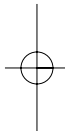
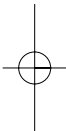


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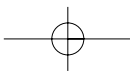
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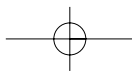
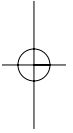


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## **Introduction**

### *Volunteers reaching out for peace and reconciliation*

In November 2002 volunteers from all over the world gathered in Seoul, Korea, for the seventeenth IAVE World Volunteer Conference. The theme of the conference, 'Volunteers reaching out for peace and reconciliation', could hardly have been more appropriate at that time, when preparations for war were on everyone's mind, or more poignant in that place, where the wounds of a war fifty years ago are still felt and where reconciliation between North and South remains a distant dream.

The papers printed here are a selection from those presented in the plenary and workshop sessions at the conference. The format of the conference favoured short presentations, so some of the papers appear here in full for the first time.

We open with the keynote address by Xanana Gusmão, recently elected president of the new country of East Timor, which is a testimony to the enduring hardship and courage that are for many the high price of peace and democracy. Subsequent papers, from countries as diverse as Northern Ireland, Japan and Colombia, provide a broad perspective on the role of volunteers and volunteering in

underpinning peace and assisting reconciliation. Some, like the paper by Jimmy Kearney and Wendy Osborne, focus on particular situations of ongoing tension and conflict; others, like that by Yoko Yazawa on a volunteer exchange programme between Japan and Korea, need to be read with a sense of context – in this case, the fact that Korea was for many years occupied by the Japanese and that memories are long.

The paper by Donald Eberly presents the case for national youth service, the alternative to military service in some countries, as an instrument for peace and reconciliation. Contributions from Colombia and Bosnia offer moving perspectives on volunteering in the aftermath of war. And papers from the UK, South Korea and the Philippines focus on the role of governments in supporting volunteering – an appropriate emphasis, given that the UN General Assembly would in a matter of days unanimously approve a resolution urging governments around the world to do just that.

One theme that hardly featured in the conference, other than in passing references, was the role of activists in campaigning for peace and protesting against war. This is at the very least ironic, given the publicity

they were beginning to attract even then and the worldwide upsurge in protest since that time. It indicates the continuing gulf of recognition and understanding between the worlds of 'traditional' volunteering and of activism.

Yet the history of volunteering is a history not only of philanthropy and service but also of radicalism and activism. It is a combination that has helped humanity to achieve some of its best and bravest dreams. There can be no better or braver dream at this time than the dream of returned peace and fresh reconciliation. Perhaps the time has come for a more concerted effort to reconcile our two volunteering worlds!

To my knowledge, this is the first time that the papers from an IAVE World Conference have been published in this way. It is certainly the first time that we have done so in partnership with the Institute for Volunteering Research, and I am pleased and proud of this new association. I thank Justin Davis Smith and his colleagues for making it possible.

Liz Burns OBE  
World President, IAVE

## Abstracts

Reaching out for reconciliation and peace in Timor-Leste

**His Excellency Xanana Gusmão, President of Timor-Leste**

*East Timor's twenty-five-year struggle for independence has created the need for a national reconciliation process 'whereby justice is meted out to perpetrators but which eschews revenge, resentment and hatred'. As this article by East Timor's president points out, this is a challenge not confined to his country: globalisation has spread intolerance and violence across the world, making peace building an urgent priority. Essential to this task is the involvement of civil society, which is less partisan than governments and less subject to political or economic pressure. The President describes the work of East Timor's Commission for Truth and Reconciliation and concludes that 'Volunteering is a nobler way of working as it demonstrates a sense of responsibility and does not ask for any benefits in return'.*

Government and volunteering

**Dr Justin Davis Smith, Director, Institute for Volunteering Research**

*One of the most important lessons from International Year of Volunteers (IYV) 2001 was that government support is vital if volunteering is truly to fulfil its potential. Using the findings of the IYV evaluation, this article identifies six different ways in which governments can provide that support: providing funds; making policy that is friendly to volunteering; setting an example (for example, by encouraging civil servants to volunteer); forming partnerships with organisations that involve volunteers; generating publicity for volunteering; and providing recognition for people who volunteer. However, the research also showed that there are four potential problems with government support: firstly, if a government fails to provide enough support; secondly, if it attempts to erode the autonomy of volunteering; thirdly, if it fails to provide a central contact point for volunteering within the administration; and fourthly, if it is reluctant to accept that volunteers can be campaigners as well as service-providers.*

## National youth service as an instrument of peace and reconciliation

**Donald J. Eberly, Honorary President, International Association for National Youth Service**

*As a worldwide increase in demand for social welfare services coincides with a decline in government funding for such services, the time has never been more opportune for national youth service (NYS): 'non-military programmes in which young people serve with varying degrees of voluntarism'. This article looks at how NYS programmes can build upon 'the sense of mutual responsibility that should exist between a nation and its young people'. It analyses programmes in Germany and Nigeria, and gives a list of recommendations for how governments can make NYS a success. The article then looks at 'service-learning', where the practical experience gained in NYS is used as the basis of academic study, and makes recommendations for good practice. In conclusion, the problems that NYS programmes may encounter – including unrealistic expectations of what they can achieve – are examined.*

## Time changes lives – trust changes everything: volunteer work for conflict resolution and reconciliation in Northern Ireland

**Professor Jimmy Kearney, Centre for Voluntary Action Studies, University of Ulster**

**Wendy Osborne, Director, Volunteer Development Agency**

*Intercommunal violence in Northern Ireland has claimed the lives of more than 3,500 people in the past thirty years. This article describes the major contribution volunteers have made to resolving conflict in the troubled province. Volunteering has been effective in this task because it has been inclusive and diverse and because government has created an enabling environment. There are case studies of how volunteers have helped with intercommunal reconciliation. A particularly optimistic sign is the number of young people involved in this kind of work.*

## Service-learning through volunteering: The Graduate Volunteer Programme, Thailand

**Supparat Rattanamuk, Assistant Professor, Graduate Volunteer Centre,  
Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand**

*Although volunteering has long been a way of life in Thailand, fewer than a quarter of the adult population are currently involved in any kind of voluntary work. This article describes the one-year diploma course set up by Thammasat University to encourage young graduates to learn about rural society through volunteering. By taking part in development projects to benefit poor people, young people can acquire valuable practical experience. This is a service-learning programme unique in Thailand; it helps the students to see their service in the larger context of social justice and social policy rather than simply charity.*

## International megatrends in volunteerism

**Mary V. Merrill, Merrill Associates, Columbus, Ohio, USA**

**R. Dale Safrit, Department of 4-H Youth Development, North Carolina State  
University, Raleigh, North Carolina, USA**

*In this article, the authors suggest that eight consistent patterns – or ‘megatrends’ – have affected volunteering during the past decade. They are: (1) a growing concern for the impact of time on volunteering; (2) variations in the meaning of the word ‘volunteering’ from country to country; (3) demographic changes that have forced volunteer programmes to concentrate on the extremes of the age continuum; (4) a growing awareness of the need for truly pluralistic approaches to volunteer recruitment, engagement and management; (5) a recognition that volunteering promotes reciprocity, community, social solidarity and citizenship; (6) a demand for volunteer programme managers to demonstrate greater professionalism; (7) the growing role of ICT in facilitating the exchange of information about volunteering; and (8) differences of opinion about the appropriate role of government in the promotion and support of volunteerism.*

## A new approach to the international exchange of volunteers: a 'closed' policy

**Chang-Ho Lee, Secretary General, KOrean Pioneers In Overseas NGOs Inc (KOPION), Seoul, Korea**

*Intermediary bodies that recruit and place volunteers overseas usually adopt an 'open' approach: that is, they leave the initial selection of the volunteers, and their after-care once they arrive, to the recipient organisations. This article introduces KOPION Inc (Korean Pioneers in Overseas NGOs Inc), a Seoul-based organisation that has pioneered the 'closed' approach, whereby only NGOs registered as members of an international network of organisations committed to certain standards are able to exchange their volunteers. The potential of the 'closed' approach for building an effective international volunteer network is explored.*

## The Korean government's policy for promoting volunteering

**Myung-sook Han, Minister for Gender Equality, Korea**

*IYV 2001 was a dramatic year for volunteering in Korea: volunteers were heavily involved in the hosting of the football World Cup, and immediately afterwards were called on to help the victims of the disastrous floods that swept the country. This article describes the Korean government's four-part plan to promote volunteering: (i) funding the training, support and recognition of volunteers, (ii) improving the infrastructure for volunteering, (iii) introducing a volunteering programme for women and young people and publicising it widely, and (iv) working more closely with NGOs.*

## Youth volunteering in Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Vahida Huzejrovic, Co-ordinator of Voluntary Work, Osmijeh (the Association for Psychosocial Help and the Development of Voluntary Work), Gracanica, Bosnia**

*The power of volunteering to bring about reconciliation is never more needed than in the aftermath of war. This article describes how thousands of young volunteers helped to rebuild Bosnia after years of conflict. The volunteers helped not only their fellow citizens but also themselves; thanks to their voluntary service, they lost their feelings of helplessness and apathy, and regained their belief in themselves.*

## The Peace Corps in the twenty-first century

**Dr Kyo Paul Jhin, Director, Office of Planning, Policy and Analysis, Peace Corps, Washington DC, USA**

*Since it was set up in 1961, the US Peace Corps has sent more than 165,000 volunteers to serve in 135 countries. This article gives a brief profile of the Corps, covering its origins in a proposal by John F Kennedy, its constitution and funding, its ambitious range of programmes (including education, business, the environment, agriculture, health and community development) and its promising future – the number of Peace Corps volunteers is to be doubled to fourteen thousand by 2007.*

## Promoting international youth voluntary services in Asia

**Lee Ji-hyang, Junior Programme Specialist, Youth Team, Korean National Commission**

*International youth volunteering has grown more slowly in south-east Asia than in Europe. This article proposes three ways of increasing the pace of development: firstly, by setting up properly organised, issue-based world youth forums and exchange programmes; secondly, by ensuring that all national, regional and international bodies – such as schools, youth organisations, businesses, governments and UN agencies – recognise the importance of volunteering in enabling young people to participate in sustainable development and to promote intercultural understanding; and finally, by encouraging young people to believe in their own potential.*

## Government support for volunteering in the Philippines

**Horacio R Morales Jr, President, La Liga Policy Institute**

*Volunteering is a widespread and long-standing practice in the Philippines but, as this article shows, it is currently failing to meet the steep increase in demand. This is partly because of the lack of a supportive policy environment at both national and regional level. The state-funded agency concerned with volunteering spends too much time vetting volunteers from abroad and too little time nurturing local initiatives. The government as a whole fails to see how useful volunteers can be in its programmes of national development. And there is a need for a south-east Asian regional body that can promote South-South volunteering as a means of opening*

*dialogue between cultures – this will help to counter the ethnic intolerance currently threatening the region.*

## The future of volunteering

**Leo Wong, Youth One, Edmonton, Canada**

*By involving the ideas and energies of young people today, this article argues, we can ‘create a bridge between the strength of tradition and the energy of innovation’. We therefore need to use our collective power to inspire young people to volunteer worldwide. Three ideas are proposed that could help to shape the future: firstly, we need to embrace diversity – diversity of thought, belief and opinion – so that we can break down the barriers we have created for ourselves; secondly, we need to research volunteering more effectively, in order to fortify it as an institution for learning about ourselves; and thirdly, we all need to find our ‘inner youth’.*

## A volunteer exchange programme between Korea and Japan

**Yoko Yazawa, Society of Yatsugatake Residents Contemplating Life and Death**

*Relations between Korea and Japan have historically been problematic. This article describes the initial stages of a volunteer exchange programme designed to improve understanding between the two countries. A Korean student spent six months in the Japanese town of Fujimi, using half her time to volunteer in social welfare facilities and half to tell the local people about the Korean way of life. Once certain administrative problems have been solved, the programme is set to expand.*

## How volunteers are helping internally displaced families in Colombia

**Maria Teresa Gnecco de Ruiz, Corporacios El Minuto de Dios**

*Fifty years of civil strife in Colombia have led to the displacement of many families from the countryside to the cities. This article describes how one organisation, Corporación El Minuto de Dios, supports these displaced families from the moment they arrive, by helping them with housing and education, and by providing psychosocial services such as group therapy. The organisation’s volunteers carry out a variety of roles: raising public awareness of the needs of displaced families; raising funds; providing training; offering emotional support; helping with job search; and escorting families to cultural and recreational activities.*

*East Timor's twenty-five-year struggle for independence has created the need for a national reconciliation process 'whereby justice is meted out to perpetrators but which eschews revenge, resentment and hatred'. As this article by East Timor's president points out, this is a challenge not confined to his country: globalisation has spread intolerance and violence across the world, making peace building an urgent priority. Essential to this task is the involvement of civil society, which is less partisan than governments and less subject to political or economic pressure. The President describes the work of East Timor's Commission for Truth and Reconciliation and concludes that 'Volunteering is a nobler way of working as it demonstrates a sense of responsibility and does not ask for any benefits in return'.*

## Reaching out for reconciliation and peace in Timor-Leste

**His Excellency Xanana Gusmão, President of Timor-Leste**

There are numerous ongoing situations of extreme violence around the world – such as in Rwanda and Colombia – that demand a reconciliation process if peace is to be achieved for the people of those countries. Reconciliation compels one to reflect upon the universality of pain, suffering and forgiveness. These feelings know no boundaries – they are the human condition. Sometimes the pain is so overwhelming that talk of forgiveness seems like another insult – people who talk to perpetrators of injustice are accused of insulting the victims. Initiating

dialogue with a recent foe is a difficult process. I am writing from the field of sorrows, where the sea of sadness washed our shores for so many years that we have even lost the names of those for whom we seek justice. I have heard the same said by our brothers and sisters in other places in the world. We know from our knowledge of history that civilisation evolved from brutality, but also that peace followed great wars.

What, then, does a tolerant society in the twenty-first century do to speed

up the healing process? Truth and reconciliation are important elements, but the parties must first engage – dialogue is the primary objective and conditions for an effective exchange of views are a basic requirement. Getting the opposite side to the table sounds like a simple task but in reality it requires complex negotiations. People have different perceptions.

Let me explain the situation in Timor-Leste in more detail. In 2000 we strove to revive dialogue and many meetings were held, starting with Jakarta and including gatherings in Singapore, Tokyo, Denpasar and Baucau, Timor-Leste. These meetings were largely aimed at promoting dialogue with the pro-autonomy leadership.

It must be acknowledged that the people did not agree with these meetings and we were accused of distorting the spirit of reconciliation. We reflected deeply on this message from the people and resolved to identify another mechanism. On the other hand, reconciliation could not be strictly limited to this period of our history. The reconciliation process has been a continuing one, even during the armed struggle stage, and covers a period of over two decades.

### **The reconciliation process**

Our process of reconciliation began in August 1975, before the invasion of Timor-Leste by the Indonesian military, when the two main parties at that time engaged in a brief but violent clash whose effects are still felt today. To this we must add the process arising from the violence of September 1999, perpetrated by militia groups organised and funded by sections of the Indonesian military determined to block the independence of Timor-Leste.

The need for us to formulate a National Reconciliation Policy became clear, as well as the need for all the parties involved – government, judiciary and civil society – to be guided by a single Code of Conduct, without which our efforts at reconciliation were bound to fail.

All the government bodies agreed that reconciliation should offer a means whereby the perpetrators of human rights violations could sit together with the victims and community leaders. From here commenced the second phase of the reconciliation process, which mostly concentrated on the September 1999 violence. Once the Indonesian authorities had announced their unqualified support, we proceeded to organise meetings at various

localities along the border in both the north and south of the country, including in the enclave of Oecusse-Ambeno, as well as in Bali and West Timor.

Throughout this process I have witnessed tense encounters that ended with tears being shed and embraces of forgiveness being exchanged between former foes. Such meetings allowed us to dispel many of the persistent concerns about personal revenge.

In each of these meetings, we emphasised the importance of justice being done. Although we recognise that many international organisations take exception to our approach, our position continues to be that we must allow the perpetrators of crimes to meet with victims before they decide to return to Timor-Leste and to face trial there.

We advocate a reconciliation process whereby justice is meted out to perpetrators but which eschews revenge, resentment and hatred. This is a very complex issue. To start a reconciliation process requires a balancing of interests: on one hand, the interests of justice, and on the other hand, the interests of a suffering community that follows a leader who is unwilling to return for fear of punishment. As I said earlier,

a good knowledge of the laws of Timor-Leste and of attitudes to those suspected of serious crimes is necessary to facilitate the reconciliation process.

A good deal is spoken outside Timor-Leste on the subject of trauma. In East Timor's case, I believe that trauma is experienced at a personal level, but that it is not a generalised phenomenon. I think we must view trauma from another angle: that is, as it may be experienced by the family members, and particularly the children, of those facing prison sentences of ten, fifteen or even twenty years.

Reconciliation must be meaningful. I believe that it will succeed only when East Timorese society stops being haunted by the ghosts of past conflicts. We have already proudly shown to the world that, in spite of the twenty-four years of violence and suffering that culminated in September 1999, the East Timorese people desire to live in harmony and to attain true peace of mind. The two elections, which took place within the space of seven months, were carried out peacefully and with an exceptionally high level of popular participation.

We agree with the need for justice. After all, this is a political process

and not merely a judicial one. That is why, in my programmes (and I was elected president on the basis of my programmes) I defended strongly the need for an amnesty for those already indicted and serving prison terms.

I have already mentioned that the reconciliation process requires a balancing of interests. I wish to add here the national interest of guaranteeing political and social stability. This must include ensuring stability along the border and strengthening our co-operation with Indonesia, particularly its eastern region. Only thus can we further our development process and attain its main goals.

We must see our reconciliation efforts as a means of consolidating national stability and of contributing to world peace. In this era of so-called globalisation, we all hoped that the world would enjoy an economic stability, coupled with a high level of technological development, that would enable us to find ways to eradicate poverty, hunger, disease and ignorance from the world. But instead we now live in an era of mistrust, an age where feelings of hatred and revenge are gaining ground almost everywhere.

It is very sad to note that at the same

time as individuals are attaching more importance to the values of freedom and democracy and the principles of tolerance and mutual respect, we are witnessing the rise of intolerance and the systematic use of terror, which hinders constructive dialogue.

### **'The sacred goal of building peace'**

Now that we have entered the new millennium, it is vital that all peoples of the world should unite around the sacred goal of building peace. Peace cannot be the privilege of a few. Peace is the most fundamental asset of every human being. Peace is not the mere absence of conflict, nor is it merely an agreement between countries to avoid war – it must derive from the peace of mind within each human being, from the solidarity between individuals and from the tolerance within societies until it reaches the level of mutual respect between countries.

