Volunteerism is a powerful means of engaging people in addressing development challenges

Post-2015
VOLUNTEERING FOR POST-2015

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INTRODUCTION

The post-2015 agenda offers a historic opportunity for Volunteer Involving Organizations to advocate for volunteerism and its values as an inherent component of any future global development framework. Over the past decade, global efforts for the recognition and promotion of volunteerism have engaged stakeholders around the world in a conversation on how to further integrate volunteerism into developmental plans, policies and strategies. Volunteerism is a form of civic engagement that is increasingly recognized as a key complementary mechanism for social, economic and environmental transformation.

As the global conversation evolves about a new post-2015 developmental framework, a number of important opportunities are emerging for civil society engagement to promote the recognition of volunteerism. The post-2015 discussions are focused on expanding the definition of development progress through an integrated perspective of the three sustainable development dimensions, and are also considering targets and indicators to measure human well-being that go beyond GDP. Volunteerism plays a role in this regard from a number of perspectives. It is a mechanism that engages people from the bottom up. It is a way of “getting the job done”, based on the premise that sustainable development results cannot be delivered by institutions alone. Many global efforts to change the game in terms of development bottle-necks have relied on the mobilization and contributions of volunteers: be it the Campaign to eradicate polio, to roll back malaria or the global environmental movements. Volunteerism forms the backbone of national and international civil society organizations as well as many social and political movements all over the world.

Volunteerism, however, represents much more. It engages people’s minds and hearts and thus can lead to changing mindsets and attitudes. People acting as volunteers care about their community and society, and feel a sense of responsibility towards the common good. This in turn leverages and develops their skills and capacities and fosters attitudes of responsible and responsive citizenship. Volunteerism is therefore intrinsically connected to the conversation about complementary means of implementation for a universal and holistic development framework, placing people at the centre of every effort. Volunteerism also provides a bridge to engage people in accountability frameworks that demand a stronger and more direct people-state connection. Such a framework will be based on increased and up-scaled partnerships that leverage all talents and capacities in society, while strengthening the feedback loop for people to hold their governments accountable for the promises they make.

With the aim to take this conversation forward, both in terms of process and substance, and building on discussions that were initiated during a consultative stakeholder meeting organized by the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme in March 2012, UNV organized a meeting with stakeholders in New York on 23-24 September. Participants included 20 representatives from global Volunteer Involving Organizations (see Annex I for the list of participants).

The meeting was organized during the week of the 68th session of the UN General Assembly in New York, in advance of the Special Event towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on 25 September. This gave participants the opportunity to engage in a number of other post-2015 related events that took place in New York during that week.
Special acknowledgments go to the team of the UNV Office in New York: Yanick Calixte, Liam Kincaid, Brandon Minnaar, Emily Miller, Shetal Shah and Jordi Llopart, have spared no effort to provide substantive input into the materials defining the event as well as supporting the meeting logistics, taking notes, and ensuring that any occurring problem was solved. Vera Chrobok, along with the post-2015 team and the Civil Society Focal Point Peter Devereux at UNV HQ, have also made an invaluable contribution to the meeting, both before, during and after in terms of general preparation, creation of documents, substantive inputs, overall communication and support to participants.

A final thank you goes to all the participants who have made this meeting a success thanks to a desire to act collectively in order to integrate the specific volunteer perspective in the conversation about key enabling factors for the new development framework. The road to success is neither easy nor even, and as much as volunteerism is generally applauded by all, it will take a lot of concerted perseverance to reach a situation where policy makers see volunteerism as an integral and necessary part of any development strategy, ultimately rendering societies more vibrant and stable.

Simona Costanzo Sow,
UNV Post-2015 Project Manager
Bonn, October 2013
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DAY 1

Participants’ expectations for the post-2015 development agenda

After a few welcoming words from Jordi Llopart, the Chief of the UNV New York Office, followed by a short welcome by UNV’s post-2015 Project Manager, Simona Costanzo Sow, and a round of introductions, participants indicated their expectations for the post-2015 development framework as well as key challenges in integrating volunteerism into the post-2015 agenda. Some of the issues that were highlighted are summarized below:

➢ There needs to be greater recognition of volunteerism and the role it plays in delivering services around the world. The V-word is assumed but it is not understood that volunteers are the implementers; volunteers are the ones delivering on the MDGs.
➢ What is omitted is invisible and therefore underfunded. There are few lives that haven’t been touched by volunteers, but we must make sure the “how” is included, not just the “what.”
➢ Enhance the understanding that volunteerism is not just a service but plays a broader role in terms of social cohesion and its contribution to societal and human wellbeing (i.e. qualitative impact).
➢ Enhance the understanding that volunteerism in the development agenda is part of the solution.
➢ We need to promote the values of volunteerism through policy engagement and the sharing of practices amongst ourselves (i.e. mutual learning). We also need research on the value and role of volunteering to more clearly demonstrate its impact.
➢ How do we reach out to decision makers on the ground? We need a clear roadmap for post-2015 engagement (i.e. a single harmonized approach).
➢ We are not seeing the constituencies push the changes that need to be pushed. We need to focus on what we want to see changed, what the main constraints are, and who are the stakeholders with whom we need to interact.

In addition, participants shared a number of additional comments and perceptions:

➢ Are we making a purposeful effort to highlight volunteerism’s role and purpose in and of itself? Is it time for us to “come out of the closet” and not just be contextualized within gender or youth? Volunteerism can be moved out from other agendas since it has a separate narrative.
➢ We need to be very clear about where we push it and how to frame it if we want it to get taken into account in the next set of development goals. Is it enough for it to be part of the narrative? Or do we want it to be part of a target or an indicator?
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- We need both aspects to be recognized: the positive effect it has on people’s lives and its role in facilitating the participation that people are yearning for and has been missing in the MDGs. We must demonstrate this impact as funding goes hand in hand with recognition.
- Any sort of work to influence decision makers must have numbers behind it.
- Which documents and which processes and reports can we influence now, and from now up to September 2014 and September 2015? What can we do globally and what do want to do nationally and regionally?
- What are the national policies that enable volunteerism to happen? How do policies embed opportunities for volunteerism to reach out to more citizens in a more structured way? Secondly, there is the issue of measurement as what gets measured gets done. While we see good indicators on health, education, etc., it would be fantastic to make a statement on social cohesion. This allows us to make a more concrete statement about the impact of volunteerism.

Presentation: MDG’s and Rio+20 - Evolution of the post-2015 agenda

The introductory session was followed by a presentation by Simona and Jordi on the background of the post-2015 global development agenda and UNV’s related advocacy efforts over the last years.

In the presentation, Simona highlighted efforts made by UNV to enhance recognition and integration of volunteerism and related concepts in the post-2015 agenda at national and global levels, and she briefly summarized the key points of the New York Action Agenda that was adopted during the stakeholder meeting in March 2012. She re-called that participants of that meeting had pledged to

- build on IYV+10 in terms of partnerships and basic messaging
- Set up a task force to advance collectively
- Develop common core messages
- Establish a process and platform for accessing opportunities
- Advocate at national, regional and international level

They had also requested UNV to act as a facilitator in this respect.

Jordi highlighted the context of the global conversation related to a new set of development goals and underlined that consensus was emerging that a new framework needs to build on the MDGs, while addressing MDG gaps as well as new challenges. A key realisation with regards to the new framework is the need for enhanced multi-stakeholder partnerships, strengthening South South relations and engaging new partners. In times of more dynamic and unstructured decision making processes, people’s engagement also plays an increasing importance, particularly in light of conversations about accountability and feedback loops between citizens and state beyond elections.

