Tolerance and Inclusion: Volunteering Enabling Community Cohesion and Embracing Diversity

VOLUNTEERING TOGETHER TO ENABLE CHANGE AND CREATE A BETTER WORLD CONTEXT PAPER

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Volunteering Together to Enable Change and Create a Better World.

The COVID-19 pandemic has emphasised how volunteers as agents of change provide the practical action that builds hope and resilience, improves lives and strengthens communities. The pandemic has resulted in the postponement of the October 2020 IAVE World Volunteer Conference hosted by the Emirates Foundation in Abu Dhabi until the autumn of 2021. However, the conference theme chosen for 2020 of 'volunteering together to enable change and create a better world' has never been more relevant or more real.

As part of the preparations for the conference the Emirates Foundation had agreed to support the writing of seven context papers on the conference sub themes. This project has continued in order to provide for greater consideration of the issues, particularly with relevance to volunteering and COVID-19, and to enable wider dissemination of knowledge that will add value to those supporting and developing volunteering around the world.

The context papers seek to bring forward current thinking and any relevant research, highlighting case studies to demonstrate impact. The papers will be published and available between July and December 2020. In addition, an incredibly special series of online Forums is being organized to enable the sharing of knowledge and discussion of the issues. The papers and the Forums provide information and insight on the following key topics:

- ▶ Volunteerism and Community Resilience – Locally Owned Solutions Delivering Impact
- ▶ Future Leadership – the Role of Youth Volunteers
- ▶ Tolerance and Inclusion – Volunteering Enabling Community Cohesion and Embracing Diversity
- ▶ Volunteering and the Digital World – Extending the Power of Volunteering through New Technologies
- ▶ Corporate Volunteering – Delivering Business Objectives through a Values Focused Mission
- ▶ Measurement and Impact – Providing the Evidence that Volunteering is Good for Society and Good for You
- ▶ Volunteering 2030 – New Paradigms

Introduction

Social inequalities persist in many communities around the world and the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen. We have seen how social issues such as the climate emergency, wars, migration crises and the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbate and/or are exacerbated by inequalities, as they impact those who are most vulnerable and marginalised in many societies. These power inequalities then sharpen social hierarchies and extend divisions between those who 'have' and those who 'have not' (c.f. Gillette, 2003). **Against this backdrop, there seems to be a need to change – or at the very least, disrupt – these social inequities for the common good. Volunteers can be positioned as agents of change which evokes notions of solidarity, partnership, and community-building as pathways for social transformation.**

What is/are the role/s of volunteering in unsettling and/or counterintuitively, maintaining social inequalities? How are volunteers commonly positioned within the spectrum of social exclusion and inclusion? For volunteer organisations, what are the implications of engaging volunteers with a diversity in age, gender, (dis)abilities and socioeconomic status? These questions animate the discussions in this background paper. Against the landscape of deepening social inequalities, this paper will explore what has been described as one of the "great expectations" from volunteer action: whether and how volunteering could offer solutions toward issues surrounding social exclusion (Rochester, 2006, p. 3). Particularly, this paper will look at volunteering practices within so-called 'vulnerable', 'marginalised' and 'poor' communities. Exploring under which circumstances participation in volunteer work can be a pathway for these groups to reposition themselves from dominantly being considered as 'recipients' of development programmes to being development actors who help make development 'happen'.

Exploring the links between volunteering and social inclusion

There is often a dilemma on the usefulness of subscribing to a 'standard' definition of volunteering because the ways by which it is understood and practiced vary immensely depending on who engages with the volunteer activities and where these activities are performed. What seems to be a common understanding of volunteering is that it is a helping activity one performs out of free will for the benefit of others with no direct financial reward (c.f. Cnaan, Handy, & Wadsworth, 1996; Rochester, Paine, & Howlett, 2010). However, several commentators have critiqued these 'standard' definitions because they may fail to capture volunteering realities in so-called Global South countries where there may be differences in resources, motivations, and social structures (Hazeldine & Ballie Smith, 2015; Millora, n.d.; Roitter, 2017). For instance, the 2015 Global Review of Volunteering by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) indicated how so-called 'global' definitions of volunteering (especially those that follow a more formal, service delivery model) are often influenced by experiences of volunteers in Europe and North America (Hazeldine & Ballie Smith, 2015). Authors of the report then offer a caution that "by naming definitions that are rooted in the experiences of the Global North as universal, particular forms of volunteering are privileged over others" (Hazeldine & Ballie Smith, 2015, p. 29).

