



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

**Southern Africa Conference on Volunteer Action for Development**  
**CONFERENCE REPORT** July 2012



**UN**  
**Volunteers**

inspiration in action



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First and foremost, thank you to the United Nations Volunteers Programme for planting the seed for this event by calling for regional events to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the International Year of the Volunteer (IYV+10). As the primary host and funder of the conference, UNV provided leadership and direction on volunteer action for development in the southern Africa region and helped to build momentum needed for this discussion among government, civil society and private sector stakeholders in the region.

A sincere thanks to the eleven additional conference sponsors that enabled the conference to cast a wide net and interrogate the role of different forms of volunteering in achieving key regional development goals. The conference sponsors include Canada World Youth (CWY), the European Commission's Youth in Action Programme, the First Rand Volunteers Programme, FK Norway, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the South African National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), the New loveLife Trust, the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA), the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA), the Talloires Network and VSO-RAISA.

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## Executive summary

The **United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme**, with the support of its implementing partner **Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa (VOSESA)**, hosted the first ever Southern Africa Conference on Volunteer Action for Development from October 17-19 October 2011 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The conference was convened to raise the profile of volunteer action as a tool for development and regional integration in southern Africa and contributed to marking the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the International Year of the Volunteer (IYV+10).

In addition to the UNV Programme, the generous support of **11 conference sponsors** helped to make the conference possible and ensured multi-stakeholder engagement from the region – Canada World Youth (CWY), the European Commission’s Youth in Action Programme, the First Rand Volunteers Programme, FK Norway, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the South African National Youth Development Agency (NYDA), the New loveLife Trust, the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA), the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA), the Talloires Network and VSO-RAISA.

The **178 participants hailed from 21 countries**, including 13 of the 15 southern African countries, and represented non-governmental and community-based organisations (45%), government (national and regional) and inter-governmental organisations (18%), the private sector (14%), higher education institutions (11%), youth (10%) and trusts and foundations (2%).

**Notable speakers** included Mr Pravin Gordhan, Minister of Finance, South Africa, Emiliana Tembo (Director, Gender and Social Affairs, COMESA), UNV Deputy Executive Coordinator Naheed Haque, Francis Chuks Njoaguani (Director, ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre), Sizwe Nxasana (CEO, FirstRand Ltd), Bhekinkosi Moyo (Programme Director, Trust Africa), Ruth Cangela (Director, Department of Youth Affairs, HoD Ministry of Youth and Sport, Mozambique), Rethabile Mosisili (Deputy Principal Secretary, Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports and Recreation, Lesotho), and the Honorable E Kayembe, MP, Malawi.

The conference highlighted the **potential of volunteer action to foster community-centred sustainable development and regional integration** in southern Africa. In particular, the conference explored the contributions of the following five different forms of volunteer action in addressing the below three development priorities in the region:

Forms of volunteer action	Three key development priorities in the region
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Community-based volunteering;</li> <li>2. Youth voluntary service;</li> <li>3. Corporate (or employee) volunteering;</li> <li>4. Higher education and civic engagement; and</li> <li>5. International (including regional) volunteering</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fighting the HIV and AIDS epidemic;</li> <li>2. Promoting youth social and economic participation; and</li> <li>3. Facilitating social cohesion within and between southern African countries.</li> </ol>

**To access the conference programme, view conference presentations and read short descriptions of each session, visit: [www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/programme.php](http://www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/programme.php).**

For the purposes of the conference, the term ‘**volunteer action**’ was used to refer to **both civic service and volunteering** and participants noted that volunteer action can differ in terms of its formality, structure, aims and duration. While there was no consensus on the definition, volunteer action was generally seen as 1.) undertaken for the common good of society and associated with



*ubuntu*, 2.) done through free will and 3.) motivated by a sense of ‘belonging’ to a particular community. Departing from traditional definitions of volunteering, participants pointed out that in the context of poverty and underdevelopment in southern Africa, volunteers often need financial or material support for the costs they incur when choosing to volunteer.

Many participants drew attention to the **unique cultural practice of *ubuntu*** in the region (also referred to as *umunthu*, *botho*, *obuntu* and *unhu*), which underpins volunteer action in communities across the region. A unifying and deeply embedded way of life in the region, participants paid tribute to volunteers who each day help others in their communities to persevere in the face of poverty, inequality, ill-health and lack of opportunity, but who often go unrecognised.

Although *ubuntu* and the spirit of volunteer action are still very much alive in the region, participants also emphasised the need to **“reinvigorate” its practice for development and social cohesion** in a contemporary regional environment. While volunteer action is not a replacement for the responsibilities of government or the private sector, participants affirmed the need to strengthen support for volunteer action and to channel it more effectively and purposely towards achieving critical regional development objectives so as to improve the lives of citizens in southern Africa. In particular, participants discussed the role of volunteer action in ushering in a **new development paradigm** that is driven by community members and which draws heavily on community assets and knowledge.

A total of **14 research papers** and document on volunteer action in southern Africa were produced for the conference to inform discussion about the role and contributions of volunteer action to **community-centred sustainable development and regional integration**. These can be accessed at: [www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/conference\\_papers.php](http://www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/conference_papers.php).

The **Conference Declaration**, outlining key recommendations from the conference can be accessed here: [www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/Conference\\_Declaration.php](http://www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/Conference_Declaration.php).

## The role of volunteer action in promoting youth social and economic participation

The South African Minister of Finance, Pravin Gordhan, highlighted the **major issue of youth unemployment in the region**, which stands at 40% in South Africa and is also high in other SADC countries, although country-level data is limited.<sup>1</sup> Youth participants from six countries in SADC echoed the need to address issues of youth unemployment at the conference opening, but also highlighted other challenges that prevent youth from becoming fully integrated members of social and economic life in the region – poverty in their communities, difficulty in accessing education, insufficient mobility in the region, a lack of information about policies that affect their lives, inadequate access to funding to support youth initiatives, and low levels of participation of youth in the policy process.<sup>2</sup>

Youth participants fuelled a debate about the role of volunteer action in promoting youth social and economic participation in a context of high unemployment. Although many participants were uncomfortable with positioning volunteer action as the answer to high youth unemployment in the

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<sup>1</sup>Delaney, Aislinn and VOSESA. 2011. *How can volunteering and service promote the social and economic participation of youth in the SADC region?*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg: VOSESA.

<sup>2</sup>For more information see the youth declaration at [www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/presentations/111021%20Youth%20statement.pdf](http://www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/presentations/111021%20Youth%20statement.pdf).



region, there was widespread agreement that volunteer action can help enhance **youth employability and social participation**.

Representatives from **higher education institutions, the private sector, government, civil society and youth** themselves attested to the role of volunteer action, including National Youth Service programmes, in helping young people develop their leadership capabilities, build skills critical for the workplace in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, gain a sense of belonging, and access new social networks and opportunities. Some participants emphasised that while the provision of stipends is sometimes necessary, these can undermine the spirit of volunteer action and confuse volunteering with employment, although this is not always the case.

Overall, participants recognised how **volunteering can mainstream young people into society** by helping young people build confidence, cultivate active citizenship, learn about different cultures, access new networks and opportunities, explore different career paths and acquire skills.

## The role of volunteer action in fighting the HIV and AIDS epidemic

The **far-reaching and negative impact of HIV and AIDS** on families, communities and economies in southern Africa was discussed in various conference sessions. While there have been some gains with respect to reductions in the number of infection rates compared to 2001 and improved access to anti-retroviral drugs, sub-Saharan Africa still has the highest HIV and AIDS prevalence rates in the world.<sup>3</sup> In her keynote address, Emiliana Tembo (Director, Gender and Social Affairs, COMESA) emphasised that, *"HIV and AIDS ...touches the very social and economic fabric of our nations and many of our people."*

Participants shared examples of how volunteering has been leveraged to help the prevention and treatment of HIV and AIDS and also highlighted that home-based care for people with HIV and AIDS is disproportionately performed by women and girls in communities. **The contributions of these community volunteers largely goes unrecognised**, which is in part due to the fact that volunteering is often taken for granted as a way of life in southern Africa. Gender stereotypes of women and girls are 'carers' also contributes to community volunteers being taken for granted. The involvement of international volunteers from developed countries in southern Africa also shapes dynamics at the local level where community volunteers are sometimes less valued and supported than international volunteers.

Numerous participants recommended **strategies for recognising and supporting community volunteers in the region to provide home-based care** and highlighted the importance of private sector as well as civil society and government involvement in this sphere of volunteer action. For example, definitions of volunteering crafted in developed countries need to be adapted to reflect the particular manifestations of volunteering in southern Africa and assess their impact. The development and adoption of home-based care guidelines and policy at the national level, guided by the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, is also necessary for raising the status of community volunteers. Other recommended strategies for alleviating the burden of care on women and girls highlighted at the conference included:

- Capacity building and training for community volunteers;
- Psycho-social support to community volunteers;

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<sup>3</sup>Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO), Regional AIDS Initiative of Southern Africa (RAISA) and VOSESA. 2011. *Reducing the Burden of HIV and AIDS Care on Women and Girls in the SADC Region: Insights from the VSO-RAISA programme*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg: VOSESA.



- Mobilising more men into home-based care;
- Stipends for community volunteers;
- Community mobilisation and community-driven development; and
- International and regional youth volunteer exchange programmes.

## The role of volunteer action in promoting regional integration

*“The ‘sense of being part of a common political space and of holding common political values in southern Africa ... is shared more by governments, and in particular heads of state and government ... than by the average person’ (Kornegay 2006).* This sentiment was shared by many conference participants who indicated that the **concept of regional integration lacks tangible meaning in the day to day lives of ordinary people in the region.** Piyushi Kotecha (CEO, Southern African Universities Regional Association -SARUA) emphasised that regional integration has typically been defined in economic and political terms, but needs to be redefined in social terms among ordinary individuals at the grassroots level.

**Volunteer exchange programmes were hailed as a potential mechanism for fostering regional identity,** building bridges across borders, facilitating regional knowledge building and promoting integration. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Volunteer Programme was launched recently to *“consolidate peace, recovery, national reconciliation and rehabilitation in crisis-affected communities”* and serves as an encouraging example of how national governments can work together to support volunteering for peace throughout a region.

A **ground-breaking study on youth volunteer exchange programmes** in southern and eastern Africa was presented at the conference and demonstrated the potential for volunteer exchange to foster regional integration in a more social sense. A key finding from the study is that participants reported ‘friendships across borders’ as the greatest impact of the programme. Furthermore, participants talked about how the programme helped them to develop deep bonds of trust with someone from a different country in the region, to learn about development in the region, and to gain a better understanding and respect for different cultures.

The conference also highlighted **that higher education institutions are uniquely positioned to promote regional integration in southern Africa,** given their mandate to promote community engagement alongside teaching and research. By mainstreaming a commitment to community engagement, higher education institutions can provide solutions to major development challenges in the region while also cultivating civic leaders with a regional consciousness. Increasingly young people at universities are providing leadership on community engagement and are looking for opportunities to engage with other like-minded students in the region.

Finally, the conference shed light on the ways in which corporate employee volunteering programmes help to build bridges, particularly across socio-economic divides within countries in the region.

## Recommendations towards an enabling environment for volunteer action in southern Africa

Participants agreed that there is still a great deal of work to be done to **foster an enabling environment for volunteer action** development and regional integration in southern Africa.



The following **six recommendations** emerged strongly conference discussions and require attention, if volunteer action is to be strengthened in southern Africa.

1. **Develop** policies, legislation and structures that support and promote volunteer action in the region;
2. **Strengthen** opportunities for youth volunteer action in southern Africa, particularly youth volunteer exchange opportunities;
3. **Support** research on the impact and contribution of volunteer action to regional development and integration in southern Africa;
4. **Build** volunteer management and organisational capacity among civil society organisations in the region; and ,
5. **Promote** networking and knowledge-building in the sector in the region; and
6. **Identify** opportunities for multi-stakeholder partnerships for volunteering and development.

Many participants pointed out that for volunteer action to thrive, civil society must be able to operate freely. This is particularly important in southern Africa where some governments have restricted or are taking steps to restrict civic freedoms. At the same time, other governments in the region have developed and adopted legislation that recognises volunteer action as a critical development resource that deserves the support of government.

Participants called on governments in the region, as well as the SADC Secretariat, to demonstrate leadership on youth volunteer action and to invest in regional volunteer exchange programmes that provide young people in the region with opportunities to learn about the region and make meaningful contributions to its development. Participants also called for greater support for youth leadership development in service programmes, including National Youth Service programmes, and for greater mechanisms to recognise young people for their efforts to promote development in the region.

To secure greater support from government and other stakeholders, there is a pressing need to demonstrate the developmental impact of volunteer action. Research on volunteer action in the region was thus prioritised as a key area that requires greater investment going forward. Some examples of research suggested by participants include:

- a feasibility study on creating a multi-stakeholder supported youth volunteer exchange programme in southern Africa;
- research on the relationships between youth volunteer action and employability;
- measuring the impact of volunteer action on community-centred sustainable development;
- research on the role of volunteer action in fostering peace and social cohesion within and between SADC countries;
- a study that looks at policies and laws that influence volunteer action at the national and regional levels; and
- further research into corporate support for volunteer action as well as higher education community engagement.

Participants also highlighted the need to build the capacity of civil society organisations in the region through different forms of volunteering (e.g. employee and international volunteering). However, to achieve this, mutually respectful and mutually beneficial partnerships need to be struck between companies and the civil society organisations they support, as well as between volunteer-sending organisations and host organisations. Participants also cited the need compile and develop indigenous approaches and materials for volunteer programme development and management, that are tailored to the different manifestations of volunteering in the region.





The final two recommendations from participants highlighted the need for more structures to facilitate knowledge-building and networking in the field and emphasised the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement for furthering volunteer action through policy and practice.

The **Conference Declaration**, adopted by participants at the closing session, summarises the key recommendations that emerged from the conference and underscores that government, business, and civil society all have a significant role to play in strengthening volunteer action in the region. The conference declaration can be accessed at: [www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/Conference\\_Declaration.php](http://www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/Conference_Declaration.php).

## Conclusion

The conference presented a **unique opportunity for like-minded individuals** from the region to engage on issues of volunteer action in the region. Throughout the conference, and in the conference evaluations, participants repeatedly emphasised their interest in future opportunities to learn and exchange with others in the field. Many participants stressed that there is a need for an organisation to take leadership in fostering mutual exchange and networking in the region.

To date, **many participants have already taken steps to build on the conference discussions** and are seeking to strengthen volunteer action, policy and practice in their countries. Thanks to the advocacy efforts of United Nations Volunteers, the Conference Declaration was referenced at the UN General Assembly convened on 5 December 2011 to celebrate International Volunteer Day and the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the International Year of volunteers (IYV+10). VOSESA is aiming to pursue further research into the relationship between volunteer action, peace and social cohesion and is supporting the convening of the African Conference on Volunteer Action for Peace and Development, which will be held from 2-4 July 2012 in Nairobi, Kenya. Other participants have also reported interesting developments in their companies, universities, government departments and NGOs.

**The Conference Steering Committee** will meet again to identify new opportunities for taking forward the major recommendations from the conference. It is, however, clear that capitalising on the conference momentum will require not only passion and commitment, but also investment and collaboration by government, inter-governmental agencies, the private sector, higher education institutions and civil society organisations to build the field.



# 1. Introduction

Held from 17-19 October 2011 in Johannesburg, South Africa, the ***Southern Africa Conference on Volunteer Action for Development*** provided a unique opportunity to highlight the particular manifestations and diverse contributions of volunteer action to development and regional integration in southern Africa. Coinciding with the ***10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers or IYV+10***, the conference also contributed to a world-wide celebration of the role and potential of volunteer action in society.

As the first convening of its kind in the region, the conference drew an impressive 178 champions of volunteer action from 22 countries. Participants hailed from 13 of the 15 southern African countries (South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Malawi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mauritius, Mozambique, Zambia, Angola, Namibia, and Lesotho), other African countries (Nigeria, Kenya and Egypt), North America (United States and Canada) and Europe (Norway, Germany and the UK). (See Appendix 1 for a list of conference participants.)

A diverse range of sectors was also represented at the conference, adding an important layer of rich diversity to the deliberations. Participants gained new insights into the opportunities for strengthening volunteer action in the region and spoke candidly about the challenges to multi-stakeholder efforts to promote volunteer action within and between SADC countries. The largest percentage of conference participants were from non-governmental organisations (NGOs), including a small number of community-based organisations (CBOs) (45%). The remaining 55% of participants comprised representatives from national governments in the region, regional government bodies as well as inter-governmental organisations (18%), the private sector (14%), higher education institutions (11%), youth organisations and volunteer programmes (10%) and trusts and foundations (2%).

*“The array of diverse sectoral and southern African participants and their warm, lively interactions and rich contributions” was a key highlight of the conference.*

**- Conference participant**

## 1.1 About this report

This report aims to serve as a resource for those in government, civil society, higher education and the private sector that seek to strengthen volunteer action for development and foster regional integration in southern Africa. Taking into consideration the conference focus and objectives, the report synthesises the key insights, knowledge, resources and recommendations shared at the conference.

First, the report explains the conference focus on volunteer action and community-centred sustainable development. It highlights the contributions that different forms of volunteer action can and do make to eradicating HIV and AIDS, promoting youth social and economic participation and fostering regional integration. Following this, five recommendations for strengthening volunteer action for development in southern Africa, particularly among young people, are discussed:

1. Develop policies, legislation and structures that support and promote volunteer action in the region, particularly among young people;
2. Support research on the impact and contribution of volunteer action to regional development and integration in southern Africa;
3. Build volunteer management and organisational capacity among civil society organisations in the region;
4. Promote networking and knowledge-building in the sector in the region; and



5. Identify opportunities for multi-stakeholder partnerships for volunteering and development.

Finally, key recommendations that emerged from the conference are cited and a number of post-conference developments that build on the conference momentum are highlighted.