Peace of mind means that people feel truly free: free from psychological or political pressure, free from economic pressure or social tension, free from past trauma, free from daily shortcomings and free from the fear of what tomorrow may bring.

Peace is the outcome of the necessary interaction of behaviours within a

society that goes on to influence policies by the governmental bodies. In this sense, peace must be an act of sovereignty by the people. If each citizen lives at peace with other citizens, every people and every country will live at peace with other countries. Towards this noble objective, the reconciliation of spirit and minds gains even greater importance.

In a democratic society, the tolerance of difference must be a fundamental principle. Yet there is still intolerance in established democracies.

Difference has many dimensions and should not be perceived merely in political terms, whether in developed societies or in developing and poorer ones – such as ours, which is still in a post-conflict situation.

The problems arising from difference are the result of repressed emotions, of accumulated feelings of frustration and aspiration. Therefore, the peace of mind we envisage must be the outcome of a long but determined effort towards reconciliation. People's attitudes and behaviour should be understood as spontaneous reactions that become irrational because they are not controlled, or as residues of hatred and revenge.

Moves towards compromise can only succeed if they arise from the

conscious acceptance of the norms of tolerance and mutual respect, which in turn will encourage the values of fraternity and solidarity. But this will not be possible without the reconciliation of minds.

Reconciliation is a process with both a personal and a social dimension. It must mature within each individual so that society may unite around the values of tolerance and mutual respect. Reconciliation is not a simple process, and therefore it is not an easy one – but it is not impossible to achieve. And without reconciliation there is no peace.

### **The Commission begins its work**

We have set up a Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in Timor-Leste. Efforts are being made to give it a presence in every district and sub-district, to ensure greater efficiency in seeking solutions at village and hamlet level. The Commission has a mandate covering all forms of non-physical violence, such as threats, persecution, burning of houses, plunder, killing of livestock and so on, but all blood crimes must be channeled to the judiciary system.

In some areas of the country, the Commission has successfully begun its work by promoting dialogue

between conflicting parties. This has led to a commitment to join hands to forget the past and to reject violence, which is the most common price paid for 'doing justice with one's own hands'.

There is still much to be done. Above all, there must be a collective desire to seek the truth and to demand justice, but in the context of reconciliation, so that future generations may live without memories of the horrors of war.

This will also be a way to give due value to the sacrifices made to free our homeland. Such sacrifices will only be vindicated when we reach an equitable level of development based on a steadfast determination to eradicate poverty.

We will be able to say that those sacrifices were worthwhile when we reduce infant mortality, when every Timorese family has a house to live in, drinking water and food, when every child attends school and the population has access to health care.

If this does not happen, the grief experienced in the past will not be healed and reconciliation will be a lot harder to achieve. Stability will continue to be merely an aspiration.

If the reconciliation process is to be

comprehensive and deeply rooted in society, it is most important that, at the political level, there should be a collective awareness of the need for such a process.

In the case of Timor-Leste, the best known aspect of reconciliation is the effort made regarding the perpetrators and victims of the 1999 violence.

However, there are conflicts emerging among local communities because of events that occurred before 1999 and which are demanding attention from the authorities in the country. At the same time, the population is demanding that the political parties involved in the violent events of 1975 should take responsibility for their actions and ask the people for forgiveness. To date, this has not been possible to achieve.

From this you can see that the reconciliation process is not merely a political question, a matter of rhetoric or an issue that simply requires the agreement of government and parliament.

To forgive is usually easy. But to be truly humble, to recognise one's mistakes, to apologise or to ask for forgiveness is very hard. It demands great courage: political courage from

politicians, moral courage from citizens. When people become genuinely humble, they will reveal a human dimension that deserves the appreciation of all.

### **The role of civil society**

The participation of civil society in this reconciliation is very important because of the complexity of the process. Civil society is less partisan and less subject to political or economic pressure. The concept of 'civil society' is too often thought of as meaning NGOs only – but it includes more than just NGOs, which are often too professionalised and too closely linked to the policies of the governments that support them. Civil society should mean, first and foremost, the social conscience of those who have the means to help the most vulnerable people, of those who have the knowledge to help those who have no access to information.

I am not saying that NGOs are unnecessary; they are certainly needed in developing and underdeveloped countries, for they reduce the corruption and mismanagement that often exists. What I am saying is that we need to encourage the active participation of the best prepared sections of our society in such areas as peace, democracy, reconciliation, solidarity,

tolerance, education and health.

Volunteering is a nobler way of working as it demonstrates a sense of responsibility and does not ask for any benefits in return. In this conformist world of questionable values, volunteering is a movement worth pursuing.

In Timor-Leste we are undergoing a state-building process and our civil society is still in its embryonic stage, as are many other sectors of our nation. As president, I have taken upon myself the responsibility not only of nurturing civil society but also of helping it to acquire a greater understanding of its role in the state-building process.

The state is its citizens, and citizens must be better served in all respects, so that the state itself may become sound and strong.

In post-conflict situations, civil society has an extremely important role to play. Armed conflict may have ceased but generalised violence may continue. Too often, state institutions are ineffectual because they are designed to solve problems through appeasement. It is up to civil society to work towards changing attitudes.

Civil society can take up the role of

generating debate and dialogue. To accept dialogue is the first step in reconciliation, where there must be respect for difference, where self-control must be exercised and where common values are identified as the common denominator leading to understanding and mutual respect.

This tolerance will reinforce the yearning for peace, towards which every human being aspires. But peace must stop being an aspiration and become a reality.

One of the priorities of my term as president will be to continue to unite the Timorese people in the fight against poverty. In this sense, reconciliation is an essential element in the current process of national reconstruction as well as national development.

The small size of our population, together with the strong sense of community characteristic of many economically underdeveloped nations, have facilitated reconciliation amongst the East Timorese. In addition, our people's strong ancestral links with the land have been an important factor in bringing refugees home, in spite of fears of possible retribution.

Only a wise policy of reconciliation can promote harmony within

Timorese society and guarantee broad participation as the precondition for social justice and improving the living standards of the population. Only then will independence have real meaning for a people who have fought, suffered and finally won their right to live in freedom and independence.

*One of the most important lessons from International Year of Volunteers (IYV) 2001 was that government support is vital if volunteering is truly to fulfil its potential. Using the findings of the IYV evaluation, this article identifies six different ways in which governments can provide that support: providing funds; making policy that is friendly to volunteering; setting an example (for example, by encouraging civil servants to volunteer); forming partnerships with organisations that involve volunteers; generating publicity for volunteering; and providing recognition for people who volunteer. However, the research also showed that there are four potential problems with government support: firstly, if a government fails to provide enough support; secondly, if it attempts to erode the autonomy of volunteering; thirdly, if it fails to provide a central contact point for volunteering within the administration; and fourthly, if it is reluctant to accept that volunteers can be campaigners as well as service-providers.*

## Government and volunteering

**Dr Justin Davis Smith, Director, Institute for Volunteering Research**

This article looks at the important issue of what is an appropriate role for government in helping to support and promote volunteering – and conversely, what are the limitations, or indeed dangers, of government involvement in the volunteering arena.

First I would like to make some general points about the nature of the volunteering/government contract at a global level, drawing on a recent evaluation of the International Year

of Volunteers 2001 (IYV2001) carried out by my Institute for the United Nations.

### **IYV 2001**

The International Year of Volunteers was, of course, a government-initiated event. The proposal came initially from the government of Japan, following the awakening of interest in volunteering in that country in the aftermath of the Kobe earthquake. In November 1997 the General Assembly of the United

Nations, with the support of 123 countries, proclaimed 2001 as the International Year of Volunteers.

IYV was a major success – indeed, one of the most successful international years of recent times. Almost 130 countries took part, and over 500 committees were set up at national, regional and local level to plan and co-ordinate a host of activities and events. Across each of the four goals of the Year – promotion, recognition, facilitation and networking – significant achievements were recorded and steps taken that will result in a considerable strengthening of the global volunteer movement.

### **What role for government?**

During the course of 2001 and the first half of 2002 my Institute, with help from the Development Resource Centre in South Africa, carried out the global evaluation of IYV for the United Nations. As such, we have a unique insight into the achievements and challenges of the Year.

The evaluation consisted of two main elements: a survey of all participating countries with a view to getting a global feedback on how the Year went; and seven country case studies to provide a more detailed picture. The seven countries chosen to take part in the study were

Canada, Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago, Laos, Lebanon, Hungary and Uganda. In addition, feedback was collected from a small number of international volunteer-involving organisations.

The full evaluation can be found on the Institute's website at [www.ivr.org.uk](http://www.ivr.org.uk). Even though I say so myself, it makes fascinating reading and offers a privileged insight into the energy and passion unleashed during the Year.

But what was the role of government in making IYV work? And what lessons can we draw for the future about the strengths and limitations of government intervention?

The IYV experience suggests that government can play a number of critical roles in helping volunteering to flourish:

#### *1. Providing funds*

Over 100 million US dollars were raised in the 126 participating countries to help run the Year. There was, of course, a huge disparity in the sums raised: 14 per cent of countries mobilised between 200 and 5,000 US dollars each, while 20 per cent of countries raised over 100,000 US dollars. The money came from a variety of sources, but the key funder was central government, which contributed 64 per cent of the total

funding for the Year. A further 16 per cent came from regional and local government, which means that 80 per cent of all funding for the Year at country level came from the state. Some of the sums raised were truly massive. For example, in Canada over 7 million US dollars were mobilised for the Year, much of it from central government. It is inconceivable that the Year would have been so successful without this injection of resources from the state.

One of the key areas of government support during the Year was facilitating the development of volunteer centres at national and local level. National Volunteer Centres were planned in a number of countries, including Sri Lanka, Lebanon, Egypt, Jamaica, Hungary and Laos; while plans to set up regional and local centres were put in place in Kyrgyzstan and Chile. In Luxembourg two new national agencies were established during the year to facilitate volunteering.

Some of the countries that struggled with IYV were those which had very little infrastructure to support volunteering; and one of the key priorities identified by participants in the Year for taking things forward after 2001 was to set up or strengthen the volunteering infrastructure.

*The first lesson from IYV is that government has a key role to play in funding the development of volunteering at national and local level.*

## *2. Making policy*

The second lesson from IYV is that government can help to create a favourable policy and legislative climate within which volunteering can flourish.

Legal frameworks for volunteering were introduced for the first time during IYV in the Czech Republic, Colombia and Madagascar, while in France, Japan and Portugal, existing laws were revised and improved. In Sri Lanka, IYV brought about talks between civil society and government on a Voluntary Social Service Organisations Act to improve conditions for involving volunteers; while National Plans on volunteering were developed in several countries including Portugal, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

The Year also suggested that government might usefully review legislation not specific to volunteering to ensure that volunteering is not inadvertently harmed. Measures along these lines were introduced by the Dutch government as part of its commitment to IYV.

In several countries steps were taken to include volunteering in the national accounts, while in many others specific programmes to promote volunteering were developed: in India, for example, a Volunteer Corps covering a thousand villages was set up to enlist volunteers and train them in disaster response.

*Lesson number two from IYV is that government has a key role to play in establishing a policy framework in which volunteering can flourish.*

### 3. Setting an example

Government can set an example to other sectors by encouraging public sector staff to get involved in volunteering and by opening up the public sector to volunteers.

In some countries politicians themselves signed up to take part in voluntary activities: in Northern Ireland, for example, thirty of the 108 members of the Legislative Assembly committed themselves to volunteer during the Year.

In other countries steps were taken to expand volunteering in key public services such as health and education. In Hungary the Ministry of Health Care launched a funding programme to develop volunteering in hospitals; and in India

partnerships between voluntary agencies and schools were established in several states to involve students of all ages in a range of volunteering activities, from community cleanliness to disaster preparation and road safety.

Governments also helped to stimulate debate on volunteering. In nearly all participating countries leading politicians gave set-piece speeches on volunteering; and in a number of countries parliamentary hearings on volunteering were held, often for the first time. For example, the Tunisian parliament devoted a special session to the International Day of Volunteers; hearings in the Russian parliament resulted in recommendations for a national plan to facilitate volunteering; and parliamentary meetings in Austria brought about the designation of permanent focal points for volunteering in all political parties.

*Lesson number three is that government can set a good example by opening up the public sector to volunteers and by stimulating public debate on the importance of volunteering to society.*

### 4. Forming partnerships

Government can help to stimulate volunteering through the forming of partnerships with both the voluntary

and commercial sectors. One of the great successes of IYV was the number and range of partnerships established at all levels and across all sectors, many of them stimulated or supported by government.

In some countries government and the voluntary sector came together to plan joint events and to carry out joint research. In other countries more strategic partnerships were established to develop volunteering strategies and national plans. In Fiji, for example, a partnership between rural voluntary organisations and the Fiji Council of Social Services was developed to help the outreach of the country's volunteer programme.

Partnerships with the commercial sector were perhaps less successful than those with the voluntary sector, but good examples nevertheless abound. At the global level UNV managed to gain the support of the Italian clothing giant Benetton, and its campaign of posters and the Colours magazine issue on volunteering were seen throughout Europe, the USA, South America and the Far East. At the national level private sector support for the Year was also forthcoming. In Bahrain in November 2001 Coca Cola, together with the Ministry of Social Affairs, launched the campaign 'Hand in Hand towards a better world'. In Sri

Lanka the Seylan Bank assisted with the awards and prizes for the IYV poster art contest for children; and in the Netherlands, Yellow Pages provided free advertising for the Year.

*Lesson number four is that government can stimulate volunteering by forging partnerships with the voluntary and commercial sectors.*

#### *5. Generating publicity*

Government can do much to generate publicity for volunteering through the media. Its power to act in this way is most pronounced in those countries where the main press, television and radio outlets are state run. But even in those countries with independent media, the experience of IYV is that government can still play a part in generating news coverage.

In Uganda one national newspaper ran a weekly supplement on volunteering, while in Spain a two-hour television marathon was screened at prime time on 5 December to showcase the diversity of volunteering.

Another method of generating publicity for volunteering is through research, and government was also heavily involved during the Year in commissioning and conducting

research on different aspects of volunteering. In a number of countries national surveys of volunteering were carried out, drawing on the Research Toolkit developed during the Year by UNV. In other countries more specific research was carried out or commissioned by government, including a study of grassroots volunteering in Cambodia, a study of the impact of volunteering in Israel and a study of the historical development of volunteering in Sri Lanka.

Governments also generated a range of promotional items during the Year. In several countries official stamps were issued to promote volunteering, and in Australia, Canada and the Netherlands flowers were given the volunteer designation. Other countries were more adventurous: a castle was donated for use by volunteer-involving organisations in the United Arab Emirates; a volunteer street was inaugurated in Mozambique; and in Brazil a rocket was launched into space carrying the IYV logo.

*Lesson number five is that government can help to generate publicity for volunteering, both through partnerships with the media and through high-level branding exercises of 'public' goods.*

#### *6. Providing recognition*

Government can contribute to the development of volunteering by giving public recognition to the achievements of volunteers. During the Year many governments set up or participated in awards schemes to recognise the contribution made by volunteers to national life. On International Volunteers Day in Panama the United Nations Information Centre worked in partnership with the Director General of the National Civil Protection system to host an award ceremony: a Medal of Honour for Courage was presented to the volunteer corps of the children's hospital. In Saint Helena volunteer recognition certificates were provided to a fifth of the island's population.

Another favoured way of drawing attention to the importance of volunteering was the involvement of VIPs and celebrities in the Year. At a global level the UN appointed four eminent persons to serve as ambassadors for the Year. And at a national level many VIPs were recruited to the cause. In Nigeria, for example, the president was appointed Grand Patron of IYV; in Uzbekistan DJ Max was involved as an IYV Ambassador; while Ms South Pacific was designated a volunteer advocate.

*Lesson number six is that governments can do much to promote volunteering by recognising the contribution volunteers make to national life and by recruiting VIP ambassadors to the cause.*

### **The limitations and dangers of government support**

Two things are clear. First, IYV was a resounding success. Second, the Year could not have happened without the active support and involvement of government, in the myriad different ways outlined above. One of the key lessons from the Year is that for volunteering to flourish, government has to be engaged.

However, the Year also draws our attention to the limitations of government support for volunteering and to the dangers of state intervention.

#### *Lack of resources*

Perhaps the biggest challenge countries faced during the Year was securing sufficient resources to implement their ambitious plans. In some countries governments were lukewarm in their support and provided limited financial resources for the Year. Of course, governments were not the sole (or indeed necessarily the main) source of support for the Year. Significant resources were drawn in from the

private sector and from charitable foundations and trusts.

Nevertheless, in those countries where IYV was most successful, governments had a key role to play, not only by providing direct financial support but also by giving official endorsement for the Year. This enabled committees to lever in support from a range of other funders. Without government backing most countries found it hard to implement their plans in full. And with more government backing more countries would have been able to participate more fully.

#### *Support or control?*

More fundamentally, the Year shows just how difficult it is for some governments to strike the right balance between supporting volunteering and seeking to control it. In one or two countries the National Committees consisted either exclusively or predominantly of government personnel and the majority of activities during the Year were directed by the state.

While to some extent this was understandable – after all, International Years are proclaimed by governments operating through the UN system – such an approach ran counter to the declared aim of the General Assembly to engage a broad-

based coalition in the running of the Year. Even more than in other International Years, it was essential that IYV was not taken over and co-opted by government, but that government and civil society worked in partnership to promote the Year. Although overall such partnerships proved extremely effective, it was disappointing that in a small number of cases governments failed fully to engage the voluntary sector.

*Lack of a central contact point*

A further challenge thrown up by the Year was the lack of a central point of contact on volunteering within government in many countries, which made it hard for the voluntary sector to make connections and build partnerships with the state. Some countries had dedicated departments and ministers with responsibility for taking forward the government's programme on volunteering; but in others, authority (where it existed at all) was dispersed over several ministries.

In some countries the Year led to the streamlining of responsibility for volunteering within government and the 'joining-up' of previously disparate departmental briefs. In others, however, responsibility remained fragmented and confused and prevented the building of meaningful partnerships with the voluntary sector.

*Volunteering as service delivery or participation*

In a document I wrote for UNV to help with the planning of the Year I drew attention to the complexity of volunteering and the diversity of forms it takes in different parts of the world. I identified four traditions of volunteering: volunteering as service delivery; volunteering as self-help; volunteering as participation; and volunteering as campaigning and advocacy. The experience of IYV suggests that some governments find it much easier to embrace volunteering in its service delivery manifestation than when it comes in the form of participation or campaigning.

