

ICVolunteers News



Involve. Develop. Volunteer.

Newsletter of ICVolunteers

Second Quarter 2007



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Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Some of you have called us asking for upcoming events and initiatives. I am pleased to let you know that there are a number of upcoming exciting activities in conferences and events.

While we continue to get involved in conference-related activities, ICVolunteers is today developing its own initiatives and projects in a more proactive way than this may have been the case in the past, where our main focus was assisting conferences. This new approach has been initiated with the launch of the CyberVolunteers Programme already two years ago, but is today taking a more important dimension, whether it is related to technology or languages, in particular.

I would like to mention especially two exciting projects in this sense: one related to languages and migration, another focusing on education and the environment,

developed in cooperation with the Earth Focus Foundation. Both projects involved our teams in several countries, currently in particular Switzerland, France and Spain.

On the African side of things, the desert school project with Mali has been very successful. Africa@home also is continuing to move, with workshops and training seminars planned in July (Muizenberg, South Africa) and in September (Geneva, Switzerland).

Last but not least, I would like to recall that our very first project has started exactly 10 years ago. These 10 years have been the occasion for us to be involved in over 260 projects in 30 countries. While things continue to evolve, it is my hope that we will be able to coordinate many more initiatives and have many more volunteers, job seekers and interns get involved with us.

*Viola Krebs
Executive Director of ICVolunteers*

Federation

ICVolunteers network

During the very last months ICVolunteers has broadened its network, finalising or making partnership agreements with a number of interesting organisations and associations that share the same mission and vision.

In Senegal our new partner is the **Service civique national du Sénégal**, which is part of the Youth and Employment Ministry and will work with ICVolunteers in the Decentralized Information Systems for husbandry (see the project description below). The **University of Swaziland** has also manifested an interest in a tighter collaboration with us on the husbandry project.

From Italy, **Vita Europe**, a network of European NGOs working in the Third Sector, has now become an official partner of ICVolunteers and we will collaborate producing an online newsletter with articles and news from Geneva and the National Offices.

The **International federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (IFRC)** Forum on Health and Care, that was held in Geneva the 9th, 10th and 11th of May will initiate a long-term collaboration with the IFRC. A great opportunity and honour for us and our volunteers.



*On the photo from left to right:
Top line: Jim Demeulemeester, Diane Heath, Emily Fisher, Margrit Leonhardt, Theo Orasianu, Adama Samassékou, Jim Rudolf, Nicola Furey, Rabah Tounsi, Cyrille Schmid, Jérôme Arondel, Ben Segal, Jean-Pierre Joly*

Bottom line: Viola Krebs, Coudou Diaw, Sophie Richardson, Lwiise Swa, Silvano de Gennaro

Work and Volunteering The Long Arm of the Job?

By Irene Amodei

What can volunteering offer people who are looking for paid employment? Why do people who are looking for a job consider volunteer work? How can agencies work with volunteers as a way of enhancing their chances of finding paid employment?

Many people believe that "real" or "pure" volunteer work is done without any expectation or hope of financial return or benefit, and that the sole motive behind "real" volunteer work is altruism, "the unselfish regard for or devotion to the welfare of others".

Nevertheless more and more people also agree that volunteers act for other reasons, that volunteer activity undertaken for motives other than altruism can be fruitful and meaningful, and finally that all volunteer effort involves some kind of exchange, even that which is based on altruism.

Some people volunteer because they understand that it is important for citizens to participate in the life of their communities, others as a way to integrate into a new community, meet people and create new relationships. However, an increasingly number of people are turning to volunteer work as part of their search for paid employment.

A real job

What does volunteering have to do with employment at all? And in the same vein, what has volunteering to do with work? A miscomprehension underlines these questions. Anyone who is a volunteer or works with volunteers knows that volunteer activity is real work and that volunteers "exert their strength and their faculties to accomplish something, to perform something, or to produce something". People sometimes find it difficult to call this activity "work" because the word work has become synonymous with paid employment. But volunteer activity for the most part is, and should be, real "work".

How to gain confidence offering skills

Looking for a job today can be a brutal experience that crushes self-esteem and erodes self-confidence. One of the greatest rewards that volunteering can offer people seeking employment (either as a first time job seeker or those re-entering the workforce after a period of absence) is the opportunity to build or rebuild confidence and help to restore their belief in themselves.