The Special Event of the MDGs, taking place in the week of the meeting, has merged the two conversation strands building on the MDGs and on the Rio Outcomes. The Outcome Document of the Event underlines a number of key principles:
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- Strengthened global partnership for development
- A commitment to the Millennium Declaration, the outcome document of Rio+20, the Monterrey Consensus, the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development and the outcomes of all the major UN Conferences and summits in the economic, social, and environmental fields
- It also explicitly acknowledges the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and singles out its commitment to poverty eradication AND sustainable development explicitly
- It also underlines the necessity for a coherent approach, integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner and underlines that this also means that there has to be a SINGLE framework and set of Goals – universal in nature and applicable to all countries. The document explicitly singles out peace and security, democratic governance, the rule of law, gender equality and human rights for all.

Simona presented a series of substantive mentions of volunteerism in UN resolutions and key post-2015 related documents. She also stressed that it was up to the participants to keep such mentions alive, by referring to them as they build their case with individual governments and sustain them by specific evidence. (please refer to Annex VI). Jordi also underlined the necessity to identify key governments with a stake in the process (Annex V) and to target advocacy efforts, based on places with active member organisations and partners and convincing evidence from these countries to the extent that it is available. He underlined the need to strengthen the feedback loop between the national and global level conversations.

Volunteerism should not only be discussed in closed fora dedicated to the issue. It is at least as important (if not more) to introduce its specific contribution in settings focussing on different thematic areas or discussing global approaches to development such as the upcoming World Economic Forum Annual Meeting to be held in Davos (Jan 2014) as well as the AU Summit in Addis Ababa (Jan 2014), the Commission on the Status of Women, the World Youth Conference in Sri Lanka, the ICPD 2014 – International Conference on Population and Development Beyond 2014, the World Conference of Indigenous Peoples or the G20 in Australia (Nov 2014).

The presentation also included an overview of ‘volunteerism milestones’ since 2010 (see Annex IV), as well as a diagram that visualizes the post-2015 process (see page 8).

The diagram indicates the two strands of the conversation (one strand that builds on the Rio+20 Outcome Document, and one strand that builds on the conversation to develop a successor framework to the MDGs), as well as the various existing processes that bring the two strands together. The date of the stakeholder meeting coincided with the moment when the two strands were brought together during the Special Event towards achieving the MDGs.
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Briefing on the Ottawa Declaration: background and ideas to take it forward

Nita Kapoor, Chair of the International FORUM for Volunteering in Development, briefed participants on FORUM’s involvement in the MDG/post-2015 process, as well as the Ottawa Declaration.

She explained that FORUM membership includes 23 agencies and four associate members, including increased members from the Global South. Members devoted a significant amount of time and resources into documenting the link between volunteerism and the Millennium Development Goals. However, volunteering organizations entered the debate later than other development agencies. Thus, once the post-2015 conversation began, FORUM pushed to become involved at an early stage. This time, volunteer involving organizations need to be more active in policy engagement at the national and international level.

The Ottawa Declaration was formulated during the 2012 annual meeting of the International Volunteer Cooperation Organizations (IVCO) to involve volunteer organizations in the global debate to discuss the relevance of volunteering as the post-2015 agenda takes shape. Based on the recognition of voluntary associations and volunteer groups in the 2010 MDG Summit Outcome Document as well as the Rio+20 Outcome Document, they envisaged their contribution to the post-2015 development agenda in the final “Ottawa Declaration”. Reaffirming the crucial contribution of volunteering as a means to engage people in shaping and implementing a truly inclusive and sustainable development agenda, they underlined their commitment to engage in all institutional follow-up mechanisms shaping the post-2015 agenda, such as the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and the high-level political forum on sustainable development. On 5 December 2012, International Volunteer Day, the Declaration was brought to the attention of the three Assistant Secretaries-General and to the Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning to underline the interest of volunteer groups in defining the post-2015 development agenda.

The Declaration has since been signed by other global and national Volunteer Involving Organizations. The full document is accessible via Forum’s website and remains open for further signatures at: http://forum-ids.org/news/join-up-to-the-ottawa-declaration/

As a next step, Nita suggested to expand the Ottawa Declaration. Ideally, a new accord that expands the space and the profile of volunteers should be drafted. This could be discussed at the annual IVCO conference in October. Part of this discussion would include how volunteering can bridge the gap, be profiled, and contribute to the post-2015 agenda.
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The afternoon was spent in small group discussions to advance on the substantive positioning and define the way forward in terms of process. Working Group 1 looked at substantive entry points to develop further in order to be able to articulate the policy asks of volunteer-involving organizations more explicitly. Working Group 2 discussed the institutional process of engagement with the different strands of the post-2015 conversation and explored ways to strengthen the volunteerism perspective within that context through existing mechanisms and through strengthening volunteer groups as a separate constituency.

The below summaries highlight the key issues that were raised during the working group discussions.

Working Group 1: Integrating a new (and old) concept

- The understanding of volunteerism as an enabler of social cohesion and societal and human well-being should be included in the narrative of the new framework.
- Realistically it will be difficult to get an explicit mention of volunteering as a target or indicator of any given goal, theoretically it could be one for many different candidate goals especially under the candidate governance goal. Ultimately, the question is what would be the best strategy to ensure the value of volunteerism is contained somewhere.
- If we rely only on the governance goal, there is a high risk of being siloed or missing the boat altogether (since it is unknown whether there will be a governance goal in the end).
- Work needs to be done on both the narrative and specific goals/targets/indicators. If volunteerism only enters the narrative, it will be diluted. If it is only in a goal which does not make the final framework, then the opportunity has been lost.
- There is consensus that a common position statement should underline universality of volunteerism, the crosscutting nature/relevance across thematic areas (ex. governance, employability, fair economies), and be specific in terms of policy asks.
- Volunteerism needs to be understood as a mechanism for participation, engagement and sustainable development goals. It is a tried and tested, universal mechanism that has been undervalued.
- One possible way forward is to articulate volunteerism’s value in 3-4 points and then illustrate it through goals in different ways (ex. applied to an education goal, a peace and security goal, a gender goal), which enables us all to work in ways in which we’re already working.
- A number of participants volunteered to draft a joint position statement.
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Working Group 2: Integrating volunteer groups as a constituency

- Where can volunteer involving organizations find an entry point to express their specific concern? How should this group organize itself/operate?
- UNV will continue to provide intelligence on process, actors and stances. UNV will also provide a map of what comes next (i.e. particular milestones, opportunities and windows for impacting the post-2015 development agenda); this will then inform both substance and process engagement as it is difficult to delink process and content. A more concrete narrative with policy asks in place will also help in defining the way in which the group operates.
- With regard to group operations, capabilities are there but resources are not. There needs to be a coordination mechanism to ensure messages are clearly articulated. There also needs to be a two-way dialogue between the global and national levels (with various layers in between) that explains how global level work is relevant to national level.
- On the whole, the goal is to get governments to value and invest in volunteering, and create an enabling environment for volunteering to achieve what it sets out to achieve.
- IFRC’s approach was suggested as a “best practice.” The IFRC used an agreed-upon set of principles to frame its operations to impact the process, and as parameters to guide commitments and action.
- We must work with existing volunteering networks to go the extra mile to talk to Member States; organizations should partner together in this where possible. In getting messages to resonate, it is important to relate to specific country contexts.
- It would be ideal to get John Ashe (President of the General Assembly) to speak on the value of volunteerism, though this is likely very difficult.
- Limited resources are a challenge, and there is a need for a coordinating mechanism.
DAY 2

