

# VOLUNTEERING TOGETHER

ISSUE 10, NOVEMBER 2021

## ADVOCATING FOR AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR VOLUNTEERING

IN THIS ISSUE:

The *Framework Act on Volunteer Service Activities* in South Korea

Employee mentorship program with Bavaria

Tackling the SDGs with MY World Mexico

...and more!

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Cover Photo: Which role did the 'Framework Act on Volunteer Service Activities' play in the field of volunteering (*article on page 16*)

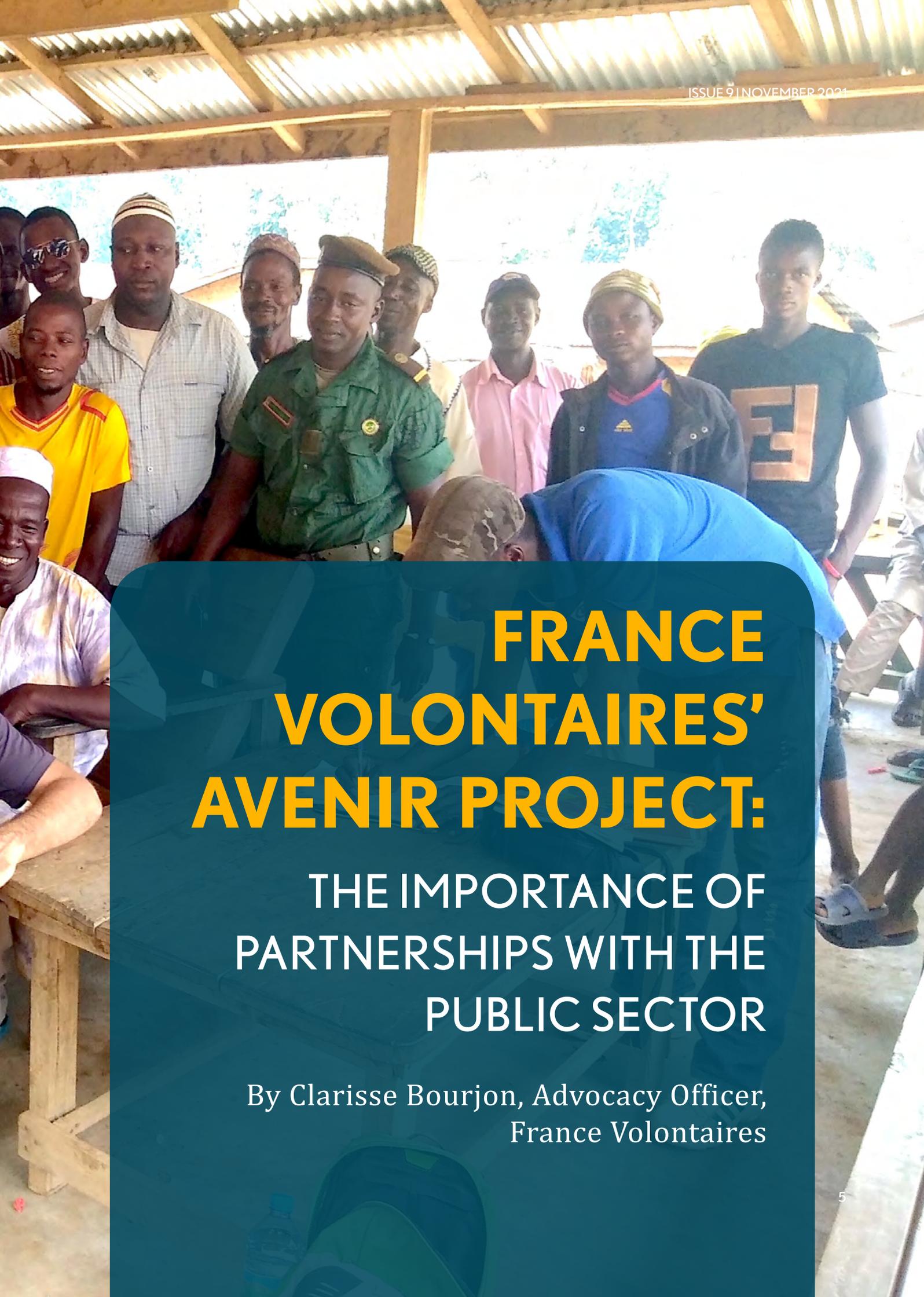




Photo: Participants at the Forum on the Contribution of Volunteerism to Achieve the SDGs, hosted by the Nigerian Volunteer Agency for Development. (article on page 40)



Photo: European and national volunteers during a training session on forest protection, tree nursery development and utilization of optimized and locally produced clay stoves.



# FRANCE VOLONTAIRES' AVENIR PROJECT:

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE PUBLIC SECTOR

By Clarisse Bourjon, Advocacy Officer,  
France Volontaires

Between 2019 and 2021, France Volontaires and Zavod Voluntariat implemented the AVENIR Project, deploying approximately 30 European volunteers to Togo, Guinea and Senegal. The volunteers were paired up with their local counterparts in their assigned countries. The volunteers supported various activities that were developed and prioritized in cooperation with their local partners. Authorities in the public sector were involved throughout all phases of the project's life cycle, regardless of the existence of a fully functioning government-run volunteering agency.

The network of actors involved in volunteering are different from one country to the other, particularly in terms of how the public sector is represented. Of course, their involvement relies heavily on staffing, funding and logistical capacities. In the three countries where the AVENIR Project was implemented, the inclusion of volunteering within public policies varied greatly and still depends on the existence and potential capacities of a public agency dedicated to volunteering.

For decades, France Volontaires has worked to develop partnerships with national government authorities, with the aim of supporting or promoting the implementation of official national volunteering agencies. Depending on the political context, available financial resources and the availability of local volunteer counterparts, the results of our efforts varied from country to country. For instance, in Togo, this work has allowed us to guide our local partners to fully establish a public agency for volunteering, Agence



Nationale du Voluntariat au Togo (ANVT). ANVT is now able to design its own strategy, work plan and budget thanks to permanent staffing. On the contrary, other countries like Senegal, are still in the process of establishing a similar entity with clear legal status and programming, due to a variety of obstacles. From one partner country to the other, these volunteering agencies are reporting to different ministries, such as Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Education, etc.

France Volontaires, beyond the implementation of national agencies dedicated to volunteering, also aims to raise awareness on the added value of volunteering to local authorities in the



Photo: Diego, a European volunteer, with community members at a training session on constructing clay stoves.

partner countries. Often associated with sectors such as sport, education or culture, international and national volunteering can also become a powerful instrument to mitigate risks affecting vulnerable communities, thus subsequently supporting community resilience. The AVENIR project illustrated how pairs of volunteers can proactively become key players in reducing the public's exposure to environmental risks, as well as mitigating food and nutritional insecurities. The rapid onset of COVID-19 has shown how deployed volunteers can adapt to very dynamic contexts and can propose quick impact measures with new objectives, innovative approaches and dynamic partnership with flexibility coordination. Most of the project

was efficiently reoriented to address raising awareness on best practices to limit the transmission of the virus. Those who are high-risk for exposure were prioritized, including frontline workers and public servants, as well as street children and single mothers.

Based on these examples, France Volontaires and our public sector partners will continue to support the inclusion of volunteering in the national policies, programming and budgets of its partner countries. This also includes sharing results with international donors and political decision makers in France and on the broader European level. Of course, the global pandemic has had a significant



Photo: France Volontaires' national representative in the process of planning volunteer intervention in Guinea's forest regions.

impact on each country's strategic priorities and the budgets made available for ministries and agencies. Volunteering can and should be taken into consideration as an efficient way to respond to crises, with the cooperation and close coordination with civil servants, public actors and international aid agencies. ■

**France Volontaires** is the French platform for International Volunteers for Exchange and Solidarity. Created in 2009 as an association, France Volontaires is the result of a shared construction between public and associative actors involved in international solidarity. Operated by the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs, it brings together the State, local authorities and associations around a mission of general interest: the development and promotion of volunteer and solidarity commitments abroad. It has a presence in France (included overseas) and a network of international representations (called *Espaces Volontariats*) in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

# CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR VOLUNTEERING

By Wendy Osborne OBE, Senior Consultant, IAVE

The United Nations recognizes that 'volunteering refers to a wide range of activities, including traditional forms of mutual aid and self-help, formal service delivery and other forms of civic participation. Undertaken of freewill, for the general public good, and where monetary reward is not the principal motivating factor'.<sup>1</sup>

This sense that people who volunteer are working not just for themselves but for the 'public good' is intrinsically about the relationships people have with others and their communities, whether these communities are geographic, people or cause centered. It is also intrinsically powerful because the ethos of volunteering speaks to themes such as trust, reciprocity; empowerment; belonging, mutual respect, inclusion, equality, solidarity, tolerance.

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<sup>1</sup> UN General Assembly, 2002 A/RES/56/28



These are the values that underpin successful and resilient communities and societies where well-being for all is actively pursued.

In 2016 and 2017 IAVE undertook the first global survey of national leadership for volunteering, finding examples of national leadership in 120 countries. The Executive Summary of this project starts with the following statement – ‘national leadership creates an enabling environment for volunteering that ultimately results in more people more effectively engaged with greater impact, for their communities and for themselves.’

The latest IAVE research report ‘Leadership for Volunteering: the COVID-19 Experience’ (2021) confirms this view. The survey data collected from 70 respondents across 67 countries indicates that 100% stated their leadership role was aimed at creating an enabling environment for volunteering.

