Measurement and Impact:
Finding Evidence Volunteering is Good for Society and Good for You

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

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NOVEMBER 2020

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

This paper aims to provide insights and pathways towards understanding and measuring how volunteers self-recognise the value of what they are doing, gain from volunteering and contribute to "solving the world's problems".[1] It initially focuses on how volunteering is understood, exploring different approaches to volunteering. How impact is measured is explored by using examples that focus on the volunteer experience, the impact of the volunteer on the aspirations and needs of communities and the natural environment. Attention is then focused on organisational practice and challenges in measuring impact, followed by conclusions.

How volunteering is understood

The understanding of the term 'volunteering' is by no means widely agreed.[2] Most simply volunteers can be defined as people who "give their time freely for the benefit of others" (Wilson & Musick, 1997, p.3) but narrow definitions of volunteering have been seen to limit diverse forms of volunteering by not acknowledging sufficiently different cultural forms or volunteering that is done outside formal organisational frameworks (Butcher & Einolf, 2016).[3]

Many advocate an inclusive approach that considers the different circumstances and dimensions of volunteering (Ellis Paine, Hill, & Rochester, 2010). They concluded that while elements of volunteering can be identified as generally shared – paid over unpaid; free will over coercion; and benefiting others over self–these are better considered on a spectrum rather than as an either/or choice. Such broader definitions can extend to mutual aid and self-help; formal service delivery; civic engagement; and campaigning, with overlap among the various volunteer types (United Nations General Assembly 2001).

Box 1 The global scale and scope of volunteering

As part of work on the 2018 UN State of the World's Volunteering Report Salamon, Sokolowski et al. 2018 highlighted some key volunteer statistics about volunteering. They show that globally most volunteering is direct person to person and not within organisational settings. This makes it harder to count, and consequently, often invisible particularly for example when women do it.[4]

They found:

▶ The direct and organization-based volunteer workforce equates to 109 million full-time equivalent (FTE) workers.

▶ 70 per cent of global volunteer activity occurs through direct person-to-person engagement, while 30 percent takes place formally through organizations or associations.

▶ Significant variations exist in the scale of the volunteer workforce across different regions. Regional differences also exist in the proportions of direct vs. organization-based volunteering.

▶ The majority of global volunteer work (57 per cent) is carried out by women

(Salamon, Sokolowski et al. 2018)

The broader, more inclusive, conception of volunteering highlights that measuring the impact of volunteering can be approached in terms of benefits for volunteers and for society. This can be seen not just in-service delivery or social change but also in the health and wellbeing of volunteers.[5]

It is also important to be clear on the desired outcomes of volunteering for individuals as well as society. The issue of who defines the outcomes and how they are measured is critical and this may vary considerably from the point of view of communities[6], individuals, volunteers, volunteer involving organisations, institutions, or the state, although there are also significant overlaps.

Formal volunteer programmes are likely to have defined objectives deriving from the volunteers, the communities they are volunteering with, the objectives of the implementing/facilitating organisation and/or the objectives of donors (whether governmental, private sector or philanthropic). These desired objectives might operate at different levels from an overall programme level to an individual volunteer intervention.

By comparison, direct (or informal) volunteering can challenge existing services or just directly respond to sudden or new situations like emergencies in flexible and evolving ways that can improve policy and practice. For example, Japanese citizens responded directly to the devastating 1995 Kobe earthquake that killed 6400 people. Given delays in the government response over a million citizens mobilised to get the city back on its feet. The unprecedented volunteering by Japanese citizens pushed the government to change its attitude and structures to support and encourage volunteering with 1995 dubbed 'year one of the Japanese volunteer age' (Avenell 2013).[7]

The ambiguity of volunteering is demonstrated by a multitude of conceptual models that can make simple measurement more difficult. But they also powerfully demonstrate the broad and cross cutting role for volunteering that can facilitate broader impacts. Ellis Paine et al (2010 p.25) identify no less than 7 lenses through which volunteering has been conceptualised: work, philanthropy, activism, leisure, care, participation, and learning. This sits alongside different models which explore the contexts in which volunteering takes place, bringing three components together: non-profit, civil society and leisure paradigms, also summarised as the overlapping components of unpaid work or service; activism; and serious leisure.[8]

Of these 'serious leisure' with people organising to spend time together doing what they enjoy - can be seen as not only service delivery but mutual aid and self-help (Wearing and Gard McGehee 2013). This builds on earlier work highlighting the value but also the ambiguity for some organisations of the continuum between volunteering and activism. These issues demonstrate the value of the broad volunteering definition and the diverse and inclusive approaches to documenting evidence that volunteering is good for individuals and society.

