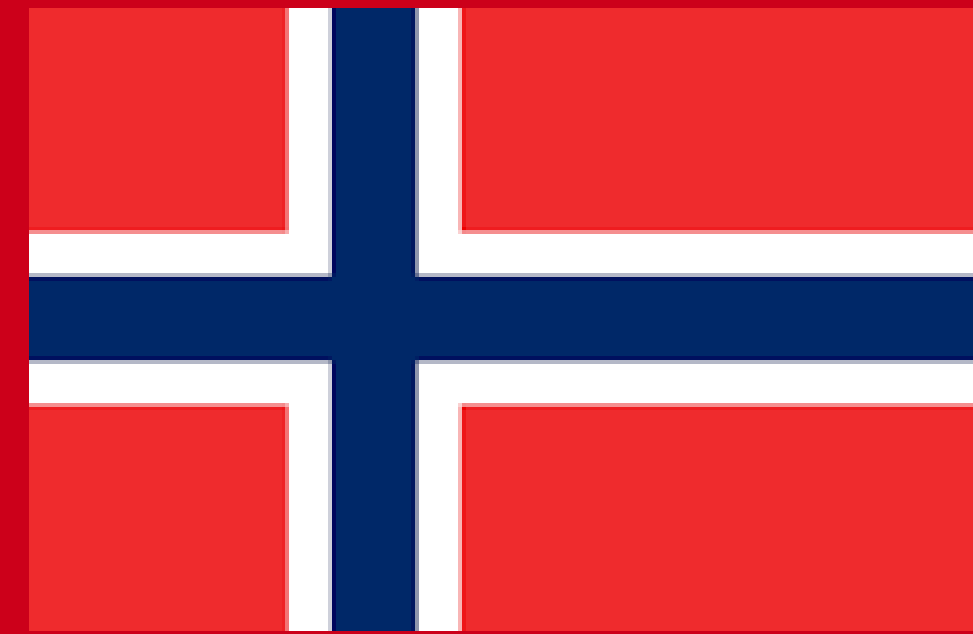


BLUE CROSS NORWAY



2020 FEBRUARY

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- Blue Cross Norway, founded in 1906, is the major diaconal organization in Norway working in the field of alcohol and drug abuse and is, also, an umbrella organization for 20 Christian organizations in Norway.
- Blue Cross bases its activities on diaconal work expressed through charity, inclusive fellowship and working for justice.
- **Work focus: Preventive measures, especially regarding children and adolescents, treatment and follow-up after treatment, outpatient activities, work focused on the needs of families, children and teenagers, four secondary schools, street-based activities, housing centers, local groups, etc.**
- Has around **1.300 employees, 900 dedicated volunteers** (called "Time Donors"), **2.300 members** and around **40 small and large local groups**.
- BCN owns and operates around **55 different institutions** situated in most parts of Norway south of the Nordland region. It is also represented by two institutions in the city of Tromso, north of the Polar Circle.





**DR. RUNE HIJALMAR
ESPELAND,
INTERNATIONAL
PROGRAM MANAGER**

1. Why is the work of the Blue Cross important to you?

Because we make a difference in people's lives every day of the year, at home in Norway and as members of a global network of Blue Cross partners.

2. Are you convinced of the impact of your work – if so, which aspects?

Without a doubt! Collaborating with Blue Cross partners to implement projects in Africa has provided significant results. Currently we focus on prevention projects with children and youth. Facilitating capacity building of other partner organizations, as we have done with training on alcohol policies, is also an important stepping-stone to achieve good results.

3. What was your happiest moment during your time with Blue Cross?

My first partner visit to Blue Cross Kisumu in Kenya was very inspiring, and it is something I think of often. Having met dedicated project staff and seen their work first-hand gives me the inner motivation to make an extra effort in my work.

4. What is/was your biggest challenge in your work for Blue Cross?

The fact that children and youth who are already disadvantaged experience more harm from drinking than others. Knowing about these vulnerable children's challenges is to be a major personal challenge, as my resources are limited in addressing these them.

5. Blue Cross in your country: What do you consider your most important project?

That is a difficult question, as Blue Cross Norway provides so many valuable services that are equally important. But I would like to highlight our national work with children and youth; from Blue Cross Youth activities to universal prevention and targeted interventions. This is the future of our organization.