



World First Aid Day, 12th September 2009 - Information Pack

One hundred and fifty years ago, a battle in northern Italy sparked an idea that has since changed the world. On 24 June 1859, Henry Dunant, a young Geneva businessman, witnessed horrifying suffering and agony following the battle of Solferino. The need for humanitarian action is still as vital today as it was in 1859. To mark the 150th anniversary of the battle and to highlight Red Cross and Red Crescent emergency disaster response as well as long-term humanitarian programmes, more than 500 volunteers and staff from 149 National Societies gathered in Solferino from 23 to 28 June 2009.

We are all more or less vulnerable but we all have the capacity to learn and provide first aid to save a life. This is the key message of the International Federation's World First Aid Day, when National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies organize different activities in order to raise public awareness on first aid and injury prevention. In 2007, more than 1.3 million people participated in activities and learnt first aid during World First Aid Day events organised in different parts of the world.

FIRST AID FOR HUMANITY

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is committed to scaling up its first aid programmes and continue to improve their quality. This is stated in its revised First Aid Policy of October 2007. More and more people and volunteers should have the capacity to provide quality first aid community-based services.

Theme for 2009 – ‘First aid for Humanity’

Key messages

- The International Federation believes that everyone has the potential to learn first aid and save lives;
- First aid is *an act of humanity* showing willingness to save lives with full respect for diversity and without discrimination;

- We should celebrate the numbers of lives saved both by first aid volunteers and by laypersons trained in first aid.

Expected results:

- √ Collected testimonies of lives saved by first aid volunteers and laypersons – Act of Humanity;
- √ A raised profile of National Societies and their volunteers in first aid, injury prevention and related health promotion activities;
- √ Increased public awareness of the importance to first aid
- √ Increased collaboration with partners in first aid community-based actions.

Target populations

- √ The general public in different settings: home, workplace, schools, rural and vulnerable communities and others;
- √ People already trained in first aid who require skills updating

Suggested activities

- Visible events, such as the **“Human Chain of First aid for humanity” – proposed at 12:00 noon on 12 September 2009;**
- Activities to recognise and award first aid volunteers for their efforts and successes in saving lives;
- Collection of testimonies from people whose lives were saved by first aid and the celebration and recognition of those who saved them
- Refresher courses to update people’s first aid skills

Others

- Recruitment campaign for first aid volunteers
- New initiatives organised by first aid volunteers
- First aid demonstrations/ training sessions/exhibitions/first aid booths.....
- Communications via the media (newspapers, magazines, radio, TV)
- Holding special, highly-advertised first aid training sessions with VIPs, personalities and the media
- Advertisements in written press, TV and radio spots/public service announcements, posters, brochures, etc.
- Talks / testimonies / Panel discussions with experts and authorities
- Competitions, games
- Street theatre
- Community surveys/questionnaires/discussions
- Working with vulnerable communities and groups (new training programs, etc.)

BE PARTICIPATORY, BE CREATIVE, TAKE CHALLENGES, WORK WITH PARTNERS

Partners

- Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers in Headquarters and branches
- Communities and vulnerable/marginalized people
- Internal Red Cross and Red Crescent partners
- External partners – governments, local and international NGOs, media, corporations, sponsors, local community groups (churches, associations, voluntary groups, women’s clubs, etc.....)