Welcome Remarks: Amanda Mukwashi, Chief of the Volunteer Knowledge and Innovation Section, UNV

In her welcome remarks, Amanda emphasized that volunteers and their role in the post-2015 framework for sustainable development are the unifying factor in this stakeholder meeting. She reiterated that there is a real opportunity for volunteer involving organizations to position volunteers/volunteerism in the global conversation. Amanda welcomed the opportunity for volunteer involving organizations to come together and think through joint advocacy approaches and action. She underlined the necessity of the volunteer sector to strengthen the body of evidence with regards to the contribution of volunteering to development, if it is to be taken seriously. The post-2015 agenda is an excellent opportunity to strengthen the importance of engaging people in order to deliver development promises. A transformative shift will not happen if key ‘assets’ are left out of the conversation. Governments will need to create and provide enabling environments for volunteerism to blossom thereby increasing the spaces through which citizens can engage in their own development processes.
Opening Remarks: Richard Dictus, UNV Executive Coordinator

The UNV Executive Coordinator structured his remarks around 5 key messages:

1. The MDGs have galvanized global efforts to reduce poverty; efforts to achieve the MDGs need to be continued while addressing the “missing elements” beyond 2015.

2. Volunteerism is a means of implementation for delivery across thematic areas AND an innovative way to engage people in the context of more complex and participatory citizen-state relations.

3. Volunteerism needs to be integrated substantively in the discussions about the structure of the new framework now, so that governments can be held accountable for their delivery on it later.

4. Volunteer involving organizations need to upscale their efforts to provide evidence of volunteerism’s contribution to development.

5. Volunteer involving organizations need to seize the spaces that have opened for them at the institutional and inter-governmental level.

1. The MDGs have galvanized global efforts to reduce poverty; efforts to achieve the MDGs need to be continued while addressing the “missing elements” beyond 2015.

Richard reminded the audience of the importance of the opportunity to discuss the post-2015 development framework in advance of its adoption. It has taken 5 years for governments and civil society stakeholders to fully buy into the logic of the Millennium Development Goals as they were decided through a much more top-down approach. The MDGs have been instrumental in focusing the attention of development partners on key priorities in order to galvanize unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world’s poorest.

However, as it turned out over the period of implementation, there were also many ‘missing elements’ of the MDGs. The MDGs neglected the role of people in development, the capacity of people to mobilize, the capacity of people to outreach, as well as the relevance of social cohesion. The MDGs mainly looked at “what” needed to change and set specific targets in this regard, but were not very explicit about “how” this needed to happen. These missing elements can be addressed through volunteerism. Volunteerism in this context needs to be seen as a way to strengthen the connection between people and the state, and as a way to leverage the voices as well as the capacities and skills of people to engage in the issues shaping their livelihoods.
2. Volunteerism is a means of implementation for delivery across thematic areas AND an innovative way to engage people in the context of more complex and participatory citizen-state relations.

Enhancing the partnerships for the implementation of the new sustainable development goals will be key if the delivery of results is to reach all the way to the local level! Volunteerism is in a privileged position in this regard because of its universal relevance across countries in the North and in the South and because of the transversality of its approach. Volunteerism is a key complementary means of implementation, not only in the traditional sense but because of the specific value-add it brings. In fact, volunteerism is indeed a key mechanism with regards to basic service delivery, community resilience for the environment and disaster risk reduction as well as peace building, to echo some of the strategic priorities UNV has defined in its new Strategic Framework.

Volunteerism is also a crucial means of implementation when it comes to strengthening the accountability between citizens and the state: the MyWorld Initiative has powerfully demonstrated that voluntary engagement is both, a way to roll out the conversation and carry it into the most remote areas as well as a way to engage people in developing solutions to address the issues raised. In this sense, volunteerism is not just the vehicle of the message, but a key catalyst and enabler leveraging people’s interests, capacities and skills and thereby durably influencing their attitudes and mindsets. Both literature on international volunteering and case studies of community volunteerism in developing countries support the view that volunteerism can engender a sense of agency in people, mobilizing them from being passive recipients to becoming active agents. Fostering such a sense of responsibility helps build community resilience and mobilization towards long-term goals for community well-being.

3. Volunteerism needs to be integrated substantively in the discussions about the structure of the new framework now, so that governments can be held accountable for their delivery on it later.

The conversation about the need to define progress beyond GDP is receiving much recognition from development practitioners. The focus on institutional capacity and financial means for the implementation of the MDGs was not sufficient to address the breadth of factors that contribute to the delivery of development goals. Non-monetary assets, such as trust and hope in the future, are increasingly recognized as fragile goods that need to be cherished and entertained for societies to be stable and peaceful. This is particularly true as we look at the role of young people who demand to be able to play a constructive role in societies, which allows them to participate, engage in the decisions that affect them and project themselves to a positive future. The HLP has also recognized that “Young people must be subjects, not objects, of the post-2015 development agenda…they must also be active participants in decision-making, and be treated as the vital asset for society that they are”.

The UN Task Team has equally identified inclusive social development as a core dimension of sustainable development, while the High Level Panel has identified leaving “no one behind” as one of the five transformative shifts that will be required in its vision of a post-2015 development agenda. It has emphasized social inclusion as a universal challenge, for every country and every person on earth, requiring structural change, with new solutions. In fact, it has also identified an increase in participation, including through civic engagement at all levels as one of the indicators for effective governance. An increased engagement in volunteering should definitely be seen as an indicator for an enhanced participatory approach to development.
Volunteering involving organizations need to upscale their efforts to provide evidence of volunteerism’s contribution to development

In order to make the substantive points about the relevance of volunteerism with regards to the new development framework more convincingly, Richard reminded the participants that one of the collective future priorities needed to be an investment in developing the evidence demonstrating the contribution of volunteers and volunteerism to development. Development partners increasingly demand hard data before they allocate any funding.

Richard reminded the participants that they needed to scale up their policy documents and tailor the body of existing knowledge to be able to make their points consistently, systematically and insistently.

Volunteering involving organizations need to seize the spaces that have opened for them at the institutional and inter-governmental level

Richard also stressed that the inter-governmental process is Member State led and advocacy therefore needed to strongly focus on influencing national governments over the coming months. It will be crucial to engage with countries to tailor successful national examples where volunteerism has made a difference, where volunteerism has produced concrete results. This will enhance chances for a government to take the position forward. Coalition-building at national level is therefore key.

The recognition of volunteer groups, as a new actor in this conversation, is crucial to ensure that the specific perspective volunteer involving organizations bring to the table is heard while the new framework is constructed. The inclusion of “volunteer groups” in the UN GA Resolution that defines the architecture of the HLPF (A/67/L.72) is a huge hook, volunteer involving organizations need to use in claiming their space at the table. In the resolution, “volunteer groups” are explicitly recognized as stakeholders that are expected to work with the Major Groups to provide their expertise to Member States on issues of relevance to the new sustainable development agenda. This opens up a space for volunteer organizations to influence the post-2015 development goals. The next step will be the utilization of this space by volunteer organizations.

UNV, as the UN entity focusing on volunteerism can definitely help facilitate the process, but it must be the volunteer organizations that speak up for themselves.
Remarks by Nyaradzai Gumbondzvanda, General Secretary, World YWCA: Volunteerism as a form of citizen participation - the YWCA experience

Nyaradzai opened her speech with a brief background on the World YWCA. She emphasized that the approach of World YMCA is about citizens’ well-being, and about claiming their rights and voices through volunteerism. Inter-generational volunteerism is prominently featured in YWCA’s mission.

