



**UN
VOLUNTEERS**

**Global Trends in
VOLUNTEERING
INFRASTRUCTURE**

A BACKGROUND PAPER FOR THE 2018 STATE OF THE WORLD'S
VOLUNTEERISM REPORT: *THE THREAD THAT BINDS*



■ SUMMARY

This paper provides an overview of the state of volunteering infrastructure globally as background research to the 2018 State of the World's Volunteerism Report: *The thread that binds*. Three kinds of data provide the basis for the analysis: a review of current literature; a survey of United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme's regional offices and field units covering 91 countries; and 34 semi-structured expert interviews. The main global trends identified are the continued expansion and consolidation of volunteering infrastructure; innovations in technology, modalities and partnerships; and new support for inclusion through volunteering. Key trends are also matched with challenges that show the tensions and contradictions inherent in volunteering infrastructure as affected by the context and the available resources. The findings also highlight that not all volunteering infrastructure is positive and that some interventions can have negative consequences for volunteerism by being restrictive, repressive, and exclusive. These tensions also indicate ways of reducing obstacles to cooperation and fostering greater inclusion by committing to equality, promoting new forms of cooperation, and incorporating technological and cross-sector innovations. They also suggest a need to balance top-down and bottom-up approaches with greater respect for local traditions, along with a need to better tailor volunteering infrastructure to national and local contexts.

■ ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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The 2018 State of the World's Volunteerism Report *The thread that binds* is a United Nations flagship publication that presents new evidence on the role of volunteerism in strengthening community resilience. It finds that communities value volunteerism because it enables them to create collective strategies for dealing with diverse economic, social and environmental challenges. At the same time, unless appropriately supported by wider actors, volunteering can be exclusive and burdensome for some groups. Alone, communities have limited capacities and resources to adapt to emerging and future risks. The report thus explores how governments and development actors can best engage with volunteerism to nurture its most beneficial characteristics, while mitigating against potential harms to the most vulnerable. In doing so, the report provides an important contribution to the evidence base on inclusive, citizen-led approaches to resilience-building.



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Volunteer trainer in front of hand-washing campaign in Tanzania (Raleigh International, 2017)

1

Introduction

Volunteering plays a key role in addressing major global challenges, such as urbanisation, environmental degradation, increased migration, and demographic changes. Furthermore, due to both contextual differences and inequalities, developing locally appropriate volunteering infrastructure is crucial to promoting a volunteerism that is sustainable.¹ Yet, in a world of competing political priorities, 'volunteering infrastructure' – the support provided to maximise the potential of volunteering - rarely receives the attention it needs.

In conditions where policies and legislation successfully create a nurturing and enabling environment for volunteering, people are endowed with stronger protections and incentives to engage in voluntary action. When carefully designed and implemented, volunteer schemes can empower people to participate in their own communities to meet development objectives. Yet, volunteering is not a singularly positive force, as in some instances it can reinforce or even intensify social divisions.² Likewise, top- down supports may unintentionally undermine self-organization by would-be volunteers or narrow access to volunteering opportunities. Thus, prioritizing a functional, appropriate, and inclusive volunteering infrastructure is needed to offer opportunities to all citizens to become agents of change and drivers of their own development.

Prioritizing a functional, appropriate, and inclusive volunteering infrastructure enables citizens to become agents of change and drivers of their own development

Recognizing the scale of global challenges, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide the framework for strengthening local ownership of the development agenda through voluntary action. The 2030 Agenda also sets the stage for an urgent focus on understanding how to develop volunteering infrastructure, and to identify key measures that can promote an enabling environment for volunteerism.³ In their efforts to integrate and maximize the contribution of volunteerism to development programming at the local, national, and international levels, United Nations (UN) Member States, international organizations, and volunteer-involving organizations (VIOs) have been fostering dialogue and consultations with a wide community of stakeholders. As one of these efforts, the plan of action for integrating volunteering into peace and development places volunteering at the centre of a strategic and long-term approach for policies and programmes aimed to implement the SDGs.⁴

To achieve the aims espoused in the SDGs and the plan of action, stakeholders must further their understanding of what constitutes an enabling environment for volunteering

To achieve the aims espoused in the SDGs and the plan of action, stakeholders must further their understanding of what constitutes an enabling environment for volunteering. This paper aims to set readers on this path by contributing new evidence and analysis through combining a mapping of volunteering infrastructure with an analysis of key stakeholders' perceptions of the major global trends, innovations, and challenges of volunteering in 2018. This analysis offers an idea of what needs to be done to improve volunteering infrastructure, priority areas to be addressed, and the major stakeholders to be involved in those activities. As a result, the paper aims to inform the future actions of UN Member States, UN entities, and international, national, and local VIOs in their efforts to maximise the potential for volunteers to make positive contributions to sustainable development.

To speak to each of these stakeholders, this paper recognises that a range of actors shape volunteering infrastructure directly and indirectly - including the public sector, private sector and civil society - and at various levels, including the global, regional, national, sub-national and community. The paper also identifies the emerging areas of volunteering infrastructure beyond laws, policies and schemes, such as technological innovations, that are enabling new initiatives, partnerships, and modalities.

1.1 What is volunteering infrastructure?

There is no unified, mutually agreed definition of volunteering infrastructure that is used in both theory and practice. Different actors and organizations in the sector use diverse working definitions (see Annex A for a glossary of key terms). For UNV, volunteering infrastructure is defined as:

An enabling environment, operational structures and implementation capacities to promote volunteerism, mobilize volunteers and support them in their work. The enabling environment includes the body of policies and laws that protect volunteers and provide incentives for volunteer action. Operational structures include schemes through which volunteers are mobilized, deployed and supported. Implementation capacities include functional and technical resources of volunteer organizations to adapt to changing circumstances, function at high standards of efficiency and achieve results⁵.

Three key elements converge to make this definition operational:

Enabling environment includes policies, laws and other key legal instruments that define, regulate, protect and/or incentivize voluntary action.

Operational structures include volunteer schemes, as well as the volunteer-involving organisations and agencies that support volunteering. It also includes networks and coordinating bodies such as volunteer centres, umbrella organisations, and related networks.

Implementation capacities include key resources that support volunteering such as funding mechanisms, channels of communication for institutionalised consultation with policy makers, mechanisms to collect and share data and document the scale impact of volunteering, and good practice standards.

Not all three aspects necessarily need to be implemented simultaneously, and they can exist in sequence or hierarchy. Taken together, they are designed to “catalyse [...] effectively engaging, mobilizing, supporting, and managing volunteers and volunteer opportunities”⁶

As Figure 1 shows, the successful development of these structures and processes can ultimately maximise the contributions of voluntary efforts to peace and development, and the 2030 Agenda.⁷

Volunteering infrastructure aims to catalyze the mobilization of volunteers, the support to volunteers and the creation of volunteer opportunities



Figure 1 | Volunteering infrastructure for empowered volunteerism

1.2 The state of volunteering infrastructure research

Given that the existing body of evidence is largely biased towards higher income countries, this paper also seeks to provide more comprehensive coverage of volunteering infrastructure across the Global South

Volunteering infrastructure is a relatively new concept. It was a point of common discussion during the International Year of Volunteers in 2001 and has been promoted since then through activities and research. These include UNV's global study on "Laws and Policies Affecting Volunteerism Since 2001"⁸, which comprised a regional review with country case studies that identified key issues in drafting and implementing volunteerism laws and policies and highlighted the need to tailor them to local contexts. Another key UNV study was the 2015 *State of the World's Volunteering Report*, which focused on volunteering infrastructure within the context of transforming governance. This report concluded that "where governments have put in place structures to enhance volunteer engagement, they have been able then to systematically leverage the power of volunteerism".⁹

Alongside UNV's work on volunteering infrastructure, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Forum for Volunteerism in Development (Forum) have both published several key reports on legal frameworks for creating an enabling environment for volunteerism.¹⁰ These studies have helped to detail how different elements of volunteering infrastructure are expressed in practice. Additional publications have looked at volunteering infrastructure either directly or indirectly, including the UN Secretary-General's reports on volunteering that occur every three years, country volunteering infrastructure analyses,¹¹ ongoing discussion papers about enabling environments,¹² national volunteer guidelines,¹³ and other evaluations and mappings that look at specific projects or countries.¹⁴

This paper builds on these studies by contributing new data and investigation that aims to develop a more nuanced and analytical understanding of global volunteering infrastructure. Given that the existing body of evidence is largely biased towards higher income countries, this paper also seeks to provide more comprehensive coverage of volunteering infrastructure across the Global South.ⁱ

ⁱ For the purposes of analysis, in this paper the term 'Global South' refers to those countries other than those classified as 'High-income countries' (HICs) according to the World Bank. See <https://data.worldbank.org/income-level/high-income>



Volunteers at the COP23 climate change talks in Bonn, Germany (UNV, 2017)

2

Methodology

The analysis in this paper is informed by three types of data: a review of secondary literature, survey responses and semi-structured interviews. By triangulating data collection methods in this way, the analysis aims to provide a more complete picture of volunteering infrastructure trends.

