



**SOUTHERN AFRICA CONFERENCE ON  
VOLUNTEER ACTION  
for DEVELOPMENT**  
17-19 October 2011 Johannesburg

tel: +27 (0)11 486 0245 fax: +27 (0)11 486 0275  
23 Marico Road Emmarentia  
P O Box 85535 Emmarentia 2029  
email: [conference@vosesa.org.za](mailto:conference@vosesa.org.za)  
website: <http://www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference>

**17-19  
OCTOBER  
2011**

**Johannesburg, South Africa  
FNB Conference and Learning Centre**

## Papers prepared and sourced for the Southern Africa Conference on Volunteer Action for Development, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg

### Abstracts

These papers have been prepared and sourced to inform conference discussion. They may be freely quoted, but must be fully acknowledged. Please let us know where you are quoting these papers so that we can track their usage. VOSESA welcomes comments, corrections and additional information as we work towards building the knowledge base on volunteering and civic service in the Southern Africa region.



# **1 Civil Society Volunteering Patterns in Africa: An analysis of the CIVICUS Civil Society Index 2008-2011 findings on volunteerism**

By CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation

The CIVICUS Civil Society Index (CSI) is a civil society self-assessment and action research project conducted by civil society organisations (CSOs) on a national level in partnership with global civil society network CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation. The aim of the project is to assess the state of civil society in a particular country in five dimensions – civic engagement, level of organisations, practice of values, perception of impact and external environment.

This paper observes two dimensions (civic engagement and level of organisation) to report on volunteerism in civil society in several African countries, taken into account direct and indirect, organised and non-organised volunteering actions and the opportunities and challenges for expanding volunteerism on the African continent. The quantitative and qualitative analysis is based on data gathered in eight African countries in the last phase of CSI, held from 2008 to 2011: Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Morocco, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo and Zambia. As two different methodologies were applied in four countries each, it uses quantitative data to profile four countries in particular (Ghana, Liberia, Morocco, Togo and Zambia), while also drawing where possible from the reports of four other countries (Guinea, Rwanda, Senegal and Tanzania).

The paper argues that although these countries have different socio-political and cultural backgrounds, most of them are characterised by a very high level of volunteer activity (up to 80%), and intensive involvement in multiple volunteering. Country profile maps were made to show the make-up of volunteering in CSOs, with the majority of CSO volunteering taking place in religious organisations. The paper also observes a common difference among volunteers who work for social organisations and political organisations: political volunteerism is less common than social volunteerism, and political volunteers are generally wealthier and older, with volunteerism for them being either occasional or very intensive.

Meanwhile, analysis of CSOs shows that although CSOs in Africa are deeply dependent on volunteer engagement, the lack of required skills or education is a barrier against volunteers playing a full role within organisations. That leads to recommendations to provide training and give practical experience to volunteers to improve their capacity, as well as to provide assistance to CSOs working with volunteers.

## **2 Declaration: Global Volunteering Conference (Budapest, Hungary), 15-17 September 2011**

### **Tenth Anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers**

#### ***Volunteering for a Sustainable Future***

#### **Organised by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme**

The Declaration states that:

“Volunteering is universal, inclusive, and embraces free will, solidarity, dignity and trust. We value, recognize and encourage the contribution of volunteering to the well-being of people, their communities and our planet. We celebrate volunteering as an essential expression of common humanity.

Volunteers bring sustainable development, poverty reduction, debt relief, HIV/AIDS awareness, and environmental campaigns to communities. They play an important role in disasters and crises, help build livelihoods, strengthen social cohesion, and contribute to human development

The world has changed since the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000. Much has been achieved through the efforts of volunteers. In the run-up to Rio+20 the post MDG sustainable development agenda must put volunteering at the centre.

For the full potential of volunteering to be realized, volunteers must be recognized, protected and supported by government, civil society, academia, the private sector, and inter-governmental entities.”