A study in Argentina, for instance, recognised how definitions used in tools for measuring volunteering activity may have failed to take into account volunteering practices specific to the culture of the country and the Latin American region (Roitter, 2017). In a country like the UK for example, the study noted that when asked during a survey, people can spontaneously give examples of volunteering activities such as giving people advice or taking an elderly person to a hospital appointment. The author of the study argues that in Latin America, fewer people would consider these activities as volunteering. As such, "comparative studies at the international level could generate distorted images of Latin Americans' generosity and/or willingness to participate in the public sphere" (Roitter, 2017, p. 172) These dominant narratives might explain why, **within international volunteering, Global South countries are often considered as 'hosts' of services from Global North (c.f. Laurie & Baillie Smith, 2018) eclipsing the wealth of volunteer activities already existing in the region.**

Part of what this paper hopes to highlight in the later sections is how volunteering is understood, and practiced in various communities in the Global South, including in groups that experience some form of vulnerability and marginalisation.

Tensions in these various definitions of volunteering are not only wordplay. Escobar's (1995) concept of 'development as a discourse', when applied to volunteering, reminds us that how we speak about volunteering crystallises on how we practice volunteering, including what assumptions we hold as to who a volunteer is. Based on the dominant definitions above, volunteering seems to be commonly understood as following a service delivery model. In this model, volunteer work is a process by which goods and services are delivered by those who 'have' to those who 'do not have'. Such understanding creates binaries between the volunteer/beneficiary, helper/helped and carers/cared-for. Along these lines, much of the literature suggests that those with higher socioeconomic status (SES) tend to volunteer more (Wilson, 2000) because they have surplus money, time and expertise and, when participating, it was found that they tend to fulfil more prestigious and meaningful tasks.

While these discourses do not necessarily say that volunteering is only the domain of the rich, they construct a particular identity of a volunteer that seems to exclude those that are often considered as marginalised and excluded: for instance, people with disabilities, young people, the poor and vulnerable, indigenous peoples and members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) communities. Most often, these groups come to mind when development programmes speak about social exclusion[1] because they may lack access to and/or deprived of resources (e.g. income and others), relationships (e.g. weaker social networks), rights (e.g. citizenship and decision-making) (de Haan, 2000) or some combination of all three.

Being socially excluded seems to not only be framed around what one 'lacks' but also generates questions around human rights, power relations, governance and accountability (e.g. who is responsible for their exclusion) and social identity (i.e. what are our assumptions about who 'they' are). In the pathbreaking publication called *Voices of the Poor*[2] that documents how the world's poor understand and experience poverty, poor people themselves recognise that power and powerlessness play a key role in excluding certain groups – such as women, disabled people, the elderly – in various institutional and development processes (Narayan, Schafft, Patel, Koch-Schulte, & Rademacher, 2000).

Social inclusion is then framed as the antidote to this splintering of the society. According to UNESCO, an inclusive society can be defined as a "society for all, in which every individual has an active role to play"[3]. The 1995 Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development committed on an approach that is "based on human dignity, human rights, equality, respect, peace, democracy, mutual responsibility and cooperation, and full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of people". These declarations underscore that cross-sectoral approaches are needed so that the aims are achieved. **Governments, the public sector, and civil society all have a role to play in flattening social inequalities.**

Drawing these debates together, it can be inferred that within volunteering discourses in particular and the broader development arena in general, poor and marginalised individuals are cast as passive recipients of development programmes and are thought of as 'excluded' from many development processes. Such a notion seems to be in tension with the concept and practice of volunteerism that evokes images such as that of young people at the frontline of the campaign for climate change and girls education, indigenous groups giving their produce to victims of calamities and people with disabilities volunteering online for policy projects. Reflecting on a collection of over 40,000 interviews with poor people from 50 countries, the authors of *Voices of the Poor* explained four factors involved in social exclusion: "the excluded, the institutions from which they are excluded, the agents whose actions result in the exclusion, and the process through which exclusion occurs" (Narayan et al., 2000, p. 229). De Haan's (2000) important reminder relates to the final factor described: social inclusion and exclusion are not static states or positions; rather they are processes. Therefore, he points to the need to critically explore the mechanism by which people are included/excluded in the society.