Putting their knowledge, talents and experience to work for an organization offers people an opportunity to exercise those capabilities, to feel that they are valuable and valued and to test and perhaps enlarge their skills in new ways. As a result, confidence in their own expertise can grow. This confidence can not only enrich their job search in obvious ways but it may also encourage and enable them to explore alternative career paths. Having responsibility for a job, with goals, objectives and deadlines can help them re-establish routines and self-discipline, regaining a sense of power, control and choice over their lives. Many people, finally, find paid employment because of connections they have made in the course of their volunteer work.

Volunteering also has much to offer those who take early retirement, whether through choice or have it imposed upon them. Some may not need a salary but would still like to continue working for a period. These individuals can provide a wealth of experience and may act as mentors for others in the organization.

A growing recognition

25% of Swiss people over-15 did volunteer work during 2006. According to Volunteer Forum (www.forum-benevolat.ch) this corresponds to 750 million hours of work per year.

Both the public and private sectors now recognize that volunteer work should be taken into account during the evaluation of a job candidate's skill, training and experience. Increasingly often, employment application forms ask explicitly about volunteer experience and volunteer work can often be a determining factor in college and university applications and in job competition.

Consequently, the growing number of people seeking volunteer work as a way to enhance their chances of finding paid employment can be seen as a real "gold mine". The sector is receiving unprecedented offers of assistance from people with outstanding skills and talents.

The volunteer placement: a crucial responsibility

Such a virtuous and "win-win" circle between volunteer expectations and organizations needs is not coincidental. The volunteer placement has to be rigorous and demanding, well thought out and meticulously designed. The volunteer job description must be clear; volunteers must be given the training needed and

should receive appropriate supervision and support from a trained volunteer manager, including regular feedback and evaluation.

The work of **ICVolunteers** is therefore unique, rare and ... hard.

On one hand ICVolunteers must meet the needs of its beneficiaries. Projects, policies and placements are designed to meet these goals, offering professional services and assuring the highest quality standards. Within this framework, volunteers are recruited, trained and engaged, depending on their skills and experience, with the emphasis on their interests, expectations and avail-

able time. Volunteer work offers huge advantages - we do believe this - but we must also recognize that volunteer work presents some limitations: generally it is flexible, relatively short-term and focused on specific goals or tasks.

Some have termed our role "facilitator": in practical terms, this means that we must be vigilant in ensuring that our efforts are oriented to meet both beneficiaries' and volunteers' needs.

Put the right person in the right position at the right time. That's all.

Volunteering as a route (back) to employment? Report from the European Volunteer Centre General Assembly

By Cyrille Marc Schmid

Translation from French by Anna Grandone and J.B-C.

ICVolunteers representatives, **Maria Vila** (Barcelona) and **Cyrille Marc Schmid** (Geneva), from Barcelona and Geneva respectively, participated in the General Assembly of the European Volunteer Centre the 22-23 of March, in Paris.

Some 100 participants, representing a variety of NGOs and research teams, debated the central question of 'Is voluntary work, or could voluntary work a route (back) to employment?'

In response to this question, several spokespersons expressed their points of view through concrete studies. The one that caught ICVolunteers' attention most was the study entitled "Volunteering – a tool to employability" led by Mr. **Dominique Thierry**, Vice-President of *France Bénévolat* (picture below), who shared the results of the study which was conducted in several cities of France; Nantes, Lille, Alès, Aix en Provence, Orléans and many more.



The observations were as follows: 4 potentially positive benefits for the job-seeking volunteer were identified: the improvement in self-image and confidence; the creation of new support and interpersonal network; the clarification of professional goals and expansion of professional horizons; the development and enlargement of abilities and qualifications.

Mr. Thierry also offered an original description of several categories of volunteers. According to him, these can be classified as follows:

- The *strategists* who count for 20% of all cases: their purpose is to use the volunteering activity in view of a specific goal.

- The *discoverers* estimated at around 40% of cases: as their name indicates, they are still discovering the world of volunteering.
- The *regular volunteers*: people who give their time on a regular basis.
- The *desperate*: a strong expression, but one nevertheless used to describe individuals wishing to come out of a profound isolation.

Another essential point of Mr Thierry presentation was to underline that volunteering has a perverse flip-side if it is not carried out in a structured manner. The risks are the following:

- Stagnation and complacency in volunteering;
- Lack of energy or motivation to find a job;
- Disaffection from the realities of the working world as there are less constraints, less stress and generally a more friendly atmosphere.

