2015 | State of the World's Volunteerism Report

Transforming Governance

UN
Volunteers
inspiration in action

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide.

Volunteerism is a powerful means of engaging people in tackling development challenges, and it can transform the pace and nature of development. Volunteerism benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer by strengthening trust, solidarity and reciprocity among citizens, and by purposefully creating opportunities for participation.

UNV contributes to peace and development by advocating for recognition of volunteers, working with partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and mobilizing an increasing number and diversity of volunteers, including experienced UN Volunteers, throughout the world. UNV embraces volunteerism as universal and inclusive, and recognizes volunteerism in its diversity as well as the values that sustain it: free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity.

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2015

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Foreword

Discussions on the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda have drawn attention to the significant human development achievements many countries have made, in all regions of the world. They also shine light on underlying reasons why progress may falter or fall short. The lack of effective and accountable governance, for example, can be a barrier to progress, undermining national and local efforts to improve lives and the prospects of communities.

For the post-2015 sustainable development agenda to succeed, improving governance, tackling inequalities, and expanding voice and participation need to be addressed simultaneously. Volunteerism can help by giving voice to stakeholders and by mobilizing people and civil society organizations to contribute to solutions.

This report is designed to help governments, civil society organizations, bilateral and multilateral development organizations, and other stakeholders to realize the full potential of volunteerism at global, national and local levels.

At the global level, the report presents examples of how volunteer networks are using technology to build alliances which advance volunteerism and connect development actors. The rapid spread of mobile phone and other information and communication technologies is expanding the reach and scope of volunteerism. It enables motivated and engaged people and groups to interact, learn from each other, and find new opportunities and resources. The report suggests ways in which such efforts could be scaled up to help implement the post-2015 agenda, and to enable vulnerable and excluded people to have a say in the decisions which have an impact on them, including those at the UN and in other global fora.

At the country level, the report suggests that the ability of volunteers to support development progress depends on the willingness of national governments to ensure that the space and supportive environments which encourage their participation and initiatives are available. The Report finds that volunteerism can help to generate social trust,

advance social inclusion, improve basic services, and boost human development. Volunteers and volunteerism bring the greatest benefits where enabling conditions like freedom of speech and association and an atmosphere of vigorous political debate are already in place.

At the local level, the Report suggests that volunteerism can increasingly be a vehicle for people in excluded and/or marginalized communities to be heard, and to access the services, resources, and opportunities they need to improve their lives. It recommends that volunteers form alliances with local governments and with like-minded local and broader civil society groupings to support people in marginalized groups, including women, to access the information and strengthen the capabilities they need to improve their prospects and hold local officials to account. The Report details how women volunteers in rural Uttarakhand, India, for example, formed 'whole village groups' which helped them learn from each other and build the confidence and capabilities they needed to engage local government officials, defend their rights, and become partners in improving their communities.

At UN Volunteers and at the UN Development Programme, we see how volunteers make a difference for the better. From our experience and as the evidence reflected in this Report shows, the motivation and commitment of individual volunteers needs to be matched by responsive and supportive governments and development actors. We hope that this Report will be considered, discussed and used for the empowerment of more people in more places to confront the exclusion, discrimination and inequalities which block development progress, and to help deliver on the shared aspirations of people and leaders everywhere to eradicate poverty in all its dimensions and achieve sustainable development for all.

Helen Clark

Helen Clark
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Preface – The art of the possible

This second State of the World's Volunteerism Report on volunteerism and governance argues that volunteerism and placing people at the centre of development policy and investment offer untapped potential for sustainable development. The report posits volunteerism as an additional resource and vehicle for bringing skills, knowledge and expertise to enable voice and participation, accountability and responsiveness as key pillars of good governance complementing other development solutions and resources.

Based on a wide body of evidence, the report highlights how volunteerism can promote peace and development. It shows what has been achieved in certain contexts and thus draws out the potential contribution of volunteers and volunteerism. This "art of the possible" is illustrated by case studies, providing a striking range of examples of how people, as individuals and in groups, are pooling their energies to act in the different governance spaces. This report also shows that when governments and other governance actors create an enabling environment and invite people into closed spaces, change can emerge that is more broadly owned and supported.

Examples of formal and informal volunteering attest to the fact that those who are marginalized, such as women, indigenous populations and disempowered young people, can create spaces where their voices can be heard and where they can affect governance at local levels. This report addresses the issue of women's engagement, providing interesting examples of how women have been able to engage in spaces outside the traditional norms, hold authorities accountable and ensure responsiveness to their needs and those of their communities. One can clearly see how marginalized groups build alliances and work with the few resources they have to inform and make change in their communities.

Governance was the subject of an unpublished chapter in the first report released in 2011. Even with the knowledge that it would be challenging to gather evidence on volunteerism and governance, current global discourse on the sustainable development agenda and the recognition that new multi-stakeholder partnerships will be an essential part of the means of implementation have made it important that we tackle the subject now. Further research and innovative strategic partnerships are needed for better understanding, documenting and measuring volunteerism and its contribution to peace and development. This report starts a conversation that can and needs to be deepened.

With this report, we hope to show the art of the possible. When we bring all available resources to the table of development, we make the challenges of our times seem surmountable. By creating environments for people to volunteer their time, it is possible to use their skills and knowledge for the common good in the sphere of governance. It is possible that we can broaden the number of people who have voice, who can participate and who can hold governance actors to account.

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Acronyms

ANAMURI	Asociación Nacional de Mujeres Rurales e Indígenas
ATT	Arms Trade Treaty
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
IANSA	International Action Network on Small Arms
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MNC	Multinational corporation
NAADS	National Agriculture and Advisory Services
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PRIA	Participatory Research in Asia
OAS	Organization of American States
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SWVR	State of the World's Volunteerism Report
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UN OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNV	United Nations Volunteers programme
VSO	Voluntary Services Overseas
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Contents

Executive summary

Volunteerism provides a key channel for engagement from the local through to the national and global contexts

There is widespread agreement that the future development agenda has to see some radical shifts to better engage people in their own, their community's and country's development. Enhanced mechanisms for civic engagement are needed to enable new discussions, negotiations and decisions. This report shows, using a body of knowledge collected through case studies, that volunteerism provides a key channel for this engagement from the local through to the national and global contexts. As local to global levels become more linked through new governance actors, so too volunteerism is adapting and changing; active and global citizens are already engaged in different ways, at different levels, to address core traditional and emerging governance issues.

This report has identified key strategies, challenges and opportunities for volunteerism, focused on three pillars of governance – voice and participation, accountability and responsiveness – where volunteers have shown impact. Specific volunteer actions and strategies illustrate the diverse ways in which volunteers engage in invited spaces, open up closed spaces or claim new spaces. Invited spaces are those where governance actors invite participation by citizens or beneficiaries. Closed spaces are where the rules of access are defined and only certain people or groups qualify. Claimed spaces are where those who are less powerful or excluded may claim or create spaces informally through social movements and community associations, or organically as people voluntarily gather to debate, discuss and/or resist. Volunteers have the agency and will to contribute to positive change, but they face many challenges in relation to governance, especially inequality of resources and power. While raising their voices is a strategy to seek engagement, more opportunities are required

to be invited as part of the discussions and decision-making by the key governance players at every level.

Volunteerism spans a vast array of activities at the individual, community, national and global levels. Those activities include traditional forms of mutual aid and self-help, as well as formal service delivery. They also include enabling and promoting participation and engaging through advocacy, campaigning and/or activism. The definition of volunteerism used in this report refers to *"activities … undertaken of free will, for the general public good and where monetary reward is not the principal motivating factor."*

Volunteering in this report is also understood as overlapping and converging with social activism; while it is recognized that not all activists are volunteers, many activists are volunteers and many volunteers are activists. The terms volunteerism and social activism are not mutually exclusive. The idea that volunteers only serve to support service delivery or are only involved in charitable activities is one that is limited and provides a superficial line of difference between volunteerism and activism.

The report recognizes that volunteering is highly context specific and is often not on a level playing field. Women and marginalized groups are frequently affected by this unevenness; not all volunteers can participate equally or on equal terms in each context. Volunteerism is harder in contexts where people are excluded, their voices curtailed, their autonomy undermined and the risks of raising issues high. An enabling environment that respects the rights of all enhances the ability of volunteerism to contribute to positive development and peace. The report shows that creating a more enabling environment that allows positive civic engage-

ment in sustainable development is critical for success.

The case studies in this report show that when people are shut out of decision-making spaces and their voices are ignored, they find other means to demand entry into more formal decision-making spaces. They can challenge the formal and informal institutions of governance, demanding greater accountability and responsiveness from those in power, whether governments, corporations or multilateral agencies.

The studies also show that when governments take the initiative to leverage volunteerism for peace and development, the majority of volunteer engagements take place in invited spaces. When people seize the initiative, the greater part of such engagements takes place in claimed spaces, at least in the beginning. In later stages some of the action may move to invited spaces. In both cases, however, volunteers seek to influence decision-making in closed spaces with their activities in claimed and invited spaces.

The report calls for much greater engagement with volunteers and volunteerism in all its forms – formal (including international volunteering) and informal – and at all levels from the local to the global. This engagement requires understanding the needs and rights of volunteers and finding ways to resource, support and actively engage with volunteer work to improve governance.

The literature on volunteerism and governance is thin. This report represents a first step in collating a body of evidence on the contributions of volunteerism to governance, especially in developing country contexts. It is opening a new conversation on the role of volunteerism in governance that must continue.

KEY MESSAGES

The report highlights the following key messages as important considerations for development processes and for strengthening governance practices, policies and strategies:

Volunteerism at the local level builds capacity of people

Volunteerism at the local level builds capacity of people, including the marginalized, to work in alliance with local government and national or international civil society organizations (CSOs) in making the governance process more participatory and inclusive. For marginalized groups, particularly women, new and additional pathways for stronger voice and participation can contribute to their needs being taken into account and resources allocated to their unique needs.

National governments creating greater space for volunteerism bring social inclusion

National governments will find that creating greater space for volunteerism will see greater social inclusion, improved social and developments results and smoother-running services. Returns on engagement with volunteers and volunteerism are maximized when enabling conditions, like freedom of speech and association and an atmosphere of vigorous political debate, are already in place. Information and communication technology – including blogs, monitoring platforms and social media – enables volunteers to complement mainstream media with grassroots-generated real-time information and to find new entry points for voice and dialogue.

Global volunteer networks promote voice, participation, accountability and responsiveness

Creating a more enabling environment that allows positive civic engagement in sustainable development is critical for success

Global volunteer networks, using diverse strategies, are effectively promoting voice and participation, accountability and responsiveness linking local, national and global spaces. Technology is a major enabler of these processes, enhancing the speed and breadth of volunteer engagement, building alliances, sharing expertise and engaging governance actors at all levels. The inequalities of access, however, must be addressed to ensure that the most excluded can join the debates.

Volunteerism will be valuable for drawing in resources for the post-2015 sustainable development agenda

Volunteerism will be a powerful resource to bring in the voice of all stakeholders and draw in all available resources to accompany the implementation and monitoring of the new post-2015 development agenda. Increased participation will need to be met by greater responsiveness from governance actors, including CSOs, the private sector and others who play increasingly pivotal roles in governance and service delivery processes. Opening up opportunities and spaces for volunteerism to realize this potential will require a range of strategies, partnerships and alliances across different levels of governance.

IMPACTS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Many millions of volunteers across the world are contributing to governance at the local level. In response to governments creating local mechanisms that encourage participation in decision-making processes, volunteers are increasingly involved in shaping policies and making decisions on issues that directly affect their lives. Concrete examples of governance spaces widening are seen in village development committees in Nepal and village planning and community-development fund management in Kenya and Uganda. These mechanisms for dialogue provide governments (and other bodies involved in govern-

ance) with practical ways to relate and interact directly with citizens. At times these spaces provide opportunities for volunteers to help shape the policy and practice of how services are delivered and to monitor implementation.

