

Mechanisms for Citizen Engagement and Measurement for the Implementation of Agenda 2030

By United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and International Labour Organization (ILO)

2 March 2018

1. Volunteerism and Agenda 2030

Globally there are an estimated 1 billion volunteers carrying out a range of roles in their communities and societies for the greater good. Even conservative estimates that tend to capture the most visible types of volunteers have shown that volunteering adds significant value to our economies and societies, for example, 2.4% global GDP.

Volunteerism and volunteers contribute to the delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) across all thematic areas, whether on specific goals such as those on health, gender, education, sustainable consumption or environmental protection, or as a cross-cutting means of implementation that engages people on the issues they are facing. Volunteers can support sustainable development, particularly by mobilizing the necessary capacities and expand the reach of the common effort.

The GA Resolution establishing the High Level Political Forum ([A/RES/67/290](#)) explicitly mentions volunteer groups as important stakeholders. Volunteer groups have an opportunity to present evidence about volunteerism's contribution to the SDGs. It is also recommended that volunteerism is measured to contribute to a holistic understanding of the engagement of people and their well-being and to be part of the monitoring of the SDGs.

2. What will the session offer?

The session will provide guidance on how Member States can work to strengthen their analysis and reporting across SDGs, in particular, under SDG17 through the integration of national data on volunteerism with a specific focus on:

- Including qualitative and quantitative data on volunteer efforts in their countries in general, and under specific thematic goals and where possible, to provide estimates of economic value;
- Demonstrating what countries are already doing (public, private and civil society initiatives) to reach out to ordinary citizens so that they can become drivers of their own development in the spirit of Agenda 2030;
- Using case studies and examples around voluntary citizen engagement to provide a narrative on social inclusion and leaving the furthest behind first under specific SDG goals and targets.

Research and evidence on volunteerism is an excellent source of information that can be used by countries to show a 'whole of society approach' within their Voluntary National Reviews, and to move beyond purely financial resource considerations in terms of the efforts that their own governments have made in the implementation of the SDGs. To date, discussions under SDG17 and other SDG goals and targets on the means of implementation have focused primarily on financial resources and resource challenges.

The session will provide an opportunity to respond to the following key questions.

- How and why can volunteerism be integrated into the implementation of Agenda 2030?
- Why is it important to measure volunteer work and what and how should it be measured?
- What are the best practices for voluntary citizen engagement that has contributed to achieving specific goals and targets?

3. Who can attend the session?

- Member States, including volunteerism policy makers and VNR lead agency representatives
- UN entities
- Civil society and volunteer involving organizations
- Academia
- Other stakeholders who are passionate about citizen engagement

4. Global examples of references to voluntary citizen engagement in 2017 VNRs



Example 1. Thailand's VNR included engagement of volunteers under specific goals. Acknowledging the profound impact of disasters, particularly on the poor, local volunteers have been trained on crisis and disaster management to build and enhance community **resilience** as part of developing the Second National Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Plan by the government (**Goal 1**). As part of the universal health coverage service, the migrant **health** volunteers act as interpreters in health facilities and provide health related knowledge to migrant communities (**Goal 3**).

Example 2. As part of the stakeholder engagement strategy developed by the Government of **Jordan**, extensive consultations were held with civil society organizations and volunteer involving organizations (VIOs) to i) raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda; ii) inform national stakeholders of government actions taken on achieving SDGs; and iii) discuss the role of stakeholders in the process, among others. Among challenges and solutions identified to ensure the meaningful participation of volunteer organizations in reviewing national progress under Agenda 2030, the government specifically committed to strengthening the role of youth in volunteerism and community service and acknowledged the important role of volunteers and capacity building needs for VIOs in SDG implementation and monitoring.

About UNV

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide. We work with partners to integrate qualified, highly motivated and well supported UN Volunteers into development programming and promote the value and global recognition of volunteerism. UNV is active in around 130 countries every year. UNV is administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and reports to the UNDP Executive Board.

Programme

	FRIDAY, 2 MARCH 2018 <i>International Conference Centre for Geneva (CICG) - Room 4</i> Mechanisms for citizen engagement and measurement for the implementation of Agenda 2030 <i>Moderator: Amanda Khozi Mukwashi, Chief, Volunteer Advisory Services Section, UNV</i>
8:30-8:35	Welcome
8:35-8:45	Setting the tone: Volunteerism and Agenda 2030
8:45-9:00	Measuring the volunteer work – how and what
9:00-9:15	Integrating evidence on volunteering in national reporting
9:15-9:35	Discussion and Q&A
9:35-9:45	Conclusion and closing