Through this study, it was clearly established that volunteering is a positive path for job-seekers. However, certain safeguards should be introduced, namely a structure for the reception of volunteers and a strict follow-up system.

It can also be noted that in most cases, the volunteer finds or re-finds employment thanks to his or her involvement as a volunteer and does so more rapidly than if he or she had not undertaken this activity.

Finally, Mr. Thierry ended his speech on an extremely positive note: "there is no longer any doubt that for an unemployed person volunteering is a positive and beneficial route to or back to employment".

It was only the following day, after having presented the CyberVolunteers Programme to the participants that ICVolunteers returned respectively to Switzerland and Catalonia.

'Cause the Planet is worthy! The Project VoLTerre

By Jim Demeulemeester
English version J.B.-C.

As part of the CyberVolunteers Program, ICVolunteers has launched several initiatives linking the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), education and training. One of these initiatives, VoLTerre, aims to involve volunteers and young people in the promotion and networking of eco-cultural sites through the ICTs hence raising awareness of environmental issues and sustainable development topics. In May 2007, using the Green Map® Program (GSM), a concept introduced in Switzerland by the Earth Focus Foundation, young cyber-volunteers students focused on the Arboretum in Aubonne (Switzerland), collecting the information required for *green mapping* the site.

What is an Arboretum and how does the GSM work?



An Arboretum is a place devoted to the conservation, presentation, experimental growing and observation of different species of forest, ornamental and fruit trees. An Arboretum is therefore a single botanic collection of trees and shrubs from all over the world (<http://www.arboretum.ch>).

The Green Map is a public initiative that utilises a number of universal icons on maps that list and name, among others, nature sites, ecological initiatives, alternative transport systems. Furthermore, this system simplifies the centralisation and search for practical information on sustainable development and provides worldwide visibility via the Internet. These maps, created by people from all over the world, are consolidated on the website <http://www.greenmap.org>. Moreover, the site is open to those who can contribute additional information to aid in the completion of these maps.

What is the role of ICVolunteers and of Cyber-volunteers in this project?



ICVolunteers, together with GSM, Earth Focus, the SBM Council and the Arboretum of Aubonne, their partner in this project, has pledged to promote and develop the GSM. To this end

we are supporting and training students from Collège du Léman in *green mapping*. By pinpointing polluted locations, for example, or by making an eco-cultural initiative worthy to be discovered more visible and accessible, Cyber-volunteers will be contributing to the protection of the Planet. Via a ripple effect, these young people have the possibility of raising the awareness of ecological issues in the people around them.

Cyber-volunteers will also share their experience in articles for the Earth Focus Foundation magazine as well as being involved in the establishment of a new GSM website to be presented in the occasion of the Festival



of Sustainable Development at Botanic Garden of Geneva, on 9th and 10th of June 2007.

See also: www.greenmap.org

Our partners in the project:

SBM Conseil



Maaya is born! A network of networks promoting linguistic diversity

By Irene Amodei and Viola Krebs
English version Rosie Wells

Will 2008 be the International Year of Languages? The Austrian Government has put this proposal to the United Nations General Assembly but, for the moment, it has not been ratified.

This is not stopping language-related organisations who are not waiting around for the formal decision from the United Nations. It is estimated that a third of all the world's languages will disappear throughout this century and so a year such as this is extremely important and symbolic for these languages.

The World Network for Linguistic Diversity was created within the context of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Tunis November 2005 and was formally launched at UNESCO in Paris on 21st February, International Native Language Day. Together with Linguamón - House of Languages, ICVolunteers runs the secretariat of the new network whose executive committee met for the first time on 19th February 2007 in Barcelona, one year after the initial launch.

At this meeting the network's foundations were made formal. As a result, it now has a name, statutes and a headquarters. The name for the Network, Maaya, was chosen by its creator and president, Adama Sasmassékou. It means 'humanity' in Bambara, one of the languages spoken in Mali. The network's official headquarters are located in the ICVolunteers offices in Geneva.

Maaya brings together many different institutions including the **African Academy of Languages**, **Funredes**, **ICVolunteers**, **Linguamón**, the **Linguasphere Observatory**, the **Language Observatory Project of Japan**, **l'Union Latine**, and **SIL International**, as well as three inter-governmental organizations, UNESCO, the International Telecommunications Union and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie.

Maaya functions as a network of networks, a catalyst and incubator which aims to promote and enhance the



status of the world's languages as the basis for the unique nature of human communication.