### 1.1.2 Conference programme overview and information

The table below provides an overview of the conference sessions. To read **descriptions of the conference sessions see Appendix 2. Also, to learn more about the conference sessions and to access conference presentations and speeches please visit: [www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/programme.php](http://www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/programme.php).**

#### Pre-conference youth session

##### Day 1

- Welcome by Helene Perold, Executive Director, VOSESA
- Welcome by Sizwe Nxasana, CEO, FirstRand Ltd
- Keynote address by Naheed Haque, Deputy Executive Coordinator, UNV
- Youth participant presentation
- Issues and Terminology by VOSESA
- IYV+10 and beyond: Role of governments, policy makers, UN Agencies and CSOs in strengthening volunteer action in the SADC region for community-centred development
- Address by Mr. Pravin Gordhan, Minister of Finance, South Africa
- National Youth Service in the southern African context
- Regional integration, peace, social cohesion and sustainable development: The role of volunteer action
- HIV and AIDS, voluntary care work and gender equality in the SADC region
- The role of civil society in promoting voluntary action for peace and sustainable development with government and regional organisations.

##### Day 2

- Keynote address by Emiliana Tembo, Director, Gender and Social Affairs, COMESA
- Higher education civic engagement: A framework for regional development and the development of a regional identity
- Re-envisioning corporate support for volunteer action in the SADC region
- Designing youth volunteer programmes to meet local needs
- Recognising community-based volunteering for poverty alleviation in the region
- Higher education community engagement and student leadership development
- Models of corporate support for volunteer action in the SADC region
- The role of international voluntary service (IVS) in promoting civil society development
- Strengthening volunteer infrastructure for peace and community centred sustainable development in the region
- Establishing an International Association of National Youth Service (IANYS) body in southern Africa.

##### Day 3

- The potential to replicate loveLife groundBREAKERS programme in the SADC region
- Site visits:
  - VOSESA and CWY presentation on joint study on youth volunteer exchange programmes in the region.
  - FirstRand Volunteers Programme sponsored visit to Niall Mellon Housebuild
  - Firstrand Volunteers Programmes sponsored visit to SMILE Impact supported Mooiplaas Community Gardens
  - loveLife visit sponsored visit to groundBREAKERS and mpintshis programme in Orange Farm
  - loveLife sponsored visit to goGogetters programme in Alexandra and Tembisa
  - CIVICUS presentation on Civil Society Index (CSI) findings on volunteering patterns in Africa.
- Closing session (video address by Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, General Secretary, World YWCA; adoption of Conference Declaration; and closing comments by UNV and VOSESA).



## 2. Focus on volunteer action and development

*“As a daughter of the region and a global citizen, I echo the key message that volunteering is ingrained in our ways of life, our culture and our social identity. It is the glue that gives social cohesion; the essence of community social protection. Through volunteering we have responded to the massive challenges of our moments.”* Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, General Secretary, World YWCA

An overarching aim of the conference was to raise the profile of volunteer action as a development resource and driver. This was rooted in the perspective of conference partners and funders that volunteering and civic service is not sufficiently recognised or supported as a mechanism for development in the southern African context. In light of this, the conference objectives were as follows:

1. **Showcase and celebrate** the diverse contribution of volunteering and civic service to achieving the objectives of development and peace;
2. **Identify opportunities and strategies** to strengthen the role of voluntary service in national and regional development;
3. **Increase research** on the nature, scope and impact of voluntary service; and
4. **Explore the potential for establishing** a variety of Southern African regional voluntary service programmes that promote inter-cultural exchange and support national, regional and international development efforts.

In her keynote address, Naheed Haque (Deputy Executive Coordinator, UNV) encouraged participants to think about how volunteer action could underpin a new development paradigm - **community-centred sustainable development** - which recognises the centrality of people’s participation in development. She described the defining and novel features of the development paradigm as follows:

For volunteering to be effective, it has to address “real issues facing real people” and must involve local support.

- David Kuria, Director, Kijabe Environment Volunteers, Kenvo

*“It will be bottom-up development based on a community’s vision for its future, with benchmarks, milestones, targets and indicators set by the communities themselves – and not by outsiders – and which are implemented by communities themselves, drawing first upon their own resources, capacities, abilities, knowledge and social capital and only then with support from local and national Governments, development partners and other stakeholders.”*

Taking into consideration this development framework, which prioritises the assets and knowledge within communities, the conference explored how volunteer action contributes to addressing **three major regional development challenges in particular**:

1. Eradicating the HIV and AIDS epidemic;
2. Promoting youth social and economic participation; and
3. Fostering regional integration and social cohesion.



## 2.1 Volunteer action: forms and terminology

Volunteer action, volunteering, voluntary service, civic service, voluntary effort and volunteerism mean different things to different people. Given this and the diverse perspectives, experiences and backgrounds of the participants, the following broad parameters for volunteer action<sup>4</sup> were shared by Karena Cronin (Projects and Outreach Manager, VOSESA) to provide a common reference point and a basis for discussion:

1. *Volunteering can be understood as “acts of one’s own free will, not obligated by law, contract or academic requirements; not done primarily for financial gain; and for common good or community well-being.”<sup>5</sup>*
2. *“Volunteering in southern Africa often occurs in resource-limited settings under extremely difficult conditions; involves an expectation of financial or material compensation; but is primarily undertaken to show solidarity.”<sup>6</sup>*
3. *“Volunteering is a civic act, one that, ideally, is driven by a volunteer’s sense of ‘belonging’ within a particular civic community. It is an act of social citizenship if you will.”<sup>7</sup>*
4. *“Civic service can be defined as formal voluntary or mandatory engagement through structured programmes, operated by private, civil society or public organisations, designed both to develop those providing service and improve social and economic conditions.”<sup>8</sup>*
5. *“Volunteering and civic service vary in purpose and focus from charitable or philanthropic service activities to those that aim intentionally for social transformation.”<sup>9</sup>*

The issue of providing stipends to volunteers proved to be a controversial one. Some participants felt that stipends erode the spirit of volunteering and threaten the sustainability of volunteer programmes, while others emphasised that stipends are necessary in a context of poverty and do not necessarily detract from a volunteer’s motivation to make a difference. While no consensus was reached, there was an acceptance that stipended volunteering is a feature of volunteering and service in southern Africa and is linked to the particular needs and expectations that arise when volunteering is promoted in a context of poverty, involving government and non-profit organisations.

Keeping within the aforementioned perspectives on volunteer action<sup>10</sup>, the conference focused attention on the following **five different forms of volunteering**, described below:

**Youth voluntary service:** 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,

<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of the conference and this report, volunteer action encompasses the terms volunteering, volunteerism and civic service.

<sup>5</sup> United General Assembly (UNGA). 2002b. Recommendations on support for volunteering (A/RES/56/38) [Resolution adopted by the General Assembly at the fifty-sixth session – Agenda item 108].

<sup>6</sup> Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO), Regional AIDS Initiative of Southern Africa (RAISA) and VOSESA. 2011. *Reducing the Burden of HIV and AIDS Care on Women and Girls in the SADC Region: Insights from the VSO-RAISA programme*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg: VOSESA.

<sup>7</sup> Obadare, Ebenezer. 2011. *Volunteering, Civic Agency and Citizenship: Some preliminary considerations*. Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg: VOSESA.

<sup>8</sup> McBride, A.M., & Sherraden, M.W. (Eds). 2007. *Civic Service worldwide: Impacts and inquiry*. New York, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

<sup>9</sup> CIVICUS, IAVE & UNV. 2008. Volunteering and social activism: Pathways for participation in human development. Retrieved 15 October 2011 from [www.unv.org/fileadmin/img/www/Volunteerism-FINAL.pdf](http://www.unv.org/fileadmin/img/www/Volunteerism-FINAL.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that while the definition for volunteer action encompasses both formal and less formal forms of volunteering, the conference placed greatest emphasis on structured types of volunteer action and volunteer action associated with NGOs.



abilities and experience so that they can develop their potential and become fully integrated into the mainstream of society.<sup>11</sup>

**Corporate support for volunteer action:** Corporate support for volunteering can take a variety of forms. Halley (1999) and Lukka (2000), for example, distinguish between employee-led activities that are supported and recognised by the employer, and employer-initiated involvement. The Centre for Corporate Public Affairs and the Business Council of Australia identified five areas of community corporate involvement (Suggett, Goodsir & Pryor 2000): corporate partnerships/alliances, employee centred or EVPs, donations (direct or via intermediaries), cause related marketing and sponsorship, as well as community access forums (such as Internet forums).<sup>12</sup>

**Higher education community engagement:** Community engagement refers to the engagement between higher education institutions and the broader context in which they are located. There is however little agreement about the definition of community and some alternative concepts have been suggested, including 'social responsiveness', which covers a wide range of responses to social, economic, cultural and political development needs (Favish, 2010) and the much narrower 'third sector' approach, which focuses on civil society alone (Hall, 2010).<sup>13</sup>

**Community-based volunteering:** Local, community-based volunteering is widespread in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, is deeply rooted in African tradition and is the dominant form of volunteering, according to VOSESA's Five-Country Study on Service and Volunteering (Patel, 2007:27). Historically, volunteering took the form of mutual aid and community solidarity. While these systems of community support, kinship and cultural practice were undermined in many SADC countries during colonialisation, such beliefs and practices do continue today.<sup>14</sup>

**International volunteering:** International volunteering and service (IVS) can be defined as 'service across borders'. This includes unilateral service (volunteers from one country serving in another country), multi-lateral service (volunteers serving in each others' countries), as well as more complex arrangements in which volunteers serve in more than one country (Sherraden et al, 2006). North-South voluntary service, which involves sending a volunteer from a developed country to a developing country to share skills and knowledge, has been the predominant form of voluntary service in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Increasingly, international volunteering also involves South-North and South-South models.<sup>15</sup>

Conference participants also encouraged discussion on other forms of volunteering including: **volunteering among older and retired persons, religious or faith-based volunteering, diaspora volunteering and online volunteering.**

<sup>11</sup>Delaney, Aislinn and VOSESA. 2011. *How can volunteering and service promote the social and economic participation of youth in the SADC region?*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg: VOSESA.

<sup>12</sup>Strassburg, Sabine and VOSESA. 2011. *How can companies foster volunteer action for development in the SADC region?*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg: VOSESA.

<sup>13</sup>Kotecha, Piyushi and VOSESA. 2011 *Engaging Universities in the Regional Integration Project in Southern Africa*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg: VOSESA.

<sup>14</sup>Cronin, K., Graham, L. A., Muchemwa, L., Perold, H., and Mang'ana, J. M. *Volunteering and Civic Service in the SADC Region: An overview*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg: VOSESA.

<sup>15</sup>Cronin, K., Graham, L. A., Muchemwa, L., Perold, H., and Mang'ana, J. M. *Volunteering and Civic Service in the SADC Region: An overview*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg: VOSESA.



## 2.2 Building the evidence base for volunteer action and development

A total of **twelve research papers** on volunteer action and development in southern Africa were commissioned and distributed at the conference. In this way, the conference made a significant contribution to increasing the availability of information and critical analysis on the relationship between different forms of volunteer action in southern Africa and the achievement of development objectives related to HIV and AIDS, youth social and economic participation and regional integration. In addition to growing the knowledge base in this area, the papers also informed and lent credibility to the issues discussed throughout the conference.

Conference research papers can be accessed at: [www.vosesa.org.za/sadcconference/conference\\_papers.php](http://www.vosesa.org.za/sadcconference/conference_papers.php).  
The conference papers were made possible with the support of:



The titles of the twelve research papers are as follows:

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
2. Engaging Universities in the Regional Integration Project in Southern Africa  
Discussion paper by Piyushi Kotecha (SARUA) and VOSESA
3. How can Companies Foster Volunteer Action for Development in the SADC region?  
Discussion paper by Sabine Strassburg and VOSESA
4. How can Volunteering and Service Promote the Social and Economic Participation of Youth in the SADC region?  
Discussion paper by Aislinn Delaney and VOSESA
5. 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
6. 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
7. Strengthening the Policy Environment for Volunteering for Peace and Development in Southern Africa  
Discussion paper prepared by United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme



8. 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 for VOSESA
9. Volunteering, Civic Agency and Citizenship: Some preliminary considerations  
Concept paper by Ebenezer Obadare
10. Volunteer Management Needs Assessment Among South African Civil Society Organisations: Final research report  
By VSO South Africa and RAISA
11. Youth Participation in Service and Volunteering: Exploring economic benefit in the Southern Africa context – A youth perspective  
By Kenneth Dickhudt and VOSESA
12. Youth Volunteer Exchange Programmes in Southern and Eastern Africa: Models and Effects (Draft)  
By Jacob Mwathi Mati and edited by Helene Perold for VOSESA

A further two documents prepared by UNV on UNV-supported consultations marking the IYV+10 were distributed to participants:

1. Declaration: Global Volunteering Conference (Budapest, Hungary), 15-17 September 2011
2. Synopsis of Recommendations: IYV+10 regional consultations (Quito, Ankara, Manila and Dakar), March-June 2011.





### 3. The promise of volunteer action for community-centred sustainable development and regional integration

This section draws on the conference discussions and research papers to consider the particular promise of volunteer action as a development resource for community-centred sustainable development in southern African. Further to this, this section explores the various ways in which volunteer action can and does support the below three development priorities:

1. The promotion of youth social and economic participation
2. The fight against HIV and AIDS; and
3. The cultivation of a regional community and identity in southern Africa.

#### 3.1 Harnessing the tradition of Ubuntu for development

Despite coming from various backgrounds and perspectives, **participants were joined in their conviction that volunteering and civic service holds huge promise as a development force in the region.** While not the antidote for poverty and underdevelopment in southern Africa, volunteer action emerged as a critical ingredient for promoting active citizenship, building greater social cohesion and improving the everyday lives and opportunities of people in the region.

Naheed Haque (Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Volunteers Programme - UNV) articulated this important point when opening the conference:

*“Volunteering has contributed to fostering community solidarity, social cohesion, ushering in independence and democracy and addressing development needs in thousands and thousands of communities across the region. With this strong foundation of social and development capital embedded in volunteerism, you will agree that there is boundless potential to reinforce the voluntary sector in SADC countries for transformational development.”*

Emiliana Tembo, (Director, Department of Gender and Social Affairs, COMESA) further elaborated on why volunteering holds particular promise as a development resource in the southern Africa context. In her keynote address, she emphasised that **volunteering is a deeply embedded way of life and a unifying feature of the region.** The indigenous spirit of volunteering finds expression in the notion of ‘Ubuntu’, which literally means “I am because you are” and stresses the idea that human beings are interdependent. She further noted that while the linguistic origin of ‘buntu’ is from Zulu or Xhosa (Bantu languages), the concept is also found in other countries in the region: ‘Umunthu’ in Malawi, ‘botha’ in Botswana, ‘obuntu’ in Tanzania and ‘unhu’ in Zimbabwe.

Talking about ‘Ubuntu’ in pre-colonial times, Moses Mnsava (Lecturer, University of Dar es Salaam) explained that: *“volunteer work was centered around communities living as social affiliates with strong familiarity to each other and sharing more or less similar life situations.”* Today, **volunteering is still a prominent feature of communities in the region** and often takes the form of mutual aid and reciprocity, particularly among communities where people are struggling to survive.

Helene Perold (Executive Director, Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa - VOESASA) made this point when she shared a key finding from VOESASA’s five-country cross-national study on



volunteering and civic service in southern Africa, which showed that “volunteering is largely the domain and the achievement of the poor – the extension of a helping hand between equals.”<sup>16</sup> Echoing this, Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda (General Secretary, World YWCA) spoke eloquently about the indispensable role of volunteers in poor communities today:

*“My soul dances in the wind, in celebration of all the unsung heroes and sheroes in our communities, volunteering with invisibility and with passion, unresourced and yet committed. They are changing lives and changing communities.”*

“Africa is at a crossroads between hope and paralysis.”  
- Bhekinkosi Moyo Programme Director, Trust Africa

While recognising the long tradition of volunteering in communities and among the poor, conference participants also reflected on a withering culture of ‘Ubuntu’ in the region. Against this backdrop, youth participants called for a “**re-birth of Ubuntu**” during a one-day pre conference workshop.<sup>17</sup> The South African Finance Minister, Pravin Gordhan, further emphasized the need to “**reactivate volunteering**” in the current social context and advocated for a strengthened civil society which can take its place alongside government and the private sector.

Naheed Haque (Deputy Executive Coordinator, UNV) stressed the need to “develop a vision for an **alternative development paradigm** that is people and community-centred, which builds upon the traditional core values of African society and is rooted in concepts of ubuntu, umuntu, letsema, kubatsira, kujitolea and other forms of **community-centred volunteering**.”

Reinforcing the particular value of volunteering for fostering development in the southern African context, Sizwe Nxasana (CEO, FirstRand) called for **multi-stakeholder support for volunteer action** when welcoming participants to the conference and the FNB Conference and Learning Centre:

*“Governments can and do play an important role in promoting volunteerism. They must continue to play this role to support more on volunteerism. It is also important that the private sector works closely with governments and civil society in policy formulation as well as implementation around issues of volunteerism so as to reap maximum benefits of this resource in our society.... Even though businesses are there for profit, we need capitalism with a human face.”*

The next three sections discuss how volunteer action contributes to addressing three SADC development priorities discussed at the conference: 1) the HIV and AIDS epidemic, 2) social and economic participation of youth, and 3) regional integration and social cohesion. They also show how **volunteer action** fosters community-centred sustainable development in the region more broadly.