In terms of experience and lessons learned for achieving the MDGs, she stressed the following key points:
- It is important to look at volunteers as a resource. Volunteerism is about communities providing and delivering services.
- The regional discourse is important for the MDGs. There is a need to place volunteerism around citizen participation as a start for regional decision-making.
- There has not been a sufficient amount of economic quantification of volunteerism and its value.
- In conflict countries, it is volunteers who make an impact.

In order to position volunteerism in the post-2015 development agenda, volunteer groups need to position themselves to engage citizens. In addition, volunteer groups need to use different language when engaging stakeholders to show the value of volunteerism.

Remarks by Jeffrey Huffines, UN Representative, CIVICUS: Stakeholder engagement around the new framework – Roles and opportunities for Major Groups and other stakeholders

Jeff briefly introduced the work of CIVICUS and highlighted the following four points:
- CIVICUS has released a report on an Enabling Environment Index.
- CIVICUS is working on a civil society scorecard to provide accountability to civil society organizations.
- The next theme of CIVICUS’s annual report will be “democratizing global governance”.
- CIVICUS is in the process of developing a global development goals dashboard.

Regarding opportunities to engage in multi-stakeholder processes at the United Nations, Jeff explained that UN DESA has asked Major Groups and other stakeholders to develop ideas on what “enhanced multi-stakeholder participation” could look like within the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) resolution. Now is the time for Major Groups and other stakeholders to propose modalities for the participation of civil society in the process. He further explained that UN colleagues are unsure what “enhanced multi-stakeholder participation” truly means in the HLPF, and that this is an opportunity to shape the discourse on participation rights. The Major Groups
would not go away; the HLPF does acknowledge other groups. He conveyed that this is the time to form modalities within existing Major Groups or form new Major Groups.

Jeff posed the following questions: Do volunteer organizations wish to be represented as a Major Group? Do volunteer organizations have a position on sustainable development? Is there political will within volunteer organizations to commit resources to become another Major Group, and if so, what should the criteria be for the UN system to recognize volunteer organizations as another Major Group? Jeff underlined that volunteer groups have demonstrated that they have a specific perspective to bring to the table, but that they need to make conscious choices in terms of the most effective ways to aggregate their views.

In response to Jeff’s questions, the following comments were made by participants:

- Volunteer organizations are still contemplating the questions put forward by Jeff. The concept of volunteering as a fundamental concept of social cohesion is not sufficiently captured through the civil society lens as overarching factor. Civil Society organizations have different agendas and a greater number of fragmentations; volunteering can be a unifying aspect across differences. However, concerns were expressed regarding resources, i.e. whether volunteer organizations have the resources to become a Major Group.
- Apart from the Major Groups, the HLPF Resolution clearly also recognizes “other stakeholders” and explicitly acknowledges “volunteer groups”. This means that they don’t have to become part of the Major Groups System to have a seat at the table.
- The concept of “volunteerism” and the validity of its specific approach to development is not well understood by everyone. This might be one reason for creating a volunteer Major Group.
- As a Major Group, volunteerism can cut across differences and stand-alone agendas.
- It is important to find channels to express the specific volunteerism perspective as it is the case for gender and youth, which are equally cross-cutting issues. The past experience has demonstrated that issues that are not explicitly mentioned don’t receive explicit policy attention nor funding in the long run.
Feedback from Day 1: How do we take the agenda forward?

Following the opening remarks and statements by World YWCA and CIVICUS, participants recapped Day 1 of the stakeholder meeting and engaged in a discussion around the way forward. The key issues that arose from the discussion are summarized below:

- Since IYV+10, volunteer organizations have been recognized in several documents that provide spaces for their voices to be heard. More volunteer organizations should utilize these spaces. If a common idea on volunteerism is developed, it would make it easier for stakeholders to move forward.
- There is increasing formal recognition of volunteers and volunteer organizations. However, there is a need for ‘new blood’ as stakeholders move forward. (ie more organizations and networks from the South and more organizations that don’t carry the notion of volunteerism in their name.
- At the same time, it is important to consolidate the core group of volunteer-involving organizations
- The landscape has been altered – the language of participation has changed for volunteer organizations. UN agencies do want volunteer organizations present at high-level events.

Based on the discussions, the group decided to set up a task force in order to take the conversations of the meeting forward and to work out a concrete action plan for joint advocacy in order to be able to determine the results volunteer organizations desire to achieve and to develop a road map to go forward, including a reflection of human and other resources different organizations are capable and ready to make available. The group should also develop a first draft of a position statement.

Another responsibility of the task force would be to identify advocacy spaces and opportunities as well as to develop criteria for relations with Major Groups. The Task Force should define the processes and reflect on opportunities ahead (e.g. internal opportunities such as International Volunteer Day, and external opportunities such as Annual Conferences, Expo Milan, etc.) YMCA agreed to verify the possibility to provide staff capacity for coordination for the first three months through their NY based representative.

The following participants agreed to become members of the Task Force:
FORUM, CUSO, VSO, IAVE, VSA, WOSM, WAGGGS, YMCA, BBC.

UNV agreed to continue to provide information and to act as facilitator to the extent possible, but underlined that the initiative needed to lie with the task force. Simona re-iterated that the VolunteerActionCounts Website was revamped to provide specific information related to post-2015 and encouraged the participants to provide any additional documents, links and position papers they would like to see uploaded there.
In his closing remarks, Jordi reiterated the importance for volunteer-involving organizations (ViOs) to step up to the challenge to make volunteering visible at this historic moment in which the international community is defining the development agenda for the next 15 or 20 years. The newly formed ViO Task Force would have to actively consider the opportunity and identify the resources needed to size the importance of the task ahead. UNV is willing to provide support and information to the Task Force and Jordi underlined the readiness of the UNV Office in New York to continue identifying opportunities for engagement and guiding partners in their proactive engagement at the international level.

Jordi reminded participants that the visibility build around volunteering during the celebrations of the first International Year on Volunteering (IVD) in 2001 did not translate into an explicit acknowledgment of volunteering impact in peace and development in the wording of any of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Jordi considered that this could have been due to the absence of concerted policy-oriented advocacy from the ViO community in the year 2000 and 2001. The post-2015 agenda provides an excellent opportunity for volunteer-involving organizations to address that historic mistake. ViOs should make their voices heard now and try to integrate an indicator on volunteering into the next generation of internationally agreed development goals.

Jordi also recalled the important advocacy achievements collectively made during IYV+10 in 2011 and in the lead up to the Rio+20 Conference in 2012 and credited those achievements to joint action by many ViOs including some of the participants present at the stakeholder event in New York. He recalled that a lot of effort has been already invested in substantively engaging with civil society colleagues, Member States, UN partners and other stakeholders and that such efforts already paid dividends from which we should all build on such the explicit mention to “volunteer groups” in the HLPF resolution as well as in the SG Report for the Special Event (please refer to list of milestones in annex IV). Such achievements provide “a foot in the door” for volunteering to be integrated into the next development agenda but this will not take place without the Volunteer-involving organizations to push the door open and walk through!
OVERVIEW OF PARALLEL EVENTS

On 23 September, the MY World side event “One Million Voices: Data Analysis from MY WORLD on What the People Want” was held at the UN Secretariat, on the results of the MY World survey. Amita Dahiya, a national UN Volunteer from India, presented the offline roll-out of the MY World survey in India. Amita stressed the role of volunteers as key implementers in the MY WORLD survey. Over 200 volunteers contributed about 2,300 hours of their time and reached out to 11 states, covering all four regions in India. With over 11,000 offline votes, India has collected the highest number of UNV votes so far. Beyond rolling out the survey itself, the volunteer effort has demonstrated how the conversation about the “World people want” can be an entry point to engage people in a conversation about their priorities, their specific expertise and ways to engage further. Beyond 2015 MyWorld has the potential to strengthen the citizen-state feedback loop and to enhance opportunities for monitoring the new framework. Volunteers will be key in rolling out this effort.