The secondary literature sources include academic and practice knowledge from legal documents, peer-reviewed journal articles, reports and programmatic documents from academia, civil society, governments, and international bodies. This literature review was supplemented with a survey of UNV regional offices, field units and focal points that covered 100 UN Member States. Each of these offices and focal points received an online questionnaire in September 2017. The survey (see Annex C) included questions that could be answered by binary Y/N responses, a graded Likert scale, or by providing semi-open-ended descriptions. Responses were received for 91 countries, which represented a 91 per cent response rate, or a moderate level of attrition. Of the 91 units used in the analysis, 70 were low or middle-income countries, ensuring a wide geographical representation.

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Although this sample of countries represents a more diverse geographical balance than in previous studies, it is certainly not exhaustive as it represents less than half of

the countries in the world. It includes, however, most of the world's countries with large populations and provides a meaningful basis for comparative analysis. The knowledge gathered and systematised from the UNV regional and field presence around the world is a credible source for piecing together a general picture of trends and challenges facing volunteering infrastructure globally. It nonetheless remains suggestive and should be construed as such—particularly when interpreting percentages and figures. In addition, because official information was not always immediately available in all countries, these data should not be taken as final. The survey represents an initial step toward creating a repository of data on volunteering infrastructure around the world.

Table 1 | Regional distribution of survey responses

World region	Frequency	Percentage
Arab	6	7%
Asia and Pacific (excluding Australia)	14	15%
Europe and the CIS	20	22%
Latin America	19	21%
Africa	29	32%
Australia, Canada and the United States	3	3%
Total	91	100%

Question 1 of the survey asked: “Does the country have existing or draft policies or legislation specific or generally relevant to volunteering?”. To ensure a more comprehensive and accurate coverage of this question, the responses to the September 2017 survey were cross-referenced and supplemented with data submitted to the UN Secretary-General’s reports on volunteering covering the period 2008-2018.¹⁵ The combined data for this question was then validated and updated up to May 2018. After this process, the total data on policies and legislation (question 1 only) covered 117 countries, including 83 countries from the Global South.

The survey represents an initial step toward creating a repository of data on volunteering infrastructure around the world

To further offset the limitations of the original survey, findings from the survey data and secondary literature review were paired with analysis of semi-structured interviews of experts in the field of volunteering. In September and October 2017, 34 experts (including 14 women, see Annex E for details) were interviewed, including scholars, community leaders, and practitioners from the UN system, academia, and VIOs. The questions (in Annex D) were all open-ended, allowing respondents to share their insights on a wide variety of issues, ranging from conceptual insights to practical examples of existing programmes.

The following sections summarize the combined findings from the literature review, analysis of survey data, and semi-structured interviews.



Volunteer teaching handicrafts at the Dzaleka refugee camp in Malawi (UNV/Gianna Schellenberg, 2018)

3

Global trends

Following the above methodology, three main global trends were identified: (1) the continuing expansion and consolidation of volunteering infrastructure; (2) the widespread application of innovations including in technology, partnerships and modalities; and (3) a stronger focus on inclusive forms of voluntary action.

3.1 Expansion

Over the past two decades, volunteering infrastructure around the world has expanded and consolidated through separate but often mutually reinforcing processes, including heightened regulation of volunteering, increased recognition of volunteering in policymaking, new volunteer schemes and coordinating bodies, a broader conceptual scope for volunteering, the diversification of volunteer opportunities, and changes related to urbanization and technology.

Over the past two decades, volunteering infrastructure around the world has expanded and consolidated

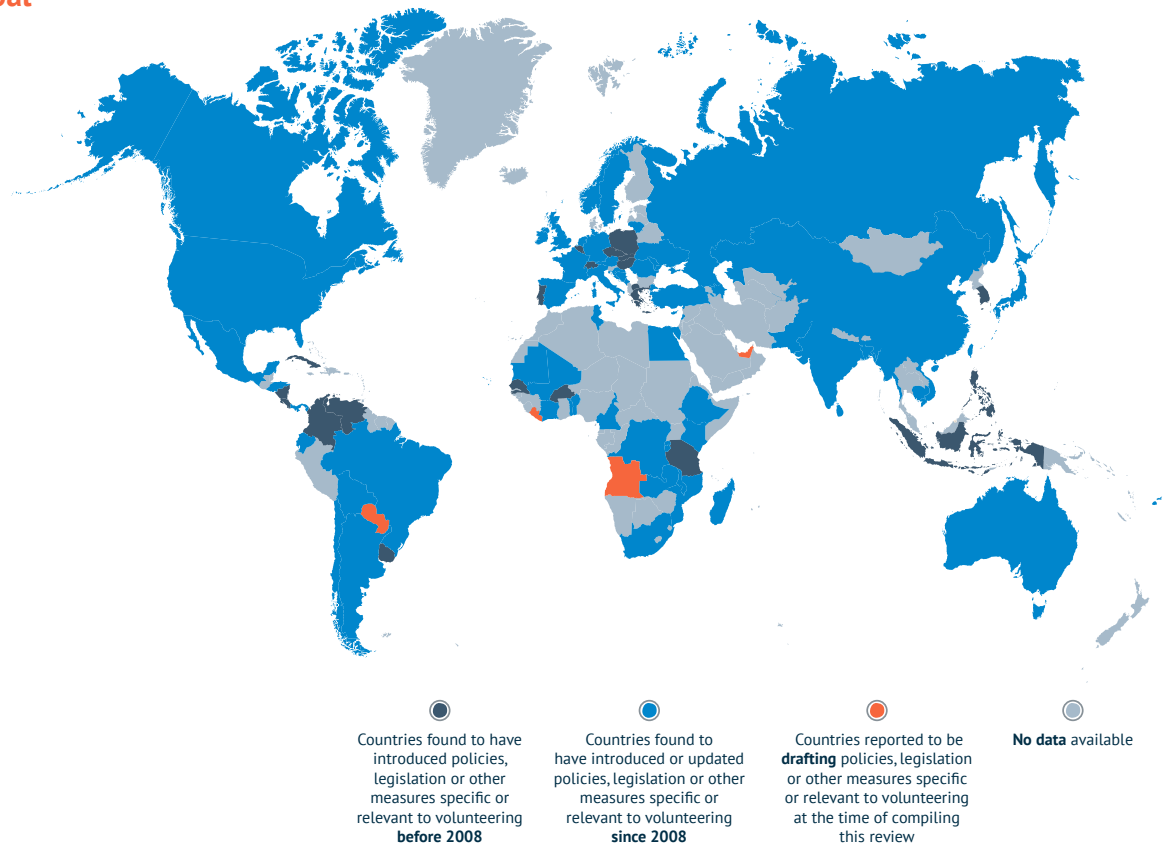
Figure 2 | Areas of expansion



→ Heightened regulation and new policies

Over the past two decades, legislation and national policies specific to volunteerism have, on average, expanded and consolidated globally. According to the 2008 UN Secretary-General Report on the Follow-up to the Implementation of the International Year of Volunteers, between 2001 and 2007 “over 70 countries have adopted or introduced new laws or policies on volunteerism”.¹⁶ According to the research carried out for this paper, between May 2008 and May 2018 at least 72 countries have

Figure 3 | Global coverage of volunteering policies and legislation



adopted or amended (68), or were in the process of drafting (4), some form of policy and regulatory framework specific or generally relevant to volunteerism such as Kenya, see Box 1. The result is that of the 117 countries covered by the combined survey data (which includes the data collected for this paper supplemented with data gathered by UNV for input to the UN Secretary-General's reports 2008-2018), 95 countries had national policies or laws in place in May 2018 that were relevant for volunteering (including four at the drafting stage, see Annex B). We can therefore say that at least some level of legislation and policy exists in many countries today that aims to leverage the contribution of volunteerism and create a stronger enabling environment for voluntary activities.

Many of the policies and legislation created through this incremental expansion and consolidation of regulatory frameworks have cross-national similarities. This convergence is partly due to transnational processes such as cross-fertilization in drafting legislation, technical assistance and international cooperation.¹⁷ International civil society networks that facilitate the exchange of best practices, inter-governmental initiatives that foster regional cooperation, and inter-governmental organizations that provide technical assistance, have all played a facilitative role in the expansion and convergence of regulation.¹⁸ Another similarity is among countries without dedicated policies and legislation specific to volunteering (e.g. a 'volunteering law'). In many of these instances, citizens' voluntary initiatives and activities are generally promoted and regulated through youth policies and legislation, while the relevant line ministries (e.g. Youth, Sports, or Culture) are responsible for implementation.

While volunteering infrastructure exhibits some similarities globally, it has also developed in different ways to accommodate divergent needs, demands, expectations, and contexts. Perhaps the most notable differences concern the divide between countries in the Global North and South. These differences emerge partly from the relationship between volunteering, employment and leisure, the formalisation of volunteering contributions within communities or organizations, and the availability of financial resources to support voluntary action. The South also tends to have a less developed regulatory framework for volunteering. This points to a continued North-South gap, since all high-income countries were reported as having adopted or drafted legislation or policies on volunteering, while only 73 per cent of the 83 Global South countries surveyed had done so.