### 3.2 Volunteer action and social and economic participation among youth

Youth participants from six southern African countries came together at a pre-conference workshop to discuss the role of volunteering in their lives. Drawing on their experiences with national youth service programmes, community-based volunteering, volunteer exchange programmes and higher

<sup>16</sup>Patel, L., Perold, H., Mohamed, S. E., & Carapinha, R. (2007, June). Five country study on service and volunteering in Southern Africa [Research report]. Johannesburg, South Africa: Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa (VOSESA)/Centre for Social Development in Africa.

<sup>17</sup> VOSESA, November 2011. Report on Pre-conference Youth Session for Southern Africa Conference on Volunteer Action for Development [Unpublished], Johannesburg, South Africa, 16 October 2011.



education civic engagement, participants identified a myriad of ways in which volunteering has positively influenced their lives.

The benefits cited by the youth participants cut across the three main topics discussed at the conference:

1. The role of volunteer action in promoting youth employability;
2. The contribution of volunteering in leadership development among young people; and
3. The extent to which volunteering can foster cross-cultural understanding and engagement.

This section mainly focuses on the first two topics while the third is dealt with extensively in Section 3.3 on volunteer action and regional integration.

### 3.2.1 Unemployment and employability

Early on in the conference, youth participants positioned volunteer action as a potential strategy for addressing unemployment among young people in southern Africa.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, in his address, the South African Minister of Finance linked volunteerism to economic development and job creation, and called on participants to think about *“innovative ways of addressing youth unemployment.”* Nelly Corbel (Senior Programme Coordinator, the John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement, American University of Cairo (AUC), Egypt) conceded that the hope of gaining employment is often one of the motivations behind a young person’s decision to volunteer, at least initially.

While volunteering cannot replace effective education and training systems, it can increase the employability and holistic development of young people through experiential and inter-cultural learning, which produces the skills and capabilities relevant to the workplace, innovation, entrepreneurship and community leadership.

- Conference Declaration

Many participants were however wary of hailing youth volunteering and civic service as a panacea for youth unemployment. Firstly, by defining the value of volunteering in relation to employment, the non-monetary benefits of volunteering, such as a sense of accomplishment, belonging or civic-mindedness, can become obscured. Also, there is little evidence in the southern African context that can be cited to demonstrate a positive correlation between voluntary service and accessing employment or income. Further to this, many participants argued that given the problem of structural unemployment in the region and poor quality education, stipended volunteering should not be touted as a replacement for employment or for quality education.

Participants acknowledge that **volunteering opportunities for young people must be seen in conjunction with widespread improvements in the quality of and access to education as well as economic policies that promote inclusive development.** In light of these views, many participants preferred to frame the discussion in terms of whether and how volunteer action can play a supporting role in **enhancing youth employability.**

To that end, government representatives from Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa explained how **National Youth Service and volunteer programmes in their countries are designed to support young people** to face the challenges of poverty, poor levels of education and difficulty in accessing employment, among other things. Speaking about the Lesotho National Volunteer Project launched in 2010, Rethabile Mosisili (Deputy Principal Secretary, Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports and

<sup>18</sup>Youth participants. 2011. *Southern Africa Conference on Volunteer Action for Development Youth Declaration*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg: VOSESA.



Recreation, Lesotho) noted that the programme aims to *“provide the young graduates with first hand work experience in various workplaces in the public and private sectors as well as NGOs, bilateral and multilateral organisations.”*<sup>19</sup> Onesmus Opundi (Commissioner, Namibian National Youth Service) and Nthuseng Mphahlele (Executive Manager, the South African National Youth Service) shared how their programmes seek to prepare servers to meet the demands of the market through the provision of vocational and life skills training, while also building a sense of citizenship.

While there is minimal research on the impact of youth service programmes in southern Africa, a study on the loveLife<sup>20</sup> groundBREAKERS youth voluntary service programme provides some evidence on the potential for service programmes to uplift young people. A 2008 study conducted by VOSESA found that **following a year’s service, groundBREAKERS show greater success in accessing further education and employment than the general youth population.** The impact assessment also found that these alumnae report that they gained skills in public speaking and networking as well as money management, job search and general administration.<sup>21</sup> Dr. Andile Dube (Director, Youth Programmes, loveLife) provided the following insight into loveLife’s effective model for youth development: groundBREAKERS *“are put through a training programme early and use the skills learnt there to implement programmes and identify new opportunities. groundBREAKERS are never told what to tell other young people. Rather, they are provided with skills and asked to think about issues and it is their prerogative what to communicate with other young people.”*

Stefan Howells, Executive Director of SCORE, an NGO that promotes youth development through sport in southern African communities, had this to say about the impact of their programmes: *“SCORE notes that volunteers develop life skills, organisational skills, positive networks, and are recognised as leaders and role models in communities.”*

The conference also highlighted how **corporate or employee volunteering can assist young people to hone skills and to ready them for the workplace.** Conference participants visited the FirstRand Employees Volunteers Programme supported Tembisa Housebuild project, which works in partnership with the Niall Mellon Township Trust. Working together with FirstRand Volunteers and other local and international volunteers, the Trust provides construction and skills development training to young people living in the Tembisa township and also builds homes for needy families in the township. Tamera Campbell, Managing Director of Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator, explained how the programme draws on professional volunteers to train young people and then places them in entry-level jobs in companies. The targets for this programme are young people between the ages of 18-24 from previously disadvantaged schools, and who have no work or after-school experience.

### 3.2.2 Leadership, identity and participation

The importance of recognising **youth in the region as ‘agents of change’ for development,** and supporting them to become leaders in their environments was a recurring theme at the conference. Nangamso Koza, Founding Chairperson, Association of Community Development Leaders in Tertiary Institutions (ACODTLI), emphasised this point: *“Providing opportunities that shape the identity of young people to become responsible leaders and graduates is very important.”*

Scott Brunett (Director of Programmes, loveLife) stressed that volunteering opportunities must provide **“young people with a space in which they feel like they belong and that they are making a**

<sup>19</sup>Momoh, Jimmy. 2011. Email correspondence with internal report attached, 25 August.

<sup>20</sup> loveLife is the largest HIV and AIDS prevention campaign for young people in South Africa.

<sup>21</sup>loveLife (2008). *A self-reported assessment of the loveLife groundbreakers programme 2005 – 2008.* loveLife: Johannesburg



**contribution.”** Speaking about the work of the Youth Association of Zambia, Petronella Chisanga shared how the organisation seeks to create volunteering opportunities for young people that *“empower young people and build their capacities in different areas so as to enable them to participate fully in the life of our country.”*<sup>22</sup>

The development of **personal agency and leadership** is also at the core of Canada World Youth (CWY), an NGO that runs youth volunteering programmes as part of its effort to provide youth with education and leadership opportunities for sustainable development. The CWY learning philosophy emphasises the following:

- learning to be
- learning to know
- learning to do, and
- learning to live together effectively.<sup>23</sup>

*“We must invest in intergenerational and transformative approaches within our volunteer programmes and initiatives. We place young people at the centre of our volunteer initiative, recognising and addressing the special barriers, challenges and issues that are faced by young women.”*

**- Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda  
(Secretary General, World YWCA)**

Some organisations utilise a **‘leadership pathway’** as a strategy for encouraging young people to take on higher levels of responsibility and leadership. For example, volunteers with SCORE undergo a series of trainings and are encouraged to move up the ‘ladder’ to become VIP sports community leaders. After serving for 12 months an *mphintshi* – a community volunteer in an unstipended support role with the loveLife programme – can be chosen to become a groundBREAKER and receive training and a stipend. Following the conference, Maureen Mwakanema (National Advocacy Officer, NAPHAM) reported that she plans to adopt the loveLife *mphintshi* in her work: *“The information [I gathered on the groundBREAKERS site visit] has become very useful in my church work where I am a girl career counsellor. In the near future we will adopt the mpintshis approach and the mpintshis will be those living with HIV as a means of reducing stigma and discrimination.”*

Finally, one participant argued that volunteering among young people is not only important for community-based leadership but also for the region as a whole. *“It is important to recognise that volunteering can contribute to selfless leadership. If young people have experience of volunteering in communities, when they become the political leaders of the future they will hopefully be thinking about the fact that they still serve these communities, and not simply about political expediency and self-gain.”*

Developing young regional leaders that understand the social challenges facing southern Africa as a whole is a fundamental pillar of the SayXchange programme, which promotes exchanges between youth volunteers in Mozambique and South Africa and between Malawi and South Africa. See Section 3.3 for a more detailed discussion of how this programme and others can help to build greater connections and solidarity across SADC countries.

<sup>22</sup>Chisanga, Petronella. 2011. Email correspondence with personal statement attached, 21 October

<sup>23</sup> McLaren, K. & Turcot, P. 2006. *Canada World Youth Impact Assessment*. Montreal, Canada World Youth.



### 3.3 Volunteer action and fighting the HIV and AIDS epidemic

*“Community volunteers help to reach the most vulnerable people who are often far from services and help to connect these people with formal health services.”* Conference participant

While volunteers in the region have contributed to promoting behaviour change, encouraging testing, advocating for the free distribution of Antiretroviral (ARV) drugs, and reducing stigma and discrimination against People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA), the conference placed emphasis on the often invisible yet indispensable role of community volunteers in responding to the epidemic through home based care. As one conference participant put it, **“Without community volunteers, there will be no home-based care” for people affected by HIV and AIDS.**

**The invisibility of community volunteers is a pervasive challenge within the southern African region**, not only in relation to the response to HIV and AIDS. The reasons for this are manifold. Traditional African culture places reciprocity, mutual aid and a commitment to helping others at its core. Consequently, volunteering is often taken for granted as a way of life. Furthermore, prevailing gender roles for women as well as men can obscure the volunteer efforts of individuals in the communities in which they, their family and friends live. The presence of international volunteers from North America and Europe often overshadows local volunteers, who are not sufficiently recognised or valued for their contributions by NGOs. Moses Mnzava, (Lecturer, University of Dar es Salaam) underscored this point when sharing findings from a Trust Africa-funded study conducted by VOSESA on the impact of international volunteering on host communities in Tanzania and Mozambique.

Bev Russell (CEO, Social Surveys Africa) highlighted that the presence and extent of community volunteering in southern Africa is often not accurately captured in research that defines volunteering solely in generic terms. In particular she cites the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition of volunteering, which is being used in a pilot project in South Africa and other countries to measure volunteering through national accounts. According to her, the ILO definition *“does not yet fully capture...characteristics peculiar to [volunteering in] Southern Africa, for example, the ravages of AIDS and the need for families to foster the 3 million orphans left behind.”* As a result, it is unlikely that this manifestation of volunteering in South Africa and southern Africa more broadly will be captured in the current pilot project being implemented by Statistics South Africa.<sup>24</sup> (To read more about how the existing ILO definition of volunteering needs to be adapted in the South African context, click on Bev Russell’s name here: [www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/programme.php](http://www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/programme.php).)

Importantly, a study by the VSO and the World Health Organisation offers evidence of the contributions of community based volunteers with respect to home-based care in the region. The study finds that **80% of people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) are cared for at home and have little support.** In particular, the study finds **that women and girls are at the forefront of responding to the disease** and comprise at least 92% of community volunteers providing home-based care. Many of these women come from poor communities, are PLWHA, or are older and in need of care themselves. Maureen Mwananema, National Advocacy Officer of the National Association of People Living with AIDS in Malawi (NAPHAM) reinforced this point when she reported that NAPHAM volunteers are mainly PLWHA who, despite their own struggles, are *“willing to volunteer their services in saving live.”*

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<sup>24</sup>Russell, Bev. 2011. Email correspondence with presentation attached, 7 December.



In its conference paper on HIV and AIDS care in southern Africa, VSO-RAISA argues that the **burden of care on women and girls** tends to fall on women because of traditional gender roles of women as mothers and care-givers. Further to this, it states that men typically are not interested in care provision given that it is unpaid.

Thomas Joseph (Regional Director) and Bongai Mundeta (Director) of VSO-RAISA stressed that the following six areas must be prioritised if the burden of HIV and AIDS care on women and girls is to be lifted and shared their work on these issues to date:

- Home-based care guidelines and policy
- Capacity building for community volunteers
- Psycho-social support
- Mobilising more men in community care work as currently more women are volunteering as care-givers than men
- Remuneration for care-givers.

In 2008, SADC Heads of States signed the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, which includes Article 27c related to care work and HIV and AIDS:

*“State parties shall by 2015: Develop and implement policies and programmes to ensure appropriate recognition of the work carried out by care givers ,the majority of whom are women, allocation of resources and psychological support for care-givers as well as promote the involvement of men in the care and support of People living with HIV and AIDS.”*

While VSO-RAISA, with the support of partners such as Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA)<sup>25</sup>, reported success in placing draft care work policy before the governments in Malawi and Zimbabwe, there is still a great deal of work to be done to ensure that policy formation and budgeting processes at the national levels recognise and support community based volunteers in relation to HIV and AIDS.

VSO-RAISA and GEMSA co-developed the *Making Care Work Count Policy Handbook* to strengthen advocacy efforts to advance policy development on community-based care work in the region. GEMSA has also launched its Making Care Work Count project, which aims to convince government to recognise the efforts of home-based care workers by providing volunteer stipends as well as creating opportunities for volunteers to move into paid care work.<sup>26</sup>

Volunteering builds social cohesion and social capital among diverse groups based on real needs and assets when developed from the bottom up through grassroots empowerment and community voluntary action.  
**- Conference Declaration**

VSO-RAISA, along with key partners such as the SADC Parliamentary Forum, is also working to promote the involvement of more men in the provision of care. The Honourable Ephraim Kayembe of Malawi has made significant headway in this regard in his Dowa District: to date he has mobilised 200 men to provide community and home-based care in the Dowa District while previously there were only 30 men providing such service in the district<sup>27</sup>.

Other organisations at the conference shared their efforts in the region to support community-based volunteers in the fight against HIV and AIDS.. The loveLife goGogetters programme, for example,

<sup>25</sup> GEMSA promotes gender equality through the media

<sup>26</sup> Mufune, Jennifer. 2011. Email correspondence, 8 December.

<sup>27</sup> Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO), Regional AIDS Initiative of Southern Africa (RAISA) and VOSESA. 2011. *Reducing the Burden of HIV and AIDS Care on Women and Girls in the SADC Region: Insights from the VSO-RAISA programme*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg: VOSESA.



seeks to support older women in South Africa who provide voluntary care for orphaned children and vulnerable teenagers in their communities and promote an HIV free lifestyle. Dr Andile Dube (Director of Youth Programmes, loveLife) explained that the programme is premised on both the recognition of the cultural practice of caring among older women and a commitment to provide financial, emotional and skills support to “grandmothers”.

Lebo Ramafoko, CEO of Soul City, talked about the Kwanda project and highlighted the power of communities to uplift themselves through volunteer action:

*“Kwanda vividly highlights that communities organised on their own behalf have the ability to partner effectively [with diverse stakeholders]” for change and development in their own communities.* Given that HIV and AIDS is one of the main challenges facing communities throughout the country, many community teams involved in the Kwanda project are providing support to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) (e.g. creating feeding schemes, getting families registered for grants, getting children to school), as well as addressing HIV prevention.

Petronella Chisanga, (Volunteer, Youth Association of Zambia) shared an inspiring story about how local volunteers, in partnership with international volunteers, can work together to support community-based volunteering in response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic:

Zambian and Swedish youth volunteers met a group of grandmothers who take care of their grandchildren whose parents died of HIV and AIDS. The women had started a handicraft business, but their profits were very low. In talking to the women, the volunteers learned that they wanted to start a piggery to generate more income. The volunteers raised Zambian and Swedish funds to buy pigs and a house for the pigs and now the women have a regular source of income to help support themselves and their grandchildren.<sup>28</sup>

Two studies conducted by VOSESA and shared at the conference reinforce **the potential for local community volunteers to work together with international volunteers to make positive contributions to the fight against HIV and AIDS.**<sup>29</sup>

During the site visits, Conference participants visited the Mooiplaas Community, where FNB volunteers and SMILE Impact have supported community members to grow a garden, start a day care centre and develop a recycling programme. This underscores the role that corporate (or employee) volunteers can play in supporting community-based volunteers in responding to HIV and AIDS. The garden provides fresh vegetables for the children at the day care centre, while the garden and recycling programmes also provide much needed income to the residents, many of whom have been affected by HIV and AIDS and are supporting others who have been affected.

### 3.4 Volunteer action and regional integration

*“Ubuntu, which embodies the spirit of volunteer action, has great potential to deepen regional integration. For volunteerism to have a regional perspective there would need to be universally agreed structures, institutions and rules.”* Emiliana Tembo, Director, Department of Gender and Social Affairs, COMESA

<sup>28</sup>Chisanga, Petronella. 2011. Email correspondence with personal statement attached, 21 October.

<sup>29</sup> See **International Volunteers and the Development of Host Organisations in Africa: Lessons from Tanzania and Mozambique** available at [http://www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/conference\\_papers.php](http://www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/conference_papers.php).





The SADC vision of a regional community with common values and a common future has yet to take hold in the hearts and minds of the vast majority of people in southern Africa. Piyushi Kotecha (CEO, SARUA) articulated this point when she remarked that **regional integration in SADC has mainly been a political and economic project of the elite and lacks meaning in the everyday lives of ordinary citizens** in the region. Emiliana Tembo reinforced the fact that regional integration is moving at a faster pace among elites than among ordinary people when she informed conference participants that high-level talks are under way regarding the establishment of a SADC, COMESA and the EAC inter-regional body and a Free Trade Area in the region.

Regional integration and a sense of regional identity, connectedness and solidarity can be strengthened through all forms of volunteering that are community-centred, gender-sensitive and based on mutual respect, human dignity and reciprocity.