At the UNDG side event “What People Want: A Report from the Global Conversation on the Post-2015 Agenda” on 23 September, Ms. Raaida Mannaa, Youth Strategy Project Manager at the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE), spoke about the importance of youth volunteering in the context of the new development framework.

On 25 September, Dr. Gill Greer, CEO Volunteer Service Abroad (New Zealand) spoke on behalf of volunteer groups to highlight the work of millions of volunteers during the fourth roundtable of the Special Event “Towards Achieving the Millennium Goals”. For the first time ever, and upon recommendation of UNV, a volunteer-involving organization was selected by the President of the General Assembly to deliver a statement to Member States on behalf of “volunteer groups.” In her remarks, Dr. Greer elaborated that volunteering is about action and service, and about active citizenship, social cohesion, partnership and relationships. As a result, the effect of volunteering across many critical areas of people’s lives, and on local, national and global development, can be transformational. For her full speech, please refer to Annex VII.
In the evening of 25 September, Mr. Richard Dictus, UNV Executive Coordinator, presented a Volunteerism Award during the **MY World Partner Recognition Event and Award Ceremony**. Click [here](#) for the link to the press releases on the UNV website.

**UNV Executive Coordinator, Richard Dictus, handing over the MY World Volunteerism Award to Mr. Mazher Hussain, Representative of the Peace Gong Kashmir Bureau in India, during the MY World Partner Recognition Event and Award Ceremony on 25 September 2013 in New York.**

*(Photo: Joel Sheakoski/UNV, 2013)*

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07 October 2013

**New York, USA:** On 25 September, United Nations representatives, Goodwill Ambassadors, members of the Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and representatives of civil society organizations from around the world gathered in New York to publicly announce the winners of the MY World Partner Recognition Awards.

Richard Dictus, Executive Coordinator of the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme, presented the award to the winner of the volunteerism category: the Peace Gong Kashmir Bureau, a children’s newspaper run by dedicated volunteers in India. An initiative of the Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore Foundation, Peace Gong promotes volunteerism and media literacy education towards a culture of peace and sustainable development by bringing together children and youth from diverse cultures, backgrounds, regions and communities.

Richard emphasized that “[…] volunteerism is instrumental in generating civic engagement. Volunteerism has enabled people and organizations to find a voice”.

Peace Gong volunteers have collected several hundred votes for the MY World survey from different regions and communities in India, often travelling extensively to remote areas, and reaching out to many people, including marginalized and poor households, tribal communities, slum areas, and youth.

The Volunteerism Award recognizes the over one million citizens who have voted through the MY World survey, as well as the efforts of MY World partner organizations to foster volunteerism and civic engagement as a core ingredient for the success of the MY World initiative. Over half of all votes have been collected “offline” through paper ballots distributed by volunteers and discussed with respondents in the most remote communities around the world.

“We don’t have an office, we don’t have staff, whatever happens is truly thanks to the dedication of volunteers,” said Dr. Mazher Hussain, the Executive Director of the Confederation of Voluntary Associations (COVA) in India, as well as a founding member of the Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore Foundation, who received the award on behalf of Peace Gong.

MY World is a global options survey that has been developed in response to the United Nations Secretary-General’s request that the next development agenda should emerge from an inclusive data driven process with wide participation. MY World asks citizens all over the world to vote for the issues that would make the most difference to their lives and that of their families. The findings of the MY World survey are shared with global leaders and
decision-makers engaged in defining the next development agenda.

A good education, better healthcare and better job opportunities range among the most voted issues around the globe, closely followed by “an honest and responsive government”. Volunteering is explicitly mentioned as an indicator for the issue of “political freedoms” as a way for “every person… to play a part in political processes in their own country, including through voting and forming or joining political parties. People should be able to exercise freedom of expression including through free media. People should be able to join and participate in trade unions and all aspects of civil society including diverse forms of civic engagement and voluntary action”.

Amina J. Mohammed, Special Advisor of the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning, highlighted that the voices of the people have made it into the Report of the High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the Secretary-General’s Report on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Post-2015 Goals, and the outcome document of the Special Event towards achieving the MDGs. “Member states listened to the voices of those who participated, […] and this is thanks to volunteers who have gone out and stretched and pushed the borders.”

UNV is a core partner of MY World and a member of the Selection Committee for the MY World awards. UNV has been supporting the online and offline roll-out of the MY World campaign since its inception in 2012, through the support of dedicated Post-2015 volunteers in over 30 countries, and through the UNV Field Units across the world.

To date, over one million people from 194 countries have participated in the MY World survey, with the support of 700 MY World partners across the globe. The purpose of the MY World Recognition Awards is to acknowledge the key contribution of MY World partners to the success of this initiative. A total of 10 awards in the following categories were given out to a selection of partners who have stood out for their performance in the promotion of MY World: Volunteerism, Innovation, Communications, Outstanding Partner, People’s Choice, as well as five regional outreach awards.

The Award Ceremony was organized by the United Nations Millennium Campaign (UNMC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), in cooperation with UNV and other partner organizations.

Speakers and presenters included Amina J. Mohammed, Special Advisor of the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning; Mr. Ahmad Alhendawi, UN Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth; Emilia Pires, Member of the Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda; Professor Fulbert Gero Amoussouga, Member of the Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the post-2015 Development Agenda; Professor Muhammad Yunus, Nobel Peace Prize Winner and Board Member of the UN Foundation; Corinne Woods, Director of the UNMC.

Aswin Bhim Nath, age 17, volunteer team leader, reaches out to a 93-year-old woman (born in 1920) in the rural area of Kerala, India to register her vote for the My World Survey. (AFRC India, June 2013)
## ANNEX I: Participant list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ms. Nita Kapoor</td>
<td>Chair of FORUM; Director of FK Norway</td>
<td>International FORUM for Volunteering in Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ms. Barb Hogan</td>
<td>Member of Board of Directors; Director of International Volunteering at CUSO International</td>
<td>International FORUM for Volunteering in Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mr. Philippe Fragnier</td>
<td>Team Leader, Knowledge Management Unit, Uniterra Program, Centre of International Development and Cooperation (CECI)</td>
<td>International FORUM for Volunteering in Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ms. Gillian Greer</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer, Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA)</td>
<td>International FORUM for Volunteering in Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ms. Kathleen Dennis</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ms. Raaida Manna</td>
<td>Project Manager of the IAVE Youth Strategy</td>
<td>International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ms. Ramona Dragomir</td>
<td>Network Development Manager (and an Atlas Corps Fellow)</td>
<td>International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Mr. Romulo Dantas</td>
<td>Executive Secretary for Youth Empowerment and Communications</td>
<td>YMCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mr. Saad Zian</td>
<td>Director, Adult Resources &amp; Volunteer Development</td>
<td>World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ms. Anush Aghabalyan</td>
<td>Senior Advocacy Coordinator</td>
<td>World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Ms. Adwoa Aidoo</td>
<td>Manager, Global Action</td>
<td>Girl Scouts of the USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Ms. Priya Nath</td>
<td>Policy Manager</td>
<td>VSO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position</td>
<td>Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Ms. Helen Claire Sievers</td>
<td>Executive Director, WorldTeach/UN Representative Building Bridges Coalition</td>
<td>Building Bridges Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Mr. Ismaila Diagne</td>
<td>Secretary General</td>
<td>France Volontaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ms. Nyaradzai Gumbonzvanda</td>
<td>General Secretary</td>
<td>World YWCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Ramya Kudekallu</td>
<td>Programme Associate</td>
<td>World YMCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Mr. Joseph Cornelius Donnelly</td>
<td>Permanent Delegate to the UN</td>
<td>CARITAS Internationalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Mr. Christophe Lobryboulanger</td>
<td>Advisor, IFRC Delegation to the UN</td>
<td>IFRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Mr. Jeffrey Huffines</td>
<td>UN Representative</td>
<td>Civicus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Mr. Corey Griffin</td>
<td>Associate Director of Strategic Partnerships</td>
<td>Peace Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Mr. Robert Leigh</td>
<td>Senior Writer, State of the World’s Volunteerism Report</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Mr. Richard Dictus</td>
<td>Executive Coordinator</td>
<td>UNV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Ms. Amanda Mukwashi</td>
<td>Chief, Volunteer Knowledge &amp; Innovation Section</td>
<td>UNV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Mr. Jordi Llopart</td>
<td>Chief, Office in New York</td>
<td>UNV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Ms. Simona Costanzo Sow</td>
<td>Post-2015 Project Manager</td>
<td>UNV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ANNEX II: Agenda of the UNV stakeholder meeting and other events around the UNGA Special Event on MDGs in New York