In this paper, we will look at whether and how volunteering can be a contributor to that process.

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[1] See for instance arguments of Cornwall (2002) and Escobar (1995) on how certain client categories – e.g. 'illiterate', 'poor', etc. – were 'created' and problematised through development discourses

[2] Voices of the Poor is a pathbreaking study commissioned and supported by the World Bank that employed participatory poverty assessment in understanding the experiences of the world's poor.

[3] UNESCO. 2012. see http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/BPI/EPA/images/media_services/Director-General/ConceptNoteSocialInclusionSocialTransformationsSocialInnovationEN.pdf

Volunteering as participation: challenging positions of exclusion?

Young People Living with HIV at the forefront of awareness campaigns in the Philippines

The Philippines has the record of the fastest growing HIV/AIDS epidemic in the South Pacific (Cousins, 2018). Many volunteer organisations combat the issue through campaigning, awareness-raising, influencing policies and service provision. One such organisation, for the purposes of organization anonymity, to be referenced as KPPI; a nationwide community of volunteers that works on HIV/AIDS awareness and service provision in a major city in the central region of the Philippines. As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the organisation has now refocused some of its activities toward ensuring that most of their clients – who are people living with HIV – are able to receive and take anti-retroviral medications.

KPPI is home to a diverse set of volunteers. Mostly, the people working on their HIV/AIDS programme are those who are themselves, people living with HIV – mostly adolescents and youth (aged 14-21) – individuals identifying as gay men and transgender girls; and young people living in low-income households or those from urban poor communities.

Pip, a 17-year-old volunteer was diagnosed as having HIV when he was just 14 years old. After being taken care of by KPPI to recover, he is now an active volunteer of the group, conducting HIV education classes and helping out in HIV screening. His motivation: "I want to help my fellow adolescents so that they will be aware of what is happening in our community and society…. At least I have helped somehow even if it's just small"

Anita started volunteering for KPPI when she began going to university. She expressed that volunteering allows her to do activities beyond those she does at school. Perhaps because she comes from a low-income household, she has a hard time explaining to her mother why she is working in KPPI for free. For her, it is clear: "Because of volunteering here in KPPI, I can see that I can also help others… I can give them medicine… It is a small thing but already a significant contribution to their lives."

Source: Author's own research (the name of the organisation and those of the volunteers have been changed to ensure anonymity)

To better understand the role of volunteering in social inclusion, there seems to be a need to veer away from understanding volunteer work from the perspective of the service delivery model to that of 'community participation'. The notion of participatory development emerged because externally imposed, donor-driven, expert-oriented, and top-down development approaches were ineffective (c.f. Cooke & Kothari, 2001). Within volunteering, these top-down approaches may have been in the form of earlier versions of international volunteering schemes that mirrored technical assistance programs which were highly critiqued for their tendency to be paternalistic and foster dependency (Devereux, 2008)[4]. Participation was an alternative because it is about recognising, supporting and valorising local community perspectives, knowledge, priorities, and skills (Mohan, 2014). In another sense, it is aimed at enabling communities to plan and execute their own development, transferring some degree of control over resources to those who previously had no such power – such as those described as 'socially excluded' in the previous section.

The narratives of the volunteers of KPPI seem to illustrate this shifting of social positions through volunteering: from being dominantly referred to as 'passive recipients' to now being 'active agents' of social cohesion. We see how Pip used to be at the receiving end of KPPI's services and, now, he is a frontline community educator with the goal of influencing the lives of young adolescents like him. The same could be said about Anita who seems to struggle to make her parents understand why, despite coming from a low-income household herself, she is not receiving 'anything' for her service and, instead, is the one providing the service to others. One can almost notice a sense of surprise in her words when she said 'I can see that I can also help others' – a shift of narrative as to what she thinks she is able to accomplish as a young person through volunteering.

