To be read

--> Best practices Guidebook for Sending Organisations

--> Best practices Guidebook for Training Providers

--> Best practices Guidebook for Volunteers

A project funded by DG-ECHO and co-financed by Agence du Service Civique

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European Open-Source Humanitarian Aid Volunteers

SERVICE CIVIQUE
DES VALEURS, UN ENGAGEMENT

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Humanitarian Aid

EU Aid Volunteers Pilot Project

BEST PRACTICES GUIDEBOOK

FOR

HOST ORGANISATIONS

ACRACCS

Diakonie
Českobratrské církve evangelické

focsiv
Volontari nel mondo.

FRANCE VOLONTAIRES
Echanges et solidarité internationale

HOT

People in peril
association slovakia

SCD
Service de Coopération au Développement

SLOGA
SLOVENIAN GLOBAL ACTION

u.r.d.
urgence réhabilitation développement

FOREWORD

Why are we developing these Best pratices guidebooks?

DG ECHO is in the process of setting up an EU AID volunteer corps, with the objective of engaging 10,000 volunteers from 2015-20. DG ECHO relies on the experience of a series of pilot projects - lessons learnt, standards and recommendations - to facilitate the setting up of this EU Aid volunteer corps.

France Volontaires, together with eight European NGOs (ECCB/Diakonie, FOCSIV, ACRA, Sloga, PIPA, SCD, HOT, Groupe URD), set up and carried out one of these pilot projects.

The EUROSHA volunteering pilot project developed an innovative volunteering framework in which volunteers (European and African) were deployed in teams in order to bring together local and international actors and carry out humanitarian information management activities.

As a result, the project produced some guidebooks to send, train, host volunteers.

- ■ These Best practices Guidebooks are one of the deliverables produced for ECHO within the EUROSHA volunteering pilot project.
- ■ From the consortium and volunteers side, producing these Guidebooks is a means of capitalising on the pilot project experience.

Who is it for?

- ■ DG ECHO
- ■ Consortium members
- ■ Volunteers
- ■ Organisations wishing to send, train and host EU Aid Volunteers in the future

How was it developed?

It was developed through a participative approach from selecting, training, technical and hosting organisations as well as volunteers, this document resulted from pilot project experience and lessons learnt.

Coordinating organisation and the Groupe URD, as expert, developed a template by project phase and to be completed by working groups: selection, training, hosting, and volunteering. Information was then analysed and compiled by a group of EUROSHA volunteers and finalised by consortium members.

How to use it?

These Guidebooks are comprised by various chapters which are related to the different phases of a volunteering deployment. According to the role you play or wish to play within EU Aid Volunteer, you must refer to a chapter or another one. However it is recommended to read through the whole document in order to know about the various processes and tips.

Tips & advice:

- •   Allow yourself enough time to organise and communicate effectively with the volunteers on logistics at the end of the deployment phase and their departure.

- •   The handover phase is key in determining to what extent local partners see themselves as real actors in the continuity of project activities. Who can sustain the project?

- •   It is highly recommended to organise a farewell meal at the end of the deployment!

W= Week
HO = Host organisation

Who	What	When
• Volunteers • Supported by the head and/or the project coordinator of the HO	• Prepare and validate the work plan for final four weeks of activities with volunteers • Help volunteers to organise feedback workshops with local stakeholders and partners • Ensure that volunteers have invited all key stakeholders to at least one feedback session	W 17
• Volunteers • Supported by the head and/or the project coordinator of the HO	• Organise feedback workshops with local stakeholders and partners • Ensure that the volunteers have made a list of all equipment that will be handed over to the local organisation(s) and plan the handover process. • Make a record of the documents produced in the field (capitalisation)	W 18
• Volunteers • Supported by the head and/or the project coordinator of the HO	• Organise a debriefing session on lessons learned with the volunteers (assessment of project activities) and prepare lessons learned report. • Ensure the sustainability of the project through networking (of stakeholders).	W 19
• Head of the HO • Logistics provider	• Last debriefing with the volunteers and the staff of the host organisation • Organise a farewell event • Close up the base (if any) and transport of equipment. • Departure of volunteers	W 20

Hosting a group of European volunteers in a third country

Principle 1
The host organisation must be well set up within local community.