Volunteers also operate outside formal local governance structures to ensure their voices are heard and that their governments respond to their needs. When they come together informally to address their needs and raise their voices, volunteers can influence and shape social norms and values. They can widen the parameters of debate, putting new ideas on policy agendas and challenging the status quo. While this may not influence decision-makers or policy outcomes in the short term, it can shift opinions and lead to long-term societal change. It can also engage with a plurality of opinions that in some contexts can make governments more responsive to a wider range of needs.

Volunteerism practised at the local level enables people to learn new skills and deepen their understanding of their rights. It enables individuals to develop the abilities to engage and participate beyond the household or village; to monitor and track government commitments and spending; and to build groups to move beyond the local to the national and even the global level. For many women it can be an empowering approach, and for many previously excluded it can build their capacity to partner with local government institutions and national or international CSOs.

Community-based volunteering employs a variety of strategies to gain greater voice and participation to influence decision-making that affects the volunteers' communities communities. Some local volunteers work alone, others work in alliance with external actors such as national or international CSOs, others form networks, while still others partner with local government institutions to make governance processes more participatory and inclusive.

Volunteers can influence and shape social norms and values

Volunteerism at the local level is not without its challenges. There is the risk of governments shifting the burden of work to volunteers particularly at this level. In addition, the continuing domination of elite groups in participatory spaces could replicate rather than reduce inequalities in access to decision-making. Some "tokenistic" participatory forums may lack real power. And some volunteers face reprisals from those opposed to their views.

Despite these challenges, the evidence shows that local volunteering has the potential to expand and improve services, to build skills, to make voices of those most marginalized stronger, to incorporate local knowledge, to provide checks and balances, and to encourage a diversity of opinions. All this, depending on the broader context, can lead to greater voice and participation, and more accountable and responsive governance.

IMPACTS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Volunteerism is seen to work with governments on core governance issues in ways that enhance social inclusion, improve social and development results and foster peace. Two threads are distinguished, one where governments take the initiative to engage volunteers, and the other where people seize the initiative. Often governments invite volunteers to work with them on issues such as increasing transparency, monitoring service provision, setting up volunteer agencies and working closely with formal volunteers (national and international). As said, returns on engagement with volunteers around a range of governance issues are maximized when enabling conditions, like freedom of speech and association and an atmosphere of vigorous political debate, are in place. Volunteers also generate actions and engage in different ways to raise their voices, call for accountability mechanisms and ask for responsiveness – all essential for improving governance.

Where governments have put in place structures to enhance volunteer engagement, they have been able them to systematically leverage the power of volunteerism and created scope for volunteers to seize the initiative in areas important to national development plans. For example, in Honduras, Mozambique and Peru, high levels of stakeholder participation were encouraged by the governments in the course of the law-making process. Other governments in, for example, Ghana and Kenya have similarly brought in formal volunteer structures, underpinned by law and resources, to encourage young volunteers to give their time to promoting health and education in rural areas, to be gainfully employed and to learn the purpose and value of civic engagement.

Some governments have engaged citizens more systematically over the long term to inform and implement policies. In Brazil, close connections between the state and civil society enabled the formulation of a new health policy that reduced the inequalities in the distribution of public healthcare.

Large-scale mobilization is essential to the success of many bottom-up volunteer initiatives. To achieve it, volunteers often work in alliances. CSOs and champions within the government and legislature can be key allies. The success of Naripokkho in Bangladesh in advocating for women victims of violence and in influencing the law related to violence against women depended critically on their collaboration with the government as well as their alliance with the grassroots organization Doorbar. Where the stakeholder group has been small, cross-national alliances and recruitment of interlocutors have sometimes generated the necessary support. This can be seen in the nationality laws in the Arab region, where finding key allies in governments, parliaments and CSOs in other affected countries was the key to success in some countries.

Many volunteer initiatives turn to the media to raise awareness, sensitize policy-makers

Large-scale mobilization is essential to the success of many bottom-up volunteer initiatives

and mobilize public opinion. Naripokkho undertook media campaigns to bring visibility to domestic violence. A new generation of technology-enabled volunteers is developing tools to provide real-time grassroots information. This complements the mainstream media by offering news and perspectives on their own websites and through blogs, lowering people's dependence on traditional media and in some cases putting the onus on traditional news sites to stay relevant.

A key influence in the success of volunteer-driven initiatives at the national level is the presence of a responsive government. Sometimes the movements themselves generate the political pressure necessary to make their government more responsive; at other times, volunteer initiatives are enabled and facilitated by a receptive government. Thus most successful bottom-up volunteer initiatives have sought to engage collaboratively with governments in certain spheres even as they contested and questioned governments in others.

A degree of responsiveness from the government, ruling group or elites is important to create an environment for widespread participation and the scope for listening to multiple voices, especially those of the most harmed, allowing them to be heard, helping to create lasting peace and healing social fractures. While voice and participation can elicit responsiveness in conditions of stability and peace, responsiveness might need to precede voice and participation in certain conflict and post-conflict situations. In Sri Lanka formal and informal volunteers were critical in enhancing the engagement of citizens in the process of healing once a more responsive government took the first steps towards reconciliation. Following the end of the civil war between government forces and the Liberation of Tamil Eelam in 2009, the Government of Sri Lanka in 2011 endorsed the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Committee (LLRC) Report and Recommendations, which highlighted a number

of priorities including a clear role for partnership between civil society and local government. Volunteers then took the report to communities, enhanced awareness and understanding, and engaged them in the peacemaking process.

IMPACTS AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL

The report focuses on volunteerism that addresses the governance pillars in the context of the diverse, cross-sectoral global governance actors who are influencing all levels of society – local, national and global. Global engagement through volunteerism most often encounters closed spaces, because governance actors, including sometimes governments, tend to prioritize their relations with other stakeholders, such as donors, member states, shareholders and investors, over citizens and communities.

Volunteering campaigns that have linked transnationally have sometimes been able to claim local, national and global spaces to increase accountability. Strategies to link global policies and conventions with national volunteer voice and participation have raised accountability issues, sometimes with positive responses. However, CSOs with roots in local volunteerism must resist the globalization pressures to pay too much attention to those with power, which can weaken their links to local constituents and their legitimacy with local governance actors.

Building alliances within and across sectors and levels can contribute to enhancing the accountability and responsiveness of global actors. Volunteers from business, government or civil society build alliances, share expertise and enable citizens to engage with diverse governance actors at all levels more effectively. No single group or organization can achieve the scale of mobilization needed to effect changes in policy at the transnational level or the state of the discourse at the global level. Building complex

> **A key influence in the success of volunteer-driven initiatives at the national level is the presence of a responsive government**

alliances has been instrumental in, for example, the success of initiatives like Jubilee 2000 or the Control Arms campaign, which depended on diversity built across countries, actors and stakeholder groups. Farmers and agrarian producers of West Africa influenced regional policy by virtue of their strength as a network, not of individuals but of organizations. To conduct the post-2015 agenda consultations, the United Nations sought to engage in partnerships with civil society and volunteer-involving organizations to expand its reach in the grassroots. The Occupy Wall Street Movement and the People's Climate March relied on numerous alliances to build momentum and reach to generate debate globally and to be heard across the world. While neither led to concrete policy changes, the ability of individuals and groups across nations to interact directly to generate and sustain a conversation about issues of common concern outside traditional intergovernmental fora is one that has a tremendous potential to change the way nations and people interact in global fora. This is an emerging phenomenon.

Technology is a powerful tool for civic engagement that needs to be developed globally in a way that allows its inclusive potential to be realized. It is enhancing the speed, breadth and diversity of volunteering engagement opportunities, whether online or in person, to address local, national and global issues. There is a need to address the digital access divide that affects women across the world, as well as rural, marginalized and poor communities. Access to the Internet is still limited in many countries, and fewer women have access to the Internet than men. In 2013 only 17% of Sub-Saharan Africa population had access to the Internet, compared with 84% of North America's population. Globally, only 38% of people have access. This is despite the fact that between 2000 and 2013, Internet penetration grew phenomenally in the developing world, by over 4,662% in Sub-Saharan Africa's, 4,210% in the Arab world

and over 3,404% in South Asia. In addition the majority of the global online conversation takes place in English, even though sites like change.org enable people to engage in different languages. This limits who can participate, and who can be heard.

Volunteers using diverse strategies that can engage back and forth among local grassroots constituents, national policy-making fora and global fora are effectively promoting multiple voices and increasing participation in global debates; they are vocal in calling for accountability and responsiveness among the diverse global governance actors.

CONCLUSIONS

From evidence drawn from volunteer work at different levels, in different spaces, using a range of strategies in very diverse global contexts, five major policy threads stand out.

Volunteerism can contribute to enhancing voice and participation, accountability and responsiveness with a range of actors and at all levels

Although not the only answer, volunteerism can contribute to the implementation of a truly people-centred development model. It provides a real gateway into engaging more voices, supporting civil society initiatives and complementing government efforts to widen participation, strengthen accountability and draw out institutional responsiveness at all levels for sustainable peace and development. It does this in multiple ways, especially the mobilization and engagement of local volunteers within communities who commit long term to addressing the problems of governance that shape their daily lives, such as on boards, on committees and in other governance mechanisms. Volunteers are key implementers of many frontline programmes, although rarely are they identified or named as volunteers or included in the analysis of success and failure and whose contribution was critical.

Volunteerism can contribute to the implementation of a truly people-centred development model

Participatory governance will thus require a shift in how volunteers are acknowledged and spaces is opened for more volunteers. It will also require other governance actors to listen to the voices of these volunteers, who may be expected to help to deliver the work but who are rarely involved in designing and planning the work, or in evaluating it.

The playing field of volunteerism must be level

Volunteers are of course a highly diverse group across location, the structures of volunteering, age, education, sex and abilities. The report shows that volunteerism itself does not occur on a level playing field and has its own power dynamics and hierarchies. Volunteer spaces are gendered, and different volunteer groups have differential access to funding and support as well as access to people in power. Volunteers face different obstacles and have different opportunities as well as differential access to key spaces.

So while in many communities and societies women are the majority – working as volunteers, providing caring and support roles, participating and raising their voices in claimed and invited spaces – most do so without much funding or support. They are often subsidizing processes that governments cannot fund. And in the invited spaces created, in order to enable more women's participation, they frequently find their voices are not listened to. Poor women often find it hard to access formal volunteering structures, for reasons of, for example, mobility, illiteracy, lack of experience in public spaces or money for transport. There is also a real gender divide in access to new communications technology, which is key for engaging globally. The world's poorest, particularly women, are often excluded from accessing formal forms of volunteering at national and global levels, meaning their voices are still often not heard in national or global fora.

Creating an enabling environment is the sine qua non for volunteerism to fully contribute to realizing any future sustainable development agenda

For volunteerism to maximize its contributions to the common good, it needs an enabling environment. The overall social, legal and political context matters greatly in terms of what volunteers can or cannot contribute to improving governance. The political bargain between states and citizens, the constitution in place, the legal framework, the social fabric in different countries, the interaction between local, national and global governance, the diversity of governance actors working at any given level – all are elements that affect who can and who cannot enter the different spaces, whose voices are heard, and who influences decision-making.

Where governments have created a conducive environment for civic engagement – more particularly for volunteers to participate – or where they have been responsive to volunteer-led community initiatives, more people have participated in decision-making. Volunteerism is most effective in enhancing civic engagement when the greater legal-institutional framework is enabling. This includes freedom of speech and association and the presence of sufficiently inclusive spaces for engagement.

Collaboration, alliances and multi-stakeholder partnerships are essential for volunteerism to succeed

Collaboration between governments and civil society has led to successful adoption of laws and structures. Enabling closer interaction between governments and CSOs can create channels for volunteer engagement to enhance the capacity of governments to implement policy.

Civil society has also sought to build alliances with government, the private sector and other actors, engaging volunteers for a common cause. As communities gain in understanding and knowledge of the changing

nature of the rules of engagement, especially through collective action at local level in informally claimed spaces, they can see the value of building alliances and partnerships as a strategy for addressing the governance-related development issues that transcend local, national and global boundaries. As volunteers use their time, knowledge and expertise to address social, economic and environmental global challenges, they can complement, challenge and question government and wider civil society efforts. At the global level, volunteer groups with common agendas collaborate across borders and express voice and participate in global venues. Many opportunities exist for promoting supportive global agreements, policies, conventions and volunteer standards. These, in turn, can add legitimacy, knowledge and resources to local and national efforts.

