

# IFRC Y.E.S.



IFRC Youth Engagement Strategy



# Vision of youth engagement 2020

*Young people will be living the RCRC Fundamental principles and Humanitarian values and they will excel as key RCRC actors in both alleviating human suffering and advocating for equality.*

*In the RCRC, young people will be treated with respect and as equal partners to adults. Intergenerational cooperation throughout the RCRC will result in humanitarian actions and extended partnerships that will increase the number of safe and resilient communities around the world.*

## Vision of youth engagement 2020 (cont.)

*Young people, including those outside of the mainstream, will have opportunities responsive to their needs, potential, ambitions, and dreams and will be able to evolve personally, and secure livelihoods for themselves and their families.*

*Young people, knowledgeable and empowered to stay healthy, will assume roles as responsible members of their communities, will care for and engage with those in the shadows and those affected by the “Solferinos of the day”, being motivated by free will, as opposed to a desire for material or financial gain or by external social, economic, and political pressure.*

*Through, recognition of youth contributions and creation of space for youth by adults, young people will develop ownership for nurturing their communities and will favour ethical decisions that lead to collective community advancement over decisions of individual gain.*

# PRINCIPLES OF THE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN RCRC

Youth engagement is intrinsic to building strong **National Societies**.

**RC RC volunteerism** is central to youth engagement and is an effective and meaningful way of **youth civic engagement**.

**Education, Empowerment, and Enabling environments** for young people are vital for youth engagement.

Youth are **agents of change** addressing global humanitarian challenges pertinent to **local communities**.

Youth in **decision-making** at all levels of management, governance, and service delivery are crucial for intergenerational transfer of experiences and **continuity**.

# “YOUTH-LED AND NS-OWNED” CONCEPT

Young people are key actors in building-up and sustaining strong National Societies and thus equal partners of adults.

Youth is not a homogenous group - intra-group dynamics, gender, age, and diversity are key factors to access resources and equal opportunities.

Working with RCRC does not inherently benefit only young people, but also the communities they reside in.

Youth in RCRC is a threshold for inclusion and engagement of other vulnerable and marginalized groups.

**LACK of SUPPORT to and INVESTMENTS in youth development ARE SHORT-SIGHTED.**

# MAGICAL NUMBER OF THE Y.E.S.

3

- *3 Age groups*
  - ✓ *Children (5-11)*
  - ✓ *Adolescents (12-17)*
  - ✓ *Young adults (18-30)*
- *3 Es concept*
- *3 Pathways*

