

The role of  
Youth  
Commission

## *Update from the Youth Commission*



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# ***Constitution***

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The Youth Commission shall be composed of a Chair and eight members.

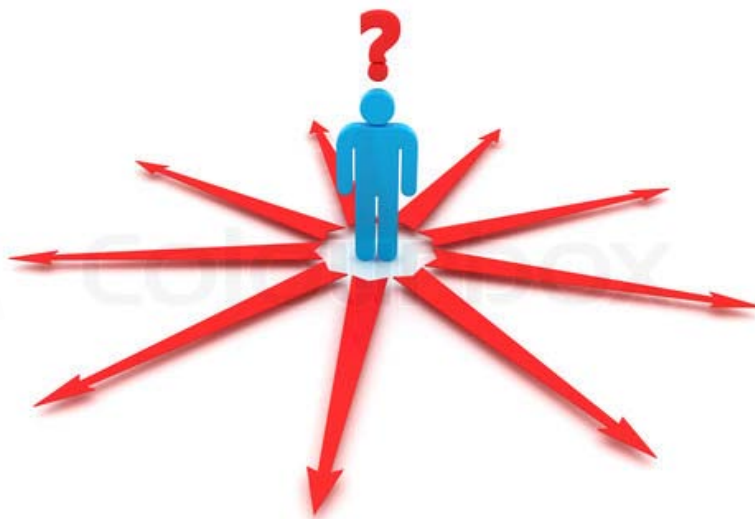
The functions of the Youth Commission shall be:

- a) to **give advice on all matters concerning youth** and youth-related activities throughout the IFRC;
- b) to **promote and assess the implementation of the youth policy**, as well as to consider and study as requested by the Board matters of policy development in the area of youth;
- c) to **review and suggest revisions of the youth policy**;
- d) to **seek youth opinions on the implementation of relevant IFRC policies** and to ensure that those opinions are communicated to the Statutory Bodies of the Movement;
- e) to **advise the Secretary General in the implementation of the youth policy** and all other policies and strategies as they relate to youth within the Movement; and
- f) to **report to the General Assembly and Governing Board on its general activities** on a regular basis.

The role of  
Youth  
Commission

# *The Youth Commission Machine*

**Saving lives,  
changing minds.**



 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Youth Policy



[www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)  
**Saving lives, changing minds.**

 International Federation  
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# ***Solferino Youth Declaration***

- ▶ Recognize youth as agents of change
- ▶ Encourage the unique abilities and skills that young people alone can bring to the table, such as intercultural communication and innovative use of technology
- ▶ Include youth in decision-making and planning processes at all levels
- ▶ Push for youth to have a stronger role in programme development and implementation to empower their communities
- ▶ Increase focus on formal and non-formal peer education as a primary method of prevention.

## The role of Youth Commission



### International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

#### Youth Policy

Adopted by the 18th session of the General Assembly held on 23-25 November 2011 in Geneva. To be reviewed by the 21st session of the General Assembly in 2017.

#### Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to inform, guide and enhance the participation of young people in the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation). Strategy 2020 challenges the International Federation to "do more, do better, and reach further" in saving lives and changing minds. It asks for a special focus on young people not only for today but also for the future, recognising their particular role in building and sustaining communities that are based on respect and solidarity.

Strategy 2020 recognises that building-up and sustaining strong National Societies requires that they attract and retain more young people. It urges that young people be educated, enabled and empowered to be active in leading and participating in voluntary activities and in the governance, management, and services of National Societies.

#### Defining youth

The terms "youth" and "young people" in the International Federation cover people in the age range of 5 to 30 years. This includes children (5 to 11 years old), adolescents (12 to 17 years old), and young adults (18 to 30 years old). National Societies are guided reasonably by this range in adopting their own definitions according to local laws, social norms and cultural contexts.

#### Valuing the role of young people

National Societies recognise and value the important role and contribution of young people in addressing humanitarian and development challenges. Their multiple roles include being innovators, early adopters of communication, social media, and other technologies, inter-cultural ambassadors, peer-to-peer facilitators, community mobilisers, agents of behaviour change, and advocates for vulnerable people. National Societies recognise the leadership role of young people in tackling contemporary and emerging issues.

Young people bring much needed skills and capacities when working alongside older people in a spirit of mutual respect. This is acknowledged as being crucial to the inter-generational transfer of experience that is vital to both progress and stability in society.