Whilst numerous examples can be given from the Year of high-profile campaigns to promote volunteering in the fight against such global evils as the AIDS pandemic, it is clear that many governments view volunteering primarily in terms of the contribution it can make to the delivery of public services. The notion that volunteering has a valuable, indeed crucial, role to play in advocating and campaigning for social and economic change is not one that finds universal favour within the corridors of power.

**Conclusion**

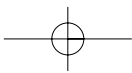
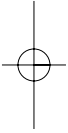
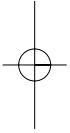
The International Year of Volunteers

offers an ideal test case of the importance of government support for the development of volunteering – but also of its limitations and dangers.

The Year offers ample evidence that government support is vital in many ways if volunteering is truly to fulfil its potential. Government has a crucial role to play as funder, as policy-maker, as example-setter, as partner and as researcher. But government also needs to recognise when to pull back. A volunteering movement dominated by the state is a contradiction in terms. For volunteering to flourish it must retain its independence and its ability to challenge as well as work alongside government.

In the UK the Blair Labour government has, together with the voluntary sector, produced a Compact, or statement of principles, which enshrines this fundamental principle of independence. Of course the proof of the pudding is as always in the eating, but as a statement of principle it is an exemplary document and one which has attracted attention in many parts of the world.

One of the great challenges for the global volunteering movement in the aftermath of IYV is how to strengthen support from government without sacrificing its independence.



*As a worldwide increase in demand for social welfare services coincides with a decline in government funding for such services, the time has never been more opportune for national youth service (NYS): 'non-military programmes in which young people serve with varying degrees of voluntarism'. This article looks at how NYS programmes can build upon 'the sense of mutual responsibility that should exist between a nation and its young people'. It analyses programmes in Germany and Nigeria, and gives a list of recommendations for how governments can make NYS a success. The article then looks at 'service-learning', where the practical experience gained in NYS is used as the basis of academic study, and makes recommendations for good practice. In conclusion, the problems that NYS programmes may encounter — including unrealistic expectations of what they can achieve — are examined.*

## National youth service as an instrument of peace and reconciliation

**Donald J. Eberly, Honorary President, International Association for National Youth Service**

In many countries, the term 'national service' has referred to a system by which young men are drafted into military service. It has been seen as a programme that uses compulsion to serve military purposes – something that appears antithetical to volunteering and the work done by volunteers. However, that kind of national service has been declining in

recent decades. Many countries have dropped conscription in favour of what they call 'volunteer' armies.

Over the same period, the term 'national youth service' has come to refer to non-military programmes in which young people serve with varying degrees of voluntarism: programmes like Britain's Community Service

Volunteers, Germany's Zivildienst, Nigeria's National Youth Service Corps, Chile's Servicio País, India's National Service Scheme, Indonesia's Kuliah Kerja Nyata, Australia's Green Corps, Canada's Katimavik, the USA's AmeriCorps, Vietnam's Organization of Young Intellectuals Participating in Rural and Mountainous Development and China's Poverty Alleviation Relay Project.

While national service has been changing, volunteer service has also been transformed. The 1925 edition of Webster's Dictionary states that to volunteer 'is to enter into any service of one's own free will, without solicitation or compulsion'. I think it is fair to say that the world of volunteers would be much smaller if we could not include those who had been asked to volunteer their services. In China, the Young Volunteers Association defines the spirit of volunteering as 'dedication, fraternal love, mutual aid and progress'.

Societies around the world have for centuries viewed volunteer service as an obligation on members of an extended family or of a community. More recently, especially in western countries, volunteering was seen as a kind of *noblesse oblige*, where rich people had an obligation to be generous to poor people. Nobody

paid volunteers, and governments were not involved. Times have changed. Governments now pay volunteers: for example, those in the US Peace Corps and the United Nations Volunteers.

The sense of obligation has also expanded beyond family members and rich people. The governments of Nigeria and Ghana decided that university graduates had an obligation to give a year of service, usually in their fields of study. In the USA, the sense of obligation has extended to secondary schools. For about the last fifteen years, a number of US cities and states have made a period of community service a graduation requirement. As you might expect, these actions were challenged by civil libertarians on the grounds that they violated the constitutional restrictions on compulsory service. When the appeal reached the Supreme Court, they rejected it, essentially agreeing with the lower court decision that community service was as much a part of the educational process as the study of history or mathematics, which were also required for graduation.

The expanding nature of volunteering was given official recognition in the guidelines for IYV 2001 prepared by UN Volunteers.

They said:

*IYV 2001 is for and about all kinds of volunteers everywhere; it is not limited to any one category of volunteer, whether formal or informal . . . domestic or international, unremunerated or modestly remunerated . . .*

UNV went on to note a number of ways to facilitate volunteering, several of which had to do with financial incentives, such as tax deductibility for volunteers, employers giving employees their normal salary while volunteering, and giving volunteers insurance protection. They also pointed to 'volunteer service schemes as accepted alternatives . . . to military conscription'.

National youth service, which includes programmes of full-time service as well as service-learning programmes, is a strong policy that produces multiple benefits at relatively low cost. It is based on the sense of mutual responsibility that should exist between a nation and its young people: young people have a responsibility to serve, but the nation has a prior responsibility to ask them to serve and to support them in meeting their service responsibilities.

The opportunity for a large increase

in volunteer service is particularly timely as it comes at a period when three powerful forces are converging to generate a large increase in the need for service delivery. During the last three decades the decline of the extended family and the nuclear family, the efficiencies brought about by computers and the reduction of service provision by governments to the private sector have led to an increased demand for services.

The result of these three forces is that the most deprived and at-risk members of society are being neglected. The need for volunteer service is greater than ever before.

Increasing demand for services is not the only reason to bring more young people into volunteering. We find that the experience of service helps in several ways with the maturation of young people, with their making the difficult transition from adolescence to adulthood. Consider the situation with young people today.

We see in every country a proportion of young people who are on the fast track to education, careers, leadership and prosperity. They seem to live in a different world from another proportion of young people – usually a much larger one – who are on the road to lives of drudgery or

unemployment, or perhaps looking to crime as the only way out.

Nevertheless, we see in every country large numbers of young people who like to take risks and do new things. They experiment with dangerous drugs, consume too much alcohol and drive dangerously on our roads. Young people also want to participate, to be contributing members of society. But society holds them back. It thinks they have not matured enough to participate responsibly. Society fails to realise that children do not gradually become adults. As they reach adolescence, they alternate between the role of children and the role of adults. When they feel childlike, they want reassurance. When they feel like adults, they want responsibilities. As they move through the teenage years, they spend more time as an adult and less as a child.

Shouldn't we look for ways that permit young people to alternate these roles, where we trust them to do important work while having support readily at hand? Shouldn't we give them the opportunity to engage their sense of adventure while serving others?

These relatively new forms of volunteer service have given us mechanisms by which we can join

the needs that exist in every country with the resource represented by young people from all walks of life.

The mechanisms for making these connections have come to be known as national youth service and service-learning. National youth service (NYS) refers to programmes where young people serve full-time for a period of six months to two years. Service-learning refers to programmes where students serve either part-time or for short periods of time and where their service activities are integrated with their studies, so that their learning informs their service and their service informs their learning.

The young people who serve in NYS programmes are given various designations, including Volunteers, Corpers, Boys, Katimavikers and Participants. This article uses 'cadets' as a generic term for all those in NYS.

I shall suggest that volunteer leaders can best advance volunteer service by working with their countrymen and women on developing new NYS programmes and on improving and expanding existing NYS programmes.

I shall give a few examples of NYS and service-learning and then identify the best practices and the outcomes of these programmes.

### **National youth service**

Last year I was in Germany and visited a site near Cologne where young people from two different kinds of NYS programmes were serving. There was one young woman from the Volunteer Social Year, where young people serve for a year and receive a stipend and other forms of support. And there were twelve young men from Zivildienst, where young men receive a stipend and serve as an alternative to military service. The site was a factory in which some four hundred people with learning difficulties or other disabilities assembled and packaged replacement parts for a machine. The job of the young people in service was to train and nurture the disabled people so that they were able to go on the production line. As much as seven years was required before some of the people were able to do useful work.

Both the factory manager and the young people at this sheltered work site agreed that there was no difference between the quality of service given by people from the different service programmes. And all agreed that the experience was having a powerful effect on themselves as people and on their career plans. Of the four young people I talked with, one had decided

on a career working with people with learning difficulties and two had changed their career plans. But there was one difference between the two programmes: only about 2 per cent of young women in Germany served with Volunteer Social Year, while some 38 per cent of young men served with Zivildienst.

Following the civil war of the 1960s, Nigeria decided it must make efforts to foster national unity. University students and other youth groups called for a national youth scheme whose first projects would be the provision of relief in war-torn areas. The Committee of Vice-Chancellors called for one year of service by all university students following their first year. After considerable controversy, head of state General Yakubu Gowon issued a decree in 1973 creating the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) to develop 'common ties among the youths of Nigeria and to promote national unity'.

The NYSC requires all university graduates to serve for one year in a different part of the country from where they grew up. The army is responsible for overall administration at the national and state levels, while the cadet's immediate supervisor on the job is usually a civilian. Following an orientation period,

cadets are posted to the place of assignment, where they are expected not only to work for eleven months in a regular job, but also to initiate community development projects in the areas where they work. They serve in their professional areas: agricultural graduates advise farmers on crops and pesticides while English majors teach high school English. The government provides stipends for them. After service, cadets are brought together to discuss their experiences, to participate in a passing out parade and to receive a Certificate of National Service

The German and Nigerian examples, as well as the US example mentioned earlier, also illustrate the acceptance by young people of an obligation to serve, just as neighbours and members of the upper classes accepted the obligation in previous times. The young men performing alternative service in Germany have accepted a period of service as an obligation of citizenship; the university graduates in Nigeria have accepted the need to perform their service year as an obligation of their privileged status as university graduates, and as a way to help unify the country; and the high school students in America have accepted the service-learning requirement as an integral part of their education.

NYS also turns the tables on the traditional approach to socially excluded people. In poor countries, disadvantaged young people tend to be ignored until they act up, at which point they are suppressed. In rich countries, they are always having things done to them; they are given job counselling, training, lectures on birth control and the like. NYS asks them to do something. It brings young people from all walks of life into the system.

If we examine NYS programmes in different parts of the world, we find that although they have various origins and goals, although they have different degrees of voluntariness, they have many similar features. The service period is about one year; cadets receive living allowances or the equivalent in food and accommodation; central government sets the regulations and most cadets serve with NGOs or local public agencies; most cadets are in the age range of 18 to 25; the major areas of service are care of very old people, health, and education.

Again, when we examine various NYS programmes, we find that they have similar outcomes. They provide services with a value greater than the cost of the NYS; they extend the outreach and improve the quality of services provided by public and

charitable organisations; they aid nation-building, combat social exclusion and add to social capital. NYS gives young people work experience, increased self-confidence, experiential education and a rite of passage from adolescence to adulthood.

How can those outcomes be achieved? Assessment of a number of NYS programmes from around the world suggests the following set of best practices:

- The government challenges young people to serve, gives them strong moral support and underwrites financial support to the extent that all young people who choose to serve are able to do so.
- It makes the opportunity for service universal by having a profile of service positions that reflects the profile of abilities brought by young people into service.
- It offers service opportunities that are important and are seen by young people to be important.
- It gives young people a choice in what they do and when they do it.
- The duration of service is nine months to two years.
- Both NYS participants and their supervisors receive appropriate orientation and training.
- Opportunities for reflection on the

service experience are an integral part of NYS.

- Completion of service is recognised and rewarded.

It is often a good idea to organise NYS participants into teams, where members work together on a project with a supervisor. If serving away from home, they may share living quarters and meet together as teams to discuss the plan of work, to reflect on what they have learned and to discuss problems that have been encountered. Even when NYS participants serve individually, they are often assembled into teams and meet frequently with their colleagues.

It must also be recognised that governmental support for NYS is essential if large numbers of young people are to enrol. NGOs simply do not have the resources to support such large efforts. At the same time, it is important for NGOs to offer NYS opportunities, even in countries with large-scale NYS. Government programmes have a tendency to become excessively bureaucratic and inefficient. NGO programmes offer a benchmark for assessing the efficiency of governmental programmes, and are also more likely to develop innovative ways of meeting the goals of NYS, which can then be adopted by governments.

### Service-learning

All NYS participants learn from their experiences, but their learning is enhanced when linkages are established between the service and the learning. Schools and universities have developed structured service-learning experiences in co-operation with NGOs and public agencies. This is understandable when we consider that two hundred years ago the education which young people acquired was about 99 per cent experiential. The girls learned cooking from their mothers and the boys learned farming from their fathers, or they learned trades as apprentices. Then the public schools came into being and young people were taught in classrooms. Then along came television and computers, with the result that in many countries young people spend most of the day sitting down, either in classrooms or in front of the TV or the computer screen.

As a former teacher and computer worker, I do not demean the learning acquired in the classroom or in front of the computer. But I do believe that a balance is needed between passive education and active education. Here are two examples of how service-learning is helping to provide that balance.

The University of Costa Rica has

required students to participate in service-learning projects since 1977. Typically, teams of a dozen or more students from several disciplines give full-time service for several months. They are accompanied by one or more professors who work with the students and meet them almost daily to discuss the relationship of their services to their academic pursuits, and to apply their academic learning to their service activities.

Since 1967, university students and their teachers in Indonesia have participated in Kuliah Kerja Nyata (KKN), in which teams of about a dozen students and one professor work on projects in rural areas. University co-ordinators work closely with the team and with village leaders to design projects that will be useful to the village, that utilise the learning of the cadets and can be accomplished by the KKN team. The projects are sometimes completed by a single team and at other times by a succession of KKN teams. Villagers contribute to the project as well, typically by providing free labour and housing.

The learning acquired by the young people in Costa Rica and Indonesia is more indelible than that acquired in the classroom. From among these and other service-learning programmes that have operated in

various parts of the world, here are the attributes of the best programmes:

- The programme is designed to offer the promise of a successful experience for the service-learning student. Students are challenged to perform, but the task is not so difficult that it is impossible to accomplish.
- The service part of the experience is a meaningful activity for the student and for the agency involved.
- Academic recognition is given on the basis of the learning acquired from the experience, not for simply having performed a service.
- There is a learning framework for the experience. It includes a set of learning objectives in advance of the service, a daily account of one's service activities and of questions raised by the experience, periodic reflection sessions and a final report and recognition.
- The school has a service-learning co-ordinator. This is a person who understands community needs, the educational interests of the school and the varied interests of students – from those who seek constructive participation in the community to those who seek any excuse not to go to school.

Thus service-learning is linked to the

curriculum. It is not a separate activity, like sports or an after-school job. We know that every person who participates in service-learning has a unique experience and derives a unique profile of values from the experience. Studies have revealed these major outcomes of service-learning:

- Increased awareness among participants of the needs of others.
- A better way to learn values than being lectured to.
- An effective way to reduce school violence.
- Increased levels of personal and social responsibility.
- More positive attitudes toward adults and others with whom they worked.
- Increased willingness to be active in one's community.

Service-learning can also have a profound impact on the way the adult members of a community view the younger members. Too often adults regard young people as trouble-makers. They view the young people themselves as the problem. With significant numbers of young people involved in service-learning activities, adult perceptions may be expected to change as young people develop the qualities noted above.

Service-learning is valuable for the

message it sends to students, teachers and the community. A school teaches values by its actions and policies: for example, the money it spends on sports, theatre and driving lessons. A school that places service-learning in the curriculum and gives it adequate support sends the message to students that the school cares about the community and the environment.

### **NYS impacts, problems and costs**

NYS is not without its problems and detractors. Some are ideological, some are pragmatic, some arise from misconceptions about NYS.

Perhaps the biggest problem over the years has been conceptual. Both politicians and the public like simple answers:

*If there is a medical problem, send in the doctors. If it's an education problem, send in the teachers.*

And so on. We have already noted how most NYS programmes come into being for a single primary reason: in Germany, to make conscription more equitable; in Nigeria, to help unify the country; in China, to serve the people in outlying areas. When we examine these programmes and others like them, we see that they have numerous positive outcomes for those who serve, for

those who are served and for the larger society. For example, Germany's Zivildienst has a strong impact on the careers and employability of cadets, while Nigeria's NYSC has a strong service delivery impact. If society's decision-making processes were more receptive to recognising the total impact of new policies, I think we would see more and larger NYS programmes.

References to 'universal service' and 'compulsory service' are frequently misapplied and misunderstood. It is most unlikely that there will ever be a NYS that engages all young people. There will be those in military service, the police force or the fire brigades, as well as those who may be exempted for reasons of religion, because they are physically or mentally incapable of serving, because they have children or because they are in prison. Although the NYS programmes in Nigeria and Germany are frequently referred to as 'large', the proportion of young people who do NYS in Nigeria is about 6 per cent and in Germany about 10 per cent.

At the pragmatic level, I find that host agency personnel sometimes have misperceptions about the role of NYS cadets, particularly in new programmes. In fact, from what I

have seen of NYS, I would say that the majority of unsuccessful placements are caused by this problem. The typical hosts – both NGOs and public agencies – know about employees and volunteers, but tend to be poorly informed about the role of cadets. Both the director of the host organisation and the persons who will be the immediate supervisors should receive several hours of orientation on NYS and the role of cadets.

### **NYS as an instrument of peace and reconciliation**

Let us conclude by listing several views on how NYS has been – and can be even more substantially – an instrument of peace and reconciliation:

- *Young people make a powerful statement for peace by choosing to serve their country in full-time civilian service instead of military service (Germany).*
- *Young people contribute to reconciliation by serving in different parts of their own country.*
- *Young people develop bonds of trust and friendship when those from diverse backgrounds serve together in common cause (Canada's Katimavik).*
- *Young people and those they serve gain a better understanding of*

*people from another country when NYS cadets serve overseas (Britain's Voluntary Service Overseas, America's Peace Corps, Japan's Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, as well as the UNV and Service Civile International and other programmes affiliated to the Co-ordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service).*

- *Young people gain a constructive understanding of other ages, races, ethnic and linguistic groups when they help elderly people stay in their own homes instead of being placed in nursing homes, when they nurture children in day care centres, teach immigrants how to read and write, and work patiently with mentally retarded persons to enable them to take up sheltered employment.*
- *Young people help the reconciliation process when they serve with peacekeepers.*
- *Young people combine the merits of teamwork and overseas service when they join a Global or Regional Youth Service (SCI, UNV, EVS).*

I suggest that the best way to facilitate volunteer service is for volunteer leaders to work on NYS and service-learning programmes with NGOs, governments and educational institutions. Those who do so will be extending the outreach

of volunteer service and will be helping to build a strong future for service to others. And perhaps most of all, they will be giving the leaders and parents of the future first-hand experience of the challenges they will confront in the years to come.