So, what are the features of an enabling environment that supports volunteering not only to exist but to flourish. There are a number of key preconditions and drivers and while these will be country, culture and situation variable depending on circumstances there are some elements that are common wherever you are in the world. To unlock the power of volunteering you need:

- ▶ Recognition for the important contribution that volunteering can make to the well-being of people and communities.
- ▶ Permission for citizens to engage in volunteering.

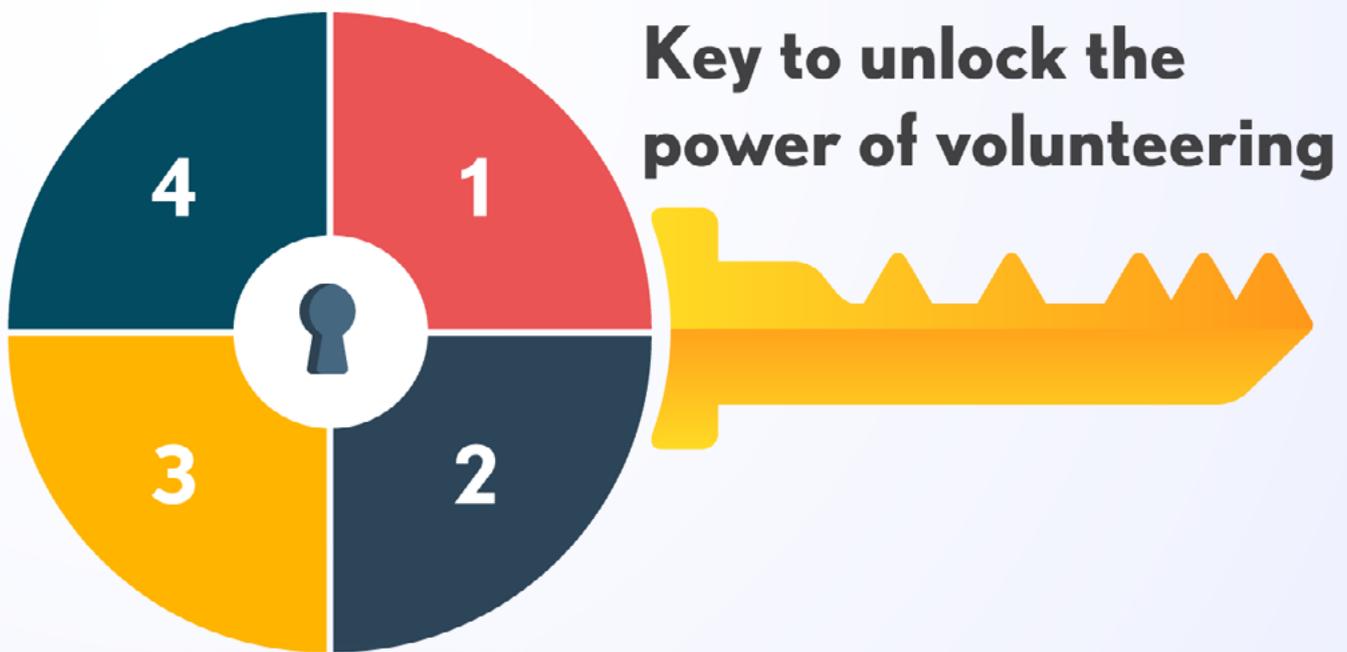
- ▶ Support for those volunteering, to keep them safe, provide them with what they need to enhance their contribution and impact.
- ▶ Access to volunteering opportunities for all.

The IAVE research illustrates that national volunteering leadership organizations contribute to creating an enabling environment in a range of ways. They provide an advocacy focus to gain recognition for volunteering by highlighting the important contribution of volunteers in tackling need as demonstrated by both their formal and informal actions during the pandemic. They collaborate with key actors from within civil society, government and the corporate sector to highlight the value and impact of volunteer action.

They engage with policy makers to create the supportive legal and regulatory infrastructure that gives permission and allows people to volunteer. This supportive environment covers all the ways in which people volunteer including taking responsibility for holding politicians and other key decision makers to account.

They build the capacity of volunteer involving organizations, set standards, provide training, promote and deliver practice to support volunteering and volunteer safety.

They educate decision makers on removing barriers to volunteering, encouraging them to support social inclusion and provide access to opportunities for all members of society. They highlight the need for resources to encourage and develop volunteering.



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- Access to volunteering opportunities for all.

- Support for those volunteering, to keep them safe, provide them with what they need to enhance their contribution and impact.
- Permission for citizens to engage in volunteering.

'An estimated 1 billion people worldwide volunteer, people of every nationality, race, ethnicity, religion and income level.'<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately this contribution is often undervalued and overlooked. The contribution of volunteers in responding to the COVID-19 crisis shows emphatically that volunteering activates citizens to participate in community action, solves critical problems and meets priority needs, and

builds more resilient communities. Yet the IAVE research into volunteering leadership and COVID-19 indicates that even when the value of volunteering is recognized this does not always translate into an enabling environment. A number of respondents to the research survey shared instances in which governments involved volunteers in their responses to the pandemic without acknowledging the contribution that the

<sup>2</sup>United Nations Volunteers. 2015 State of the World's Volunteerism Report: Transforming Governance

volunteering sector can make to these initiatives.

The knowledge and expertise of national volunteering leadership organizations can play a pivotal role in helping key actors from civil society, government and the corporate sector build the enabling environment for volunteering that will help the world deal with the change and unpredictability of an uncertain future. We have an ongoing global pandemic, the crisis of climate change and growing economic challenges. The United Nations has declared that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) cannot be

delivered without the contribution of volunteers. The pandemic has increased the task to successfully deliver the SDGs by 2030.

There has never been a greater imperative for national volunteering leadership organizations, and indeed all of us, to create the enabling environment for volunteering. It is only by volunteering together and as the 2021 International Volunteer Day hashtag states taking action to ***#VolunteerNow for our common future*** that will help build the world to sustain the generations of tomorrow. ■

The IAVE Research Report, 'Leadership for Volunteering: the COVID-19 Experience', can be found at [leadership4vol.iave.org](http://leadership4vol.iave.org)



Photo: Volunteering Australia's CEO, Mark Pearce, with ACT SES volunteers.



# REIMAGINING VOLUNTEERING FOR ALL AUSTRALIANS

By Mark Pearce, Chief Executive Officer,  
Volunteering Australia

Volunteers are the often-invisible workforce that supports our nation every day and through challenging times. Volunteers and organizations have shown great resilience and adaptability during recent crises including bushfires, floods and the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, many informal community volunteers also emerged to support those in need. The willingness and dedication of Australians to help others has highlighted the critical role of volunteers and Australian society's reliance on volunteering activities and programs.

While recognition of the value of volunteering is increasing, volunteering in Australia has been in decline over the last decade and the COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound and ongoing impact on volunteering. We cannot afford to take volunteers and volunteering for granted. Volunteers are needed more than ever to ensure stability and recovery in the wake of COVID-19.

Given the weak recovery in volunteering to date, there remains an important challenge ahead. As COVID-19 restrictions reduce and the country continues to open up, the volunteering ecosystem and governments will need to work together to reinvigorate volunteering post the pandemic.

Opportunities exist to do things differently, invest in the future and create a thriving volunteering ecosystem. Volunteering Australia called on the Australia Government to initiate a National Strategy for Volunteering to recognize the vital contribution of volunteers and to ensure volunteering is sustainable for future generations.

As a result of our advocacy, Volunteering Australia has recently embarked on several projects, with the Australian Government, seeking to overcome barriers and leverage current opportunities so we can reimagine volunteering for all Australians.

Volunteering Australia has been funded by the Australian Government to lead the development of a National Strategy for Volunteering. The project will deliver a National Strategy owned by the volunteering ecosystem that will provide a blueprint for a reimagined future for volunteering in Australia. It will be Australia's first National Strategy for Volunteering in ten years.

Over a twelve-month period, Volunteering Australia will be facilitating a collaborative consultation process with stakeholders of the volunteering ecosystem to design a National Strategy for Volunteering. An independent Project Board will set the vision, principles, and priorities for the project and provide strategic oversight of its development. Volunteering Australia will also be conducting research on the current state of volunteering in Australia, including trends, challenges, and opportunities.

The Volunteering in Australia research will be a comprehensive, national analysis of key demographic data of volunteers, volunteer involving organizations, and other data relevant to volunteering. The research will culminate in a series of reports that provide an evidence-based dataset to further our understanding of the volunteering landscape.

Stakeholders will be invited to participate in or contribute to a range of consultation processes to collaboratively inform the scope of the National Strategy. The stakeholder engagement process will prioritize the participation of minority groups to ensure the National Strategy is representative and inclusive. The final National Strategy will provide a blueprint to support the future of volunteering in Australia.

This blueprint will help inform the Volunteer Management Online Project, which will provide Volunteer Involving Organizations and volunteers easy access to online volunteer recruitment and management tools, training, and resources that are nationally consistent.

The project aims to support Volunteer Involving Organizations to increase the numbers, retention and diversity of volunteers across Australia and build the capacity of Volunteer Involving Organizations to successfully recruit and retain volunteers online.

It is time to invest in the strategic adaptation of volunteering and ensure volunteering is effective, inclusive, and sustainable into the future. These projects will provide strategic leadership to the volunteering ecosystem, while investing in initiatives and infrastructure, that will enable volunteering to thrive. ■



Photo: Mark Pearce, CEO of  
Volunteering Australia

# WHICH ROLES DID THE 'FRAMEWORK ACT ON VOLUNTEER SERVICE ACTIVITIES' PLAY IN THE FIELD OF VOLUNTEERING?

By Seoul Volunteer Center, South Korea





For volunteering activities in the Republic of Korea, a systematic and stable government-level foundation was established through the enactment of the Framework Act on Volunteer Service Activities in 2005. Following the application of an extensive volunteer system for the 1988 Summer Olympic Games in Seoul, volunteering of civil society was activated with a goal of democratizing the society and lifeworld, in line with the development of the democratic movement across the country. Since then, enterprises have been organizing volunteering activities of their employees and the press has been holding volunteer campaigns.