### **3 Engaging Universities in the Regional Integration Project in Southern Africa**

Discussion paper by Piyushi Kotecha (SARUA) and VOESASA

Regional integration has historically been viewed as a pathway to development and poverty reduction in Africa. As in other parts of the world, it is viewed as a means to achieve sustained economic growth and socio-economic development, and overcome structural challenges such as political fragmentation, small market size and the landlocked nature of some member states. Within southern Africa, the 15 member states that comprise the Southern African Development Community (SADC) share geographical, historical, cultural and often linguistic ties but differ vastly in size and their levels of socio-economic development. They also face challenges of persistent poverty, failing education systems and health crises that will require ingenuity, resourcefulness and strong leadership to overcome.

The aim of this paper is to explore the potential for engaging universities in promoting greater regional integration in the southern African region, with the intention of prompting further conversation and debate around the role of universities in supporting regional initiatives. The paper considers the regional context and provides an overview of the regional integration project in Africa generally and in the southern Africa region more specifically, noting some of the challenges faced in the process. The paper also considers the role of universities in society, both in terms of the external pressures in today's changing world that are pushing them to actively engage with their contexts, and the internal debates relating to community engagement as a function of universities. Three broad areas in which universities can contribute to strengthening and furthering southern African regional integration and fostering a regional identity are proposed. The paper concludes by posing questions for further consideration.

#### **4 How can companies foster volunteer action for development in the SADC region?**

Discussion paper by Sabine Strassburg and VOESASA

This paper aims to map out the approaches and issues associated with corporate support for volunteer action in the SADC region. It discusses what companies do to foster volunteering spirit, and thus briefly addresses the shape of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the region. To make a case for corporate support for volunteering, benefits and barriers to involvement are sketched. Based on case studies from the SADC region, different models and manifestations of corporate support for volunteer action are conceptualised; these range from donations to employee volunteering programmes and corporate partnerships. The paper draws conclusions on how to enhance further development, and identifies key issues for discussion and further research. Note: The conference discussion will be captured, adding shared understanding and identifying both opportunities and threats. As a result a position paper could be produced that will inform strategy and enable corporations and businesses to take advantage of volunteering to meet the needs of their business, their employees, and their communities.

## **5 How can volunteering and service promote the social and economic participation of youth in the SADC region?**

Discussion paper by Aislinn Delaney and VOESASA

The African Youth Charter upholds the right of every young person to participate in all spheres of society, but socio-economic challenges such as poverty, youth unemployment, the HIV epidemic and education systems that do not adequately equip them to take part in the knowledge-based economy, limit young people's opportunities for participating in mainstream society.

In the face of these challenges, finding ways to foster opportunities for youth participation becomes ever more important. Youth volunteering and service programmes provides one way in which young people can be engaged and drawn into society. Youth volunteering and service spans a broad range of activities in the social, cultural, political and economic spheres that enable young people to assist others and contribute to the development of communities and countries, while also developing their own skills, abilities and experience so that they can develop their potential.

Where youth volunteering and service programmes and activities are well-managed and draw on young people's talents in a meaningful way, they can foster increased participation, civic engagement and active citizenship. The paper explores ways in which youth volunteering and service promotes social, political and economic participation amongst youth, as well as some aspects of personal development that support further participation and engagement. The paper also includes recommendations for ways in which participation through volunteering and service can be promoted and supported.

## **6 International Volunteers and the Development of Host Organisations in Africa: Lessons from Tanzania and Mozambique**

By Lauren A Graham, Eddy Mazembo Mavungu and Helene Perold with  
Karena Cronin, Learnmore Muchemwa and Benjamin J Lough

The phenomenon of international voluntary service (IVS) in which people (usually from Northern countries) volunteer their services in a country other than their own (usually in the developing world) is one that is growing, resulting in growing numbers of volunteers being hosted in Southern African countries. The motivations for this phenomenon are often shaped around the desire to contribute to development. And yet we know relatively little about the extent to which IVS does contribute to host organisations and communities. In particular, the voice of the host communities themselves has tended not to feature strongly in research on IVS. This article seeks to contribute to that gap. It assesses the contribution of international volunteers to the development of host organisations, from the perspective of the host organisations and the communities that they serve. It draws on case studies conducted in Tanzania and Mozambique and interrogates expectations of what international volunteers can offer, and the realities of host organisations experiences in terms of international volunteers' contributions to social capital development and the ability of organisations to meet their objectives development. It goes on to discuss some of the barriers that host organisations struggled with in the host-volunteer relationship and makes recommendations for how the potential of IVS can be better realised. What emerges most clearly in this research is that the localised relationships between volunteers and host organisations and thus the development potential of the relationship are profoundly shaped by international realities, histories and discourses of international aid and trade and these issues need to be acknowledged by all stakeholders if we are to ensure that the potential of IVS is realised.