We have noted how a sense of responsibility to those in need began with extended families, moved outward to neighbourhoods and communities and is now found in some nation states. It is time to consolidate these programmes at the national level and then move to regional and global levels. I am sure this can be done. If our countries would give all students the opportunity to engage in service-learning, provide for at least as many young people in NYS programmes as they have in military service, and work together on service and conservation projects, I think it would soon become apparent that that kind of expenditure, and that kind of co-operation, are better roads to peace and reconciliation than military might and high walls.

*Intercommunal violence in Northern Ireland has claimed the lives of more than 3,500 people in the past thirty years. This article describes the major contribution volunteers have made to resolving conflict in the troubled province. Volunteering has been effective in this task because it has been inclusive and diverse and because government has created an enabling environment. There are case studies of how volunteers have helped with intercommunal reconciliation. A particularly optimistic sign is the number of young people involved in this kind of work.*

## Time changes lives – trust changes everything: volunteer work for conflict resolution and reconciliation in Northern Ireland

**Professor Jimmy Kearney, Centre for Voluntary Action Studies,  
University of Ulster**

**Wendy Osborne, Director, Volunteer Development Agency**

Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom and shares a land border and a cultural and historical heritage with the Republic of Ireland. It has a population of about 1.68 million people. For the past thirty years or more, it has experienced civil unrest, inter-communal conflict and sectarian tensions. The resulting violence claimed the lives of over 3,500 people and caused over 20,000 serious injuries.

Northern Ireland remains a deeply divided society, with the Northern Ireland Assembly once again suspended and direct rule by the United Kingdom government reintroduced. The years of civil unrest drove many people into the comparative safety of their own communities. Indeed, 94 per cent of the residents of the city of Belfast still live in single-identity communities, either Protestant or

Catholic. Trust between communities remains fragile.

But Northern Ireland is not a society without hope. On the contrary. The years of the civil unrest saw a significant growth in the number of voluntary and community groups, including groups directly involved in peace and reconciliation and in cross-community work. They saw a significant increase in the number of volunteers. A rich diversity of individual groups and volunteers gave time, insight and commitment to tackling conflict resolution and to reconciliation. For example, recent research by the Volunteer Development Agency revealed that, in 2001, some 448,000 people over the age of sixteen are giving time through an organisation or group, an increase of 17 per cent since 1995. The research also indicates that 13 per cent of those volunteers are directly involved in volunteering with a cross-community organisation, an increase of 6 per cent on the 1995 figures.

### **Creating a society at ease with itself**

Northern Ireland is now in a post-conflict phase, but the further development of trust within and between communities and between political parties is essential. This will take time. Long-term peace building

and conflict resolution must involve all sectors and communities. The work of volunteers remains vital in achieving a society at ease with itself, where sectarian tensions are progressively reduced and where equality of citizenship is actively promoted.

How best can we further promote the work of volunteers, both generally and in the field of conflict resolution and reconciliation? Our experience confirms that strong and stable communities, based on trust as well as on a sense of common purpose and mutual support, are interactive, inclusive and participatory ones. We know that lack of participation in society – for whatever reason – leads to exclusion and marginalisation, leaving people detached from the processes of day-to-day community life.

Evidence also suggests that healthy and sustainable communities need a process of community development and a community infrastructure that focus on:

- Involving local people in identifying issues, needs and potential solutions and building appropriate community organisations.
- Enabling local people to take the initiative by helping them to

develop appropriate skills, knowledge and confidence.

- Empowering local people by assisting them to organise themselves to gain a voice and power within the decision-making systems.
- Equipping the community to address the full range of social, economic and environmental issues facing its members.

Our experience also confirms that good community relations are vital to building trust within a divided society. Recent legislation (the Northern Ireland Act 1998) now requires public bodies to have regard in their work to the desirability of improving relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

For volunteer work to achieve maximum impact and to fulfil its potential in promoting inclusion, equality and reconciliation, we must remove the barriers to participation and inclusion. We must seek to promote diversity in volunteering and to make volunteering an inclusive process in which people from diverse backgrounds and with diverse skills can participate, regardless of race, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation etc. An initiative to promote diversity in volunteering, led by the Volunteer

Development Agency, was one of the major legacies of the International Year of Volunteers in Northern Ireland.

There also needs to be an enabling environment that recognises the impact of volunteering in promoting social inclusion and reconciliation. There is a role here for government. Government cannot, of course, make volunteering or community participation happen. What it can do, however, is to create a policy, funding and fiscal environment that supports volunteering and community involvement – but it must do so in a way that does not control or direct local actions and does not replace or weaken existing informal relationships.

In Northern Ireland, government is partly funding the well-developed volunteering infrastructure, which includes the Volunteer Development Agency and a network of local volunteer bureaux. Government has also introduced some policy initiatives to promote volunteering. One example is the Millennium Volunteers Programme for young people aged between 16 and 25. Another is the Active Community Initiative, which aims to help rebuild a sense of community by encouraging and supporting all forms of community involvement. Yet

another is the commitment in the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme of Government to encourage and support greater community participation, particularly by those groups under-represented in volunteering activities, and to increase the number of active community groups and volunteers.

Our experience in Northern Ireland is that volunteer work, particularly in the fields of conflict resolution and reconciliation, contributed in no small measure to the momentum that led to the peace process and the devolution of power to a locally elected Northern Ireland Assembly. Volunteering, particularly among young people, is a potent form of education for citizenship.

Volunteering connects people to and within their communities. It acts as the catalyst for a process of social development that over time can make a significant impact on community well-being, as trust is developed and lives are changed. At a time of fragile relations between communities and political parties in Northern Ireland, we rely heavily on volunteers as active participants in their communities to help achieve a peaceful, tolerant, socially and economically inclusive civil society that values diversity and respects differences.

### **Some stories of reconciliation**

Here are a few examples of how volunteers contribute to moving forward reconciliation in our small corner of the world, where conflict, tension and a lack of trust challenge the very fabric of community life.

We are all aware of the power of stories. Whether they are myths and legends, tales from childhood books or stories from the world of adult fiction, they have an impact on our thoughts and ideas. Often it is the true-life stories that have the greatest impact. Ireland, both North and South, is a land of storytellers, first in the oral tradition and then with the written word. Indeed, every day and everywhere we are all telling stories to each other about the happenings within our families, our social networks and our neighbourhoods.

Malcolm, aged twenty, and his brother Peter, aged nineteen, were found dead on 4 July 1972. Their killings have always been regarded as one of the mysteries of what are colloquially referred to in Northern Ireland as 'the troubles'. No definite motive has emerged for the murder of the brothers. Protestants may have killed them because they were friendly with Catholics. Catholics may have killed them because they were Protestants. The brothers left

their home on Alliance Road in North Belfast on the evening of their murders to visit their girlfriends, who were both Catholic. Early next morning their bodies were found on a grass verge eight miles from Belfast. Both had been shot in the head.

In 1973, over a year after their tragic death, their mother said in an interview with a local newspaper:

*My boys were great fun. They both enjoyed life to the full.*

She said that, following their deaths, she and her husband had become active in the peace movement, where they had made both Protestant and Catholic friends.

John Paul Lederach has stated that:

*True reconciliation is not about forgive and forget. True reconciliation is to remember and change.*

The peace movement in Northern Ireland is full of individuals who are prepared to put aside their pain and suffering and get involved as volunteers in reaching across community divides to build relationships based on trust rather than suspicion and fear. They give out the important message that peace building demands personal

involvement. It is not a process for others. It is a process for you and me.

During the darkest days of the early 1970s, when tension and violence were running high, Hugh found himself volunteer organiser of a group of vigilantes. Nowadays, the word has connotations of an extremist group that seeks to hand out its own form of justice. In the County Armagh town where Hugh lived, however, 'vigilante' was the name given to a local community watch, whose task was to act as an early warning against car bombs and assassins. For one year Hugh was a local vigilante co-ordinator, and he feels that this led him and a few others to setting up a local residents' group that eventually evolved into a community association. By the mid-1970s the volunteers involved in the community association were pushing for a general clean-up and improvements to their local environment. Hugh is fiercely anti-sectarian and has spent a lifetime giving time to provide both practical services to his community and extend the hand of friendship across the community divide.

It is fortunate for Northern Ireland that Hugh's story is not untypical, and it is such individual and collective participation and action

that has kept the flame of reconciliation alive.

### **'Young people are the here and now'**

Recent research indicates that by the age of six a third of children in Northern Ireland are identifying with one of the two main communities (Protestant or Catholic) and just under one in six (15 per cent) are making sectarian statements. The danger here is that the next generation will harbour negative prejudices that will create new barriers to community reconciliation. Northern Ireland has an increasingly segregated population: it has a mainly segregated school system and many traditional youth organisations and social networks that have involvement from only one side of the community. To change this takes time, commitment and action.

Many parents are volunteering their time to establish integrated schools where Catholics and Protestants can be educated together. This voluntary movement has led to the establishment to date of forty-seven integrated schools with a total of 15,733 pupils. While this still represents less than 5 per cent of the school population, it is a growing educational sector. The volunteers involved in establishing these integrated schools have changed and

are changing the lives of countless numbers of children by allowing them the opportunity to learn and grow together within a cross-community environment.

We often talk about young people being the future hope for Northern Ireland. However, it is important to remember that they are also the here and the now. A substantial amount of volunteer work has been carried out with and by young people in the field of reconciliation. Often it is the simple task of breaking down the barriers to getting to know each other that can have a profound effect on future lives, as people become reconciled to their differences – differences that, owing to lack of understanding, often exist as a perception rather than a reality. In the evaluation of some recent peace and reconciliation volunteer projects, the comments of the young people taking part are quite revealing:

*I've learnt that Catholics do not have horns, are not aliens, but are perfectly normal people like me – they just have a different religion.*

*If the future generations get on with each other as well as we have, peace might come soon.*

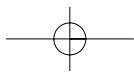
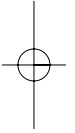
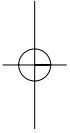
*You don't have to be the same religion to have fun.*

However, it is the First Call Youth Theatre Group that perhaps says it best:

*You have to work at peace. You cannot sit back. You must do something. War is passive for most of us. Peace must be active. These are all the new things we have learnt. We think there are small changes happening, but it's very hard to stand up for peace.*

One of the most important challenges to be tackled in Northern Ireland today is reconciliation. For when both sides continue to be afraid of, and angry at, each other, they are incapable of co-operating and putting all their energies into building a healthy and sustainable society.

Volunteer work is vital to taking forward this reconciliation agenda. We continue to need a rich diversity of people to give time, insight and commitment to each other and to promoting a society that works for understanding, tolerance, equality and peace. They are the peace builders and the gift of their time changes lives – but their trust changes everything.



*Although volunteering has long been a way of life in Thailand, fewer than a quarter of the adult population are currently involved in any kind of voluntary work. This article describes the one-year diploma course set up by Thammasat University to encourage young graduates to learn about rural society through volunteering. By taking part in development projects to benefit poor people, young people can acquire valuable practical experience. This is a service-learning programme unique in Thailand; it helps the students to see their service in the larger context of social justice and social policy rather than simply charity.*

## Service-learning through volunteering: The Graduate Volunteer Programme, Thailand

**Supparat Rattanamuk, Assistant Professor, Graduate Volunteer Centre,  
Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand**

Volunteering has long been a way of life in Thailand. It is rooted in the beliefs of Buddhism and in Thai culture, which stresses the virtues of caring for each other. About 9.7 million adults (22.5 per cent of the adult population of Thailand) are involved in volunteering, either in governmental or non-governmental organisations, or both. However, this number is less than it should be in a Buddhist country.

Compared with the past, young people are less interested in voluntary social service. The Graduate Volunteer Program has been set up to encourage young graduates to learn about rural society through volunteering. By helping the rural poor in specific development projects, young people can acquire useful experience. This approach is summarised by the slogan:

*I serve you in order that I may learn from you. You accept my service in order that you may teach me.*

The Graduate Volunteer Centre (GVC) of Thammasat University offers a one-year course entitled the Graduate Volunteer Diploma Program. This is a service-learning programme unique in Thailand; it helps the students or volunteers to see their service in the larger context of social justice and social policy rather than simply charity.

Although the GVC is a university faculty, it is not solely concerned with academic research. It strives to make an active contribution to volunteering and rural development. The graduate volunteers have to study in the classroom for one semester and then spend seven months in a development project in a rural community. After returning from the village, they have to write a mini-thesis based on their community service. Through supporting people, the young graduates can learn about social and rural problems and become part of the solution by having a stint as development volunteers. In the thirty-three years since its establishment, GVC has already produced more than a thousand highly motivated volunteers. All our graduates are now working in

various professions and are still possessed with the spirit of volunteerism.

GVC's Graduate Volunteer Program is now used by some government ministries to tackle the unemployment problem among new graduates during a period of economic slump; the new programmes offer 70,000 new graduates a scholarship to work as development volunteers to monitor government projects. If they complete the programme, they should learn something about volunteering and good citizenship.

### **Defining service-learning**

Service-learning joins two complex concepts: community action – the 'service' – and efforts to learn from that action and connect one's learning with existing knowledge – the 'learning'.

Service-learning was first defined as 'the accomplishment of tasks that meet genuine human needs in combination with conscious educational growth', in the publications of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) in 1969. This was concerned with developing learning opportunities for students that were related to community service, community development and social change. A

good service-learning programme helps participating students to see their service in the larger context of social justice and social policy rather than charity. For example, service-learning programmes should not just recruit students for soup kitchens – they should also ask them why people are hungry. Literacy volunteers should be asked to consider why there are so many illiterate people in an ‘advanced’ society.

Advocates of service-learning question whether experience alone will help communities and develop civic consciousness in students. They call for structured opportunities to reflect on one’s service so that students can better understand the causes of social injustice and take action to eliminate them. Service-learning is also at the ‘enabling’ and ‘empowering’ end of the service-social change continuum, emphasising support for people who seek to meet their own needs rather than having things done for them. This fits in with the three principles of service-learning proposed by Robert Sigmon:

1. Those being served control the service (s) provided.
2. Those being served become better able to serve and be served by their own actions.

3. Those who serve are also learners and have significant control over what is expected to be learned.

In accordance with these three principles, service-learning brings about reciprocity between server and served. This exchange goes far beyond the traditionally paternalistic, one-way approach to service, in which one group or person has resources which they share charitably or voluntarily with a person or group that lacks resources. In service-learning, those being served control the service. The needs of the community, rather than those of the academic institution, determine the nature of the service provided.

### **The Graduate Volunteer Diploma Program (GVDP)**

The Graduate Volunteer Program was originated by Dr Puey Ungphakorn, former president of Thammasat University, as an experimental programme of the Faculty of Economics. In 1969 it was officially approved as the Graduate Volunteer Diploma Program by the Council of Thammasat University and the Board of National Education. In the following year, the Office of Civil Service Board recognised the standard of those who have fulfilled the GVDP. In 1975, the GVDP was separated from the Faculty of Economics and was taken over by a

new faculty of Thammasat University named the Graduate Volunteer Centre (GVC).

The Graduate Volunteer Centre has been operating for over thirty years, based on a philosophy of volunteerism and service-learning (in the rural communities). Besides the GVDP, the Centre has now expanded to offer two more master's degree programmes: Rural Studies and Development, and Women's Studies. The GVC has more than thirty-five permanent staff members – professors, field supervisors and administrative personnel – to service those programmes. The GVC also offers an opportunity for professors from other faculties to volunteer to act as academic advisers for the graduate volunteers. Thus they can learn about rural issues and volunteerism along with the graduate volunteers.

The stated purpose of the GVDP is 'to learn and serve Thai rural communities on the basis of volunteerism, and explore concepts in rural development as well'. Its objectives are:

- To produce graduates in the Graduate Volunteer Diploma who understand the concepts of learning methodology and rural community development, and can

apply their knowledge and co-operate with other stakeholders.

- To encourage graduates to be aware of volunteerism, citizenship and social responsibility.

Graduates in any subject from any educational institution whose academic status is recognised by the Thammasat University's Council can apply. Selection is through written and oral examination according to GVC guidelines. About thirty successful candidates can be accepted annually to study for the GVDP.

The GVDP is a full-time study programme. The students are expected to study together and to share all kinds of learning activities during the first semester (seventeen weeks) at the GVC training centre. At the centre, the students will study the core subjects, which are further used in their field study-service (twenty-seven weeks). After completion of the first semester, all students have to choose a specific development project and learn the techniques for implementing it. The chosen project will then be matched with a rural village. When students return to the centre, they are expected to work with their academic supervisors to write a mini-thesis on what they have learned, based on their own experience of serving the villagers.

The GVDP curriculum is composed of the following subjects:

- GV 510: Social Psychology
- GV 511: Social Research  
Methodology
- GV 512: Techniques for Rural  
Development Work
- GV 520: Thai Society
- GV 521: Thai Rural Development
- GV 530: Field-Work (Field-Service)
- GV 540: Mini-thesis

The development projects affiliated to the field-service are:

- Non-Formal Education (Ministry of Education)
- Nutrition Promotion (Ministry of Public Health)
- Organic Matter for Soil Improvement (Ministry of Agriculture)
- Land Settlement Co-operative (Ministry of Agriculture)
- Rural Development
- Sub-District Administrative Organisation (Ministry of Interior)
- Non-Government Organisations:
  - Foundation for Thailand Rural Reconstruction Movement (TRRM)
  - Foundation for Child Development
  - Sai-Yai (Caring) Foundation
  - Community Forestry

No tuition fee is charged for this

one-year course. Instead, Thammasat University gives each volunteer a living allowance of 4,000 baht (\$US100) a month. The GVC tells the graduate volunteers that this money comes from the Thai people (that is, the government budget), who therefore expect them to be a good volunteer. The university spends about \$US2,000 on each graduate volunteer.

Graduates from GVDP are expected to have a sense of dedication and responsibility, and to be equipped with initiative, ideas, skills, humanity and a better understanding of rural society.

After a written test and an interview to examine their attitudes towards social problems, around thirty applicants enter each year's programme. They receive a scholarship for all tuition fees and other university services.

