

1. Introduction

Having the 35% of the population of Malaysia being youth, with such a high percentage of youth in Malaysia, they are a high asset and important stakeholder in order to ensure the development and humanitarian services are in line with their vision, needs and reality. Following the IFRC Youth Policy (2011) and IFRC Youth Engagement Strategy (2013), guided by Malaysian National Youth Policy (2015) this Malaysian Red Crescent Society (MRCS) Policy is to set the direction for Youth development and Youth engagement across all programs and services at all levels of the National Society.

Higher emphases is needed for the recognition and focus for the resilience of young people through the approaches of MRCS taking in consideration of Political challenges, economic challenges, social challenge and technological challenges young Malaysians face. (Malaysian National Youth Policy (2015)- These include violence, exploitation, discrimination, substance abuse, accidents and diseases, unemployment, poverty consequent to financial and economic crises trafficking, migration, and urbanisation. Additional risks may come from negative peer pressure on personal and social behaviour.

Youth policy emphasizes the recognition of the important of not only seeing them as beneficiaries, but also the important role of youth and values of them in the contribution with mixed age from all walks of life to join efforts in striving to solve the challenges.

2. Overall Goal and Definition of Youth

The overall goal of MRCS Youth Policy is "To develop volunteerism and sustain a well-organized and active youth force, representing all segments of the society to support and own MRCS in all programs and activities".

The definition of youth would be under the scope of; Link Unit (ages 10 – 12), Red Crescent Youth (ages 13 - 17) and Youth VAD (ages 18 – 30), who offer himself / herself / by his or her own free will to perform a task on behalf of MRCS without monetary compensation or expectation of compensation.

3. Youth Vision

Alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable population by mobilizing the **POWER of HUMANITY & YOUTH ON THE MOVE.**

4. Youth Mission

Ensuring a special focus on young people not only for today but also for the future, recognising their particular role in building and sustaining communities that are based on respect and solidarity, by attract and retain more young people through the education, enabling environment and empowerment. And through activating the leading and participating of young people in voluntary activities and in the governance, management, and services of MRCS.

5. Purpose

Encourage and promote the participation of MRCS Youth in the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement to develop and utilize the potentiality of youth in providing humanitarian services with MRC core areas including:

- i) Safety & Security
- ii) Health & Social Services
- iii) Humanitarian Diplomacy
- iv) Disaster Management & Risk Reduction

6. Objectives

The Youth Policy aims:

- 6.1 To develop institutional MRCS Youth Structure in order to ensure the voice of the youth to be heard from bottom up;
- 6.2 Introduce good governance and implement the principles at all levels (responsibility, accountability and transparency) through the engagement of youth in governance and decision making at all levels;
- 6.3 To define the age groups the rights, roles and responsibilities of the youth volunteer;
- 6.4 To provide guidance followed by development of manuals, procedures, rules and regulation for youth development and youth engagement;
- 6.5 To ensure providing enabling environment for youth to act as an example as agents of positive behavioural change and enabled to address;
- 6.6 To provide guidance for strengthening and expand national and international cooperation among MRCS youth network and external and movement wide, partners and networks at national, regional and global levels.

7. Policy Statement

The most efficiency method to achieve the MRCS vision is by involving youths in all programmes and activities by :-

7.1. Youth Structure

- 7.1.1. Youth Units (Links, RCY, VAD Youth) are to be established and developed at all Branches and Chapters level with ensured communication flow among Branches, Chapters and Youth themselves;
- 7.1.2. National Youth Structure to be put formally in place in order to ensure the voice of the youth to be heard from bottom up;

- 7.1.3. Youth leaders for the National Youth Structure to be elected from the grassroots youth members, defined by the Rules of Procedures;
- 7.1.4. Youth representatives from the National Youth Structure to be seated and joining the Governance of MRCS at all levels;
- 7.1.5. Youth representatives from the National Youth Structure to be connected to the Regional Youth Networks such as Southeast Asia Youth Network and Asia Pacific;

7.2. Youth Engagement

- 7.2.1. Branches and Chapters shall raise awareness and promote volunteerism among Youth to nurture Humanitarian Values and the sense of responsibility, mutual respect and self-help through all programmes engaging young people;
- 7.2.2. Branches and Chapters shall ensure transformation of Youth from Links, RCY, VAD Youth and beyond, thus to promote consistency and further strengthening the engagement of youth;
- 7.2.3. Branches and Chapters shall optimise the use of Resource Management System (RMS) for Youth data management and analysis;
- 7.2.4. Youth are involved in all stages of program designing, development, implementation and evaluation;
- 7.2.5. The programmes and trainings aiming for youth, must be considered and designed in a youth friendly manner following the principle of 7.2.3;
- 7.2.6. Youth-led initiatives are to be fostered and encouraged through all programmes and at all levels, along with the enabling-environment and youth friendly space offered both at governance and management at all level;

7.3. Youth Development

- 7.3.1. Youth Leadership development is to be recognised and ensured at all level of the National Society and especially through the programmes, and the competencies youth gain are to be linked up with the Strategic Aim of MRCS;
- 7.3.2. Deployment of the youth volunteers outside their community, state and country to be ensured;
- 7.3.3. The age and gender-specific development needs of the Youth are given specific attention in the design and delivery of Red Crescent services at all level;
- 7.3.4. All programmes to ensure, Youth volunteers themselves to grow, adjust, and mitigate the issues and challenges youth in general are facing;

8. Policy Implementation

This policy will come into effect after the approval of the MRCS National Council. However MRCS Strategies, Plan of Action, Handbooks will form as part of this document.

The MRCS youth volunteer focal point shall bear primary responsibility to identify productive and creative youth volunteers, recruiting suitable youth and train, develop and retaining them for the various programs and projects MRCS will undertake. Maintaining a database, providing necessary support, assistance, supervision, monitoring and evaluating the contribution of youth volunteers towards the programs / activities of MRCS would always be a challenging task for the Youth Department.

Planned and organized efforts are required for effective utilization of the volunteers. The development of an organized network of youth volunteers at all level and retaining them through sustainable program activities have become crucial needs. The function of the Youth department at national, Branch and Chapter levels are to provide a coordinating point for effective Youth volunteer management within MRCS, direct and assist staff members and youth volunteers joint efforts to provide more productive and equality services.

However it is to be recognised that the above policy statement is not only through the role of the department, but to be cross-cuttingly guiding all programmes and services at all level.

9. Conclusion

MRCS Youth Policy aims to recognize the desired requirements and conditions of the MRCS Youth, stating clear vision, purpose, direction, and strategies to consolidate youth forces from all walks of life and mobilize resources referred to develop youth to become young volunteers with fairness and spirit of humanitarian, knowledge and know-how, broad solidarity, initiatives and innovation in planning activities referring to promote effectiveness in providing humanitarian services responding to the needs of victims and vulnerable and contributing to accelerate the poverty reduction, protecting and promoting dignity of humanity to have the prestige of the Malaysian Red Crescent upheld in both national and International levels.

This policy is to be reviewed every 5 year or earlier if there are changes to relevant national and international requirement so that it remains current, effective and appropriate to the surrounding environment of youth and ensuring the policy guidance would be in line with the vision and needs of the young generation.