While volunteering infrastructure exhibits some similarities globally, it has also developed in different ways to accommodate divergent needs, demands, expectations, and contexts

Kenya's 2015 National Volunteerism Policy

BOX 1

The Kenyan Ministry of Labour Social Security and Services developed the National Volunteerism Policy of Kenya in 2015. The Policy was developed in a consultative manner with government, non-state actors, and academia, and its overall objective is to provide guidelines on efficient and effective coordination, management, and promotion of volunteerism. It provides for an institutional and implementation framework, including a National Volunteer Board and Secretariat, and seeks to ensure that volunteerism is embedded within key national policies. The Policy sets the definition and principles of volunteering and outlines strategic interventions, including technical support, exchange of best practices, resource mobilization, and management strategies. The absence of a legal framework to promote volunteerism, scarce coordination between different volunteering programmes, and lack of support for national, regional, and international volunteers are among the main challenges identified in the Policy. Some of the Policy's key recommendations are to establish a monitoring and evaluation framework along with communication and information management systems for voluntary action.

Source: Republic of Kenya, 2015 & 2016

→ New volunteer schemes and coordinating bodies

Perhaps the most visible development of the global expansion of volunteering infrastructure has been the creation of new formal volunteering schemes, institutional bodies, and organizational networks. Among the 91 countries surveyed on this issue, 65 were reported as having national schemes created with the specific mandate to organize volunteering activities. The major aims of these national schemes were described as: creating opportunities for youth (38); administering social services (30); alleviating rural poverty (22); and addressing environmental issues (21). Of the 65 countries reported as having national schemes, 51 also had volunteering legislation and/or policies. This means that while some countries have volunteering legislation and policies but have not set up a national scheme, and a small minority have set up national schemes without adopting policies and legislation, the correlation between these two volunteering infrastructure pillars remains high. As the survey data did not allow for analysis of causation (i.e. which came first), further research is recommended to explore whether the adoption of national legislation or policy tends to precede or follow the implementation of national volunteering schemes. Alongside national schemes, coordinating bodies were reported in 76 of the 91 surveyed countries, mostly in the form of civil society networks (44) and government agencies (51). Many countries also appear to have a diversified coordination structure that includes more than one type of coordinating body.

Scholars and practitioners are increasingly envisioning an enabling environment for volunteerism that is broader in scope than formal regulatory frameworks and government-led policies

In terms of distribution, the literature shows that the Global North has a far larger share of formal volunteer schemes. Across the Global South, much volunteering happens in an informal way and is highly family- and community-oriented¹⁹ and further research is also recommended to analyse the relevance of 'traditional' volunteering infrastructure (particularly laws and policies) for the informal volunteering that is prevalent in the South. A notable exception to this general trend continues to be in some communist and post-communist countries, where volunteering tends to be more formal in character and often strongly influenced or implemented by state-run schemes and associations. These differences can be seen quite clearly in China and India, which have some similarities in population and economic attributes but differ in political set-up. Although India does have formal and government-led volunteering schemes it also has a rich and multi-layered civil society. In China, while there is a growing civil society, the volunteering infrastructure remains influenced by the government to a much higher degree.

→ Broader conceptual scope for volunteering infrastructure

While policies, laws, schemes and bodies are often seen as the building blocks of volunteering infrastructure²⁰, demographic, economic, and technological changes also have a major impact on its evolution.²¹ Across the globe, the participation of informal volunteers has become increasingly visible, particularly in response to natural disasters. 'Traditional' development and humanitarian actors are recognising the importance of engaging with this often-spontaneous voluntary action. Technology has in many instances lowered barriers to access and facilitated a more diverse demographic composition of volunteering. New 'middle classes' are using their leisure time to volunteer while stronger recognition of the contribution of volunteerism to development has encouraged more formal participation.

A new consensus is emerging around the idea that volunteering infrastructure must grow in scope to support and accommodate these changes. Accordingly, scholars and practitioners are increasingly envisioning an enabling environment for volunteerism that is broader than formal regulatory frameworks and government-led policies.²² As a result, programmatic efforts to develop and strengthen volunteering infrastructure are increasingly geared toward altering norms, and “nudging” societal responses and attitudes toward volunteering, while continuing to regulate and manage formal processes and procedures.²³ A good example of this is the Voluntarios X Madrid programme described in Box 2.

Promoting active citizenship through Voluntarios X Madrid

BOX 2

Voluntarios X Madrid (VXM) is a municipal office recently created to organise, support, and coordinate volunteer initiatives. Their model of volunteer engagement explicitly challenges traditional and institutionalised approaches used by many VIOs. Their vision is to promote volunteerism by localising it to bring opportunities to all citizens through local engagement. It established a unified digital platform for all volunteering activities in Madrid and, alongside mobilising around 12,000 volunteers, VXM also functions as a forum for coordination by funding other organizations and providing technical assistance. Information points throughout the city provide specialised information and advice to volunteers, VIOs, and private business. Employees at VXM see themselves as “local mediators between citizens and VIOs in their areas”.

Source: Interview data

→ Localization of volunteering infrastructure

Political action, economic trends, and media coverage have been key driving forces for the expansion of local volunteering infrastructure. Momentum created in part by global advocacy initiatives related to the 2030 Agenda have led to volunteering infrastructure being increasingly framed as a means to leverage local citizen contributions to local development.²⁴ Sometimes this momentum has led to volunteering infrastructure taking better account of cultural specificities and traditional forms of volunteering. Acknowledgement of the contributions of local volunteers and informal forms of volunteerism has expanded the recognition of volunteering as a force for change, and strengthened cultural acceptance of volunteers’ involvement in community-based solutions. At the same time, it has also exposed the need for external, non-local VIOs to engage with local forms of volunteering and to recruit volunteers from local populations.²⁵

Technology has also contributed to this ‘local turn’ over the past decade. Social media outlets have made participation in informal and spontaneous forms of volunteering easier, while also facilitating the diffusion of alternative formal voluntary action models such as ‘episodic’ and ‘micro’ volunteering.²⁶ Through new social enterprise models, local volunteers are meeting community development challenges. Technological platforms have enhanced local action in disaster settings. For example, as the hurricanes that hit the Caribbean and the USA in 2017 showed, technological platforms such as Ushahidi and other crisis-mapping software were quite effective at matching local volunteers’ capacities with community needs in real time.²⁷

Another ‘localisation’ push factor has been the attrition of state-funded support for social services that many countries, and particularly high-income countries,

Volunteering infrastructure is being increasingly framed as a means to leverage local citizen contributions to local development

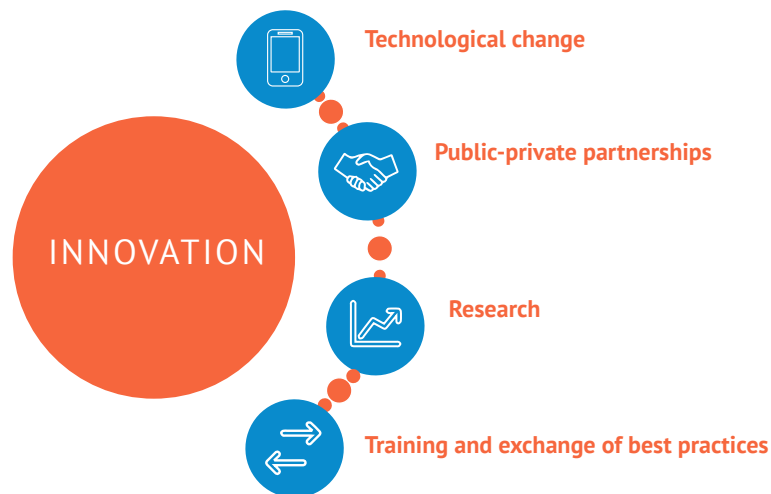
have experienced over the past decade. In many societies, people-led solutions and voluntary activities have increased in response to these austerity measures. At the same time, conflict prevention and disaster preparedness approaches have incrementally shifted away from centralized and technical humanitarian delivery and towards decentralized and localized people-centred volunteering solutions. With greater citizen participation, the recognition of the viability and usefulness of localised voluntary initiatives has increased.²⁸

→ **Urban investments in volunteering infrastructure**

More and more cities are investing in municipal volunteering initiatives as ways to both meet development challenges and create more cohesive urban communities

The global population residing in urban areas is projected to rise to 66 per cent by 2050.²⁹ This increase will occur across all regions but at a faster pace in the Global South, with nearly 90 per cent of this increase occurring in Asia and Africa. Cities are therefore where many development challenges – as well as the skills, partnerships and resources to overcome them - will concentrate in the future. More and more cities are investing in municipal volunteering initiatives as ways to both meet development challenges and create more cohesive urban communities at a time when they are under threat. London, for example, launched Team London in 2012 to encourage active citizenship and strengthen links among diverse communities by bringing volunteers of different ages and backgrounds together. Since this launch, over 150,000 adults and 100,000 young people have joined the programme. Recognizing that “Londoners lead busy lives,” Team London creates volunteer opportunities to suit them, “from one-off events to longer-term commitments; from joining in a local clean up to helping kids learn to read”³⁰. Madrid is another city that has been particularly successful in the past few years in using volunteering to promote active citizenship (Box 2).

