

# Supporting volunteer management at the Ukrainian Red Cross Society

Eastern Ukraine / Berlin, Germany

## The challenge

The Ukrainian Red Cross Society (URCS) works with a pool of emergency response volunteers who are called upon in situations of emergencies and disasters. This is particularly relevant in Eastern Ukraine since those regions are most affected by the ongoing conflict over the Donbass area. As a consequence, URCS has made it a priority in 2017 to develop a network of 2,000 volunteers. To be able to respond adequately to a worsening of the humanitarian situation in Eastern Ukraine, URCS requires the volunteers to be prepared and managed professionally for their role. URCS is therefore looking for ways to improve their volunteer management practices and to attract new volunteers into their network particularly in the regions of Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia.

## Our approach

URCS was particularly interested in how people could be motivated to become volunteers and how they can be engaged in a participatory manner. Germany has developed a very successful model of working with volunteers in the area of emergency management. This is why IIPU facilitated a study tour to Berlin, Germany for eleven representatives of URCS. These representatives work with approximately 300 volunteers in emergency response teams and youth movements in regions of Eastern Ukraine.

In Berlin, they met with representatives of the German Red Cross. In workshops and during presentations as well as in direct personal contact with German experts they had the opportunity to discuss the following topics:

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- volunteer work in Germany: basics and legal framework
- strategic considerations: financing volunteer work, integration of different age groups, motivational instruments, insurance for volunteers
- operational issues: decision making, management tools, communication of volunteer work

The Ukrainian delegation thus gained a detailed insight into how the German Red Cross engages, manages and retains volunteers who successfully support the protection of the population in Germany.

## The results

The participants in the study tour have expanded their knowledge and competencies in the area of effective volunteer management. They have learned new approaches to recruiting, training, management and motivation of volunteers. As a consequence, they are not only able to use these new ideas and approaches in their own work with volunteers, but also to share and disseminate them among colleagues - thus broadening the competencies of the entire URCS.

## Testimonials

*"I have received a lot of new ideas on how to motivate volunteers, how they can be insured and how different age groups and different teams can be managed."*

*"Following this study tour, we would now like to introduce online volunteering."*

*"Having participated in this study tour, we decided to include retired people as volunteers. Nine people have already been trained."*



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The Initiatives of the Infrastructure Programme for Ukraine (IIPU) were commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) to support crisis management and crisis prevention in municipalities in Eastern Ukraine. The programme is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and has four components:

- Strengthening social infrastructure for the absorption of internally displaced people
- Strengthening of Ukrainian municipalities hosting internally displaced people
- Psychosocial support and conflict management to strengthen Ukrainian communities hosting internally displaced people
- Strengthening of the capacities of the Ukrainian emergency service

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