They are expected to study and live in the GVC training centre, which has dormitory accommodation. Here, the volunteers are taught via a framework of social sciences and development theories for almost four months. They study subjects such as social psychology, rural development and research methodology. The training is student-centred: we treat them like adults. Various

participatory learning techniques are employed. Finally they have to pass a written exam

The volunteers now learn about the project assigned to them. A schedule is prepared jointly by GVC and the host organisation, and the volunteers spend ten days learning from the demonstration project site. They learn techniques for working through the project activities with all stakeholders. However, these are not infallible formulae that volunteers can apply in every circumstance. They have to learn from real situations.

Now it's time to get away from the city. The volunteers are sent to study and serve in the rural community. Each volunteer has to live separately from his or her classmates in a village assigned by the Graduate Volunteer Centre. They stay with a local host family and participate in daily activities as if they were members of the community and the household. Their work ranges from household chores to farming.

Apart from the villagers, the graduate volunteers also have to work with local government officials and/or NGO staff to ensure the success of their projects. Each volunteer enters the host community with one small development project to work on. For

example, it could be about soil improvement, non-formal education or nutrition. The GVC does not emphasise results: it thinks that how the volunteers conduct the project and what they learn from it are more meaningful.

During the seven months of field-service, the GVC organises five workshop days for all graduate volunteers. This gives them a chance to get together again and to discuss their learning experiences, the village's socio-economic background, the problems encountered etc. All field supervisors, academic staff and other supporting personnel take part in the workshop to give practical advice. The graduate volunteers themselves can also discuss shared or individual experiences with their peers. They also present the research proposal that arose from their learning experience in the field.

Besides the workshop, GVC sends the field supervisor and the academic adviser to visit the graduate volunteer on site at least twice during the seven months. Of course, the advisors and the supervisors will contact the graduate volunteers via mail and phone periodically to keep in touch.

The experience learned from the field service will be used as the basis for a

mini-thesis. The graduate volunteers will integrate the knowledge gained from the classroom with their field experience, to show how learning occurs. The results may be very valuable to the villagers, the GVC and the volunteers themselves.

### **What the volunteers say**

The graduate volunteers say that they find the GVDP programme new, amazing, exotic and challenging. More importantly, it makes them feel more mature. They have inside knowledge about how rural society works. Samroenge Chueychuenjit, an ex-graduate volunteer who used to work at Nong Meg Village, Kalasin Province, says:

*I've learned a lot from these villagers. Their wisdom is amazing.*

Like several of his peers, living in a village has given Samroeng a clearer picture of rural society and its complex problems.

On a personal level, many graduate volunteers have found themselves developing emotionally and mentally. As a city child raised in a well-to-do family, journalism graduate Wandee Santivuthimaetee was used to being pampered by parents and servants. But after spending seven months as a Thammasat graduate volunteer at Saw-O, a small Karen village near

the Thai-Burmese border, the twenty-four-year-old woman acquired a better understanding of the reality of rural life:

*In the past, rustic life was in my perception romanticised, beautifully painted with green pastures and naïve villagers.*

Up in the hill-tribe village, however, Wandee witnessed the misery brought upon rural people by industrialisation and economic growth. She has come to realise that rural development is not about the powers-that-be patronising 'little people' – it's about giving rural people respect and treating them as equal human beings.

After experiencing tough living on the GVDP, many graduate volunteers feel more self-confident. Samchai Srisan, who now works for the Chatpattana political party, said:

*The last day before departing from the Graduate Volunteer Centre, I felt so confident that I was ready to walk through the storm with my stronger legs. Experience of being a volunteer here has been so precious for me.*

Chaisri Trirat, who is now working in a bank, said:

*I told myself that, after completing*

*my service-learning as a graduate volunteer, I could face the toughest of jobs. Nothing can discourage me from working for people because I am now aware of what volunteering is.*

Wandee also confirmed that she had been helped to achieve emotional maturity:

*With an open heart, I accepted whatever happened to me, good or bad, as a lesson. Finally I overcame my confusion.*

The Graduate Volunteer Diploma Program is admired by many as a way of encouraging young graduates to dedicate themselves to their rural compatriots. Dr Puey Ungphakorn, founder of GVDP, was popular with all the groups. The programme was running very well during his time. Each year, before leaving for their field-service, all graduate volunteers got the opportunity to meet His Majesty King Bhumipol Adulyadej, or his representative, and to hear a speech. On one occasion the King said:

*Whether in the development of the country or of yourself, it's necessary to co-operate. Because you cannot specialise in everything, you need to share knowledge and information. Also, you should not work alone in caring for people.*

### **A new use for the GVDP**

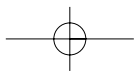
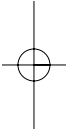
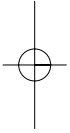
During the time of the economic boom in Thailand (1989-1996), the number of applicants for the GVDP dramatically decreased. It did not mean that young people were becoming more selfish than in the past. But the mainstream social trends, which emphasised careers and material success, had forced them to care more about themselves than others. The ensuing economic crisis and the International Year of Volunteers (IYV) have possibly stimulated greater interest in being a graduate volunteer.

The recent economic downturn has also made hundreds of thousands of graduates unemployed. The government has used the GVDP as a solution: the new programme offers 70,000 new graduates a scholarship to study and work as development volunteers to monitor government projects.

Using the GVDP as a way of tackling youth unemployment has raised doubts about the efficacy of the service-learning taking place. However, the Ministry of University Affairs has launched a nation-wide summer programme of community learning and service that is rooted in the GVDP principle:

*I serve you in order that I may learn from you.*

The Graduate Volunteer Centre does not expect its volunteers to change the world or to improve the livelihood of rural villagers during their short stay. However, its programme gives the younger generation more awareness of – and concern for – their less fortunate compatriots. This makes sustainable development possible. The GVC is the place that will give graduates this valuable opportunity if he or she has the generosity to help others and the will to learn.



*In this article, the authors suggest that eight consistent patterns – or ‘megatrends’ – have affected volunteering during the past decade. They are: (1) a growing concern for the impact of time on volunteering; (2) variations in the meaning of the word ‘volunteering’ from country to country; (3) demographic changes that have forced volunteer programmes to concentrate on the extremes of the age continuum; (4) a growing awareness of the need for truly pluralistic approaches to volunteer recruitment, engagement and management; (5) a recognition that volunteering promotes reciprocity, community, social solidarity and citizenship; (6) a demand for volunteer programme managers to demonstrate greater professionalism; (7) the growing role of ICT in facilitating the exchange of information about volunteering; and (8) differences of opinion about the appropriate role of government in the promotion and support of volunteerism.*

## International megatrends in volunteerism

**Mary V. Merrill, Merrill Associates, Columbus, Ohio, USA**

**R. Dale Safrit, Department of 4-H Youth Development, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina, USA**

Many individual authors have identified trends and issues affecting volunteerism in their respective countries and contemporary societies. Drawing on identified trends from

nine geographic regions of the world, we offer the following eight consistent patterns – or ‘megatrends’ – that we suggest have emerged during the past decade.

(1) Across all the countries reviewed for this paper we perceive an overarching concern for the impact of time on volunteerism. In countries where volunteerism is well established and an accepted cultural phenomenon (e.g. the USA, Canada, Australia etc), there are growing concerns about volunteer burnout, as a decreasing proportion of the population attempts to meet an increasing demand for volunteer services. As people work harder to balance professional and familial pressures, they are placing a higher premium on their personal time. Time given to volunteering is viewed as time taken away from family and friends; time is viewed as a disappearing commodity, to be used very judiciously and sparingly. While the value of volunteering remains high, the time available for volunteering has decreased. This view of 'shrinking' time is affected by generational differences, life stage fluctuations and socio-economic conditions. Younger generations devote less time to volunteering as they devote more time to family and friends. 'Baby boomers' continue to deal with increasing workplace demands and the pressures of employment and economic security. In developing countries, life pressures necessitate limited time commitment to volunteering, as individuals struggle to earn a living, support

families and maintain basic living standards.

(2) The meaning of volunteering and the use of the 'V word' vary considerably from country to country. The word 'volunteer' is used in various societies to (1) define the setting of work, such as formal or informal; (2) define the value of work, including low paid or non-paid; and/or (3) to define the scope of work, such as reaching out beyond the confines of employment and normal responsibilities or performing activities that benefit others. There is no globally accepted, uniform definition of volunteering. In some cultures, volunteering involves unstructured, informal activities of neighbour helping neighbour, while in other countries it is a formalised system for reciprocity and collective work. In some countries volunteering is viewed as work done to help others with no concern for monetary gain, while other societies consider volunteer work a form of low-wage employment or a means to more substantial employment. In yet other settings, volunteering is treated synonymously with civic engagement, public advocacy and citizenship.

(3) Demographic changes are forcing volunteer programmes to concentrate on both extremes of the age

continuum. In the USA, Canada, Europe, Australia and some Asian Pacific countries, demographic patterns show an ageing population, with the prediction that increasing numbers of people will live a third or more of their life in retirement. This prediction, coupled with the large numbers of 'baby boomers' who will enter retirement in the next decade, is leading to an increased emphasis on volunteer programmes designed not only to serve, but also to attract and engage, retired and senior populations. In contrast, Mexico, Armenia and other developing countries have a high percentage of people under the age of 25. In such countries there is considerable interest in creating volunteer programmes and opportunities that attract and engage young people. Such programmes are viewed as opportunities to instil an ethic of service in a new generation as well as to promote the ideals of character and skill development, career exploration and work experience/exposure.

(4) The challenges of multicultural societies, the role of service recipients as service providers, the growing gap between rich and poor and the increase or decrease in faith-based volunteering have led to a growing awareness of the need for increased diversity and for greater emphasis on

the development of truly pluralistic approaches to volunteer recruitment, engagement and management. Volunteer programmes cannot thrive as the exclusive realm of the affluent or well educated. Programmes around the world recognise the importance of engaging people from all sectors of society to foster social change.

(5) Volunteerism recognises and promotes reciprocity, community, social solidarity and citizenship. Volunteerism is an effective venue for fostering civil society and building (or rebuilding) social capital. Volunteering fosters the development of social bonds that bridge ideological differences and bring diverse and isolated individuals together. The value of volunteering extends beyond the actual act of service to helping communities become more participatory and cohesive, and to nurturing the development of democratic principles.

(6) There is a heightened awareness worldwide of the need for increased professionalism from volunteer programme managers. Risk management, corporate volunteerism, mandated volunteerism and technology require new skills and capacities for professionals engaged in the work of building and

managing volunteer programmes. Engaging diverse populations in a 'time sensitive' culture requires critical attention to the development of infrastructures that support and sustain volunteer efforts.

(7) The Internet offers opportunities for the creation of horizontal connections to facilitate the exchange of volunteering information; global information networks provide opportunities for peer-to-peer sharing and the exchange of ideas and resources; virtual networks raise awareness of issues and trends. Professionalisation increases as salaried volunteer managers span time, distance and cultural barriers to share knowledge about systems, structures and roles that support effective volunteer programmes.

(8) There is considerable difference of opinion worldwide regarding the appropriate role of government in the promotion and support of volunteerism. Dynamic tensions exist between the desire to have legislation that promotes and supports volunteer initiatives, and the concern that government incursion into volunteerism will lead to its politicisation. While some countries view government interest in volunteerism with scepticism, many others are actively working to create

laws to establish, legitimise and support volunteerism infrastructures and the holistic NGO sector.

While each individual country has unique challenges and issues regarding volunteerism, it is helpful to identify and reflect upon potential megatrends that draw us together in a search for common solutions. Megatrends help to broaden our perspectives and foster local solutions to global issues, while helping to create models that strengthen volunteer efforts worldwide.

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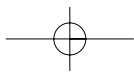
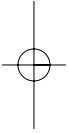
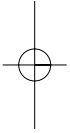
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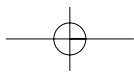
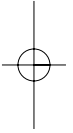
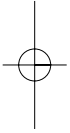
<p><i>Canada</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Much from the few</li> <li>• Volunteers have changed</li> <li>• Mandatory volunteering by contract</li> <li>• Risk management</li> <li>• Importing corporate management</li> <li>• Better support for volunteer managers</li> </ul> <p>(Paddy Bowen, <i>Volunteer Canada</i>, August 2001)</p>	<p><i>United States</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer burnout and episodic volunteering</li> <li>• Increased competition</li> <li>• Professionalisation</li> <li>• Diversity</li> <li>• New forms of volunteering</li> <li>• Liability and risk management</li> <li>• Technology</li> </ul> <p>(Safrit and Merrill, <i>Voluntary Action</i>, 2001)</p>	<p><i>Mexico</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not valued as an activity</li> <li>• Life and time pressures limit commitment</li> <li>• Moving from informal to formal</li> <li>• Moving from altruism to civil society</li> <li>• No infrastructure, government support, professionalism</li> <li>• Mandated volunteering</li> <li>• Emphasis on youth</li> </ul> <p>(Mexican Association for Volunteers and The Junior League of Mexico City, 2002)</p>	<p><i>Netherlands</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for reciprocity and collective experiences</li> <li>• Need to find something of your own</li> <li>• Knowledge available anytime, anywhere</li> <li>• Growing professionalism</li> <li>• Globalisation leads to localisation</li> <li>• Mingling of politics and volunteer work</li> <li>• Growing diversity of people</li> </ul> <p>(Dutch Foundation for Volunteer Management, January 2001)</p>	<p><i>Europe</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ageing European population</li> <li>• Ageing European population</li> <li>• Growing gap between rich and poor</li> <li>• Increased secularisation and capitalist free market philosophy</li> <li>• Competition for free time and professionalisation</li> <li>• Altruism, non-paid labour and volunteerism as 'job killer'</li> <li>• Information, networks and supranational issues</li> </ul> <p>(Schumacher, Halva, Hijack, Schneider, <i>Euro-Volunteer Information Pool</i>, April 2001)</p>
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**International megatrends in volunteering**

<p><i>New Zealand</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paid employees and volunteers are overworked</li> <li>• Volunteers support fair wages and good working conditions</li> <li>• Unpaid work and volunteering are not the same</li> <li>• Recognising the contributions of elders</li> <li>• Reciprocity and people-in-community</li> </ul> <p>(<i>Katherine Peet, Volunteering Canterbury, 2001</i>)</p>	<p><i>Australia</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time as a disappearing commodity</li> <li>• Partnership between government and volunteers</li> <li>• Volunteers as 'cheap labour'</li> <li>• Retiring boomers</li> <li>• Awareness and information</li> <li>• Corporate commitment to community as well as stakeholders</li> </ul> <p>(<i>Anthony Albanese, Australian Journal on Volunteering, 2001</i>)</p>	<p><i>Korea</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer and volunteer Service are new words for an ancient tradition</li> <li>• Volunteering valued and publicly supported by newspapers and corporations</li> <li>• Mandated school volunteering</li> <li>• Formalisation of volunteering and volunteer management</li> </ul> <p>(<i>Lee Chang-Ho, Journal of Volunteer Administration, 2002</i>)</p>	<p><i>Armenia</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not valued</li> <li>• Development of civil society</li> <li>• Equate low pay and volunteering</li> <li>• Volunteering leads to payment</li> <li>• Volunteers, members, beneficiaries</li> <li>• Engagement of youth</li> <li>• Absence of legislation/government support</li> <li>• Limited knowledge of systems/ approaches</li> </ul> <p>(<i>Susanna Grigoryan, Journal of Volunteer Administration, 2002</i>)</p>	<p><i>Worldwide</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining volunteering - formal and informal - altruistic and philanthropic</li> <li>• Reciprocity and collective work - individual responsibility toward society</li> <li>• Legislation or politicisation</li> <li>• Religion and beliefs</li> <li>• The role of young people</li> <li>• Global exchange of information via the internet</li> <li>• Foundation for volunteering is at local level</li> <li>• Growth of local and regional volunteer centres</li> <li>• The challenge of multicultural societies</li> <li>• Internationalisation of society</li> </ul> <p>(<i>Govaert, Daal, Munz, Keesom (eds), Volunteering Worldwide, 2001</i>)</p>
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# Shorter pieces



*Intermediary bodies that recruit and place volunteers overseas usually adopt an 'open' approach: that is, they leave the initial selection of the volunteers, and their after-care once they arrive, to the recipient organisations. This article introduces KOPION Inc (KOrean Pioneers in Overseas NGOs Inc), a Seoul-based organisation that has pioneered the 'closed' approach, whereby only NGOs registered as members of an international network of organisations committed to certain standards are able to exchange their volunteers. The potential of the 'closed' approach for building an effective international volunteer network is explored.*

## A new approach to the international exchange of volunteers: a 'closed' policy

**Chang-Ho Lee, Secretary General, KOrean Pioneers In Overseas NGOs Inc (KOPION), Seoul, Korea**

Many Korean NGOs currently send volunteers to work overseas. In 1999, KOICA (KOrean International Cooperation Agency), an organisation set up by government on the Peace Corps model, helped more than thirty Korean foreign aid NGOs to form their own council.

Since then, the members of the Association of Korean Foreign Aid NGOs have each year selected, trained and dispatched about a thousand students and other citizens

to developing countries as long-term or short-term volunteers.

Typical of these is the programme run since 1997 by the Korean University Council for Social Service (KUCSS) and JoongAng Ilbo (the Central Daily News). Every summer, KUCSS sends about 200 university students to NGOs working in countries such as China, Russia, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Philippines, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan and Thailand.

### **The international exchange of volunteers**

So far, however, no international programme seems to have used a 'closed' approach to the exchange of volunteers: that is, one in which only registered NGOs can participate. If one NGO accepts foreign students and graduates as volunteers from an international intermediary body, it is allowed to send volunteers of its own choosing to other registered NGOs overseas.

Some existing programmes, like Idealist – the largest internet network, developed by Action Without Borders – and the UNESCO Work-Camp Program, are not closed: they are open to every NGO and to individuals, and both NGOs and applicants have free access to one another. The intermediary agency simply provides information on the NGOs seeking volunteers and does not check to see which NGOs accept or reject which applicants.

However, this 'open' policy, which ignores the processes of selection and after-care of volunteers, raises challenging issues for both volunteers and host organisations where selection, programmes and recognition are concerned.

#### *Selection*

The existing mechanism does not

enable NGOs to recruit and select the most appropriate volunteers from the international volunteer market. They may be able to advertise their programmes on the internet and/or through their own information network, and they may be able to recruit some applicants on the basis of their technical skills. But they can learn little about the applicants' motivations: how willing are they to contribute to the well-being of the people and countries they serve? Even though the recruiting NGOs can provide adequate orientation and pre-training for the volunteers they have selected, the motivation needed to serve in overseas NGOs cannot be cultivated overnight.