- Conference declaration

A key contribution of the conference was to position volunteering, and youth volunteer exchange programmes in particular, as a potential mechanism for fostering regional integration in social terms. Participants shared examples and evidence of how **volunteering can help regional integration ‘trickle down’ to ordinary citizens** by fostering cross-cultural understanding, solidarity, regional identity, social cohesion and peace within and between SADC countries. In recalling the 2008 xenophobic attacks in South Africa, Helene Perold (Executive Director, VOSESA) gave a

sobering reminder of the urgent need to engender a renewed sense of solidarity and mutual respect within South Africa, as well as in southern Africa where conflict destroys people’s lives in many communities.

### 3.4.1 Volunteering, regional integration and regional identity

The strongest evidence shared at the conference on the role of volunteering in promoting regional identity and regional integration came from a forward-looking study on youth volunteer exchange programmes in southern and eastern Africa. Funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the study was conducted by VOSESA with extensive support from Canada World Youth and cooperation and feedback from the SayXchange programme. The study focused on two youth exchange programmes in the region:

1. **Canada World Youth’s Youth Leaders in Action programme**, which includes a south-south exchange programme between South Africa and Mozambique in southern Africa and between Kenya and Tanzania in East Africa.
2. The **Southern Africa Trust’s SayXchange** youth volunteer exchange programme, which started as a response to the xenophobic attacks in South Africa during 2008 and which is implemented in Mozambique, South Africa and Malawi.<sup>30</sup>

Key emerging findings from the study were shared at a site visit co-hosted by VOSESA and Canada World Youth at the loveLife offices in Johannesburg. Jacob Mati (Research Manager, VOSESA) reported that participants from both CWY and SayXchange in Mozambique and South Africa identified **‘friendships across borders’ as the greatest impact of the volunteering experience**, while knowledge and learning registered as the greatest impact for the CWY programme in eastern Africa. According to the volunteers, host families as well as host organisations involved in the study, volunteering has enabled them to establish deep bonds of trust with people from another country, gain insight into development issues in the region, learn a new language and develop an appreciation of different cultures in the region. These reported impacts signal the role that volunteer exchange programmes can play in fostering a regional identity among individuals and communities in the region.

<sup>30</sup>In 2011, SayXchange introduced a third component to its programme (involving young volunteers from Malawi exchanging with volunteers from Mozambique and South Africa), but this did not form part of this study.



Higher education institutions (HEIs) were identified as another key development resource that can be leveraged to promote regional integration and the development of a regional identity in the region. In addition to building scholarship and knowledge that provides solutions to the development challenges facing the region, **HEIs also provide a platform for the promotion of community engagement within and across SADC countries.** Currently, however, community engagement is not sufficiently supported within SADC public universities as evidenced by the fact that only 11% of university resources and time are focused on this area.<sup>31</sup> To combat this, Nelly Corbel (Senior Programme Coordinator, the John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement, American University of Cairo (AUC), Egypt) argued that community engagement should be positioned as a cross-cutting function of universities rather than simply one of three core pillars of universities. By investing more in this area, universities will also be investing in the energy, passion and commitment of student leaders, who find meaning in community engagement. One such student leader is Nangamso Koza. The organisation which she co-founded and still chairs, ACODTLI, is keen to participate in exchanges programmes with other student leaders of community engagement in Lesotho and other countries. Unfortunately, difficulties in mobilising funds for these activities are delaying these plans.

### 3.4.2 Volunteering, social cohesion and peace

FK Norway's unique approach to development cooperation provides further examples of how volunteering can underpin regional integration at the grassroots level. As explained by FK Norway Deputy Director, Grete Thingelstad, FK Norway funds North-South, South-North as well as South-South reciprocal exchange programmes among young people and professionals through partner organisations. FK Norway has supported SCORE, an organisation that promotes development through sport to implement reciprocal exchanges between its offices and programmes in southern African countries. Speaking about the value of these exchanges, Stefan Howells, Executive Director of SCORE, explained how the volunteer exchange programme, rooted in the common language of football, has helped to break down stereotypes across borders and developed new partnerships in the region.

The ability of volunteer exchange programmes to challenge stereotypes and promote critical reflection about the "the other" (e.g. someone that is different from you in terms of socio-economic background, religion, age, culture, gender, etc.) signals its importance as a mechanism for supporting what the SADC Secretariat terms "a durable peace" in the region.

Recognising **the potential of volunteering to promote peace and social cohesion**, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has launched a new volunteer programme which is currently being piloted in Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Liberia and Sierra Leone. As shared by Francis Chuks Njoaguani (Director, ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre) the programme is an outgrowth of a smaller regional youth exchange programme aimed at addressing issues of conflict in the region. It is hoped that the new volunteer programme "*will help consolidate peace, recovery, national reconciliation and rehabilitation in crisis-affected communities.*"<sup>32</sup>

Reflecting on the post-World War II context in Europe, Claus-Bernhard Pakleppa, Vice Chair of the Executive Committee of South Africa German Network (a network of organisations that promote

<sup>31</sup>Kotecha, Piyushi and VOSESA. 2011 *Engaging Universities in the Regional Integration Project in Southern Africa*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg: VOSESA.

<sup>32</sup>The New People Newspaper Online. Tuesday, 24 May 2011 (last updated). *The New People Newspaper Online*. [Online]. Available: [www.thenewpeople.com/world-news/africa/item/936-ecowas-volunteers-programme-call-for-applications-sierra-leone](http://www.thenewpeople.com/world-news/africa/item/936-ecowas-volunteers-programme-call-for-applications-sierra-leone) [20 January 2012].



volunteer exchange programmes between South Africa and Germany) shared how volunteer exchange programmes were initiated between France and Germany to promote reconciliation and peace. He noted that many of these programmes still exist, although today they have different aims. Over time, he suggested, the relationships among programme participants have helped to address the issues that led to the creation of the exchange programmes in the first place.

In the East African Community, there is growing support for the establishment of a volunteer exchange programme to promote peace and development in the region. The 2010 Global Peace Convention produced the Nairobi Declaration, which includes the following endorsement of volunteer exchange:

**Article 2.** Strengthen the shared vision and alliances within the African Union to foster enhanced political and economic integration and collaborative peacebuilding measures, along with other regional economic blocs. Promote a Regional Peace Service Corps to address critical human needs.<sup>33</sup>

The conference was attended by high-level government officials in the region, including Prime Minister Odinga and President Kibaki and more than 1,000 participants affirmed the Nairobi Declaration by acclamation.

While volunteer exchange programmes between southern African countries can promote social cohesion and peace, volunteering can also promote these objectives within countries and even within communities. Duncan van Nierkerk (Founder, SPONSORME and a Commonwealth Youth Programme participant) alluded to this when writing on his blog about his visit to the FirstRand Volunteers Tembisa Housebuild project, which builds homes for needy people in the Tembisa township in South Africa:

*"I was excited about the opportunity to see corporate employees getting involved in volunteering activities during working hours and have a chance to learn about the impact that volunteering has on employees within the corporate structure. Coming from a corporate structure, the volunteers had a task at hand which they focused on completing, but more than that, it gave them a chance to reflect on their lives and be involved in something a little different."*

VOSESA's study on youth volunteer exchange programmes in southern and eastern Africa also supports the contention **that volunteering can help to promote attitudes and learning that underpin peace and social cohesion**. For instance, a Kenyan Canada World Youth (CWY) volunteer made the following comment about the role of volunteering in prompting new insights about national unity and social cohesion:

*"In 2007 we fought in Kenya along tribal lines... We do not want this to happen again. The programme helps us interact with other people from different areas and different cultures. This way, you get to understand that other people too have a right to live their own way of life the way he/she sees it necessary. And when you come back to Kenya you start seeing things beyond tribal demarcations."*

The possibility of volunteering to promote personal reflection and learning about issues of social cohesion and peace further underscores the potential of volunteering to support SADC regional objectives of peace and development in the region.

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<sup>33</sup>Global Peace Festival Foundation. 2010. *Global Peace Festival Foundation*. [Online]. Accessed: [www.globalpeacefestival.org/news/global-peace-convention-concludes-nairobi-declaration](http://www.globalpeacefestival.org/news/global-peace-convention-concludes-nairobi-declaration) [10 February 2012].



## 4. Recommendations towards an enabling environment for volunteer action in Southern Africa

Recognising that volunteer action can and does contribute to sustainable livelihoods, building social cohesion and fostering community-centred sustainable develop for people in the region, conference participants called for governments, business, educational institutions and civil society organisations to support an **enabling environment for all forms of volunteer action** in southern Africa.

Tapiwa Kamuruko (Senior Portfolio Manager Africa Region, UNV) and Kate Cotton (Manager, National Volunteering Team, VSO) described the important role an enabling environment plays with respect to:

- Raising public awareness about volunteering;
- Strengthening volunteerism by having structures and policies (networks as well);
- Increasing impact of volunteering (e.g. through volunteer management);
- Increasing best practice in and knowledge of the volunteerism sector; and
- Increasing volunteer opportunities.

“The components of an enabling environment are a strong government and civil society partnership to ensure a common understanding and shared appreciation of volunteerism; supportive public leadership, policies and legislation; adoption of a diversity of approaches to mobilise and facilitate inclusive volunteerism; and sustainable funding and capacities.”

- UNV, “**Strengthening Policy Environment for Volunteerism and Peace in southern Africa**” Conference paper

What follows in this section are key recommendations from the conference that can inform efforts to foster an enabling environment for volunteer action in southern Africa. These recommendations are aimed at policy makers, inter-governmental organisations, civil society, and companies and can be summarised as follows:

- Develop policies, legislation and structures that support and promote volunteer action in the region, particularly among young people;
- Strengthen opportunities for youth volunteer action in southern Africa;
- Support research on the impact and contribution of volunteer action to regional development and integration in southern Africa,
- Build volunteer management and organisational capacity among civil society organisations in the region; and ,
- Promote networking and knowledge-building in the sector in the region; and
- Identify opportunities for multi-stakeholder partnerships for volunteering and development.

While the path to establishing an enabling volunteering environment will invariably be a unique one for each SADC country, depending on its particular context, it is hoped that the recommendations that that follow will provide some generic guidelines on the steps involved in going down this path.



## 4.1 Strengthening policy and legislation for volunteer action for development

*“Neglecting to factor volunteering into the design and implementation of policies could entail the risk of overlooking a valuable asset and undermine traditions of cooperation that bind communities together.”* UN General Assembly as quoted by Naheed Haque, Deputy Executive Coordinator, UNV

The SADC region as a whole lags behind other regions on the continent in terms of volunteer policy development and the recognition of volunteer action as a development resource. At the same time, numerous countries in the region have taken different steps towards proposing and adopting policies and other structures to support volunteer action. Governments, civil society and the private sector from the region need opportunities to learn more about the policy development in southern Africa, the African continent and the wider world, and to explore how these approaches could be adopted and tailored to the needs of southern African countries as well as the region more broadly.

We, the volunteer community, **urgently** need to bring volunteerism to the centre of the policy and development agenda of the Southern Africa region of the world and not remain in the periphery or margins.  
- Naheed Haque (Deputy Executive Coordinator, UNV)

**Notable policy developments in the region were shared at the conference** and provided participants with concrete examples of how the legal environment for volunteer action can be improved in the region. Mozambique emerged at the forefront of volunteer policy development given the recent passage of its National Law on Volunteering. Ruth Cangela, Director of Youth Affairs at the Mozambican Ministry of Youth and Sports, provided insight into the three-year, multi-stakeholder process

which drove the development of the policy and supported its adoption. Impressively, the law was passed with the support of both the ruling and the opposition parties in Mozambique and enshrines a commitment by the government to recognise the history and value of volunteering and to support and protect volunteers to engage more widely in the country’s reconstruction and development.

Volunteer policies have also been drafted and are being debated in Tanzania and Namibia while Mauritius is currently in the process of developing a National Volunteer Centre through institutional and policy changes. While UNV has supported efforts in Zimbabwe to establish a National Volunteer Centre, the project has not yet got off the ground.

South Africa does not have a policy or law that defines volunteering or commits to supporting it. That said, volunteering and service have been addressed in various national policies regarding development and other national interests. For example, the National Youth Policy (1997), the Immigration Action (2002), National Guidelines on Home-Based Care, the Disaster Management Act (2002) and the 2010 FIFA World Cup Organising Committee Volunteer Policy for South Africa.

In the region, VSO-RAISA and GEMSA have advocated for **volunteering to be integrated in policy concerning community and home-based care** for people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS. Thus far their engagement with members of parliament, civil society and government officials has resulted in the development of draft national care work policies in Malawi and Zimbabwe. In 2011, the Malawian government was reviewing the policy to ensure that it addresses the needs and rights of community volunteers involved in HIV and AIDS work, including the provision of resources, incentives and other support required in the delivery of HIV and AIDS services.

Bhekinkosi Moyo (Programme Director, Trust Africa) called for public policy in the region to embrace the deeply rooted culture of *ubuntu*, but also warned that **policy and laws do not always enable**



**volunteering.** Depending on the country and the law itself, new legislation can hamper rather than unleash volunteering. As noted in the UNV conference paper on this topic:

*“The ICNL research also points out that ensuring a supportive policy environment does not necessarily require new laws and regulations. It may be better not to pass a law or regulation on volunteering than risk impeding existing beneficial forms of volunteering, especially traditional, community and non-formal or direct expressions.”*

Space for people to associate freely around issues of shared concerns and voice their opinions in public spaces is fundamental if volunteer action is to flourish in the region. This is particularly critical in the African context where some governments have placed restrictions on civil society to operate freely, while others continue to view civil society with suspicion.<sup>34</sup> Bhekinkosi Moyo writes extensively on this issue in the African context in the Trust Africa and Southern Africa Trust funded book: *(Dis) Enabling the Public Sphere: Civil Society Regulation in Africa (Volume 1)*. Emphasising the relationship between a thriving civil society and volunteerism, the UNV paper notes:

*“Volunteerism initiatives will be more successful and easier to administer when civil society organisations are free of inappropriate restrictions on their activities or over burdensome requirements, such as excessive reporting mandates.”*

Further to this, Professor Ebenezer Obadare (Department of Sociology, University of Kansas) suggested that volunteerism, if understood as an act of social citizenship, *“is best ‘performed’ when the state has paid its dues to society.”* As emphasised by the South African Minister of Finance in his address to the conference, a vibrant civil society and high levels of volunteering in southern African countries are critical for holding government accountable to its responsibilities to its citizens, which is a necessary ingredient for development in the region.

While there are some exciting developments in southern Africa with respect to national policy and programming for volunteer action, the conference underscored that there is great scope to strengthen the legal environment for volunteer action within and between SADC countries.

## 4.2 Strengthening opportunities for youth volunteer action in Southern Africa

*“We need to develop more transformational leaders like you, especially youth as “agents of change” in their communities.”* Naheed Haque, Deputy Executive Coordinator, UNV

**Youth participants at the conference called strongly for increased opportunities for young people to volunteer within and between countries in southern Africa,** Their passion for greater volunteering opportunities is enshrined in a declaration they shared during the opening session. (Access the youth declaration at [www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/presentations/111021%20Youth%20statement.pdf](http://www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/presentations/111021%20Youth%20statement.pdf)).

Explore the potential for establishing a variety of regional voluntary service exchange programmes in Southern Africa that promote inter-cultural learning and awareness to support national, regional and international development  
- Conference Declaration

The conference noted that the SADC Secretariat has yet to demonstrate public leadership on the issue of regional volunteer exchange programmes and needs to consider establishing a regional volunteer programme supported by governments in the region.

<sup>34</sup>The relationship between the state and non-state actors in 18 African countries is explored in depth in the Trust Africa and Southern Africa Trust book: *(Dis) Enabling the Public Sphere: Civil Society Regulation in Africa (Volume 1)*.



Conference participants, were however inspired by the possibility of a SADC youth volunteer exchange programme in learning about developments on this front in other African regions. Francis Chuks Njoaguani (Director, ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre) updated participants about the design and implementation of the new **ECOWAS Volunteers Programme**.<sup>35</sup> There has also been an organised call for the establishment of a Regional Volunteer Peace Corps in the East African Community (EAC).

National Youth Service and national volunteer programmes emerged as two areas in which a number of countries in the region are investing. Government representatives from Namibia, South Africa and Lesotho shared information about the role of these programmes in building citizenship, facilitating skills development and supporting the achievement of national development priorities.

The South African National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) convened a side meeting at the conference to discuss ways of growing the network of youth civic service stakeholders in southern Africa so as to strengthen opportunities for youth volunteering in the region as well as to enhance practice in the region. Patrick Mphale (Senior Manager, South African National Youth Service) and Helene Perold (Executive Director, VOSESA) shared information about the International Association of National Youth Service (IANYS), a network of practitioners, policymakers, researchers, young people and professionals involved in youth civic service, and the participants discussed the needs and opportunities for a similar network in the region. Notably, the meeting indicated strong interest in promoting volunteer exchange programmes among young people in the region, and made other recommendations related to research and knowledge-building (which are addressed in sections 4.3 and 4.5)

Many participants also mentioned the challenge of promoting volunteer action among young people in the region. To address this, participants recommended that volunteering needs to be communicated and perceived as something that is fun and 'cool', relevant to young people's lives and communities, enable them to express their passion and serve as an investment in young people's development. Participants also flagged the need to identify creative and inexpensive ways of reaching more young people with information about opportunities to serve their communities. Given the context of youth unemployment, incentivising youth volunteering was highlighted as a critical issue, although there were different opinions about whether incentives should be non-monetary or monetary in nature. Lastly, participants also recommended that young people be recognised for the contributions they are already making to their communities. Alfred Magehema (Director General, Young Tanzanians for Community Prosperity – YTCP) shared his efforts to cultivate support for volunteering by organising a meeting with government officials in Tanzania to ask them to develop an award for young volunteers and to provide opportunities and financial support for young people to volunteer inside and outside government.