Bringing together contexts and potential outcomes, Rochester et al (2010) drew on a matrix model from the Institute for Volunteering Research's Volunteer Impact Assessment Toolkit. The impact of volunteering can be understood by comparing volunteering contexts (of volunteers, organisations, service users and community) with defined outcomes of physical, human, economic, social, and cultural capital (Rochester et al. 2010).[9]

Approaching measuring impact

The above approaches underpin how we can understand what we measure and how volunteering makes a difference. For our purposes they can be usefully summarised as follows:

▶ How the volunteer experience impacts on the volunteer personally and influences their future opportunities and behaviour. This includes how the volunteer experience impacts on active citizenship and public engagement.

▶ How volunteers impact the aspirations and needs of the communities where they volunteer.

These two elements can potentially be complementary or can potentially negatively influence each other.

How the volunteer experience impacts on the volunteer personally and influences their future opportunities and behaviour

Using volunteer perspectives to demonstrate benefits to volunteers themselves, where they are placed and in what wider context they engage, have all been researched and can be undertaken by smaller as well as larger organisations.

Any organisation can simply ask volunteers about their experience; their satisfaction in their activity and the organisation; and what difference this is making in their lives. Such an approach, which could be informal or formal, can be used to assist organisational understanding or learning and to improve support provided to the volunteer, and even generate promotional material that helps recruit other volunteers.

Where organisations are looking to gain insights by comparing volunteer experiences, either for their own knowledge or to demonstrate achievements to other stakeholders, a more formal approach using surveys can be useful. The following examples illustrate the different ways surveys can be used:

The Norwegian Agency for Exchange Cooperation (NOREC), a Governmental Agency, resources volunteer partnerships between organisations. In 2006, they undertook a comprehensive survey of their Norwegian volunteers and decided to continue this on a regular basis. They refined and expanded the survey as their understanding and commitment to the measurement tool grew. The volunteers surveyed broadened from initially only those based in Norway to include all NOREC supported volunteers globally.[10]

The Coordinating Committee for International Service Organisations (CCIVS) is a global network created in 1948. The activities of its members are based on the long established short-term (two to three weeks) workcamp model. Historically, the main programme focus has been on peacebuilding, which is reflected in its 'Raising Peace' campaign.[11] While there are different elements to the campaign, such as local awareness raising activities and engagement in the Global Human Rights Week, the essential programme model remains the short term workcamp with 'raising peace' as its core theme. This is also the largest work camp model run by CCIVS members.

More recently, CCIVS has supported a focus of members on Climate Justice and this now accounts for over a third of their volunteer workcamp activities.[12] Its *IVS for climate change impact assessment* used surveys to explore the effectiveness of new 'climate justice' volunteering activities and how they compared to existing 'raising peace' activities. (Volpini 2019).

Box 2 — IVS for climate change impact assessment model

"The impact assessment followed a quantitative approach and utilised a pre-test-post-test design: volunteers answered the same series of questions before and after their participation in a project, self-reporting their agreement or disagreement with different statements on standard 1-5 or 1-7 Likert scales."

The approach was to identify if responses were different before and after the volunteer experience using the same questions, which were based on past organisational experiences and knowledge about expected volunteer competences at the personal, inter-personal and social-cultural levels. This was supplemented by *"ten additional and complementary items (for a total of 20 short questions) developed to assess the specific goals of the campaign."* 73 respondents from 22 countries provided data at both interview stages.

The analysis of the data used statistical techniques to identify the most significant changes that could be attributed to the work of the organisation or the *"efforts and engagement"* of volunteers. This was applied to the *"climate justice programme experience"* and also compared with participants in the *"raising peace campaign"*.