#### *Programmes*

The second challenge is how to ensure that NGOs provide the volunteers they recruit with appropriate programmes. How can we construct an international system that can effectively place volunteers in overseas NGOs and supervise their programmes?

#### *Recognition*

The third issue is about how the host NGOs in particular, and international networks in general, can recognise the contributions made by volunteers. Although some NGOs award their own certificates to mark the successful completion of

volunteer work, there is currently no standard certificate used by all participating NGOs.

### **KOPION tries out a new approach**

KOPION (KOrean Pioneers In Overseas NGOs) was set up in March 1999 by JoongAng Ilbo (the Central Daily News) and a consortium of six Korean NGOs. It began as one of the programs of JoongAng Ilbo's Bureau of Volunteer and NGO Service (now the Ilbo Institute for Civil Society) and aimed to place Korean university students and graduates as volunteers in overseas NGOs for an average of six months.

In April 2000, however, KOPION became an independent programme and has now developed into a non-profit organisation committed to serving disadvantaged people in the global community by recruiting and training international volunteers. In 2002 KOPION Inc was registered with the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Twice a year, in summer and in winter, we send out about fifty volunteers to NGOs in underdeveloped and developing countries, such as India, China, Russia, Ukraine, Bangladesh, Philippines, Ghana, Cameroon, Uzbekistan, Mongol, Argentina and

Ecuador. Since the inception of the programme in 1999, about sixty NGOs in twenty-six countries have requested KOPION volunteers. These organisations are two types: local NGOs and the overseas branch offices of participating Korean NGOs, such as JTS (Join Together Society), Good Neighbors, Food For the Hungry International and the National Council of Saemaul Undong Movement.

The KOPION Dispatch Program is based on the principle that the host organisation provides volunteers with free room and board during their stay. The host organisation is also expected to provide the volunteer with suitable programmes and activities, offering adequate supervision as well as opportunities to learn and serve. Other expenses, such as air fares, passports, visas, medical examinations, insurance and pre-departure training, are supposed to be paid by the participating KOPION volunteers themselves. We are at present raising money to help pay volunteers' expenses, contacting potential funding sources such as businesses and governments.

KOPION Inc is planning to expand its Dispatch Program to enable international volunteer interchanges between domestic and overseas NGOs. In addition to sending Korean

volunteers out, the new programme – provisionally entitled INPION (INternational Pioneers In Overseas NGOs) – will bring foreign volunteers to Korea.

We are now creating the international volunteer exchange system that will form part of both the KOPION and INPION programmes. The schedule is as follows:

1. Assess the needs of domestic organisations for foreign volunteers.
2. Devise a programme for foreign volunteers in domestic organisations.
3. Contact overseas organisations that the KOPION programme has helped to recruit foreign volunteers. The two programmes, KOPION and INPION, can run in parallel: even though overseas NGOs may not have plans to send their people to Korea through INPION, they can still participate in the KOPION Dispatch Program and receive Korean volunteers.
4. KOPION Inc organises a separate division for INPION so that it can act as an intermediary between Korean NGOs and overseas NGOs. This can be done in two ways: we can simply link Korean NGOs and overseas NGOs, providing the necessary information to both

parties – or we can assume responsibility for recruiting, training, placing and supervising foreign volunteers who are willing to come to Korea with references from overseas NGOs. However, it is not yet clear whether the new division will be able to take up this burden.

5. The INPION programme and the KOPION Dispatch Program are two separate initiatives, but they can operate in parallel within a ‘closed’ system, ultimately aiming to create the World-PION for the exchange of international volunteers: NGOs that receive Korean volunteers will be eligible to send their volunteers to Korean NGOs. This will, of course, be another heavy burden for KOPION Inc.

#### **Advantages and disadvantages of a ‘closed’ system**

The idea of a closed system for exchanging volunteers may not, however, be a cure-all. There are still many challenges to be addressed by participating organisations, both Korean and overseas, especially at the practical level.

#### *Selection*

At present, there is no mechanism to control the quality of applicants. Overseas NGOs have to select volunteers on the basis of application

forms, which in most cases can only describe an applicant's basic skills, such as computer and language proficiency, but not their inner motivations and personal attitudes.

Under the closed system, an intermediary body like KOPION Inc could help to recruit more reliable volunteers for overseas organisations by using a careful screening process. Likewise, the overseas member organisations could select more appropriate foreign volunteers by conducting personal interviews and taking up references. Member organisations could also give the recruited volunteers intensive pre-departure training for about seven to ten days, focusing more on motivation and attitudes than on technical skills.

The main issues that need to be discussed include:

- In view of the time, energy and expense involved, how willing would NGOs in the closed system be to recruit reliable volunteers for other member organisations overseas ?
- What would encourage the participating NGOs to carry out such intermediary work ?
- Who will pay the necessary expenses, especially when most of the NGOs would have some

difficulty in carrying out the recruitment, selection and training of the volunteers who are to be sent out ?

- Will the recruited foreign volunteers be able to pay such basic expenses as air fares, health insurance and training?
- How can we address the issue of selection if we pursue the idea of World-PION among NGOs internationally ?

#### *Programmes*

KOPION Inc is exploring ways to link the programme with a scheme whereby universities give students academic credits for their volunteer activities overseas. If this becomes possible, more reliable student volunteers can be dispatched to overseas NGOs, and the programmes of work arranged for volunteers by the host organisations can be supervised more effectively. Student volunteers will have to send regular field reports to their professors, along with an evaluation letter from their field supervisors. This would ensure the accountability of the programme.

This issue of programmes can be also resolved for the incoming foreign volunteers. If the special unit we are organising for the INPION programme provides preliminary training and overall supervision for foreign volunteers while they are

staying in Korea, this will improve the accountability and effectiveness of the programme.

The main issues that need to be discussed include:

- Who will pay for the training and supervision provided for foreign volunteers by this special unit of KOPION Inc – or, indeed, by any other intermediary body?
- Will the participating foreign volunteers, especially those recruited in under-developed countries, be able to pay these expenses themselves if the intermediary body or KOPION Inc cannot?

#### *Recognition*

All the member organisations, including KOPION Inc, could issue the volunteers with a standard certificate confirming their successful accomplishment of international volunteer activities. If the certificate could be issued under the name of a well-known sponsor, such as a government department, this standardised worldwide certification system could be very valuable to participating volunteers.

#### **Conclusion**

A closed system that allows only participating NGOs to exchange their volunteers would help to resolve the

problems of selection, programmes and recognition. However, one big question remains: who is going to pay for all this? Further discussion is clearly needed.

In conclusion, here are a few suggestions on how to get started with the development of an effective network for the international exchange of volunteers :

- Build a joint website to exchange relevant information and views on how to build a global network and how to design the programme.
- Run the joint web site by membership, thereby recruiting member NGOs worldwide for the closed system.
- Form a preparatory committee to translate the collected opinions and expertise into action.

*IYV 2001 was a dramatic year for volunteering in Korea: volunteers were heavily involved in the hosting of the football World Cup, and immediately afterwards were called on to help the victims of the disastrous floods that swept the country. This article describes the Korean government's four-part plan to promote volunteering: (i) funding the training, support and recognition of volunteers, (ii) improving the infrastructure for volunteering, (iii) introducing a volunteering programme for women and young people and publicising it widely, and (iv) working more closely with NGOs.*

## The Korean government's policy for promoting volunteering

**Myung-sook Han, Minister for Gender Equality, Korea**

The International Year of Volunteering 2001 will be remembered as an historic year for the volunteer movement in Korea. The major event was our hosting of the football World Cup in June. What most people saw was spectacular football and overwhelming waves of support from fans. However, there was a quieter wave not visible during the competition: the many volunteers who carried out tasks ranging from competition management to cleaning up the streets. This participation was not restricted to any particular age or gender: for example, many housewives participated in the home-stay movement, supported the foreign athletes in the stadiums and

guided foreign tourists on the streets. I firmly believe that the success of the World Cup owed much to the efforts of these volunteers.

Energetic voluntary activity also helped us to recover from the unprecedented flood we experienced in September 2001, immediately after the World Cup. As volunteers rushed to the aid of flood victims, the press praised them, speaking of a 'civilian revolution' of sharing and sacrifice. This magnificent response was led by young people in their twenties and thirties. Among them were numerous individual volunteers who went to the disaster sites to do what they could to help. All of them said that

they felt happy and proud because of their efforts. I think the government will take a more active role in helping these people to continue to participate in volunteer service.

In our country, there is a growing desire to reach the 'semi-finals' of volunteer service, just as we did in the World Cup. In other words, we must strive for new levels of achievement. To do this, we need to expand our roles, with the help of international organisations such as IAVE. In this respect, the World Volunteer Conference provided a very valuable foundation for us. Furthermore, the theme of the conference, 'Volunteering: reaching out for reconciliation and peace', referred to an urgent task that we can accomplish together.

Our Ministry of Gender Equality was launched in 2001 to help bring about true gender equality in Korea. The ministry has been working to protect the rights of women, to abolish discrimination against them and to expand their social participation. As one of our major undertakings, we support volunteer service for women. In this way we hope to put into practice the true principles of volunteering, as well as giving women the opportunity to develop themselves and participate in society.

To do this, we shall firstly promote voluntary service through the education, training and support of volunteers. In accordance with the trend towards specialised volunteering, we will provide training for volunteers in each field. In addition, we are working on providing domestic and overseas training for the managerial level of volunteer organisations. In addition, the government will encourage volunteering through award schemes and other measures.

Secondly, we are attempting to create the conditions for stable and continuing volunteering. For this purpose, we are strengthening the support for 159 women's volunteering centres. Also, we have been paying the premiums for liability insurance for 21,000 volunteers since last year and intend to extend this practice even further. A plan to support the promotion of volunteering by using money from the women's development fund is also on the way.

Thirdly, we are trying to persuade more women to participate in volunteering and are thus developing a new volunteer service programme. For this purpose, we will create a national infrastructure that will make it easier for people to become volunteers. Furthermore, we wish to

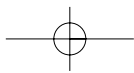
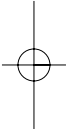
increase youth volunteering by publicising the volunteering programme for women in colleges; a total of sixty-seven college volunteer organisations have participated in this project over the past two years.

neighbourliness to spread throughout the global village, transcending national boundaries, through the medium of volunteering.

Our fourth proposal is to improve co-operation with NGOs. Voluntary service will truly develop when the voluntary sector and the government work in harmony. The ministry supports voluntary sector organisations as far as its budget allows. In addition, we are jointly promoting with the voluntary sector education and training projects and other initiatives.

We are making an all-out effort to support, among other activities, volunteering at international events and in disaster relief, publicity drives to raise awareness of voluntary action and research projects into volunteering. However, such efforts are inadequate compared with the activities of civil organisations or the public demand for volunteer services. We commit ourselves to making even greater efforts in future.

A Korean proverb says that 'even a piece of paper is easier to hold together'. Throughout their long history, Koreans have been famous for sharing with their neighbours. I would wish this spirit of



*The power of volunteering to bring about reconciliation is never more needed than in the aftermath of war. This article describes how thousands of young volunteers helped to rebuild Bosnia after years of conflict. The volunteers helped not only their fellow citizens but also themselves; thanks to their voluntary service, they lost their feelings of helplessness and apathy, and regained their belief in themselves.*

## Youth volunteering in Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Vahida Huzejrovic, Co-ordinator of Voluntary Work, Osmijeh (the Association for Psychosocial Help and the Development of Voluntary Work), Gracanica, Bosnia**

I am writing this article on behalf of our country's young volunteers, for most of them are very modest. Although they achieve wonderful things, if you ask them what they do as volunteers, they will reply, 'Nothing special.' Several years ago I felt just like them – I was still not fully aware of the effect that volunteers and volunteering were going to have on me. Now I *know* that volunteering helps you to develop professionally as well as personally.

I learnt about the values of volunteering at the most difficult period of my life, at a time when everyone in my country was

suffering because of the war. This shows that volunteering is always possible in some way or another, and that it really can make changes in peoples' lives.

In my war-torn country, voluntary work is urgently needed to help address the huge needs that are not being met because of the lack of human and material resources. Our people, who were already exhausted because of the war and their losses, now have to face such post-war problems as poverty, unemployment and depression. I think it is pessimism about their prospects that affects young people the most. They also tend to become depressed, and

easily go astray, because they lack so many things they need and because nobody seems to care.

The presence of NGOs like ours is very important in such situations. We are trying to meet the needs that the government does not meet and we are closer to the people. We take care of various groups of people, but children and young people play a special role in our organisation. We take them off the streets. We invest in them, because we know that they are our future, and because we want to help them to have a better life tomorrow. Of course, we do not wait for tomorrow before doing something. We involve them today in all aspects of life, so that they can be better citizens tomorrow, shaping society and laying the foundations for a better life for subsequent generations.

The youth volunteers in our country are proof that volunteering is a way of receiving as well as giving. In my experience, volunteering is a process of healing and self-reconstruction – a process that helps you to become yourself again.

### **Volunteering can give life meaning**

Of course, volunteering in countries like Bosnia can be extremely difficult. You need to spend a lot of

time, energy and money to motivate people, to help them to start believing in themselves again. When you are in a situation like ours was, you feel helpless and hopeless – you cannot imagine any future for yourself. When you experience loss, it can be difficult to see anything positive in your life, or to believe that anything can be done about it. But once you start to experience volunteering and its values, you begin to look at things differently. You start to feel more yourself, you start to plan, to have aims in your life. The last point is especially important: our aims are what give our lives meaning. Our organisation wants to ensure that young people feel some sense of meaning in their lives.

I am proud to say that, thanks to massive efforts immediately after the war, we have succeeded in our aim. We managed to recruit thousands of volunteers, mostly through schools and universities. The activities our volunteers carry out are similar to those done by volunteers in other countries: that is, they help with house building and other physical reconstruction; they work with children with special needs, learning difficulties or disabilities, with orphans and with elderly people; they help organise public events, elections, seminars and conferences;

they run radio programmes on volunteering; they help with translation; and so on.

These are quite usual activities for volunteers, but the chance to be involved in them is what matters for our young people. It helps them to develop personally and to improve their self-esteem and their coping strategies; it helps them to start making plans and, above all, to feel that they belong. This lack of sense of belonging is very common among young people in our country, and is the result of war, displacement and refugee life. Volunteering brings all members of society together: it integrates different ethnic groups, it mixes local people, refugees and displaced people, and it prevents the exclusion of disabled people and older people. While working with different groups and in different settings, young people meet people from different walks of life, learn about the functioning of various institutions and develop a range of skills such as management, communication and teamwork. These skills enable them to have more self-confidence and to believe in their own potential.

### **Volunteering shows you what you're good at**

We are happy to see that so many of our volunteers who had once seemed

so apathetic and disappointed now want to make something of their life. Many of them have decided to continue their studies. They will become teachers, psychologists, linguists, architects and so on because they learnt about these activities when they worked as volunteers. Through volunteering, they discovered what they are good at.

Also, many of the former volunteers have become aware of the needs of other communities and are campaigning for human rights. They learnt about those rights from being involved in real situations.

Volunteering makes young people curious about things: they look for more information, explore the literature, participate in seminars, training events and conferences. All these things widen their horizons. That is also our aim: to encourage young people to explore, criticise and be aware, to prevent them from sinking into passivity.

For example, one of our young volunteers has a little brother in our day care centre for children with special needs. The child was born with very short arms, but he is of normal intelligence – in fact, he quickly learnt to read, write and communicate with other people. But

when he reached school age, the local school refused to accept him. However, his older brother knew what he was capable of and stood up for his rights. His persistence paid off and he eventually managed to enrol his brother in the school. I spoke to the teachers who had originally refused the little boy. They are happy to have him in their classroom now, and admitted their previous mistake. They are grateful to the volunteers who prepared the boy for the school.

Disabled children are just one of many disadvantaged groups that are excluded by institutions. For such groups, volunteers provide precious help.

We always tell our volunteers that although they cannot change everything, they can always be themselves – and that there is always light at the end of the tunnel.

*Since it was set up in 1961, the US Peace Corps has sent more than 165,000 volunteers to serve in 135 countries. This article gives a brief profile of the Corps, covering its origins in a proposal by John F Kennedy, its constitution and funding, its ambitious range of programmes (including education, business, the environment, agriculture, health and community development) and its promising future – the number of Peace Corps volunteers is to be doubled to fourteen thousand by 2007.*

## The Peace Corps in the twenty-first century

Dr Kyo Paul Jhin, Director, Office of Planning, Policy and Analysis,  
Peace Corps, Washington DC, USA

### **The power of an idea**

On 14 October 1960, after a day of campaigning for the presidency, John F. Kennedy arrived at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor at 2 a.m. to get some sleep, not to propose the establishment of an international volunteer organisation. Members of the press had retired for the night, believing that nothing interesting would happen.

But ten thousand students at the university were waiting to hear the presidential candidate speak, and it was there on the steps of the Michigan Union that a bold new experiment in public service was launched. The assembled students

heard the future president issue a challenge: how many of them, he asked, would be willing to serve their country and the cause of peace by living and working in the developing world?

Kennedy said:

*We will only send abroad Americans who are wanted by the host country – who have a real job to do – and who are qualified to do that job . . . For every young American who participates in the Peace Corps – who works in a foreign land – will know that he or she is sharing in the great common task of bringing to man that decent way of life which is*

*the foundation of freedom and a condition of peace.*

The reaction was both swift and enthusiastic. In 1961, the first Peace Corps Volunteers accepted assignments to serve in six countries, and since then, more than 165,000 men and women have served in 135 countries. The Peace Corps has demonstrated how the power of an idea can capture the imagination of an entire nation.

### **About the Peace Corps**

The Peace Corps is an independent agency within the executive branch of the United States government. The President of the United States appoints the Peace Corps Director and Deputy Director, and the appointments must be confirmed by the US Senate.

The Peace Corps' goals are:

1. To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women.
2. To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.
3. To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

And our mottoes are:

- To satisfy our customer the first time and every time.
- Do it right the first time and every time.