Figure 4 | Areas of innovation



3.2 Innovation

The second key global trend identified in this analysis is innovation. Over the past decades volunteering infrastructure has incorporated various innovations, including new technologies, partnerships, and best practices. Together these are bringing profound changes to the shape of volunteering infrastructure and the way that volunteers are mobilised and supported.

→ Technological change

Technology is one of the primary forces shaping volunteering infrastructure today. Digital infrastructure and social media have made volunteering less static and attracted new, non-traditional societal groups to volunteering. Short-term and online volunteering have become an ever-growing reality³¹ which experts unanimously deem to be “here to stay”.³² Volunteering infrastructure is adapting to these changes in voluntary action, which are often more episodic and based on short-term commitments and contributions to often broader and longer-term projects.

One of the most practical ways technology has changed volunteering infrastructure around the world is by facilitating the match between supply and demand and by expediting deployment of humanitarian and disaster responses. New technologies allow agencies to match disaster management and community needs to volunteers with relevant capacities. In all sectors, VIOs rely more and more on databases to recruit, coordinate, and inform current or potential volunteers. A related phenomenon with great potential for volunteering is crowdsourcing. Volunteered Geographic Information (VGI) or Crisis Mapping, for example, allows short-term volunteer engagement to contribute to a larger network and a broader project. For example, the International Network of Crisis Mappers (crisismappers.net) is an international, volunteer-based community engaged at the intersection of humanitarian crises, new technology, crowdsourcing, and crisis mapping. Using just a computer, an internet connection, and open-source software, volunteers support recovery and response efforts during or after a humanitarian crisis or natural disaster by identifying affected areas and people to help.

Technology is also making it possible to revise traditional VIO ways of working. Online technologies promote remote collaborations and allow any organization with an internet connection to tap into specialised expertise. In this way, technological innovations have shifted volunteerism away from a dependency on site-based activities. Crowdfunding, for example, allows volunteer groups to raise money quickly, efficiently, and with precise and tailored purposes. Technology also makes it quicker and cheaper to transfer knowledge among organizations, potentially lessening administrative burdens. It is not uncommon for VIOs to use websites created to match supply and demand for volunteers at the community level. This can allow smaller VIOs to focus their limited capacity on substantive issues instead of on recruiting efforts.³³

One of the most practical ways technology has changed volunteering infrastructure around the world is by facilitating the match between supply and demand

→ Public-private partnerships

The private sector is often incentivized to contribute to volunteering infrastructure once governments and civil society have led the way, usually by setting up a regulatory framework and coordinating informal networks.³⁴ VIOs can partner with businesses to reciprocally enhance working practices and the way volunteer contributions are managed between organizations and their employees. These processes are often rooted in recruitment models that tap into existing networks and local organizations to create partnerships among organizations with common interests.³⁵ The business community has realised that volunteering can help facilitate employee participation and commitment, while also strengthening communities and the relationship between businesses and communities. Large companies have been leaders in this trend, and

many have created dedicated volunteering departments to build partnership and project opportunities with VIOs.³⁶

Networks and other support actors have facilitated partnership building, knowledge exchange and capacity development to enhance private sector engagement with volunteering and VIOs (see example in Box 3). Impact 2030 is one global initiative that has focused on engaging the private sector to enhance awareness and knowledge of volunteering, as well as to exchange skills and mentoring opportunities.³⁷

BOX 3

Support for corporate volunteering in China

Corporate volunteering and private sector partnership with the voluntary sector is becoming increasingly prominent in China. A support structure is beginning to develop, including organizations such as Horizon Corporate Volunteer Consultancy (HCVC). HCVC was founded in China in 2010 to support Chinese and international businesses to become involved with volunteering. The support HCVC provides includes designing corporate volunteering programs, creating online systems to recruit, manage, and evaluate volunteers; designing and providing training for corporate volunteers, and conducting research on volunteering to inform policymaking. HCVC also promotes cross-sector collaboration by convening alliances that bring volunteering organizations together with corporate actors and other stakeholders. Beginning in 2015 HCVC also started funding national competitions to promote innovative volunteering projects across China.

Source: CVC, 2017; Interview data

→ Research

Output and capacity for research on volunteering has not grown uniformly

The past two decades have witnessed a significant increase in demand for volunteering infrastructure globally, followed by commitments to better support volunteer action. Research on volunteerism is one of the ways this interest has been expressed. However, output and capacity for research on volunteering has not grown uniformly. In the Global North, an increase in research on volunteerism over the past 30 years has percolated from academia and other independent research institutions into government reports and policies. Research studies have slowly but steadily begun to influence policymaking on volunteering. The Global North has also made significant headway in the statistical study of volunteerism and data gathering processes have emerged from different government-led initiatives.³⁸

In the Global South, capacity for research has remained more limited and only 28 Global South countries (40 per cent of the total surveyed) of the original 91 countries surveyed for this paper were reported as having conducted research related to volunteering infrastructure over the past five years. In both the North and South, investing in research has remained a prerogative of larger institutions, as smaller VIOs typically have too few capacities and resources to invest in research.³⁹

At the global level, research conducted on volunteering has focused on measuring scale, scope and impact. The International Labour Organization (ILO), for example, works with national statistical agencies to develop standards for measurement of volunteering. The International Association for Volunteer Effort's (IAVE) Global Network of National Volunteer Centres (GNNVC) and Forum have also been active in undertaking research on volunteering. These organizations seek to develop a research agenda and data gathering processes with a global reach. The European Volunteer Centre (CEV) has engaged in similar endeavours at the European level.⁴⁰

In 2016, Forum’s annual International Volunteer Cooperation Organizations’ (IVCO) Conference launched a research project to identify national volunteering infrastructure in 70 countries. In October 2017, a focus of this annual conference was on how transformative partnerships contribute to the implementation of the SDGs, including how to create enabling environments for voluntary action.⁴¹

→ Training and exchange of best practices

Training programmes for volunteers and capacity development initiatives for VIOs are not a consolidated practice in many countries around the world. In the original survey conducted for this paper, only 32 Global South countries (46 per cent of the total surveyed) were reported as having requirements or infrastructure in place for training volunteers. A few training programmes were reported as intentionally targeting under-represented groups (women, elderly, youth, minorities, indigenous populations, persons with disabilities, HIV positive, etc.), although this focus on inclusive participation was marginal overall. Such trainings can focus on the needs, strengths and skill-gaps of each group, as well as the innovative ideas and methods that diverse groups of volunteers can contribute.⁴²

The exchange of best practices was reported as being more common than training programmes for volunteers, and exchange frequently happens through informal or loosely structured channels at the national level—though online technologies have made formal mechanisms of exchange far easier. In most of the 91 countries surveyed, best practices are exchanged either sometimes (34) or often (37). The channels for exchange occur through VIO networks or coalitions and through other organized focal events (for example conferences or celebrations for International Volunteer Day). Exchanges of effective practices also commonly occur at the international level. International VIOs hold regular conferences and produce collaborative research on best practices.⁴³ According to the experts interviewed, however, much of this knowledge exchange is currently unidirectional, with material on volunteer management, volunteer motivations, and technical tools primarily produced in the Global North.⁴⁴

Much of this knowledge exchange is currently unidirectional, with material on volunteer management, volunteer motivations, and technical tools primarily produced in the Global North



Figure 5 | Areas of inclusion

3.3 Inclusion

After expansion and innovation, the third global trend that the analysis identified was inclusion. Volunteerism has a great potential to be an enabler for social inclusion. On the other hand, without a volunteering infrastructure that promotes inclusive practices, volunteerism can also be exclusive and restrictive – particularly for vulnerable people and groups volunteering informally.⁴⁵ The UN Secretary-General's 2015 report to the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on integrating volunteering into the next decade emphasised that:

*The momentum built through recognition of how volunteerism contributes to peace and development and the promotion of the inclusion of more people, especially the marginalized, can only be maintained through supportive volunteerism policies, structures and capacities for effective volunteer engagement and management, including adequate resources.*⁴⁶

Legislation and policy can include provisions designed to overcome these barriers and promote diverse and inclusive volunteering

A strong volunteering infrastructure is needed to ensure that volunteerism contributes to the inclusion of all, and particularly of marginalized people. Creating different volunteering schemes “catering to varying needs of groups of people” is a strategy that the 2015 UN Secretary-General's report describes as most likely to expand “the range of opportunities for engagement and inclusion.”⁴⁷

→ Inclusive regulation

Some of the most prominent access barriers to volunteering include a lack of material support and financial incentives, social marginalisation and discrimination, under-appreciation of the contribution of volunteering, and lack of information or organisational support.⁴⁸ Legislation and policy can include provisions designed to overcome these barriers and promote diverse and inclusive volunteering. Among the 91 countries originally surveyed in this study, roughly half (46) were reported to have national legislation or policies stipulating the inclusion of specific under-represented categories of volunteers (e.g. women, elderly, youth, minorities, indigenous populations, or persons with disabilities). A similar number of countries (44) were reported to have VIO programmes or initiatives with measures to enhance inclusion. Figure 6 illustrates various enabling factors for inclusive volunteering at the international, national, sub-national, and organizational levels.

