

Annex 30: Guidelines for Incentives for volunteers

Programs depend on volunteers to do a large amount of the work. The commitment of volunteers to join and to continue to volunteer in the programme very much depends on the incentive made available to the volunteer. An incentive can be described as a stimulation for someone to volunteer. As an organization that promotes the empowerment of communities and sustainable development monetary incentives are not applied. However there are many other incentives that can stimulate key volunteers to contribute towards the programme.

For Red een Kind supported programs there are two particular groups of volunteers of great importance. In the first place community facilitators (different titles are being used for this change agent) that support Community Ambassadors and children/youth groups and facilitate the correspondence and sponsor related documentation for the programme. In the second place Community Ambassadors (children and families) that represent the community towards the sponsors through correspondences. Community facilitators require different incentives than community ambassadors.

Incentives for Community facilitators

In the first place for community facilitators to be motivated it is important that they are carefully selected. Community Facilitators should in the first place be motivated by a personal interest in the well-being of children to participate in the programme. However often more is necessary to allow them to stay motivated to do the work of a community facilitator. This can be done in the following ways:

1. As an incentive the programme provides training to the facilitators to do the work well
2. Giving the facilitator a formal recognized role in the community gives status which is often an incentive to join as a volunteer
3. In case the facilitator has a large area to cover (travel) costs will be covered by the programme. As an incentive also a bicycle can be provided to the facilitator
4. Important is also that volunteers are appreciated for the work being done. This can be done by thanking them for the work being done, praising people for the work that is being done, organizing social events
5. The facilitators need to receive ongoing good quality support in the work they do Making an agreement with the facilitator on the services provided by the facilitator and the incentives the facilitator can expect is encouraged. Partner organizations are also encouraged to develop a policy for incentives for volunteers that work for the programme. A distinction needs to be made between a volunteer that directly works for the programme (such as a community facilitator) and the community volunteer that works directly for the community.

Incentives for community ambassadors

For the success of the programs it is also essential that community ambassadors actively participate in the programs. Their contribution contributes towards ongoing involvement and financial support of sponsors. In the first place it is important that the ambassadors are aware of their role as volunteers representing the community. Good awareness raising can contribute mitigate the wrong effects of children and their parents having wrong expectations from the programme. There needs to be a voluntary willingness to represent the community and as a result participate in particular activities (such as correspondence). Though the might volunteer children and families will need a number of incentives to ensure their ongoing involvement during the life of the programme:

1. Ambassadors are the first (but not the only ones) to benefit from the programme. The parents of ambassadors are expected to actively participate in the programme.
2. For many children it will be an incentive if attractive, enjoyable activities and events are organized (such as group games, meetings with peers with bible classes or training events).
3. For some ambassadors the correspondence and the contact with the sponsor will be an incentive to participate. However some of the ambassadors will not enjoy this contact and will need an alternative incentive to participate.
4. Hand-outs provided to the ambassadors are discouraged. However children groups can benefit from materials provided necessary to allow the group to function effectively. These could include writing and drawing materials and sports equipment.
5. Ambassadors can also experience the special visits of the community facilitators as they monitor the well-being of the child as an incentive as they receive special attention.

Partner organizations are encouraged to develop a contextualized incentive policy for their ambassadors and frequently monitor the effectiveness of the policy. When developing an incentive policy be clear about your goal. Determine the behaviours to reward what are the right incentives (develop criteria). Keep the plan simple and involve a small group of volunteers in the process.