The outcome of this approach identified the relative differences in change between different competences within and across the programmes. The report showed that generally the Climate Justice workcamp participants scored more highly in both levels and extent of change against the criteria set by the approach. Also, given the similarity in the two programmes, CCIVS was able to have a greater understanding of the benefit of some new approaches with the Climate Justice programme, such as *"targeted workshops on relevant sustainability issues."*

The survey also identified other factors that impacted on the levels of response from participants, notably issues such as length of the workcamp project, age, occupation, gender, and pre-departure orientation. (Volpini 2019)

The approach of using volunteers' own words and experience can be used by smaller organisations or larger ones. For instance, the use of standard surveys (even simple tools like Survey Monkey) can be used on different points of the volunteer journey.[13] More complex data collection options are also available but require more resources. This need not use the same questions at each stage. It is also possible to ask *different* or additional questions at various stages of the volunteer experience, depending on what is considered most relevant at that point. However, this approach is likely to require analysis of interviews which would likely be part of a large-scale research project and arguably lends itself more to longitudinal study that tracks volunteers over a period of time.[14]

While a significant body of research on volunteering focuses on the volunteer, there are limitations on relying solely on the 'self-reported' views of volunteers. Validating the results of impact can be undertaken in different ways. Other perspectives also have validity and the opportunity of comparing how different stakeholders view the same situation or reality can provide important insights, indicating where there is shared understanding and where there are differences.

One model used in research which organisations to use is *triangulation* – using *multiple sources of evidence* - e.g. volunteers, organisation staff and primary actors.[15] This is set out in Figure 1 below and illustrated by how NOREC developed their survey approach outlined above.

Figure 1. Illustration of triangulation data generation

Community perspectives based on interviews or surveys

What difference volunteering makes

Organizational reviews and reports

Volunteer perspectives based on interviews or surveys

NOREC decided not to rely on the views of volunteers alone but to seek out the views of their partner organisations. In consequence they developed a parallel survey of their partner organisations -where the volunteer participants were assigned - to develop an understanding of their experiences. These data sets could then be located in regular organisational reviews and evaluations – both internal and external to the organisation. This process provided corroborating evidence through three sources of data that enabled comparison across the different approaches.[16]

A second example of the benefits of triangulation of evidence is from a study on volunteers working in English Public Libraries. The study drew on the different experience and perspectives of library managers, library users as well as library volunteers. Bringing together the different viewpoints highlighted opportunities for libraries to 'make philosophical and practical shifts from community service provision to being a partner with communities and hence become more socially inclusive' (Pateman and Williment 2013, Casselden, Walton et al. 2017).

This approach enables responses to be compared and understood from different stakeholder perspectives which is powerful for gaining ownership by different groups for long term partnerships, collaboration, and support.

How volunteers impact the aspirations and needs of the communities where they volunteer

When looking at what volunteers 'do' in their interaction with others, there are often a number of interested stakeholders: volunteers; an organisation involving volunteers or running volunteer programmes; funders or sponsors who support volunteer related initiatives; and the 'place' where volunteering is undertaken, including communities.

This area is problematic, since attributing impact to the volunteer activity is hard to prove.[17] A World Bank model of using control groups, which draws from a tradition of scientific experimentation, has gained significant traction with some groups on what constitutes valid data. This contrasts two comparable scenarios where one has volunteer interventions and the other does not. It is then theoretically possible to compare the two different outcomes. However, in a social context, this carries challenges of implementation (e.g. where direct and less visible volunteering occurs) as well as ethical issues. Furthermore, it has been argued that the level of proof for a social process is unnecessary or inappropriate and models which accept evidence based on reasonableness and the balance of probabilities can demonstrate a distinctive contribution to multiple objectives. (Buckles and Chevalier 2012, International Council for Science 2017).

Where volunteers operate within a framework of objectives, such as high-level targets, there are ways in which measurement and impact can be approached. To develop a model of understanding how volunteers contribute to interconnected targets such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), organisations will need to either set objectives and monitor and assess what takes place against those targets; or they will need to have a process of review to reflect back on what has been achieved through the volunteering contribution to overall programme goals.

Box 3 — Measuring the volunteer contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[18]

The SDGs are agreed by all countries and National governments are producing voluntary reviews of their contribution to the SDGs and the role of volunteering has been increasingly highlighted in the reviews.[19]

Agenda 2030 has a framework of 17 SDGs, of which 15 might be seen as of a substantive nature – goals focused on areas such as education, health, water, biodiversity, and climate action to be implemented together. Connecting individual volunteer activities to high-level objectives can be challenging but Haddock and Devereux (2016) suggested aggregating the contributions of volunteerism to SDGs with a "Generic Logical Framework for Volunteering for Sustainable Development."[20]

Such a framework can demonstrate the complementary contributions of a programme to a range of stakeholders. It sets out inputs, outputs, impact, and distinctive contribution of a volunteer intervention, allowing for adjusting the balance as required between quantitative and qualitative approaches in the information reported.