What are the aims? Maaya was established to encourage governments, institutions and civil society to adopt measures favouring multilingualism, to promote bi- and/or multilingual education, to develop free software supporting linguistic and cultural diversity and to defend freedom of expression more generally.

The Network also aims to encourage multilingualism in cyberspace and to create and share linguistic resources by, for example, distributing important documents, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in as many languages as possible.

Maaya is still in its infancy but in the future it will have projects to manage and will play an important role as a platform for exchanging and sharing information. Nowadays, we live in a society of shared knowledge, when technology offers great potential for languages but also a great risk for only a very small minority of the world's 6000 languages are now found in cyberspace.

The Catalan Third Social Sector Desk The First Congress in Barcelona

By Maria Vila and Irene Amodei

The Catalan Third Social Sector Desk (*Taula del Tercer Sector Social de Catalunya*) was set up in July 2003 with the express aim of supporting the inclusion of the most disadvantaged people in society and striving to change the basic conditions which lead to their exclusion. The Desk works with private and public sectors as well as the Catalan society. Almost four years later, the Third Social Sector Desk held its First Congress in Barcelona on the 22nd and 23rd of March and ICVoluntarios was there to report.

Up to 23 umbrella organizations are currently active members of the Desk, representing more than 2000 Catalan entities, from AIRES (Associació Intersectorial de Recuperadors i Empreses Socials de Catalunya) to CÀRITAS and CREU ROJA, from FCD (Federació Catalana d'Associacions d'Ajuda al Drogodependent) to FEATE (Federació d'entitats d'assistència a la Tercera Edat), from MLP (Moviment Laic i progressista) to VORAVIU (Federació Catalana d'Entitats Pro Intelligència Límit). These organisations serve more than 800,000 people, in particular, children, families, the elderly, youth, the disabled, the chronically ill, drug addicts, immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, prison-



ers, ex-prisoners and the homeless. In total they generate 16,000 workplaces and work with 50,000 volunteers. The intention of the Congress was to strengthen the cohesion between the involved organisations promoting their recognition as proponents of national social policies and creating an environment for debate and exchange of ideas. With its 90 workshops and 3 plenary sessions, the congress focused on public policies, human resources management, corporate responsibility, accountability and quality standards. Participants were encouraged to share experiences, projects, relationships and fundraising practices.

In the final speech of the day, Joan Puigcerros, stressed the event's importance to future collaboration between public and private sectors, "reflecting that the black and white thinking about our country is a thing of the past". According to Mr Puigcerros predictions "the Catalan Third Sector is going to become something more dynamic and well-organised, gaining a fundamental role in Spanish society."

The congress concluded with the collective reading of the Manifest of the Taula, which calls for social inclusion and cohesion as focal issues of governmental policy, and that the Third Sector becomes a recognized agent for this vision.

See also: www.taulasocial.org

Switzerland



Spring brings a time of change, renewal and new beginnings. According to the wind flow, new faces have recently appeared at the Swiss Office, joining Lwiise, Corinne, Brigitte and Jérôme. **Diane Heath**, who helped as a reporter during The Aid and Trade Event, is now working in the prospecting and networking department. **Emily Fisher**, who was the Project Leader during the same conference, has now been permanently enrolled in the Project Manager Team. She is also Legal advisor for ICVolunteers' contracts. **Daouda Malam Baba** has reached the Volunteer and Human

Resource Division and **Zoe Eleni Smart** has reinforced the Communication Unit. Last but not least, **Carol Lima** and **Kashmira Aga** will be lending a hand to the Project Management Team because, together with flowers, Spring brings also conferences, events and new partnerships (one will be signed in May with the Red Cross Federation and one in June with a European Network based in Italy, Vita Europe). Without mentioning ...the parties!

Let's have a look to some projects:

Humanitarian De-mining Meetings

23-25 April 2007, Geneva, Switzerland

Summary: Every year, thousands of people step on landmines and lose limbs or their lives over it.

In the fight against Anti-Personnel Mines, the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction* is a cornerstone in the effort to end the suffering and casualties caused by Anti-Personnel Mines. Since 1999, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian De-mining (GICHD) has supported the implementation of the Convention, primarily by hosting meetings of the Standing Committees. The GICHD, in partnership with others, provides operational assistance, creates and disseminates knowledge, improves quality management and standards, and supports instruments

of international law, all aimed at increasing the performance and professionalism of mine action.



The April 2007 meetings organized by GICHD will provide an opportunity to discuss the third year of the application of the Nairobi Action Plan 2005-2009, which was adopted on 3 December 2004 at the First Review Conference.