Deepening understanding through research is critical

This report starts a conversation on what volunteers bring to support participatory, accountable and responsive governance processes at different levels and in different spaces. But the data challenges remain real and must be addressed if the potential of volunteerism as a resource is to be fully realized over the coming years. One challenge is defining and describing the immense range

and diversity of volunteer forms across the world. A second is capturing the size, scope and scale of different kinds of volunteerism through quantitative measures. A third is capturing the nuances, distinctions and complex contributions through more qualitative case studies rooted in diverse contexts. All three would benefit from further interrogation. Also required is a serious commitment to better data collection, including qualitative data culturally grounded in how volunteerism is defined and practised in different countries.

Measuring the contribution of volunteers to development is important. So is enabling volunteers to monitor and report on development locally, nationally and globally. To this end, technology coupled with people's willingness and determination to engage in development, to hold governance actors to account and to ensure responsiveness provides another opportunity to engage citizens as volunteer monitors and reporters of progress against any development agenda. Millions of people participated in the MY World survey, and volunteers facilitated community engagement to ensure maximum engagement. As more people have access to both Internet technology and mobile phones, the opportunity should be grasped to ensure that governance at all levels is participatory, accountable and responsive.

Data challenges remain real and must be addressed if the potential of volunteerism as a resource is to be fully realized

Introduction

This State of the World's Volunteerism Report (SWVR) 2015, Transforming Governance, builds on the comprehensive analysis of volunteerism in the first Report in 2011. The report focuses on volunteerism as a catalyst for civic engagement that improves local, national and global governance (box 1). It explores volunteer action in relation to three key pillars of good governance – voice and

citizens hold them to account. For governments, the language of duty bearers and rights holders applies. With other governance actors, the relations of accountability also require answerability and enforceability.

With **responsiveness**, the state and other governance actors listen and are receptive to citizens' views and are willing to modify their

BOX 1. **UNDP DEFINES GOVERNANCE**

"[Governance is] the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences."

Source: UNDP 1997.

participation, accountability and responsiveness. Research for the report emphasizes that the contribution of volunteerism is highly relevant to good governance in these three areas. Likewise, the report shows how volunteers enhance local, national and global engagement using different strategies and involving a wide range of people.

With **voice and participation**, citizens or their representatives engage in and influence policy processes – to achieve civic goals and objectives. Voice is the capacity to articulate interests, express views and priorities and demand one's rights and entitlements. It is exercised through participation in elections, consultations, decision-making and implementation. It can also be citizens taking responsibility through lobbying, protests or complaints.

With **accountability**, those with power – such as governments, international organizations and service providers – are obliged to take responsibility for their actions while

actions accordingly. Without concerned and capable governance, voices can go unheard or have limited impact. Responsiveness is linked to building effective governance institutions, mechanisms and processes.

Embedded in governance is the concept of power; and improving governance involves analysing how power is understood, shared and exercised. In a paradigm for development that is effective, inclusive and sustainable, it is critical to look at the shifts in power required to enable such changes.

While volunteers often come together in alliances with other members of civil society to engage with those having power and control over their lives, they can lack the resources, the information, the access to decision-making and the ability and power to demand the changes needed for improving governance.

This report uses the United Nations (UN) definition of volunteerism (box 2).

BOX 2. **UNGA DEFINES VOLUNTEERISM**

"The terms *volunteering, volunteerism* and *voluntary activities* refer to a wide range of activities … undertaken of free will, for the general public good and where monetary reward is not the principal motivating factor."

Source: UNGA 2002 (A/RES/56/38).

Volunteers across the world – as individuals, in formal organizations and in informal groups and networks – address governance challenges in many ways. They engage with the complex web of governance actors at different levels by raising their voices and finding spaces to participate, often calling for more accountable and more responsive leadership. They also enable governments to increase their reach and effectiveness, building legitimacy and confidence. In different contexts and in different ways, volunteers enter a range of relationships and alliances to reach those who have the power to govern and shape their lives and opportunities. Volunteers also have many ways to identify and articulate their needs and to ask for their rights – to improve their conditions and protect their livelihoods and well-being.

Some governments have leveraged volunteering to strengthen voice and participation by opening previously limited or closed spaces and improving their own responsiveness and accountability. They have engaged with the power of volunteerism to inform policies and laws, to improve state functioning and electoral processes and to reach groups that official and formal engagement mechanisms cannot easily reach. Some governments have strengthened volunteer infrastructure – through better laws, policies and funding – to enable greater and more targeted volunteering, while others have enabled greater citizen participation by putting in place policies and plans to promote participation of excluded groups.

The State of the World's Volunteerism Report 2015 presents an analysis of the relationship between volunteerism and governance and some of the core governance issues amenable to volunteer action locally, nationally and globally. It looks at volunteering as a mechanism for engaging people to improve governance. It highlights the agency of volunteers in influencing governance, from traditional and local government structures to multilateral agencies and the international corporate sector – as active local and national citizens and as global citizens when focusing on some of the world's most challenging issues.

The report explores the existing and new opportunities and challenges that volunteerism faces in the growing demand to improve governance and include people's voice in the post-2015 development agenda (chapter 1). It explores what volunteerism can offer in promoting, implementing and monitoring this agenda and highlights the dangers of a shrinking space for civic engagement.

The broad body of evidence collected for this report is largely qualitative, based on detailed case material that has been checked to ensure it is robust. The cases at the local level focus especially on how people organize within their communities and with local governments to find ways to raise their voices and to participate, often calling for greater transparency and accountability from governance actors (chapter 2). The cases at the national level focus especially on relations between citizens and states, while acknowledging that there are other governance actors of significance at this level, including religious bodies, traditional structure, donors, intergovernmental organizations, the private sector and multinational corporations (chapter 3).

The cases at the global level, where the governance of players working beyond the state is a major issue, show how volunteerism is changing and developing new strategies to try to address new forms of ownership and control, the governance of global public goods and the reality of a fast-evolving world of social media. Here again the activities of informal volunteers are at the forefront, though often working in alliances with formal volunteer organizations or other international non-governmental organizations (chapter 4).

Building on the work of the SWVR 2011, the research for this report has brought together new data and ideas, although many similar challenges to those of 2011 have also been faced. These include the lack of accessible and comparable data, especially quantitative data; the problems of defining and putting boundaries around the different concepts of volunteering; the fact that the term is differently named and defined depending on the geographical and cultural context; and the limited work done to date on what is credible and legitimate evidence on volunteerism and its impact, given the lack of quantitative data.

The work on volunteerism and governance is less developed than the roles of volunteerism in service delivery and in extending the quality, reach and access to these services. There are national surveys and time-use surveys in some countries, but the terminology, categories and definitions used for measuring are widely divergent and do not yet allow for comparison or aggregation. In some contexts, evidence is hard to access because of language, lack of use of websites to share volunteer experiences, and lack of evaluations on the impact of volunteerism in relation to promoting voice and participation, accountability and responsiveness from governments, the private sector and civil society organizations (CSOs).

The evidence is patchy and of variable quality. In order to deal with these challenges, great efforts have been made to be systematic and clear about what evidence was collected, what was used to inform and provide background understanding and what cases should be selected to go in the report. Qualitative evidence is less summarized than quantitative evidence and so the tension between presenting enough evidence clearly and keeping the report short was constantly an issue.

Care has been taken to ensure that, as far as possible, the case studies are illustrative of points that have emerged in several ways: through a literature review, scans of Africa, Middle East, Asia and Latin America by commissioned researchers, and a global scan of major trends affecting volunteerism and governance in all continents. All cases were subject to a set of criteria (annex). The case study evidence is weighted in favour of countries of the global South. Scattered databases, limited time and too few resources meant that choices had to be made: more is known and documented on volunteering in the North, especially international and formal volunteering, so this report attempted to redress the balance. There are losses in analysis for some regions but gains in others that are often overlooked in the literature.

Although the intention was always to triangulate the data in the cases and to ensure that the sources were reliable, "volunteer voices," which by definition are not peer reviewed or necessarily supported by other sources, have also been introduced. Their experiences are central to a report on how volunteerism works to address governance issues. They are the people who can explain their approaches, the barriers they encountered, the strategies they used and the changes they saw or expected to see.

This report is breaking new ground and is a beginning. Many recommendations on what is needed to deepen and develop this analysis and understanding are emerging from the report, especially on the need for better definitions and analysis of the boundaries, and for the merging of volunteerism with

other forms of activism and civic engagement, such as social activism, CSOs and wider civil society. The need for better definitions as well as qualitative measurement and data (including volunteer experiences) is clear, and must be matched by better quantitative national and international data collection and measurement.

Building on the 2011 report, this second SWVR starts a new conversation on volunteerism and governance that should not end when it is published. As part of a global research agenda on volunteerism, with the objective of developing a body of knowledge and evidence, further discourse should emerge that deepens the understanding of the role and value of formal *and* informal volunteerism – including its more spontaneous, ad hoc and one-off forms (box 3). More work is needed to identify where different forms of volunteerism are found, what works best in which spaces and at which levels, and what really enables volunteerism to reach its full potential for civic engagement around governance. The report poses new questions that demand more systematic, global data collection to understand the relationships between civic and governance actors in highly diverse and often challenging contexts.

BOX 3. **FORMAL AND INFORMAL VOLUNTEERISM**

Volunteerism, while universal, is multifaceted, and it can be organized and managed formally within structured organizations, especially CSOs, and also within governments and the private sector. It can also be run informally, and millions volunteer within informal structures and groups, outside of formally recognized institutions; it is often practised within the communities where people live and work and can be a lifelong commitment.

Formal volunteering is organized through formal organizations and usually requires volunteers to work to organizational agendas, where the terms and conditions of volunteering are laid out within policies and structures for volunteering, and their work and contribution are measured against the targets set for the organization using organizational indicators.

The range of formal volunteering is wide and includes employee volunteering in the private sector, volunteering within CSOs as well as participation in government volunteer schemes. This is the volunteering that is most described and analysed in the literature, especially international formal volunteering for development, which is highly developed with strong systems and procedures in place to ensure volunteer ability, safety and impact wherever they are placed.

There is far less literature available – descriptive, analytical or regarding the scale, scope and nature of informal volunteering – especially in relation to issues of governance. Informal volunteers range from those without literacy to educated people who work without legal protection and often with minimal training; they often learn on the job. The evidence suggests that those who start volunteering informally in their communities, schools and hospitals learn new skills of organizing, participating and raising awareness and that this learning enables some to go on to enter new and more formal spaces to lobby, to represent the community and the women or people with disabilities and to ask for their voices to be heard and their rights respected. Joining an informal group that is addressing a clear and urgent survival or community need can be the start of a journey for some that leads to engagement later in policy debates, development planning and the monitoring of government and other governance players.

Within both types of volunteering, a vast range of people volunteer. While they are often seen as "tools" or instruments to improve service delivery, fill gaps and meet urgent unmet needs, many are able to articulate their needs and their rights, and can engage in governance activities as people with their own views, perspectives and autonomy.

1

Volunteerism and governance: Rationale, context and analytical framework

The post-2015 agenda is highly ambitious and will require all available assets to be mobilized, new relationships to be forged and new ways of thinking and working to be developed. Recently the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator, Helen Clark, stressed the break with the past and the need for new thinking and action. In order to achieve sustained development and the global ambition to "leave no one behind," international institutions, governments, the private sector, individuals and communities will have to do business differently. An improved approach to peace and development will be needed, one that focuses on participation, civic engagement and robust accountability, and the project will require good governance that engages people in planning and monitoring, and that ensures responsive governance.[1]

It is widely agreed that such an approach must be at the heart of the new development commitments and will require an interactive and multidimensional approach to development, including the facilitation of poor people's own analysis so that they can really engage. "Civil society organizations have played a key role [in the policy discourse in many developing countries], demonstrating that achievement of the [Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)] is fundamentally related to the achievement of greater political space and voice for those affected by poverty and exclusion."[2]

RATIONALE: WHY VOLUNTEERING AND GOVERNANCE? WHY NOW?

