



Reimagining
Volunteering
for the 2030 Agenda
JULY 2020

Daily Digest

#volunteerSDGs #GTM2020

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TOP STORY

Volunteering is even more essential in times of crisis, echoed panelists at GTM2020

In a highly unequal region like Latin America, the COVID-19 pandemic is threatening to worsen inequalities. Volunteers are critical, not only to the pandemic response, but to build back a new normal which leaves no one behind. But are our systems fit for new ways of engaging people? Can volunteering be used as a means to address inequalities and accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?

Day 2 of the Global Technical Meeting on Reimagining Volunteering for the 2030 Agenda zoned in on how volunteering can be a game-changer in the Decade of Action.

The contribution of volunteering to the SDGs is immense. Based on the survey conducted by the Plan of Action secretariat, over 90% of the respondents believe that volunteers contribute significantly to the SDGs, particularly on health and education.

“The value of volunteers in development efforts is invisible because it is not measured and documented, especially the work of informal volunteers,” emphasized Rafael Diez de Medina, ILO Statistician.

To reimagine volunteering, “we need **open and accessible data** to support volunteering efforts, close knowledge gaps and build trust with governments and civil society,” stressed Lev Jakobson, Vice President of the Higher School of Economics in the Russian Federation.

Peter Kanyandago, Professor of Ethics and Development Studies at Uganda Martyrs University, added the need to **diversify the evidence base**, noting that “there is a tendency for the North to help the South do research. I think something that could be explored is the opportunity for the South to help the North”.

At the same time, “we need to **build evidence from the ground up** and move away from top-down assumptions underpinning existing volunteering evidence”, said Bianca Fadel, a researcher at the Northumbria University.

During COVID-19 pandemic, local volunteers have indeed been supporting local efforts to collect data and provide information especially in hardest to reach areas, as shown by examples through Peru’s ‘Bicentennial Project’ and Thailand’s ‘Friends of Thailand’.

Such data is important to overhaul policies integrating volunteering and improve their effectiveness. In addition to collecting evidence, “We need to think **about new partnerships and ways of working**, and how and why people-led action through volunteering has a critical role to play,” remarked Cielo Morales of ECLAC.

To better understand how the strengths of volunteering can accelerate the SDGs, a new tool called the [Acceleration Matrix](#) developed by volunteering and SDG stakeholders, was presented. The matrix brings together **four acceleration characteristics with the six contributions of volunteering namely, solidarity, inclusion, ownership, participation, innovation and inspiration.**

In building new societies post-COVID19, **the matrix can guide policy makers to activate people’s contributions by engaging with volunteering as an SDG accelerator.**

“Volunteers can change the reality only if they have a good opportunity. Volunteers are the ones who will take the SDGs to the locals”, remarked Wjdan Al-Matari, Volunteer and Founder, Helping Hudaida Migrants Initiative.

WHAT’S COMING

Day 3 to discuss how next generation volunteering could look like

The session on Wednesday will look at how our understanding of volunteering is changing and discuss innovative policies and practices to support next generation volunteering. In addition, regional contexts on reimagining volunteering will be explored in the five regional breakout sessions.

Check out the full [programme for more information](#).

Read the draft document on [Policy Blueprints: An Enabling Environment for Volunteering](#)

#GTM2020 ON THE WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- Watch the live recordings of [Session 1](#), Session 2(to be updated) and [Session 3](#)
- Read the Daily Digest from [Day 1](#)
- See the social media wall here: <https://walls.io/volunteerSDGs>
- Interact with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Youtube](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) using #volunteerSDGS #GTM2020 #HLPF2020

VISUAL SUMMARY OF DAY 2