#### Strengthening the contribution of young people

National Societies educate young people in the humanitarian values and Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and encourage them to acquire the practical skills needed to live, work, and relate to others accordingly. Adolescents and young adults in National Societies are provided with the opportunity to be engaged as active members and volunteers and, in the context of prevailing national employment laws, as remunerated staff.

Young people are involved in all the activities of their National Society, taking into account relevant age-specific requirements of needed skills and experience, safety and well-being. They are encouraged to be fully involved in the planning, design, delivery, and review of Red Cross Red Crescent services to which they contribute or from which they benefit. National Societies provide their young volunteers and in particular the youth leaders with the opportunity to participate in decision making processes not only at the national but also at the international level.

Young people are fully included in the governance and management of their National Societies at headquarters and branch levels. They may be organised through integrated or specific youth structures according to the institutional context that best optimises their contribution in the National Society.

#### Skills and Values based education pledge (proposed at the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent)

For the years 2012-2015, we hereby pledge:

The Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies, governments, the International Olympic Committee and other actors are committed to the promotion of a culture of non-violence and peace through nurturing humanitarian and Olympic values, developing interpersonal skills to interact constructively and live peacefully together.

With a view to building respect for diversity, nonviolence and social cohesion, we emphasise the importance of values and skills-based (formal and non-formal) education, cultural awareness programmes, and the use of sports, arts and other creative methodologies (hereafter "non-cognitive") reaching out to children, from the earliest age possible, youth and the community at large.

We pledge to:

- Enhance partnerships and collaboration through non-cognitive activities with a view to reaching out to all sectors and people of all ages of society.
- Promote skills and values based formal education, including its institutionalisation at the national level.
- Promote physical education, healthy lifestyles and avenues for voluntary service as part of the formal school curriculum, in particular at the primary and secondary level.
- Engage or increase engagement in non-formal education, transmitting values and skills based education through school or after school interventions.
- Promote access for children and youth to community-based activities such as sports, arts, music and theatre which foster dialogue, mutual understanding and non-violence
- Support and promote initiatives empowering youth to take up a leadership role in the promotion of a culture of nonviolence and peace, such as the Olympic Truce, the IFRC YABC<sup>1</sup> and other youth-led initiatives.

#### Proposed evaluation criteria (in 2015):

- ➔ Increase in the # of countries having institutionalised values and skills based education, including at primary level
- ➔ Increase in the # of Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies engaging in non-formal education
- ➔ Increase in youth engagement in voluntary service through sports, arts, theatre, music, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change



## ***Global youth consultation***

- 109 answers to survey, 21 interviews
- 104 National Societies + some networks / others
- 72 National Societies signed the Youth pledge 129 (IC 2007)
- 73 National Societies have a youth policy (if we combine the answers with those received in consultation 2005-2007, we can see that at least 116 National Societies have a youth policy or similar commitment to youth engagement)
- 58% have a youth member in Governing Board
- Solferino World Youth Meeting strengthened youth space
- Youth take part in different actions and contribute to basic service delivery
- Regional networks are found to be important

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# ***Interviews***

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## Trends in answers

- Global improvement in the space given to youth
- To reach youth you need youth
- Theory doesn't always become reality

## Youth add value

- Sustainability
- More volunteers
- Innovative approaches
- Motivation and dynamism
- Better outreach to beneficiaries

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## ***Lessons to be learned***

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### Best ways to encourage youth

- Recognition
- Ownership (genuine responsibility)
- Training
- International participation
- Formal commitments

## ***Messages from the previous Youth Commission***

- Strengthen youth networks. Mobilise funds to assist the networks
- Follow-up dialogue and cooperation with ICRC
- Focus on implementation of youth policy and a follow-up of an evaluation of the implementation
- Youth participation at statutory meetings should be a priority
- Strengthen the advocacy role of the Youth Commission using the Solferino Declaration
- Focus on intergenerational dialogue
- Call for action on the things that have been achieved. Efforts should be focused on the action through innovation and leadership.
- Not to lose sight of trending and evolving issues such as migration, violence, climate change and the overlapping consequences
- Continue to focus on youth leadership at the global, regional and national levels. Increase youth contribution to programme planning initiatives at the IFRC level and to also build the capacity of the volunteers.