Many bold questions about development and the practice of governance are being raised in different development forums. With the end of the MDGs, the world is reflecting on successes and failures and is on the cusp of finalizing a new global development framework – the Sustainable Development Goals. While there have been many successes, flaws in the MDGs are now openly acknowledged: they include the challenges of good governance and accountability and the lack of fuller engagement of people in the development process.

Governance was identified as a global challenge in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee meetings on aid effectiveness in Busan in 2011.[3] Ministers from across the globe, government representatives, parliamentarians, CSOs and private sector representatives met to build on a process of improving aid – a process that started in Rome in 2003, was developed in Paris in 2005 and was further articulated in Accra in 2008. These meetings recognized that development aid was more than finance. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness put country ownership at the centre of the development agenda, while mutual accountability was introduced at Accra.[4]

Busan went further and was the first forum to include civil society representatives as full and equal participants in negotiations.[5] Development financing was understood to be no longer exclusive to governments and the private sector but critical for civil society; thus they needed to engage in development decision-making. The discussions reinforced the importance of country-level ownership and the need for governments to provide an enabling environment for civic engagement. The forum recognized that sustainable development depends on the participation of all civil society actors.

Commitments at Busan to promote civic engagement are proving challenging to translate into action. A recent monitoring report on key indicators looked at the enabling factors for strong civil society participation in governance and found many deficits. This study of Colombia, Malawi, Rwanda and Zimbabwe asserted: "The world's governments have made high-level commitments, for example, at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, to enable a rights-based and participatory environment necessary for civil society to thrive. In many cases, however, their commitments are not being transformed into reality at the community level."[6] While the findings in this monitoring report were mixed, serious gaps were identified in citizens' rights to undertake development work without fear of reprisals; in freedom of association, assembly and information; and in freedom of expression.

The importance of these issues continues to be emphasized in other high-level forums: "An empowered civil society is a crucial component of any democratic system and is an asset in itself. It represents and fosters pluralism and can contribute to more effective policies, equitable and sustainable development and inclusive growth."[7]

The emerging consensus is that the new Sustainable Development Goals, building on the MDGs, have to put these "people issues" centre stage: "The new framework has to connect with people. That is why, for the last two years, the United Nations has spearheaded an unprecedented global conversation on the world we want …. People want to be a part of delivering this new agenda and holding governments to their promises."[8]

In extensive UN consultations, from the global consultations with civil society through to discussions in the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals, the problems of governance have emerged as a real challenge to sustained development. "In the public

The post-2015 agenda will require all available assets to be mobilized, new relationships to be forged and new ways of thinking and working to be developed

feedback through the MY World Survey on priorities for the new agenda honest and effective governance ranks highly among the seven million people who responded."[9] Governance ranked fourth as a global priority: about 50% of voters chose honest and responsive government as a priority for future development, after education, healthcare and jobs.[10] These findings are echoed in other surveys: CIVICUS in its 2014 State of Civil Society report highlighted the need to redress "the double democratic deficit" and at the World Economic Forum it was stated that "the decline in trust of institutions, lack of leadership, persistent gender inequalities and data mismanagement are among the trends to watch."[11]

People also show their concerns through protests. In a study in 2013 (covering 87 countries and 90% of the world's population) of 843 protests between 2006 and 2013, the main grievances were economic justice and opposition to austerity, failure of political representation and political systems, global justice and human rights. The study noted that the increase in the number and diversity of protests are "a result of people's growing awareness that policy-making has not prioritized them."[12]

These new approaches will also require changes to civil society's way of working. The MDG era often saw insufficient attention to the voices of volunteers and activists: national nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and international NGOs, UN and other agencies often "spoke for them." This affected civil society's ability to have voice and influence, but it also eroded legitimacy and strength of some CSOs. Several commentators highlight the risks of paying more attention to donors and raising the profile of their CSO or private sector organization, and some NGOs appear to be losing touch with the grassroots, which threatens their legitimacy and also means they are less likely to achieve social transformation.[13]

Volunteerism provides a channel for civic engagement

The UN General Assembly's definition of volunteering stresses three characteristics: volunteering consists of activities undertaken of free will, for the general public good and where monetary reward is not the principal motivating factor. "The notion of what constitutes the common good may be contentious. For example, when people participate in peaceful activism for or against animal research or the building of a dam, both sides seek what they consider beneficial outcomes. They are included in our definition. Activities involving, or inciting violence that harm society and actions not corresponding to the values attributed to volunteerism are not included in our definition."[14] The issue of volunteerism that undermines a human rights agenda is acknowledged and does need addressing, but falls outside the focus of this report and currently agreed definitions of volunteering.

Volunteering in this report is understood as overlapping and converging with social activism (box 1.1). While it is recognized that not all activists are volunteers, many activists are volunteers and many volunteers are activists. The idea that volunteers only serve to support service delivery or are only involved in charitable activities is one that is limited and provides a superficial line of difference between volunteering and activism. Naidoo puts it well:

In addition to being a contested term, the word volunteering can conjure up negative connotations for some in civil society, particularly those in activist quarters. Instead of addressing the root causes of social problems, volunteering is sometimes seen as humanitarian action which alleviates the daily suffering of the poor and marginalized by providing direct services, but falls short of producing real change. Activism on the other hand is associated with advocacy, campaigning and social disobedience undertaken with the explicit aim of systemic social, economic and political change. This distinction

between volunteering and activism, from my perspective, is a false and unhelpful dichotomy, which has contributed to a divide within civil society between the so-called volunteering and activist communities. It is increasingly being recognized that a key question facing civil society is how to foster greater respect and dialogue between these two worlds so that they might find new ways of engagement around shared goals of development and justice. This, I think, is critical if we are to make real progress towards ending poverty and inequality.[15]

Volunteerism represents … a tremendous resource for addressing many of the development challenges of our times

The terms volunteering and social activism are not mutually exclusive. Many examples in the report focus on volunteering that is also social activism as a form of civic engagement. They are examples of people engaging in "a wide range of activities … undertaken of free will, for the general public good and where monetary reward is not the principal motivating factor."

"In light of the overall global context over the last several years, any theory of change used to pursue peace, development, poverty eradication and social inclusion objectives in the future must place 'people' at the conception and implementation of every effort to transform society, build resilience and mitigate conflict to achieve future development solutions. Volunteerism

represents … a tremendous resource for addressing many of the development challenges of our times and it has the potential to significantly promote broad based national ownership, inclusive participation and sustainability."[16]

CONTEXT – VOLUNTEERISM AND GOVERNANCE

Many key trends around governance and sustainable development in the MDG era have already been highlighted, including the concerns around poor governance, the evident lack of engagement of those most affected in debates and policy-making, and the inequalities of wealth, power and gender that threaten many of the achievements made during the last 15 years.[17] While much has been done to address poverty and raise access to key resources, the unequal distribution of wealth and power has worsened. The gap between the rich and the poor in most countries of the world – developed and developing – is widening. The gap between countries is widening as well. In 2013, 7 out of 10 people lived in countries where economic inequality has increased in the last three decades.[18] The 80 richest people in the world now own as much as the 3.5 billion in the poorer half of humanity.[19]

BOX 1.1. **VOLUNTEERING AND SOCIAL ACTIVISM**

Based on the General Assembly definition of volunteerism, UNV articulated four types of volunteerism: mutual aid/self-help; philanthropy and service to others; civic participation; and advocacy and campaigning,[20] two of which directly relate to social activism. Working to help people through improving services and support to communities and working to tackle the root causes of poverty and injustice are complementary.[21] Volunteering and social action converge and overlap around creating opportunities for participation: "Social activism starts at exactly the same premise as volunteering – people giving time who want to make a change in their community. All the volunteers I know are social activists on some level."[22]

This also applies to action taken at the national and global levels, where people are motivated to effect change through participation and raising their voices, as well as engaging in practical service. Volunteering that involves advocacy to change systems of accountability and governance and that promotes civic engagement, especially around governance, merges with social activism in purpose and strategy.

For governance the picture is mixed. The global context is changing fast, and includes diverse trends, some of which appear quite hostile to engagement, dialogue and accountability, and others that look supportive. Some governments are opening new spaces for civic engagement in political life and increasing access and representation for women and minorities. Others are contracting that space, including limiting freedom of association and speech with new regulations for the press and media, for registering and monitoring CSOs, for controlling of funding and tight supervision of their activities and those of their volunteers.[23] Most governments have signed up to human rights documents, treaties and conventions at the global level, but many have done so with reservations, and the challenge of the contexts that lack respect for rights is serious.

Other trends include the determination of people and some governments to call powerful global players to account, to ask for dialogue and negotiation, and to find a place at the table. There has been a rise of people across the globe monitoring the behaviour of global players, including multilateral agencies, international legal systems, global religious organizations and key financial "movers and shakers." While globalization is not new it is gathering pace and changing character in the 21st century, raising many new challenges and opening new possibilities.

But while change accelerates, the institutions expected to manage and promote positive development remain largely unchanged: "Today's core institutions of global governance were put in place after the Second World War. However, in the intervening 60 years, the global economy has completely changed; international CSOs have played key roles in intergovernmental conferences; multinational corporations (MNCs) have multiplied in size and scope; and environmental problems have evolved into challenges to the stability of global ecosystem. Yet the formal institutions of global governance have remained state-centric. And they are demonstrably un-able to manage contemporary globalisation, contain global climate change, or address systemic social failures."[24]

Key political players remain the nation-states. The growing concentration of wealth in fewer corporations or individuals brings great power that is hard to challenge or call to account, often even by governments. People feel many shifts in their contexts and economies, including rapidly changing land ownership and natural resource management that directly affect the livelihoods of many. People can find it hard to understand what these changes are and where ownership and accountability lie. Recent experiences in the United Kingdom illustrate well how some people feel confused and disempowered. Some lash out at the European Union as the cause of their disempowerment, unaware that many of their basic services – including health and education as well as social welfare, prisons and such utilities as power, railways, gas and water – are now run by companies and corporations based thousands of miles away.[25]

> *Two hundred giant corporations, most of them larger than many national economies, now control well over a quarter of the world's economic activity …. Of the 100 largest economies in the world, 51 are corporations; only 49 are countries. Wal-Mart, the number 12 corporation in the world, is bigger than 161 countries, including Israel, Poland, and Greece. Mitsubishi is larger than the fourth most populous nation on earth, Indonesia. General Motors is bigger than Denmark. Ford is bigger than South Africa. Toyota is bigger than Norway.* [26]

Globalization is linking people and organizations in new ways, a trend Anthony Giddens, a renowned observer of the 20th century, noted almost 30 years ago: "Social and economic relationships are being stretched world-wide … [as many] aspects of people's lives are influenced by organizations and social networks located thousands of miles away from the

societies in which they live. A key aspect of the study of globalization is the emergence of a world system – that is to say, for some purposes we have to regard the world as forming a single social order."[27] However, he warned that this did not necessarily mean "world unity," suggesting that globalization can be a violent and oppressive process of seeking hegemony and economic advantage.[28]

While many cannot act at the global level, protests about rising prices, unemployment, corruption, loss of control of natural resources, and illegal immigration are becoming common, and many local problems are now seen also as global problems. Even though there are obvious barriers, local people are accessing international courts, as women have in Guatemala where women's rights to life were being ignored.[29] Others promote their cause through multimedia, as with the people in the South Pacific deeply affected by climate change, who used social networking to bring their plight and demands to global attention.[30] People´s voices can be amplified through attending international forums previously closed to them, such as Rio+20, the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals and many others.

Relationships can be built now from the bottom up because of vastly improved global communications. Relations can also be horizontal, allowing volunteers and other civil society players to join together in collective action to raise their voice in international forums, through attendance at inside gatherings, protests outside them, and again through the increasing use of the many platforms provided by social media. Some of the issues that have been the focus of global volunteer mobilization and action have been the unjust economic order and the world economic crisis that triggered the Occupy Wall Street movements replicated in hundreds of cities worldwide, and reappearing now in different forms of protest. Jubilee 2000 focused on the unfairness of debt; volunteers across the world are acting in different ways to raise the issue of taxation, the way

that global players can avoid national taxes in many countries and the need for redress.