In a way, volunteering was a pathway for them to play an important role in tackling issues that directly affect them and/or are important to them. The same pattern could be observed in other countries. In Mexico and South Africa, national surveys show that volunteering attracts participation, quite significantly, from resource-poor communities (Butcher, 2010). In Malawi, marginalised young people prove to be at the forefront of civic service and volunteerism in the country (Moleni & Gallagher, 2007). In more 'developed nations', volunteer activities are bustling among Black and ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and prisoners (Gillette, 2003; Lukka & Paine, 2001).

When seen through the lens of participatory development, volunteering becomes one of the pathways to involve, as active citizens, traditionally excluded groups so that in certain situations, they may reposition themselves from being the ones 'cared-for' to being the 'carers' (Gillette, 2013). In a way, participation through volunteering brings those at the margins towards the centre of development processes while playing an active role in the society, in line with the aims and approaches of participatory development and social inclusion described earlier. This shifting of roles carries several benefits to the volunteer, such as, empowerment from passive to active citizens, improved literacy, enhanced social status and self-worth, and acquisition of life skills. It also creates benefits for the community, such as, poverty alleviation, enhanced social cohesion and sustainable development (Burns et al., 2015). Youth development service and volunteer programs, for instance, have been an effective strategy in addressing key issues affecting the youth in Malawi (Moleni & Gallagher, 2007). In Peru (Jenkins, 2009) and India (Banerjea, 2011), women health volunteers, who have earned recognition as experts in the work, have gained higher social status as community members seek their help and advice. Because of examples like these, policy makers and international non-government organisations have encouraged the participation of marginalised groups through volunteerism (see for instance, CIVICUS, International Association for Volunteer Effort, & United Nations Volunteers, 2007).

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[4] There are now many volunteer involving organisations that challenge these service delivery models, for instance, through south-to-south volunteering programmes and mutual learning between local and international volunteers.

Volunteering, mutual aid and solidarity

Case Study

Community-based volunteer responses to COVID-19 all over the world

As the government-mandated lockdown measures were put in place all over the world, it became clearer that the most socially vulnerable – such as those coming from low-income households, older people – are being most affected by the limited mobility and interactions. COVID-19 was not just a public health issue but also a social inequalities issue. The crisis, however, has also seen the rise of local volunteer responses in various ways and scales.

In India, for example, <u>young people</u> in large cities such as Chennai and Bangalore, raise funds and organise distribution of food packages for daily wage workers. Recognising the large number of people placed in isolation, a group in Serbia created an online <u>one-stop shop</u> where people join in virtual coffee sessions, yoga and other socialisation activities. In the UK, thousands of <u>local groups</u> work together to collect groceries and medicines for their neighbours. In the Philippines, a group of volunteers set-up a <u>citizens' budget tracker</u> to monitor how the government is spending allocated budget for COVID-19 responses – and suggesting ways on how this could be spent efficiently. In Mexico City, a local group has been active in bolstering local economy by promoting the products of <u>local street vendors</u> whose sales have been sharply affected by the pandemic. In the Bay Area in the US, <u>a group of five volunteers</u> who identify as disabled, queer people of colour have set-up support (e.g. distribution of home-made hand sanitizers, N95 respirator masks and gloves) for their fellow persons with disabilities and other underserved populations such as those who are homeless. In an interview, one of the group's members, Stacey Milbern, shared:

> "Really, what it takes to flatten the curve is collective action and collective commitment. Interdependence is going to be what saves us, and COVID-19 is the extreme example of this."

Source: See links, also Green (2020), Tolentino (2020), Abrams (2020) and Monbiot (2020)

When volunteering is seen less as a development programme or strategy and more as an activity that people do every day, it becomes clearer how volunteering is embedded in wider helping activities within communities. In dealing with pressing social problems, people often turn to each other for support. These activities contribute both to social integration and, also community resilience. The examples above illustrate how the COVID-19 pandemic saw the rise of community-based helping activities and the reinvigoration of those that have already long existed – all towards developing context-relevant responses to the unprecedented crisis. The impetus for these initiatives seems to be founded on community spirit and solidarity in response to shared issues and challenges. What sustains these groups are resources generated by the community themselves (for instance raising funds and enlisting volunteers to operationalise the goods distribution in India) which are often separate from provisions of state and other civil society institutions.