### 4.3 Prioritising research on the impact and contributions of volunteer action

*"What isn't counted, doesn't count."* Simona Constansa Sow, Project Manager IYV+10, UNV

Throughout the conference, participants repeatedly lamented that **research on volunteer action, development and regional integration in the southern African context is not widely supported or undertaken**. The writers of the twelve conference papers faced this constraint when conducting research into how different forms of volunteer action in the region contribute to development and regional integration.

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<sup>35</sup>See Section 3.3 on regional integration for more information on the ECOWAS programme.



The conference paper on “Engaging Universities in the Regional Integration Project in Southern Africa” noted that the lack of information on volunteer action is rooted in a deeper problem related to the generation of indigenous knowledge on the African continent. As explained by renowned academic Mahmood Mandani:

*“The formulation of research problems in the humanities and social sciences in universities in the region today tends to be externally driven, and this does little to build African scholarship and local knowledge production.”*

Since the conference, the results of the pilot study have been released. To read the article published in Business Day, go to [www.businessday.co.za/Articles/Content.aspx?id=157629](http://www.businessday.co.za/Articles/Content.aspx?id=157629). To read a response to the article by Helene Perold, Executive Director of VOSESA, visit [www.businessday.co.za/Articles/Content.aspx?id=157885](http://www.businessday.co.za/Articles/Content.aspx?id=157885).

Bev Russell (CEO, Social Surveys) underscored this point when talking about the pilot study being undertaken by Statistics South Africa, with the support of Johns Hopkins University in the United States, the International Labour Organisation and the United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV), to measure volunteering in South Africa through national accounts. As discussed in more detail in Section 3.2, she cautioned that the definition employed for the study draws too heavily on generic concepts of volunteering and that as a result the

study may not succeed in capturing informal and communal forms of volunteering which comprise a significant portion of volunteer action in South Africa.

Some conference participants emphasised that research on volunteer action in the region should be funded and conducted by and with southern African and African scholars. In turn this will help to build an enabling environment for volunteering through building indigenous knowledge, supporting evidence-based advocacy, information programme design and development and promoting networking and learning.

- It can contribute *“to produce[ing] tangible solutions to southern African problems that draw on both local as well as global systems of knowledge and are grounded in southern African experience, norms and values.”*<sup>36</sup>
- *“It can provide a powerful tool for civil society to engage with policy makers to advocate for policy development and adoption.”*<sup>37</sup>
- It can provide a basis for reflection on volunteering practice and assists in identifying models and strategies that work as well as those that do not.
- It can also be a resource to facilitate networking, knowledge-building and partnership across and among advocates of volunteer action on pressing social, economic and political issues in the region.

Some areas of **recommended research** that came out of conference discussions as well as the papers include:

<sup>36</sup>Kotecha, Piyushi and VOSESA. 2011 *Engaging Universities in the Regional Integration Project in Southern Africa*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg: VOSESA.

<sup>37</sup>Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO), Regional AIDS Initiative of Southern Africa (RAISA) and VOSESA. 2011. *Reducing the Burden of HIV and AIDS Care on Women and Girls in the SADC Region: Insights from the VSO-RAISA programme*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 October 2011, Johannesburg: VOSESA.





- A baseline study of the sector – scoping research on policies that influence volunteerism – labour laws, migration policies, participation of marginalised groups, volunteers and human rights.
- A feasibility study on a multi-stakeholder supported youth volunteer exchange programme (or programmes) in southern Africa.
- Mapping the organisations involved in youth civic engagement in southern Africa as well as the different forms that volunteering takes.
- Research on the role of volunteering and service in increasing employability among youth.
- Measurement of volunteering in our national accounts and organisational budgets in a way that captures the particular nature of volunteering in the southern African context.
- Documentation of the role that volunteering has played in the lives of successful people in the region.
- Measurement of volunteer impact – not only community-centred sustainable development and MDG impact, but also less tangible impact such as social capital, development capital, solidarity, well-being and happiness.
- Development of a manual on community development and volunteerism, and managing volunteers in community engagement.
- A study on the impact of higher education community engagement on young people.
- Primary research into employee volunteering and other forms of corporate support for volunteer action that exist in southern Africa.
- An evaluation of what has been achieved/progress post the conference and to identify where further support is needed for advocacy at the country level.
- Research to develop a manual on community development and volunteerism, and managing volunteers in the model of community engagement.

#### 4.4 Building the capacity of civil society organisations and volunteer management in the region

*How do we construct a set of conditions which will enable us to have a civil society movement with sufficient status and strength in mobilising capacity to sit across the table to speak with decision makers in the private sector and government?” Pravin Gordhan, South African Minister of Finance*

The importance of **building the capacity of civil society organisations** so that its voice(s) and influence can be elevated in society was highlighted on numerous occasions at the conference. Tracey Henry, CEO of Tshikululu Social Investments provided a useful reflection on the meaning of capacity building:

*“For me the essence of **capacity building** refers to ‘actions that improve or enhance effectiveness and support the achievement of mission and strategic objectives’. Enhancing sustainability should be the key focus of any capacity-building activity.”*

Reflecting on the role of corporate involvement in capacity building, she cautioned that **capacity building should not be viewed as a quick fix**, and does not necessarily yield sustainability whereby an organisation is able to raise its own income. She suggested that corporates seek to support sustainability among NGOs and CBOs in a way that enables these organisations: *“to consistently, continuously and efficiently raise, manage and deploy funds in order to implement programmes effectively and achieve set goals which will ultimately benefit communities in which they operate.”*



The conference paper on “International Volunteers and the Development of Host Organisations in Africa: Lessons from Tanzania and Mozambique”, prepared by VOSESA and based on a Trust Africa funded study, offered some insight into how International Voluntary Service (IVS) can be strengthened to better serve the needs and interests of civil society organisations that host international volunteers. Eddy Mazembo Mavungu (Research Associate and former Research Manager, VOSESA), shared two key findings:

1. The IVS experience is profoundly shaped by international histories, relations and the dynamics of international trade and aid. For example, colonialism has influenced how White people are perceived and has engendered a myth of white superiority. It is thus necessary for all stakeholders involved in IVS – sending organisations, intermediary placement organisations, host organisations, international volunteers and local volunteers – to acknowledge this reality and to take this into consideration in all aspects of the volunteer experience (e.g. partnership identification and development, programme design, training and orientation of volunteers, as well as general volunteer management).
2. To enhance the impact of international volunteering on development, partnerships between sending organisations and host organisations need to be strengthened. On the one hand, this involves recognising that host organisations have expertise in the areas in which they work and demonstrate an exceptional degree of resilience given the difficult conditions in which they operate. Additionally it requires that sending organisations involve host organisations more meaningfully in the recruitment, placement and management of international volunteers, so that an appropriate match is struck between the needs of the host organisations and the capacity and expectations of the international volunteers.<sup>38</sup>

The Conference Declaration urged all stakeholders to strengthen the effectiveness of international volunteering in all its forms through a commitment to mutual learning, reciprocity, collaboration and constant reflection.

Sharing findings from a study of a German international youth volunteer programme, *weltwärts*, Claus-Bernhard Pakleppa (Vice Chair of the Executive Committee, South Africa German Network) provided insights into the expectations, stereotypes and misperceptions that some German volunteers hold about the host organisations and the countries in which they serve. Additionally, he emphasised that the experience and effectiveness of international volunteers is enhanced for both international

volunteer and host organisations when **strong volunteer management practices** are in place.<sup>39</sup> For example, this can help host organisations integrate young volunteers as important members of the organisation and give them responsibility.

Access to **indigenous resources and training on volunteer programme development and management** is, however, limited in southern Africa. Given this reality, VSO shared with conference participants its plans to launch a new regional volunteer management facility in partnership with the University of Venda. However, more investment is needed in developing the guidelines, tools and services that will assist organisations, companies, higher education institutions and governments in harnessing volunteering for their strategic benefit and the benefit of the volunteers themselves.

<sup>38</sup>Graham LA, Mazembo Mavungu E and Perold H with Cronin K, Muchemwa L and Lough BJ (2011) “International Volunteers and the Development of Host Organisations in Africa: Lessons from Tanzania and Mozambique”. In South Africa German Network (SAGE Net) Deutschland (2011) *International Volunteering in Southern Africa: Potential for change? Insights emerging from young German volunteers and host organisations in South Africa, Tanzania and Mozambique*. Fischer J (Ed.) (2011) Interdisciplinary Studies on Volunteer Services Volume 2. Bonn: Scientia Bonnensis.

<sup>39</sup>South Africa German Network (SAGE-Net). 2012. *International Volunteering in Southern Africa - Potential for Change?* Bonn: Scientia Bonnensis.



Finally, capacitating volunteers through mentoring, structured reflection and skill-building is also fundamental to strengthening volunteerism in the region. As reported in the CIVICUS paper on Civil Society Volunteering Patterns in Africa, *“CSOs in Africa are deeply dependent on volunteer engagement, but 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.”* This resonated strongly with youth and individuals involved with youth service and volunteering programmes, but also has relevance to all volunteers, whether youth or older persons, skilled or unskilled.

While capacity building was deemed a critical factor on which the sustainability and effectiveness of organisations and volunteer programmes often rests, participants also cautioned that the over-professionalisation of the volunteer sector can weigh down organisations and take their focus away from the people and communities they aim to serve. There is a need to strike the right balance so that the volunteering spirit can be better harnessed to yield maximum benefits to all parties involved.

## 4.5 Promoting networking, knowledge-sharing and exchange in the region

***“To reap the benefits of volunteerism, there is a need to get organised. This is a key thing.”***  
Sizwe Nxasana, CEO, First Rand

As one conference participant rightly noted, *“[there is a] need to be organised, [to] respect each other’s specialty and context of interventions; [a] need for connectedness and to share information...”*

This is difficult, however, when there is a lack of understanding about the different actors in the volunteering domain and how to approach and collaborate with these players.

During a breakaway session on corporate support for volunteer action in southern Africa, facilitated by Colleen du Toit (CEO, CAF Southern Africa), participants conceded that there is generally a lack of communication between companies and NGOs due to the fact that NGOs don’t know how to approach companies in relation to employee volunteering programmes. Many companies also struggle to communicate with and identify reputable NGOs with whom they can engage.

During a side meeting to discuss the International Association of National Youth Service (IANYS), participants shared their interest in building relationships with others working on similar issues in the region and to develop a network which facilitates knowledge-building, exchange of best practice, and greater influence with respect to decisions on youth civic engagement in the region.

A short reflection on the CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation site visit also drives home the eagerness among participants to broaden and deepen their connections in the region:

*“Participants noted with enthusiasm the potential opportunities for collaboration and synergies. People were interested in networking and improving their connections on the continent, and in being part of the more global picture through CIVICUS and its work and engagements. They were eager to find out more, particularly how linking with CIVICUS could help them in their varied contexts, both nationally and within their work environments ...*



*Many people wanted to stay connected, share information and dialogue, and they wanted to continue in conversations to build a stronger African network.”<sup>40</sup>*

In the conference evaluations, participants clearly indicated their desire to have had more opportunities for networking at the conference and called for further engagement opportunities:

*“I would appreciate it if we had more time to network and meet and engage in a smaller group.”*

*“Let’s make this a regular event – gathering people and organisations on the voluntary sector. Let us also agree on what to do together in between annual conferences.”*

*“Hope that there will be other platforms for further discussion to push further and implement the contents of the declaration.”*

*“Would appreciate that VOSESA ensure a follow-up and continue to be a facilitator in putting different partners in touch in the south region. Regular feedback of what is happening among the different participants [with]VOSESA acting as a referring body would be highly appreciated.”*

This feedback points to the **need to coordinate knowledge-sharing, networking and engagement opportunities** with conference participants around the broad array of topics covered at the conference, as well as particular issues, forms and aspects of volunteering and civic service in the region. Some recommendations for future topics to be explored include:

*“Change doesn’t come about because we will it: It comes about through activism and being organised.”*

**- Pravin Gordhan, South African Minister of Finance**

- Leadership and volunteer management in Africa
- Volunteering impact assessments
- Government volunteering initiatives
- Regional integration
- Corporate support for volunteer action
- Designing exit opportunities for youth volunteers
- Youth volunteer exchange programmes in the region

However, there needs to be coordinating capacity (or capacities), which matches the desire of conference participants to maintain contact, continue to exchange information and knowledge, and to influence regional bodies, policy processes and programmes and practices on issues of critical concern to advocates of volunteerism.

## 4.6 Multi-stakeholder engagement

*“For social change to happen there is a need to involve multiple stakeholders in addressing the various challenges society faces.”* Siswe Nxasana, CEO, FirstRand Ltd

The participation of government, civil society and private sector organisations in the conference underscored the fact that **we each have a unique perspective and contribution to make to fostering volunteer action in the region** – development organisations, companies (small and large),

<sup>40</sup> MacGarry, Megan. 2011. Email correspondence with internal report attached, 15 November.



government departments, youth organisations and networks, higher education institutions and individual volunteers.

Participants shared their thoughts on the particular roles of government, civil society and the private sector in fostering volunteer action in the region:

- *“Government has a critical role to play in research on volunteerism and NGO convening.”<sup>41</sup>*
- *“In South Africa businesses need to help uplift society to redress the historical injustices of apartheid or there will be no environment in which to run a business.”<sup>42</sup>*
- *“Employers have a valuable role to play in tackling the issue of job creation and youth unemployment.”<sup>43</sup>*
- *“Civil society is needed to hold government and the private sector accountable.”<sup>44</sup>*

Participants also talked openly and critically about the tensions that can characterise relationships between government and civil society, and between civil society and the private sector. One participant shared that NGOs are often sceptical of corporate sector motivations to engage with civil society, while another mentioned that companies often do not understand civil society organisations. Professor Ebenezer Obadare, Department of Sociology, University of Kansas, suggested that civil society should be in conflict with government and exists to pressurise government on issues of social justice, democracy and human rights. A few government officials were of the view that civil society needs to be reigned in and controlled by government.

Alongside these discussions, examples of engagement and partnerships within and across sectors were also showcased. The Mozambican experience of developing and passing a national law on volunteering in 2010 was a clear example of how government can take leadership in promoting an enabling environment and engage civil society and private sector actors meaningfully in policy development.

*“The rights-based approach to programme implementation that CIVICUS is following fits very well with the strategy of volunteerism as it ensures that caregivers are able to demand better services from government.”*

**- Honourable Ephraim Kaymebe,  
Parliamentarian, Malawi**

VSO reported a close working relationship with the SADC Parliamentary Forum and success in working with that institution to advocate for countries in the region to adopt policy to support and recognise community-based home care workers. Maureen Mwananema (National Advocacy Officer, NAPHAM) explained that the organisation works with government ministries on a number of issues but also lobbies the government around the free provision of ARVs as well as agricultural support for PLWHA. David Kuria (Director, Kijabe Environment Volunteers – KENVO) remarked that initially the organisation had a difficult relationship with government, but the relationship has improved and the organisation now works closely with government on various issues.

Desiree Storey (Manager, FirstRand Volunteers Programme) shared its efforts to foster closer engagement with NGO partners through ‘community conversations’ while Carol Kiangura (Programme Manager, VSO Jitolee) explained how General Motors Kenya Ltd has invested in building longer-term community partnerships as opposed to engaging in one-off activities. There

<sup>41</sup> Bev Russell, CEO, Social Surveys Africa

<sup>42</sup> Sizwe Nxasana, CEO, FirstRand

<sup>43</sup> Tamera Campbell, Managing Director of HarambeeYouth Employment Accelerator

<sup>44</sup> Pravin Gordhan, Finance Minister, South Africa.



were also examples of government and private sector engagement with respect to the placement of graduates of national youth service and volunteer programmes in Namibia and Lesotho.

The **principles of dialogue, engagement, mutual respect and** reciprocity were identified as critical success factors for multi-stakeholder engagement, and made difficult by the varying degrees of power, resources and influence that partners bring to the table. While the conference gave voice to a number of examples of multi-stakeholder engagement, there is a need for broader and more far-reaching partnerships among supporters of volunteer action. The Conference Declaration thus called on: *“All stakeholders, including volunteer-involving organisations, governments and member states, parliamentarians, private sector organisations, higher education institutions and other development partners to increase investment in, and improve and widen regional and institutional collaboration during the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers in 2011 and beyond.”*



## 5. Conclusion and way forward

***“The Southern Africa Conference on Volunteer Action for Development is an unprecedented opportunity for volunteer organisations, governments, regional bodies and other stakeholders to strategise on how to continue to work together even more closely to harness the transformational power of volunteer action, civic engagement and other forms of free will, participation and philanthropy for MDG achievement, sustainable development and regional integration.”*** Naheed Haque, Deputy Executive Coordinator, UNV

Conference participants hailed from different walks of life, countries and professional backgrounds, yet they all told a similar story about the **value of volunteering** and its potential to help build stronger, more equal and socially cohesive countries in the region. The testimony of conference participants and the 12 conference papers disseminated at the conference provided much needed anecdotal and empirical evidence on the role of volunteer action in fostering social change and community-centred sustainable development, particularly in relation to the fight against HIV and AIDS, youth social and economic participation and regional integration. In this way, the conference helped to position volunteer action as a development resource that allows people to drive the change they need at the grass-roots level. It also helped to build the case for greater recognition and support of volunteer action in the region.

At the same time, participants were of one mind that volunteer action is not a magic bullet for addressing the myriad challenges facing countries in southern Africa, and that sometimes volunteer action can be used for negative purposes. For example, in some cases youth service programmes in the region have been used by government to entrench political power and unleash political violence. Conference participants also shared how different forms of volunteer action can perpetuate power imbalances between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have nots’, and can also perpetuate racial and gender stereotypes.