Volunteers can build relationships in many ways, both virtually and face to face, and volunteers are developing many strategies and tactics for entering new spaces where global discussions and decisions take place to get their voices heard. Marching, building websites, taking global issues and developing local campaigns around them are all approaches being developed. Energy and creativity are developing around global action and citizenship, often engaging youth and involving new global players such as Internet platforms like 350.org and Avaaz.[31] Many younger people appear more motivated to come together around issues they care about, rather than joining formal organizations as they might have in the past.

Access to global spaces is uneven, and many volunteers are excluded because of a lack of money, technology or literacy. The world is still biased heavily towards the voices of those who come from countries that have good infrastructure and universal education. A recent report by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) provides a timely reminder of the strong economic and gender biases in Internet access and use. "More than twenty years after the birth of the Internet, two-thirds of the planet's population still do not have regular access to the Internet, and a greater proportion of these unconnected global citizens are women. ITU estimates that some 200 million fewer women are online, compared with men."[32] In addition, many women worldwide are less literate, less mobile and have less access to public spaces and travel than men.

Even so, there is a clear mobilization of people through volunteerism, including those from the South, whose voices have often been absent in the past, in part because of the challenges of access. New technology is allowing the increasing engagement of volunteers

who normally would be excluded. Volunteers working alone or in small informal groups or larger movements, and sometimes in alignment with CSOs at national or international levels, can now speak out on the global issues that cannot be easily addressed at local or national levels. In addition they are increasingly using the opportunities created by international organizations around development, rights and justice to bring issues to international attention for redress or arbitration.

REGIONAL EXAMPLES OF VOLUNTEERING FOR BETTER GOVERNANCE

A few examples that seem particularly rooted in each region are presented below to highlight the diversity of volunteerism and the range of the governance issues that have been the focus of volunteerism recently. They celebrate the diversity and power of volunteering, and provide a backdrop for the case studies that follow.

Africa

Africa is a continent of growth and one of vibrant volunteerism primarily based on long-held values that underpin the concept of volunteerism in the region. "Elements of the philosophy of Ubuntu, common throughout southern Africa, are found in many traditions around the world. Ubuntu values the act of caring for one another's well-being in a spirit of mutual support. It is based on recognition of human worth, communal relationships, human values and respect for the natural environment and its resources."[33] Traditionally volunteerism has filled many gaps in service provision for poor people, and much volunteering is done by the poor for the poor.[34]

Most volunteering in Africa is informal.[35] Volunteerism is strong in east and southern Africa and parts of west Africa. Two areas that have been especially strong across the continent have been work on HIV/AIDS, and movements promoting women's rights.

Africa has led the way in providing innovative services for the prevention and care of HIV/AIDS, tackling stigma and promoting justice and treatment for those infected with HIV and rights for those affected by HIV/AIDS, including the rights of widows on inheritance, property ownership and rights of children. The work by hundreds of thousands of volunteers across the continent has led to campaigns for better access to treatment and inclusion in policy-making called "Nothing About Us Without Us." Some of these campaigns have been taken to the global level by volunteers, especially women, demanding that their experiences and needs be better taken into account by global institutions setting protocols and programmes for the best ways to address HIV/AIDS.[36]

The International Committee of Women Living with HIV/AIDS has been one vehicle used by female volunteers to speak out in Africa (it is now a global community of 15,000 volunteers); the community of practice promoted across the world by Stepping Stones is another. Their approach to HIV/AIDS work was pioneered in Uganda when several local organizations such as The AIDS Support Organization (TASO) were building up expertise on AIDS; it was run by volunteers drawn from across the society, including members of local grassroots organizations, highly educated women in Uganda, and others based in the South and the North. These volunteers work to address needs and HIV prevention – especially addressing gender relations – as well as linking lived experience to national and global policy- and decision-making.[37]

From Ghana to Zimbabwe and from Uganda to South Africa, informal volunteers have worked on women's rights, in movements and sometimes starting NGOs, on asking for and developing new laws for women, especially around violence, sexual harassment and rape, and around rights within marriage and rights to inheritance. These groups have all worked with women to raise issues of concern and to mobilize many informal vol-

New technology is allowing the increasing engagement of volunteers who normally would be excluded

unteers (mostly women) in their campaigns. In the past 10 years, many countries in Africa have passed laws criminalizing domestic and other forms of violence and changed marriage laws to give women rights.[38] Women's organizations and many volunteers continue to work to ensure that these laws, now passed, are implemented, resourced and adequately monitored.

Decentralization, now common across Africa, provides new government-created spaces for participation and civic engagement at the local level, through village- and district-level local governance structures. A key element of decentralized development programming is the engagement of communities in the planning and implementation of local development projects. Volunteers and voluntary actions are central to the civic engagement and input required to make this happen. Governments across Africa have also established volunteer organizations for mainly young people to promote their civic engagement, to help to forge a national identity and to address youth unemployment. Through volunteering in these formal organizations, young people are contributing to promoting key services as well as becoming engaged in civic and political processes; this often continues after they finish their volunteering.

The Arab Region

The Arab region has seen an explosion of protests and activism of many kinds, during and following 'the Arab Spring'.

As the region works out new state-citizen relations and copes with the consequences of violent and military intervention, volunteerism is surfacing more strongly in some countries, especially that involving women and young people.[39] During the events of early 2011 in Yemen, Libya, Egypt and Tunisia, social activism was instrumental in organizing demonstrations, setting up makeshift clinics for people wounded by security forces, and spreading information about the corruptive effects of poor governance. New forms of expression of collective concerns such as poetry, art, drama and graffiti also emerged as powerful means to communicate. For example, "youth have been at the heart of many of the recent movements for political change in the Middle East and North Africa. Harnessing this recent surge in public activism among youth, and broadening the base of youth civic engagement in the region are seen as critical pathways towards political reform and more equitable development in the region."[40] Similarly:

The patterns of youthful civic engagement we identified in Egypt (through research) are being repeated with variations across the Middle East and North Africa. More and more young people engage in public spaces through virtual forums, innovative artistic expression and real-time organizing. In each country the government response is different, and that dynamic is determining whether the largely peaceful mass demonstrations that characterized Tunisia and Egypt are replaced by violent protracted conflict. This is a historic narrative of youth civic engagement across a huge geographic swath of the Middle East that is still being written.[41]

However, issues of inequality, especially gender inequality, are significant. The 2011 Human Development Report shows that the Arab region has the lowest overall scores in relation to women, with 12% of seats in parliament taken by women, 32% of girls and women having secondary education and 26% of women in the formal labour force, against 77% of men.[42] There are big variations in the region, and while women in many countries contribute greatly to their local economies and communities through a wide range of activities, including volunteering, their role is largely unreported.

There is a lack of good research and data on volunteering across this highly diverse region. "The lack of reliable data poses a seri-

ous challenge to sustaining and expanding volunteerism projects and initiatives. Existing research is dispersed and, at times, lacking in rigor and accuracy."[43]

Formal volunteering is viewed by some with suspicion as a Western concept. But helping others is seen as part of a religious obligation rooted in both Islamic and Coptic religions, and the line between giving time voluntarily and as a duty is not sharply defined. Across the region, the majority of people do not belong to civil society or volunteer organizations.[44] This is for historical reasons tied to the nature of the state and its definition of state-civil society relations, and one major linked constraint is the relatively weak legal and enabling environment in many Arab countries.

Asia
Countries across Asia occupy completely different spaces in the governance and volunteerism landscape. In Myanmar the space for civil society and active citizenship is expanding fast,[45] while in others it is closing. In the majority of countries in the Asia-Pacific region, citizen movements and engagements take place within the context of democratically elected governments (such as India, Malaysia and the Philippines). Right to information acts and volunteering acts legitimize citizen engagement in governance, and the greatest challenges are often in recognizing and meeting the civil rights of marginalized and excluded groups.

Urbanization is increasing rapidly, with 42% of the population being in cities in 2010 and the expectation that 7 out of 10 of the largest cities will be in Asia by 2025. In spite of the growth and contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) these mega cities are also marked by poverty and growing inequality.[46] This brings both opportunities and challenges to volunteerism. The complexity of issues facing the mega-urban regions demands innovations in urban planning and governance, including the greater engage-

ment of civil society. Pakistan has recognized this growing need and reorganized urban authorities to grant a formal role to members of the public; these Citizen Community Boards can spend one-quarter of their allocated budgets on community needs.[47]

Environmental governance is a major issue across Asia because much poverty relates to lack of access to common public goods and the growing impact of climate change on natural resources. Food security and natural resource exploitation require new forms of collaboration beyond traditional technical and aid-driven solutions. They are collective action problems that will require a human relationship and iterative approach, calling for the engagement of large numbers of volunteers. Landlocked countries and small island states increasingly stress the urgency of climate change and the damaging environmental aspects of development.

In some countries – such as Bangladesh, Myanmar, the Philippines and Viet Nam – volunteers are having to respond to major environmental disasters, such as typhoons and floods, and how they derail development progress. The vulnerability of the region to natural disasters has led to new international governance frameworks intended to protect global public goods and manage global threats. The UN REDD+ scheme has set aside nearly $70 million for national programmes in 18 countries, including 10 in Asia. It will be essential for citizens to claim the rights to common resources and public goods within this framework.[48]

In India, the tradition of volunteering is strong, through religious obligations, contributions to others and the Gandhian tradition. Many rights have gained traction in recent years with the rights to information, education, employment and food being promoted and incorporated in law, and providing a good enabling context for volunteering in many parts of the country.

China, India and Sri Lanka have produced national State of Volunteerism reports. China's 2011 report looks at the formal structure and function as mandated and implemented by the governments – and at forms of volunteerism performed by grassroots NGOs, CSOs, academia and the private sector.[49] Since 2001, the government at all levels has increasingly recognized volunteerism's function in strengthening social capital through policies, regulations and administrative support. Much of this progress is credited to disaster responses, such as the Wenchuan earthquake in Sichuan in 2008, and to mass volunteer events, such as the Beijing 2008 Olympics, the Shanghai 2010 Expo and the Guangzhou Asian Games, which together had 4.2 million volunteers officially registered. Continuing limits on legal registration as a nonprofit organization – many nonprofit organizations must register as businesses – and the lack of legal protection for volunteers while participating remain big challenges for ensuring wide voice and participation.

The recently established initiative Making All Voices Count – involving Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and the Philippines – is looking to increase governments' accountability and responsiveness to citizens.[50] It has identified challenges on both sides of the divide: lack of incentives and opportunities for meaningful engagement of citizens and the lack of incentives and capacity for governments to translate citizen feedback into action. The influential NGO Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) has written a "Global Charter on the Right to Participation in Local Democratic Governance," which highlights the rights of citizens to decide and improve on local democratic governance processes and outcomes and emphasizes the participation of poor, marginal and excluded groups.[51]

The Asian Peasant Coalition – an Asia-wide network of farmers, landless peasants, fisherfolk, agricultural workers and indigenous peoples – has more than 15 million members from 33 organizations in nine different countries. Resisting the erosion of land rights is one of its core strategies. Much of this activism takes the form of protests, solidarity and press releases.[52] A lot of local action comes at significant cost to individuals, and this is where alignment with bigger organizations – national and international NGOs – can offer protection and support.