Principle 2
The host organisation must have the capacities to manage, accompany and follow up volunteers.

Principle 3
The host organisation must work together with sending, training and technical organisations to set up work plan, define roles and responsibilities, security and safety processes.

These principles are from the experience of EU Aid Volunteer, pilot project « EU, Local and Online volunteers : key actors for inclusive humanitarian information sharing in crisis preparedness"

Contents:

1. Introduction

This Mini Guide is aimed at organisations running humanitarian programmes who are interested in hosting a group of EU Aid volunteers.

It is based on the experience of three organisations, namely France Volontaires, PIPA and ACRA, who hosted volunteers for the EUROSHA pilot project (2012-13),

Twenty-six young volunteers from various EU member states (Italy, Czech Republic, France, Slovenia, Hungary, Belgium, Poland) and locally (Chad, Burundi, Kenya, CAR) were selected, trained and deployed in Chad, CAR, Burundi and Kenya in teams of four or five European volunteers and two national volunteers.

During the deployment phase, the goal of volunteers was to:

- Reinforce the knowledge of the international humanitarian community; reinforce the capacity to mobilize actors during crisis situations through management and collection of information, trainings and activities among different actors

- Reinforce local capacity in maintaining and preserving the management of open-source humanitarian information, to enable local organisations and communities to remain visible and

☐ Collect and update the obtained data during the project and at the end of the project.

☐ Monitor progress in the work plan with an updated weekly, monthly, quarterly activity plan.

☐ Write weekly, monthly, quarterly reports.

☐ Organise individual interviews with each of the volunteers at the end of the induction period, to identify problem areas and organise appropriate support for each volunteer.

Tips & advice:

- Identify a volunteer representative for each main activity ("Who does what")

- Establish clear deadlines for the submission of the different reports.

■ **End of deployment**

Your organisation has nearly completed its hosting period and in one month the volunteers will depart.

In this section, you will find a work plan that will enable your teams in the field to support the volunteers in winding down their project activities, organising feedback workshops for local stakeholders and partner organisations and nurturing potential partnerships to ensure the continuity of project activities.

■ **Project activities**

Your organisation is currently hosting a group of European volunteers. The team in your local office is responsible for providing support and monitoring the volunteers' progress over the next six months.
This phase starts at the end of the two-week induction period and ends four weeks before the departure of the volunteers.

Check list

☐ Validate two documents that were prepared during the induction phase: (i) a document which outlines the role of the host organisation and its responsibilities during the deployment phase; and (ii) a document which outlines the role of the volunteers and their responsibilities during the deployment phase.

☐ Organise a feedback session and an evaluation session with the volunteers.

☐ The programme of the weekly evaluation sessions should include: (i) the progress of the volunteers on the work plan, (ii) logistics, (iii) an update on the security situation, (iv) space for the volunteers to express their problems, fears, etc.

☐ Providing support to the volunteers with planning and contacting potential partners, beneficiary groups for training sessions, etc.

☐ Help organise events or a space for exchange and discussion between the volunteers and partners on issues related to the context of the project and the specific cultural values of the deployment countries.

☐ Facilitate a regular security meeting at least once a month.

☐ Monitor and supervise project activities.

☐ Organise weekly meetings of monitoring and planning.

☐ Check the security situation and do regular updates of security procedures.

☐ Check the working relation between the volunteers and your team.

☐ Check and resolve any practical problems (health, transport, logistics and accommodation) on a daily basis.

☐ Establish a system for monitoring and controlling the budget.

active as the equal actors in crisis management and in recovery after crisis

Engaging as a hosting organisation for a group of European volunteers is a serious commitment which requires considerable forethought and planning.

This mini guide will help you assess (i) whether it is feasible for you to host a group of European volunteers and (ii) whether it is beneficial for your organisation and your team, and for the volunteers themselves. This mini guide should also enable you identify a number of pre-requisites for establishing a successful partnership with the other stakeholders involved in this project.