### Sunday 22 September

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2pm – 5.30pm</td>
<td>Advancing Regional Recommendations on Post-2015: <em>A Dialogue between Civil Society, Governments and UN Representatives</em> (hosted by NGLS)</td>
<td>Trusteeship Council Champer UN Plaza</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Monday 23 September – Stakeholder meeting Day 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30am</td>
<td>Introduction of participant organisations and post-2015 engagement</td>
<td>OHR Learning Resources Center, Conference room FF-1138, 11th floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30-11:45</td>
<td>MDG’s and Rio+20: Evolution of the post 2015 agenda Background and Briefing</td>
<td>304 East 45th Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- UNV’s role</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Integrating a new (and old) concept and constituency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The overall process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:45-12:30</td>
<td>The Ottawa Declaration: background and ideas to take it forward</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:30-13:00</td>
<td>Q+A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pm-2.30pm</td>
<td>Lunch organized by UNV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.30pm-5.30pm</td>
<td>Working Groups The global conversation: why volunteerism matters for post-2015</td>
<td>OHR Learning Resources Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Integrating a new (and old) concept</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Integrating volunteer groups as a constituency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Tuesday 24 September – Stakeholder meeting Day 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.30am</td>
<td>The way forward</td>
<td>OHR Learning Resources Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Welcome Remarks: Amanda Mukwashi, Chief of the Volunteer Knowledge and Innovation Section, UNV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Opening Remarks: Richard Dictus, UNV Executive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## VOLUNTEERING FOR POST-2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.00am</td>
<td>Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Remarks by Nyaradzai Gumbondzvanda, World YMCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Remarks by Jeffrey Huffines, Civicus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.45pm</td>
<td>- Feedback from Day 1: How do we take the agenda forward?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Closing Remarks: Jordi Llopart, Chief of the UNV NY Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pm-2.30pm</td>
<td>Lunch organized by UNV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.30pm</td>
<td>Dinner organized by UNV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restaurant “Padre Figlio”, 310 East 44th Street</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Wednesday 25 September

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Start: 9am</td>
<td>Not facilitated by UNV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(all day)</td>
<td>Special Event on MDGs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roundtable discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.30pm</td>
<td>MY World Partner Recognition Event and Award Ceremony (organized by UNMC/UNV and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>partners)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Followed by a 7pm Reception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trusteeship Council Chamber, UNV Plaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Danny Kaye Center, UNICEF House 3, United Nations Plaza, 44th Street</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX III:  List of key documents and links

Volunteer Action Counts website:
http://www.volunteeractioncounts.org/en/

Relevant resolutions:
A/67/L.72
http://csonet.org/content/documents/A67L72.pdf
A/RES/66/67
A/RES/67/138

Open Working Group on Sustainable Development:

High-Level Political Forum:

Ottawa Declaration:

Turkey Declaration:

MY World:
http://www.myworld2015.org/
http://blog.myworld2015.org/tag/the-future-we-want/

UNV video on post-2015/MY World:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=HMLUd7mN8n0

UNV video “Seven billion voices – IYV+10 and beyond”:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=PuO-tBQNqXc

UNV video on 2012 NY stakeholder meeting:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=hxN8fhQ91qY

Video on 5 transformative shifts
http://www.post2015hlp.org/inourhands/

UNV Newsletter # 5 focusing on civil society engagement with the post-2015 processes.
ANNEX IV: Volunteerism milestones

2010/2011

Committed to include a broader civil society stakeholder constituency including: “...non-governmental organizations, voluntary associations and foundations, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders [...] to enhance their role in national development efforts as well as their contribution to the achievement of the MDGs by 2015.” (A/RES/65/1)

Brought the opportunity for UNV to convene a wide range of international and national stakeholders and UN partners, governments, civil society, the private sector and academia around issues pertaining to volunteering and civic participation, formulating recommendations for its further integration into policies and legislation.

6 regional meetings
Global Volunteer Conference

Underlined:
- the universality, scope and reach of volunteerism;
- the diversity and universality of volunteer actions, ranging from social activism to basic service delivery;
- that community participation and civic engagement contribute to the wellbeing of the individual volunteer as well as the society overall;
- that millions of people are contributing to the MDGs through their voluntary actions.

DPI/NGO Conference A/66/750 Underlined the necessity to incorporate citizen engagement and volunteering in all plans for sustainable development and human well-being and recommended that new measures of sustainable welfare should be developed, considering headline indicators such as civic participation.

Recognizes that “volunteerism is an important component of any strategy aimed at, inter alia, such areas as poverty reduction, [and] sustainable development. ...Calls upon the UN system... to further recognize and integrate volunteerism... into [its] policies, programmes and reports, recognizes the contribution of volunteers and volunteer organizations, and encourages their participation in future United Nations and other relevant international conferences.
VOLUNTEERING FOR POST-2015

2012

At an IYV+10 wrap up meeting stakeholders develop an Action Agenda and decide to collectively advocate for further integration of volunteerism into the post-2015 agenda through Rio+20 as well as the post-MDG conversations.

The Outcome Document of the Rio+20 Conference underscored that sustainable development requires the "meaningful involvement and active participation of Major Groups ... as well as other stakeholders including... volunteer groups".

For the decade ahead, this report highlights how the promotion, recognition, facilitation, networking and integration of local, national and international volunteering, including that of young people, can significantly contribute to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, foster social cohesion and enhance social inclusion, life skills, employability, resilience and community well-being. Volunteerism should be an integral part of the post-2015 development framework. The mainstreaming of volunteer engagement will ensure that people are placed at the heart of sustainable peace and development efforts.

"Integrating volunteering in the next decade" adopted on Dec. 2012, welcomed "the creation of momentum in developing common platforms to increase support for volunteerism" and called upon the integration of volunteering in all relevant issues of the United Nations. Requested the Secretary General to "report to the General Assembly ... on the plan of action to be developed by UNV to integrate volunteering in peace and development in the next decade and beyond".
UN GA Resolution that defines the architecture of the HLPF, explicitly recognizes "volunteer groups" as stakeholders that are expected to work with the Major Groups to provide their expertise to Member States on issues of relevance to the new sustainable development agenda.