## **7 Reducing the Burden of HIV and AIDS Care on Women and Girls in the SADC Region: Insights from the VSO-RAISA programme**

Discussion paper by Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO), Regional AIDS Initiative of Southern Africa (RAISA) and VOSESA

With 1.8 million out of 2.6 million HIV infections worldwide (UNAIDS 2010), sub-Saharan Africa remains the epicentre of the global AIDS epidemic. In many SADC countries, the high morbidity and mortality from HIV and AIDS place significant demands on already under-resourced health services. The effectiveness of formal health systems is compromised by resource constraints, the brain drain, and high absenteeism and death rates among health personnel due to HIV and AIDS.

Community and home-based care (C&HBC) programmes are popular in Southern Africa and renowned for their ability to provide a continuum of care for the chronically ill in their homes in a relatively cost effective, sustainable and comprehensive manner that complements institutional care. The C&HBC model enhances the capacity of families/communities to offer affordable quality care for the sick. It is driven by community volunteers, most of whom are women and girls, in dire need of help. Up to 80 per cent of volunteer care providers in C&HBC programmes are women (VSO-RAISA & WHO 2009). Their working conditions are unregulated, legal frameworks to protect their rights are non-existent/weak, and organisations that use volunteers neglect their responsibilities/obligations towards them. The volunteers are unrecognised, overwhelmed by work, psychologically burdened by others' problems and inadequately supported.

Drawing on the decade-long experience of the Voluntary Services Overseas Regional AIDS Initiative for Southern Africa (VSO-RAISA) and its partners in Southern Africa, this paper argues that scaling up HIV and AIDS services in C&HBC programmes requires fundamental changes on many levels. Recognising the rights of care providers, and providing a supportive environment for them to provide quality care, is a fundamental entry point to addressing this challenge. The responsibility for making these fundamental policy changes rests with those who hold power and bear the duty to respect, protect, promote and fulfill the rights of care providers – national governments, donors, civil society and other key players involved in the fight against HIV and AIDS. It is now time to recognise the contributions of community volunteers in the fight against HIV and AIDS, and to support and empower them to understand their rights and to demand them.

By 2012, VSO-RAISA and partners hope to successfully influence the adoption of national care work policies in three of the seven programme countries - Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe.



## **8 Strengthening the Policy Environment for Volunteering for Peace and Development in Southern Africa**

Discussion paper prepared by United Nations Volunteers (UNV)  
Programme

As countries in Southern Africa examine peace and development challenges in pursuit of sustainable social, economic, and environmental national goals, the MDGs and beyond 2015, volunteerism is being increasingly recognised as an important and under-recognised asset. For governments to fulfill their responsibilities in enhancing local governance, access to services, and capacity development, volunteers in communities and through civil society can be important partners in achieving development and enhancing well-being.

This paper proposes that for volunteerism to reach its full potential in contributing to peace and development, there must be a supportive and an enabling environment for volunteering. The components of such an enabling environment are a strong government and civil society partnership to ensure shared appreciation of volunteerism; supportive public leadership, policies and legislation; adoption of a diversity of approaches to facilitate inclusive volunteerism; and sustainable funding.

This paper discusses the process of ensuring an enabling policy environment for volunteering and service in the context of Sub Sahara Africa. Based on the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) Research and the Guidance Notes, lessons for identifying, drafting, adopting and implementing appropriate policies and laws are drawn from SADC and other national initiatives. The second part focuses specifically on new trends in youth volunteer and civic service corps, and the policy and programming lessons learned from national and regional examples.