Haddock & Devereux (2016) also explored the potential linkages of volunteering with specific SDGs and showed a 'crosswalk' could graphically map the diverse range of volunteering activities to different SDGs.

So, while *volunteers* are likely to contribute to the direct achievement of individual goals, volunteering also might be seen as one distinctive mechanism that enables all the SDGs to be achieved together.[21]

This highlights the recognised role of volunteerism in 'expanding and mobilizing constituencies, engaging people in planning processes and localizing the agenda by providing new spaces of interaction between governments and people for concrete and scalable action' (United Nations General Assembly 2014). In other words, the UN recognises, that volunteers are essential to the achievement of the SDGs, but also affirms the distinctiveness of volunteering. Volunteers increase trust, participation, and networking amongst service users/primary actors, and this is a distinctive contribution of volunteering. [22]

So, there are two routes for demonstrating contribution to SDGs: building a picture of measuring against specific SDGs (or a combination of SDGs showing the crosscutting contribution) and demonstrating the distinctive nature of volunteering in doing so.

Given the challenges of measuring the impact of volunteering *proxy indicators* have often been used. Common indicators are the monetary equivalent of the work done or number of volunteers on a programme.

Using the volunteer proportion of citizens or the financial equivalent can be used as a proxy for measuring volunteer contributions as both inputs and outputs. For example, a study for Volunteering Western Australia found four out of five residents volunteered either formally or informally and that the socio-economic and cultural value of volunteering to Western Australia in 2015 was estimated to be $39.0 billion (Institute of Project Management 2015).

A focus on volunteer numbers is exemplified historically in volunteer programmes and youth programmes. A combination of volunteer numbers/activity has often been seen as a proxy for direct achievement in schools (e.g. large scale volunteer tutor or mentor programmes), or learning by volunteers through experiencing another context, different environment or another country (e.g. School mentoring or service learning projects; Weltwarts; Kenya's greenbelt movement for voluntary community tree planting; or Earthwatch volunteering nationally or internationally).

Whatever additional tools might be used to measure contribution, the underpinning assumption rests on the relationship between scale, the designed programme[23], and the potential of the volunteer to gain or provide added value. Overall, the use of proxy indicators such as the number of volunteers can be effectively reinforced by qualitative data such as case studies which show how the volunteer contribution has worked or more quantitative data through attitudinal surveys, as discussed in the section above.

For example, the results of one study shows evidence of the potential impact of pre-service teachers being volunteers in schools in two ways related to both individual and societal benefit:

1. Pre-service teachers' training and professional experience improved because of their involvement as volunteers in programmes of schools as Learning Communities.

2. Their involvement had significant impact in the improvement of children's and even families' learning.

To gauge this impact on themselves and others a group interview was undertaken with the volunteers at their University followed by a questionnaire that was completed while pre-service teachers were volunteering and a further interview once back at the University (González, Yeste, Jiménez, & Ignatiou, 2019).

Case studies of individual volunteer activities are a powerful tool since they demonstrate examples of achievement (or non-achievement) and can be used to demonstrate contribution to substantive targets alongside illustrating the distinctive contribution.

Another way of approaching measurement and impact is to build this into the nature of the volunteer experience. One example of this is Community or Citizen Science, where measurement is contributing to the shaping and collection of data on social or environmental problems and related advocacy and public engagement. These sorts of **participatory methods hold significant promise for not only capturing volunteer impacts but also measuring and motivating action to solve global problems.**[24]

Box 4 — Community science – good for volunteers, good for society and the earth

Community science taps into communities local knowledge, experience and enthusiasm to make a difference to a wide range of key societal issues from **Covid-19 to freshwater quality**, **climate change** or community health and wellbeing.

In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic volunteers were able to contribute their experience from their homes bringing new insights but also enabling volunteers stuck at home to feel connected and able to contribute something useful and meaningful in the midst of the **pandemic and lockdowns**. Prior to and as restrictions have lifted volunteers have again been able to collect data outside the home.