It is important to note, however, that some volunteering infrastructure can also exclude. Highly formalised or government-dominated volunteering infrastructure environments can discourage non-governmental VIOs from participating, shaping the enabling environment for volunteering, and ultimately ensuring a counterpoint or buffer to governmental involvement in agenda setting and programming.⁴⁹ In a similar way, regulations can make it difficult for volunteers from certain backgrounds to volunteer. For instance, some countries have a provision in their national legislation explicitly defining volunteerism as unpaid work. A potentially negative effect of this provision is that it can create a much higher opportunity cost of volunteering for people from lower-income brackets, discouraging their recruitment and involvement.⁵⁰

**Figure 6 |
Enabling factors
to enhance
volunteer
participation at
different levels**



→ Inclusive programming

Volunteers contribute differently and have diverse expectations and needs. Some programmes might not work for certain demographics or groups, for example young volunteers and elderly volunteers often need to be recruited and managed in different ways. With growing awareness of this, many VIOs are beginning to think differently about engagement and inclusion, going beyond offering positions that attract 'traditional volunteers'. For instance, some have focused on offering greater professional and skills development in tandem with volunteer positions, others have developed inclusion and diversity policies, and many are considering how to design shorter-term opportunities.⁵¹ In common across the Global North and the Global South, and often in response to growing youth demographics and/or major shifts in employment patterns, VIOs and governments increasingly recognise the importance of engaging youth through volunteering. Since young volunteers tend to respond better to short-term and ad-hoc terms of engagement, organizations that have traditionally relied on a model of long-term volunteering engagement are the most challenged. Solutions have been two-fold: creating more opportunities for episodic volunteering with lower levels of commitment, as well as creating innovative ways of nurturing a younger volunteer base. In the United States for example, schemes engaging school-aged youth through educational institutions have allowed the values and opportunities of volunteering to reach a new audience.⁵² Likewise, public service in South Africa has been increasingly integrated into school programmes.⁵³

VIOs are beginning to think differently about engagement and inclusion, going beyond offering positions that attract traditional volunteers

Other programmatic and management interventions that aim to overcome barriers to participation include: fostering better understanding of local dynamics; offering training opportunities; ensuring a diverse composition of staff; reaching individuals in marginalized groups through targeted engagement efforts; creating a more welcoming environment for new volunteers through effective management and public recognition; and encouraging leadership and mid-management positions for women and other marginalized groups.⁵⁴ At each level of intervention, from global to local, inclusion involves different but mutually reinforcing actions (Figure 6). As a rule, fostering inclusion is best designed and implemented as part and parcel of national development plans. However, this integration can be complicated in certain contexts. For instance, in some countries, top-down promotion of volunteerism may invoke negative feelings and scepticism, due to the way it has been manipulated in the past.⁵⁵ In other countries, cultural acceptance of volunteering makes it far easier to promote 'volunteering for all'.

Figure 7 | Good vs. bad use of technology for inclusive volunteering



As discussed above, technology is rapidly being adopted by many VIOs and is often highlighted as offering new ways to overcome barriers of access to volunteering. In some contexts, the anonymity of remote, online volunteering provides new channels for marginalised groups to engage, while for persons with disabilities technology can offer powerful new tools for them to volunteer.⁵⁶ However, technology also has potentially harmful effects on inclusion (Figure 7). Access and usage are not equally spread and both volunteers and VIOs may lack the technical know-how to use new technologies. For volunteers, this means that technology can potentially raise new barriers to access. This may particularly be

the case for groups that less frequently utilize new technologies in their daily lives, such as older people (who have traditionally high volunteer participation rates in many cultures) or the economically disadvantaged. For VIOs, organizations that do not, or cannot, use technology potentially lose out on funding, partnership and mobilisation opportunities, putting smaller, less well-funded VIOs at a disadvantage.

The Ibero-American Youth Volunteerism Programme for Social Transformation

BOX 4

The emerging Ibero-American Youth Volunteerism Programme for Social Transformation and associated “Pact for Youth” began from a partnership of the International Youth Organisation for Ibero-America (OIJ), UNV, and UNDP, with the participation of OIJ Member States and other partners. This pact aims to facilitate the cross-border participation of Latin American youth in tackling development challenges across the region, while fostering regional integration and understanding. Programme priorities include the development of a regional youth volunteering infrastructure, including the use of a virtual platform; the consolidation of a network of volunteers and VIOs; and the deployment of Ibero-American youth volunteers across the region.

Source: International Youth Organization (OIJ), 2017; Interview data

→ New directional flows

As a people-centred strategy, volunteering offers a means to enhance the inclusive participation of all people in national and international development processes. This includes flows of volunteers within and across sub-national areas, as well as flows of volunteers across national borders and regions beyond the traditional North to South direction. The regional International Youth Organisation for Ibero America (OIJ) programme (see Box 4) illustrates a programmatic approach aimed at empowering youth across Latin America to contribute to regional development through volunteer exchange.

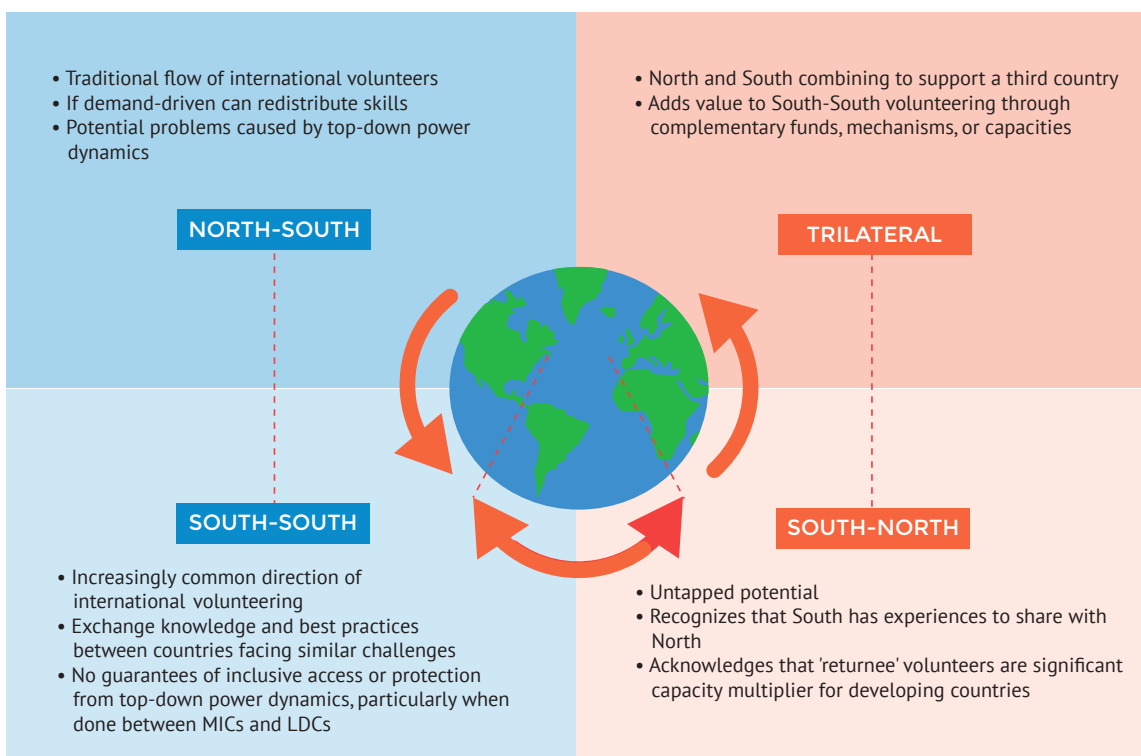


Figure 8 | International volunteering: from North-South to multi-polar

Despite this growth, South-South volunteering is still largely “aspirational” with great potential for growth but large challenges to overcome

South to South volunteering offers a potential solution to many of the documented shortcomings of ‘traditional’ North-South volunteer exchanges.⁵⁷ In the past decade, volunteering infrastructure to enhance South-South cooperation has steadily increased as political support for South-South cooperation has continued to grow and new policies and partnerships have emerged. South-South volunteer programmes have emerged in Argentina, China, India, Nigeria, South Africa, and Thailand, and regional volunteering exchange efforts have been created, including in the Southern African Development Community, the African Union, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).⁵⁸ Some of these programmes are now beginning to evolve from focusing primarily on volunteer mobilization. A good example is the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) volunteer programme which initially focused on deploying volunteers but is now also working with VIOs from member countries to facilitate information-sharing and exchange of best practices.⁵⁹