# THE IFRC Y.E.S. IS ...

## **MENU of the IFRC Youth Policy's "HOWs"**

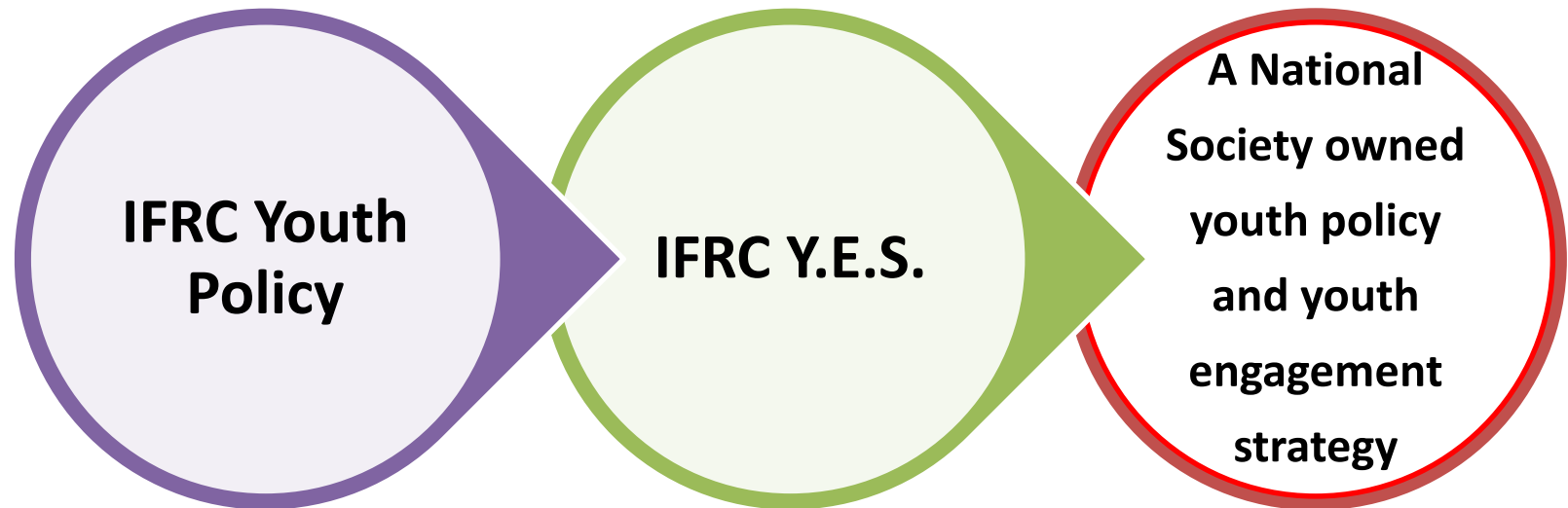
- Select from the list of Strategic directions & Recommended Actions.
- Regional and NSs' specific adaptations are encouraged.