In response to the social trend, the government proposed the bill for the promotion of volunteering for public interest in 1994. Following the enactment of the Framework Act on Volunteer Service Activities in 2005, a stable foundation for the citizens' public activities was established. The Framework Act on Volunteer Service Activities served as a foundation for citizens' safe and systematic participation in volunteering activities across all fields within their local communities through public-private partnership.

The Framework Act on Volunteer Service Activities is largely divided into two sections. The first section specifies the direction of volunteering policies, while the second prescribes details of the related projects and the project implementing entities. The basic direction of volunteering policies is to pursue public interest and promote cooperation between government and citizens. The government establishes the "Master Plan for Volunteer Service

Promotion" every five years to propose a detailed direction for policy operation reflecting the social and environmental changes and volunteering paradigm shifts in each period. Currently, the third Master Plan for Volunteer Service Promotion (2018-2022) is being implemented with a goal to achieve quantitative growth and qualitative development of volunteering. The basic direction of this plan is to pursue community integration.

The details of volunteer service promotion projects are specified as rewards to encourage volunteers, hold Volunteer Day events, provide comprehensive insurance for volunteers, and train volunteers. As for the scope of service activities, the projects prescribe 15 areas of public service necessary for society, which include activities for: (a) the promotion of social welfare and public health, (b) the development and progress of local communities, and (c) the promotion of rights and interests of the socially disadvantaged and the fostering and protection of juveniles.

The Framework Act on Volunteer Service Activities prescribes the installation of volunteer centers at the state agencies and local governments as the policy management entities. The role of volunteer centers is to professionally manage and operate volunteering activities. As of 2021, there are 245 volunteer centers across the country by central, metropolitan, and local governments. In addition, according to the Act, volunteer service organizations may establish Volunteering Korea to promote and facilitate volunteering activities on a national scale. Through Volunteering Korea, projects such as support for collaboration



among volunteer service organizations, domestic public relations to promote volunteering activities, and the development of policies regarding volunteering activities can be implemented by the private sector.

### Which roles did the Framework Act on Volunteer Service Activities play in the field of volunteering?

First, the Framework Act on Volunteer Service Activities enabled citizens to experience the process of stable and systematic volunteering activity management. Volunteers are bonded in a comprehensive management system under which they can search for the activities they want to perform, get trained on volunteering activities, assess and share their thoughts about volunteering activities after participation, and even

receive performance-based certification for their participation. The volunteering management system established a social foundation for citizens' participation in activities promoting public interest by helping participants understand the value of volunteering and gain experience in problem-solving through volunteering.

Second, it led to the development of an effective volunteering support system ([www.1365.go.kr](http://www.1365.go.kr)) to provide information on various activities and certify the participants' performances through an integrated volunteering management system ("1365 Portal"). In 1365 Portal, volunteers and organizations can freely upload and search volunteering activities. Applicants wishing to participate in volunteering activities use this system. The 1365 Portal collectively manages

volunteers' certified volunteering participations. In addition, a link to the Ministry of Education system enables them to also manage the volunteer participation of elementary, middle, and high school students.

Third, local governments have implemented and operate volunteer centers, which serves to locally promote volunteering activities and implement volunteering projects. The central government and upper-level local governments have established central volunteer centers, metropolitan city/province volunteer centers, and lower-level local government volunteer centers to implement the volunteer service promotion policy.

Central volunteer centers focus on improving the laws and systems related to volunteerism and implementing government projects on a national scale. Volunteer centers for metropolitan areas and provinces develop and promote volunteering projects for lower-level local governments. They serve as a connector in the network of smaller volunteer centers including those of lower-level local governments. Volunteer centers of lower-level local governments develop and support volunteering projects that are customized for each locality and citizen.

The enactment of the Framework Act on Volunteer Service Activities has brought improvements in the volunteering field. However, the following additional efforts are required for further improvement.

First, efforts must be dedicated to promoting multi-layered and diversified volunteering activities through cooperation







Photo: South Korea's 1365 portal where volunteers and organizations can upload and search volunteering opportunities.

with various areas of civil society. The Framework Act on Volunteer Service Activities contributed to the establishment of a structured system by stabilizing and standardizing volunteering activities. However, it is limited in reflecting changes in civil society and the citizens' autonomy when engaging in volunteering activities. For example, the rigid specifications on methods of selecting an organization to volunteer for and the duration of volunteering activities limit volunteers' autonomy and stifles creativity. As a result, this impedes cooperative links with various civil social areas. For the institutionalization of the Act to develop further, a flexible and integrated approach enabling comprehensive reflection of the changing needs of the society and citizens must be taken.

Second, the positive social influence of volunteering - which is achieved through

cooperation between the public and the private sectors - must be spread out. Through institutionalization, a stable and systematic government support system for volunteering has been established. In fact, 245 volunteer centers were installed as organizations in charge of volunteering management according to the Framework Act on Volunteer Service Activities. These volunteer centers are either operated directly by the government (117 centers, 47.8%) or through consignment to the private sector (128 centers, 52.2%). Institutionalized volunteering, with the government's support, produces social outcomes to resolve local issues and increase public interest. Efforts are required to activate creative and enterprising volunteering activities in the private sector based on a stable support system in order to ensure that the public-private partnership produces social outcomes for volunteering.

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# VOLUNTEERING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

By Abigail Martínez, Program Assistant  
& Angel Cortez, National Coordination  
Liaison, MY World Mexico

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POR EL CLIMA



14 VIDA  
SUBMARINA



Photo: Hilda, a MY World Mexico ambassador in Tlaxcala, leads Toktli Environmental Education, an initiative to promote SDGs 4, 12,13,14,15 and 17.

Since its foundation, MY World México has managed to be a leadership space in promoting volunteering in favor of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Thanks to its digital positioning and the participation of volunteers at the local, national and international level, it thus promotes transgenerational inclusion, innovation and a transdisciplinary approach.

Through five strategic programs; Accelerators Program, XSDG Action Mentoring Program, MY World México Kids, Alliances and Campaigns, and the Knowledge Hub, MY World México has impacted nearly two million people in Mexico and Latin America in building

a better present and future for all. The initiative is accompanied by interested volunteers, academia, the private sector, civil society organizations and social movements.

In collaboration with the various stakeholders involved, MY World México has become a space for reflection, reconceptualization and application of emerging concepts in sustainable development and the SDGs. It also functions as a meeting space where adults, youth and children from various parts of Mexico and Latin America come together in the co-construction of a sustainable world. MY World México has managed to mobilize people in their local communities, making them see that we are all key to the



Photo: Zerefino, a My World Mexico ambassador in Veracruz, implemented several projects focused on SDG 13 - Action for the climate.

transformation of our immediate and global environments, because as an organization we are witnesses that our power grows when we all get involved, since in this fight, everyone's participation is necessary.

Such is the case of our ambassador Hilda, who is originally from Tlaxcala. Hilda is the leader of the collective "Toktli Environmental Education" which, through hybrid pedagogical interventions such as conferences and workshops, promotes the advancement of various SDGs, including SDGs 4, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 17. Through joint efforts, Hilda and her team have developed a series of educational activities that aim to raise awareness of sustainable development and the dissemination of environmental problems, involve citizens in the development of actions towards a sustainable living and the development of capacities to face the challenges of the present and future, impacting hundreds of Mexicans. MY World México has supported this project through training for the application of the SDGs in a local context, providing tools that enhance the efforts and knowledge of the participants.

Likewise, as part of the accelerators program, Zeferino, from the state of Veracruz, implemented during his period as ambassador several projects focused on SDG 13 "Action for the climate", among them he developed an agroecological microsystem in conjunction with his parents. This project achieved the development of local and national alliances, which not only functioned as disseminators of the project and the relevance of replicating similar schemes, but also achieved a domino effect on the people around them, involving members of their community in the construction of sustainable lifestyles.

The impact of the agroecological microsystem of Zeferino and his family goes beyond their objective of incidence in SDG 13. The synergies generated by the actions of Zeferino, his parents and the immediate community can be reflected in the improvement of SDGs 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 13 and 17. Projects like Zeferino show the intersectionality of the SDGs and the effect that our actions have on our local communities.

Examples like Hilda and Zeferino are common within our community and the reason for being of MY World México. Despite being a digital platform, the actions implemented by each member of MY World México are generating changes in the immediate communities, involving people around them. This shows us that despite working on a globally established Agenda, each one of us, as local actors, plays an essential role in achieving the goals and objectives, since we are the ones who, with the collaboration of the others around us. We create change towards the future that we deserve, not the one that has been inherited to us.

In this way, MY World México demonstrates how important volunteering is in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, that the support of youth is a key element in achieving the construction of sustainable lifestyles, and that we are all indispensable in this fight. Throughout our history, this collaborative attitude has been essential for participation and recognition in both national and international advocacy spaces.

To learn more, do not hesitate to visit our website [www.myworldmexico.org](http://www.myworldmexico.org) or email [contacto@myworldmexico.org](mailto:contacto@myworldmexico.org). ■



Fujitsu, IAVE Corporate Member



Sick Pikin Project, IAVE Member



AVS HK, IAVE Member

# SUPPORT OUR MISSION

IAVE creates a more just and sustainable world by enabling the leaders, organizations, and environments that empower volunteers.



