

National Society: Implementation Plan

Florence Call for Action



Activities of the Swiss Red Cross In the field of Migration

1) Refugee reception centers

a) Activity

In spring 2016 the Swiss Red Cross was mandated by the Swiss State Secretariat for Migration to run ad hoc refugee reception centers in case of a growing number of arrivals. The Swiss Red Cross is responsible for these centers in three border cantons. In the course of implementing this mandate, the SRC headquarter is working closely with the SRC branches of the respective cantons, not only regarding preparation and contingency planning, but also with regard to the running of the centers. To be able to ensure sufficient staff, the SRC has created a first response and support pool out of SRC headquarter staff and is currently developing a concept for spontaneous volunteers (see Volunteering section). From October 2015 till January 2016 the SRC already run a similar reception center. However this was an urgency measure based on an ad hoc assignment by the Swiss authorities following a sudden increase of arrivals.

b) Target group

Migrants

c) Tools

Contingency planning for increasing arrivals of refugees; concept planning for spontaneous volunteers; creation of first response and support pool at headquarters for opening and running of refugee centers.

d) New / scaling up / intensity efforts

New, possible scaling up in the future.

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2) Training for working with traumatized children

a) Activity

In the context of the global humanitarian refugee crisis and due to the rising influx of asylum seekers, inquiries to the SRC Outpatient Clinic for the Victims of Torture and War from people seeking advice are increasing since October 2015. These inquiries include issues of dealing with traumatized minor refugees. Based on many years of experience and expertise in working with traumatized people with migration background, the SRC (Health & Integration Department) has designed a project concerning "Traumatized Minor Refugees", starting in fall 2016.

b) Target group

People seeking advice on topics concerning traumatized minor refugees (professionals as well as related persons). Among them are teachers, municipal health services, cantonal educational counselling centers, caretakers, school psychologists and school social workers, etc. Their inquiries include issues like information on services for affected children and young people, training and coaching on the subject, sensible leisure facilities for minor refugees, services provided by volunteers concerning personal assistance and support, e.g. tutoring and homework assistance for children.

c) Tools

The project's objectives include topics like networking and exchange of expertise and information, sensitization and training, as well as psychosocial support and therapy. In a first step, a central contact point for professionals as well as other related persons will be established, in which all subsequent measures will be initiated and coordinated.

d) New / scaling up / intensity efforts

New project, starting in fall 2016; 2 years pilot project until the end of 2017, subsequently integration of established services into the regular services of the SRC.

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In the field of Social Aspects

1) Water safety campaign

a) Activity

In 2015, the SLRG (one of the five rescue organizations of the SRC) counted 50 drowning accidents. Strikingly often, people with migration background and asylum seekers become victims of drowning accidents. Since they reflect knowledge from over 85 years of lifesaving, especially knowledge on water safety, the SLRG safety rules play an important role in prevention work, as this setting of behavioural recommendations can be life-saving. The SLRG has responded to the drowning accidents of asylum seekers and people with a migration background by translating the swimming safety rules into several languages. Swimming and river safety rules are now available in German, French, Tigrinya, Arabic, Tamil, English, Serbo-Croatian, Portuguese and Somali. The translations have been distributed to asylum centers by the State Secretariat for Migration and are available for download. Posters and brochures on water safety are available for download as well.

b) Target group

People with migration background, asylum seekers

c) Tools

Translation of existing Swimming safety rules & River safety rules

d) New / scaling up / intensity efforts

2) Sport events for community building

a) Activity

The project aims at bringing people from different social and cultural backgrounds together by organizing community-building activities. Sports and physical exercise serve as a common language that helps to overcome socio-cultural boundaries between people. Asylum seekers from various countries, young volunteers of the Swiss Red Cross regional branch Basel-Stadt or the Youth Red Cross Basel and members of various sports associations come together in the afternoon at different locations and are active together. The common activities help to overcome prejudice and ignorance and combat discrimination and xenophobia. In addition to these sports events, awareness-raising workshops for the association and youth group members are organized. Different workshops on xenophobia, respect and diversity accompany the encounters with asylum seekers from different social and cultural backgrounds and allow reflection on the experiences gained. The project thus creates platforms for encounter, awareness and participation.

b) Target group

People (especially children, adolescents and young adults), regardless of their origin. Participation is free of charge and on a voluntary basis. Second target group: socially competent, well-integrated, locally networked and, if necessary, professionally qualified volunteers from the ranks of the SRC BS (especially Youth Red Cross Basel) and project partners (sports associations, scouts etc.).

c) Tools

Organization of sports activities and events with asylum seekers, awareness-raising workshops

d) New / scaling up / intensity efforts

new, possible scaling up in the future

3) Project Input – social induction for young migrants

a) Activity

This project of the Youth Red Cross in the Canton of Aargau seeks to support unaccompanied minor asylum seekers in coping with everyday life in Switzerland as well as and in their personal development. It aims at strengthening their independence and helping them to help themselves. This target is achieved through the exchange with local youth and young adults, particularly at “Input events” on various topics, such as cooking and nutrition, German language and vocabulary, information and networking, creativity and activity. The project is made possible thanks to the social commitment of volunteers aged 15 to 30 years. For young asylum seekers participation is voluntary and free of charge. Project “Input” not only seeks to enable and encourage intercultural exchange between local and asylum-seeking adolescents and young adults, but also to promote and encourage voluntary commitment and sensitization to the situation and needs of young asylum seekers in Switzerland.

b) Target group

Unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, Canton of Aargau

c) Tools

Regular meetings and exchange, Input events

d) New / scaling up / intensity efforts

The project was launched in March 2016.

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In the field of Volunteering

1) Volunteer development

a) Activity

Strategy 2020: According to our strategy 2020, we aim to increase the number of volunteers and the diversity of our volunteers. Therefore we provide financial support to our local branches for developing and implementing different kinds of projects/goals regarding volunteering. These are the following:

- The local Branches develop a concept for their volunteer management and implement it until 2020.
- The local Branches plan, implement and evaluate a project within our volunteer management cycle to improve their volunteer management.
- The local Branches step up their efforts to build youth groups.

b) Target group

Volunteers and young volunteers

c) Tools

Online Toolkit Volunteer Management: <http://www.toolkit-freiwilligenarbeit.ch/>

d) New / scaling up / intensity efforts

For some local branches new, for others scaling up.

2) Volunteering in Refugee Centers

a) Activity

Due to a large number of new arrivals of refugees in Switzerland in autumn 2015, the Swiss Red Cross SRC supported the government by setting up and running a Refugee reception center from October 2015 till January 2016. Many volunteers supported SRC in the center. The center closed due to decreasing refugee numbers.

The Swiss Government expects increasing numbers of refugees this summer and SRC is preparing again to set up refugee reception centers in three different cantons. Volunteering plays an important role. Working in the centers is an opportunity to volunteer for a short period of time (vs. long-term volunteering) and be involved in direct action. SRC plans to work with spontaneous volunteers in the centers as well, if required. As this is a new topic in SRC, we try to sensitize our local branches to it.

b) Target group

Volunteers, Spontaneous Volunteers, Local Branches

c) Tools

Concept for spontaneous volunteers in SRC refugee reception Centers;

Information sheets concerning Volunteer Management in refugee reception centers.

d) New / scaling up / intensity efforts

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