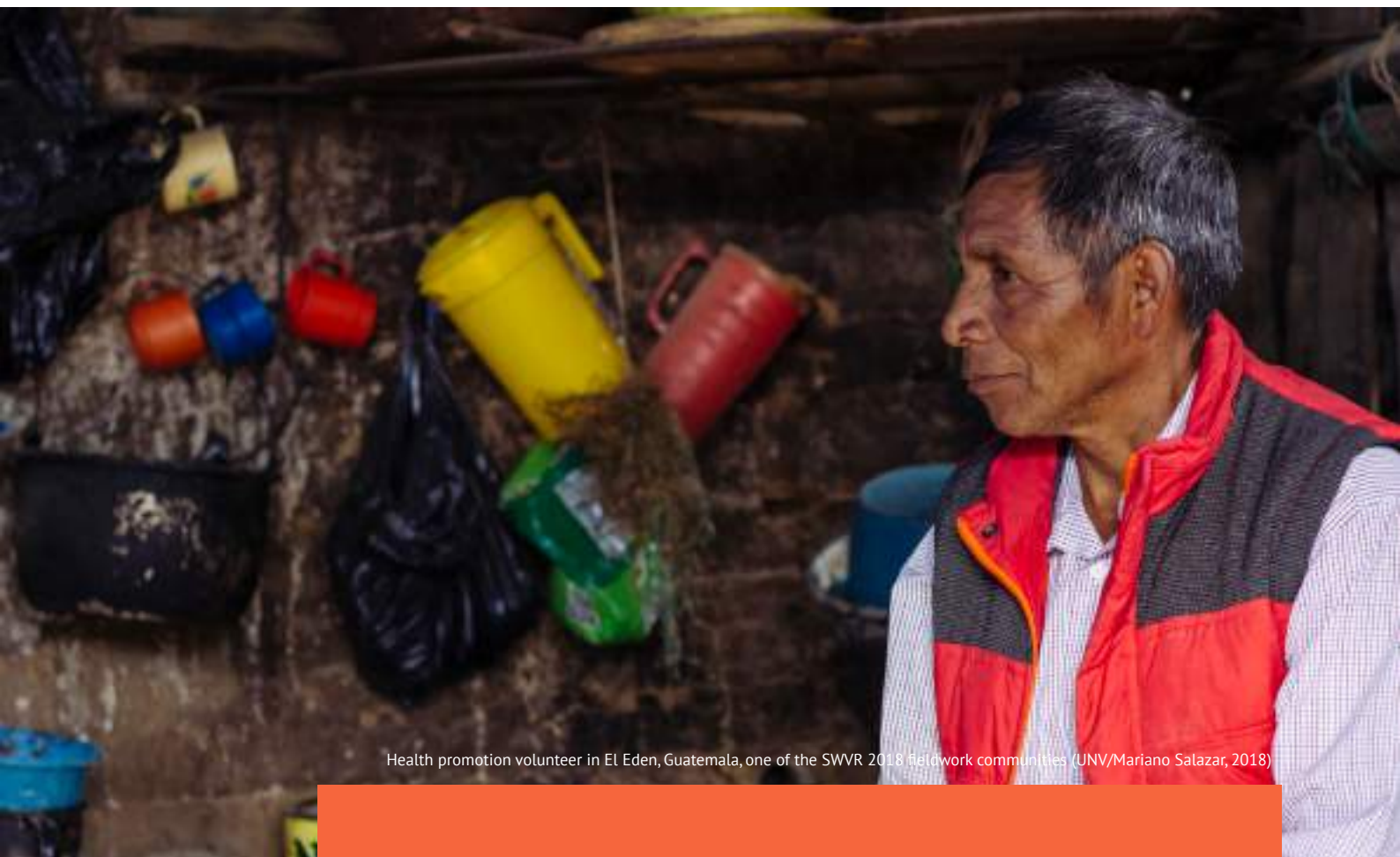
Despite this growth, South-South volunteering is still largely “aspirational”⁶⁰ with great potential for growth but large challenges to overcome. Lack of funds, capacity, and sustained operational and programmatic engagement pose major challenges to existing programmes.⁶¹ In addition, if South-South programmes fail to follow the principles of mutuality, reciprocity, and respect that are supposed to guide South-South Cooperation, they risk repeating the mistakes made by some traditional North-South models.⁶² Other modalities offer potential solutions to these challenges - including triangular cooperation (see Box 5) - and provide new models of international volunteering as a driving force for South-South and South-North Cooperation in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

BOX 5

FK Norway’s international exchange programmes

FK Norway is a Norwegian governmental organization facilitating bi-directional volunteer exchange between organizations in Norway and partner organizations in the Global South. For the past decade, FK Norway has been restructuring its international volunteer programming to enhance reciprocity. Its current model aims to facilitate partnership agreements that counter power imbalances, and to include all partners in the planning phase. This participatory approach seeks to transform international volunteering cooperation away from a donor-beneficiary relationship. Several evaluations over the past decade have indicated that its old model of international North-South volunteer cooperation was able to develop citizenship in volunteers but less able to make an impact on the ground. As a result, FK Norway now prioritizes reciprocal exchanges between South-North and South-South. Volunteers are exchanged between organizations, with at least one organization being in the South. Once they finish their assignment they share their experiences and knowledge with others in their home organization. Returnee volunteers therefore have a multiplying effect by developing future leaders, increasing partnership relations between organizations, and sharing and applying best practices.

Source: Interview data



Health promotion volunteer in El Eden, Guatemala, one of the SWVR 2018 fieldwork communities (UNV/Mariano Salazar, 2018)

4

Challenges

The trends identified above bring to light various challenges to the expansion and consolidation of volunteering infrastructure. Developing national and international volunteering infrastructure is a process entailing numerous inherent tensions, which produce interventions that cater to different interests. With divergent interests, such interventions are not always in agreement, and may not necessarily be beneficial to volunteerism or all volunteers. These innate contradictions reflect differences in the nature of volunteering infrastructure, nuances in context specificity, obstacles to international cooperation, and shortages in capacity and resources. The following tensions do not represent either/or dichotomies but rather capture a continuum of interests and challenges, with each needing to be systematically re-negotiated and re-evaluated.

→ **Does regulation stifle innovation?** Without a well-developed and properly implemented regulatory framework, it is difficult for national and international VIOs to create and run sustainable volunteer programmes, to recruit and retain volunteers, and to effectively contribute to community resilience and development. At the same time, too many regulations risk making bureaucratic requirements too burdensome,

Developing national and international volunteering infrastructure is a process entailing numerous inherent tensions, which produce interventions that cater to different interests

particularly for small organizations. Thus, while regulations are necessary and have many helpful aspects, they can potentially hinder the development of innovative solutions.

→ **Is regulation used to include or exclude people?** Some volunteering policies and processes explicitly create space for the inclusion of marginalized groups, particularly women and youth. However, regulation can also block the participation of certain groups in volunteering - particularly those who are already marginalized - as well as prevent the mainstreaming of self-organized or grassroots VIOs. Likewise, in the process of regulating volunteering activities, governments have excluded VIOs from decision-making and policy- or law-making processes.

→ **Will technology ultimately enhance inclusion?** Despite its great potential, technology alone cannot overcome the need to engage volunteers who might not be literate in the use of digital infrastructure. This issue is particularly apparent in generational differences, for example younger people generally adopt mobile technologies more quickly. Likewise, socio-economic differences can influence who benefits from new technologies, with poorer communities, rural populations, and more generally Southern communities having lower access to digital technology.

The type of infrastructure needed to support formal volunteering is different from the support needed for informal voluntary action

→ **Does the 'professionalization' of volunteering discourage or encourage participation?** Preserving the 'spirit' of volunteerism can conflict with the professionalization of voluntary activities. On the one hand, engagement that is too short, sporadic, amateur or uncoordinated can hinder effective practice and development outcomes. Yet, some people are only able to participate in volunteer roles allowing for short-term involvement, particularly those with competing livelihood priorities. Setting too high a bar on volunteering requirements can squeeze out participation and may exclude certain groups. On the other hand, providing specialised requirements and training can make volunteering more appealing, can attract more qualified volunteers, and will likely improve development outcomes.

→ **Cross-national similarities or cultural differences?** Building an enabling volunteering infrastructure requires considering the specific challenges present in different national, regional, and international contexts. Ideally, volunteering infrastructure should be able to adapt to local contexts. For example, traditional volunteering practices, different understandings of the separation between paid work and volunteering, and diverse populations all require tailored support, regulations and policies. The contraposition between top-down vs. bottom-up models is a proxy for this dichotomy but ultimately illustrates a fraction of the many tensions emerging from contextual differences. While universal standards and practices are needed, they also need to be flexible enough to account for contextual and cultural differences.

→ **Should investments prioritize formal or informal volunteering models?** The type of infrastructure needed to support formal volunteering is different from the support needed for informal voluntary action. This is significant because while formal volunteering models prevail in the Global North, informal voluntary action is often more common in the Global South. Likewise, there are gender, age and geographical differences between informal and formal volunteering with women and youth often more active in informal volunteering.⁶⁵ Decisions to invest in diverse forms of

volunteering will inevitably have implications for who ultimately benefits from these investments.