Role of ICVolunteers: ICVolunteers has been helping with the overall organization of the event, including logistics, reporting and language assistance

IFRC Forum

9-11 May 2007, Geneva, Switzerland

Summary: The Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescents Societies (IFRC) organized the *Health and Care Forum*. Representatives of up to 40 Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies met in Geneva 9-11 May 2007, one week before the opening of the World Health Assembly (14 to 23 May 2007). They brought together their experiences to strengthen the Federation's international strategies on key health topics such as malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and Avian influenza.

The Forum included the presentation of best practices in improving local health conditions through community-based health care programs.

Role of ICVolunteers: ICVolunteers provided the IFRC with a full-time intern, Melanie Caruso, for 5 months. During the event the Swiss office of ICVolunteers provided support with the overall organization, including logistics, reporting and language assistance.

Balelec

25 May, Lausanne, Switzerland

Summary: With more than 30 concerts spread over 7 different stages, the Balelec Festival, was held at the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne on the 25th May. It is the most important cultural event organized by students in Europe. Now in its 27th year, the Festival Balelec is a non-profit association committed to environmental protection and run by 50 volunteers who

offer 8 months of their time to organise an 8 hour event (see www.balelec.ch).

Role of ICVolunteers: ICVolontaires, sharing these values, will host a stand of drinks fundraising for the environmental and educational project "VoLTerre". Ten volunteers will help in assembling the stand and serving drinks

Fête du développement durable

9-10 Juin, Genève, Suisse

Résumé: Cette année, la *Fête du développement durable* aura lieu les 9 et 10 juin 2007 au *Jardin Botanique*, dans un cadre magnifique. Des organisations, actives aussi bien localement qu'internationalement, présenteront leur travail autour de la question du développement durable.

Rôle d'ICVolontaires: ICVolontaires s'engage au niveau de l'organisation, mettant à disposition 20 bénévoles pour l'accueil des visiteurs à différents emplacements dans le parc. ICVolontaires en profitera également pour présenter, avec la Fondation Earth Focus, les résultats du projet éducatif «VoLTerre».

Geneva Music Festival

22-24 June, Geneva, Switzerland

Summary: The *Geneva Music Festival*, Geneva's main annual musical event, takes over the streets and squares of the city for three days every summer. Music is everywhere, with more than 50 indoor and outdoor stages. In this, it's 17th year, the festival will comprise about 50 stands run by non profit organisations. Their mission, as usual, will be to feed and refresh the huge crowd that regularly attend the event. Benefits from

these stands will be totally devoted to cultural, social, educational, humanitarian or environmental activities.



Role of ICVolunteers: ICVolontaires will keep a stand of food and beverages fundraising for the "Book project" for the students of the Fogou, in Guinée, Conakry.

Swiss Proteomics Society Congress 2007

3-5 December 2007, Lausanne, Switzerland

Summary: The Proteomics project is slowly taking shape. The Congress itself will take place in Lausanne from the 3rd until 5th December. The venue will be the famous Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne. Brigitte Elling, as coordinator, is in daily contact with a team of seven SPS members who are the local organizers of the congress. MC Art has started working on creating a web site. Cyrille Schmid and Caroline Eicher, a volunteer, are helping out on finding sponsors.

Role of ICVolunteers: Further work lying ahead for ICVolunteers revolves around logistics (catering, hotels, transports...), initial calls to potential sponsors, further construction of website. Meanwhile, the Lausanne team will focus on inviting speakers and finalizing the program. Should anyone have good connections in, or an in-and-out knowledge of Lausanne, he or she is more than welcome to contact Brigitte Elling for a coffee and a chat!

France

On April 2 2007, in the presence of the Mayor of Ferney Voltaire, Pierre-Etienne Duty, and of many volunteers and supporters, ICVolunteers-France officially opened its new offices in Bâtiment Jean Sébastien Say, 13 chemin du Levant, 01210 Ferney-Voltaire (France).

Thanks to the support of the City of Ferney-Voltaire and the *Chambre de Commerce et de l'Industrie de l'Ain* ICVolunteers-France has now begun developing its own projects, including *Health and Prevention* - a project dedicated to migrants' education and intercultural-mediation against health risks - *From North to South* - a

reforestation project conceived in collaboration with the Nation Forests Office and the WWF - and *Migrants Parents*, which aims at involving non-French speaking parents in the schooling process of their children.