In his paper, “Volunteering, Civic Agency and Citizenship”, Professor Ebenezer Obadare notes 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”*.

Nevertheless, conference participants agreed that volunteer action, if properly conceptualised, structured and managed, offers a critical pathway for people’s participation in development as well as personal and community transformation.

Youth participants provided a **vision for the future of volunteering in southern Africa**. Their collective hope is that volunteering can signal the rebirth of *ubuntu* in the region in ways that are youth-driven and supported with flexible funding from government at the regional, national and local levels. In many ways, the conference was the first step in charting a positive future for volunteering as described by the youth participants. Conference participants had an opportunity to share, learn and connect with like-minded individuals from across the region. From their engagement, the beginnings of a strategy for promoting an enabling environment for volunteer action in southern Africa started to crystallize.

Participants cemented their commitment to charting a new future for volunteer action in the region by adopting the **Declaration of the Southern African Conference on Volunteer Action for Development** at the closing session. **Recognising volunteer action as an expression of *ubuntu* and a development asset in the region**, the declaration

To access the Declaration of the Southern African Conference on Volunteer Action for Development, visit: [www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/Conference\\_Declaration.php](http://www.vosesa.org.za/sadconference/Conference_Declaration.php).



outlines the key **recommendations on how to strengthen the quality and opportunities for volunteering** in the region and calls on a diverse range of stakeholders, including youth, government, companies, civil society, higher education institutions, inter-governmental agencies and other development actors, to do their part to enhance volunteer action for community-centred sustainable development and peace.

As outlined in the Declaration and discussed in Section 4, participants identified six priority areas which require attention if volunteer action is to be strengthened in southern Africa. These include:

1. Policy development and implementation that supports civil society and volunteer action for development and peace in the region;
2. Strengthening opportunities for youth volunteer action in the region, particularly through the establishment of a SADC regional youth volunteer exchange programme;
3. Research on the nature, extent and impact of volunteer action for development and peace in the region;
4. Building sustainable volunteer management capacity among civil society organisations in the region;
5. Creating opportunities for greater networking, knowledge-sharing and exchange in the region so as to strengthen the social dimension of regional integration; and
6. Cultivating multi-stakeholder recognition and support of the value of volunteer action for development and regional integration.

Key action areas related to these six recommendations from the conference include:

<p>1. Policy development and implementation that supports civil society and volunteer action for development and peace in the region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate policy makers at the country and regional level about the value of volunteering and help them learn about volunteer policy development and integrating volunteering into development planning.</li> <li>• Support efforts to ensure civic freedoms in southern Africa and that hold government responsible for their responsibilities to citizens and non-nationals.</li> <li>• Advocate for government and private sector support for volunteer centres to facilitate volunteering within and across SADC countries.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Strengthening opportunities for youth volunteer action in the region, particularly through the establishment of a SADC regional youth volunteer exchange programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upscale national youth service opportunities in SADC member states and promote engagement across National Youth Service programmes in the regions to encourage countries in the region that do not have programmes to start NYS programmes.</li> <li>• Engage with the SADC Secretariat about the possibility of establishing a SADC regional youth volunteer exchange programme and set the stage for conducting a feasibility study.</li> <li>• Provide support and recognition to young volunteers who are promoting volunteering in their communities and in the region.</li> </ul>





<p>3. Research on the nature, extent and impact of volunteer action for development and peace in the region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop definitions of volunteering and service that reflect the particular contexts within the region.</li> <li>• Build an indigenous knowledge base on the particular manifestation and, practice of volunteer action for development in southern Africa. This might include research on youth volunteering and employability, service and social cohesion, a feasibility study on establishing a regional volunteer corps in SADC, and a regional scan on volunteering related policy in southern Africa.</li> <li>• Document best practice in the region and use this to develop manuals, guidelines and toolkits on how to initiate and sustain volunteer and service initiatives and programmes in the region.</li> </ul>
<p>4. Building sustainable volunteer management capacity among civil society organisations in the region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influence the practice of international volunteering so that it supports civil society capacity building in the region more effectively.</li> <li>• Develop indigenous materials on volunteer programme development and management, drawing on leaders in the field.</li> </ul>
<p>5. Creating opportunities for greater networking, knowledge-sharing and exchange in the region so as to strengthen the social dimension of regional integration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish an online community of practice (or a number of online platforms) that encourages networking, learning and coordination among practitioners and supporters of different forms of volunteer action in southern Africa (e.g. youth, employee, higher education, etc.).</li> <li>• Organise learning forums at the country and/or regional level that focus on one of the five forms of volunteering (e.g. employee volunteering).</li> <li>• Establish a membership organisation among volunteer-promoting organisations in the region.</li> </ul>
<p>6. Cultivating multi-stakeholder recognition and support of the value of volunteer action for development and regional integration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ground multi-stakeholder engagement in the principles of mutual respect, reciprocity and dialogue.</li> </ul>

The challenge facing participants now is to leverage the momentum, key recommendations, new insights and burgeoning relationships generated by the conference and to expand and improve opportunities for volunteer action in the region. While United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa (VOSESA) convened the conference, the responsibility for taking forward the key recommendations for growing an enabling environment for volunteer action in southern Africa outlined in the Conference Declaration (and discussed in Section 4) is truly the responsibility of all conference participants and broad array of stakeholders, including government (local, national and regional), business (small and large), young people, higher education institutions and civil society organisations (including faith-based organisations).



## 5.1 Post-conference developments

Since October 2011, there have been a number of **exciting developments** that build on the conference. While VOSESA and UNV have not conducted a formal consultation with conference participants, the following overview provides some insight into the headway that has been made and signals the potential for further follow-up and collaboration.

On 5 December 2011, thanks to the UNV leadership and advocacy, the United Nations General Assembly passed GA Resolution 11184 to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Year of the Volunteer as well as International Volunteer Day. An impressive 97 countries co-sponsored the resolution, which identified volunteerism as one of the 'clearest expressions of solidarity in action' and an effective force for sustainable development.<sup>45</sup> UNV distributed the Southern Africa Conference on Volunteer Action for Development Declaration to government representatives, and reported that Ombendi Sefue of the United Republic of Tanzania, speaking on behalf of the African Group to the General Assembly, quoted the Conference Declaration.<sup>46</sup> Also on 5 December 2011, UNV published the State of the World's Volunteerism Report (SWVR), which includes a series of recommendations for how to strengthen volunteering going forward. (The report can be accessed at [www.unv.org/swvr2011](http://www.unv.org/swvr2011).)

UNV is now strategising how to take forward the UN GA Resolution 11184 as well as the recommendations from the SWVR and exploring how to ensure that volunteer action is prominently factored into Rio+20, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, which will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from 20-22 June 2012. This conference will be critical in shaping the discussions and focus of the post-2015 MDG agenda.

CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation is the coordinating partner of the NGO Major Group for Rio+20 and has developed a website as well as a guide for civil society organisations that are interested in understanding, participating in and, hopefully, influencing the process. The website also explains how NGOs can get involved in different thematic discussions (e.g. green economy, agriculture, health, etc.) (See [www.civicus.org/images/stories/resources/Thematic%20Cluster%20Info.pdf](http://www.civicus.org/images/stories/resources/Thematic%20Cluster%20Info.pdf).)

In January 2012 the South African National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) launched a new three-year initiative to scale up youth volunteering in South African civil society. While the initiative does not result from the conference, VOSESA was instrumental in drawing a number of conference participants into this process which promises to be an important one for strengthening volunteering in the South African context.

On 3 March 2012 the Honourable Ephraim Kayembe of Malawi, with the support of other conference attendees from Malawi, including representatives from UNV, NAPHAM and WUSC, held a meeting with Malawian Parliamentarians and the Volunteer for Development Task Force to discuss the conference and to lobby for government support in developing a volunteer policy and in promoting volunteer programmes in the country. The meeting was exceptionally successful and ended with government agreeing to provide the resources to develop a national policy on volunteering as well as other activities such as a feasibility study on the status of volunteerism in the country.

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<sup>45</sup>United Nations. 2011. *United Nations GA 11184*. [Online]. Accessed: [www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/ga11184.doc.htm](http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2011/ga11184.doc.htm) [6 December 2011].

<sup>46</sup>Costanzo Sow, Simona. 2011. Email correspondence, 6 December.



In March 2012 VOSESA also shared insights from the conference during a meeting of key representatives from the International Association of National Youth Service (IANYS) in Italy to discuss the need for the network and the opportunities to strengthen the network. At this meeting VOSESA learned that the African Union Youth Volunteer Corps is in the initial stages of discussing the possible establishment of a regional volunteer exchange programme in southern Africa with the SADC Secretariat.

In March 2012, Helene Perold, Executive Director of VOSESA, addressed the closing seminar of CAF Southern Africa's Employee Volunteer Week 2012, during which she shared a number of insights from the conference discussion on corporate and employee volunteering.

Conference attendees from the FirstRand Volunteers Programme and Discovery have shared lessons learned from the conference with their colleagues in South Africa. Later this year, FirstRand will be hosting an employee volunteering conference, which will draw on the content produced at the conference to promote further debate and discussion in South Africa. Information about this event will be available towards the middle of 2012.

In May 2012, the Southern African Association of Regional Universities (SARUA) will publish a volume on critical perspectives on regional identity and the role of higher education. The publication will include an updated version of the conference paper by Piyushi Kotecha, *Engaging Universities in the Regional Integration Project in Southern Africa*.

From 2-4 July 2012 a similar regional conference will take place in Nairobi, Kenya, entitled the *African Conference on Volunteer Action for Peace and Development (ACVAPD)*. This conference is being organised with the support of the Global Peace Festival Foundation, UN-Habitat, the Kenyan Ministry of the East African Community, as well as a number of key partners from the Southern Africa Conference on Volunteer Action, including FK Norway, Canada World Youth (CWY), UNV and VOSESA. Additionally, a number of conference participants from east and southern Africa are serving on the Conference Steering Committee. A key aim of the conference is to strengthen support for youth voluntary service programmes in the region as a means of fostering positive peace and addressing environmental and health challenges.

In July 2012 VOSESA will be presenting two papers it prepared for the conference on international voluntary service and models of regional youth volunteer exchange programmes at the International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR) Conference in Siena, Italy.

loveLife is moving ahead with plans to expand into other African countries and is drawing on inputs from the conference to finalise its Africa strategy.

Lastly, VOSESA continues to seek partnerships in the region and internationally to conduct research on the unique manifestations of volunteering and civic service in the region, the potential for more regional youth voluntary service programmes to be initiated in the region, and the impact of different forms of volunteering on development outcomes.

A meeting of Conference Steering Committee members will be convened during 2012 to discuss how we can continue to work together to take forward the major insights and recommendations from the conference. VOSESA will also be consulting with conference participants to identify further opportunities to build on the network that was initiated through the conference. A key priority will be to engage further with national and regional government bodies concerning volunteer exchange opportunities in southern Africa. It is hoped that from the engagement a holistic picture of the short, medium and longer-term opportunities for strengthening different forms of volunteering (youth



volunteering, community-based volunteering, etc.) will start to take shape. However, it is clear that to build on the conference momentum will not only require the passion and commitment of conference participants, but also the resources to support engagement, exchange and collaboration among champions of volunteer action in the region.

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## Appendix 1: Conference participants

First name	Last name	Organisation	Website	Country
Médard	Abenge-Yega	DRC Community of South Africa		South Africa
Mercy	Alidri	UNV	<a href="http://www.undp.org.mw">www.undp.org.mw</a>	Malawi
Carol	Atwell	United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme		Germany
Francisco	Barreto de Carvalho	UNV	<a href="http://www.undp.org">www.undp.org</a>	Mozambique
Renuka Devi	Bissessur	Ministry of Social Security National Solidarity & Reform Institutions	<a href="http://socialsecurity.gov.mu">socialsecurity.gov.mu</a>	Mauritius
Live	Bjorge	FK Norway	<a href="http://www.fredskorpset.no">www.fredskorpset.no</a>	Norway
Carola	Blendermann	South African German Network e.V.	<a href="http://www.sage-net.org">www.sage-net.org</a>	Germany
Tshego	Bokaba	Tracker Network	<a href="http://www.tracker.co.za">www.tracker.co.za</a>	South Africa
Miranda	Bontlenyana Maphosa	loveLife groundBreaker		South Africa
Scott	Burnett	The New loveLife Trust	<a href="http://www.lovelife.org.za">www.lovelife.org.za</a>	South Africa
Tamara	Campbell	Harambee		South Africa
Ruth	Cangela	Ministry Of Youth and Sport		Mozambique
David	Caprara	Brookings Institution	<a href="http://www.brookings.edu/global">www.brookings.edu/global</a>	USA
Manoj	Chiba	City Year South Africa	<a href="http://www.cityyear.co.za">www.cityyear.co.za</a>	South Africa
Bessie	Chinhaire	God's Will Support Group		Zimbabwe
Obert	Chinhamo	United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme	<a href="http://www.unvolunteers.org">www.unvolunteers.org</a>	Namibia
Petronella	Chisanga	Youth Association of Zambia	<a href="http://www.yazinfo.webcam">www.yazinfo.webcam</a>	Zambia
Schemeline	Christian	National Youth Service	<a href="http://www.nys.com.na">www.nys.com.na</a>	Namibia
Nelly	Corbel	AUC - Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement	<a href="http://www.aucegypt.edu/RESEARCH/GERHART">http://www.aucegypt.edu/RESEARCH/GERHART</a>	Egypt
Erma	Cossa	VOSESA	<a href="mailto:ermacossa@gmail.com">ermacossa@gmail.com</a>	South Africa
Simona	Costanzo	United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme		Germany
Kate	Cotton	VSO	<a href="http://www.vsointernational.org">www.vsointernational.org</a>	UK
Karena	Cronin	VOSESA		South Africa
Jacinta Padmini	David	Highway Hospice Association	<a href="http://www.hospice.co.za">www.hospice.co.za</a>	South Africa
Sedica	Davids	FEW	<a href="http://www.few.org.za">www.few.org.za</a>	South Africa
Lily	De Gama	UNV SA		South Africa



First name	Last name	Organisation	Website	Country
Aislinn	Delany	VOSESA	<a href="http://www.vosesa.org.za">www.vosesa.org.za</a>	South Africa
Andes	Doubell	Field Band Foundation	<a href="http://www.fieldband.org.za">www.fieldband.org.za</a>	South Africa
Colleen	du Toit	CAF Southern Africa	<a href="http://www.cafsouthernafrica.org">www.cafsouthernafrica.org</a>	South Africa
Benjamim	Duarte Jose	AJUDE	<a href="http://www.ajude.org.mz">www.ajude.org.mz</a>	Mozambique
Andile	Dube	The New loveLife Trust	<a href="http://www.lovelife.org.za">www.lovelife.org.za</a>	South Africa
Bronyn	Durand	Monash South Africa	<a href="http://www.monash.edu">www.monash.edu</a>	South Africa
Mansasa	Dzirikure	SADC Secretariat		Botswana
Moses	Emanuel Mnzava	University of Dar es Salaam	<a href="http://www.udsm.ac.tz">www.udsm.ac.tz</a>	Tanzania
Lucrécia	Feijó	FOJASSIDA	<a href="http://fojassida.blogspot.com/">http://fojassida.blogspot.com/</a>	Angola
Patricia	Felicite	CARITAS MAURITIUS	<a href="http://caritas-ilemaurice.org">caritas-ilemaurice.org</a>	Mauritius
Kristina	Fermskog	CAF Southern Africa	<a href="http://www.cafsouthernafrica.org">www.cafsouthernafrica.org</a>	South Africa
Michael	Gogwane	American International Health Alliance	<a href="http://www.aiha.com">www.aiha.com</a>	South Africa
Gino	Govender	Amnesty International	<a href="http://www.amnesty.org">www.amnesty.org</a>	South Africa
Lauren	Graham	VOSESA	<a href="http://www.vosesa.org.za">www.vosesa.org.za</a>	South Africa
Naheed	Haque	UNV	<a href="http://www.unvolunteers.org">www.unvolunteers.org</a>	Germany
Bridget	Harris	First National Bank	<a href="http://www.fnb.co.za">www.fnb.co.za</a>	South Africa
Luann	Hatane	Cross-Cultural Solutions, South Africa	<a href="http://www.crossculturalsolutions.org">www.crossculturalsolutions.org</a>	South Africa
Tracey	Henry	Tshikululu Social Investment		South Africa
Tammy	Hoblak	Canada World Youth	<a href="http://www.canadaworldyouth.org">www.canadaworldyouth.org</a>	Canada
Stefan	Howells	SCORE	<a href="http://www.score.org.za">www.score.org.za</a>	South Africa
Natalie	Huddle	Private		South Africa
Baarata	Innocentia	The new loveLife Trust	<a href="http://www.lovelife.org.za">www.lovelife.org.za</a>	South Africa
Momoh	Jimmy	UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME	<a href="http://www.undp.org">www.undp.org</a>	Lesotho
Janet	Jobson	The DG Murray Trust	<a href="http://www.dgmt.co.za">www.dgmt.co.za</a>	South Africa
Louise	Jones	Old Mutual Foundation	<a href="http://www.oldmutual.co.za">www.oldmutual.co.za</a>	South Africa
Philanie	Jooste	Helene Perold and Associates		South Africa
Bianca	Joseph	University of Stellenbosch	<a href="http://www.sun.ac.za/mgd">www.sun.ac.za/mgd</a>	South Africa
Thomas	Joseph	VSO-RAISA	<a href="http://www.vso.org.uk">www.vso.org.uk</a>	South Africa
John	Kabongo	CARE International Zambia Office/ZVCC	<a href="http://www.carezambia.org">http://www.carezambia.org</a>	Zambia
Justice	Kalebe	Australian Volunteers International (AVI)	<a href="http://www.australianvolunteers.com">www.australianvolunteers.com</a>	South Africa