Telefonica, IAVE Corporate Member

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## Become a member

Join IAVE's global network of volunteer leaders and organizations, working to address the world's most critical issues through the power of volunteering. **Learn more and join at [bit.ly/joiniave](https://bit.ly/joiniave)**

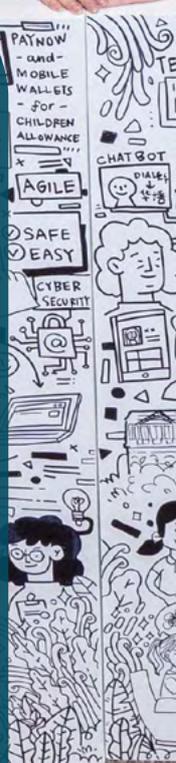
## Donate

Your financial support will help IAVE to develop volunteers as actors and activists in protecting civil society. **Donate at [iave.org/donate](https://iave.org/donate)**



# COGNIZANT OUTREACH: NETWORKING FOR GOOD

By Pratibha Kurnool, Lead for APAC and Technology Partnerships for Social Impact, Cognizant & Padmasini Dayananda, Global Head of Outreach – ESG, Cognizant





CHNOLOGY  
IMPROVE  
LIVES

EXISTING  
SUPPORT &  
SOLUTIONS

MARKET

CLINICS

PERSONAL  
and  
ORGANISATIONAL

CHARITY

salesforce

CLOUD

iShineCloud

AI

TRAILHEAD

COLLABORATION

COMMUNITY GIVING

IMDA

DIGITAL CLINIC  
for  
SENIORS

Community

ACTIVATING  
COMMUNITIES

ISTANA

TRAILHEAD

CARING NATION

ANTO

**Cognizant**  
**OUTREACH**

Photo: Cognizant Community Cafe

The unspoken power of corporate volunteering programs is its potential to be a force multiplier of social impact while building strong and meaningful relationships with critical stakeholder networks – both internal and external. Additionally, networks can play a crucial role in bringing in a systems thinking approach to our volunteering programs. The issues we face today, no doubt exacerbated by the pandemic, are better addressed when we go beyond addressing symptoms, to finding the source and innovating for solutions that usher in sustainable system-level changes.

Internal networks include employee interest groups, business units, corporate functions while external networks include clients, vendors, business partners, governments, industry associations, civic society, non-profit partnerships, to name a few.

### More than a feel-good factor

Harnessing the power and impact of networks through volunteering is an art to be refined. Many organizations are still hesitant to reach out to get their network involved – beyond the gala fundraisers or invites to charity golf. From our experience in strategizing for and executing collaborative impact, hesitancy stems from a few key reasons:

- ▶ Corporate Volunteering still largely considered an employee-engagement initiative, not so much a vehicle for corporate social impact
- ▶ Volunteer managers fear of acceding control to external stakeholders
- ▶ Management is wary of the heavy investment of time and effort in aligning stakeholders



Photo: Salesforce Panel on Improving Everyday Life with Salesforce

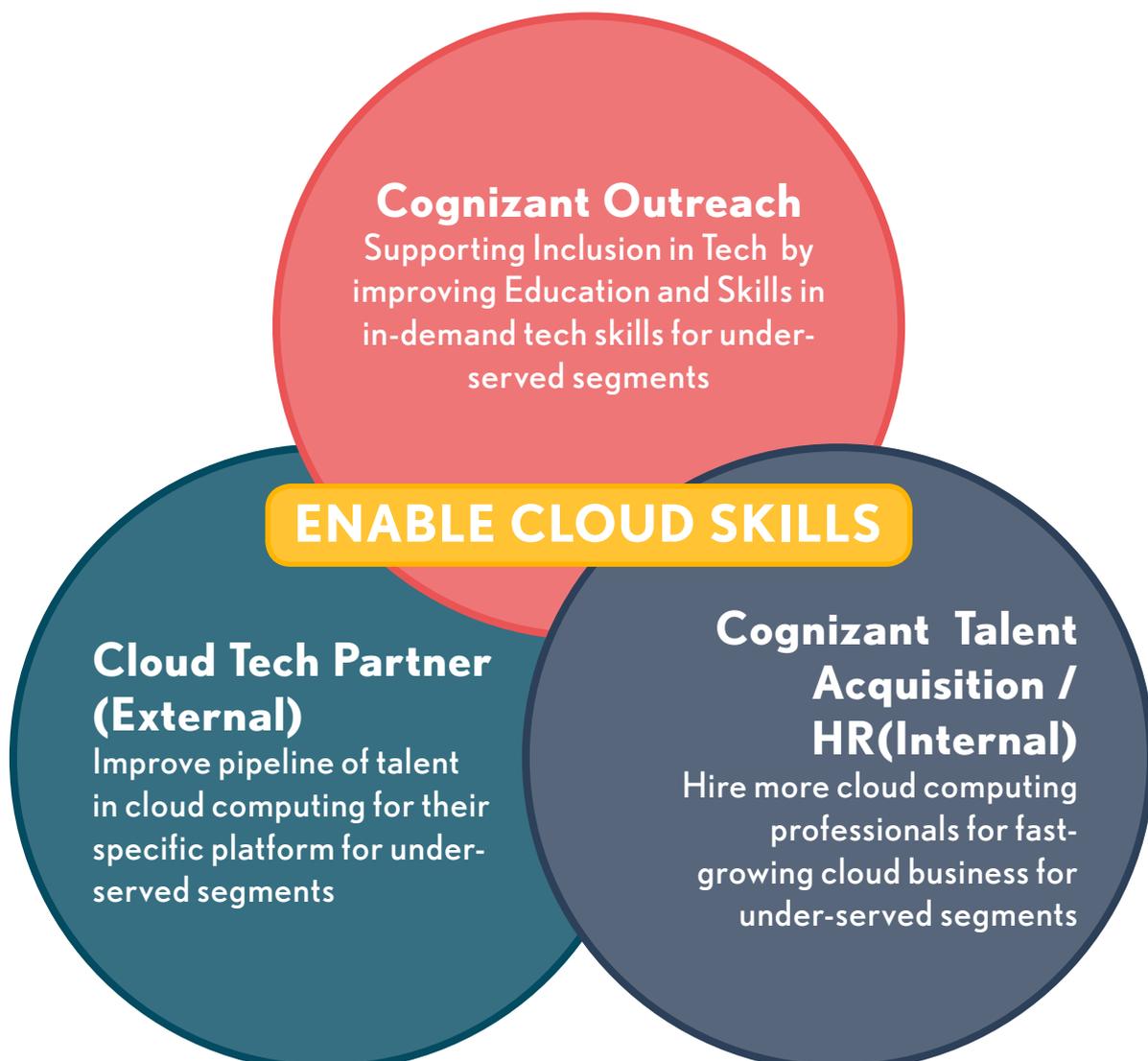
- ▶ Fears of a slow and rocky road; need for speed

Indeed, all the above are valid concerns. If one gets serious about collaborative impact, it is important to define the guiding principles driven by the desired outcomes, and to ask a few hard questions:

- ▶ How can we engage our networks in more meaningful ways?
- ▶ How can we leverage our networks to address long-term strategic priorities?
- ▶ How can we adopt a systems thinking approach to create long term value?

- ▶ Interestingly, collaborating partners need not always share the same goals, but must address complementary constituents of a shared purpose.

For example, at Outreach we collaborate internally (with our Talent Acquisition Teams) and externally (with our strategic technology cloud partners) to volunteer for hackathons which helps youth gain in-demand cloud skills with an added opportunity to be hired by us. Let's see how our shared purpose (enabling cloud skills) is addressed through complementary network goals.



## The Cognizant Way

At Cognizant, our social strategy stems from our corporate purpose, our “why”, which is – **to engineer modern businesses to improve everyday life**. Cognizant Outreach – ESG, has been an enabler of social impact through employee volunteering for the last 13 years, enabling over 200,000 employees to volunteer globally.

Outreach – ESG strategy aims to improve everyday life by supporting inclusion in tech and increasing community impact across five thematic areas that tie-in with organizational purpose – Digital Education, Digital Skilling, Digital Empowerment of Non-profits and charities, Environmental Stewardship, and nurturing employee passion.

Our initial collaborative experiences by including internal networks connected to varied business functions - HR to government affairs, from Sales and Marketing to Learning and Development - showed value and promise. This led us to believe that we could truly harness the power of people from our extended networks to amplify the RoI (return on investment) of time and money.

Our all-powerful “why”, had to find and address our networks’ shared purpose, while also serving a common social vision.

### Impact-led network inclusion strategy

Tapping into our networks also called for establishing strong internal partnerships with departments that own these networks. When there is strong internal alignment on the outcomes from involving the external

networks, the benefits of involving a network can be truly and fully tapped.

We looked at each of our external networks as an invaluable opportunity to bring our vision to life. The common denominator that drives all our networks is the connection with purpose. In our experience, volunteering provides the most tangible and meaningful way to involve our networks.

Our volunteering strategy clearly articulates the impact we seek to have, in three defined areas. (Refer Table 1: Network Inclusion Strategy) Impact therefore becomes our North Star to guide us on “why include our networks?”. Aligning with impact goals addresses this and further provides clarity on “which” networks we need to invest in.

The table on the following page provides insights into how Cognizant looked at our network inclusion strategy by viewing it from the lens of the network’s ability to contribute significantly to our three areas of impact.



