

Workshop Presentation

Topic: Volunteering of Professionals

Developing a Volunteer Program Beneficial to Both KFHI and Volunteers; Hunger Reporter

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Introduction; KFHI, the first NGO to send aid to overseas

The Korea Food for the Hungry International(KFHI) is an international non-governmental organization(NGO) established as a national organization in support of Food for the Hungry International(FHI) in 1971.

Even though Korea has been an aid-receiving country for a long time since the Korean War, KFHI has been born as the first NGO registered in Korea in 1989 to support various developing communities domestically and overseas. At present we operate and maintain on-going development programs, cooperating with an international headquarters and national offices in over 76 countries around the world.

KFHI's humanitarian programs and achievements encourage staffs, sponsors and volunteers in continuing their commitment in improving the lives of people in developing communities. In all areas of KFHI, the role of volunteers is invaluable. The followings will give the details of the influence and roles of volunteers at KFHI.

KFHI's volunteer programs and new one, Hunger Reporter

Volunteers abroad

KFHI's volunteer activities are largely divided into 'Field activity' and 'Office activity'. 'Field activity' can be explained like the following. KFHI are now sending 127 professional volunteers to 27 countries around the world. 'Hunger Corp', the professional volunteers are sent around the world and work periodically and their one

term is 3 years. There are also shorter terms; 6-months and one-year. As we can see with the word ‘volunteer’, all the expenses taken place during the volunteer activities are paid by the volunteers themselves.¹ Of course, expenses for big projects performed by the organization such as school constructions, water resources development are supported by the organization. As they carry out such a huge task abroad, the organization singles out applicants with crucial courses. All the to-be volunteers should go through two training courses; three nights and four days course and one month residential training course. During the training program, their religions, characters and abilities are checked and estimated. Volunteers through those harsh courses could carry big projects with other staffs under the control of KFHI. These are follow a mission declaration called VOC² cooperating churches, leaders, people in the field lands for continuous development.

As well as ‘Hunger Corps’, there are volunteer activities abroad in a short term basis. It usually is carried for one to three weeks during summer and winter vacation. They work in cure program, culture exchange program, education program, construction program and so on. Also they participate in emergency relief project such as Tsunami in South Asian countries and Katrina in America. For example, 179 volunteers in total had been sent in 13 times to South Asian countries for relieving Tsunami disaster.

In conclusion, as volunteering overseas carries such huge task and volunteers get involved directly within it, they are singled out and trained considerably, and the organization put every effort to bring out their talents.

Volunteer at home

¹ If they could not afford it, the organization partially supports within its regulation. However, primarily volunteers bear their expenses by themselves, and most of them have abided by the regulation.

² the creed of VOC is as following: The community and its people are advancing towards their God-given potential by: -Being equipped to progress beyond meeting their basic needs, and -Having a growing group of Christians: loving God and one another, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit, reaching out to serve others.

However, since KFHI is in the country to help, office works as well as field activities are of very wide range and pretty important. The activities in Seoul office, which are managing overseas activities and collecting contributions, drive overseas emergency relief and are active in developing field.

The activities in Seoul office include sending mails to manage regular and irregular sponsors, calling to collect sponsors & thank-you calls, word processing to send business & Government proposals, inputting into a program to certificate paid donation, sorting coins from piggy banks, sorting & selling goods at 'Giversmart', the charity recycling shop. There are more activities relating to counseling & plan performance for the progress of event, choosing and analyzing the business in good financial condition to send proposals on high-price, managing web page program, designing and planning for PR brochure, and translating into English.

Also, these activities are differed by characters of volunteers, id est mid-high school students, housewives, workers, because their abilities and concerns are various. Especially, business planning team, one of the departments in KFHI, gives a charge of a project to the volunteer who majors in management or economy to have a relative experience and work more effectively.

These all abovementioned activities are important factors in KFHI, which are being performed in Seoul office.