First name	Last name	Organisation	Website	Country
Tapiwa	Kamuruko	UNV	<a href="http://www.unvolunteers.org">www.unvolunteers.org</a>	Germany
Fezile	Kanju	MSF/Doctors without Borders	<a href="http://www.msf.org.za">www.msf.org.za</a>	South Africa
Anock	Kapira	United Nations Volunteers	<a href="http://www.unvolunteers.org">www.unvolunteers.org</a>	Zambia
Stella	Karegyesa	UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS	<a href="http://www.unvolunteers.org">www.unvolunteers.org</a>	Tanzania
Ephraim Abele	Kayembe	Malawi Parliament		Malawi
Carol	Kiangura	VSO RAISA	<a href="http://www.vsointernational.org/what-we-do/raisa/">http://www.vsointernational.org/what-we-do/raisa/</a>	Kenya
Piyushi	Kotecha	Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA)	<a href="http://www.sarua.org">www.sarua.org</a>	South Africa
Nangamso	Koza	ACODLTI	<a href="http://www.acodlti.ac.za">www.acodlti.ac.za</a>	South Africa
David K	Kuria	Kijabe Environment Volunteers-Canada World Youth	<a href="http://www.kenvokenya.com">www.kenvokenya.com</a>	Kenya
Priscilla	Ladegourdie-Ravaton	Non-State Actor Unit		Mauritius
Dennis	Lane	Skillshare International	<a href="http://www.skillshare.org">www.skillshare.org</a>	South Africa
Dan	Lephoko	Children On the Move	<a href="http://www.childrenonthemove.org.za">www.childrenonthemove.org.za</a>	South Africa
Lebogang	Luvuno	GlaxoSmithKline South Africa	<a href="http://www.gsk.co.za">www.gsk.co.za</a>	South Africa
Alfred	Magehema	YOUNG TANZANIAN FOR COMMUNITY PROSPERITY (YTCP)	<a href="http://www.ytcp.org">www.ytcp.org</a>	Tanzania
Sandra	Mahnecke	GIZ (German Development Service)	<a href="http://www.giz.de">www.giz.de</a>	South Africa
Nkagare	Makhudu	The New loveLife Trust	<a href="http://www.lovelife.org.za">www.lovelife.org.za</a>	South Africa
Judy	Maluleka	Sasol Shared Services	<a href="http://www.sasol.com">www.sasol.com</a>	South Africa
Jacob	Mapemba	World University Service of Canada	<a href="http://www.wusc.ca">www.wusc.ca</a>	Malawi
Alson	Maphosa	VSO		South Africa
Bento	Marcos	AFS Interculture South Africa	<a href="http://www.afs.org.za">www.afs.org.za</a>	South Africa
Emarentia	Mashabane	loveLife groundBreaker		South Africa
Imisa	Masinjila	Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO)	<a href="http://www.vsointernational.org">www.vsointernational.org</a>	Tanzania
Siven	Maslamoney	Converse Consulting and Management Services (Pty) Ltd	<a href="http://www.resolve.co.za">www.resolve.co.za</a>	South Africa
Jacob Mwathi	Mati	VOSESA	<a href="http://www.vosesa.org.za">www.vosesa.org.za</a>	South Africa
Mittah	Matjila	First National Bank	<a href="http://www.fnb.co.za">www.fnb.co.za</a>	South Africa
Ngoako	Matsha	Mail&Guardian	<a href="http://www.mg.co.za">www.mg.co.za</a>	South Africa
Eddy	Mazembo Mavungu	VOSESA	<a href="http://www.vosesa.org.za">www.vosesa.org.za</a>	DRC



First name	Last name	Organisation	Website	Country
Thandiwe	McCloy	The new loveLife Trust	www.lovelife.org.za	South Africa
Themba	Mdlalose	Microsoft South Africa	www.microsoft.com/southafrica	South Africa
Victor	Mensah	Commonwealth Secretariat	http://thecommonwealth.org/	Zambia
Barry	Mey	Stop Hunger Now SA	www.stophungernowsa.org	South Africa
Ernestine	Meyer-Adams	University of Johannesburg	www.uj.ac.za	South Africa
Joseph	Mhlaba	UNDP		South Africa
Jeff	Mkhwanazi	SAAYC	www.saayc.co.za	South Africa
Tshiamo	MMaruping	loveLife groundBreaker		South Africa
Thandeka	Mmusi	VOLUNTEER CENTRE	www.volcent.co.za	South Africa
Kefiloe	Mokoena	SayXchange Participant	www.afs.org.za	South Africa
Benedict Emmanuel	Mongi	UVIKIUTA-Tanzania	www.uvikiuta.org	Tanzania
Nevashini	Moodley	FNB Wealth		South Africa
Rethabile	Mosisili	Ministry of Gender, Youth Sports and Recreation - Lesotho		Leshoto
Bhekinkosi	Moyo	TrustAfrica	www.trustafrica.org	Senegal
Nthuseng	Mphahlele	National Youth Development Agency	www.nyda.gov.za	South Africa
Patrick	Mphale	National Youth Development Agency	www.nyda.gov.za	South Africa
Eliakim	Mtawa	Ministry of Information Youth Culture and Sports	www.hum.go.tz	Tanzania
Tracy	Mtsweni	loveLife groundBreaker	www.lovelife.org.za	South Africa
Learnmore	Muchemwa	VOSESA	www.vosesa.org.za	South Africa
Helen	Mudzusi	University of Venda	www.univen.ac.za	South Africa
Jennifer	Mufune	Gender and Media Southern Africa (GEMSA)	www.gemsa.org.za	South Africa
Bongai	Mundeta	VSO RAISA	vsointernational.org/raisa	South Africa
Eve	Mungai	VSO	www.vso.org.uk	Kenya
Kenneth	Munkombwe	VSO	www.vso.org	Zambia
Chipso	Muzorewa	Global Peace Festival Foundation	www.globalpeacefestival.org	USA
Maureen	Mwakanema	National Association for People Living with HIV and AIDS in Malawi(NAPHAM)	www.napham.net	Malawi
Solomon	Mzinyane	First National Bank	www.fnb.co.za	South Africa
Elia	Nashandi	National Youth Service	www.nys.com.na	Namibia





First name	Last name	Organisation	Website	Country
Xolile	Ndzoyi	JL Zwane Centre	www.jlzwane.sun.ac.za	South Africa
Pearl	Nel	First National Bank	www.fnb.co.za	South Africa
Erickson	Nenghwanya	National Youth Service	www.nys.com.na	Namibia
Francis Chuks	Njoaguani	ECOWAS		Nigeria
Moses	Nku	loveLife groundBreaker	www.lovelife.org.za	South Africa
Charity	Nshimbi	VSO RAISA	vosinternational.org/raisa	South Africa
Craig	Nudelman	OSISA	www.osisa.org	South Africa
Petros	Nyakunu	KUBATSIRANA	www.kubatsirana.org	Mozambique
Sizwe	Nxasana	FirstRand Limited		South Africa
Ebenezer	Obadare	Department of Sociology, The University of Kansas		USA
Benter	Okello	VOSESA	www.vosesa.org.za	South Africa
Charles	Omoga	Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative	www.repsai.org	South Africa
Claus-Bernhard	Pakleppa	South African German Network e.V.	www.sage-net.org	Germany
Craig	Paterson	FNB Commercial Banking	www.fnb.co.za	South Africa
Darshana	Pema	Canadian International Development Agency	www.canada.co.za	South Africa
Helene	Perold	VOSESA	www.vosesa.org.za	South Africa
Karen	Peters	VOSESA	www.vosesa.org.za	South Africa
Michelle	Pietersen	Matie Community Sevices	www.sun.ac.za/mgd	South Africa
Marishka	Pillay	Discovery Health CSI	www.discovery.co.za	South Africa
Sakhele	Plaatjie	JL Zwane Centre	www.jlzwane.sun.ac.za	South Africa
Nadia Karina	Ponce Morales	Canada World Youth	www.canadaworldyouth.org	Canada
Francis	Potai	MINISTRY OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, INDIGENISATION AND EMPOWERMENT	www.mydie.gov.zw	Zimbabwe
Marcalthea	Probert-Chibasa	Absa Bank - CSI Department	www.absa.co.za	South Africa
Lebogang	Ramafoko	Soul City Institute	www.soulcity.org.za	South Africa
Danielle	Rowe	Monash South Africa	www.monash.edu	South Africa
Lushamba	Rudahindwa	Ministry of Sports DRC		DRC
Bev	Russell	Social Surveys		South Africa
Hellen	Sammy Thoya	UVIKIUTA-Tanzania	www.uvikiuta.org	Tanzania
Kgontse	Seloane	loveLife groundBreaker		South Africa
Henny Lesiba	Seoloana	SCORE	www.score.org.za	South Africa
Linsey	Sherman	Investec	www.investec.co.za	South Africa



First name	Last name	Organisation	Website	Country
Lusanda	Shiba	Australian Volunteers International (AVI)	www.australianvolunteers.com	Swaziland
Rejoice	Shumba	Australian Volunteers International (AVI)	www.australianvolunteers.com	South Africa
Livhuwani	Sikhipha	Sasol Shared Services	www.sasol.com	South Africa
Karuna	Singh	WITS UNIVERSITY STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND LEADERSHIP	www.wits.ac.za	South Africa
Neshia	Sioga	loveLife groundBreaker		South Africa
Jerome	Slamat	Stellenbosch University / Southern Africa Higher Education Community Engagement Forum (SAHECEF)	www.sun.ac.za	South Africa
Shelby	Stapleton	All out Africa	www.alloutafrica.com	Swaziland
Desiree	Storey	FirstRand Limited	www.firstrand.co.za	South Africa
Sabine	Strassburg			South Africa
Nicole	Strydom	First National Bank of SA Ltd	www.fnb.co.za	South Africa
Friederike	Subklew-Sehume	The New loveLife Trust	www.lovelife.org.za	South Africa
Adonis	Sucalit	World Vision International	www.wvi.org	South Africa
Afsaneh	Tabrizi	VOESASA		South Africa
Emiliana	Tembo	COMESA		Zambia
Grete	Thingelstad	FK Norway	www.fredskorpset.no	Norway
Martha	Tholanah	ICW Zimbabwe	www.icwglobal.org	Zimbabwe
Onesmus Katanga	Upindi	National Youth Service	www.nys.com.na	Namibia
Gail	Valentyn	The President's Award	www.presidentsaward.co.za	South Africa
Henri	Valot	CIVICUS	www.civicus.org	South Africa
Deline	Van Boom	VOLUNTEER CENTRE	www.volcent.co.za	South Africa
Beth	van Heerden	FirstRand Limited		South Africa
Duncan Luke	Van Niekerk	Commonwealth	Www.sponsorme.co.za	South Africa
Leslie	van Rooi	Stellenbosch University	www.sun.ac.za	South Africa
French	Vibar	World Vision International, SAR	www.wvi.org.za	South Africa
Anthony	Waldhausen	Gay & Lesbian Network	www.gaylesbiankzn.org	South Africa
Susan	Wamatu	VOLUNTEER CENTRE	www.volcent.co.za	South Africa
Henry Sammy	Wanyama	Australian Volunteers International (AVI)	www.australianvolunteers.com	South Africa
Karla	Wesley	Australian Volunteers International (AVI)	www.australianvolunteers.com	South Africa
Nompilo	Xaba	Adventist	www.adra.org.za	South Africa



## CONFERENCE REPORT July 2012

First name	Last name	Organisation	Website	Country
		Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)		
Esme	Young	Sasol Shared Services	<a href="http://www.sasol.com">www.sasol.com</a>	South Africa
Roseline	Zigomo	Prime Minister's Office, Government of Zimbabwe		Zimbabwe



## Appendix 2: Brief description of conference sessions

### Conference sessions

#### Pre-conference youth session

The pre-conference session aimed to support youth participants to engage meaningfully and effectively in the Conference. As such the session provided a space for youth to share their experience and perspectives on volunteering in the region and to build relationships and effective networks as well as to learn from each other. Five of the selected participants were from South Africa while the remaining six were from Zambia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Namibia. Six of the participants were female, while the remaining four were males. All of the participants were below the age of 27 years. The participants drafted a youth declaration, which was presented during the opening session of the conference.

#### Day 1: Monday, 17 October 2011

##### Welcome by Helene Perold, Executive Director, VOESASA

Helene Perold provided an overview of conference participants and explained the importance of the convening for the development of the region. She explained the background to the conference and outlined the conference objectives and the envisaged outcomes. Finally, she thanked the conference sponsors and all the individuals and organisations that helped make the conference possible.

##### Welcome by Sizwe Nxasana, CEO, FirstRand Ltd

Sizwe Nxasana welcomed participants to the conference and emphasised that FirstRand believes that part of their job is to support communities to develop. He highlighted the critical role of volunteerism as a force for change in society and reflected on the value of volunteerism, and particularly of *ubuntu*, in South Africa. He called on government to provide a policy environment more conducive to fostering volunteer action and stressed the need for the private sector to work together with governments and civil society on policy and programming in order to enhance the effectiveness of volunteer action. He suggested that volunteer action can help to hold capitalism accountable in the wake of the 2008 financial meltdown, promote social cohesion and provide opportunities for youth. He also presented the key features and accomplishments of the FirstRand Foundation and its Volunteer Programme.

##### Keynote address by Naheed Haque, Deputy Executive Coordinator, UNV

In her keynote address, Naheed Haque noted the impressive range of stakeholders in the room and highlighted that the conference was one of many regional events that UNV had supported throughout 2011 to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers (IYV+10). She shared that UNV would be launching its State of the Worlds Volunteerism Report in 2011 and mentioned that the UN General Assembly would be meeting on December 5<sup>th</sup> 2011 to discuss volunteerism. Following this, she paid tribute to the tradition and transformational power of volunteer action in the southern Africa region and emphasised the important role that volunteer action can and does play in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). She went on to emphasise that young people are important agents of change in the region and called on African governments to support volunteering opportunities for young people. In the run up to the Rio+20 summit and the post MDG agenda, she stressed the need for champions of volunteer action to put forward an alternative vision of development – community-centred sustainable development – which places people at the centre. In conclusion she called upon participants to join the world in celebrating volunteering as an expression of our common humanity, and in engaging the will, positive energy and innovation of millions of people towards realizing the MDGs and sustainable development.

##### Youth participant presentation

Youth participants presented the Declaration developed during the pre-conference session. The declaration highlighted the value of youth volunteering for fostering youth social and economic



participation and called on conference participants and other actors in the region to promote and support regional opportunities for youth volunteering, including youth regional volunteer exchange. Other recommendations suggested by the participants included greater recognition of youth volunteer efforts, access to funding for youth volunteering programming, greater flexibility to move throughout the region, the creation of a platform (or platforms) to better coordinate youth volunteering activities, better M&E of volunteering organisations and more research on the contribution of volunteering to the economy.

#### **Issues and Terminology by VOSESA**

This session, conducted by Karena Cronin from VOSESA, focused on the different conceptions of volunteer action, volunteering, volunteerism and civic service and highlighted some of the debates concerning definitions of volunteering in the southern African context. The session also outlined the different forms of volunteer action that would be considered at the conference – youth volunteering, higher education civic engagement, corporate or employee volunteering, community-based volunteering and international volunteering – and noted the different manifestations of volunteer action from charity to social activism.

#### **IYV+10 and beyond: Role of governments, policy makers, UN Agencies and CSOs in strengthening volunteer action in the SADC region for community-centred development**

Moderated by Tapiwa Kamuruko (Senior Portfolio Manager Africa Region, UNV), the session shed light on significant developments within the region with respect to creating an enabling environment for volunteer action for community-centred sustainable development. Simona Constansa Sow, Project Manager IYV+10, UNV provided background on the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers and shared recommendations for strengthening volunteer action for development from five regional consultations organised by UNV. Ruth Cangela (Director, Department of Youth Africa, HoD Ministry of Youth and Sport, Mozambique) shared the multi-stakeholder process of developing the National Law on Volunteering in Mozambique and highlighted government's facilitating role in the process. Bev Russell (Managing Director, Social Surveys) emphasised that government has a critical role to play in enabling volunteering through research and information gathering and shared preliminary findings from a research conducted by Statistics South Africa on volunteering activities in South Africa. Bhekinkosi Moyo (Programme Director, Trust Africa) stressed the importance of knowledge generation on volunteer action, which he noted is a form of philanthropy, in order to create awareness among governments. He also recommended that government should embed the values of solidarity, mutuality and reciprocity in policies that promote volunteer action, but cautioned that the law itself does not promote engagement and sometimes can even undermine civic participation.

#### **Address by Mr. Pravin Gordhan, Minister of Finance, South Africa**

Recalling his younger years and the anti-apartheid struggle, the Minister noted the rich history of volunteers, volunteerism and grassroots organising in South Africa and stressed its importance in building healthy democracies in the region. He emphasised the need to reactivate volunteering in the region and for civil society to become better organised so that it can mobilise for effectively for social change and influence other domains such as government and the private sector. He highlighted the important role that volunteering plays in youth development and in inculcating values of solidarity and sharing. Lastly, he again reflected on the importance of a vibrant civil society for development and mentioned the particular value of volunteering in a context of high youth unemployment.