At the end, suggested questions are to challenge participants to add their contributions to the discussion.

## **9 Synopsis of Recommendations: IYV+10 regional consultations (Quito, Ankara, Manila and Dakar) March-June 2011**

As part of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme convened five regional consultation meetings with stakeholders in Latin America; Europe, the CIS and Arab Region; Asia-Pacific and Caribbean; Francophone Africa; and Anglophone Africa between March and June 2011.

There were more than 300 attendees, representing 97 countries and 144 organisations – including 85 civil society organisations and 48 governments. Delegates were asked to contribute their ideas and opinions on several volunteering-related topics, which were later compiled into a series of recommendations presented to stakeholders.

This document represents a synopsis of the 125 recommendations that were gathered at these meetings.

## **10 Volunteering and Civic Service in the SADC Region: An overview**

Background paper by Karena Cronin, Lauren A Graham, Learnmore Muchemwa, Helene Perold and John Mark Mang'ana

This paper was written to guide the Strategy Session discussion convened by UNV and VOESASA on 29-30 November 2010 to plan the Southern African Conference on Volunteer Action for Development to be held during the International Year of the Volunteer + 10 (2011). The paper represents a first attempt at an overview of different forms of volunteering in the SADC region and how they relate to regional development priorities.

In an effort to address the persistent socio-economic challenges in Southern Africa, the SADC member states adopted an indicative strategic framework (RISDP) outlining priorities for the promotion of regional development and the attainment of the MDGs. The framework implicitly identifies participatory development as one ingredient necessary for regional development. Despite this, with a few exceptions, volunteering is generally not recognised or supported as a tool for development and peace among the SADC member states. Most of the countries lack the policy and infrastructure required to support and recognise volunteering as an asset and a form of development capital. As a result, the region is unable to harness the potential of civic engagement in its efforts to attain the MDGs.

This paper explores various forms of volunteering present in the region. It examines the potential of youth volunteering to make an impact on social integration in communities and raises the question of whether it can increase the levels of skills and employability of the youth. While community-based volunteering is believed to be the most prevalent form of volunteering in the region, the paper shows that it is not typically recognised as having particular value and is often taken for granted. International volunteering is more formalised than the other forms of volunteering, and involves young people aged between 18 and 25 as well as professionals who are placed in the region by international sending organisations. If international volunteering is to contribute significantly to regional development, the need for reciprocity and mutual learning between international volunteers and host organisations is a pre-requisite.

Corporate and employee volunteering is on the increase, but more research is needed to understand its scope and impact. The paper presents examples of companies that have not only deviated from the traditional practice of forking out funds as a gesture of corporate responsibility, but are using different models to encourage employee volunteering. In the higher education sector, community engagement is still an under-developed sphere of activity across the region, but has the potential to foster student leadership.

## **11 Volunteering, Civic Agency and Citizenship: Some preliminary considerations**

Concept paper by Ebenezer Obadare

These reflections have been provoked by the global resurgence of interest in volunteerism as a vehicle for civic renewal and societal revitalisation. This interest, it is claimed, is inflamed partly by a number of assumptions about volunteerism, and its relation to civil society, citizenship, development, and social integration. I take issue with these assumptions, while continuing to defend the inherent goodness of volunteerism, broadly understood (both in its formal and informal modes) as unmonetised service in the cause of the social. The basic aim is to trouble volunteerism with a view to interjecting a much needed clarity about its possibilities and limitations. For proper perspective, these reflections are set in a global context, although the provocations which I put forward are orientated at African issues and problems. First, the paper engages with the state, which, in a growing number of cases, has championed the cause of volunteerism. While noting that there is nothing inherently wrong with this, the paper recognises the danger of a pattern in which 'public' 'service' provision and delivery are constructed as a problem of inadequate volunteering, and thereby downloaded on the fragile shoulders of an already beleaguered civil society. As a corrective, the paper proposes a more searching interrogation of the state against the background of the transformations wrought by a rapidly changing global economic order. Moreover, because the call to volunteerism is often framed in a way that might lead one to imagine that there is no friction between state and civil society, it suggests an insinuation of social conflict into the discourse of volunteerism, to counter the statist narrative which tends to place the burden of societal regeneration on civil society. Furthermore, because volunteerism is a civic act, one that, ideally, is driven by a volunteer's sense of 'belonging' within a particular civic community, the paper urges an approach to volunteerism as an act of social citizenship that is best 'performed' when the state has paid its dues to society. It is argued that this dialogic understanding of volunteering as something socially situated is underemphasised in the volunteerism literature. Finally, the paper addresses youth angst and speculates on the meaning of volunteerism to a social demographic suffering profound alienation. It considers transformations in the nature of volunteerism, particularly what appears like an incipient professionalisation, as more and more young people are inclined to see volunteerism as a coping strategy.