In fact, volunteers can also play a more political role, as in the example of the volunteers in the Philippines who pool their expertise to hold the government accountable to citizen's money. There is space for everyone to organise these volunteer initiatives, with often-considered 'marginalised' groups taking matters into their own hands (e.g. the disabled, queer POCs' COVID-19 initiatives above) by providing each other with support in areas that the state may have failed them.

The 2018 State of the World's Volunteerism Report (United Nations Volunteers, 2018) has identified the importance of local voluntary action founded on human connections and self-organising in the face of crises in creating and maintaining resilient communities. The report has found that often, these 'informal helping' activities are separate from those implemented by the government and other, more structured, organisations. When super typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines in 2013, the first responders were one's family, relatives, and friends, who themselves, had experienced the same calamity and adversity as the persons they were helping. It was found that the most important and effective responders during the 2015 Nepal earthquake were community members and neighbours (Devkota, Doberstein, & Nepal, 2016).

Case Study   'Lost boys of Sudan' giving back 'home'

In 1987, a civil war in what is now South Sudan saw over 20,000 young children flee their villages to escape death or induction into the army. Close to two decades later several were resettled to the United States, Canada, and Australia. However, many of those resettled so-called Lost Boys of Sudan continue to give back to their communities in South Sudan through local organisations as a way to maintain connections with their previous communities many miles away.

One of such organisations is South Sudan Initiatives (SSI) based in Syracuse New York. It was founded in 2009 by Dut Leek Deng who resettled in the US following the killing of his mother when he was just a young child. SSI was founded to empower women and children through enhancing their educational and economic opportunities. Through SSI, South Sudanese orphans were given scholarships for tuition fees and widows were given access to business loans. When the founders of these groups were asked why they have set up these initiatives, many of their responses point to sense of community and the obligation to give back:

"I have seen a lot. I mean a lot; I have seen women being raped in front of me. I have seen a lot of people being killed in front of me, including my own mother. I see that the only thing that [would make her] very happy is to see me helping somebody else. That would be something that she would be very proud of." (Founder, South Sudan Initiatives, personal communication, July 17, 2017)

"Somebody has saved me. Somebody helped me. It's my turn now to be able to give back" (Founder, South Sudan Initiatives, personal communication, May 21, 2019).

Source: Appe & Oreg (2019)

In the discussion so far, volunteering is seen as a form of mutual aid and self-help (Burns & Taylor, 1998). **Volunteering is about people helping people regardless of one's socioeconomic status, gender, age or (dis)ability. The line between the 'volunteer' and the 'beneficiary' is increasingly blurred.** These person-to-person helping activities – while highly activated during crises – are also found to be occurring every day. In fact, latest global statistics indicate that 70% of the world's volunteering activity is done informally (UNV, 2018). These helping activities are not just about direct provision of services (i.e. helping your sick neighbour with a household task) but also a mechanism that keeps communities together, including amongst groups that share a common history but are situated in different countries.

The narratives of the Lost Boys of Sudan in the previous case study illustrates this: they point to a strong sense of reciprocity (e.g. helping others because I have been helped in the past) and giving back to communities that they continue to identify with despite being so far away. Solidarity, reciprocity, mutual aid, and self-help form the bases of many volunteering activities around the world. For example, a study on Black ethnic minorities' helping behaviour in the US revealed that, traditionally, they "have had to look after themselves [sic] and become self-reliant", thus helping each other is a communal trait especially people in the same community and religious affiliation (Lukka & Paine, 2001).

In South Africa, the main motivation for volunteers is to "alleviate poverty" and in Mexico, it is to "help those in need" which seem to show a sense of shared responsibility among the citizens when faced with the realities of poverty (Butcher, 2010). These practices are also highly influenced by culture. The pan-African concept of Ubuntu, for instance, is said to form the basis of volunteering activity in many communities in the region. Research has found that volunteering in many African communities could be best described as the poor helping his fellow poor (Patel, Perold, Mohamed, & Carapinha, 2007).