**Table 1: Network inclusion strategy**

	<b>Social</b>	<b>Reputational</b>	<b>Business</b>
<b>Impact</b>	The scale of impact we seek to achieve in each focus area	The extent to which Outreach - ESG can positively influence Cognizant’s reputation as a responsible corporate citizen amongst our most critical stakeholders	The extent to which our volunteer programs impact the business positively, in the context of our strategic priorities
<b>Alignment with Networks “Why”</b>	<b>To complement impact goals, impact communities at scale</b>	<b>To further reputation in strategic markets, among business-critical stakeholders</b>	<b>To address strategic priorities</b>
<b>Value from Networks “Which”</b>	Networks that share our social goals and can complement our efforts - by providing resources, tools, or platforms to achieve improved impact at scale	Networks that offer distinct and unique opportunities to significantly influence our reputation favourably among our most critical stakeholders	Networks where collaborative impact is likely to provide us with collateral business benefits by addressing strategic priorities

Articulated impact goals helped us to create a network-wide implementation strategy and execution framework. Thanks to this framework, we have been able to reach out to specific networks where volunteering collaborations are delivering win-win-win outcomes – for our communities, for our partners and for Cognizant.

Photo: Virtual Digital Clinics with a technology partner

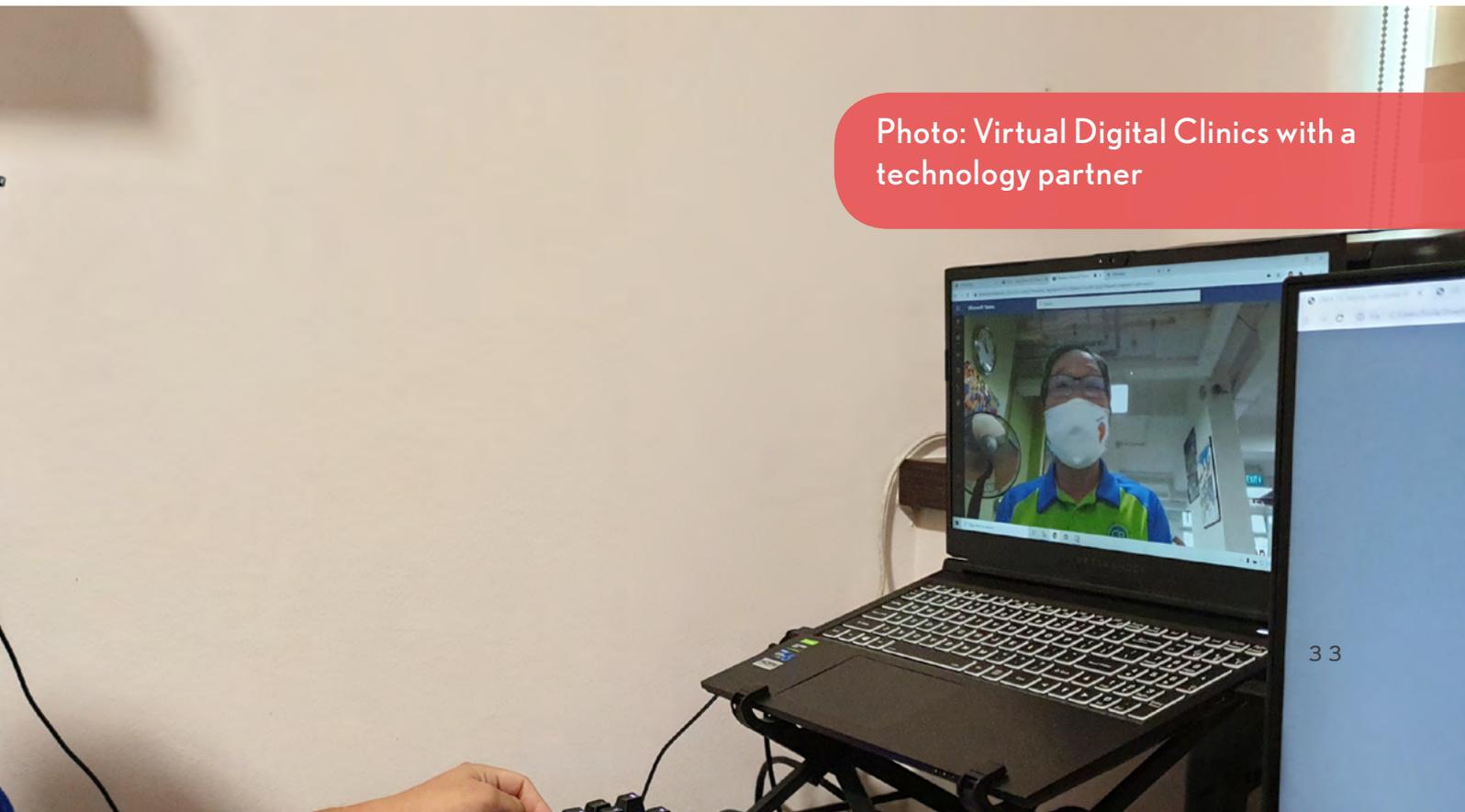


Table 2: Engaging networks with Outreach - Framework in Action		
Social	Reputational	Business
<p>Outreach – ESG driven networks that provide us the platform and scale to execute our programs</p> <p><b>Which networks can help to engage volunteers, execute programs at scale?</b></p>	<p>Where do we need to improve our reputation? Among which stakeholders, in which market?</p> <p><b>Which network can give enable positive reputational impact?</b></p>	<p>What are my organization’s strategic business priorities? Who are the major influencers?</p> <p><b>What are the synergies with these networks?</b></p>
<p>Beneficiary network for each thematic area:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Schools</b></li> <li><b>NGOs/Charities</b></li> <li><b>Cause-based NGO networks</b></li> <li><b>Colleges, Universities</b></li> <li><b>Community organizations supporting diversity and inclusion</b></li> <li><b>Public sector/ government agencies</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Positive reputation:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>For hiring new talent:</b> Talent marketplace, especially fresh and diverse talent from universities, learning organizations</li> <li><b>For license to operate:</b> Government agencies, government – corporate affairs in local strategic markets</li> <li><b>For business wins:</b> Current and potential customers (G2000 companies) and our largest strategic partnerships</li> </ol>	<p>Clients, strategic technology partners, inorganic growth vehicles (acquisitions) are the networks most critical to business growth.</p> <p><b>Synergies:</b> Commonality of social purpose (cause, beneficiary type, market)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resource augmentation (Additional resources that multiply social impact)</li> </ol>
<p><b>Example for scale</b> Tapping into a global network of NGOs to execute a globally relevant volunteering program that connects global humanitarian NGOs with skilled volunteers from 35 countries</p>	<p><b>Example for reputation</b> Collaborating with universities and youth skilling organizations to improve career readiness of youth through a unique experiential bootcamp, involving clients and technology partners, leading to improved reputation in the youth talent marketplace as an employer of choice</p>	<p><b>Example for business impact</b> Collaborating with a major cloud technology partner to run a nation-wide campaign with a national skilling agency to volunteer together for improving digital adoption among senior citizens, leading to business wins enabled by stronger relationships</p>

**When partners come together for good, great things happen!**

To summarize, volunteering programs that involve networks - internal and external – have the potential to strengthen partnerships, infuse them with meaning and purpose by driving tangible change in communities. Done correctly, this can only accelerate the good

work leading to gains for all and undoubtedly contribute to UN SDG 17 – Partnerships that will drive sustainable development. Indeed, from our experience at Cognizant in driving impact within our networks, we are happy to paraphrase the familiar adage to “organizations that volunteer together, thrive together!”. ■



# ADVOCATING FOR AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT AT THE 2021 HLPF

By David Styers, Coordinator, Volunteer Groups Alliance,  
United States

Every year since 2013, the United Nations' High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) has served as the main global platform in the follow-up and review of the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development and the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs). Also during the HLPF each July, the UN's member states adopt inter-governmentally negotiated political declarations, and the

Secretary-General releases status reports on the 2030 Agenda, including one specifically on [volunteering](#) this year.

The HLPF additionally highlights the expertise of the [major groups and other stakeholders](#) at the international level in both a consultative role and active participation. Volunteers are included as a relevant stakeholder group at the UN and

have a standing invitation to participate as observers and respondents and to host a side event during the HLPF. The [Volunteer Groups Alliance](#) (VGA), a global coalition of more than 70 organizations that contribute to sustainable development through volunteering, represents the [Volunteers Stakeholder Group](#).

The 2021 HLPF focused on sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic to promote the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. COVID-19 has particularly shown how the one-billion volunteers in every country across the world are a powerful resource to help communities build back better from the pandemic and to achieve the 2030 Agenda. VGA advocates for how member states and society must improve their recognition, support, and integration of volunteers' and civil societies' contributions in wider development efforts and in crisis prevention and recovery to leave no one behind.

### VGA Side Event

On July 6, 2021, VGA partnered with United Nations Volunteers (UNV) for the side event "[Volunteers and COVID-19: How volunteers help build back better during the pandemic to achieve the 2030 Agenda](#)" with nearly 600 registrants (a recording of the event can be found [here](#)). Facilitated by Mei Cobb, VGA co-chair and Senior Director of Volunteer Engagement at United Way Worldwide, the side event featured representatives from the governments of Guinea, France, and [Chile](#) and from volunteer organizations around the world about how volunteering has contributed to the COVID-19 response and has been supported during the pandemic.

Not surprisingly, organizations are reporting that an astounding number of people volunteered during the pandemic and plan to continue to do so, and that COVID-19 has greatly changed how they engage volunteers. Below are three recent research reports shared at the side event:



Photo: Yann Delaunay, Executive Officer at France Volontaires, presents at the VGA side event on the contribution of international volunteering to the 2030 Agenda.

1. France Volontaires presented its study published in May 2021 on the contribution of international volunteering to the 2030 Agenda. The objectives of this study were to observe volunteers' contributions and to develop an analysis method focused on SDG 4 ("Education for All") and Madagascar (full report in [French](#), or the summary report in [English](#) or [Spanish](#)).