## ***So... What will be on the agenda for the next two years?***

- Youth building resilience (SA1)
- Promoting healthy lifestyle (SA2)
- Respect for diversity (SA3)
  
- Implementing the youth policy (EA1)
- Strengthening youth leadership (EA1)
- Strengthening youth networks (EA1)
- Humanitarian diplomacy focusing on youth audiences (EA2)
- Resource mobilization (EA2)
- Strong youth representation (EA2)

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## ***Youth Commission work plan 2012 - 2013***

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### **Priorities:**

A direct link to Strategy 2020:

The work plan places a special focus on Strategy 2020's enabling action 1, Build strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The key priorities are:

- Implementing the youth policy
- Strengthening regional youth networks
- Strengthening youth leadership

# ***Youth Commission work plan 2012 - 2013***

## **Overall direction:**

- The Youth Commission gives special attention to **regional youth networks** in empowering youth and ensuring open information and knowledge sharing.
- It aims to engage youth at all levels by fostering partnerships and close cooperation with internal Movement actors as well as external partners who share the same values and ambitions

## Work plan – strategic aims

Priorities	Activities
<b>Strategic aim 1 - Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises</b>  Youth building resilience, key areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Climate change</li> <li>- Disaster preparedness and management</li> <li>- Psychosocial support</li> </ul>	Cooperation and contribution to the work of the Advisory Bodies and other relevant International Federation bodies  Promotion of peer and non-cognitive approaches in service delivery throughout the Movement  Cooperation with various Secretariat departments in furthering the focus areas and contribution to future planning  Establishing and promoting partnerships with external and internal Movement actors
<b>Strategic aim 2 - Enable healthy and safe living</b>  - Promoting healthy lifestyle, key areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Youth and sports</li> <li>- Healthy lifestyle (including prevention of non-communicable diseases)</li> <li>- HIV/AIDS prevention</li> </ul>	
<b>Strategic aim 3 - Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace</b>  Respect for diversity, key areas of focus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Intergenerational dialogue</li> <li>- Intercultural dialogue</li> <li>- Conflict resolution and violence prevention</li> <li>- Bring extremism/terrorism to global RCRC agenda</li> </ul>	

# Work plan – enabling actions

Priorities	Activities
<b>Enabling action 1 - Build strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies</b>	
<b>Implementing the youth policy</b>	<p>Youth policy implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting National Society adoption and adaptation of the youth policy</li> <li>Creating an International Federation Youth Strategy</li> <li>Organizing the Global Youth Conference in Vienna with the Austrian Red Cross to further youth engagement and gather input on the youth strategy</li> </ul>
	<p>Fostering a culture of volunteerism through the three pillars of the Volunteering Development Strategy: Protection, Recognition and Promotion of volunteers and volunteering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognizing youth volunteers via “thank you” campaigns and other initiatives</li> <li>Sharing good practices in retaining youth volunteers as older adults</li> <li>Focusing on children in fostering a culture of volunteerism</li> <li>Advocating for the promotion of volunteer insurance</li> </ul>
	<p>Understanding the situation of youth in the Movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that the Federation-wide reporting system includes the age of volunteers</li> <li>Encouraging evidence-based research on the social value of youth volunteers</li> <li>Enforcing the spirit of Pledge 129 (Youth Pledge) by creating a clear understanding of what is meant by youth engagement in the Red Cross Red Crescent</li> </ul>

## Work plan – enabling actions

Priorities	Activities
<b>Enabling action 1 - Build strong National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies</b>	
<b>Strengthening youth leadership</b>	Creating a youth leadership training and guidance to ensure basic skills for youth leaders globally, as well as to maximize potential of youth as leaders
	Encouraging regional cooperation in training peer educators to empower youth
	Increasing dialogue at regional levels to promote the role of youth in governance and management at the global, regional, national and local levels
<b>Strengthening youth networks</b>	Fostering good and open communication between the regional youth networks and the Youth Commission
	Encouraging and supporting the youth networks in their short and long-term planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting efforts
	Engaging the networks in global research on youth engagement through case studies and inspirational practices

## ***Work plan – enabling actions***

Priorities	Activities
<b>Enabling action 2 – Pursue humanitarian diplomacy to prevent and reduce vulnerability in a globalized world</b>	
<b>Humanitarian diplomacy focusing on youth audiences</b>	Ongoing cooperation with relevant Secretariat departments to ensure youth voices in the planning process
	Supporting and taking part in the process of ensuring humanitarian education for all
	Promoting the skills and values-based education pledge introduced by the International Olympic Committee and the International Federation
	Identifying avenues for youth to contribute to International Humanitarian Law and Disaster Law
<b>Resource mobilization</b>	Encouraging youth to take a leadership role in resource mobilization, especially in fundraising for youth-related initiatives

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## *Any thoughts?*

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# ***Global Youth Conference***



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***We are here for you guys! 😊***

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It's time for action!