Community or citizen science has gained renewed interest and focus in the last ten years to the point there are now for example a number of national and regional associations for civic science in Australia, the USA and Europe. These are part of the **Citizen Science Global Partnership Network**.[25]

Community science is also highlighted for its benefits to its volunteers through for example the thrill of discovery. One study documented the appreciation of nature by a range of biodiversity citizen scientists while doing their monitoring and observation. These included witnessing rare species or undisturbed animals, enjoying natural beauty and diversity; experiencing fun, surprise, or relaxation; and feeling wonderment in, or a deep connection with nature" (Ganzevoort & van den Born, 2019).

From at least as early as 1900 people interested in birds were recording systematically their observations and **highlighting them**. Ornithologist Frank M. Chapman, a leader in the emerging United States of America Audubon Society for protecting bird populations, was concerned about declining bird populations. He proposed a new holiday tradition—a "Christmas Bird Census" to count birds in the holidays instead of hunting them. The voluntary bird recording has continued over the years with significant impact. For example, from 1960 Audubon Society volunteers recorded the decline in bird species including the bald eagle which was found to be linked to the use of the pesticide DDT. In 1972 and utilising their volunteer collected evidence they were able to campaign with others, to achieve a US EPA ban on the use of DDT. In 2015 and 2019 the Society again used its voluntary collected bird data to produce a report highlighting another of the worlds pressing problems demonstrating the impact of climate change and the need for action.

Community science is today used in a range of settings to **highlight air pollution**, **declining freshwater quality** and other pressing issues. The nappy science gang is an illustration that community science can be applied usefully by volunteers in many settings. Mothers questioned national advice that nappy or diaper rash would be caused by using biological cleaning products! In 2015 a group of volunteers who were parents of small children created the **nappy science gang**. They found through a partnership with the Royal Society of Chemistry that their reusable cloth nappies could be washed in biological detergents without causing rashes. Their community science led to the National Health Service changing their advice on how best to clean nappies! (Collins, 2015).
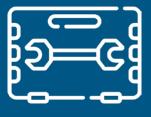
Measurement, organisational practice, and challenges

Organisations are likely to seek simplicity but face different and complex choices. Measuring impact is best seen as a learning journey – finding out what an organisation considers is most important to measure and how this connects to cost-effectiveness. The knowledge base in organisations may not document what volunteers are contributing and may not have in place systems that set objectives or monitor what Is taking place. This may be a matter of priorities, efficiency or of culture. Even within an organisation, different approaches to volunteering and volunteer programmes may focus on different outcomes and on how and what is to be measured. [26]

One question is how the data is generated. Tool kits to do this are readily available, but they require long term organisational commitment and training of staff and volunteers in their use. Two good examples are the IVR toolkit (2004) and the UNV *Assessing the Contribution of Volunteering to Development* (United Nations Volunteers 2011). The typical focus of such practical toolkits concerns the experiences and views of volunteers and some extend to other stakeholders, especially service users or primary actors. In that sense, when best used, such processes enable learning in order to improve the potential contribution of volunteers, while they also enable general statements of experiences at different moments of time and over time.

Box 5 | The Volunteering Impact Assessment Toolkit

The Volunteering Impact Assessment Toolkit (VIAT) is a framework for volunteer-involving organisations to assess the impact of their volunteer programme on key stakeholders such as: volunteers, the host organisation, service users, community partners and the wider community. It examines how each of the stakeholders benefit from the programme with regard to five identified categories namely: physical capital; human capital; economic capital; social capital and cultural capital. The UK Institute for Volunteering Research developed VIAT with input from the London School of Economics, the University of East London and Roehampton University. An example of its successful use including the traffic lights system to transparently convey key results completed for the Gaelic Women's football association can be **seen on the web**.