[Key findings](#) from UNV research for the next State of the World's Volunteerism Report coming out later this year found that 2020 volunteering levels across 8 countries among adults 15+ ranged from 75% in Lebanon to 98% in Senegal. In addition to reporting plans to volunteer over the next year, many volunteers expressed an even greater interest in doing more to participate in civic affairs and work with others on innovative solutions, as much as two or three times than seen previously. More details can be found in UNV's recent paper "[From care to where? Understanding volunteerism in the global South: A multi-country study on volunteering before, during and beyond COVID-19](#)".

3. The International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) presented the [findings](#) of a study about how volunteering leadership structures that help advance the 2030 Agenda have been impacted by the pandemic. Nearly all survey respondents said COVID-19 had changed the way they use technology and social media, and 84% have revised their strategic approach to work through online support and engagement with Volunteer-involving Organizations (VIOs) and volunteers.



Photo: Ahmad El-Zubi, Founding CEO of Naua/Nahno, voiced opportunities of volunteering in supporting the local communities in Jordan.



Photo: Alexandra Infante Perales, Director of Perú Voluntario, shares her insight on the role of volunteers in supporting the local communities in Peru.

About 62% said COVID-19 changed the way their organization operates and that these changes will not be reversed in the future.

Finally, volunteers from Jordan, Peru, Kenya, and [Guinea](#) voiced the opportunities of volunteering in supporting their local communities. This side event emphasized how volunteers and the organizations that lead them can help build back better during and after a pandemic, a natural disaster, and any traumatic event.

### Voluntary National Reviews

Another major component of the HLPF each year is the presentation by member states of their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). These reports facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges, and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The VNRs also seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and to mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the SDGs.

Of the 41 VNRs prepared for this year’s HLPF, 26 (63%) mentioned the positive contributions of volunteering to the SDGs by highlighting evidence, data, and examples of volunteer activities towards sustainable development. Many countries particularly showcased the role of volunteers in combating the COVID-19 pandemic, and half of the 26 VNRs that document volunteer contributions link volunteering to the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized groups. Volunteering mentions in VNRs can be reviewed in the [Volunteering Database](#) of UNV’s Knowledge Portal.

### For the 2022 HLPF, 45 countries have announced plans to submit a Voluntary National Review:

- |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Andorra*          | Kazakhstan*           |
| Argentina**       | Latvia*               |
| Belarus*          | Lesotho*              |
| Botswana*         | Liberia*              |
| Cameroon*         | Luxembourg*           |
| Comoros*          | Malawi*               |
| Côte d’Ivoire*    | Mali*                 |
| Djibouti          | Montenegro*           |
| Dominica          | The Netherlands*      |
| Equatorial Guinea | Pakistan*             |
| El Salvador*      | The Philippines**     |
| Eritrea           | São Tomé & Príncipe   |
| Eswatini*         | Senegal*              |
| Ethiopia*         | Somalia               |
| Gabon             | Sri Lanka*            |
| Gambia*           | Sudan*                |
| Ghana*            | Suriname              |
| Greece*           | Switzerland**         |
| Grenada           | Togo***               |
| Guinea-Bissau     | Tuvalu                |
| Italy*            | United Arab Emirates* |
| Jamaica*          | Uruguay***            |
| Jordan*           |                       |

**Note:**

*Countries with one asterisk \* are second timers, those with two asterisks \*\* are third timers, those with three asterisks \*\*\* are presenting for the fourth time, while those without asterisks are presenting for the first time.*

## Conclusion

Volunteers, and support for their efforts, are essential to not only the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development but also the sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. And volunteer groups are heartened by the growing acknowledgment and significant progress of the role of volunteers in the implementation of the SDGs. To share your volunteers' stories, please visit [www.volunteergroupsalliance.org](http://www.volunteergroupsalliance.org). ■

## Ministerial Declaration

In July, UN member states adopted the [Ministerial Declaration](#) as the outcome of the HLPF session. This year, they highlighted in the document the meaningful participation and involvement of volunteers in partnerships:

*22. We commit to promoting public engagement and innovative partnerships through a whole-of-government approach, regional and local mobilization and actions, and meaningful participation and involvement of communities, people, civil society, **volunteers**, academia and the private sector. Resource mobilization is crucial for health systems and social-economic recovery. We stress in this regard that further support is needed from developed countries, especially regarding the transfer of technology, capacity-building and financing to developing countries. We commit to strengthening cooperation to close the digital divide within and among countries. Fulfilling official development assistance (ODA) commitments is urgent as international public finance is critical for supporting the sustainable recovery from COVID-19, while taking into consideration that domestic and international efforts have to go hand in hand, and domestic revenue mobilization needs to be complemented with support from all sources. We stress the need for the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, in particular developing countries....*



Photo: Health care volunteers during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.



# CONTRIBUTION OF VOLUNTEERISM TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS IN NIGER:

## THE IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERING STRUCTURES

By Hamidine Hassane, Director General, Nigerien  
Volunteer Agency for Development , Niger

The Nigerien Volunteer Agency for Development (ANVD) is a public social establishment, placed under the technical supervision of the Ministry of Territorial Planning and Community Development. The general objective of this Agency is to contribute to the implementation of national development policies and strategies with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Its mission is the management and promotion of national volunteering for development. As such, ANVD is responsible for:

- ▶ Recruiting volunteers
- ▶ Training and supervising volunteers
- ▶ Monitoring and evaluating volunteers
- ▶ Promoting and enhancing volunteering
- ▶ Organizing initiatives on volunteering
- ▶ Developing partnerships with public sector entities (national or foreign) within a regulatory framework
- ▶ Managing community development relays (community volunteers)

With the framework of its mission in mind, the Nigerien Agency for Volunteering for Development, in collaboration with the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Niger, organized the Forum on the Contribution of Volunteering on Wednesday, June 9, 2021.

The main objective of this meeting was to appropriate and take into account the contribution of volunteering in the development of Niger's Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



### The Results from the Forum

The forum, organized and guided by ANVD, produced several key results at the conclusion of the event, including among others:

1. The presentation of the SDGs by the General Management of the plan which relate to the voluntary commitment and employability of young graduates. These are SDGs 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16 and 17
2. A presentation by the General Management, on the SDGs and its relationship to volunteering and youth employment for new graduates. (SDGs 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16, 17)
3. The findings from 20 volunteering structures highlighting key initiatives, objectives and program results.
4. The recognition of the Nigerien Volunteer Agency for Development (ANVD) as the official representative on all issues related to volunteering in Niger. As a result, delegates made



the commitment to consult with ANVD before engaging in any initiative relating to the promotion of youth employment and volunteering in Niger and internationally.

5. ANVD renewed its pledge to uphold its commitment to sharing any key information and to collaborate with all the actors to achieve its mission.

### Impacts of the Forum

The General Directorate of the Ministry of Planning and over 20 national volunteer involving structures participated in this forum. Forum delegates planned for future initiatives that will focus on achieving sustainable development through volunteering. It was an opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences between national actors, discussing ways to address social issues through volunteering.

This 2021 forum has had a huge impact on issues related to volunteering in Niger. We can cite among others :

1. Taking into account the contribution of volunteer structures in the 2021 Voluntary National Review.
2. The political commitment of the State to merge all forms of civic engagement it manages into one, thus allowing ANVD to increase its capacity to diversely mobilize volunteers on the ground;
3. The creation of a framework for exchange, bringing together most of the actors involved in volunteering in Niger under the leadership of ANVD. The forum was the catalyst to creating synergy around ANVD as the official representative in the sector and its role in achieving the SDGs. It also served to bring together the various actors in the volunteering community. This synergy also made it possible to recognize the efforts that each of the structures lead on a daily basis. Commitments have been made by all the delegates present to work together through periodic meetings, with the aim to sustain this volunteering framework that is supported and appreciated by all.
4. New NGOs and development associations joined in partnership with ANVD to recruit volunteers available under the formal framework. In fact, 50% of the structures that took part in the forum sent formal requests for volunteers to ANVD.
5. The State of Niger, through the Ministry of Territorial Planning and Community Development, has shown all its willingness to support the framework and are committed to providing the necessary means to achieve its objectives. ■



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# BAVARIA'S #MEUNO VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM

PARTNERING WITH PROCOLOMBIA  
FOR MENTORES SIN FRONTERAS

By María José Molina Zambrano,  
Sustainability Lead, Bavaria, Colombia

# MENTORES SIN FRONTERAS



Understanding the importance and relevance of corporate volunteering, in 2017 Bavaria made a bold move and invested on a platform called #MeUno, whose main purpose was to unite the Colombian people beyond beer. Since then, we have been the pioneers in corporate volunteering, and have become a benchmark for other companies around Colombia. #MeUno became Bavaria's volunteering program, through which the company has contributed to transforming the country and mobilizing people around social and as environmental causes. This program has been implemented in four countries throughout Latin America, and in Colombia, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we developed volunteering activities that

mobilized over 7,000 people simultaneously. Over the course of 4 years, we have worked with different initiatives and partners. We have not only gained a better understanding of the needs of Colombian volunteers but this experience has taught us the importance of developing partnerships with the public sector.

We have tried to improve year after year and address new challenges that arise. In 2020, COVID-19 led us to rethink the way in which we were operating and adapt to the change and uncertainties brought on by the pandemic. For instance, due to the restrictions on mobility caused by the pandemic, the program had to be adjusted to continue fulfilling its purpose of positively impacting and transforming Colombia, but without the risk of face-to-face encounters. In addition to this, a nationwide problem arose as children had to adjust to homeschooling. This shift jeopardized their access to proper education as there was a significant lack of support coming from the national education system, especially for low-income families.