In the Secretary-General report "A life of dignity for all: accelerating progress towards the MDGs and advancing the UN development agenda beyond 2015" the “volunteer groups” are mentioned as a separate constituency to take into account when implementing the transformative actions of the post-2015 development agenda.

The final Report of 88 national consultations, 11 thematic consultations as well as the My World survey contains numerous references to the relevance of volunteerism for the new framework.
ANNEX V: Key countries

• President of the UNGA: John William Ashe, Antigua and Barbuda (as of September 2013) Uganda (2014)
• Co-Facilitators OWG: Kenya and Hungary
• Leading on HLPF: Italy and Brazil
• Leading on Special Event: Ireland and South Africa
• Chair and Vice Chair G77: Sri Lanka and Cameroon
• Presidency EU: Ireland (1/2013), Lithuania (2/2013), Greece (1/2014)
• Post Busan aid effectiveness panel: United Kingdom, Nigeria, Indonesia
• HLP former Co-Chairs: United Kingdom, Liberia, Indonesia
ANNEX VI: Mentions of volunteerism in key post-2015 documents

UNT T 2nd Report A renewed global partnership for development, March 2013

- p.16 Engaging new and emerging actors “In recent years, a more multi-polar global economy has emerged, led by the rapid growth of middle-income countries. Some middle-income countries now play a much more prominent role in development cooperation, and South-South cooperation reached between $12.9 billion and $14.8 billion in 2010, even though data gaps are likely to render this an underestimation. Nonetheless, it remains a small fraction of ODA, and should be seen as a complement rather than a substitute for North-South cooperation. South-South and triangular development cooperation are particularly relevant for in-kind contributions (including human resources as seconded personnel or volunteers; equipment or media-related products and services), exchange of skills, technical support and best practices. Such peer learning as well as knowledge, experience and technology sharing is vital to promote the development of innovative forms of partnerships.”

UNT T Statistics and indicators for the post-2015 development agenda, July 2013

- p. 36 9. Indicators of satisfaction, perceptions and attitudes
  Para 123. As described in the Sitglitz/Sen/Fitoussi report, “Quality of life includes the full range of factors that make life worth living, including those that are not traded in markets and not captured by monetary measures. … recent advances in research have led to new and credible measures for at least some aspects of quality of life. These … provide an opportunity to enrich policy discussions and to inform people’s view of the conditions of the communities in which they live.”

SDSN Report: An Action Agenda for Sustainable Development, 6 June 2013

- Page 3-4: Difficulties of global governance: In an age of globalization, governance within and among countries is becoming more diffuse and complex. Whereas in the past, national governments made most decisions relating to a country’s internal economic development, today they must coordinate with a broad spectrum of actors, including businesses, local governments, regional and international bodies, and civil society organizations. The information and communication revolution is leading to unprecedented transparency and growing demands for participation in key decisions from all segments of society in every country. An action agenda for sustainable development must therefore mobilize governments at all levels as well as civil society and business.
- Page 14: Societies and political systems differ in their responses to inequality. Some resist it strongly through aggressive policies and transfers; others seem to tolerate very high levels of inequality. We call on all societies to ensure that all individuals and households are empowered to fully participate in political, economic, and social life. To ensure sustainable development, economic gains must not only be inclusive, but the quality of social interactions that are based on trust, honesty, voluntarism, and solidarity needs to be enhanced through the promotion of social ethics and the observance of human rights for all.
VOLUNTEERING FOR POST-2015

A Million Voices: The World We Want, September 10, 2013

- P.ii (5) “A special effort was made to reach out to the poor, the marginalized and others whose voices are not usually heard. Modern communications technology, the mobilization of UN agencies and the exceptional enthusiasm of countless volunteers made this unique endeavour possible.”

- P.4 (14) “People and communities should be the key drivers at the start, the end and throughout any effort to transform society, build resilience, mitigate conflict and achieve sustainable development” Tanzania National Report, Chapter 3.11 on volunteer action and civic participation, p.39

- P.6-7 (16-17) “The consultations have revealed a huge appetite and demand for involvement not only in the design of the development agenda, but also in its future implementation. One million voices are a clear call that people, businesses and civil society organizations want to be engaged in creating development solutions while holding governments and the international community accountable for implementation. People from various walks of life are asking for transformation — not just of the “what”, but also “how” we do development. They are asking not just for a one-off consultation, but an ongoing conversation and concrete opportunities for engagement. They want not only to articulate the problems, but to help find solutions and be involved in implementing them. In this context, a number of national consultations, such as in DRC, Egypt, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan and Tanzania, called for an enabling environment for civic engagement: “People and communities should be the key drivers at the start, the end and throughout any effort to transform society, build resilience, mitigate conflict and achieve sustainable development.” — Tanzania national report, chapter 3.11 on Volunteer Action and Civic Participation, p.39

- P.35 (45) “There is a need to engage people, more specifically the youth. In the formulation of the development agenda, which in many ways can tie into a desire for increased volunteerism that can empower youth, transform the often passive relationship between citizen and state in addressing development challenges, and provide work skills” Kyrgyzstan national report, thematic areas: Values, p16.

- P.35 (45) “The Inequalities discussions have also highlighted the important role of civic engagement and volunteering as a way for all people, and particularly the most vulnerable, to foster their sense of responsibility and self-worth, and provide opportunities for them to concretely impact their livelihoods and play a constructive role in their communities.”

- P.76 (86) “In Indonesia, participants see transparency and the eradication of corruption as preconditions for the successful implementation of development interventions, such as government management and regulation of water resources. Good governance also requires greater civic participation in the policymaking and policy-regulating process.”

- P.80 (90) Voices from Arab States, the Middle East and Northern Africa “For countries affected by different degrees of conflict, transition and insecurity — directly or through neighbouring states — the resulting insecurity, and perceptions as such, severely reduces opportunities for people in affected communities. This has negative impacts on health, education, employment, family formation and civic engagement.”

- P.137 (147) “The empowerment and meaningful participation of individuals and civil society in governance systems are necessary to tackle inequality and promote social inclusion. A key building block of good governance is empowerment, with enhanced and meaningful participation in decision-making processes. In seeking to foster active participation from the ground up, the post-2015 agenda should ensure that meaningful civil society participation is facilitated via a rights-driven framework, which protects and promotes freedom of information, expression, movement, association and assembly, while limiting trends towards increased state securitization. Strengthening local governments and local development is critical for ensuring empowerment, civic participation and better service delivery. Local-level indicators must be included in any future development framework, because local governments are the primary point of institutional contact for the majority of individuals. From service delivery
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to wider programmes for citizen empowerment and civic participation, policies need to focus on individuals and communities, rather than merely on geographic areas.”


- Para 98 “The transformative actions of the post-2015 development agenda should be supported by multi-stakeholder partnerships that respond to the sustainable development agenda. These should include not only governments but also businesses, private philanthropic foundations, international organizations, civil society, volunteer groups, local authorities, parliaments, trade unions, research institutes and academia. Such partnerships can channel commitments and actions from a wider set of actors, and their success depends on assigning roles, responsibilities and clear accountability.”


- (Page 16) Peace. The Panel strongly believes that conflict – a condition that has been called development in reverse – must be tackled head-on, even within a universal agenda. We included in our illustrative list a goal on ensuring stable and peaceful societies, with targets that cover violent deaths, access to justice, stemming the external causes of conflict, such as organised crime, and enhancing the legitimacy and accountability of security forces, police and the judiciary. But these targets alone would not guarantee peace or development in countries emerging from conflict. Other issues, like jobs, participation in political processes and local civic engagement, and the transparent management of public resources are also important.
- (Page 4) Good institutions are, in fact, the essential building blocks of a prosperous and sustainable future. The rule of law, freedom of speech and the media, open political choice and active citizen participation, access to justice, non-discriminatory and accountable governments and public institutions help drive development and have their own intrinsic value.
- (Page 50) Every person can actively participate in realising the vision for 2030 to bring about transformational change.