This mini guide is organised in phases (preparation phase, hosting phase, etc.) and provides a series of important questions that your organisation needs to ask itself and checklists, etc.

Key contacts:

France Volontaires: contact@france-volontaires.org
Acra: valeriadepaoli@acraccs.org
PIPA : sliaka@peopleinperil.sk
Necofa : necofakenya@yahoo.com

2. Prepare you organisation to host volunteers

Your organisation is interested in submitting an application to be a host organisation for a group of EU Aid volunteers for a six-month deployment.

In this section, you will find information that will help you decide whether or not to submit an application to host EU Aid volunteers.

To do so, you will need to consider a series of questions that will help you to take this decision, including whether (i) your mandate allows you to do so, (ii) you are currently running humanitarian operations in a context that would be suitable for hosting EU Aid volunteers, (ii) a group of EU Aid volunteers would bring added value to your programme, (iv) the role of the EU Aid volunteers corresponds to a given need in this context, and (v) you have the necessary resources to host EU Aid volunteers (logistics, e.g. housing and transport; financial; and human resources).

Tips & advice:

- It is highly recommended to organise a welcome meal in the first two days of the volunteers' arrival.

- Ensure that all the partners involved in project implementation agree on the timetable of activities before starting the activities.

- Ensure that the volunteers are equipped for the work required and that they are capable of organising themselves as a team.

- To foster a good information flow between the volunteers and the host organisation, ask the volunteers to appoint a representative or a spokesperson.

- Ensure that any travel is carried out in accordance with safety standards prescribed by the UNDSS and the relevant Embassy in the host country.

- Allow enough time to carry out all the activities in the induction phase (before the volunteers commence their activities). This will help the volunteers to settle in whilst laying the foundations for good coordination between the volunteers and the host organisation.

"Volunteers could spend few days collecting information on how the population manages crisis, how shall they prepare themselves to manage crisis"
Cheick Diallo, National referee, France Volontaires CAR

■ **Check whether volunteers' activities correspond to local needs**
- Do you know of any organisations in the areas where you are operating that might be interested in working with the EU Aid volunteers, specifically in relation to the activities they will be responsible for?
- Have you carried out an initial assessment to check whether the volunteers' activities respond to a demonstrated need?
- Can you identify opportunities for linking volunteers' activities into other existing humanitarian programmes?

When		What	Who
Week 2	Day 1	• Visiting public authorities • Meetings with international and national stakeholders interested in working with the volunteers	Head of the HO HO Project coordinator
	Day 2	• Visiting public authorities • Meetings with international and national stakeholders interested in working with the volunteers	Head of the HO HO Project coordinator
	Day 3 & 4	• Meetings with international and national stakeholders interested in working with the volunteers	Head of the HO HO Project coordinator
	Day 5	• Debriefing about the meetings with stakeholders and public authorities (What kind of strategy does the actor have? How do we position ourselves in the game? What are our objectives?) • Readjustment of the work plan and timetable • Plan a meeting with all stakeholders interested in working with the volunteers to validate the work plan and timetable.	Head of the HO HO Project coordinator
	Days 6 & 7	• Rest	

■ **Check whether your organisation has the capacity to fulfil all the necessary security requirements**

• Have you conducted a thorough risk analysis to ensure that you can ensure the safety of the EU Aid volunteers and that they can carry out their activities without taking unreasonable risks?
• Do the security conditions in the country as a whole and in their area where the EU Aid volunteers will be living and/or working meet DG ECHO criteria (i.e. post-crisis contexts, not conflict)?
• In terms of security conditions, can EU Aid volunteers realistically carry out their activities in the regions where you are operating without taking unreasonable risks?
• Do you have an emergency evacuation plan covering all areas where the EU Aid volunteers will be living and/or working?
• Do you have information on the behaviour of the local population in crisis situations (looting, assault, rape, etc.)?
• Does your organisation have a set of guidelines regarding safety standards?