The use of surveys may pose issues of resourcing for organisations. Even when using on-line models, it takes up staff time, volunteer time and demands that time is allocated for the data to be collected and developed into a format for use – demonstrating organisational performance, enabling learning, improving practice. In research terminology, it may be a model of action research where an approach to learning is inbuilt to the research process; a cross-sectional review, which shows what happens at a given point in time (and can involve year on year comparisons); or a longitudinal study which tracks volunteers or service users over time, exploring changes in attitude or behaviour. It is not surprising larger organisations seek to work with research focused organisations, who have the necessary expertise but also may provide an independent view.[27]

There are two further considerations that are important to raise. **First, measuring volunteering is still predominantly undertaken by people based in high income countries** and needs to be balanced by tools and studies demonstrating the impact of volunteering in low- and middle-income countries. Hence the importance of broad definitions of volunteering that include the cultural nuances of volunteer practice.[28] **Secondly, the impact of external factors that could affect the results of any approach to measurement.** Most noticeably would be how COVID-19 impinges directly on the ability to survey (it might provide opportunities for more engagement or barriers to any engagement) and how it might unusually affect the results, especially if the volunteer opportunity ceases.

Conclusion

This paper has explored how volunteering is understood, the different approaches that can be taken to measuring impact and has referenced the benefits of even basic forms of measurement for organisations and volunteers. It also notes the investment required for long term systematic monitoring and review. As a result, **organisations are better off taking the time to decide what is of benefit or interest and what resources (including volunteer time) they are able to commit.**

Organisations must also consider how the generation and reporting of data will relate to organisational culture. It is important to avoid the potential disempowering of volunteers and primary actors in the process by open discussions, building ownership for shared benefits as well as the required outcomes.

Faced with the level of complexity of what constitutes volunteering, its various contexts, and potential outcomes, finding evidence for measurement and impact may appear a daunting task. Since volunteering plays an important catalytic role that may be invisible, this makes measurement and resourcing more difficult.[29] This is why being part of broader networks and associations is so important as an opportunity to share insights, support, capacity development and frameworks. Across the IAVE network the importance of volunteering leadership organisations for enhancing the enabling environment is illustrated by the IAVE coordination at national and regional level, as well as its work with corporates through its Global Corporate Volunteer Council.[30]

When looking to higher level objectives, such as international or national targets, it is plausible to shape objectives for volunteer interventions and explicitly link them to such targets. Direct attribution of a high-level target to a specific volunteer input remains challenging. However, **demonstrating that specific volunteer activities contribute directly to achieving a target is a powerful rallying cry.** A clear and transparent system of monitoring and reviewing volunteer achievements against such targets helps volunteers feel they really are making a difference and helps mobilise support and recognition for the overall work.

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Notes

[1] The Terms of Reference for the paper focuses on these three aspects and related issues of measurement and impact.

[2] It is thought that the term 'volunteer' was used from the 1750s to describe civilians mobilized in times of emergency for military service (Cnaan, Handy, & Wadsworth, 1996)

[3] In order to allow more precise measurement and particularly allow comparison across countries the ILO Manual for the Measurement of volunteer work even gave specific examples of what was within or outside the scope of their definition (International Labour Office, 2011).

[4] This is exemplified in SDG reporting which highlights the fact that unpaid care work is predominantly done by women. See https://www.sdgdata.gov.au/goals/gender-equality/5.4.1

[5] For example, some studies have showed volunteering had favourable effects on elements like depression, life satisfaction and wellbeing (Russell, Nyame-Mensah, de Wit, & Handy, 2019).

[6] It is important to note that communities may be people sharing a common geographic location but equally may be people of potentially diverse backgrounds coming together around a common interest for example related to their children's schooling or sport or leisure or nature. It is well recognised that most non-professional sport cannot exist without the myriad volunteers who act in roles like coaches and umpires for example. As Ramsey (2012) says "It is important to recognise that volunteering happens in space and place and that the community is simultaneously a location, a site of identification and a set of relationships". Ramsey, N. (2012). Understanding how volunteering creates stronger communities - A literature review. London, Institute for Volunteer Research.

[7] This was such an important turning point it meant Japan took the lead on processes and procedures internationally. This lead to a better response to emergencies but also explicitly included them championing the recognition, embrace and support of community led voluntary action in the Hyogo Framework for Action to Build Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters (United Nations, 2005).

[8] See Ellis Paine et al (2010). They draw upon Lyons and Wearing (2008) and Stebbins (1996). Plewes and Stuart (2007) also developed a model of three overlapping components drawn from the perspective of programme typologies: development model; learning model; and civil society strengthening model.

