellidos, Nombre:" followed by a text box containing "HERVERA MENE, OBDULIA MARIA".

Below these fields is a table with four columns: "DIAS", "TURNO", "H.INICIO H. FIN", and "OBSERVACIONES". The "DIAS" column has a dropdown menu showing "Lunes". The "TURNO" column has a dropdown menu showing "Mañana". The "H.INICIO H. FIN" column has two sub-columns for start and end times. The "OBSERVACIONES" column is for notes. There are 10 rows in the table, all currently empty except for the headers. A scrollbar is visible on the right side of the table.

Registro: 1/1

<OSC>

4. Possibilities offered by the application of the system of management

Some interesting points in the wide field of possibilities provided by the application of the system are:

- 1 It gives us the right regulation of volunteering.
- 2 It provides regulation of volunteer activity.
- 3 It enables us to set up ratios of efficiency in the management of volunteering in the Local branches.
- 4 And ratios of efficiency in the recruiting campaigns of the Spanish Red Cross.
- 5 It gives a profile of the volunteering in the organization.

In fact, here we have the main raison d'être of the data-base of the human resources of the Spanish Red Cross, and the reason for its introduction: it enables us to come to decisions about important questions of management of the volunteer sector and of its activities. The data become practical knowledge for the organization.

5. Some examples of management of volunteering and its activity

Attention is drawn to certain time limits set up in the process of management.

For example, the organization stated a maximum of 30 days between the signing by a volunteer of his incorporation and his Basic Training course. With the application of the management system, we now have lists of persons who had not received this training within the stipulated time. In fact we can detect the lapses between the events of the management process and any possible divergences in each region.

The number of petitioners in each region.

By petitioners we mean persons who have contacted the organization, whether by phone, by internet, by a visit or by any other means, for information about the Spanish Red Cross, and to whom a reply must be given by the means they prefer. The system provides the number of these persons and their means of contact and their incorporation can be speeded up.

Checklist of interviews.

This option provides a control of the interviews with persons seeking information. The interview is one of the important events in the process of management as it is one of the first opportunities for the Spanish Red Cross to pass on information to those interested in becoming Red Cross volunteers. Each Local Assembly organizes a group of volunteers prepared to conduct these interviews, assisted by the checklist.

Campaigns and channels of information.

With the application of the system a check can be made of all the recruiting programmes. Information can be gathered about the response to a given campaign and this can be related to the amount invested in the programme.

The screenshot shows a web application window titled 'RRHH' with a sub-header 'RRHH0080 - Ventana'. The main content area is titled 'LISTADO DE RECURSOS HUMANOS'. Inside this area, there is a form titled 'LISTADO DE R.R.H.H. POR TIPO DE PERSONA Y CAMPAÑA CAPTACIÓN'. The form includes several input fields and checkboxes: 'JERARQUÍA EN CENTRO' (checkbox), 'CENTRO' (text field), 'TIPO DE PERSONA' (dropdown menu), 'CAMPAÑA' (text field), 'FECHA INGRESO DESDE' (text field), 'FECHA INGRESO HASTA' (text field), 'FECHA NACIMIENTO DESDE' (text field), 'FECHA NACIMIENTO HASTA' (text field), 'INCLUIR BAJAS EN EL PERÍODO' (checkbox), 'TIPO VOLUNTARIO' (dropdown menu), and 'LISTADO INCLUYENDO CORREO ELECTRÓNICO' (checkbox). The bottom of the window shows a status bar with 'Registro: 1/1' and '<OSC>'.

Drafting of lists for management of activities.

Lists can be drawn up for different requirements such as:

- 1 The search for volunteers in a certain region.
- 2 Lists and reports of volunteers and of the state of their management in a given area.
- 3 Lists by area, programme and main project assigned to each volunteer.
- 4 The number of volunteers per area and by age.
- 5 Details of volunteers according to the programme /level of education / profession.
- 6 Volunteers in terms of the activities and locality.
- 7 Activities, and the volunteers assigned to them.
- 8 Availability of volunteers per day and per period of duty.

These lists help the directors of an activity to adjust the number of volunteers to the activity in course in a given region, balancing the offer with the demand. Close coordination is required between the managers of the volunteers and those of the activity, so it is essential to keep the two data-bases bang up-to-date.

Cards for volunteers.

This section provides the following:

- 1 Bulk printing of cards.
- 2 Printing of individual cards.
- 3 Cards for Red Cross youth.
- 4 Tags for volunteers and petitioners.

Certificate of commitment to voluntary service.

In view of the activity of a volunteer, a confirmation can be issued automatically of the work of any volunteer of the Spanish Red Cross.

Inactivity of a volunteer.

Information can be obtained of possible periods of inactivity of a volunteer to discover the reason for this abstention

Contacting volunteers with special abilities.

For example, if the Department of International Cooperation of the Central Office of the Spanish Red Cross has to form psycho-social teams for immediate response to emergencies, it coordinates with the Training Department in the preparation of a special course for this purpose. Then from the data-base it is easy to find volunteers of the Spanish Red Cross who have the qualities required – (age, training in psychology, place of residence, etc.) – so that they may be invited to attend the course.

If some area of the Spanish Red Cross intends to organize language teaching for foreigners and considers that the teachers should know the language of the students of the course, it is possible to use the data-base to find these teachers.

Rapid contact with volunteers.

Using the personal details in the data-base, particularly the e-mail address and the mobile phone number, communication can be made almost automatically with the volunteers.

Profile of the volunteers.

The data available to volunteer management in March 2006 showed the average features of the volunteers:

- 1 Man aged between 20 and 30, student.
- 2 The most usual professions of our volunteers : students, male nurses and drivers.
- 3 The greatest number are found in social work and in emergency services.
- 4 Two thirds of those in social services are women.
- 5 Two thirds of those in first aid and emergencies are men.
- 6 The average undertaking in an activity is of 7.88 hours per week (women 9.35 hours and men 5.40).
- 7 In the programme of social service, the average undertaking is of 3.6 hours per week, and in First Aid and Emergencies 10 hours per week.
- 8 Volunteers remain in the organization for an average of 6 years 5 months.

6. The future

One of the keynotes of management is the intensive use of the new technologies together with the earlier forms of communication, and the Spanish Red Cross intends to raise the efficiency of certain processes of management.

The system of digital telephones in combination with the data-base will provide automatic telephone contact with sectors of age, place of residence, etc. The benefits will be:

- 1 A quicker insertion of the volunteer into given activities.
- 2 Profiles of the volunteers who leave the organization.
- 3 Statistics of the degree of contentment of the volunteers. This would assist in decision-making in matters that would maintain their morale.
- 4 A study of the reasons why volunteers decide at some point to leave the organization. As in the preceding remark, this would help managers to make decisions in questions that depend on the Spanish Red Cross.