Latin America

The history of civic engagement and volunteerism across the region is very long, with peasant movements, trade unions and women's organizations having contributed to a vibrant political economy. The concept and practice of rights are now increasing. Volunteerism that has historically supported governments to better deliver on their mandates, especially good service delivery, is shifting towards a governance agenda. For example, in Chile, as part of the enactment of the Law on Transparency of Public Administration and Access to Public Information, CSOs have worked with local communities to implement new legislation. They have developed volunteer models with a strong capacity for replication not only in Chile but elsewhere in the region.[53]

While some governments espouse what they define as a more socially just agenda, the spaces for civic action have been closing, and crises of representation and trust are on the rise, with peoples' satisfaction with several governance actors now low. There has been a significant rise in protests and in citizen voices calling for more involvement in setting agendas: specific concerns have focused on education, land rights, the environment and natural resource management. To take one commentator's view:

In Latin America we are witnessing the creation of new, innovative and expanded spaces for civil society, with an important amplification and expansion of rights, and of the claims of rights by social collectives and social movements. The strong uprising of the student movement

in Chile in 2011 centred its fights in the right to education. The women´s movement and other groups in Uruguay have demanded sexual and reproductive rights and the legalization of abortion. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Movement in Argentina is a paradigmatic example of new civil society formations that advance rights not included in the first waves of citizenship-building and not present at the time of the democratic transitions.[54]

Another issue facing volunteerism and a vibrant civil society is the need to deepen democracy and increase representation and trust. "The new forms of nonconventional protest that have become a feature of the region indicate a spreading of the crisis of representation and of political parties which continue to be the institutions that elicit the lowest level of citizen trust. These are new forms of participation that are simply a great cry to be listened to. It is as if they were shouting 'Listen to me!'"[55]

Volunteerism contributes to addressing these democratic deficits. "Volunteering is exactly the opposite form to 'clientelism', which is indeed a problem in the region (a tendency to favour, without justification, certain people, organizations, political parties, etc. in order to get their support)…. [It] can play a fundamental role in amplifying and improving the quality of democracy, closing gaps, and generating new and different kinds of spaces of civic participation."[56]

Exciting approaches are also promoting volunteering in poor communities, for example, through the international organization America Solidaria, and justice for victims of conflict and violence.[57] In June 2011, Colombia passed the most ambitious reparations law in its history (known as 'The Victims Law') formally recognizing the consequences of the ongoing internal conflict. The law marks a significant rethinking of transitional justice and even defines a form of volunteerism called 'victimology volunteerism'. It defines such volunteerism as the set of accompany-

ing, support and counselling activities aimed at victims of violence and state crimes. These activities are developed by a group of people, free, organized and without payment, altruistically providing support after receiving basic training on working with victims.[58]

An overarching challenge

It is difficult to compare the incidence of volunteerism across different countries, let alone different regions that are so diverse. This is an ongoing challenge identified in the SWVR 2011. The figures that are available focus primarily on formal volunteering, in the national volunteer surveys undertaken in some countries, and to a lesser extent on international formal volunteering. Although governments as well as national and international NGOs work with many volunteers in their programmes, the numbers and contribution of these volunteers to their work is not usually discussed or measured separately; little credit or attribution is given to these volunteers in most reports.

There is limited work on the definitions or measurement of formal volunteering – let alone informal volunteering. The numbers of people involved; who is included and excluded; and how often and for how long people in different contexts can volunteer (given their domestic and productive commitments) are largely undocumented.

The diverse measures of volunteering suffer from insufficient academic research, poorly documented volunteer experiences and the paucity of good library collections, especially in developing countries. Accessibility to the data is difficult. The SWVR 2011 assessed four different approaches to measurement by Gallup, Johns Hopkins University, The World Values Survey and the CIVICUS Civil Society Index, all of which used different definitions and methods and came to different conclusions about the volume and nature of volunteering across the world and its economic value. The data are often queried and contested.[59]

Few available studies show the scale of local and national volunteering outside the formal sector, although a few time-use surveys have taken place recently, for example, in Germany, which capture the engagement of people with volunteerism.[60] The situation is starting to improve with recent new initiatives.

First, the ILO 2013 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians approved the *Resolution Concerning the Statistics of Work, Employment and Labour Utilization*. It officially incorporates volunteer work as one of three types of work, and calls for measuring it along with other labour studies. Comparable measures of volunteer work will contribute to the measurement of decent work and of well-being of households and societies. It will also enable comparative assessment of participation in different forms of work among different populations groups, such as women, young people, and migrants.[61] This builds on the *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* approved during the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

Second, the European Economic and Social Committee has issued an opinion on statistical tools for measuring volunteering and strongly recommends countries follow the standards set forth in the ILO *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work*.[62] Using the ILO Manual, the Italian National Institute of Statistics, National Coordination of Volunteer Support Centres and the Volotariato e Partecipazione Foundation surveyed voluntary work in 2013. Findings included that one out of eight Italians volunteered, an estimated 6.6 million people. The total volunteer rate equals 12.6%, with 7.9% volunteering through a group or organization, and 5.8% directly or informally volunteering. Men participated more in organization-based volunteering, which includes organized sports. Women and senior citizens contributed the most hours in informal volunteering.[63]

In addition, a national review to update the definition of volunteering in Australia has been launched, and the new definition is expected to include volunteering in formal, virtual and informal settings.[64] Canada and the United States have recently added survey data on informal as well as formal volunteering.[65]

WHO VOLUNTEERS?

In looking at how volunteerism is organized, it is important to ask: Who are the people who give their skills and time, freely and without coercion, to benefit others and to work for changes around issues they care about? While the profile of volunteerism varies worldwide, people of all ages, ethnicities, classes, and religions volunteer in different ways to achieve different ends, and not all people who want to volunteer in different spaces are able to do so. A few examples below look at groups whose ability to participate is affected by the nature of the group they belong to and the challenges that stand in their way.

Youth volunteering is especially important in countries where young people predominate and where rapid social change is leading to dislocation, loss of traditional structures and unemployment. Young people volunteer their time and skills for a wide variety of reasons, such as idealism, hope for a better world, wanting to gain skills for future employment, to keep busy and to contribute to their own society. They are especially involved in protests and demands for change; they want to be heard and to have a role in shaping affairs, and they can often be seen calling for more transparency and accountability at national and international levels. There are many recent examples of the engagement of youth in civil unrest in many countries in protests, marches and Internet campaigns.

People of all ages, ethnicities, classes, and religions volunteer in different ways to achieve different ends

HOW MEASURING VOLUNTEERISM PROMISES LONG-TERM ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BENEFITS

The number of volunteers globally may well now exceed one billion. If "Volunteerland" were a country, only China would have a larger working age population.

Yet measuring the value created by volunteering remains in its analytical infancy. This measurement problem may have real costs, causing citizens and societies to under-invest in volunteering activity relative to its potential social benefit. The narrowest way of measuring these benefits is to take the economic value of goods and services created by volunteers – the GDP-equivalent value of volunteering services. Even this narrow measure suggests the benefits could be significant. In a recent United Kingdom case study, I estimated them to be at least 3.5% of annual GDP.

But taken alone, economic benefits will significantly understate the wider social benefits of volunteering. For example, social research demonstrates clearly that volunteering delivers significant private benefits to participants. This might include improved technical and social skills, but also higher well-being more generally among volunteers. Research strongly suggests that volunteering can deliver wider societal benefits – in the language of economics, positive externalities. These might include lower costs to the public purse (in maintaining social security, medical and criminal justice systems) but also greater civic engagement in the work of charities and governments.

Summing these economic, private and social values is not straightforward – and has rarely been the subject of rigorous study. But preliminary estimates suggest volunteering could give an all-in benefit many multiples of its GDP-equivalent value.

It is fair to say we are still in the analytical foothills of measuring accurately these benefits, especially some of the wider societal externalities. One of the least explored of these avenues, from a societal perspective, is improved governance. This could improve social welfare through a number of channels.

For CSOs and volunteer-involving organizations, improved measurement of impact could help in directing volunteer resources to where their prospective benefits are greatest. It could improve the efficiency of volunteer service provision.

For companies and businesses, a better appreciation of the benefits of volunteering, in enhancing the skills and well-being of their workforce, could help in improving the quantity and quality of their existing volunteer programmes. This could thereby improve business efficiency.

For governments and public organizations, volunteering can help not only in discharging these functions, but in a way which improves the transparency, accountability and representativeness of these actions. This, too, could improve the efficiency and legitimacy of government activities.

*Special contribution by **Andrew G. Haldane**, Chief Economist at the Bank of England and co-founder of Pro-bono Economics Volunteering, Research and Measurement.*

The challenges of young people are well understood by governments, many of which have developed volunteer programmes to provide opportunities for young people and to focus them on the importance of positive civic engagement. Such schemes are also intended to keep young people occupied and to instil in them a sense of purpose and national identity and commitment, especially where national identity can be fragile. These formal structures often work best for urban male youth with more education, while those from rural areas with less education tend to engage in less organized forms of volunteering. Many volunteer within their religious organizations and understand volunteering as an obligation.

Organizations such as Helpage have helped to raise the profile of older people in development and turned the spotlight on all the work they do as volunteers in their societies. Until recently this has been a neglected area of analysis and attention. Older people work informally as volunteers in their own communities: widows and grandmothers are a neglected group whose volunteer work is undervalued and yet whose contribution is often essential in keeping families and communities together,[66] especially those affected by conflict, disasters and health crises such as HIV/AIDS and Ebola.

Women volunteer in many contexts, especially where services are very poor; they predominate in much of Africa, for example, where they work sometimes in bad conditions without protection.[67] Women participate especially in informal volunteer settings, and millions give their time, skills and energy to volunteering across the world. Volunteering can enable them to break through and challenge their social inequality, build their confidence and enable them to contribute to governance, as when they participate in local government forums, village-level planning or gender budgeting, or advocate for new policies that will benefit them. Women across the world have led campaigns to stop violence against women, a key impediment to development; to recognize women's rights in the physical, social and economic spheres; and to call for gender justice.

However, volunteering can also serve to reinforce traditional and unequal gender roles, with women providing key services – especially in caring roles – without due recognition or reward. While women in many contexts are increasingly encouraged to attend meetings, often through the use of quotas or training programmes, their voices in these forums are often not heard. Indeed volunteering can add to their already heavy workloads and cause domestic friction when their household and caring roles are unfulfilled due to participating outside the home. In spite of multiple programmes designed to promote their voice and participation, especially within formal governance structures, the significant barriers to women's effective participation are overlooked. Some of the barriers include lack of literacy or education, lack of mobility to attend meetings, male control over their movements and finances, poverty and gender discrimination against women that extends from the home to the parliament in most countries.[68]

Volunteerism is gendered, and the spaces in which women volunteer are gendered. Recent data from Germany show that women still face more difficulties in entering formal volunteer spaces than men because these appear to reproduce gendered structures. They may more easily access informal spaces that are flexible and accessible.[69] Once having been volunteers in these spaces, some women move into formal volunteering, again echoing findings from other parts of the world.

People with disabilities, those of low caste or class, slum dwellers and other marginalized groups often volunteer to take collective action in alliance with NGOs and networks (also staffed by volunteers) to raise their profile and press their concerns about exclusion.

Volunteers from these and many other often-excluded groups work to address governance issues using a wide range of approaches. Many work to promote their inclusion in policy debates and find ways to get their voices heard and to participate in contexts where they experience discrimination and rejection. Volunteering may be a significant step in the journey towards building confidence and demanding recognition – and from there, participation and voice can follow. "[Volunteering] allows disenfranchised groups the opportunity to re-engage with mainstream activity, if they are able to overcome the obstacles they are experiencing. Volunteerism, whether it is an act of philanthropy or empowerment, can operate as a powerful imperative for social inclusion."[70]

A great deal of volunteering worldwide is organized and run through religious bodies, including governance work on issues of peace, social justice, inequality and climate change. Many of these bodies exhort giving money and time for those less fortunate or experiencing serious infringement of their rights.

In more constrained contexts, volunteers learn to work "under the radar" and can make progress to call actors to account and hold them responsible for failures of governance. The case studies show that development progress is the greatest when volunteers work in alliances with other civil society actors and often in cooperation with governments or other actors where they can participate and help to build or demand more accountable responsive governance.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK – PILLARS, LEVELS AND SPACES

Pillars
After looking at the different elements of good governance – such as voice and participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, equity and accountability among others – the report focuses on the contributions of volunteer action to voice and participation, accountability and responsiveness based on the weight of the evidence.

Levels
The contexts and opportunities for volunteers to engage vary considerably at the local, national and global levels, as well as within each society and community. Those working at the local level are often rooted in their own community and working on governance issues that directly affect their daily lives and those of their families. At the national level, concerns are especially around state/citizen relations and relationships with a range of other governance actors that shape state policy and practice, such as the private sector, religious organizations and MNCs. Volunteer action at the global level, where there is no world government or fixed governance system, involves addressing governance by a wide range of actors, all with different accountabilities. At this level different forms of organizing are found, including a widespread use of social media, and volunteers often work in alliances with international NGOs and other stakeholders.