The professional activities are not very often, but volunteers need to deeply concern in a project. Therefore, they get an orientation to KFHI and keep a good relationship. It enables the volunteers to keep working with us. Experts are included in volunteers: professors in management schools who give advices of sending business proposals, web designers who design and manage on the web, and translators working on a lot of documents. These activities are very helpful for KFHI projects to be more professional and managed effectively at home and abroad. More careful management is needed to keep a long relationship with the professional volunteers. However, it is hard to find the not only professional but also long-term volunteers.

In many cases, general volunteers can not meet the person they have helped face to face. And their works are also usually repetitious and relatively simple. Therefore, motivation of the volunteers is very important. Volunteers who apply with high expectations and hope to help those who suffer, facing the 'reality' of simple daily work, could be disappointed. In order to help volunteers' expectations

match the tasks at hand, KFHI does the best to explain the significance of even seemingly menial jobs in changing the world.

Many volunteers are needed for a variety of tasks, and KFHI finds recruits with the help of Korea's educational policy. Currently in South Korea, many colleges require students to volunteer in social institutions for as many as 30 to 100 credit hours in order to graduate. KFHI collaborates with several colleges to recruit an average of 40 undergraduate students hoping to work with Seoul KFHI.

Developing a volunteer program; Hunger Reporter

However the number of youth volunteers, especially college students hoped to contribute themselves to more global, huge and professional projects while KFHI longs for the helping hands for the everyday routine chore. Thus when these young volunteers faced the “reality”-just doing simple monotonous works, they’ve got easily tired and finally giving up. As a result, this phenomenon became a burden to KFHI. Moreover volunteers of this inclination are usually well-known of the international NGOs and have extraordinary talents of frequent foreign languages and sometimes enthusiasm. So laying their potentials behind was one of the losses to KFHI also.

Going through deliberations over and over, KFHI has finally devised a new volunteer program, named “Hunger Reporter.” Hunger Reporter lets young volunteers study world’s hunger and poverty, carrying on field research according to their interests and intellectual extents, requiring visiting their studying areas mostly during the vacations. This program is motivating and more satisfying young volunteers.

Originally addressing hot news from UN and international press of the calamity to the local societies was the KFHI’s staffs’ work, however making use of young intellectual power and passion, KFHI not only expedites their alarming role to the society for the hunger and emergency worldwide, but also motivates and brings up the next generation, who will lead small society, KFHI and the world. In this process, they are reborn as a reporter, messenger and ambassadors to the society for the international hunger. Further in college they can assist in a campaign for raising funds or hold the events, speaking out to the Korean society.

In fact, for this new program, we need to have small meetings regularly for a group study and discussion and need extra efforts and time from the staffs. However from the long-term viewpoint, it’s a very inspirational and worthwhile program for young generation who will take the responsibility of the next society, now letting

them informing and advocating the poor people's news. And through their activities, more people can get to know the KFHI's projects of love and participate in KFHI's works. Also young volunteering people can have pure hearts for the international and domestic charities and help.

Through KFHI's new development program that started this year, fifteen youth and university student participants have begun with studies on various development issues like AIDS, and children's education. In addition, every week during their Creative Activity class time, thirty students from a foreign language high school attend lectures related to hunger issues at a gathering called 'Hunger Reporter'.

During school breaks, students go directly to the field, exploring issues they are studying, and investigating current circumstances and present needs. Then, at school or community events, students can share with other Korean citizens about the situation and the region they visited³. Each person gives a presentation related to their activities at their school or other local arenas, through writing about their views or participating in speech contests.

Conclusion; Hoping for Developing volunteer program

Hunger Reporter, demanding additional staffs and more workload seems to be wasteful at a glance. However through young volunteers, we can effectively inform and share the world terrible situations, and we believe that they'll become the leaders of society in future, who hold neighbors in and out of the South Korea with love.

we'd like to open our minds, learn more beneficial volunteer programs like the 'Hunger Reporter' case through this conference, and develop more helpful programs for KFHI, other NGOs and the people in need in the world.

³ Pictures and materials from KFHI can be used for these events to support the presentations and to promote KFHI.