## **Unifying global strategic framework for youth engagement in RCRC**

- 3Es concept
- Key Youth definitions
- Roles and commitments
- Glossary

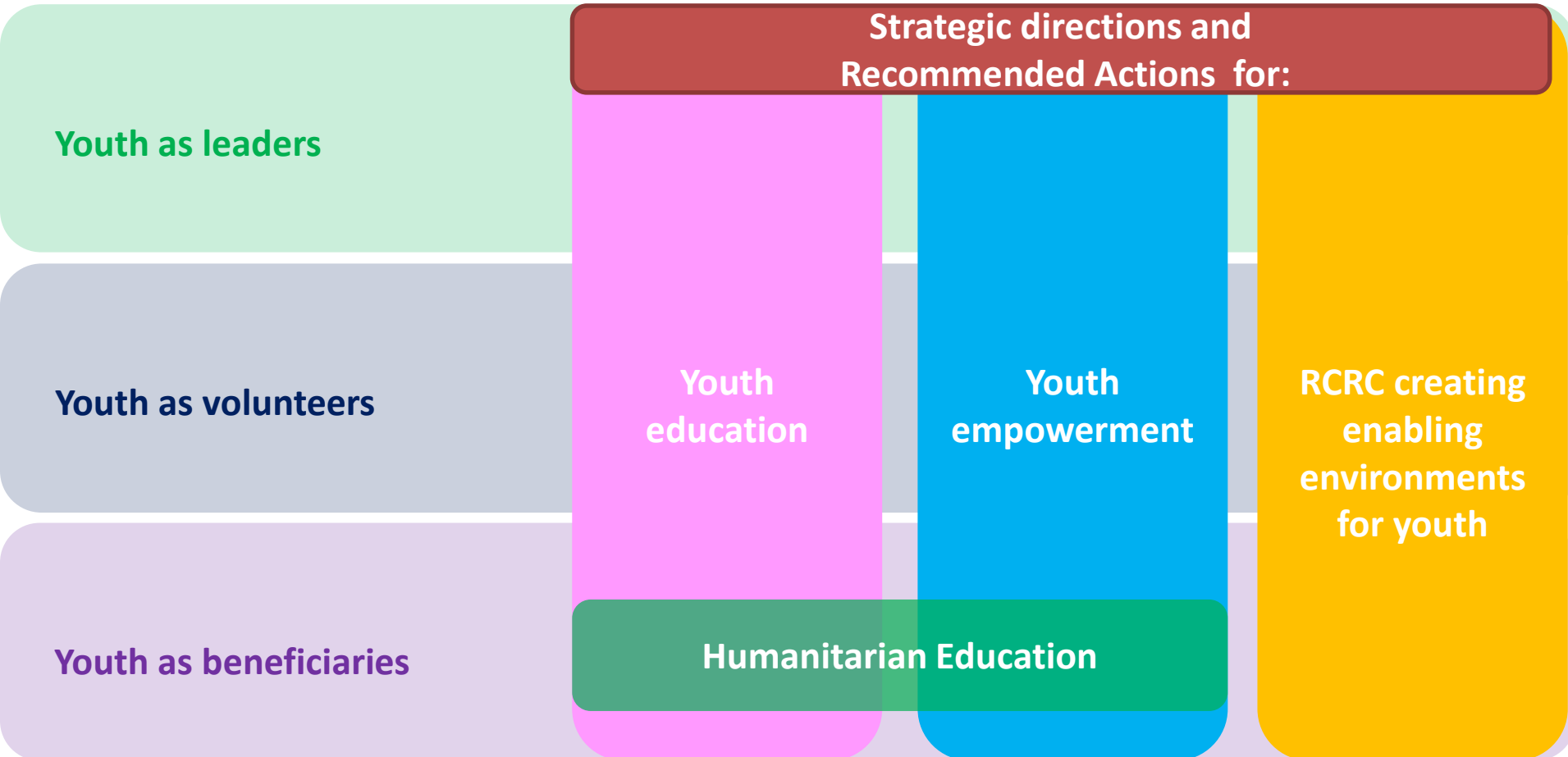


# THE IFRC POLICY AND THE IFRC Y.E.S. ARE *for* NSs



# IFRC Y.E.S.

*“STRONG YOUTH FOR STRONG RCRC AND SAFE AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES”*



IFRC Youth policy (2011)

IFRC Strategy 2020  
Solferino Youth Declaration (2009)

**CORNER STONES OF RESILIENCE IN THE Y.E.S.**  
*“WELL-EQUIPPED, EMPOWERED, HEALTHY AND ENABLED  
CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS, AND YOUNG ADULTS AS AGENTS OF CHANGE”*