■ **Check whether your organisation can ensure basic working and living conditions**

• In terms of logistics (e.g. transport, accommodation, Internet access, etc.), can EU Aid volunteers realistically carry out their activi-   ties in the areas where you are operating, both   at country level and at local level?
• Have you identified suitable accommodation for EU Aid volunteers in the areas where you are operating (water, electricity, etc.) and do you   have a plan B?

■ **Check whether your organisation has the necessary resources to host EU Aid volunteers**

- Can your organisation provide basic logistics for EU Aid volunteers during deployment? For example, can you provide transport for EU Aid volunteers during deployment? Are they allowed to use local transport or can they drive vehicles themselves?
- Does your organisation have sufficient experience in supervising a group of volunteers and monitoring their work?
- Does your staff (especially those who will be working directly with the volunteers on a daily basis) have sufficient experience in working in a multicultural environment?
- Have you already identified a member of staff who will be able to monitor the work of volunteers (planning activities, monitoring activities, etc.)?
- Do you have sufficient human resources to support EU Aid volunteers during deployment? Does one of your members of staff have the necessary time to ensure the role of volunteer coordinator in the field?
- Do the local public authorities know your organisation and your programmes? Do you know members of the humanitarian and development community in the areas where you are operating?
- Do you fully understand all the operational aspects of the volunteers' activities during deployment?
- What added value will EU Aid volunteers bring to your organisation?

	When	What	Who
Week 1	Day 1	• Pick up volunteers from airport • Drop them off at their accommodation • Make sure that they have everything they need (do essential purchases, etc.) • Provide them with basic information about health and security standards. • Check official documents (visas, etc.) • Take them out for a welcome meal	Coordinator and country logistician
	Day 2	• Rest • Guided tour of town • Introduction to field office staff	Head of the HO HO Project coordinator Logistics provider
	Day 3	• Present the programme of the two-week induction (including working hours) and validate content and objectives with the volunteers • Present the follow up process, logistics conditions, internal rules, etc. • Conduct a security briefing • Appoint a representative for the volunteers	Head of the HO HO Project coordinator Logistics provider
	Day 4	• Administrative and consular procedures • Help the volunteers prepare their presentation about the project for stakeholders. • Plan meetings and make appointments with stakeholders that are likely to be interested in working with the volunteers.	Head of the HO HO Project coordinator
	Day 5	• Continue to help the volunteers prepare their presentation about the project for stakeholders. • Continue planning meetings and making appointments with stakeholders that are likely to be interested in working with the volunteers.	Head of the HO HO Project coordinator
	Days 6 & 7	• Rest	

Tips & advice:

- Allow yourself enough time to carry out all the activities in the preparation phase.

- Get informed about the various project stakeholders and their expectations.

- Ensure that the Terms of Reference, activities and the timing is discussed thoroughly with all the project partners (including the host organisations) before the arrival of the volunteers in the field to foster good coordination.

- Brief the volunteers prior to their arrival on the security rules in force in the host organisation.

« In case hosting organization does not have own facilities for volunteers and has to rent, furnished and equip the apartment for the volunteers before their arrival, it has to be clear that the funds for equipment will be available on time before the volunteer's arrival"
Katerina Karásková, Kenya field coordinator, PIPA

4. Host volunteers

The deployment phase can be broken down into three sections: a two-week induction, project activities and end of deployment.

■ Induction

Your organisation is about welcome a group of EU Aid volunteers to its office in the field.

In this section, you will find a work plan that will enable your teams in the field to help the EU Aid volunteers settle in to their new environment and start their activities as quickly as possible.

The induction period starts with the arrival of the volunteers at the airport (Day 1) and covers their initial two weeks in the field, including an induction briefing.

Tips & advice

- Check that the roles and responsibilities (including working hours) of the volunteer management partners (sending organisation, training provider, hosting organisation, local partner) are well defined and accepted by everybody.

- Make sure that the expectations and the objectives of the volunteer management partners are in line with your hosting capacities and with the capacities of the volunteers.

- Ensure that you have a clear and precise understanding of project resources (material, financial, human) and of resource management.