CEPAL, Sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean: follow-up to the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 and to Rio+20 (here in Spanish)

- (Page 101) “Message 2: The region is changing. Emerging issues should be addressed in the new development agenda. A common criticism leveled against the agenda of the Millennium Development Goals is that it fails to address a number of important dimensions of well-being. Each region (indeed, every country) faces a set of challenges that are not reflected in the basic agenda comprising the eight global goals. The new post-2015 development agenda will have to take into account and reflect these missing dimensions. As a middle-income region, Latin America and the Caribbean will be facing new challenges: the end of the demographic dividend and the onset of population ageing, the challenges associated with non-communicable diseases and growing tensions arising in relation to the need to ensure universal access to a good-quality diet and health care; lack of opportunities for young people and difficulties
in access to sexual and reproductive health services; criminality and violence, including gender-related violence; discrimination and territorial inequalities; and climate change and vulnerability to extreme natural events. Notwithstanding the inequality in the region, it must be borne in mind that people in all regions, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, are entitled to a standard of living that ensures their well-being and, therefore, satisfying human rights means promoting public policies aimed explicitly at reducing inequality in all its forms (ethnic, gender, territorial and socioeconomic).

The affirmation of new identities and of multiculturalism provides new opportunities for exercising citizenship and strengthening the participation of individuals, including through voluntary efforts, in building the egalitarian future we want.

- In addition, the report also articulates the crucial role that volunteerism plays on different emerging issues (page 77), for example on issues of public safety: "Citizen participation, community mobilization and the promotion of volunteerism are essential to public safety and recovery programmes, particularly for preventing youth and gender-based violence and fostering local security governance. Thus, the concept of public safety includes community action for crime prevention, capacity-building of security institutions, access to effective justice, values-based education, respect for the law and tolerance."

- Other references can be found in pages 71, 68, 9 and 3, and UNV logo is among the different agencies that have participated in this joint UN effort.

World Happiness Report 2013, 9 September 2013

- Page 57: Pro-social behavior (e.g., donating money and volunteering)
- Page 66: “Individuals who report high subjective well-being give more to their communities — in both time and money. Morrison et al. (2012) found that both life satisfaction and positive feelings predicted reports of donating money to charity, helping a stranger, and volunteering activities. Oishi et al. (2007) found that happier people volunteer more.”
- Page 92: “Acts of altruism, such as gift giving and volunteer work, raise one’s individual well-being.
- Chapter 7 describes the OECD Guidelines on Measuring Subjective Well-being (2013) and also documents progress already underway within a number of national statistical offices.
- Page 149: Social connections – social contact is one of the most important drivers of subjective well-being, as it has a large impact both on life evaluations and on affect (Helliwell and Wang, 2011b; Kahneman and Krueger, 2006; Boarini et al., 2012). Although only some elements can be measured well in the context of general household surveys, measures of human contact, such as frequency of contact with friends and family, volunteering activity, and experience of loneliness, should also be collected where possible.
- Page 202: The wide variety of subjective well-being determinants. The very large number of determinants of subjective well-being also means that changes over time in any one variable, or in any one difference between two groups of individuals, may have only a small impact on mean scores. The range of variables showing significant associations with subjective well-being includes health, income and material wealth, employment status, migrant status, education, marital status, social relationships, trust in others, volunteering, confidence in institutions, governance, freedom, air quality, personal safety and crime — to name just a few (Boarini et al., 2012). Thus, when examining either changes in country-level mean scores over time, or mean score differences between groups, it is important to consider other variables that may also be changing over time or differing between those groups, which could serve to reduce or obscure the effects of the variable in question.
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ANNEX VII: Gill Greer’s speech at the UNGA Special Event

High-level Event Roundtable Four  25 October 2013 (As delivered)

Dr Gill Greer CBE, MNZM
CEO Volunteer Service Abroad (New Zealand)

This week the Secretary General stated that civil society has never been more central to the UN Agenda. Thank you for the privilege of speaking to you as part of that relationship.

I’m from Volunteer Service Abroad, a New Zealand NGO whose founding President, Sir Edmund Hillary, conquered Mt Everest with Tenzing Norgay 60 years ago. He believed that positive relationships lead to great things. Today, with support from the New Zealand aid programme VSA delivers his vision of people to people development by bringing together New Zealand volunteers and Pacific partners to share their skills and experience. VSA is also one of 27 members of the International Forum for Volunteering in development.

Though I cannot claim to speak for all volunteer groups, I’m here today to speak about the millions of volunteers and volunteer groups around the world whose work is at the very heart of civil society, and integral to sustainable, people-centred development. So I want to begin by asking–Can you imagine a world without volunteers? It would be a poorer world because, as we know, volunteering is about action and service, about active citizenship, social cohesion, partnership and relationships. Its impact on local, national and global development, can be transformational.

Millions of volunteers of all ages, and backgrounds-from young people to professionals from the private sector and members of diaspora communities- work in partnership, at home and across borders. They share their skills, experience, knowledge and passion for a better world. They choose to give their time and talents, because they share a commitment to human wellbeing. Collectively they have contributed to the MDGs, building human and social capital and capacity and contributing to inclusive economic growth. They work across all sectors, from disaster relief to education, from IT to agriculture and conservation, from business development to water and sanitation, with children and with the elderly. The multiplier effects can be seen across countries and across generations.

With its people-to-people approach, volunteering-like all good development-draws on the ethos of shared humanity. It is integral to participatory democracy, to social justice, to fair, inclusive growth, and to environmental protection. It is a cornerstone of healthy, vibrant communities which, in turn, foster wellbeing and resilience.

Recent reports and resolutions since the 2010 MDG Summit show that UN member states have increasingly acknowledged the value added by volunteers. The Secretary General’s report, “A life of dignity for all” recognises “volunteer groups” as part of the multi-stakeholder partnership that will support the post-2015 development agenda.
We welcome this recognition, believing that volunteering and volunteer groups have contributed to the MDGs in diverse ways. Now we too must work with partners to tackle those MDGs which lag behind, including reducing maternal mortality, and ensuring universal access to reproductive health.

Today our world is at a critical point where we must learn “to do development differently”.

In two years’ time you will initiate a comprehensive post 2015 framework to address poverty, inequality and the SDGs. According to the State of the World’s volunteerism report, countries with high levels of volunteerism are more economically and socially vibrant, and better placed to meet global challenges. 2015 therefore offers the opportunity for volunteering to be an even more effective catalyst for sustainable, people-centred development, contributing to the elimination of inequality between and within countries, and between men and women.

For this work to deliver results that count, volunteers and volunteer groups need to be recognized by local and national governments, and international policy makers, and supported by an enabling environment.

It will also need to be recognised that volunteers and volunteer groups are more than implementers. They, and those they support, need the opportunity to engage with governments and decision makers, to be involved in the decisions that shape their lives, here and at home, just as millions of people have done by responding to the UN’s unprecedented consultation on the post-2015 framework.

We hope that framework will encompass wellbeing, inclusive growth, human rights, good governance, accountability, partnership, peace and environmental responsibility.

I asked if you could imagine a world without volunteers. The answer lies in a proverb treasured by the Maori people of my country—“And I ask the flaxbush what is the most important thing in the world and it replies: he tangata, he tangata, he tangata. It is people, people, people.”
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