Youth  
education

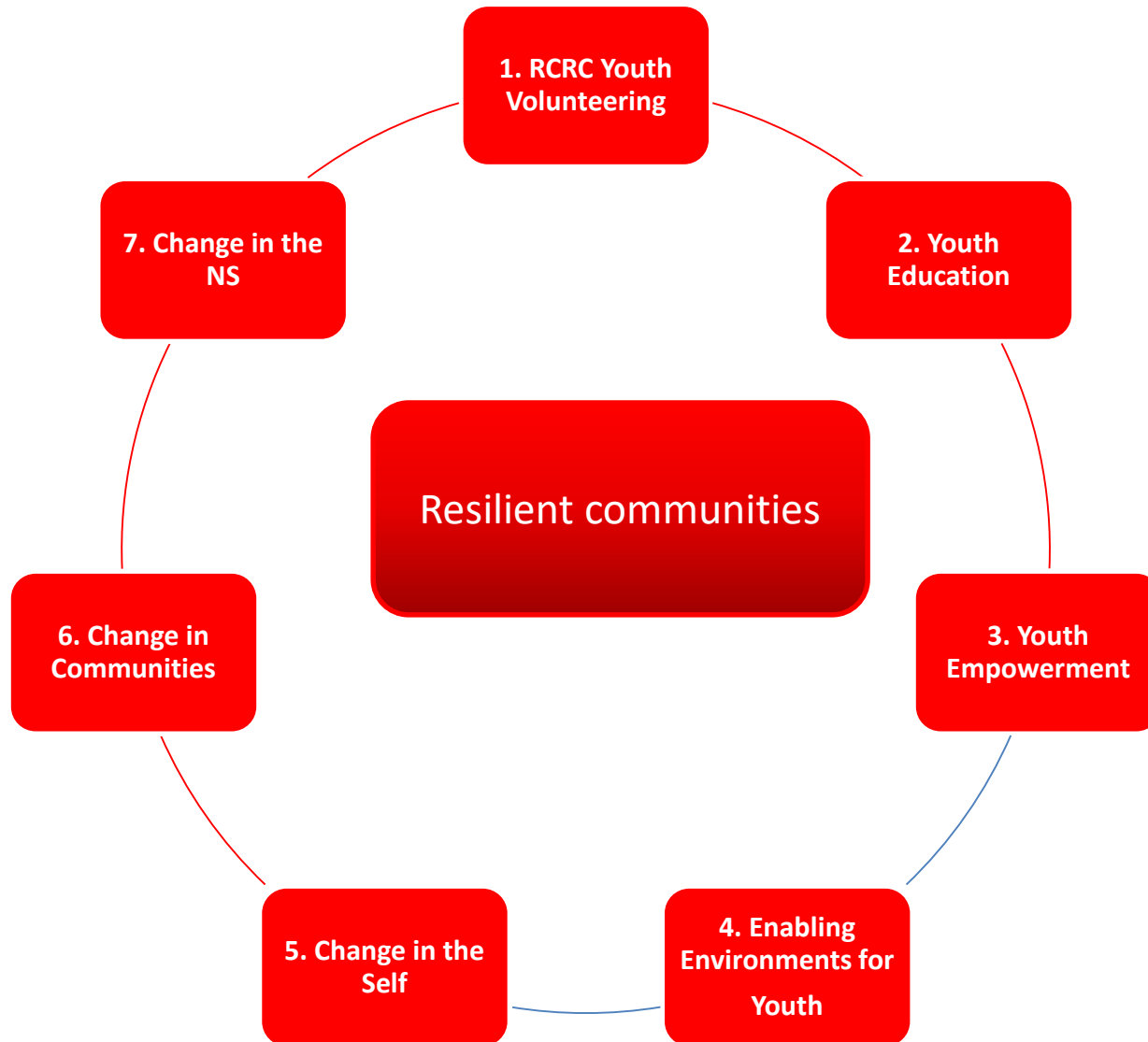
Youth  
empowerment

RCRC creating  
enabling  
environments  
for youth

Humanitarian Education



# The Y.E.S. Cycle



## Section: Youth as leaders

### Strategic direction # 1: Ensuring youth participation in decision-making at all levels of management, governance, and service delivery

#### Recommended actions:

- 1 Create environments that recognise and utilise the leadership skills of all individuals, including young people.
- 2 Increase membership of youth within the National Society and create youth-led structures that allow elected youth leaders to represent their peers and voice youth issues throughout the National Society governance structures.
- 3 Establish mechanisms to ensure gender equality in decision-making bodies, taking into account the diversity of volunteers and communities served.
- 4 Actively consult National Society youth leaders to add value in all National Society activities.
- 5 Create and promote environments where youth leaders are deeply connected to a range of youth communities.

### Strategic direction # 2: Strengthening the leading role of young people in connecting with vulnerable and marginalized people, advocating for and with them, and identifying and tackling emerging issues together.

#### Recommended actions:

- 1 Provide relevant educational opportunities and tools for young people so that they embrace humanitarian values, learn how to effectively advocate, and acquire inter-personal and life skills to serve diverse communities.
- 2 Ensure that young volunteers can mutually engage and support their peers in marginalized communities.

### Strategic direction # 3: Prioritizing and investing in personal and professional development for current and future leadership roles of young people.