Consequently in 2020, Bavaria developed a partnership with Procolombia, a national governmental entity, to support the educational process of youth between the ages of 6 and 14. The initiative Mentores Sin Fronteras uses technology to provide educational support for children from low-income families who are struggling with Math, Spanish and/or English. Through #MeUno, Bavaria invited its employees to donate two hours of their free time every two weeks to accompany these students in their educational process.

**65**  
**VOLUNTEERS**



**70+**  
**YOUTH BENEFICIARIES**



**1020+**  
**HOURS DONATED**



Volunteers were split into different groups, according to the subject they were interested in teaching, the grade level and the age of their preferred beneficiary. Once they were assigned to a group, they received training from Procolombia. The training provided them with tips and best practices on how they could manage students' groups. The volunteers were also equipped with the necessary tools to properly prepare their classes. Once the volunteers were trained, they were responsible for planning their classes before the virtual session with the students.

There were two iterations of Mentores Sin Fronteras. 25 volunteers from different cities and areas within the company enrolled for the first iteration of the program. This allowed them to meet new people within the company and was an opportunity for employees to network and bond. The volunteers accompanied students along 4 sessions. Each session covered the most critical topics within each subject area, which were identified by an initial analysis performed on the first day of the

program. With the help of Procolombia's team, we had the opportunity to engage over 65 volunteers, assisting over 70 youth beneficiaries. In total the volunteers donated over 1020 hours to this program.

This was a very enriching experience for not only the students but also for the volunteers. In the feedback sessions with the volunteers, 100% of them stated that they would be mentors again and that the program had helped them develop multiple soft-skills (such as leadership, time-management and empathy, among others). They also concluded that Mentores Sin Fronteras was a great opportunity to retribute others by donating their time and knowledge to help those who were less privileged.

This program capitalized on the company's biggest asset: its people. It also helped strengthen its relationship with Procolombia. With only a small financial investment (used only to produce communication pieces for the volunteer recruitment process) and little human resource investment, Mentores Sin Fronteras was an absolute success.

Now that it is over we can say that such initiatives certainly work in two ways. On one hand, they provide a great way for companies to provide their employees with the opportunity to help others while strengthening their own soft-skills and acquiring new personal and professional abilities. On the other hand, it provides the chance to work with the public sector while implementing efforts to drive positive impact for the most vulnerable populations in the country. ■



# CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING: HOW TO COLLABORATE AND SCALE YOUR IMPACT

By Paul Ryatt, Co-Founder, Copalana, Switzerland

**T**he current climate crisis and social tensions playing out on a global scale is a wakeup call for us. We need to collaborate to address the challenges and ensure a sustainable planet for our children. Although the challenges seem overwhelming, globally we have the skills and resources we need to tackle the problems locally.

Copalana believes that we humans are wired to do good. It makes us feel good,

it makes us feel like our life has purpose and that we made our time on earth worth living. We believe that corporate leaders want to act responsibly and play an active role in helping address the challenges our planet faces. We are convinced that both employees and clients want companies to support social change.

If all these things are true, then why are non-profit organizations not receiving all the support (financial and non-financial)

they need to achieve the sustainability goals proposed by the UN as the for 2030? These Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.<sup>1</sup> This question has been at the core from the very beginning when Copalana started as a family venture in 2016.

### What is the problem and how can we help solve it?

Based in Lucerne Switzerland, the small family-team decided to do something about contributing to the solution, rather than just talk about the problems our world faces around the dinner table. Inspired by his experience on Credit Suisse's Global Citizens Program (GCP), Paul Ryatt founded the tech-for-good start-up with the aim to find ways to improve collaboration between the companies, non-profits and employees/volunteers.

The GCP is Credit Suisse's international skills-based volunteering program through which employees leverage and develop their talents and leadership capabilities while at the same time providing invaluable support to Credit Suisse's Corporate Citizenship partner organizations. This hands-on experience motivated Paul to help connect individuals with opportunities to support non-profits.

After discussions with a few large Swiss financial institutions, it became clear that even large companies with well-established

CSR departments face resource constraints and administrative hurdles when it comes to the management of their skills-based volunteering programs. In order to scale, they need efficient ways to collaborate - less manual work and more automation, especially when it comes to finding & matching volunteers.

Non-profits, who have even fewer resources, need access to corporate & employee networks in order to scale their impact. Establishing partnerships with companies takes a lot of time and effort. Connecting with employees means endless emails & meetings to find matching skills and accelerate their projects.

It is no secret that employees want to add purpose to their work and lives. They want to work for organizations which foster and promote a giving culture. Large companies have the means to create foundations and staff CSR departments, but what about smaller organizations who also want to contribute to the solution but just don't have the capacity?

To help address these challenges, with financial support and close collaboration with program managers from Credit Suisse, the Copalana team was able to draw on the expertise of the corporate citizenship team to develop and trial the Copalana platform

### What does Copalana contribute to the solution?

Copalana designed and developed a digital platform to help companies and non-profits

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development Goals definition ([www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals](http://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals))

easily connect to a platform (Volunteer marketplace) that enables non-profits and volunteers 'find' a match between the needs of the former and the interests of the latter who would like to volunteer supporting an organization using their expertise and skills.

Another value-add of the Copalana platform is a crowdfunding function which enables employees to start fundraising campaigns for vetted projects from non-profits.

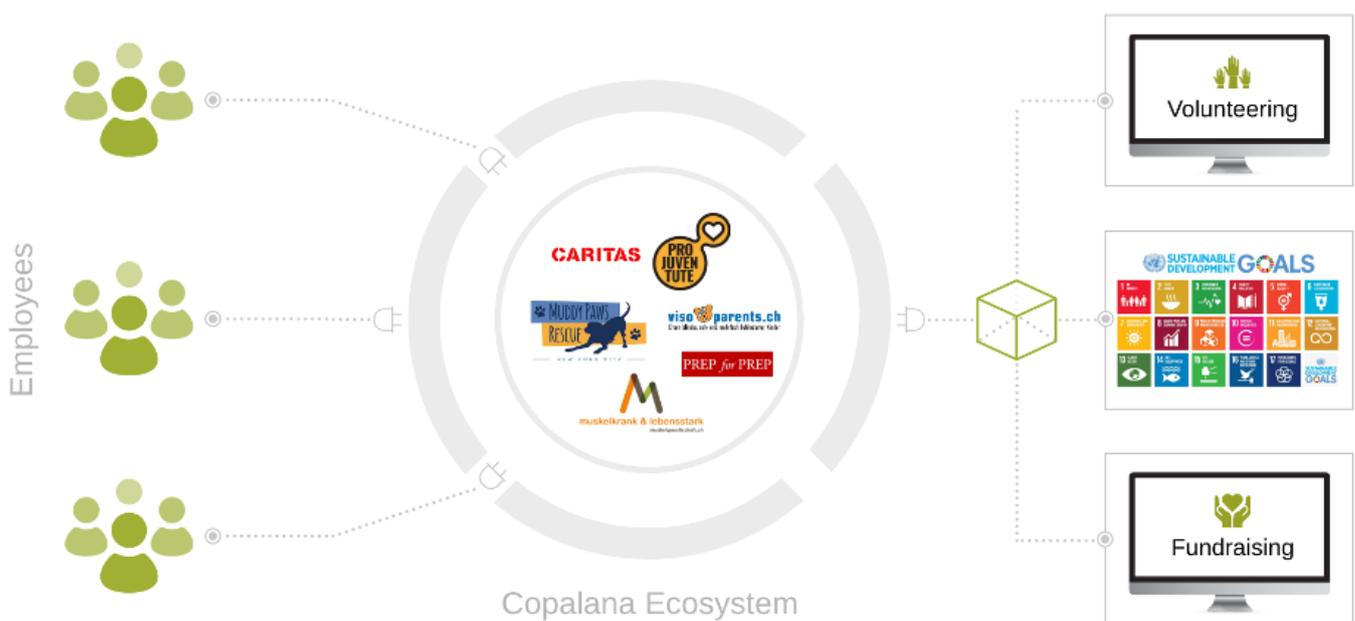
The Copalana system is a one-stop solution where synergies are shared among partners in the network, and caters for both large and small companies. Large companies can set up closed user groups for their employees and define a portfolio of non-profits they wish to work with. This enables them to work with their partners more efficiently and increase their engagement.

The platform has been designed to enable global teams to collaborate with employees

and non-profits locally. Each region enjoys autonomy while adhering to the different local compliance, data security and scalability requirements.

Copalana enables non-profits to post volunteering projects, monitor engagement and extract reports. They can post the same project to multiple corporate partners and have contact with employees who apply via dashboards. Over 250 non-profits are already using the platform for fund raising and volunteering. Leading non-profits (Credit Suisse partners) Room to Read, Opportunity International and Plan International were part of the pilot phase.

The CSR-in-a-box approach is especially attractive for smaller companies with limited resources. Companies, wishing to engage their employees in their corporate social responsibility activities can connect their volunteers with vetted non-profits and create a purpose-driven culture.



Employees can easily, set up their skills profile, find interesting projects and apply to volunteer. They are notified by email when assignments matching their skills become available. This eliminates the need for companies to send internal emails each time a non-profit posts an assignment.

The Copalana operating model relies on companies to support the platform & team so that they can continue to provide the service free of charge to non-profits. No transaction fees or commissions are charged for crowdfunding projects, and no fees are charged for non-profits to post assignments to the volunteer marketplace.

### The digital world breaks barriers and connects worlds

Digitalization in the volunteering and fundraising space brings tremendous opportunities. Non-profits realize that they need to prepare for a next-generation of giving. Financial institutions are thinking about what the next generation will care about and how they will contribute to society.

The millennials are helping to paint the picture. They care about our planet, about purpose and work-life balance. They are used to digital solutions and are motivated by social engagement. They want to connect with like-minded people and contribute towards the solution to enable a better world.

