

VALUE Network – Intercultural Dialogue Subgroup

Notes of Workshop in Lille, FR - 17 November 2010

Following the presentations from the ICD Subgroup and the invited expert Susana Szabo, discussion included the following points:

- intercultural dialogue is not just cross-border but can be within one state, within an organisation and inter-generational.
- Shared examples illustrated how it was important for volunteers working with other cultures (even within one state) to understand that transmission of knowledge about a host culture should not destroy the culture of the incoming group. This is an important point for training of volunteers.
- Following on from this, it was also noted that volunteers from one region in a large state (eg TR) have to be sensitive about their work in another area, for example westernised clothing being worn by volunteers from large cities when working with people in more isolated rural areas may influence the local residents to aspire to a perceived culture that is not necessarily desirable.
- In those cases it was suggested that it is very important to encourage the local hosts of volunteers to celebrate their regional specialities e.g.by preparing to sing local songs. In this way they are *giving* from their own cultural perspective and not just receiving cultural influences from volunteers.
- Further to this, they can also exchange learning experiences – eg sharing their knowledge of animal care. So volunteering in these situations can occur in a spirit of shared learning

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