[9] They highlighted three perspectives on categorising and classifying volunteering and volunteers 1. The dominant non-profit paradigm with formal organisations, paid staff and volunteer managers, 2. A civil society paradigm emphasising small organisations service less and the other elements of mutual aid and self-help, participation and advocacy more, Finally 3. they highlighted serious leisure e.g. people volunteering in sports and culture Rochester, C., et al. (2010). *Volunteering and society in the 21st century*. New York, Palgrave Macmillan.

[10] "In 2006 FK Norway conducted a survey targeted at Norwegian participants only. The 2009 survey intended to find whether the trends found in 2006 still were to be found, and if we were able to find similar or other trends among participants from South. The 2009 survey is the basis for the 2011 study and this study, although some of the questions have been changed or replaced. Most of the questions have been kept in order to see changes over time...As we have no control group, and the FK participant has some clear characteristics, we are not able to say that all the trends are direct impact from the FK-exchange. We will therefore have to rely on the participants subjective opinions on our impact. We are, however, able to say something about trends in career development for FK

participants in general." FK Norway Participant Surveys available at https://www.norec.no/en/about-norec/organisation/reports/

[11] "Raising Peace is a networking initiative that aims to contribute to the construction of peace, the guarantee of human rights all over the world, and to highlight the role that International Voluntary Service (IVS) plays in this field. The campaign achieves this through advocating for human rights, non-formal education training and capacity building, empowerment of activists and organisations and through communication and visibility campaigns." https://ccivs.org/ccivs-in-action/raising-peace/

[12] "IVS for Climate Justice is a worldwide campaign taking place in over 100 countries, coordinated by CCIVS: it engages volunteers with local communities to work on grassroots projects that combine manual work and awareness raising actions. These address issues such as climate change, carbon offset, environmental sustainability, protection of ecosystems, water and soil management and conservation." *CCIVS IVS for Climate Justice Impact Assessment Report* 2019 p.4

[13] The UK Government International Citizen Service consortia, led by VSO, utilised surveys of volunteers at three different points of the volunteer journey: prior to commencing the assignment; just before the end of the assignment; and at a set point after the volunteer had ended the assignment. This was applied to all international and national volunteers on the programme. This approach provided the opportunity to track the volunteer in terms of their views, experiences and actions throughout their time as a volunteer and beyond. It also provided comparisons across cohorts of volunteers at different stages of the volunteer assignment both within a given period and over several years.

[14] For a current Longitudinal Study of Australian Volunteers see Fee et al (2019). Some organisations have also picked a theme of interest, e.g. post volunteering behaviour in civic engagement, and comparing volunteers against non-volunteers (Kelly and Case 2007).

[15] The term 'primary actors' is preferred to the term 'beneficiary' which implies passivity. It also suggests a relationship where the volunteer does not benefit.

[16] "An online survey was carried out **July 30th - October 7th 2007** among all active partners both primary and secondary in the North and in the South. It was designed so that Fredskorpset could obtain more information on partner's perception of Fredskorpset and how to improve Fredskorpset's services." Fredskorpset was the Norwegian name of FK Norway, which was subsequently changed to NOREC. The UK ICS programme also surveyed volunteers and partners. In both cases the volunteer and partner survey data is supplemented by activity reports from staff.

[17] This perhaps connects to what is considered an appropriate way to measure volunteering has changed over time, according to the priorities of the day (Allum 2016).

[18] In 2015, in his report to the United Nations General Assembly on integrating volunteering in the next decade   the UN Secretary-General proposed a plan of action to integrate volunteering into peace and development efforts over the following decade and beyond, with three strategic objectives: (a) bolstering ownership of the development agenda through enhanced civic engagement and widening the enabling environment for citizen action; (b) integrating volunteerism into national and global development strategies; and (c) measuring volunteerism to contribute to a holistic understanding of the engagement of people and of their well-being and to be part of the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals.

[19] From 2016 to 2019, 69 VNRs highlighted the role of volunteers in achieving national priorities. Countries have highlighted diverse volunteer contributions – from extending services to those often left behind, designing and testing innovations to local problems, to gathering data and providing feedback on SDGs progress (United Nations 2019). In 2018, 29 of 46 reporting countries (63%) documented the contributions of volunteers in their official Voluntary National Reviews on SDG national progress, increasing from 40% in 2017 and 9% in 2016.

[20] This is based on an earlier version developed by UNV (UNV 2011).