- Ensure that you have a good understanding of the volunteers' activities and of the technological and logistic resources required for carrying out these activities.

- Ensure that you can provide suitable accommodation for the volunteers. Together with the project coordinator, define a set of clear criteria for volunteers' living conditions and accommodation.

"In Kenya we did not have the same level of basic working and living conditions and volunteers were not prepared to have a lack of comfort. It created tensions until new comfortable houses were built."
Katerina Karásková, Kenya field coordinator, PIPA

"Ensure that volunteers will be legally authorised to carry on their activities"
Valeria De Paoli, Desk manager, ACRA

"It is essential to measure if the host organisation has the capacity to achieve project partners expectations. The coordination between sending, training, technical and host organisations must be strong and transparent. "
Licius Karenzo, National referee, France Volontaires Burundi

3. Prepare volunteers' arrival and mission

Your organisation has been selected by DG ECHO to host a group of EU Aid volunteers and you have approximately four months to prepare their arrival.

In this section, you will find a work plan that will help you and your teams prepare for the arrival of a group of EU Aid volunteers (at head office level, regional level and local office level).

M= Month - HO= Host organisation

Who	What	When
• Head and staff of the HO • Head office • Project coordinator	• Define the activities that will be undertaken by the EU Aid volunteers during deployment. • Define the objectives of these activities.	M 1
• Head of HO • Staff from the HO • Project coordinator	• Conduct a feasibility study (including risk analysis)	M 1
• Head and staff of the HO • In liaison with local and international stakeholders.	• Validate the relevance of these activities (i.e. make sure that they respond to a demonstrated need and that no-one else is doing exactly the same thing, check that no-one else is better qualified to carry out these activities, or is more experienced, or that another group of people can carry out the same activities for less money)	M 2
• Head of the HO • Project coordinator	• Identify existing organisations and stakeholders (local and international) in the field that are likely to work with or that may be interested in working with the volunteers. • Organise meetings and coordinate with these stakeholders (present the project, explain the objectives of the volunteers' mission, etc.)	M 2 & 3
• Head of the HO • Members of the diplomatic representation	• Check that security conditions are still clement and, as far as possible, make projections for how the security situation will evolve over the next year (taking into account national events such as General elections, etc.)	M 2
• Head office • Head of the HO • Project coordinator	• Validate Terms of Reference internally • Validate Terms of Reference with DG ECHO	M 2
• Head office • Head of the HO • Project coordinator • Technical stakeholders of the project	• Liaise with recruitment services and submit a list of required skills (languages, computer literacy, etc.) to ensure that the volunteers are selected with the relevant expertise that will allow them to carry out their activities effectively. • Participate in the selection phase (i.e. recruitment of volunteers)	M 2

M= Month - HO= Host organisation

Who	What	When
• Head of the HO • Staff from the HO • Project coordinator	• Define and submit the latest version of the working plan	M 3
• Project coordinator • Head office • In liaison with the Head of the HO	• Draw up a job description for the member of staff (in hosting organisation) who will be responsible for supervising and/or coordinating the volunteers during their mission	M 3
• Head office • Head of the HO	• Identify the member(s) of staff who will be responsible for welcoming volunteers in the field	M 3
• Head of the HO • Logistics provider (if there is one)	• Prepare a logistics plan before the volunteers' deployment: list the equipment requirements, purchase of equipment, identify and prepare the volunteers' accommodation (furnished and equipped), etc.	M 3 & 4
• Head of the HO	• Organise a briefing with the local staff who will work directly with the volunteers	M 4
• Head office • Head of the HO • Technical stakeholders of the project	• Prepare two-week initial induction period in the field	M 3
• Head of the HO	• Make a list for the volunteers of all important contacts for local, national and international stakeholders and emergency contacts in the local area (hospitals, police, firemen etc.)	M4
• Head of the HO	• Get in touch with selected volunteers and answer their questions	M3
• Logistics provider (if there is one)	• Plan the volunteers' journey from arrival to their deployment headquarters (if it is different)	M4