In the Philippines, volunteerism is said to be founded on the precolonial concept of *pakikipagkapwa* or an extension of the self for others (Aguiling-Dalisay, Yacat, & Navarro, 2004). It is also related to bayanihan – tagged as the "backbone of the Filipino family and village life". Bayanihan is a system of mutual aid, help and concern among communities in the pursuit of a common goal otherwise difficult to achieve with *kanya-kanyang kayod* (each one fending for himself).

Volunteering contributes towards social inclusion and cohesion as it operates within wider helping activities in communities. Looking at volunteering this way frames it as a relational concept infused with tolerance and respect for differences but also a recognition of the many similarities and points of partnerships.

Concluding thoughts: challenges and critical questions

In this background paper, we have explored understandings and practices of volunteering as it occurs in everyday life within different communities all over the world. By thinking of volunteering as community participation, we have seen how volunteers' work is robust and bustling even in resource poor contexts. **Making these hidden solidarities visible allows us to challenge the dominant identities – influenced by discourses that begin with identifying what these groups 'lack' – attached to volunteers that are often considered 'marginalised'.** Through volunteering, they do not only play an active role in the society but are able to forge their own space at the centre of development processes especially on issues that concern them. Through a diversity of practices and channels, they take centre stage in responding to various issues like climate emergency, poverty, inequalities, and insecurity. This paper explored volunteering through the lens of mutual aid – like an 'invisible glue' that holds communities together – and highlights the relational aspect of volunteer work.

There are, however, challenges and issues within these debates. One, there is the concern surrounding a tendency of governments and other institutions to overbear on these community-based volunteering activities. Overreliance on these helping activities, might place too much responsibility of service provision to the poor who, in the first place, should be the key population these services need to be reaching. As one woman, a health volunteer in Peru expressed, "we have a lot of goodwill, but we still need to eat…" (Jenkins, 2009, p. 24).

Partnerships, collaborations, and accountability systems must be put in place. While volunteering may challenge ascribed identities, it is important to lay bare how inequalities and power asymmetries

persist in many communities – even in those that are often homogenised (e.g. to use the term 'poor community' has the tendency to suggest that everyone in such community experience the same level of poverty).

The gendered aspect of volunteering, for instance, makes these issues visible. Women, in certain programmes, are considered as more self-sacrificing, their income is seen as supplementary to that earned by the male breadwinner and their work as merely extensions of their maternal roles (Jenkins, 2009). Elsewhere, it has been observed that volunteer organisations tend to rely on women volunteers because they assume that "women have infinite time to participate in volunteer-based community groups" (Lind 1997, as cited in Banerjea, 2011).

Taken together, **experiences and expressions of volunteerism from various contexts around the world show that volunteering may unsettle inequalities and lead to social inclusion by allowing a reimagination and repositioning of the roles, capacities, and agencies of those commonly regarded as 'excluded'.** The term volunteer could represent a variety of individuals with differences in age, gender, (dis)abilities and socioeconomic status. Recognising that various volunteers can bring a multiplicity of skills, knowledge, practices, and values into any organisation begs the following question. **What contribution towards social cohesion would there be if organisations embrace diversity as a resource rather than a challenge?**

In light of the challenges above, volunteers can take on various positions in the continuum of exclusion and inclusion – and these can change overtime and/or within particular contexts. Actors within volunteer-involving organisations could then reflect as to whether and how their volunteer engagement programmes reposition the volunteers towards a certain end in the continuum. Volunteering groups and practices exist within a wider development ecosystem that includes diverse actors, such as, the state, NGOs, volunteer-involving organisations, and other peoples' organisations, with, at times, competing agendas. Therefore, there seems to be a need to explore what sorts of partnerships and collaborations among these groups could best lead to certain development outcomes.

This paper does not aim to put forward the final word in these debates and dilemmas, rather, to be a stimulus for discussion. As such, here are some critical questions that need to be further explored:

1. Recognising that volunteers have diverse set of skills and knowledge; what sort of roles can volunteers take within our organisations?
2. What sort of assumptions do we have about the skills, capabilities, and knowledge of the volunteers we work with?
3. How can we build upon (and not disrupt), pre-existing community volunteering activities?
4. To what extent can volunteering practices challenge dominant gender roles?
5. Under which circumstances can volunteering counterintuitively lead to social exclusion?