Platforms such as Copalana are about collaboration through the building of a community. They differ from classic white-labeling approaches because they are cost

efficient. The Copalana model is certainly attractive for the non-profits because it is free. Companies large and small can contribute according to their size and budget.

The platform is an independent entity and wants to work with corporate partners who support their employees in purposeful work, care about social responsibility and wish to collaborate. Alongside Credit Suisse, additional strategic partners include the Migros Pioneer Fund, which supports Copalana in its endeavor to scale up throughout Switzerland and make social engagement an integral part of corporate culture. A second financial services institution, UBS, has also joined the volunteer marketplace and is currently running a pilot for specific skills-based volunteering assignments for their employees in Switzerland.

The motivation for the family-team is not about money, but rather to inspire people to engage in purposeful work.

### Would you like to get involved?

Non-profits can register and join the platform and once they have been vetted and on-boarded, then can start to use the services free of charge. Corporates can simply [contact](#) Copalana to schedule a meeting and explore opportunities. Individuals who want to volunteer can [sign-up](#) on the volunteering marketplace and create a skills-profile, and they will be automatically alerted when projects matching their skills become available. ■

# INTERVIEW WITH FLORA CHUNG

## FORMER CEO OF AVS HONG KONG

AGENCY FOR VOLUNTEER SERVICE

義工培訓及推廣中心

VOLUNTEER TRAINING CENTRE



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**Editor's Note:** We had the privilege of interviewing Flora Chung, a long-time friend and member of IAVE. This past September, after 42 years of service to Agency for Volunteer Service (AVS) Hong Kong, Flora retired as its Chief Executive Officer. In this interview, Flora reflects on the growth of the organization and volunteerism in Hong Kong over the past four decades, highlighting the highs and lows of being a leader in the field of volunteering. Please join us in congratulating Flora on her successful tenure and here dedicated service to the volunteering community in Hong Kong and beyond!

**Congratulations on your retirement and your successful tenure as the Chief Executive Officer at AVS! After 42 years of service at the organization, how does it feel to see how much AVS as grown over the years?**

AVS has seen tremendous growth over these years. I joined AVS as a Referral Officer in 1979, and undertook various posts such as Senior Coordinator, Senior Executive, Division Head and General Manager, and became the Chief Executive Officer in 2002. I feel gratified and proud of the remarkable development of the Agency especially over the last 2 decades.

AVS has achieved its role as a pivotal and

leadership organization in advancing volunteerism in Hong Kong, with strong recognition from different sectors and the wider community. AVS was actively engaged in a number of significant events in partnership with the government involving volunteer participation, notably the WTO Ministerial Conference, East Asian Games, Life Buddies, Fight Coronavirus Campaign, etc.

AVS also joined hands with the business sector in promoting volunteering and recognizing volunteer contributions, like the Hong Kong Volunteer Award, Give A Day Get a Disney Day, HSBC Share to Care Volunteering Campaign, Books for Love, Sharing Your Dreams and so on.

Internationally, AVS is the focal point and cooperating unit of UNV in Hong Kong and funded by the government, started the UNV-Hong Kong Universities Volunteer Internship Programme in 2015, sending university undergraduates to the UN overseas field units for a 6-month assignment.

In terms of finances, despite the inadequate government subventions, AVS has maintained a positive and healthy financial position with the support of charity foundations, corporate sponsorship and fundraising activities. The annual budget has grown from HK\$15 million (US\$1.9 million) to over HK\$30 million (US\$3.9 million) from 2002 to 2021.

**You have been involved with AVS since its early days. What initially drew you to join the organization and build it up to what it is today?**

There were numerous favorite memories. Just to name a few:

AVS set up the first Volunteer Training & Development Centre in Hong Kong in 2003. It was dedicated to enhancing the quality of volunteering and volunteer service management through delivering various types of professional training programs. Under the funding of The Hong Kong Community Chest, we endeavored to expand the operation and services, and developed youth development and leadership programs to address the community needs. It moved to a new premises in 2012 and was renamed as Hong Kong Institute

of Volunteers in 2019, with a focus on promoting the Hong Kong Volunteer Charter and good standard of practices.

The hosting of the 10th IAVE Asia Pacific Regional Conference in Hong Kong was a success story which I cherished for years. It helped strengthen AVS' linkage with the international volunteer community and build oversea networks which has reinforced the status and recognition of AVS as a leadership volunteer organization locally and internationally. I was most pleased to have developed long-term friendship with the IAVE colleagues and friends and counterparts worldwide from that juncture..



AVS was appointed as the co-organizer of the 2009 East Asian Games Volunteer Program in Hong Kong. We took charge of the recruitment, selection, training and management of over 6,000 volunteers for the first ever mega international sports event held in Hong Kong. While the Hong Kong athletes created the legend which excited the whole community, the volunteers' passion and distinguished services were highly commended by the athletes and guests. Our experiences in working together with the Games organizer, sports associations, public and private organizations, universities and NGOs to deliver the positive outcome were memorable and invaluable to AVS, our dedicated team of staff and volunteers!

The establishment of the Hong Kong Volunteer Award was also a significant accomplishment for AVS and the volunteer community in Hong Kong. It was launched in 2005 to award individual volunteers, and included volunteer groups and businesses from 2009. Taking consideration of the specific conditions of big corporations and small-sized companies, from 2019, the Corporate Award offer awards to the two groups of companies according to slightly different criteria. The stories of the awardees not only attracted the attention of the media and members of the public and helped raise the profile of volunteering, but also set inspiring volunteer models to the community.

**Can you tell us about a program developed under your leadership that you are particularly proud of and would like to highlight for our readers?**



Realizing that the use of advanced ICT was conducive to effective volunteerism promotion, and engagement of volunteers, with the support of IT professionals and consultants, I actively enlisted funding for the development of a comprehensive volunteer engagement system. The process involved vigorous consultation, brainstorming, project planning, pitching, networking and lobbying over years. We finally obtained a project sum of about HK\$7 million (US\$0.9 million) for implementing the system "Volunteer Hongkong" (V-HK) which has been successfully launched.

It was an important step forward to digitalize the work flow in order to increase the effectiveness and efficiencies of services including volunteer registration,



matching, training and recognition, as well as to improve the experience of different users. Though there is room for enhancement to meet the changing societal needs, this initiative is impactful to further strengthening AVS' pivotal in volunteerism.

### Over the past 50 years, how has the volunteering landscape changed in Hong Kong?

Volunteering in Hong Kong has been growing in breadth and depth over the past decades. The volunteer participation in both formal and informal volunteering has increased tremendously. According to the Volunteer Movement of Social Welfare Department, the number of registered volunteers increased by 50%, from 0.89

million in 2010 to 1.3 million in 2020.

Hong Kong has an aging population. 18% is above 65 in 2018 and expected to become 1 in 3 in 2038. As observed from AVS' database, while the youth volunteers continue to be the majority (40% being aged 6-30), older volunteers aged 55 or above showed a trend of higher growth than other age groups, rising from 10.5% in 2010 to 22% in 2020. The volunteers were better educated. 57% attained post-secondary or university education level, and 25% were professionals and management executives.

It has been widely recognized that volunteering not only benefits the needy and builds social solidarity, but also enables people to live a more meaningful and fulfilling life. The service opportunities are multi-faceted, covered a greater range of areas. Virtual volunteering has become more popular in times of the pandemic. Cross sectoral collaboration is instrumental to build synergy and expand capacity to promote volunteering. Inter-generational volunteering helps enhance social harmony and cultivate positive social values to the younger people. Social media and other digital means are indispensable to extend the reach of volunteering and for public communications nowadays.

### AVS has been a long-term partner and close friend of IAVE for many years. Can you share your thoughts on the relationship between AVS and IAVE and how you would like to see this relationship evolve?

We should keep closely connected and be mutually supportive. IAVE is a very

good platform for volunteer leadership organizations worldwide to exchange, share and learn from one another, reaffirm our belief in volunteerism and update the latest development, new thoughts, ideas and inspiring models. IAVE also represents the international volunteer community to recognize and celebrate the achievements and contributions of volunteering to meeting the sustainable development goals.

**Being part of a leadership team of a large nonprofit organization can come with its own set of challenges. Can you tell us about a challenge you have faced during your term and how you and your team overcame these obstacles?**

Recruitment and retention of quality staff is a challenge faced by many nonprofit organizations. AVS is no exception. Under resources constraints, we have strived and managed to improve the employment conditions, to enhance team spirit and the sense of belonging through various means as much as we could. Apart from that, the setup of a volunteer staff (non-paid) team who works hand in hand with paid staff has proved effective to strengthen our talent pool. Some paid staff who have resigned are invited to stay in the capacity of volunteer staff if situation agreed to be suitable. Every year, AVS keeps about 70 volunteer staff members in support of different service units or tasks including training, project organization, event management, volunteer coordination, office work, etc.





**What's one advice you'd like to pass on to your successor and to other nonprofit leaders around the world?**

Stay positive and be creative to keep up with societal changes. There are challenges but also opportunities at all times. Strong collaboration with different stakeholders is an important key to success.

**2020 marked the 50th anniversary for AVS. What do you hope to see for AVS and volunteerism in Hong Kong in the next 50 years?**

Upholding its vision, mission and values, AVS will continue to strengthen the leadership role in volunteerism in partnership with all sectors to build a caring community. There will be more innovations, greater diversity and inclusiveness in volunteer participation. Let "Everyone Volunteers" become a culture of Hong Kong. ■





International Association for Volunteer Effort

**VOLUNTEERING**  
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MAGAZINE

ISSUE 10, NOVEMBER 2021

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