#### **National Youth Service in the southern African context**

In his role as facilitator, Professor Ebenezer Obadare (University of Kansas) noted the issues raised by the youth during the opening session. Talking about the new Volunteer Programme in Lesotho, Rethabile Mosisili (Deputy Principal Secretary, Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports and Recreation) explained the programme's aim to help prepare young people to access employment and find African solutions to African problems. Nthuseng Mphahlele, Executive Manager of the National Youth Service (NYS) and Skills Development, South Africa, talked about the reasons for the



establishment of the NYS, the achievements of the programme, as well as some of the challenges it currently faces. Speaking about the Namibian NYS, Onesmus Upindi (Commissioner) discussed the similarities between the South African and Namibian context with respect to the aims of NYS. Participants also discussed the particular motivations for youth volunteering in the southern Africa context, the challenges associated with providing a stipend for a service programme, the importance of remembering that NYS is not an alternative to the formal but failing education systems in the region and that NYS can and has been instrumentalised for negative political ends in the region.

**Regional integration, peace, social cohesion and sustainable development: The role of volunteer action**

This session explored the potential for youth volunteer exchange to be a driver of regional integration in SADC and considered different youth volunteer exchange programme models. Francis Chuks Njoaguani (Director, ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre) shared how the new ECOWAS Volunteer Programme seeks to address issues of conflict in the region and foster regional integration. Highlighting the importance of reciprocal volunteer exchange grounded in equality, Grete Thingelstad (Deputy Director General) talked about FK Norway's e in fostering volunteer exchange in the region among young people (e.g. SCORE and Field Band Foundation). Lastly, David Kuria of Kijabe Environment Volunteers – KENVO talked about how the organisation initiated exchanges between Kenyans and then partnered with Canada World Youth to initiate south-south youth volunteer exchanges between Kenya and Tanzania. He stressed the importance of local buy-in for the success of the programme. In her role as facilitator, Helene Perold (Executive Director, VOSESA) referred to the experience of the European Voluntary Service, which was established to foster regional integration and reconciliation among European countries post World War II, and noted that a key barrier in southern Africa is that countries sometimes see regional integration as a threat to national sovereignty. As noted in other sessions (documented in this conference report) it will be important to advance the social dimension of regional integration (which can be promoted by volunteering) as a support for economic and trade integration.

**HIV and AIDS, voluntary care work and gender equality in the SADC region**

Facilitated by Thomas Joseph (Regional Director, VSO-RAISA) this session focused on the key issues pertaining to volunteer action in addressing the HIV and AIDS epidemic. It also explored the key role that volunteers play in providing community and home-based care to those with HIV and AIDS and shed light on the gender issues in this field since the burden of care falls disproportionately on women in communities. Bongai Mundeta (Director, VSO-RAISA) presented on the need for policy formulation to recognise and support community-based volunteers and identified six key areas where action is needed particularly at the country level. Dr. Andile Dube (Director, Youth Programmes, loveLife), shared how the goGogetters programme works within the cultural practice of older women caring for children and young people in the community and ensures that it supports this practice by providing financial, emotional and skill support to these grandmothers. Jennifer Mufune (Executive Director, Gender and Media Southern Africa – GEMSA) highlighted that although women do most of the care work in the field of HIV, this goes largely unrecognised in the media and emphasised that the media has a large role to play in shifting mindsets about the role of women in care work. Lastly, the Honourable Ephraim Kayembe (Member of Parliament, Malawi) stressed the importance of involving local leaders in sensitising communities about the burden of care falling on women and advocating for more involvement of men and boys in care work.

**The role of civil society in promoting voluntary action for peace and sustainable development with government and regional organisations**

Jacob Mati (Research Manager, VOSESA), Professor Ebenezer Obadare (Dept. of Sociology, Kansas University) and Henri Valot (Director of Outreach, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation) discussed a number of issues that have bearing on the role of civil society in promoting development with government and regional organisations. The definition of civil society was explored and the inherent tensions between civil society and government were candidly acknowledged. The relevance of civil society organisations to civic participation, including volunteering and activism was also



debated. With youth at the forefront of social mobilisation in countries like Egypt, the discussion also considered the role of volunteer-involving organisations in promoting youth civic participation and their broader engagement in development and democratisation.

**Day 2: Tuesday, 18 October 2011**

**Keynote address by Emiliana Tembo, Director, Gender and Social Affairs, COMESA**

Mrs. Emiliana Tembo reflected on the linkages between volunteer action, sustainable regional social and economic development, and the potential to leverage the spirit of *ubuntu* to deepen regional integration. First, she explored the diverse meanings and definitions of volunteer action in the region. She went on to identify *ubuntu* as a unifying feature in southern Africa and commended African volunteers, particularly community-based volunteers, for their contributions to responding to HIV and AIDS, poverty and gender inequality, poor water and sanitation and numerous health issues among other challenges. She also noted the potential for volunteer action to promote youth development and address high levels of youth unemployment in the region. Finally, she stressed the importance of regional coherence on volunteerism issues and proposed that volunteer action can support efforts to promote peace in the region and overcome deep-rooted fragmentation in our societies and political institutions.

**Higher education civic engagement: A framework for regional development and the development of a regional identity**

The session provided insight into community engagement at higher education institutions in southern Africa. Helene Perold (Executive Director, VOSESA) facilitated a discussion which drew on the perspectives of students, staff in engagement activities and advocates of higher education in the region. Piyushi Kotecha (CEO, Southern African Regional Universities Association - SARUA) stressed that community engagement is not properly resourced or supported at higher education institutions in the region. She recommended greater investment in this sphere as a tool for driving development and regional integration, to ground it in indigenous knowledge and local solutions. Nangamso Koza (Founding Chairperson, Association of Community Development Leaders in Tertiary Institutions - ACODLTI) showcased the work of ACODLTI to enable young people to engage in meaningful ways as volunteers in their communities, to develop themselves, and to foster greater connectedness between like-minded young people in the region. Finally, Nelly Corbel (Senior Program Coordinator, The John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement, The American University of Cairo (AUC), Egypt) proposed that community engagement should be a core and cross-cutting value of higher education. If approached in this way, community engagement can prepare young people to work in civil society and help to foster regional integration.

**Re-envisioning corporate support for volunteer action in the SADC region**

Claus-Bernhard Pakleppa (Vice-Chair of Executive Committee, South Africa German Network – SAGE Net) facilitated this session, which looked at trends in corporate support for volunteer action in the SADC region and considered recommendations for how to strengthen corporate support for volunteer action, particularly in South Africa. Sabine Strassburg (Independent Consultant) presented findings from a desk review on corporate support for volunteer action in the region and highlighted the lack of consolidated information and research on this topic, compared to other regions in the world. Tamera Campbell (Managing Director, Harambee) presented on the South African Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator programme, which draws on professional volunteers to train young people who are then placed in entry-level jobs in companies. Tracey Henry (CEO, Tshikululu Social Investments, gave a thoughtful presentation about the need for companies to support volunteer action in a way that supports the longer-term needs and sustainability of communities/civil society organisations and that is grounded in genuine and meaningful partnership.

**Designing youth volunteer programmes to meet local needs**

The session, facilitated by Lauren Graham (Research Associate, VOSESA) provided an opportunity to learn about youth volunteering initiatives in the region and how they facilitate youth leadership. From his experience with SCORE – a sports and development organisation – Stefan Howells



(Executive Director) noted that volunteering helps young people to develop life skills, positive social networks and to become recognised as leaders in their communities. Scott Burnett (Group Director Programmes, loveLife) provided insight into the loveLife groundBREAKER (youth service) model which requires that each server recruits 5 *mpintshis* (or volunteers) to assist them with programme implementation. Many *mpintshis* are inspired to apply to become groundBREAKERS and alumni of the programme have an easier time accessing future employment and education opportunities than their national counterparts. Lastly, Petronella Chisanga (Volunteer, Youth Association of Zambia) shared an inspiring story about the potential for youth from Northern and Southern countries to find sustainable solutions to promote development in the region.

#### **Recognising community-based volunteering for poverty alleviation in the region**

Facilitated by Deline Van Boom (Director, Volunteer Centre Cape Town), this session featured presentations from organisations in three different countries in southern Africa and showed how organisations engage local volunteers in diverse community development projects. In Tanzania, Alfred Magehema (Director General, Young Tanzanian For Community Prosperity - YTCP) shared how YTCP, a youth-led volunteer involving organisation, aims to address the issue of high youth unemployment in Tanzania and engage youth in environment management programmes. Maureen Mwanema (National Advocacy Officer, NAPHAM), explained how NAPHAM's work on HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support is done by volunteers, many of whom are living with the disease. In South Africa, the Soul City Kwanda project highlights that communities organised on their own behalf and drawing on their own energy and resources have the ability to partner effectively for development, noted Lebo Ramafoko (CEO, Soul City).

#### **Higher education community engagement and student leadership development**

Nangamso Koza (Founding Chairperson, Association of Community Development Leaders in Tertiary Institutions - ACODLTI) moderated this session which focused on the potential of student volunteer work as a co-curricular activity, to develop desired graduate attributes. Presentations were made by Dr Jerome Slamet of South African Higher Education Community Engagement Forum (SAHECEF) and Dr Leslie van Rooi (Head FVZS Institute for Leadership and Student Development, Stellenbosch University) on research conducted into this topic. The research demonstrated that graduate attributes can be developed through student volunteer involvement and highlighted the educative nature as well as the value of student volunteerism. Throughout the session, participants also discussed the need to share the student volunteer programme model with other universities in the SADC and COMESA regions, the study's methodology, the community perception of student volunteers and the lack of programmes in existence that build relationships between youth out of schools and in school. A major recommendation from the session was that a manual on higher education community development and volunteerism should be developed.

#### **Models of corporate support for volunteer action in the SADC region**

Colleen du Toit (CEO, CAF Southern Africa) moderated this session and noted the importance at looking at the different behaviours of companies in terms corporate social responsibility approaches and the lack of research available on this topic in the region. Drawing on her experience in Kenya, and other African countries Carol Kiangura (Programme Manager, VSO Jitolee) shared insight into the range of development issues that employee volunteering can address, the different incentives behind employee volunteering, and best practice in designing and implementing meaningful and sustainable programmes. In her capacity as Manager of the FirstRand Volunteers Programme, Desiree Storey presented its mission, how it operates, its contribution to development and opportunities for strengthening the programme. Victor Menash (Programme Manager, Africa Region, Commonwealth Secretariat) spoke about efforts to encourage corporate support of volunteering and particularly youth volunteering given the context of youth unemployment in the region. Nelly Corbel (Senior Programme Coordinator, the John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement, American University of Cairo (AUC), Egypt) also served as resource person for the discussion.





### **The role of international voluntary service (IVS) in promoting civil society development**

The session, facilitated by Karena Cronin (Projects and Outreach Manager, VOSESA) covered research conducted on international volunteering in southern Africa. Claus-Bernhard Pakleppa (Vice-Chair of Executive Committee, South Africa German Network – SAGE Net) presented key findings from qualitative impact research conducted on a German international youth volunteering programme. He shared information on the attitudes, mindsets, motives, expectations and experiences of the young volunteers, and identified some key ingredients for a ‘successful’ voluntary service posting for both volunteers and partner organisations. Moses Mnzava (University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania) and Eddy Mazembo Mavungu (Research Associate, VOSESA) presented key findings from a study conducted by VOSESA, and funded by Trust Africa, on the experience of international volunteering by host organisations, host communities and volunteers in Mozambique and Tanzania. Moses provided critical contextual background on volunteering in Tanzania and the host organisations, while Eddy emphasised four key reasons why international volunteering cannot be understood in isolation from the history of colonialism and current day trade relations.

### **Strengthening volunteer infrastructure for peace and community-centred sustainable development in the region**

Naheed Haque (Deputy Executive Coordinator, UNV) demystified the concept of community-centred sustainable development and shared nine recommendations for how to strengthen community-centred sustainable development through volunteerism. For example, she mentioned the importance of bringing volunteerism to the centre of the policy and development agenda in the region; sharing and documenting experiences and good practices on the role of volunteer action in community-centred sustainable development; fostering youth leadership; developing an integrated and holistic model (or models) for community-centred sustainable development; and measuring the impact of volunteer action on development. Following this Tapiwa Kamuruko (Senior Portfolio Manager Africa Region, UNV) and Kate Cotton (Manager, National Volunteering Team, VSO) reflected on the features of an enabling environment for volunteer action and discussed the role of an enabling environment in strengthening volunteer action in the SADC region.

### **Establishing an International Association of National Youth Service (IANYS) body in southern Africa**

Supported by the South African National Youth Development Agency, and facilitated by VOSESA, this meeting focused on how to strengthen the network of champions of youth service and youth volunteer action in southern Africa. Patrick Mphale (Senior Manager, South African National Youth Service) and Helene Perold (Executive Director, VOSESA) shared information about the International Association of National Youth Service (IANYS), a network of practitioners, policymakers, researchers, young people and professionals involved in youth civic service. Participants reflected on the value of growing such a network in the southern African context. Notably, meeting participants indicated strong interest in promoting volunteer exchange programmes among young people in the region, and made other recommendations related to strengthening research and knowledge-building on youth volunteer action policy and programming in the region.

### **Day 3: Wednesday, 19 October 2012**

#### **The potential to replicate loveLife groundBREAKERS programme in the SADC region**

This breakfast meeting, hosted by loveLife, was well attended by conference participants. Grace Matlhape (CEO, loveLife) presented on the loveLife groundBREAKERS programme and discussed the organisation’s interest in expanding the programme into the SADC region. Participants discussed with great enthusiasm this possibility and shared their thoughts on the needs and opportunities in this regard.

#### **Conference site visits**

- **Canada World Youth and VOSESA** hosted a discussion at the loveLife offices on a study on models and effects of youth volunteer exchange programmes in southern and eastern Africa. Jacob Mati (Research Manager, VOSESA) shared emerging findings from the study and Nadia Karina Ponce Morales (Senior Program Associate, Canada World Youth) helped to facilitate the



discussion. The study was supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and provides evidence of the role of youth volunteer exchange in promoting friendships across borders and fostering inter-cultural understanding.

- **CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation** hosted a site visit to their offices in Newtown. Henri Valot (Director of Outreach, CIVICUS) gave opening remarks while Mariano De Donatis (Convening Manager, CIVICUS) presented on CIVICUS's membership base, network and projects. Megan MacGarry (Convening Officer for Africa, CIVICUS) presented on CIVICUS's networking activities on the continent while Lerato Pagiwa (Communications, CIVICUS) briefly highlighted ways participants could engage with CIVICUS. Finally, Mariatu Fonnah (Research Unit, CIVICUS) gave an overview of CIVICUS's Civil Society Index (CSI) programme, and shared key research findings on volunteering patterns in Africa.
- **FirstRand Volunteers Programme** sponsored a site visit to the **Tembisa Housebuild** project, which operates with the support of the Niall Mellon Housebuild Trust and FirstRand Volunteers Programme. Approximately 30 FirstRand employees were on the site and helped to build a new house. Participants discussed with volunteers what it means to be involved in the volunteering project and also learned about the Trust's skills development programme, which trains people in a wide range of construction disciplines. The site visit was organised by Desiree Storey (Manager, FirstRand Volunteers Programme).
- **First National Bank (FNB)** sponsored a site visit to the **Mooiplaas Community Gardens** project supported by **SMILE Impact**. The garden provides fresh vegetables to the children at the day care centre, while the garden and recycling programmes also provide much needed income to the residents, many of whom have been affected by HIV and AIDS and are supporting others who have been affected. Organised by Bridgett Harris (Volunteer Manager, FNB) the site visit provided staff with an opportunity to learn about the partnership behind this project and how meaningful engagement with beneficiaries through "community conversations" helps to strengthen corporate employee volunteering projects.
- **loveLife** hosted a site visit to their Orange Farm Y-Centre to meet their team of passionate groundBREAKERS and *mpintshis* who implement Cyber Ys, Radio Ys, a full range of sports activities including basketball, the Cultcha Factor Loving Life and Body Ys Healthy Sexuality in schools. Vulnerable young people in Orange Farm are linked to the Y-Centre by loveLife's senior corps of goGogetters, older women volunteers supported by loveLife to care and support orphans and other young people made vulnerable by HIV and AIDS. A groundBREAKER led the site visit with the support of other young people involved in the programme, and the site visit was organised by the loveLife Provincial Manager, Sidwell Sekgobeta.
- **loveLife** also sponsored a site visit to goGogetters programme in Alexandra and Tembisa townships. The programme aims to reduce the incidence of teenage pregnancy and support orphans. Organised by Nkagare Makhudu (National Manager: Youth Leadership Development, loveLife) and supported by Sidwell Dekgobeta (Provincial Manager, Gauteng, loveLife), the site visit provided participants with an opportunity to meet with loveLife's teenage pregnancy reduction team in the area as well as the goGogetters team. Participants also visited the Winnie Mandela Clinic, which is partnering with loveLife's groundBREAKER programme to implement Body Ys Healthy Sexuality and lovingLife programmes in the surrounding schools.

Note: Due to service delivery strikes, the **South African National Youth Development Agency** sponsored visit to YouthBuild was cancelled and participants were redirected to the FNB and SMILE Impact supported Mooiplaas Community Gardens site visit.



### **Closing session**

Participants watched an inspiring video address by Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda (General Secretary, World YWCA). As a daughter of the region, she commended the unsung efforts of community-based volunteers who help to support communities in the face of government failure and noted that volunteering has a special role to play in fostering social cohesion. To strengthen volunteer action in the region, she recommended that young people be put at the centre of volunteering initiatives, that more research be conducted on the value of volunteering in the region, that community innovation be scaled up and that the empowerment of women continue as a priority. Following this, youth participants at the conference read out the Conference Declaration which was then adopted. Naheed Haque (Deputy Executive Coordinator, UNV) shared closing comments about the importance of placing volunteerism at the centre of the development agenda and the need to continue to support young leaders in the region who are agents of transformational change. She also thanked that many organisations and individuals who supported the convening of the conference.