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UNV launched the SWVR 2022 jointly with the League of Arab States in Cairo, in the presence of H.E. Nivine Kabbag, Minister of Social Solidarity of Egypt (centre). She is flanked by Christian Hainzl (right), UNV Regional Manager for the Arab States and Karina Nersesyan (left), UNFPA Deputy Regional Director for the Arab States (left).

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Calling on policymakers to work with volunteers in building forward better

The regional launch of the fourth State of the World's Volunteerism Report (SWVR) in the Arab States took place on 29 August 2022 at the headquarters of the League of Arab States in Cairo, Egypt. Discussions emphasized the value of volunteer-state partnerships in addressing the region's pressing humanitarian and development challenges and building forward better in an equal and inclusive manner.

The 2022 SWVR reveals that cooperation between volunteers and governments helps build collaborative decision-making. Drawing on quantitative and qualitative research with case studies from around the world, it also highlights the role of local volunteers as brokers between their communities and state authorities and underlines the diverse paths volunteering offers to civic participation.

The report, based on the case studies examined, identifies three models to highlight innovative volunteer-state relationships – the deliberative

governance model, the collaborative service delivery model and the social innovation model.

“ The 2022 SWVR presents evidence on how partnerships between volunteers and the state allow marginalized groups to have their voices heard. Such collaboration offers people not only a tool to influence or inform government policies, but also opportunities for volunteers to contribute their knowledge and expertise to solving common challenges. --Christian Hainzl, UNV Regional Manager for the Arab States

Zooming in on volunteer estimates for the Arab States, the report suggests that the total number of volunteers aged 15 years and older volunteering on a monthly basis in the region amounts to 26 million (out of 850 million globally), with an average monthly volunteer rate of nine per cent (noting a global average of 15 per cent).

Shifting to evidence drawn from the content, one case study from the region highlights how volunteers, in partnership with state authorities, were able to contribute to more inclusive provision of COVID-19 vaccines to vulnerable domestic-workers in Lebanon.

Another example from Tunisia showcased how state-volunteer partnerships helped enhance the participation of rural communities in decision-making processes, leading to a collaborative approach to manage scarce water resources.

The report was launched in the Arab States at an event organized by the UNV Regional Office for the Arab States, in collaboration with the League of Arab States, the Ministry of Social Solidarity of Egypt and UNFPA Arab States Regional Office. It was attended by the permanent representatives of Member States of the League of Arab States, alongside participants from the government, UN partners, academia, civil society and volunteer-involving organizations.

H.E. Dr Haifa Abu Ghazaleh, Assistant Secretary-General and Head of Social Affairs at the League of Arab States, delivered the opening remarks, followed by H.E. Dr Nivine Kabbag, Minister of Social Solidarity of Egypt and Ms Elena Panova, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Egypt.

The next session began with two testimonials of local volunteers serving in Egypt. Afterwards, Dr Christian Hainzl, UNV Regional Manager for the Arab States, presented key findings and messages from the report, setting the stage for a panel discussion on its findings. The discussion, facilitated by Ms Vera Chrobok, Policy Analyst at UNV, brought together voices from governments and volunteer-involving organizations.

Alongside H.E. Minister Kabbag, panelists included Mr Sami Hassounah, Head of the Civil & Community Service Programme at the Prime Minister's Office in the State of Palestine, Dr Amal Emam, Regional Youth and Volunteer Coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Dr Kamel Mohanna, Founder and President of Amel Association International of Lebanon, and Mr Hany Mahmoud, Vice President of the Arab Voluntary Union of Bahrain.

Minister Plenipotentiary, Mr Tarek El-Nabulsi, Director of the Development and Social Policies Department at the League of Arab States moderated the exchange.

The event also witnessed the launch of the Arab Strategy to Promote Volunteering in its closing session. The strategy was developed by the League of Arab States, in close collaboration with the UNFPA Arab States Regional Office, and with advisory support from UNV.

Arab States

Sustainable Development Goal: [SDG 10: Reduced inequalities](#) [SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals](#)