→ ***Do North and South disparities in volunteering investments reflect budgetary or normative barriers?*** Regional and country-specific differences in financing presents a challenge for volunteering infrastructure globally. In the North, funds for supporting volunteerism are often a first budget item to be cut in the event of crisis and economic slowdown. Ironically, a common assumption behind cuts in general is the belief that volunteers can compensate for reductions in public spending.⁶⁴ In the South, many governments remain reluctant to invest in the sector, with some hesitant to allocate portions of their national budget to create volunteering infrastructure and others actively discouraging voluntary participation. It is not clear whether this indicates a lack of political will and interest in support for volunteering or whether it merely reflects budgetary realities.



A volunteer presents recommendations for volunteer support in Sudan (UNV Sudan, 2017)

5

Recommendations

The trends and challenges presented in this paper point towards how to strengthen volunteering infrastructure across its three main pillars of enabling environment, operational structures, and implementation capacities. Areas with perhaps the greatest potential include applying flexible volunteering infrastructure models to create an enabling environment; addressing the contradictions inherent in volunteering infrastructure; tapping into innovation and digital infrastructure while also continuing to leverage established practices and 'traditional' volunteers; fostering collaborative partnerships with fair contributions by each party; and catering to the different needs of diverse groups of volunteers. These recommendations can be implemented at different levels by different stakeholders including, in particular, local and national governments, international organizations, and local and international VIOs.

First, developing an enabling environment for volunteering implies simultaneously being responsive to competing needs while remaining mindful of inherent contradictions. Such contradictions are usually inevitable when aiming to expand volunteering infrastructure while at the same time fostering inclusive participation, preserving the independence of voluntary organizations, promoting participation

Developing an enabling environment for volunteering implies simultaneously being responsive to competing needs while remaining mindful of inherent contradictions

from groups from different social and economic strata, and incorporating technology into volunteering activities. While these contradictions will remain a reality, negative implications can be minimized through the promotion of effective practices, which are now emerging from an increasingly diverse body of VIOs and networks.

Second, volunteering infrastructure needs to be adaptable and flexible, rather than monolithic and prescriptive. Flexible volunteering infrastructure models combine top-down and bottom-up approaches. Thus, while it is crucial to create and expand universal and standardized regulatory frameworks, it is equally important to incorporate context-specific dynamics. Effective volunteering infrastructure ought to carefully consider cultural differences and geographical diversity, not only between Global North and Global South, but also within regions and countries, as well as the generational, socio-economic, and gender differences of diverse volunteer populations. Failing to tailor volunteering infrastructure to these distinctive needs and contexts risks imposing inadequate or inappropriate conditions and can easily stifle participation.

While it is crucial to create and expand universal and standardized regulatory frameworks, it is equally important to incorporate context-specific dynamics

Third, stakeholders need to prioritize and foster reciprocal, multi-stakeholder partnerships. Building an inclusive volunteering infrastructure not only means promoting participation across a diverse array of individuals, but also involving the private sector, civil society, and other key partners in the design of interventions from an early stage. Business actors can significantly contribute to building the capacity of VIOs, not only by offering financial resources, but also through employee collaborations and skills development initiatives. At the same time, VIOs can help business actors to improve and expand their corporate social responsibility goals. As governments become more receptive to public-private partnerships they should be encouraged to promote them systematically in the field of volunteering infrastructure. Fruitful partnership and meaningful participation can also be promoted in the context of international cooperation. Many governments now advocate for South-South cooperation in the economic, infrastructure, and capacity-building fields but need to be encouraged to do so with their volunteer programmes as well.

These recommendations can help ensure that people are provided the necessary protections and incentives they need to fully participate in voluntary action. Ultimately, prioritizing a volunteering infrastructure that incorporates these considerations can empower people to address the varied global challenges faced by their communities; enabling all citizens to become agents of change and drivers of their own development.

Annexes

Annex A: Glossary of key terms

▶ VOLUNTEERISM, VOLUNTEERING AND VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES

A wide range of activities undertaken of free will, for the general public good, for which monetary reward is not the principal motivating factor (UNGA 2002).

▶ VOLUNTEERING INFRASTRUCTURE

An enabling environment, operational structures and implementation capacities to promote volunteerism, mobilize volunteers and support them in their work (UNV 2018c).

▶ FORMAL VOLUNTEERING

Voluntary activity undertaken through an organization; typified by volunteers making an ongoing or sustained commitment to an organization and contributing their time on a regular basis (UNV 2015, p. xxv).

▶ INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING

Voluntary activities done directly, unmediated by any formal organization that coordinates larger-scale volunteer efforts (UNV 2015, p. xxv).

Annex B: Summary of UNV review of policies and legislation on volunteerism

This annex lists countries that have introduced policies, legislation or other measures specific or relevant to volunteering. The data is based on a survey of secondary sources in September 2017 through UNV field units and regional offices. This information was then supplemented with inputs from Member States gathered for the UN Secretary-General's reports on volunteering covering the period 2008-2018.

This data builds on analysis of volunteering policies and legislation presented by UNV in 2009 (UNV, 2009). Updates or information on additional policies and legislation can be sent to unv.swvr@unv.org

A: Countries found to have introduced policies, legislation or other measures specific or relevant to volunteering before 2008 (23 countries)ⁱⁱ:

Africa: Burkina Faso, Senegal, United Republic of Tanzania.

Asia and the Pacific: Indonesia, Philippines, South Korea.

Europe and Central Asia: Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Kosovoⁱⁱⁱ, Macedonia, Portugal, Luxembourg, Poland, Slovakia, Switzerland.

Latin American and the Caribbean: Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Nicaragua, Uruguay, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

B: Countries found to have introduced or updated policies, legislation or other measures specific or relevant to volunteering since 2008 (68 countries):

Africa: Benin, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Côte D'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, Togo, Zambia.

Arab States: Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia.

Asia and the Pacific: Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Japan, Myanmar, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Vietnam.

Europe and Central Asia: Azerbaijan, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, France, Germany, Georgia, Croatia, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Sweden, Spain, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

Latin American and the Caribbean: Argentina, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama.

North America: Canada, United States of America.

C: Countries reported to be drafting policies, legislation or other measures specific or relevant to volunteering at the time of compiling this review (4 countries):

Angola, Liberia, Paraguay and United Arab Emirates.

ii Where countries have subsequently supplemented, updated or revised policies they are not listed in this category but are listed under B or C.

iii All references to Kosovo should be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Annex C. Country and regional survey

The following questionnaire was sent to UNV regional and country offices and field units in September 2017.

The present survey aims to review volunteering infrastructure (volunteering infrastructure) in the host country. UNV defines volunteering infrastructure as: "The schemes, policies, laws, bodies, networks, and initiatives that increase opportunities for volunteering and shape the contribution of volunteer efforts to peace and development."

In other words, the survey seeks to identify the opportunities and challenges that different development actors operating in the host country (national in particular) face in promoting and developing an enabling environment for volunteerism.

When you mention a specific policy/initiative/activity/programme throughout the survey, please make sure that you also specify the institution/ that promotes or administers it.

A. Legal framework

1. Does the country have existing or draft policies or legislation specific or generally relevant to volunteering? Y/N
 - a. If Yes, please provide example(s) and reference(s)
 - b. If Yes, does the legislation include regulations to ensure inclusivity for volunteering? Y/N
 - If Yes, please provide details

B. Policy framework

2. Do volunteering-involving organizations advise national and local authorities on how to factor volunteer contributions into development cooperation programmes? Never/sometimes/often
3. Does the government establish national targets for volunteer participation? Y/N
 - a. If Yes, what is the target? _____
4. Does the government seek to connect volunteer initiatives with national development goals and priorities? Y/N
 - a. If Yes, please give example(s) of existing policies
 - b. If Yes, does the government pay particular attention to specific types of initiatives and organizations? Please give details
5. Do religious, cultural, political, or other leaders in the country (including social media figures) explicitly advocate policies supportive of volunteerism or act as spokespersons to promote volunteerism for development? Y/N
 - a. If Yes, please provide example(s) of public message on volunteerism
6. Does the government promote/support specific volunteer-focused or volunteer-relevant policies/programmes/initiatives/activities for South-South Cooperation? Y/N
 - a. If Yes, please provide details

C. Coordinating bodies and programmes

7. Do national-level volunteer schemes exist in the country? Y/N
 - a. If Yes, please provide details (names, run by governmental/autonomous organization, how many volunteers involved)
 - b. If Yes, which of these activities best describes the main aims of the schemes (you can choose more than one)? Create opportunities for youth/administer social services/alleviate rural poverty/collect data/other (please specify)

8. Do national volunteer programmes that deploy volunteers internationally exist?
 - a. If Yes, please provide details (names, run by governmental/autonomous organization, how many volunteers involved)
9. Does a body or network exist to coordinate local and national voluntary actions in the country?
 - a. If Yes, please also specify type: governmental agencies, civil society networks, etc.
10. Do any national volunteering-involving programmes or initiatives require the inclusion of specific under-represented categories of volunteers (e.g., women, elderly, youth, minorities, indigenous populations, disabled, HIV positive, etc.)? Y/N
 - a. If Yes, please provide details
11. Do requirements and/or infrastructures exist for training of volunteers? Y/N
 - a. If Yes, please provide details
 - b. If Yes, are trainings for under-represented groups (women, elderly, youth, minorities, indigenous populations, disabled, HIV positive, etc.) organised? Y/N
12. How often do volunteer-involving organizations exchange information about good practices? Never/sometimes/often
 - a. If sometimes/often, then how? Networks; conferences/workshops; staff exchanges; online exchange

