

News  
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## Local volunteering is the thread that binds communities and makes them strong

In a fragile and turbulent world, volunteers are active in every major shock and stress situation experienced by communities – from earthquakes and flooding to climate change and local conflicts. Often working behind the scenes, they are the thread that binds communities together, finds the latest [State of the World's Volunteerism Report 2018](#), published by the United Nations Volunteers ([UNV](#)) programme.



The **State of the World's Volunteerism Report 2018: The Thread that Binds** draws on original research across five continents to understand how communities view volunteering. The report aims to help governments and development partners maximize the contribution of volunteerism as a property of resilient communities.

Focus groups and policy discussions for the report were organized in Bolivia, Burundi, China, Egypt, Greece, Guatemala, Madagascar, Malawi, Myanmar, the Netherlands, Philippines, Russia, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Tanzania.

More than one billion people volunteer globally. Considering the hours they contribute, this is equivalent to over 109 million full-time workers. This global volunteer workforce, or "Volunteeria" as the report calls it, exceeds the number of people employed in six of the 10 most populous countries worldwide. The vast majority of volunteer work happens informally, with 70 per cent of all people who volunteer working directly to help people in their communities, while the remaining 30 per cent volunteer through formal organizations. Women represent 57 per cent of all volunteers.

As volunteers are active in all communities, decision-makers need to better understand the relationship between volunteerism and community resilience so that voluntary action has the best opportunity to contribute to the collective and public good.

By unpacking the distribution of the costs and benefits of local volunteerism under strain, the report examines how governments and other peace and development actors can contribute to making peoples' actions in volunteering a real part of community preparedness. --Toily Kurbanov, Deputy Executive Coordinator of UNV

The report recommends:

- Providing adequate support and resources, so that volunteer groups and networks can step up from coping with to preventing shocks
- Ensuring access to volunteering opportunities, including for those who prefer to work informally, and moving away from piecemeal volunteering projects
- Supporting equal distribution of volunteer labor and impact

Download the [State of the World's Volunteerism Report 2018: The Thread that Binds](#) [embargoed until 18 July 2018].

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**Notes to editors:****For more information and interviews please contact:**

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**About the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme**

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide. Volunteerism is a powerful means of engaging people in tackling development challenges, and it can transform the pace and nature of development. UNV is active in around 130 countries every year. , is represented worldwide through the offices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and reports to the UNDP Executive Board.

For more information go to <https://www.unv.org/swvr/resilientcommunities>, and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).



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