

MEPI Alumni Connection

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MEPI



MEPI Day of Service

Alumni Toolkit

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About the MEPI Day of Service

The MEPI Day of Service is a movement by the MEPI alumni network to fostering community engagement, building team spirit, and connect with the broader MEPI network. The MEPI Day of Service leverages the power of social media for MEPI Alumni and stakeholders to honor the MEPI values of meaningful and effective partnerships in the Middle East and North Africa to generate shared solutions that promote stability and prosperity in the region.

Alumni from the eligible MEPI Alumni Connection countries¹ of Algeria, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia are encouraged to together to plan and participate in community service activities in your home communities as part of the MEPI Day of Service movement. Service activities can range from a day spent cleaning up a national park, to renovating a school in need; think creatively about how to best serve your community's needs!

The MEPI Day of Service is a day of volunteering and community engagement; no financial support is provided. To support your success in this annual activity, the MEPI Alumni Connection team had developed this Toolkit to support you in:

- planning and implementing your service activities,
- share your efforts and impact on social media, using #MEPIDayofService
- and support you in hosting MEPI Day of Service activities in your communities on the same day in future years.

Act: How Will You Volunteer

The first step is to choose the type of volunteer work that you would like to do for the MEPI Day of Service.

Would you like to organize your own event?

Use this toolkit for guidance and tips for organizing and implementing community service events.

Looking for ways to volunteer at existing events?

Leverage your network to find people who need volunteers! Here are some resources to start searching:

¹ Eligible countries for the MEPI Day of Service to be confirmed by MEPI/NEA and Posts during approval phase.

- Friends and colleagues – *ask you friends and colleagues if they are planning events or are members of groups that need volunteers*
- Local schools and associations – *local schools and community groups often need volunteers to help them complete their work successfully*
- Social media – *follow #MEPIDayofService to learn about events that fellow MEPI alumni are planning and how to get involved*

Additional Resources:

129 Examples of Community Service Projects: <https://blog.prepscholar.com/129-examples-of-community-service-projects>

Organizing Successful Events

Successful events rely on intentional planning; most of your time and effort in implementing an activity will go into the planning and preparation.

Assessing the Need and Setting Goals

- Prioritize the people you are serving: What is the most useful for them?
- Determine: What is the goal of this activity?
- What kind of short-term or long-term impact could this activity stimulate?
- Set clear objectives for the service activity.
- Consider coordinating with an existing organization or working with another community leader to design an impactful activity.

Think through the process for a successful event. Some guiding questions to consider:

- Where will the activity take place?
- How many people do you anticipate serving?
- How many volunteers are needed? What will the volunteers be required to do?

Develop a timeline and workplan leading up to the event and for the event:

- How much time will it take to learn about your community's needs and discuss your ideas with your community members?
- How much time will it take to get a meeting and approval from local authorities?
- How much time will it take to reach out to friends and community members to confirm volunteers for planning and implementing your project?
- How often should you be following up with community members and volunteers?

Additional Resources:

Five Steps to Organizing a Community Service Project: <https://livegreen.recyclebank.com/5-Steps-to-Organizing-a-Community-Service-Project>

How to Create Successful Community Service Projects: <https://blog.prepscholar.com/community-service-projects>

Planning Your Community Service Project:

<https://extension.purdue.edu/4h/Documents/Volunteer%20Resources/Past%20Congress%20Lesson%20Plans/Planning%20Your%20Community%20Service%20Project.pdf>

Garner Volunteers

To successfully accomplish your community service project, you will need to assemble the right team and establish clear roles.

- Volunteers to help you organize and plan?
- Volunteers to advertise and help recruit other volunteers?
- Volunteers to design materials or take photographs?
- Volunteers to implement the activity.

You will likely need many types of volunteers. How will you recruit volunteers?

- Make the activity relatable and fun.
- Is this a new activity you are proposing, or building on a success from previous similar initiatives?
- Have a simple, concise message of:
 - What you want to do and why it is important to the community.
 - Benefits the volunteers will gain, such as a new skill.
 - A realistic estimate of the amount of time the volunteers will contribute to planning and on the actual day.
- Working with an established group can make it much easier to find dedicated volunteers
 - Start with your MEPI Alumni network and your friends, who may be like-minded or who may have personal experience with the problem you are addressing.
 - Share with colleagues, classmates, and members of other groups to which you belong.

Additional Resources:

Volunteerism: A Practical Guide for Non - Profit Organizations:

<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/structure/volunteers/recruiting/main>

<https://maktabatmepi.org/ar/tags/volunteerism>(Arabic)

How to Get Volunteers to Help at Your Event: <https://www.attendstar.com/how-to-get-volunteers-to-help-at-your-event/>

How to Find Volunteers for an Event: <https://www.gevme.com/blog/how-to-find-volunteers-for-an-event/>

Safety & Risk Mitigation

It is important to ensure that you've assessed the risks that may be present at your event and take steps to mitigate those risks.