D. Initiatives and activities

13. Do volunteer-involving organizations pay attention to local traditional expressions of volunteerism? Y/N
 - a. If Yes, please provide details
14. Do national volunteer-involving organizations use online volunteering? Y/N
15. Do special programmes exist for people with limited access to onsite action? Y/N
16. Have volunteer-related institutions undertaken research projects on volunteering infrastructure in the past five years?
 - a. If yes, what have they focused on?
17. Do initiatives exist that bring multiple stakeholders together to support programmes/activities/studies on local/national volunteerism for development? Y/N
 - a. If Yes, please provide details
18. How deeply integrated are technology and innovation into volunteering for development initiatives? (1 – not integrated/don't use tech and 5 – deeply integrated/technology is central to day-to-day activities)
19. Has the government made financial commitments to support volunteerism? Y/N
 - a. If Yes, are allocations to volunteerism formalised in the national/ministerial budgets?
 - b. If Yes, does the government require the development of gender-sensitive volunteer programmes to make them eligible for potential funding? Y/N
20. (*Only Regional Offices*) Are there any regional-level volunteer programmes or policies? Y/N. If yes, please provide details

Annex D: Semi-structured interviews

The following survey questions were used during the semi-structured interviews to gather the opinions and perspectives of volunteering scholars, community leaders, and practitioners from the UN System and volunteer-involving organizations.

1. Is there an agreed upon definition of volunteering infrastructure?
 - a. What are in your opinion the foremost elements that should pertain to such a definition?
2. What do we know about volunteering infrastructure?
 - a. Why is volunteering infrastructure important?
 - b. Does volunteering infrastructure maximise the potential of volunteering? How?
 - c. How can volunteering infrastructure specifically advance the 2030 Agenda?
3. Is there an ideal volunteering infrastructure environment?
 - a. What would be its central elements?
 - b. Can you give any examples of existing elements?
4. What are the main new trends in volunteering infrastructure?
 - a. Global/regional/national/community levels
 - b. Can you mention any specific examples of schemes/coordinating bodies/platforms/networks?
5. What are the most promising innovations in volunteering infrastructure?
 - a. Can you give any concrete examples—e.g., digital infrastructure, social media initiatives?
 - b. Do you know of any particularly fruitful partnership initiatives?
 - c. Do you see it possible to reproduce in other contexts? How?
6. What are the main challenges going forward?
 - a. Challenges to volunteering infrastructure.
 - b. Challenges of volunteering infrastructure to volunteerism—cases in which volunteering infrastructure has a (unintended) negative impact e.g., by being restrictive, repressive, exclusive, etc.
 - c. What needs be done to overcome these challenges?
7. What would you like to see happening in terms of making volunteering more inclusive?
 - a. What are the main trends and challenges?
 - b. Can you mention any examples of successful programmes/initiatives, including gender-sensitive ones?
8. What is happening in terms of cooperation, both North-South and South-South?
 - a. What would you like to see happening in terms of cooperation, both North-South and South-South?
 - b. Do you know of successful multi-lateral/national/local initiatives worth mentioning?
 - c. Do you know of any initiatives particularly apt at promoting community resilience and democratic governance?

Annex E. List of experts interviewed

1. Paul-Armand Menye – Programme Specialist (Volunteer Advisory Services), Regional Office for West and Central Africa, UNV
2. Narendra Mishra – Programme Specialist (Volunteering infrastructure), UNV HQ
3. Jeffrey L. Brudney – Betty and Dan Cameron Family Distinguished Professor of Innovation in the Nonprofit Sector, University of North Carolina Wilmington
4. Rebecca Nesbit – Associate Professor, Department of Public Administration and Policy, University of Georgia
5. Cliff Allum – Consultant in International Development; Former Chair of the International Forum for Volunteering in Development Research Working Group
6. Didier Muamba Kabeya – Former Regional Programme Specialist (Volunteering infrastructure), Regional Office for West and Central Africa, UNV
7. Peter Devereux – Research Fellow, Curtin University’s Sustainability Policy Institute
8. Betty Stallings – International trainer, keynote speaker, consultant, and author specializing in volunteer management, fundraising, leadership, and board development
9. Megan Haddock – International Research Projects Manager, Center for Civil Society Studies, Johns Hopkins University
10. Susan Ellis – President of Energize, Inc. (training, consulting, and publishing firm that specializes in volunteerism)
11. Susan Chambré – Professor Emerita of Sociology, The Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Baruch College
12. Sue Stephenson – Vice Chair, Executive Committee, IMPACT 2030
13. Jacob Mwathi Mati – Lecturer, School of Social Sciences, The University of the South Pacific
14. Emiliya Asadova – Programme Analyst (Volunteering infrastructure), Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, UNV
15. Juan Ángel Poyatos – Director, Volontare
16. Concepción Fernández Alvarez – Head, Volunteer Department (Voluntarios X), General Directorate for Citizen Participation, Municipality of Madrid
17. David Caprara – International Vice President, Strategic Partnerships, Global Peace Foundation
18. Mark Hager – Associate Professor of Nonprofit Management and Leadership (NLM), Arizona State University
19. Rokiah Haji Omar – Director, University Community Transformation Center, The National University of Malaysia
20. Francis Chuks Njoaguani – Director, ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre (EYSDC)
21. Robert Toé – International Development Consultant
22. Pierre Soetard – Director of Programmes, France Volontaires
23. Qiang Zhang – Associate Professor, School of Social Development & Public Policy, Beijing Normal University
24. Francisco Roquette – Former Regional Manager, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNV
25. Scott Miller – Chief Executive, Volunteering New Zealand
26. Noumi Oosterwijk – Former Regional Programme Specialist (Volunteering infrastructure), Regional Office for East and Southern Africa, UNV
27. Tapiwa Kamuruko – Programme Specialist (Volunteer Advisory Services), Regional Office for East and Southern Africa, UNV
28. Lucas Meijs – Professor of Volunteering, Civil Society and Businesses and Professor of Strategic Philanthropy, Rotterdam School of Management
29. Helene Perold – Director, Helene Perold & Associates (HPA) and Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa (VOSESA)
30. Øyvind Sunde – Deputy Director General – Administration & Strategy
31. Gabriella Civico – Director, European Volunteer Centre
32. Elaine Colaco – Principal Consultant, Think Through Consulting
33. Ajay Pandey – Partner and Leader for CSR, Strategy and Performance Improvement, Think Through Consulting
34. Maria-Jose Benitez – Regional Programme Specialist (Peace and Citizen Security), Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNV

Notes

1. CEV 2012
2. UNV 2018
3. UNGA 2015a
4. UNGA 2015b
5. UNV 2018c
6. UNV 2004
7. UNV 2016
8. UNV 2009
9. UNV 2015
10. Allum, Salway, & Davis Smith 2017; Devereux & Learmonth 2017; IFRC 2011; IFRC 2014; O'Brien, Learmonth, Rakesh, & Parke Weaving 2017; Seelig & Lough 2015
11. e.g. CEV 2012
12. e.g. O'Brien et al. 2017; VOSESA 2011
13. e.g. Republic of Kenya 2015 and 2016
14. e.g. UNV, UNDP & Indian Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports 2017
15. UNGA 2008; UNGA 2012; UNGA 2015a; UNGA 2018
16. UNGA, 2008, p. 9
17. Catherine Shea 2010; IFRC 2011
18. Lough 2015; UNV, UNDP & Indian Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports 2017; Van den Bos 2014
19. UNV 2018b
20. UNGA 2008; UNGA 2012
21. Allum, Salway, & Davis Smith 2017; Devereux & Learmonth 2017; O'Brien, Learmonth, Rakesh, & Parke Weaving 2017
22. Allum et al. 2017; Devereux & Learmonth 2017; O'Brien et al. 2017; Interview data
23. Brudney & Sink 2017
24. UNGA 2015a; UNGA 2015b
25. Interview data
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2018 STATE OF THE WORLD'S VOLUNTEERISM REPORT *THE THREAD THAT BINDS*

VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

This paper provides an overview of the state of volunteering infrastructure globally as background research to the 2018 State of the World's Volunteerism Report: *The thread that binds*. The 2018 SWVR is a United Nations flagship publication that presents new evidence on the role of volunteerism in strengthening community resilience. It finds that communities value volunteerism because it enables them to create collective strategies for dealing with diverse economic, social and environmental challenges. At the same time, unless appropriately supported by wider actors, volunteering can be exclusive and burdensome for some groups. Alone, communities have limited capacities and resources to adapt to emerging and future risks. The report thus explores how governments and development actors can best engage with volunteerism to nurture its most beneficial characteristics, while mitigating against potential harms to the most vulnerable. In doing so, the report provides an important contribution to the evidence base on inclusive, citizen-led approaches to resilience-building.