The team is reachable at france@icvolunteers.org or by phone at the following number: +33 (0) 450 42 07 73 (every Thursday morning 8h30 to 12h30). To read more, see www.icvolontaires.org/france.

Recent activities of ICVolontaires-France include:

International Mother Tongue Day 2007

21 February 2007, Paris, France

Summary: The recognition that linguistic and cultural diversity represent a universal value that strengthens the unity and cohesion of societies led the 30th session of the General Conference of UNESCO in 1999 to launch and observe an *International Mother Language Day* on 21 February every year throughout the world. This day was chosen in memory of three "martyrs of languages", shot in Pakistan in 1952, during a demonstration which aimed at recognizing their mother tongue, Bengali, beside the Urdu. This year's theme was devoted to the topic of multilingualism.



Role of ICVolunteers: As part of this UNESCO sponsored event, now in its seventh year, and as the official secretariat of **Maaya** (the World Network for Linguistic Diversity), ICVolunteers was invited to participate in a

workshop on Languages in Cyberspace in Paris on 22nd February. During the workshop ICVolontaires-France provided four interpreters who assisted in the success of the meeting which included speeches by Adama Samassekou, of the African Academy of Languages and Yoshiki Makami, of the Language Observatory Project, reports of the Survey of the Asian and African Languages on the Web, by C. A. Marasinghe, S. Kodama, and the launch of the publication "How to ensure a Language's Presence in Cyberspace", by its author Marcel Diki-Kidiri.

"By deciding to celebrate mother tongues, UNESCO's Member States wished to recall that languages are not only an essential part of humanity's cultural heritage, but the irreducible expression of human creativity and of its great diversity."

UNESCO Director-General Koichiro Matsuura

Spring General Assembly of European Volunteer Centre

22-24 March 2007, Paris, France

Summary: The spring CEV General Assembly took place in Paris, France on 22-23 March 2007 and focused on "Volunteering as a route (back) to employment". This conference was held in collaboration with IAVE – Europe and organized thanks to efforts of France Be-nevolat. The General Assembly aims to give an overview of effective and innovative networking and mobilization strategies throughout Europe to strengthen

volunteering. What has worked? Why? Is this practice transferable?

Role of ICVolunteers: Cyrille Marc Schmid, Manager of Cybervolunteer Program attended the assembly and presented to the audience facts, challenges and progress of ICVolunteers experience in the cyberspace, stressing particularly the Africa@home project and perspectives.

Spain

The dynamic team of ICVoluntarios-Barcelona, composed by Maria Vila, the coordinator, and Noelia Jover, Program Manager, is working really hard!

The project *Parla amb mi, parla aquí* is ending its 1st phase which means hundreds of mails, over 50 meet-

ings done and the translation, with the support of *Linguamón* (www.linguamon.cat), *Casa de les Llengües*, into more than six languages of a questionnaire to check the willing of the migrants to volunteering.

More: www.icvolunteers.org/spain

The Catalan Third Social Sector Desk

22-23 March 2007, Barcelona, Spain

Summary: The Catalan Third Social Sector Desk held its First Congress in Barcelona on 22nd and 23rd of March. Up to 23 umbrella organisations are currently active members of the Desk, representing more than 2000 Catalan entities. These organisations serve more than 800,000 people, in particular, children, families,

the elderly, youth, the disabled, the cronically ill, drug addicts, immigrants and refugees.

The role of ICVoluntarios: ICVoluntarios attended the meeting bringing to the audience its experience.

Youth in action

Barcelona, Spain

Summary: "Youth in Action" is the new programme presented by the European Commission as an extension of the Youth Programme (2000-2006) for the period 2007-2013. It comprises five actions, including youth exchanges, the European Voluntary Service and "Youth of the World" which is designed to develop projects with third countries.

The general objectives of the programme are to promote young people's active citizenship; develop young people's solidarity; foster mutual understanding between peoples through young people; support youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field; promote European cooperation in youth policy.

In order to reinforce the active commitment of young people, "Youth in Action" supports mobility and initiatives for young people and projects for participating in democratic life. It also aims to step up young people's participation in various forms of voluntary activities, both within and outside the European Union.

The role of ICVolunteers: ICVolunteers team attended a meeting on youth policies in Skopje (Macedonia) and sent a number of local volunteers abroad. ICVoluntaris-Barcelona is now working to become eligible as a destination for young volunteers around the world willing to have a volunteer experience in Barcelona.

