



International Year of Volunteers
10th anniversary
2011

SYNOPSIS OF RECOMMENDATIONS IYV+10 REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS

Quito, Ankara, Manila and Dakar

March-June 2011



UN
Volunteers
inspiration in action

The below constitutes a synopsis of 125 recommendations gathered at five International Year of Volunteers Tenth Anniversary Regional Consultation Meetings held during March-June 2011.



Albert Gonzalez Ferran/UNA/MID

RECOGNITION

1. In order to persuade publics, governments and the international community of the effectiveness of volunteering and civic engagement in reaching shared goals, good practices must be collected, reported, shared and replicated in an intentional and coherent manner.
2. Recognition of the impact of volunteering should be integrated with existing channels for monitoring development and MDG achievement, noting that volunteering cuts across all areas and the extent of community participation is itself an indicator of progress in societal wellbeing.
3. An agreed system for measuring the impact of volunteering on peace and development, including the MDGs, is necessary in order to report its value and enhance its effectiveness even further.
4. Recognition schemes that highlight the achievements of individual volunteers and volunteer organizations would enhance the impact of community mobilization and help reinforce the effects of volunteering on those individuals and on communities.



Maximiliano Pérez, Un Techo para mi País

BACKGROUND

As part of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme convened five Regional Consultation Meetings with stakeholders:

- Latin America (Quito, Ecuador, March 2011)
- Europe, the CIS and Arab Region (Ankara, Turkey, April 2011)
- Asia-Pacific and Caribbean (Manila, the Philippines, May 2011)
- Francophone Africa (Dakar, Senegal, May 2011)
- Anglophone Africa (Dakar, Senegal, June 2011)

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

FACILITATION

1. By referring to new or existing international guidelines, national priorities, and the needs expressed by communities, support for volunteering should be integrated into national legislation and policies in tailored forms that suit the specificities of any existing situation. Civic engagement can thus become a more effective tool for peace-building and sustainable development, including the MDGs.
2. A principle of partnership between governments and civil society should be adopted starting with the development of policies and legislation on volunteering. Such participatory approaches will give ownership to both governments and communities, improving the likelihood of peace and development policy effectiveness and long-term sustainable approaches.
3. In order to leverage the power of volunteerism and civic engagement across the board, governments should recognize volunteerism's cross-cutting benefits and ensure multi-sectoral coordination across different ministries and departments capable of influencing the various thematic areas. Meanwhile, relevant existing policies and legislation on any relevant subject can be amended to include aspects of volunteering and volunteer-involving organizations and institutions.
4. Governments and other entities should build the capacity of volunteers to deliver results and document the impact of community participation.



Recognizing that firm foundations of civic engagement frequently already exist, these structures can then be enhanced, adapting the volunteering modality to the specificities of the local situation, including with new methods such as Information and Communications Technology. This would help create sustainable, results-based and people-centred peace and development solutions.

NETWORKING

1. The volunteering community needs cohesive networks at all levels to strengthen its strategic value, its voice and lobbying power, ultimately focused at achieving peace, the MDGs and sustainable development.
2. The volunteering community must continue to seek and reinforce new partnerships, particularly with the private sector, that will further enhance progress towards peace and development goals.

PROMOTION

1. Civic participation and volunteering take many forms, and to promote the value of volunteering a common core understanding is needed. This would also take into account the need to tailor messages to local specificities, which call for different and often complementary forms of volunteering.
2. The promotion of volunteering for peace and development needs creativity at all levels: media outreach, the Internet, celebrity engagement, and – importantly – grassroots role models who can highlight the transformational change volunteering has created in communities and in themselves, and the necessity of civic participation in sustainable development.
3. Volunteerism, service, and civic participation should be integrated into education systems, including school curricula and similar structures, to promote deeper and more universal understanding and recognition, ultimately grooming 'a sense of citizenship' and underscoring the value of volunteering to peace and development.



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