## **12 Volunteer Management Needs Assessment Among South African Civil Society Organisations: Final research report**

By VSO South Africa and RAISA

Volunteering constitutes an important contribution to addressing key development challenges in South Africa. However, there has been little research on its nature, scope and challenges. It is against this background that VOESASA has partnered with Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) to conduct research on volunteer management capacity needs of organisations. The methodology of the study was both quantitative and qualitative in nature. 107 organisations participated in an online survey, followed by in-depth interviews with eight organisations to capture a deeper understanding of survey trends.

Findings from this study shed light on volunteer management practices and challenges. The majority of organisations surveyed have connections with local communities and local volunteers are the most common. International volunteers originate primarily from Europe and North America and very few come from SADC or any other African country. Female volunteers are more common. With regard to age, volunteering seems to be an activity in which children, adolescents and older people are less involved compared to the 18-59 age cohort. More than half of organisations surveyed do not have a programme to develop volunteering. This means that volunteering is not systematically managed, but rather approached on an ad-hoc basis. These volunteer management practices emerged as the most common: the recognition of volunteers and their contributions, making use of volunteer task descriptions, orientation and training sessions, and supervision and feedback sessions. Half of the organisations that found these volunteer management practices applicable acknowledged that they were well implemented. However, dissatisfaction with volunteer management appeared to be more common than satisfaction, with many respondents reporting that their volunteer management practices need improvement.

The prevalence of non-contracted volunteers, the lack of both cash and non-cash support and the lack of provision of volunteer learning or written materials on the nature and expectations of the volunteering experience signals the informality of volunteering in the country. Common challenges related to volunteer management include the lack of national policy guidelines on volunteering, problems of both human and financial resources, and competition for volunteers amongst organisations. In order to overcome some of the challenges identified, the study recommends that well-resourced civil society organisations should partner with the government in order to invest in the development of an infrastructure suitable for the development of clear national policy guidelines for volunteer management. The partnership must also undertake capacity building of grassroots civil society organizations on volunteer management practices.

### **13 Youth Participation in Service and Volunteering: Exploring economic benefit in the Southern Africa context – A youth perspective**

By Kenneth Dickhudt and VOSESA

The African continent, especially the Southern Africa region, has experienced dynamic GDP growth in the past decade. Concurrently, the continent has become the world's most densely youth populated region. While demographic dividend theory would suggest that this new generation of potential labour and leadership should see the continent poised to become a world leader, youth marginalisation continues to act as a substantial challenge toward sustainable socio-economic development. Building upon additional work related to youth volunteering and service as a tool for youth social and political participation, this study makes an additional contribution to conversation by focusing on the economic incentives and rewards related to youth volunteering. Importantly, the study explores the benefits to both individual volunteers and society, where volunteer-enabling policy is present, as well as highlighting collective action theory that promotes volunteering in society. Using qualitative research methods, the study finds that youth volunteering enhances the opportunities for youth to increase their cultural and social capital. Further, the research also finds that individuals' likeliness to volunteer is correlated to the amount of volunteering from others in the community. Importantly, the research finds that youth volunteering can be a vital tool for increasing social cohesion in the SADC region. Focusing on regional ("south-south") volunteering, this research is unique in that it focuses on volunteers who also exist as citizens in the recipient communities, and thus acting as a vehicle toward promoting "African solutions for African problems".