Mali

The Oulad Nagim desert school has gotten support and funds mobilized by the UNESCO Group of the Geneva *Collèges Candolles*. A fruitful exchange took place between the two schools.

A training seminar on information and communication technologies is planned for early June and the Mali office is officially recognized as a Malian entity.

Oulad Nagim Desert School

Spring 2007, Mali

Summary: The UNESCO Group of *Collèges Candolles*, also involving students from *Collèges Calvin*, lead a number of initiatives to help the Desert School of Oulad Nagim located at 120 km from Timbuktu. The Genevan students organized an exhibition, debates and fundraising campaign for the Desert School. The school children of the desert school made drawings and communicated their progress in school through information and communication technologies to the pupils in Geneva.

Thanks to the funds raised by the Swiss kids, the well in the Mali desert is now going to be 10 meters deeper, thus less prone to getting completely dry during the season where rain is a rarity. School books and other equipment were also purchased with the funds.

Role of ICVolunteers: ICVolunteers established the contact between the two schools, helped with initial planning, documentation and the contact between the desert community and the Genevan public school.

Senegal

Decentralized Information Systems for husbandry in the Sahel

Senegal

Summary: The Decentralized Information Systems for husbandry in the Sahel is a pilot project for the improvement of the management of pastoral resources, through the set up of several "information terminals".

Role of ICVolunteers: ICVolunteers is the network facilitator of this project and has already contacted many partners, such as the Minister of Breeding, the

Radiodiffusion Télévision Sénégalaise (RTS), the local communities, and the Cresp. An agreement has been proposed to the *Service civique national* and it will be signed in time. A future cooperation with the University of Swaziland and the HAMA (Hub of African Modern Agriculture) project is also in prospect.

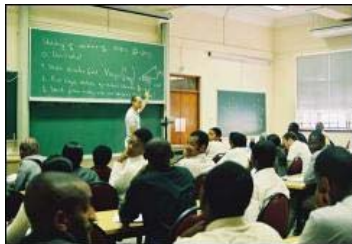
For more information, see <http://cyber.icvolunteers.org>

South Africa

AIMS workshop on volunteer computing

16-22 July 2007, Muizenberg, South Africa

Summary: Organised and sponsored by the Africa@home partnership - which involves the CERN, the University of Geneva, the World Health Organization, several African academic institutions, the Swiss Tropical



Institute, ICVolunteers and Informaticiens sans frontières - the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences workshop on Volunteer Computing for Africa will introduce participants to

state-of-the-art open source software technologies behind distributed computing and cyber-volunteerism on the Internet. Participants will gain hands-on experience

with these technologies, so that they can harness the power of volunteer computers worldwide for their own research or to support research of their colleagues in universities and research labs across Africa.

Volunteer computing is a new and rapidly growing trend that can help in efforts to tackle some of the major humanitarian challenges faced by Africa, and can also bridge the digital divide by putting African researchers at the centre of international humanitarian projects.

Role of ICVolunteers: ICVolunteers is recruiting and selecting the workshop participants and cyber-volunteers. During the event it will be in charge of the onsite logistics of the workshop.

XVII IAAP Congress on Analytical Psychology

12-17 August 2007, Cape Town, South Africa

Summary: The International Association for Analytical Psychology is organizing its 2007 Congress, which will take place in Cape Town on August.

The Congress will focus on Analytical Psychology that engages the contemporary world and the finding of confirmations and challenges in numerous spheres, internally among schools of Jungian theory and practice as well as externally from other disciplines.

To enhance the exploration of interdisciplinary approaches as they interact and impact the theory and practice of analytical psychology, the organizers are striving to include experts from various disciplines such

as cultural anthropology, the cognitive and neurosciences, sociology, evolutionary psychiatry, politics, history and so forth. Similarly, bands devoted to the Arts are anticipated, with attention to music, movement, film, along with fine arts. (Check the overall program on ICVolunteers web site).

Role of ICVolunteers: ICVolunteers South Africa, together with the Switzerland office, will facilitate the congress linguistic services, such as interpretation from and to English, French, Spanish, Italian, German.

Other Places

MOVE Conference

22-24 May 2007, Bruxelles, Belgium

Summary: The MOVE conference at the Economic and Social Committee in Brussels will gather 60 experts and practitioners who will present and discuss good practice on: how to identify, assess and validate skills, competences and knowledge learned through volunteering; how to ensure mutual recognition of these skills, competences and knowledge by different stakeholders such as institutions of formal learning, the business sector

and state agencies as well as accreditation bodies. Participants will discuss barriers that may hinder collaboration of different stakeholders and open a European debate on the mutual recognition of learning outcomes through volunteering.