Peace Corps Volunteers make real differences in the lives of real people. They help to improve the human condition at the grass-roots levels. Their challenging assignments include:

- *Education:* Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) is the Peace Corps' largest programme.
- *Business:* Business volunteers work in education, private businesses, public organisations, government offices, co-operatives, women's and youth groups and more.
- *Environment:* Environment volunteers carry out a wide variety of activities, from teaching environmental awareness to planting trees within a community.
- *Agriculture:* Agriculture volunteers work with small farmers to increase food production while promoting environmental conservation practices.
- *Health:* Health volunteers raise community awareness, train health workers and educate families.
- *Community development:* This is the most open and flexible programme in the Peace Corps. Community development volunteers conduct assessments of

how to address a community's needs.

- *Focus areas:* Within the above project areas, the Peace Corps often develops programmes to address emerging needs worldwide. Currently, HIV/AIDS education is an important challenge in Africa and around the world.
- *Crisis Corps:* To date, 470 Crisis Corps Volunteers have served in thirty countries in Latin America, Africa, the Pacific, Asia and eastern Europe. The Crisis Corps is currently recruiting volunteers to work in Africa on HIV/AIDS-related activities.

The Peace Corps enjoys bipartisan support in Congress. One senator and six representatives, including both Democrats and Republicans, served as volunteers themselves.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is charged with general oversight of the activities and programmes of the Peace Corps, and the House Committee on International Relations serves a similar function. The Peace Corps' annual budget is determined each year by the congressional budget and appropriations process, and is part of the foreign operations budget. The Peace Corps' annual budget for fiscal year 2002 is \$275 million. President Bush has devoted the highest level of

funding to the Peace Corps than at any time in the history of the agency.

### **The future**

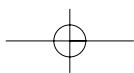
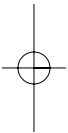
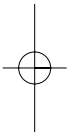
In his 2002 state of the union address, President George W. Bush stated:

*A spirit of sacrifice and service gave birth to the Peace Corps more than forty years ago. We needed the Peace Corps then, and we need the Peace Corps today . . . I have called for twice as many Peace Corps volunteers over the next five years, to return the Peace Corps to the strength it had in the mid-1960s.*

This means that we will double the current number of Peace Corps volunteers from seven thousand to fourteen thousand by 2007.

In addition to the areas of service listed above, the Peace Corps has signed an memorandum of understanding with the Habitat for Humanity International to extend house building for needy people around the world.

Our volunteers are peacemakers and they are making lasting friendships around the world.



*International youth volunteering has grown more slowly in south-east Asia than in Europe. This article proposes three ways of increasing the pace of development: firstly, by setting up properly organised, issue-based world youth forums and exchange programmes; secondly, by ensuring that all national, regional and international bodies – such as schools, youth organisations, businesses, governments and UN agencies – recognise the importance of volunteering in enabling young people to participate in sustainable development and to promote intercultural understanding; and finally, by encouraging young people to believe in their own potential.*

## Promoting international youth voluntary services in Asia

**Lee Ji-hyang, Junior Programme Specialist, Youth Team, Korean National Commission**

Throughout history, young people have been key agents for social change, community development and technological innovation. Youth has long been regarded as the future. But this perception has blurred our ability to see young people as important social agents *in the present*. In recent years, there has been a growing demand from young people for opportunities to participate in societal development. At the same time, governments and institutions are seeking ways to involve young people and help them to become responsible citizens.

The UN General Assembly declared 1985 as International Youth Year: Participation, Development and Peace. And in 1995 the UN strengthened its commitment to young people by adopting an international strategy: the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond.

The World Programme covers ten priority areas, including the full and effective participation of young people in the life of society and in decision making. In its proposals for action, the Programme says that

governments should consider the establishment of voluntary service programmes for young people, that youth organisations should be directly involved in every aspect of setting up these programmes, and lastly that programmes of international co-operation between youth organisations should be set up to promote intercultural understanding and development training.

In recent years, four World Youth Forums have been held, involving participants from all sectors of society in focused global dialogue on youth-related issues. In discussions, the young people reaffirmed their desire to encourage youth volunteering as an important form of youth participation and to promote inter-cultural understanding through workshops, seminars, exchange programmes and youth camps.

In this context, the UN's declaration of the year 2001 as International Year of Volunteers, with the aims of highlighting the achievements of volunteers worldwide and of encouraging more people to volunteer, also had a great impact on developing international youth voluntary service.

International voluntary service started in Europe, in the form of

work camps. During the 1920s the Service Civil International (SCI) team helped to rebuild farms in France and Germany destroyed during World War One. Since then, the idea of sending volunteers overseas has spread across the world. Thanks to the dramatic growth of work camps set up by NGOs and the creation of international organisations such as CCIVS (Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service), many young people have been able to share with each other ideas of peace and co-operation.

However, youth volunteering has developed more slowly in Asia. International voluntary service in Asia began around 1960 but, unlike in Europe, it was mostly initiated by government and little overseas interaction was promoted. The multitude of languages, cultures, religions and political systems in the region was considered to be an obstacle to the development of international voluntary services. Also, the geographical disparity made it harder to organise international programmes. It was same with Korea. In 1965 SCI organised the first international summer work camp. The following year, the Korean National Commission for UNESCO organised an international youth camp, and has continued to do so for the past thirty-seven years, inviting a

total of 3,900 young people from all over the world.

However, in the 1980s and 1990s young people became the leading force for social change in Asia. They turned their gaze to the outside world and demanded major involvement in world volunteering activities and exchanges. With the support of young people and enlightened NGO leaders, Asia's volunteering is now taking a big leap forward. In 2002 Korea Overseas Volunteers (KOV), run by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, sent about 220 volunteers to twenty-five countries; of these, 113 (51.3 per cent of the total) are in thirteen countries in Asia and the Pacific. Not only government but also NGOs, youth organisations and universities are now recognising the importance to youth empowerment and participation of sending young volunteers abroad.

Promoting international youth voluntary service and exchanges has always been seen as an effective way to include young people in social development, intercultural understanding and peace building. However, international voluntary services are facing many problems over visas, awareness raising, quality of training and justifying their activities in the community. Here are

some suggestions for promoting youth volunteering worldwide:

Firstly, properly organised, issue-based world youth forums and exchange programmes should be encouraged. The UNDP Global Youth Forum and the Youth Employment Summits are good examples. Rather than merely inviting young people to a gathering, we should genuinely involve them in the policy making process, giving them a chance to confront the real problems of the world and to find solutions

Secondly, all national, regional and international bodies – such as governments, schools, youth organisations, businesses and UN agencies – should recognise the important role of volunteering for building the capacity of young people to participate in sustainable development and for promoting intercultural understanding, civic education, tolerance and human dignity. Full financial, political and administrative assistance in implementing, researching, evaluating, training and planning volunteering programmes is also needed.

And last but not least, young people should believe in their own potential. They are no longer a problem, but equal members of society striving to

solve problems. They should aim to make a difference through their day-to-day activities. They should not complain that nobody is helping them, but should make a start in their own communities. They should open themselves up to the world, through youth exchanges and building networks. They should seize the chance to acquire enough capacity to become a responsible global citizen.

The impacts of globalisation – including rapid economic change and political instability – are affecting the daily life of the youth of many countries. But, thanks to the actions and words of young people, we can look forward to a better world. Because young people are flexible, open-minded, co-operative, enthusiastic and, most of all, have a strong will to volunteer.

*Volunteering is a widespread and long-standing practice in the Philippines but, as this article shows, it is currently failing to meet the steep increase in demand. This is partly because of the lack of a supportive policy environment at both national and regional level. The state-funded agency concerned with volunteering spends too much time vetting volunteers from abroad and too little time nurturing local initiatives. The government as a whole fails to see how useful volunteers can be in its programmes of national development. And there is a need for a south-east Asian regional body that can promote South-South volunteering as a means of opening dialogue between cultures – this will help to counter the ethnic intolerance currently threatening the region.*

## Government support for volunteering in the Philippines

**Horacio R Morales Jr, President, La Liga Policy Institute**

Predictions of a regional humanitarian crisis should make us more passionate about volunteering. It is an ideal response to the need for working together and for cultural exchanges in a world where ethnic differences have been hijacked to sow fear and to justify aggression. This is an opportune moment to reflect on these issues as we scan the events of the past few months: the bombings in Bali, in Zamboanga in the southern Philippines and elsewhere; the regional resonance of the drumbeat towards war in the

Middle East; and the continuing economic malaise that envelops east and south-east Asia.

This is a particularly difficult time for volunteering in terms of security, funding and capabilities. Following the events of 11 September 2001, international volunteering has been hard hit and the number of overseas volunteers has dropped. As embassies revise their advice and international security agencies reduce their estimate of our ability to protect foreign nationals, there will be fewer

committed individuals willing to work in our region. While this opens up opportunities for South-South volunteering, it also implies an unconscious distancing by the developed world from the problems faced by the developed and underdeveloped countries.

The security problem is compounded by budgetary issues. In the Philippines our national volunteering organisations, including the national volunteer regulatory agency, are faced with severe budget constraints, crippling our ability to share skills and knowledge across regions and ethnic groups, and threatening the demise of any national or state effort to promote volunteer action. It is likewise becoming more difficult to match the demand for committed volunteers with the available supply of skills and capabilities. We have moved forward in our needs, even though the fragility and vulnerability of disadvantaged people remains.

These problems are a direct result of volunteerism being subjected to the same strong winds of globalisation that buffet other aspects of our social life. And since these trends arise from global integration, they must be met with an integrated response.

Any effort to explain public policies towards volunteering in the

Philippines requires comparisons to be made with the larger picture across the region. I believe that interaction and engagement in volunteering requires the embedding of public policies at the regional level, using best practice developed at the community level.

### **Volunteering in the Philippines**

Volunteering is deeply embedded in the collectivist culture of the Philippines. It has its historical origins in Filipino mutual aid systems, specifically the concept of *bayanihan* in rural areas, when townsfolk would pool together their labour to help distressed individuals and families. Sometimes the system was intertwined with the institutions of trust or social capital in the countryside, such as the pooling of labour for harvest or planting. Thus, volunteering became systematic rather than random. As a precursor of latter-day practice, volunteering was institutionalised in the late 1950s and early 1960s, when rural reconstruction organisations used a sort of *bayanihan* to mobilise professionals and experts to allocate a portion of their time, talent and money to help those in need. At this point, volunteerism began to capture the imagination and efforts of a nascent 'nationalist' intelligentsia. Volunteering was given an added push when it was institutionalised as

part of official development assistance in the field of capacity building in the early 1960s. Since that time, volunteer organisations have become a distinctive component of development and cultural programmes in the Philippines.

The Philippine government established the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA) in the 1970s. The organisation began rather inauspiciously, focusing on regulation and control rather than on guiding volunteer placements and priorities. The PNVSCA was largely demand driven and engaged in little focusing or targeting. In fact, it was not until the mid-1980s that we in the NGO community saw volunteering gradually being turned into a more programmatic instrument, targeting key development needs. From mainly English teaching or general primary education, volunteer intervention expanded to address other important issues such as gender and the environment. The real qualitative shift has occurred in the last two decades, when key volunteer groups such as VSO (UK), CUSO (Canada), SNV (Netherlands) and to a certain extent DED (Germany) have started to shift volunteering away from an exclusive focus on placements and volunteers and towards an emphasis on development and outcomes.

The PNVSCA was only just beginning to respond to these new developmental challenges when the Philippine government announced plans to abolish the organisation owing to fiscal constraints. Hence, the challenge in the Philippines today is to find a way to strengthen partnerships between local development actors and the volunteering community, while maintaining a proactive government role in the process.

### **The threat to volunteering**

In the case of the Philippines, the threat to volunteering from internal factors (budgets and supply of skills) is exacerbated by the failure of the state to transform volunteer groups into a genuine community of development professionals interacting with each other. Government has paid very little attention to coherence and learning.

For example, scant attention is being paid to the link between the macro anti-poverty and development goals of the state and the empowerment of local executives and local government units – and the potential role that volunteers can play in facilitating this link. Even today, PNVSCA is still geared towards the processes of regulation: for example, approving requests, handing out visas, checking the identity and

integrity of volunteers and monitoring placements. As a result, it has largely targeted foreign volunteer-sending organisations operating in the Philippines. Inadequate attention has been paid by government to nurturing local volunteering initiatives such as VIDA, the UP Pahinungod volunteering programme, Xavier University's Year of Service programme, or even the Ateneo University's Jesuit Volunteer Programme.

The only consolation is that the current situation clearly demonstrates the need for immediate and tangible reforms. If it actually happens, the closure of PNVSCA will have an unfortunate impact on the ability of the Philippines to attract experts who can work alongside disadvantaged partners and communities. The immediate effect will probably be a loss of committed personnel and the end of a process of honest self-assessment and subsequent capacity building within PNVSCA. Indeed, in the past two years we have seen the PNVSCA leadership and its personnel redirect themselves towards the broader goals of development co-operation. Can PNVSCA survive the looming fiscal crisis? We hope it does.

Our hope, of course, is that even if

PNVSCA is dissolved, its learning will be embedded in another state agency. An optimistic view would be that volunteering can be strengthened by a closer attachment to organisations such as NEDA. If this becomes a dead-end, there is no option but to utilise the body of knowledge about the experience and achievements of voluntary work as a way of promoting volunteering – either at the regional level, or directly by helping local communities to gain access to such knowledge.

### **Regional volunteering**

An increasingly important aspect of volunteering is South-South exchange. In the Philippines, organisations such as VSO have established a recruitment base to enable Filipino volunteers to be sent to work in other developing and underdeveloped countries in Africa and in south and south-east Asia. These positive developments provide the basis for expanding this type of co-operation, especially at the regional level.

Regional volunteering can be seen as an offshoot of a shared framework for analysing events in our region. This framework could be called 'cosmopolitan reconstruction'. Mary Kaldor of LSE describes it as 'an alternative forward looking cosmopolitan political project which

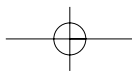
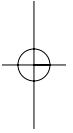
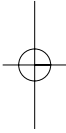
would cross the global-local divide and reconstruct legitimacy around an inclusive, democratic set of values counterposed against the politics of exclusivism'. It would operate within a framework of international law and allow for a political, social and economic component.

Many people would resist the notion of volunteers being involved in politics – and I am not suggesting that they should. I do, however, believe that there is a need to send volunteers who would engage various cultures in some sort of 'interfaith dialogue' and would build, along with their partners and the stakeholders, the economic and social institutions that would make economic progress and capacity building possible, while at the same time encouraging religious tolerance, respect for human rights and cultural sensitivity.

The only possible way to take this forward is to establish a regional volunteering institution. This institution should enable cross-border and cross-cultural exchange that feeds into development projects and programmes – in the same way that gender and environmental issues are now seen as cross-cutting concerns, even in the most localised economic initiative.

A second important requirement would be for local communities to continue to have access to volunteers from the North. This is a dual investment: in the transfer of skills and in the building of solidarity between North and South. A volunteering initiative – supported by regional bodies such as ASEAN – can go a long way to reduce the threat posed by current flashpoints in the region. It can likewise bridge the widening gap in the attention paid by the developed world to the developing and underdeveloped countries. As a first step I propose the setting up of a volunteer development academy – where the process can be systematised, professionalised and regularised.

To conclude, I believe that harnessing the potential of volunteering to respond to today's complex challenges is imperative. The Philippines, and south-east Asia, show the greatest potential for contributing to the development of volunteering, since it is already embedded in our culture. However, these efforts should be accompanied by the establishment of a supportive policy environment at the national and regional level. Alongside an alarming resurgence of ethnic and racial intolerance, there exist greater opportunities for co-operation.



*By involving the ideas and energies of young people today, this article argues, we can 'create a bridge between the strength of tradition and the energy of innovation'. We therefore need to use our collective power to inspire young people to volunteer worldwide. Three ideas are proposed that could help to shape the future: firstly, we need to embrace diversity – diversity of thought, belief and opinion – so that we can break down the barriers we have created for ourselves; secondly, we need to research volunteering more effectively, in order to fortify it as an institution for learning about ourselves; and thirdly, we all need to find our 'inner youth'.*

## The future of volunteering

Leo Wong, Youth One, Edmonton, Canada

Imagine the inspirational power of volunteering. When I was thirteen, I saw other people doing it, and that's how it started. At my school we had a newsletter club, and my friends wanted to write, so I joined them for a lunch-hour meeting. That was the first time I had volunteered for anything. Now I am twenty-four and I have started my own non-profit programme called Youth One, which publishes youth opinions on the Internet and in a printed magazine. Today, our web site attracts nearly one million hits a month, we distribute thirty thousand copies of our magazine and we have over a hundred young volunteers in our city of Edmonton, Canada, plus a number of young volunteers from around the

world connecting other youth to various community resources. And this all started with a simple gesture, and a desire to make a difference.

Imagine if we could use our collective power to inspire young people worldwide to volunteer. For example, Youth One runs a Volunteer Web-A-Thon every year during Global Youth Service Day, where we ask young people from around the world to make pledges of volunteer hours. This is just an example of how we can work together in innovative ways and help motivate young people to volunteer.

It doesn't matter how old people are, or how old they think they are:

everyone can serve as a role model for young people. Through their actions, their beliefs and their words, they can inspire the youth in their community to volunteer. By assuming this responsibility, they will help to ensure future generations will continue to volunteer. And the young people who are already volunteering today are a source of energy we can build upon.

That energy is contagious, and it is what inspires me to continue volunteering. When I see other young people discover the difference their efforts have made to other people, I can't help but be motivated to do more myself. When I was at the World Youth Volunteer Summit in Tokyo in December 2001, I remember talking to a new Japanese friend of mine, who said she was ashamed that she didn't volunteer enough and wanted to do more. I was touched because I knew she sincerely felt guilty, and that reaction inspired me to want to help more young people discover the impact of volunteerism.

And that is how powerful youthful energy is. It often serves as the stimulus that changes our world. I see this when young people first acquire an interest in a cause, whether it be social, environmental or political. Their eyes light up and

they dream the answers to questions of 'What if?' What if our world was a little more simple, and a little more friendly? What if we could actually do what we could imagine? That youthful energy fuels creativity, and it is creativity that helps us to solve our challenges.

Those challenges are different ideologies, different beliefs and different agendas. How can young people make a positive impact when the generations before us have demonstrated that conflicts can be fought but not won, and that humanity can be sacrificed for the sake of greed and control? These are the serious issues that face us today. How long do we wait before we allow them to become the serious issues that face our children tomorrow?

### **Three activities that will help shape the future**

What will the future be like for the youth of the next generation – those who are babies today, or not even born? It is up to us to make sure we do not leave a world that denies our young people optimism and hope. We need to come together and put our energy into a few activities that I think will help to make our future the reality we want it to be.