Many issues are different at different levels, those who are able to engage are different, and the strategies – while some are common across all levels – also frequently differ. However, it is important to recognize that volunteers may sometimes move between levels, just as their work may involve merging some of the pillars of governance.

Spaces
Researchers have developed the concept of "spaces" to help analyse who can participate, where, when and under what rules of access and engagement. The Institute of Development Studies, United Kingdom, has developed this concept, focusing on closed, invited and acceptable spaces, each shaped by the power relations that define the boundaries and possibilities in each space[71]:

Volunteerism is gendered, and the spaces in which women volunteer are gendered

■ *Closed spaces.* Many decision-making spaces are closed, the rules of access are defined and only certain people qualify. Decision-making is by elites without any need for or pretence of broader consultation or involvement. Volunteering efforts focus on opening up such spaces by asking for greater accountability, transparency, information and public involvement. With closed spaces volunteers may challenge, advocate and campaign and only rarely get invited to participate.

Participation in different spaces is essential for the marginalized to find and express their voice

■ *Invited spaces.* To widen participation, governance actors invite participation, often in created spaces, by citizens or beneficiaries. Within invited spaces, volunteers may participate on the terms set by the inviter. Such spaces may be user groups, local government forums, budget monitoring, church committees, parent–teacher associations and so forth. These spaces may be institutionalized and ongoing or transient and one-off. They may include or exclude people by setting criteria such as literacy, the language used, the time of meetings and who controls the proceedings in the space. Research shows that invited spaces must be kept open by the ongoing demands of activists, community groups, NGOs and social movements. Some spaces are inclusive and welcoming to marginalized people, others can be dominated by local elites, usually male and from the dominant caste/class or religious group.

■ *Claimed spaces.* The less powerful actors may claim or create spaces informally through social movements and community associations, or organically as people voluntarily gather to debate, discuss and resist. Created spaces are important for

developing and growing new areas and they provide avenues for participation. They can lead to collective action and mobilize people to address urgent needs and rights within their own contexts and communities. Skills and understanding developed here can often later be transferred to action within invited spaces or enable people to run campaigns and create networks beyond the local level.

Participation in different spaces is essential for the marginalized to find and express their voice, build their confidence and engage actively in events that affect them directly. "Radical definitions of participation as a platform for citizenship not only emphasize community involvement in the processes of local development – but also demand that social development lead to substantive empowerment of community members in terms of rights, power, agency and voice."[72]

Since volunteers are understood as a critical part of wider civil society, the limiting or closing of spaces for participation and voice and for negotiating accountability will inevitably reduce their ability to engage and participate. So, in focusing on spaces and what volunteers can do for themselves, researchers stress that volunteerism alone usually cannot effect major change.[73] Several other factors are essential to success, including wider enabling policies, responsive bureaucrats, and articulate and coordinated people. Voice and participation, while essential, are not sufficient to change governance rules and mechanisms – these need a responsive government. An enabling environment is critical, along with strong partnerships and alliances with other nongovernment actors at different levels.

As part of UNDP's support to Typhoon Yolanda Recovery and resilience in the Visayas region, the Philippines, one international UN Volunteer for Livelihoods and Small Medium Enterprise Specialist and 19 national UN Volunteer Field Monitors supported the UNDP 'cash-for-work' programme. Here, UNV Field Monitor Jeline Pearl Cabuenas supports people affected by the disaster.
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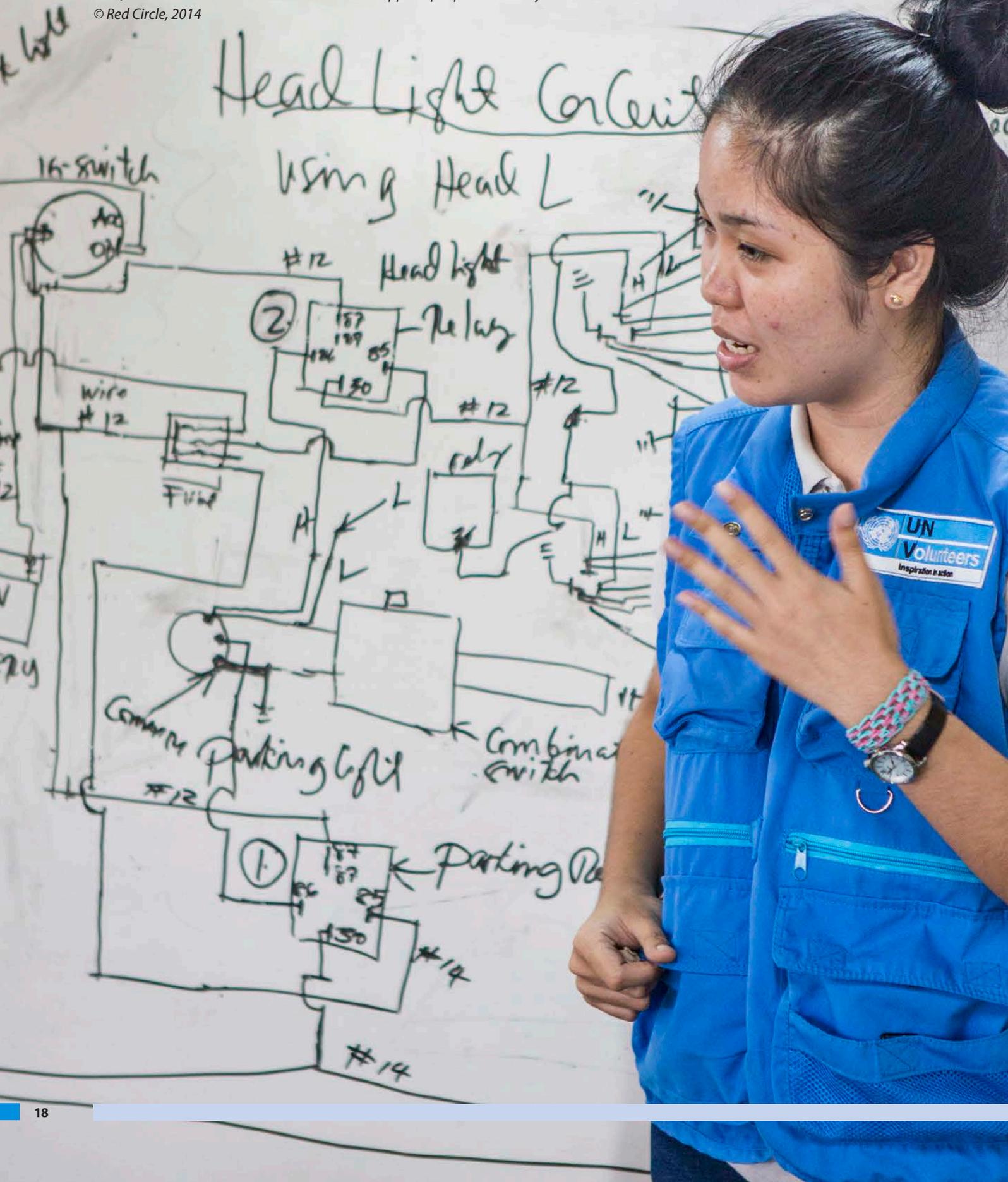
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Impacts of volunteerism at the local level

"Since my release, I have become more convinced than ever that the real makers of history are the ordinary men and women of our country; their participation in every decision about the future is the only guarantee of true democracy and freedom." Nelson Mandela[74]

Volunteers across the world are taking action at the local level to address issues directly affecting their lives and their communities. It is at this level that governance decisions most directly affect individuals and communities. And it is at this level that millions of people in communities worldwide volunteer to address the issues that most concern them and shape their lives. Much of their work is about providing and supporting service provision that is patchy or weak and not reaching the poorest; some is about organizing to promote their rights – rights not to experience violence (especially against women and children), rights to a livelihood and the basic necessities of life, rights to be heard. Much work challenges and widens norms and attitudes to enable change. And some demands more and better accountability from a wide range of governance actors whose decisions shape lives.

This chapter looks at how volunteers, many of whom live and work in the communities where they volunteer, are engaging to influence governance at the local level. It shows how volunteers are exercising their rights to participate in decision-making in a wide variety of different spaces and around a multitude of issues related to local contexts and experiences. It also shows how local governments sometimes work closely with, and rely heavily on, volunteers to deliver or improve services, reach marginalized groups or address difficult issues. Too often, these volunteers' stories are not heard and analysed because their work is often informal and local.

Volunteers are exercising their right to be heard at the local level in varied and at times innovative ways. Some volunteers work with local government institutions in formal "invited" spaces set up by governments to bring local people into decision-making processes. "Subnational institutions constitute one of the most important avenues for poor people, women and minorities to participate in the development of their communities and influence the decision-making processes that are directly relevant to their lives. Important opportunities for poor people, women and minorities to participate in the development of their communities are to be found in local and regional institutions of governance."[75]

In some countries, local community members are elected to participate in the planning and implementation of government-funded programmes at the village and local regional levels. Some countries have quotas to ensure women and other minority groups are represented in these forums. In addition, formally established community health, forest and community planning user-groups have increased opportunities for participation in decision-making that can lead to more accountability and more effective service delivery. Local people have helped make institutions and leaders more accountable and responsive, and have improved service delivery. In Brazil, community involvement in health-programme decision-making has had a dramatic impact on infant mortality.

Outside these invited spaces, too, volunteers are calling for increased government

BOX 2.1. **CIVIL SOCIETY CONTRIBUTION**

As a researcher and now a development practitioner, I have had the privilege to meet many women and girls across several countries in Africa and seen both the depth of the challenges women face in their daily lives and the extraordinary strength and resilience that can come out of their working and learning together and raising their voices in support of each other. I have seen them giving their time and energy to come together, learn, support each other, and challenge the social norms and structures that perpetuate their vulnerability and exclusion.

At a meeting in Kenya in early 2015, I heard a young woman living with HIV tell her story of marrying a man whose wife had just died, assuming because he was a man of standing she could not have died from HIV-related causes. She herself was diagnosed with HIV when she got pregnant and was abandoned by her husband, left alone, frightened and with nowhere to turn. She had thoughts of suicide especially because HIV and divorce carry stigma and shame in her community. She went through deep despair until friends reached out to her in solidarity, sharing their own stories of survival. She saw other women's isolation and despair, and the importance of sharing experiences and support. She started visiting other women, often taking personal health risks around TB associated with HIV, because "who will do this if we do not"? She brings hope to women and also knowledge and understanding of their health and other issues.

Through these visits women are learning to understand the social norms that shape their lives and choices, and that make them so vulnerable. She has recently started a small NGO and again takes risks as a strong advocate for women's rights. Her work in the community enabled her to build her confidence and skills and now she is raising her voice in many public forums. She is building networks with women to enable them to start to address the constraints that lead to their poor health, lack of choices, little education, exclusion and stigma. Through human contact, discussion and doing things together, women learn to participate and raise their voices about the need for change.

Source: Seri Wendoh, co-author of a research report on gender in Africa (Wendoh and Wallace, 2006), feminist and currently gender and rights advisor at International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), based in London.

accountability and responsiveness. At times, they are working within the formal systems of governance to advocate for new and improved accountability mechanisms and better service delivery (as with volunteers monitoring government provision of service to women victims of violence in Bangladesh).

Volunteers at the local level organize informally to address issues that directly affect them. For example, volunteers work to address the prevention, care and support of those with HIV/AIDS or Ebola, not only delivering practical support but also challenging the norms and attitudes that perpetuate these conditions. Similarly, volunteers mobilize to challenge male attitudes to violence across many communities worldwide, to promote the rights of children, to create better relations with formal service providers and to increase access to education, health and other services. Through taking to the streets in protest, volunteers have shown their dissatisfaction with governance, the lack of respect for citizen rights, or the exploitation of natural resources in ways people experience in their community as undermining their livelihoods.