Role of ICVolunteers: ICVolunteers was contacted in order to report on the four plenary of the conference.

Civitas

4-6 May 2007, Padova, Italy

Summary: Civitas is the most important exhibition – fair on solidarity, social and civil economy realized in Europe. It is a unique event because it is both an exhibition and a meeting place.

It is the square of great ideas for the common good promoted by those who work in the third sector in order to make them visible, to create projects and comparisons, to net different organizations. Civitas promotes meetings between the citizens and the actors of



the local territory: civil society, institutions and firms. Civitas is composed of stands, meetings and seminars, exhibitions, artistic - cultural events.

Role of ICVolunteers: ICVolunteers will participate as partner of the network of NGOs VitaEurope.

Who talked about us?

L'organisation non gouvernementale ICVolontaires est maintenant implantée en France, avec l'inauguration de ses nouveaux locaux au Centre international des affaires. (...) Avec plus de 200 bénévoles dans le Pays de Gex, cette ONG soutient des projets liés à la communication.

"Le Dauphiné", 4 avril 2007

Aprovechar las nuevas tecnologías de la información y la comunicación para apoyar proyectos de desarrollo. Ese es el objetivo que llevó a Viola Krebs a crear hace más de siete años la organización ICVoluntarios. La entidad empezó colaborando en tareas de comunicación y traducción en jornadas y conferencias sobre temas sociales y humanitarios y, con el tiempo, ha ampliado sus proyectos y ha creado una red de cibervoluntarios con más de 7000 personas de todo el mundo.

www.canalsolidarios.org

Geneva annually hosts hundreds of high-level meetings, conferences and workshops (261 in 2005, according to the International Geneva Yearbook), mainly related to the humanitarian, social, environmental and medical field. In the front or often in the back line, mingled and hidden among delegates, speakers, media and officials, there is often a discrete (unnoticed) but vital group of people that is indispensable for the smooth running of every special event. Sometimes they help in the welcoming and the logistic services, or the bag-packing and room supervision, in other occasions they interpret, write and edit reports, proceedings or on-line news, depending on their various and eclectic skills. And this peculiar group is composed of volunteers. Or, more precisely, of international conferences volunteers.

www.vitaeurope.org

BECOME A REPORTER FROM GENEVA!

As of the 6th of May, ICVolunteers is officially a partner of the Vita Europa Network.

VITA Europe is a fortnightly newsletter, written in English and published online by Vita, a non profit content company, in collaboration with a network of European partners aiming at stimulating and encouraging the leaders of the Third system, as well as politicians and managers of public and private institutions interested in social issues.

VITA Europe is an information tool – up to date, accurate and trustworthy – that aims to stimulate ideas, networking and institutional lobbying.

Its main areas of interest are:

- Development and external aid (national and European funds for aid development and best practices in foreign aid development)
- Health and environment (campaigns and best practices for social services and the environment)
- Third system and social enterprise (best practices of associations and social enterprises)

The newsletter gives a voice to and highlights European projects, conferences, summits as well as international campaigns and other events.

ICVolunteers is involved by reporting news and writing articles from the Geneva area and its international framework.

We are building up a team of volunteer students, researchers and journalists who wish to participate on the editorial board, discuss topics and news and write articles that will be published on the Vita Europe web-site and will be edited in the newsletter.

If you want to join our team during the weekly meeting, please contact rene.Amodei@icvolunteers.org or tel. +41 76 8001436.



About ICVolunteers

ICVolunteers (International Conference Volunteers) is a dynamic international non-governmental organization that recruits, trains and coordinates volunteers with specific skills for non-profit projects in the fields of languages, conference support and cybervolunteerism.

We work with volunteers to implement social and educational programs in order to help populations and local communities to develop.

Through volunteer effort, we cooperate with organizations in the humanitarian, social, environmental and medical fields to implement projects and conferences at local, national and international levels.

In addition, ICVolunteers promotes volunteerism and its recognition, by enhancing civic commitment and involvement, and by providing leadership and links between organizations, individuals and communities.

With its headquarters in Geneva (Switzerland), ICVolunteers has offices and permanent representation in a number of other countries, including France, South Africa, Mali and Spain.



Impressum

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Layout: ICVolunteers

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