Bringing new insights into the relationships between volunteering, community cohesion and tolerance, this paper hopes to prompt continuing and cross-sectoral discussions amongst academics, policymakers, practitioners, and volunteers themselves around issues identified here and more. **As social inequalities continue to pervade many societies, there seems to be an urgent need to explore how these conversations could strengthen existing volunteer initiatives and shape future action.**

Suggested Readings

a. Appe, S. and Oreg, A (2019). Lost and Found in Upstate New York: Exploring the Motivations of 'Lost Boys' Refugees as Founders of International Nonprofit Organizations. *Administration and Society*. [Online First].
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b. Banerjea, N. (2011). Voluntary participation and poor women's work: a critical examination of a community health improvement initiative in a Kolkata slum. *Contemporary South Asia, 19*(4), 427–440.

c. Jenkins, K. (2009). "We have a lot of goodwill, but we still need to eat...": Valuing women's long term voluntarism in community development in lima. *Voluntas, 20*(1), 15–34.

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About Emirates Foundation

Emirates Foundation is an independent national organization set up by the Abu Dhabi Government to facilitate public-private funded initiatives for the empowerment of youth across the UAE, putting them at the forefront of economic, social and human capital development. Emirates Foundation's works to have empowered and engaged youth contributing towards shaping the future of the UAE. The organization works in partnership with the private and public sectors to encourage social responsibility and enhance youth capacities through programs that meet their needs towards achieving sustainable community development.

The Emirates Foundation has 3 key priorities:

- ► To develop youth competencies through empowerment and raising awareness
- ► To encourage social responsibility within the private and public sectors
- ► To provide all administrative services according to standards of quality, effectiveness, transparency and innovation.

To learn more about Emirates Foundation, Please visit their website at www.emiratesfoundation.ae/ef

About IAVE

International Association for Volunteer Effort

The International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) exists to promote, strengthen and celebrate volunteering in all of the myriad ways it happens throughout the world. With members in 70+ countries, IAVE is the connective tissue of a global network of leaders of volunteering, NGOs, businesses, governments and acadmic institutions that share a belief in the power of volunteers to make a significant strategic contribution to resolving the world's most pressing problems.

IAVE has four core functions:

- ▶ **Convening.** IAVE brings together leaders from across the field through a series of virtual and in-person events, such as the biennial World Volunteer Conference and regional conferences.
- ▶ **Advocacy.** IAVE serves as a global voice for volunteering, working closely with the United Nations, international NGOs and global companies to call attention to the strategic importance of volunteering as a way to solve problems and improve the quality of life for all.
- ▶ **Knowledge development.** IAVE is a recognized knowledge leader for the global volunteer community, conducting research and providing in-depth reports on current trends and challenges.
- ▶ **Network Development.** IAVE brings together key constituencies to share with and learn from one another – the Global Corporate Volunteer Council and the Global Network of Volunteering Leadership.

To learn more about IAVE, Please visit their website at www.iave.org

About the Author

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Chris Millora is a Filipino PhD scholar with the UNESCO Chair in Adult Literacy and Learning for Social Transformation, University of East Anglia (UK). His project is an 11-month ethnography of the learning dimension of local volunteering by 'vulnerable' youths and adults in an HIV/AIDS awareness group and informal settlers' movement in the Philippines. Chris recently worked with UN Volunteers developing a volunteer typology for the 21st century in preparation for the Global Technical Meeting 2020 on Reimagining Volunteering for the 2030 Agenda. Chris holds an MA in Lifelong Learning Policy and Management from UCL Institute of Education in London.

About the Sub-theme

Tolerance and Inclusion – Volunteering Enabling Community Cohesion and Embracing Diversity

Volunteering is vitally important to providing a sense of belonging to one's community, it is a practical way to showcase resilience by including everyone in helping themselves and others to overcome problems whether they are, for example, economic, social, humanitarian or environmental. Volunteers are working across divisions and between cultures showcasing in practical ways the respect for others that builds more tolerant societies. Organizations that involve volunteers also need to be committed to the value of inclusion, showcasing tolerance and embracing diversity in their involvement of volunteers.

VOLUNTEERING TOGETHER TO ENABLE CHANGE AND CREATE A BETTER WORLD