Firstly, we need to embrace diversity

– diversity of thought, belief and opinion. Young people are often more open-minded than the older generations, and we can be useful in bringing together ideas and opinions. With communication tools as abundant as they are now, we should continue an open dialogue on a truly global level, but more importantly, we must open dialogue within our own communities. With tools such as the Internet, we are on the verge of great risks and rewards. We can continue to segregate ourselves into isolated groups, or we can support our communities by bringing different people together locally, nationally and internationally. Through this process we will innovate and we will find ways of breaking down the barriers that we've created for ourselves. Young people are central to making that happen.

Secondly, we need to research more effectively and consistently. I believe that research helps to fortify volunteerism as an institution for learning about ourselves. We need to give more power to what we are doing, through scientific evidence and through a clear voice and message. We need to do a better job at understanding research and its practical uses – we need to create proof of our successes and treat that as a form of currency. The more we

gather this new currency of information and knowledge, the more we benefit as a whole. If we are able to promote this currency among organisations, governments and academics, we will be able to exchange it for products such as strong communities, healthy children and hope for the future. As we grow older and wiser, I hope our legacy will be our shared knowledge that can be transferred to those who follow us. Specifically, we should transfer our knowledge, our experience and our passions to the young people who are learning about this world and how it works. Let us make sure that by doing good research now, we build a foundation for good practice tomorrow.

Thirdly, and perhaps most challenging, is the need for all of us to find our inner youth. When was the last time you considered yourself as young? The pure desire and energy of the act of volunteerism is, I would suggest, a characteristic of youthful people. You need the spirit of a champion, the convictions of a leader and the energy of a star to do what you do as a volunteer. You direct your heart and your mind in combination to create social change. Just like small children who relish the novelty of a new toy, we relish the opportunity for new experiences and meeting new people.

### Why young people volunteer

Taken from Youth One's Volunteer Web-A-Thon last year, here are some reasons why young people choose to volunteer:

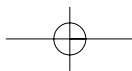
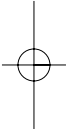
- *I can use my skills to benefit others, and therefore feel appreciated* (Melanie, 22, Australia).
- *To change my community in any way possible and show youth the positive side of this world that we live in* (Geoffrey, 22, Kenya).
- *One teacher showed me what it was like to make a huge difference in one person's eyes, and that was just unloading groceries for an old couple, so I did more and it brought a huge smile to my face. I am now very active in my community and school district* (Chelsea, 17, USA).
- *It reminds me to live my life while I can. I volunteer with cancer patients, and I love to see the way they live every day, because they have realised that everyday counts (even the bad ones)* (Angela, 22, Canada).
- *Because I want to help the community around me and the world. Volunteering is also one of my hobbies. Through volunteering, I can gain a lot of useful knowledge and unforgettable experiences while having a great time doing it* (Eric, 21, Korea).
- *I feel it's my responsibility to help inform, inspire, and create change in my community in Ghana. Many young people are hopeless in life here; no food, no employment, living in poverty. I wish to volunteer to let every young person build up some confidence in his ability to change his own life through some inspiration, support and motivation* (Emmanuel, 22, Ghana).
- *There is nothing more touching than when a younger person comes up to you and says, "I want to be just like you when I'm older"* (Laura, 18, Canada).
- *I choose to volunteer because I want to give back to my community and I want to be a resource of my community, not a burden* (Joyce, 14, China).
- *I am part of this world, a member of the human community. If I do nothing to help those around me, I am cutting myself off from who I really am. One can only realise his or her humanity in relation to other people* (TJ, 16, USA).
- *I choose to volunteer because I like to make a difference in the community, and if I affect only five people positively they can affect five other people and so on, soon the whole world will be affected* (Rebecca, 14, Canada).
- *Life is short and we are not meant for mere living without a cause.*

*Everyone is born for a cause and I too want to live for that cause*  
(Sreenivasa, 25, India).

- *I want to improve the earth and community for years to come. So even after I pass away my work is still shown* (Amber, 16, USA).

I think it is clear that, by involving the ideas and energies of young people today, we can create a bridge between the strength of tradition and the energy of innovation.

The difficult part comes in convincing others to be just as youthful, just as energetic as we are about volunteerism. The difficult part comes in persuading others that we need to appreciate each other in order to help each other. The difficult part comes in persuading others that the privilege that comes with volunteering is that you can be as youthful as you want and that we live on for ever when we give the gift of humanity. But since when was life easy? As volunteers, as youthful people, we know that overcoming difficulty is what motivates us to be involved. If we can overcome these difficulties, we can overcome any challenge that awaits us.



*Relations between Korea and Japan have historically been problematic. This article describes the initial stages of a volunteer exchange programme designed to improve understanding between the two countries. A Korean student spent six months in the Japanese town of Fujimi, using half her time to volunteer in social welfare facilities and half to tell the local people about the Korean way of life. Once certain administrative problems have been solved, the programme is set to expand.*

## A volunteer exchange programme between Korea and Japan

Yoko Yazawa, Society of Yatsugatake Residents Contemplating Life and Death

Our Society's members include the staff and patients of medical institutions, patients' families and local residents. We all live at the foot of Yatsugatake, a mountain range with eight peaks in Nagano Prefecture.

We gather occasionally to talk about life and death. Our primary concern is how to live our lives with dignity, even in its final stages, when we might experience both physical and mental illness. We occasionally invite doctors or welfare specialists to give us lectures bringing us up to date on

their respective fields. Some of our members volunteer at homes for elderly or mentally handicapped people.

### **The background to the programme**

Our volunteer exchange programme had its origins in March 2000, when Dr Kang-Hyun Lee, Asia-Pacific Regional Co-ordinator of IAVE and Executive Director of Volunteer 21 in Korea, visited Japan as guest speaker at the general assembly of IAVE Japan. During a subsequent visit to my town, Fujimi in Nagano

Prefecture, we talked about the possibilities of setting up a youth exchange programme between our two countries. Early in 2001, Dr Lee sent me specific proposals for an exchange programme. Although we realised that if we were to implement the programme here in Japan, we would have to overcome several major problems, we decided to accept his proposal.

As we feel it important to deepen mutual understanding between Japan and Korea, our closest neighbours in Asia, we were happy to initiate a programme that would enable us to know more about each other's culture, history, people and society.

As the first step, we organised a specific programme to exchange student volunteers. The students would be required to stay in Japan for at least three months, during which time they would volunteer for half of each day at local non-profit organisations, such as the hospital, the old people's homes or the public library. For the rest of the day they were free to socialise with the local people or to follow their own pursuits, with the help of local friends where necessary.

### **The visit of Ji-Hye Che**

We chose our first student volunteer from among a group of applicants

interviewed by Dr Lee. In early June 2001 we welcomed to Fujimi Miss Ji-Hye Che, a student of social welfare. Dr Yazawa, director of Fujimi's Kogen Hospital and a member of our Society, kindly arranged for her to be accommodated free of charge in the nurse's dormitory and to dine at the doctor's dining room in the hospital.

Ji-Hye stayed for almost half a year and worked each morning at the old people's home affiliated to Kogen Hospital. At her request, we organised programmes to enable her to gain practical experience in other welfare-related facilities, such as other old people's homes, a home for people with learning difficulties and the public library in the town centre of Fujimi town, which was then attracting media attention because of its unique method of operation. The work experience at the library was particularly new to Miss Che.

Ji-Hye was very busy every weekday, but I managed to teach her quite a lot of Japanese, which was very useful as it enabled her not only to communicate with people in her day-to-day life but also to give speeches as part of the cultural exchange. She gave a talk about the culture and history of Korea twice to local schools and twice to our informal gatherings of residents at the Community Plaza. We even touched

upon the controversy about what Japanese high school textbooks said about recent history, because what we wanted was real understanding between our two countries, not superficial relations. Ji-Hye also gave a class in Korean cooking, which was so popular with the townspeople that she had to repeat it to a second sitting.

Ji-Hye attended the volunteer youth conference held as a part of the celebrations of the International Year of Volunteers in Nagano in August and in Tokyo in December, as co-sponsored by IAVE. She met a lot of active young volunteers from all over the world and learned much about their activities.

In return Ji-Hye enjoyed Japanese cuisine, the midsummer firework display on the Suwa Lake in Nagano and also the breathtaking views of autumnal leaves at the foot of Yatsugatake.

### **The problems**

The programme did have its problems, however. Firstly we had difficulties in obtaining entry visa into Japan for the student volunteers. The problem was that the programme did not fall under any visa-issuing category at that time: if you want to study, work or travel in Japan there are entry visa conditions already in

force, but Ji-Hye wanted to stay in Japan for quite a long time doing voluntary work. Fortunately, we managed to negotiate the matter with the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, who promised to consider favourably any future applications for entry into Japan for volunteering purposes.

Another problem was accommodation for the students. Japanese people tend to live rather in isolation from one another, even in rural areas, whereas Koreans seem to have much closer relationships with each other, like relatives. In Korea, welfare facilities such as hospitals or homes for elderly or disabled people would generally welcome volunteers, who might stay there for a few days or even longer and be provided with food and shelter. By contrast, in Japan we are not used to having volunteers stay overnight or longer, except for disaster relief or similar. In other words, it is not customary in Japan to provide food and lodging to volunteers. However, we are hoping to find inexpensive board and lodging in farmhouses, which normally have plenty of space; however, the new students may have to work for a few hours a day to pay for their daily necessities. In that case, it may be necessary to ensure that the students strike a sensible balance between working as volunteers and earning their keep.

What is most important is to cultivate a taste for volunteering as well as deepening the understanding between the young people of both countries.

### **The future**

In future, we would like to expand our volunteer exchange programme into new areas. For example, it might be a good idea to exchange high-school students during the summer vacation so that they can learn about the host country's culture and society through volunteering.

When I look at the programme so far, I feel that, despite the difficulties, we have made progress towards effectively exchanging volunteers between our two countries. We would like to continue our mutual efforts so that the programme will keep on growing.

*Fifty years of civil strife in Colombia have led to the displacement of many families from the countryside to the cities. This article describes how one organisation, Corporación El Minuto de Dios, supports these displaced families from the moment they arrive, by helping them with housing and education, and by providing psychosocial services such as group therapy. The organisation's volunteers carry out a variety of roles: raising public awareness of the needs of displaced families; raising funds; providing training; offering emotional support; helping with job search; and escorting families to cultural and recreational activities.*

## How volunteers are helping internally displaced families in Colombia

Maria Teresa Gnecco de Ruiz, Corporación El Minuto de Dios

For more than fifty years, Colombia has experienced periods of severe violence caused by guerrilla warfare. This situation has become worse during the last ten years, affecting most of the rural areas and coming very close to the main cities.

The guerrillas are attempting to intimidate civil society through the murder of peasants and the burning of their homes. This has led to the displacement of large numbers of families from rural to urban areas. The guerrillas do this because it is a quick and inexpensive way of

acquiring land – which enables them to enlarge their area of influence, improve their access to strategic resources and transportation and to carry out illicit activities. The number of municipalities affected by this problem is increasing dramatically, and now stands at 547.

### **The impact of displacement**

Displacement has a severe impact on families. They have to leave their land, their animals and their possessions to seek protection in vast, impersonal cities. The journey may take several days and they often

arrive in the cities in a very poor physical state.

The majority also arrive with serious emotional problems, after witnessing such traumatic events as the murder of husbands or sons or the forcible enlistment of family members into the terrorist groups. Some saw their houses being burned and most were forced to leave at very short notice (sometimes a matter of minutes), abandoning all their possessions

Of the displaced people, most of those aged under 18 or over 50 are men. However, most of those aged between 18 and 49 are women, due to the fact that many of the men in this age group are killed or forced to join terrorist groups.

Owing to the loss of their partner, many women have to assume the role of head of the family. And because most of the displaced people come from rural areas, there is a significant reduction in agricultural activity.

Children are also severely affected. In most cases they don't understand why their parents have been killed or why they suddenly had to leave their land, animals, schools and friends

To meet the immediate needs of displaced families in their new

environment, the Colombian government has designed humanitarian assistance programmes. To promote economic stability for the newcomers, the government has also set up income generation programmes.

Several national and international NGOs are also tackling the problem: for example, Community Health and Finance International, which is based in Washington DC, is sponsoring humanitarian assistance programmes in several cities. Both government and NGOs work through Colombian non-profit organisations, which implement the programmes. One of these organisations is the Corporación El Minuto de Dios.

### **Corporación El Minuto de Dios**

This non-profit social agency was founded in 1958 in Bogotá by a Catholic priest, Father Rafael García Herreros, and a group of volunteers for the purpose of helping poor people, mainly through housing programmes. The organisation took its name ('A minute with God') from the TV programme that Father Herreros has presented every night since 1953.

Over time, the organisation has diversified its programmes to meet changing needs. It has set up schools

for vulnerable children, a university, a network of radio stations and a TV network. These services are grouped into different entities according to their nature, although they are all part of the Minuto de Dios organisation. The first entity created, Corporación El Minuto de Dios, is the agency that carries out the social programmes.

The Corporación El Minuto de Dios currently runs programmes in more than fifteen cities throughout the country. They include housing programmes, community organisations, schemes to eradicate child labour, community centres, youth development projects, humanitarian assistance for displaced families, a home for older people and a foster parent scheme to help children remain in school.

Although the organisation started with volunteers only, it has since had to hire professional and non-professional paid staff as well in order to be able to carry out all the programmes.

During the International Year of Volunteers, Minuto de Dios was an active member of the national committee set up by the Colombian group of IAVE to celebrate the year. The organisation was also a member of the steering committee that

organised, among many other activities, a national conference on volunteers (with more than 300 participants), an academic forum at a well-known university and the passing of a national law to regulate volunteer work in Colombia.

The Corporación El Minuto de Dios has been recognised as a leading social institution in Colombia. Every year it organises 'million peso banquets' in many cities, inviting government and civic leaders with the aim of raising funds to finance the different programmes. The president of Colombia participates in the event held in Bogotá, which is known both as the 'richest banquet' – because of the price of the admission ticket – and the 'poorest banquet', because only a piece of bread and a small glass of wine are served.

The Corporación, its founder and its director have received several awards in recognition of their achievements.

Volunteers in El Minuto de Dios help in different programmes according to their knowledge, skills and interests. The volunteers are of all ages, both sexes and belong to a range of socio-economic groups. They are motivated by their sense of social responsibility and their interest in helping others in need. They include young people with idealism and energy, retired

people with time in their hands and the skills acquired over a lifetime, and poor people who have experienced suffering but are willing to help. All volunteers go through a selection process and orientation programmes.

Corporación El Minuto de Dios has successfully enlisted volunteers in: combating the poverty of displaced families; finding jobs for unemployed people; training adults for employment in the city; improving small businesses; enrolling children in city schools; and organising recreational activities for young people and adults.

In other words, helping to improve the living conditions of displaced families and opening up new opportunities for them.

The principles on which the Corporación's activities are based include:

- Respect for the dignity of every individual.
- Acceptance of everyone as he or she is.
- Recognition that each person is unique, with their own personality and needs, and thus have to be treated differently.
- Confidentiality – the information received is not shared with

anyone, except for the purposes of medical treatment.

#### *The humanitarian assistance programme*

This programme offers families food, living facilities, cooking utensils and bedding for the first three months after they have been displaced. Volunteers assist the programme in various ways: for example, by assembling and distributing food; giving the newly-arrived families information about the city and their rights; and helping them to adjust to the new environment and to use existing resources and social programmes.

The children need special help in adjusting to urban life and city schools. Because they come from disadvantaged rural areas, they tend to have poor language skills. Indeed, they may not have experienced any environment other than their hut, their fields, their animals and the nearby river.

They may feel uncertain of who they are, what they look like and how they fit in with city life. They may never have worked with crayons, scissors, puzzles, building blocks or books before. They often do not know how to participate in the games played by city children. Hence it is difficult for displaced children to

attain the same level of readiness for school as children who have always lived in urban areas.

In many cases, displaced children need individual tutoring in writing, reading and mathematics, and in making learning fun and simple. Help with conversational skills and vocabulary development are among the activities carried out by volunteers.

#### *The psychosocial services*

The majority of displaced people arrive in the cities with emotional problems. They need someone to talk to so that they can express their feelings of anger, sadness, fear or loneliness. They often need individual and group psychotherapy.

Group therapy can be very useful. If the group members can learn to talk and release their feelings of anger, their self-esteem and self-assertion improves. They learn that others have similar problems, and this diminishes their feelings of isolation. The therapy group identifies behavioural patterns caused by anxiety about the new environment, such as difficulties in being close to people, trusting them and sharing with them. The process of re-education helps people to understand their own behaviour and aids socialisation. However, people who are clearly psychotic are

referred to mental health services.

The type of group therapy provided for children depends upon their age, their condition and their behaviour: activity group therapy is for children of seven to eleven and play therapy is for four to six year olds. These groups give children an outlet for their aggression in a controlled setting, and help them to socialise with others. The activities during the session can include painting, games, role playing, dance, songs, arts and crafts, and trips to recreational facilities. Parent groups help parents to recognise how their reactions affect their children's behaviour.

The psychosocial services also encourage people to participate in self-help groups, according to their individual interests and the needs of the programme. They can join groups that address such issues as advocacy, health care, sport and recreation, education, income generation, orientation to the new environment, spiritual activities and special events. The groups usually meet weekly and have eight to ten members, with social workers acting as consultants. The groups identify problems, set priorities, formulate goals, identify activities and carry out projects. Members learn to participate in group discussions, make decisions, resolve conflict, conduct a meeting,

work in teams, and develop their leadership as well as further the democratic process.

*The six roles of volunteers*

In El Minuto de Diós, volunteers carry out the following roles:

- *Changing attitudes.* Displaced families from poor rural areas are frequently discriminated against by city dwellers. Volunteers can help to change attitudes by getting involved with these newcomers and raising public awareness of their living conditions, their problems and their needs.
- *Fundraising.* Volunteers help to raise funds for the agency.
- *Training.* Volunteers assist with training programmes in job skills, self sufficiency and business administration.
- *Emotional support.* Volunteers offer warmth and understanding to displaced people, helping them to regain self-confidence. In short, they provide the 'human touch'.
- *Cultural and recreational activities.* Volunteers take displaced families on visits to museums, parks, shopping centres and leisure facilities to help them become familiar with their new environment. They also organise recreational programmes, sporting competitions, play sessions, music classes and special events to

celebrate feast days.

- *Job search.* Volunteers play an important role in finding employment, teaching money management and running programmes to instil economic self-sufficiency.

In short, volunteers help to mitigate the pain of displacement and to encourage emotional, economic and social recovery.