[21] This was explicitly recognised by the UN Secretary-General's Synthesis report on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda which highlights volunteering as a "powerful and cross-cutting means of implementation" for the SDGs. See also Devereux, P. Paull, M. Hawkes, M. Georgeou, N. (2017).

[22] This tends to focus on issues of social capital and the distinctiveness of a relational people to people model (Randel, German et al. 2004, Devereux 2010, Burns, Picken et al. 2015). The terminology used for the people and communities where volunteering takes place varies and can have unhelpful and even unacceptable connotations: beneficiary, primary actors, service users are three of the different ways of describing this relationship

[23] Keeping in mind the Salamon et al (2017) report highlighting 70% of volunteering is not through organisations

[24] It has been found that mobilizing volunteers to map and monitor environmental data is a cost-effective, largescale approach to managing risks that impact communities. Volunteering also provides people with opportunities to determine their own priorities and to move from being passive recipients to active agents of their own development. Voluntary action can be holistic and transformational, and can lead to more effective, inclusive, locally owned, approaches to climate mitigation and adaption (McKinley, Miller-Rushing et al. 2017, United Nations Volunteers 2017). A 2015 research review estimated that over 1.36 million people volunteered annually in the 388 biodiversity projects surveyed. The in-kind contribution of volunteerism to biodiversity citizen science was valued at over $667 million annually

[25] However, the voluntary contributions of everyday people to science and knowledge is much older and might be regarded as a good example of the more recent volunteer classification of serious leisure.

[26] See Allum (2019) which in a review of the NOREC work and its impact, concludes that to achieve outcomes requires a specific focus in programme design throughout the volunteer process.

[27] The CCIVS impact study indicates the importance of allocating resources to such research – it was funded by the EU Commission – and the potential of working with a well-structured model enabling the analysis to be underpinned by statistical approaches. This has the benefit of enabling learning but also demonstrating the impact of the work to external stakeholders.

[28] As highlighted increasingly for example by Perold, Mati, Butcher and Einholf and others (Butcher & Einolf, 2016; Patel, Perold, Mohamed, & Carapinha, 2007; Perold & Graham, 2016). Civil Society index reporting provided another way to capture this breadth of volunteering for example in its report on Civil society volunteering patterns in Africa (CIVICUS, 2011).

[29] Being able to measure is nevertheless important when there is the transfer of state responsibilities to volunteers but the resources necessary to deliver are not transferred. See the work of Volunteering Australia on this in 2017 to concretely measure the value of the volunteer support services they provided as part of their efforts to secure ongoing government support https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Value-of-Volunteering-Support-Services.pdf

[30] Some peak or member organisations, such as networks, may address issues of collective measurement though this needs to be carefully managed to address the challenges and opportunities of diverse interests and practices of members (Allum and Onuki 2019). There has also been a concerted focus – through the Volunteer Groups Alliance (VGA) – to bring together a diversity of volunteer involving organisations to demonstrate and advocate for the significant contribution of volunteering to Agenda 2030. See https://www.iave.org/volunteer-centers/

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 Authors

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Dr. Cliff Allum is an Associate Fellow at the Third Sector Research Centre, University of Birmingham, UK. He is a researcher and writer focusing mainly on the area of volunteering. Prior to this he had been involved in both the UK and international voluntary sector including roles as CEO of Skillshare International and President of the International Forum for Volunteering in Development. He has been a volunteer in grass roots football coaching and is currently involved in tennis coaching and tennis tournaments. Cliff is also National Treasurer and Trustee of the WEA, the largest voluntary sector provider of Adult Education in the UK. He lives in Birmingham, UK.

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About the Sub-theme

Measurement and Impact – Providing the Evidence that Volunteering is Good for Society and Good for You

It has always been important for volunteers to know that their involvement has made a difference, volunteering can also be of great benefit to the individual volunteer. Increasingly the focus is on providing the evidence to record, measure and showcase the impact of volunteering. As an example, the United Nations, in taking forward the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 agenda, is seeking to scale up the measurement of impact to evidence how volunteers are making a positive difference to solving the world's problems. Everyone understands that impact measurement is important but not that easy to do. Learning from experience is helpful, organizations and institutions need to share information on what they are measuring and how they are doing it.

VOLUNTEERING TOGETHER TO ENABLE
CHANGE AND CREATE A BETTER WORLD