#### Recommended actions:

- 1 Provide relevant educational opportunities to prepare young people to assume and advance in leadership roles and responsibilities.
- 2 Provide opportunities for youth leaders to learn from the experiences of senior leadership and facilitate a smooth transition between current and future leaders.
- 3 Establish formal and informal mentoring systems as a tool to enhance youth development in the National Society and introduce mechanisms which identify and capitalise on the talents of young people engaged with RCRC.
- 4 Establish specific communication platforms (e.g. discussion meetings, etc.) so that staff and volunteers of all ages can take an interest in and act upon youth opinions in the National Society.

### Strategic direction # 4: Strengthening the leading role of young people in opening the doors to new partnerships

#### Recommended actions:

- 1 Support participation of RCRC youth leaders in networking platforms (national youth alliances, youth council, etc.) specifically created for addressing matters of youth development and action.
- 2 Nominate and support youth leaders to represent the National Society in various networks, e.g. national networks of technical experts, thematic networking initiatives, Regional RCRC Youth Networks, including those with external organisations and partners.

## Section: Youth as volunteers

### Strategic direction #1: Increasing meaningful engagement of young volunteers

#### Recommended actions:

- 1 Integrate humanitarian education in school curricula and non-formal education settings.
- 2 Offer a wide range of volunteering opportunities for children, adolescents, and young adults that will attract members of under-represented groups and reflect the make-up of the local community.
- 3 Complement traditional forms and ways of volunteering with innovative, non-traditional ways of youth volunteering, including shorter term participation, online volunteering and less formal forms of engagement.

### Strategic direction #2: Motivating and retaining young volunteers.

#### Recommended actions:

- 1 Recognise and support efforts of young volunteers to engage in programs and services delivered by the National Society in their community.
- 2 Adjust volunteer management systems to enhance capacity building and encourage leadership skills in young volunteers.
- 3 Provide coaching and other opportunities for skills development such as training and engagement in roles with increased responsibility and complexity that will result in furthering life skills and increase employability of RCRC young volunteers in the domestic and local labour markets.
- 4 Outline clear pathways and provide support for the smooth transition of children, adolescents, and young adults within the range of volunteering opportunities of the National Society; this would also encourage seamless transitioning of youth into volunteering as adults.

### Strategic direction #3: Guaranteeing the well-being, security, and safety of young volunteers throughout, and after their engagement in RCRC programmes and services

#### Recommended actions:

- 1 Provide young volunteers with the necessary information, training and resources to ensure that they are able to protect their physical health, mental well-being and personal property while engaged with RCRC voluntary programs and services.
- 2 Insure young volunteers through the IFRC Volunteer Accident Insurance or other local insurance.

### Strategic direction #4: Recognising young volunteers as contributors to innovation

#### Recommended actions:

- 1 Invest in the provision of education and skills development for young volunteers to excel in bringing innovative approaches to program design and service delivery.
- 2 Create opportunities for intergenerational dialogue and partnerships between young volunteers and adult volunteers in order to address humanitarian challenges through a combination of tested, traditional and new innovative approaches.
- 2 Create safe environments where young people can propose and pilot test innovative approaches to addressing needs of vulnerable people and the National Society while building on traditions, best practices, and lessons learnt.

### Strategic direction #5: Recognising and promoting the social value that young volunteers bring to development

#### Recommended actions:

- 1 Empower young volunteers to be ambassadors, through their peers, communities and the public, of the everyday humanitarian work they carry out.
- 2 Promote (internally and externally) inspiring practices, approaches, models, and examples provided by young volunteers who are addressing humanitarian needs in their communities.

## Section: Youth as beneficiaries

### Strategic direction #1: Promoting Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values to all young people as a means of changing minds, saving lives, and strengthening resilience

#### Recommended actions:

- 1 Establish RCRC Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values as the foundation for the individual's ethical behaviour.
- 2 Promote the Fundamental principles and humanitarian values as the foundation for RCRC advocacy on behalf of and with marginalized groups.
- 3 Incorporate non-formal methods and peer-to-peer approaches in the dissemination of the Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values within the National Society and its programmes in communities.
- 4 Incorporate the IFRC framework of strengthening resilience in all programmes targeting or working with young people.
- 5 Engage young beneficiaries as key advocates in changing minds and as agents of change in strengthening the resilience of their communities.

