From participation to engagement:

Empowering volunteers



Background

Our core task is supporting people in need: children, adults, families and social institutions. In case of a crisis we are there, and in addition to providing immediate assistance, we strive to provide great experiences and dignity to people living in difficult situations.

- 15 years old organisation
- 7 FTE , 6 PTE
- 250 registered volunteers
- 1000+ other volunteers

What is working well?

- Strong community within the core team (20-30 people)
- Fast reaction in case of emergency
- Everything is solved somehow
- High engagement to the case





Several different projects - Challenge: how to bring them together

Providing food for homeless people living on the streets and in homeless shelters

Organising parties in homeless shelters with food, soft drinks, games and live music

Reintegrating 2 homeless men through working for BBM



Bike Maffia Farm and Cultural Space: Growing vegetables and fruits for people in need, hosting disadvantaged groups, organising community events.

Sensitizing children in schools and involving them in the food preparation

Food rescue and donation coordination

Providing meaningful experiences for children in state care

Low level entry - Challenge: how to involve them more

Most of the people are joining us to make sandwiches:

- no experience needed
- no contract
- no mandatory engagement



From reactive to proactive volunteer management



- Volunteer survey → Volunteer database
- Volunteer newsletter
- Event table
- Utilizing volunteer Facebook group
- Project team meetings in person
- Follow-up after one-time volunteer events
- Volunteer event with 60+ people actively participating in team building games
- Recruiting new volunteers for concrete tasks (e.g.: social media, children's program)
- Volunteer trainings and contracts for specific projects

Results

- Volunteer database
- New volunteers getting involved in specific projects
- “Old” volunteers taking on more responsibility
- Better visibility across projects
- Better understanding of who is doing what
- Independently running projects becoming part of the teamwork
- New connections within the team
- Working as one big team - in progress