- Prepare ahead with contingency plans such as:
 - a. Having a list of all the relevant persons phone numbers
 - b. A backup plan for weather
 - c. Who's in charge if something happens to you that day?
- Determine what equipment you may need and ensure that equipment will be available:
 - Provide it yourself
 - Ask for donations
 - Ask volunteers to bring their own equipment

Examples may include paper, art supplies, shovels, hammers, books, prizes, games, transportation, microphone, water, chairs, etc.

- Determine if any of the work that you may be doing has associated risks such as exposing chemicals, loud noises, or dust
 - Determine if the risk can be avoided
 - Determine if you need a specialist at the event due to the risk
 - Determine if special equipment is needed to reduce the risk, such as facemasks or earplugs.
- Brief your team and volunteers about your risk assessment and provide everyone with information on emergencies contact number or procedures in case of injury or sudden sickness
- Established contact with your local authorities early in the planning process and stay in touch throughout planning and the day of the event to ensure their support, for example visiting the mayor's office or local police stations.
- Bring a First Aid kit with you during the activity day for any sudden injury or sickness.
- Brief volunteers on the risks.

Use the following resources to support you in assessing and mitigating for risks:

Appendix X – Risk Assessment Form

Additional Resources:

Risk Assessment and Volunteering Information Sheet, Volunteer Now: <http://smallcharityweek.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Risk-Toolkit-Volunteers.pdf>

Risk Management for Your Volunteer Program, Verified Volunteers: <https://www.sterlingvolunteers.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Risk-Management-For-Your-Volunteer-Program-Whitepaper-2.pdf>

How to Complete a Risk Assessment, Know How Non Profit: <https://worksmart.org.uk/health-advice/health-and-safety/hazards-and-risks/what-are-five-steps-risk-assessment>

Sample Photo/Image Release Form

https://www.nfplaw.org.au/sites/default/files/media/Sample_Volunteer_Consent_and_Release_Form.pdf

Promote & Connect:

Volunteering not only benefits the community but also builds community! MEPI Day of Service is an opportunity for MEPI Alumni to connect with each other and with like-minded individuals in your communities, countries, and region. Leverage the momentum of the day and social media to build enthusiasm for your event, garner volunteers, and share the results and impact of your hard work and dedication.

Sharing catchy, clear and engaging posts on social media network will boost both your work impact, exposure and outreach to potential volunteers and local partners who would support your activity.

Share your plan

Use social media to share calls for volunteers or learn about opportunities to volunteer. Sample Posts:

Help us collect book donations for the pupils at Example School in Example Community! Drop off your books at Example School between 11:00 – 16:00 on Example Day. See you there!
#MEPIDayofService

Example Event aspires to spread awareness about financial literacy to contribute towards the advancement of our community at large. Everyone is welcome to join us on Example Day starting at 9:00 am. #MEPIDayofService

See also Appendix X – Developing an Advertising Plan

Share your actions

This is the big day! Using social media on the day of your event demonstrates the drive and force of MEPI Alumni action across the region. Join the movement to contribute to your communities and share your actions proudly with the MEPI Alumni network by sharing updates and photos throughout the day using the unique *#MEPIDayofService* hashtag. We also encourage you to tag the handles of @USMEPI, @IREXintel, and US Embassy in your country for wider interaction and outreach on social media for the MEPI Day of Service. Sample Posts:

Come join us at the playground! We have 20 volunteers helping assemble new play equipment for the students. Let's make our community a great place for our children. #MEPIDayofService

Resources: See Appendix X – Social Media Hashtags and Platforms for a list of relevant HashTags and Social Media platforms to tag when sharing your MEPI Day of Service activities

[Share your results](#)

Keep the energy going after the event!

Use social media to thank your volunteers. Sample Post:

Use social media to connect your partners and highlight their work to others through future opportunities. Sample Post:

Thanks again to @localschool for inviting us to come share our skills for #MEPIDayofService; we reached 100 students that day! @localschool is always looking for professionals to share their skills; learn more on their webpage here: XXX.

On behalf of our team we want to thank everyone who committed both their time and efforts and believed dearly in the event power to positively impact our community. #MEPIDayofService

Impact Sharing Report:

Share the impact of your work on social media and also with IREX and MEPI. Submit photos and a MEPI Day of Service Impact Report Form to IREX using this link:

English: https://irexorg.formstack.com/forms/impact_sharing_report

Arabic: https://irexorg.formstack.com/forms/impact_sharing_report_arabic

Remember you can always report your success to MEPI via the success story link:
<https://mepi.state.gov/alumni-corner/send-success-story/>

Resources: See Appendix X - MEPI Day of Service Impact Sharing Report template

Questions and Contact Information

Please email IREX at mepialumni@irex.org with any questions concerning social media and your #MEPIDayofService engagement. You may also email us with photos, articles, and other updates on how your MEPI experience and #MEPIDayofService activity has impacted your work back home. IREX and MEPI can help publicize the great work that you are doing if you let us know about it!