### Strategic direction#2: Strengthening personal capacities of young beneficiaries by putting special emphasis on their abilities and developmental needs

#### Recommended actions:

- 1 Provide training and educational opportunities for staff and volunteers to enhance their capacity to work with young people of all ages.
- 2 Integrate psycho-social support in all programmes with young people.
- 3 Integrate life skills training for young beneficiaries in all programmes where youth are engaged.
- 4 Promote personal competencies that children, adolescents, and young adults acquire through their engagement in RCRC programmes.
- 5 Include children, adolescents, and young adults in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all programmes they participate in.

### Strategic direction#3: Developing a culture of young beneficiaries taking action and giving back to their communities

#### Recommended actions:

- 1 Recognise young beneficiaries as key to RCRC actions and community development and include them as key stakeholders in service delivery bearing their specific needs in mind.
- 2 Apply mechanisms for peer-to-peer mentoring amongst young beneficiaries so that they become empowered and participate in decision-making processes.
- 3 Seek feedback from young beneficiaries on all aspects of National Society's program and service delivery.
- 4 Review internal procedures to ensure the participation of young beneficiaries in bodies that represent the National Society's beneficiaries.

### Strategic direction#4: Maintaining relevance and responsiveness of all RC/RC programmes and services to the needs of young beneficiaries and marginalized youth groups

#### Recommended actions:

- 1 Conduct vulnerability and capacity assessments with a specific focus on involving young people, especially in programmes and services targeting young beneficiaries.
- 2 Set mechanisms for self-assessment of the National Society's outreach to young beneficiaries.
- 3 Partner with external expert stakeholders to identify and address needs of vulnerable youth and marginalized youth groups.

# Youth as Leaders - IMPACT

Advocacy of National Societies for vulnerable and marginalized groups.

Creation of new partnerships for the benefit of programs and services of National Societies.

Personal and professional development opportunities of young people for assuming their current and future leadership roles within National Societies.

Youth engagement in decision-making process of National Societies at all levels.

# Youth as Volunteers - IMPACT

Motivation and retention of young people engaging with programs and services of National Societies.

Social value that young volunteers bring to development of local communities and National Societies.

Diversification of the volunteers base of National Societies better mirroring makeup of local communities.

Well-being, security, and safety of young volunteers being guaranteed by National Societies.

Innovation of programs and services of National Societies through implementation of youth-led initiatives.

# Youth as Beneficiaries - IMPACT

Relevance and responsiveness of RCRC programs and services to needs of young beneficiaries and marginalized and vulnerable youth.

Strengthening resilience of young beneficiaries while considering their abilities and developmental needs in project planning cycles of respective RCRC programs and services. .

Children, adolescents, and young adults considered three distinct groups participating in RCRC programs and services.

Nurturing of a culture of young beneficiaries taking actions and giving back to their communities.



# Key factors impacting the cycle



**Qs&As**

# STAY TUNED AND INFORMED



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

**FedNet**  
*sharing global knowledge*

[IFRC Y.E.S. page](#)



**Red Cross Red Crescent Youth**  
Community Page about International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Youth on the Move - around the world. Moving where? What are you(th) doing? Share it with us and let the world see how the youth volunteers make little moves everyday to do more, do better, and reach further.

22,069 Likes

About Photos

# Thank you for your attention

**For further information on youth engagement and development**

**Marcel Stefanik**

**Senior officer**

**Youth Action and Volunteering Development dpt.**

IFRC Secretariat

Tel.: +41 (0) 22 730 4222

E-mail: [stefanik.marcel@ifrc.org](mailto:stefanik.marcel@ifrc.org)