Challenges to participation at the local level are abundant. Groups or individuals (such as women) are socialized in some societies not to use their voice or are unaccustomed to participating in invited and traditional spaces.[76] Some groups may be intentionally excluded. Invited spaces for volunteer participation can also be dominated by elites, whether individuals or groups with more education, access to economic resources or connections to decision-makers. Hidden hierarchies and social norms can limit the power of groups with less influence. Yet there are stories showing how collective activities in informal spaces, such as mothers' groups or online forums, can give individuals the tools, knowledge and collective strength to engage in more formal decision-making spaces, and for those with power to hear and listen to the voices of the marginalized.

Local governments are not always responsive to the needs of volunteers and, at times, may even undermine them. For example, in many countries indigenous groups are fighting to protect their environment in the face of government policies that prioritize extraction or economic expansion. In such instances volunteers often claim existing spaces to exercise power and voice. Chile's National Association of Rural and Indigenous Women (ANAMURI) uses national and global alliances with other indigenous and *campesino* movements to lever power and change the cultural norms that left their issues ignored.[77]

This chapter provides examples, shaped by their context, of volunteers working in all three types of spaces – closed, invited and claimed. There is more accessible information on volunteers working in invited government spaces or with formal volunteers, national and international NGOs and other agencies such as the UN. For reasons of language, accessibility and a lack of written records, much volunteering goes unrecognized and unrecorded. This, however, does not mean it is of less importance. The evidence is a huge mosaic of volunteer actions that work to engage with government and other powerful actors to help them meet their obligations on basic services, respond to local needs and call for greater accountability. In doing so, volunteering at the local level emerges as a resource for securing and sustaining voice and participation, accountability and responsiveness.

INFLUENCING DECISION-MAKING THROUGH PARTICIPATION

Trends to decentralize power to the local level since the 1980s, particularly in Africa, Asia and Latin America, show the increased attention to local governance, and participatory local governance practices.[78] New formal spaces have emerged around the world to enable citizens to engage in policy processes at the local level.[79] Who gets access

> **Volunteering at the local level emerges as a resource for securing and sustaining voice and participation, accountability, and responsiveness**

to these spaces, and the level of volunteer involvement and influence in these forums varies greatly, depending on the way the local government system has been established and what powers it has for funding and decision-making.

Participating in invited spaces

Concrete examples of governments widening invited spaces are seen in village development committees in Nepal and village planning and community-development fund management in Kenya and Uganda. These mechanisms for dialogue provide governments (and other bodies involved in governance) with practical ways to relate to and interact directly with citizens. At times these spaces provide opportunities for volunteers to help shape the policy and practice of how services are delivered and to monitor implementation. For instance, in environmental governance, community forest management is increasingly recognized for its contribution to improving development outcomes, so that "when management is initiated and owned locally, communities have demonstrated their capacity for putting effective and adaptive forest management practices in place to address future forest governance."[80] In Brazil, where local health councils allow tens of thousands of volunteers to be involved in improving health service delivery and influencing health policy, mortality rates have dropped sharply.[81]

Such mechanisms are intended to facilitate development from the grassroots by providing invited spaces for local people to raise their voice and influence the decisions that affect them most directly. But the potential influence of local invited spaces, such as community forest user groups and local health councils, can be undermined by many factors. These include a lack of trust between citizens and governments, a lack of transparency and accountability, a failure to observe constitutional rights and a high level of centralization of decision-making.

In addition, these participatory mechanisms can reinforce community inequalities if measures are not taken to address issues of unequal access and power. The presence of a strong patriarchal culture and gendered social norms can mean that women lack power to influence decisions vis-à-vis men even when quotas or reservations aim to ensure that they are formally represented in decision-making. Women may find it hard to find the time, or even secure permission, to leave home to engage with local decision-makers. And even when they can access these spaces, they may be unable to raise their voice, or their views may be ignored. Similarly, people from marginalized groups, such as those of low caste, economic status or with little education, can also struggle to be heard, leading to the domination of local forums by those with more power and resources. This may lead individuals to disengage or feel disempowered or even humiliated (box 2.2).

So, do these participatory opportunities really lead to shifts in power, changing patterns

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BOX 2.2. **VOLUNTEER VOICES:** AN ELECTED WOMAN *PANCHAYAT* MEMBER

Research from the Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability (the Citizenship DRC) in India reports an interview with an elected woman *panchayat* (local legislative body) member:

"I only know this much, that I am a member, nothing beyond that. Family members said that there is a seat reserved for women, you contest the election, we will manage it after that. 'Why did she contest the election then,' I ask. Her voice chokes. 'Family members insisted, but you see, it's so humiliating. All these women make fun of me all the time and tell me that I am no more than a peon in the *panchayat*.'"[82]

of social exclusion and injustice? Or do they just serve to legitimize the status quo? The evidence shows many examples of volunteers having a positive impact through engaging with local governments in invited spaces and using a range of strategies to access closed spaces. These successes may stem from targeted action by organizations mobilizing volunteers to tackle governance issues as in Nepal. Or, as with women's groups in places like Uttarakhand, India, they can grow organically, as community volunteers develop an awareness and resolve to make their voice heard in these spaces, as well as the individual tools and collective voice to achieve this.

Helping women to engage in Nepal

In 2007, Nepal's interim constitution mandated a 33% quota for women across all local governance boards. This includes village development committees – the institutions responsible for village planning – and the creation of partnerships between communities and the public sector. It also requires 10% of the committee budgets to be allocated to women and girls.

However, in reality, women's representation in these local bodies is extremely low, and even when women volunteers take part, they often fail to contest decisions that divert gender-targeted funds to other development projects.

In order to counter the lack of progress, international volunteers[83] and their partners from a local women's organization in the west of the country provided training on leadership to help women raise their concerns, speak with a collective voice and feel that they had something important to say. In addition to working with local volunteers already participating in local governance forums, they worked with the community to inform individuals that politics is not for men only and to make it clear that women play a vital role in local governance. The international volunteers also worked with male board representatives – many of whom were unaware of the quotas for female participation – informing them of the benefits of ensuring women's active participation.

As a consequence of the training, women are starting to raise their voice on Nepalese boards. Likewise people are seeking to ensure that resources are allocated more fairly and in accord with local needs. In one village development committee, women asked for part of the budget to be allocated for stretchers to support women in labour, and in one village women have ensured that domestic violence and alcohol abuse have been added to the agenda.[84]

When people can engage effectively in invited spaces, the results can be profound. As shown below, including marginalized groups in decision-making can allow development agendas to take the needs of specific groups into account and resources to be distributed more effectively and equitably, improving the responsiveness of governance institutions. Participation can also begin to transform social relations as deeply entrenched social norms are challenged and reassessed.

Uttarakhand local women engaging with formal governance structures

In Uttarakhand local women began engaging with formal governance structures after developing new skills, capacity, knowledge and the ability to collectively organize by engaging in local volunteer activities.[85] They began with organizing informal women's groups to discuss issues on running and maintaining *balwadi* centres for preschool education, supported by a community-based organization, the Uttarakhand Environment Education Centre. Groups began to develop around these preschool centres in different villages, and eventually an informal network made up of over 450 groups spread across seven districts in Uttarakhand. A key organizing principle of the groups (encouraged by the Centre) was that they should include a woman volunteer from every family in the

village, irrespective of caste and economic status. The groups became known as "whole village groups" (WVGs) – underlining the inclusion of women from all backgrounds.

At first, discussions related to children's education, and later the groups became forums to discuss other issues, such as sustainable management of local forest and water resources. As volunteers in these groups, women became involved in organizing, engaging in dialogue and making decisions. Because the WVGs included volunteers from all households, this involved addressing power relations within the village and requiring negotiations, debate and conflict resolution on issues such as equal distribution of water among villagers.

Many WVGs later moved to engaging with formal structures of governance and the electoral process. Several women from the WVGs have been elected as ward members, block committee members or representatives of the village *panchayat*. Women also fielded an independent candidate for state assembly elections in 2006, nominating a woman from a family living below the poverty line and funding the campaign with state-wide WVG contributions. Although the candidate was not elected, her example led others to more actively engage in the governance system and familiarize themselves with the electoral process.

Indirectly, women have been able to build their self-confidence, acquire skills and develop a desire to change their circumstances through volunteering in the WVGs. This has given them the individual capacities required to take part in formal governance processes, such as speaking in front of the community, giving them the confidence to speak with government officials and authority figures, and (for some) emerging as leaders. WVGs also give women a platform to interact with the village *panchayat* as well as district and block functionaries to put forward their demands, pressuring them as a collective and

at times even campaigning or undertaking street marches outside state institutions. Further, by using public spaces in the village, either by holding meetings or performing songs (as at festivals or weddings), they became active in the public domain and could "normalize" their participation. Challenging social norms in indirect and non-adversarial ways ensured they were not alienated by men in the villages.

As a collective group, women have become aware of the need to influence governance structures in order to influence the development agenda. In some instances, volunteers have helped make state services accountable, particularly in education. Women have raised their voice to ensure that state-managed child development centres are set up, to provide equal quality childcare. And, with badly run schools and absent or nonperforming teachers, WVGs have communicated their dissatisfaction to government functionaries and monitored school registers every month. WVGs have been able to modify development initiatives according to local context, such as rejecting road construction because it lowers farms' productivity or cuts through water sources.

One community-based organization worker remarked on the influence of the WVGs: "These days any government official who comes to the village asks for the president of the WVG, not the *gram pradhan*, because they know that these women will create trouble later if they are not consulted."[86]

Nepal and Uttarakhand in India highlight the importance of taking into account the often invisible hierarchies of power that restrict the ability of the poor and most marginalized to raise their voice and participate in formal governance spaces, even if their presence in such forums has been invited or is mandated by law.

Volunteers are also essential in delivering development programmes. Agencies working

on development often want to promote community involvement and local ownership, understanding that without this the programmes will fail. By extending, supporting and improving service delivery, volunteers working in these formal programmes improve governments' ability to deliver on their commitments.

Examples of this include school feeding programmes,[87] building girl-friendly schools and developing mothers' clubs to raise awareness of the importance of girls' education and to encourage parents to send their children to school. The work of the volunteer-run mothers' clubs helped increase enrolment of boys and girls and improved achievement rates of girls.[88] The United Nations Girls' Education Initiative in 2011 built on this work, often informally in villages where women come together to walk their girls to school, to check on dropouts and to encourage mothers to see the value of education. The "My education, my future" campaign is being implemented through local partners working with volunteers in communities.[89]

Water governance in the Arab region
Twelve Arab countries have average per capita water availability rates below the World Health Organization's threshold for severe scarcity. UNDP argues that the water crisis is a crisis of governance: water security requires effective governance; good management principles and practices; and attention to complex and rapidly changing social, economic, political and environmental circumstances.[90] Recently local community stakeholders and user associations have been established in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Tunisia and Yemen. Some water user groups (WUGs) have been set up through a bottom-up consultative approach. When authorities confer with volunteer members who are ordinary water users, this can ensure inclusion, transparency and accountability.

Several volunteer-based WUGs in Yemen's Amran basin have been founded in the past

few years by the Groundwater and Soil Conservation Project with help of the German Technical Cooperation. One of these, the Wa'alah WUG, was established in 2006. The community came together to prevent the misuse of groundwater and depletion of the aquifers. Transport of water outside the area was found to be the main reason for falling water levels. They agreed to prevent water being sold to tankers from any well and to prevent tankers from transporting water to outside the area. They launched a petition (*markoum*) signed by every well owner and sheik, to establish a new regulation, approved by the local authority. A financial penalty for breaking the *markoum* was imposed. The community agreed to report the violators in order to prevent them from coming back to transport water outside the area. This agreement has prevented conflicts between the different tribes in the area. Community volunteers were involved in implementing the *markoum*. Tankers stopped transporting water out of the area, and water levels stabilized. Other WUGs in the Amran basin agreed on the same *markoum* regulations.[91]

Participating in claimed spaces
The above examples demonstrate how volunteer mobilization occurs in different ways and through different types of partnerships with other groups, local and international. They also show the importance of claimed spaces in local communities in making voices at the margins audible and legitimate, as Rosemary McGee argues: "The most relevant interfaces and dynamics of 'governance' often lie not between citizens and state, but within the citizenry and within the community."[92]

This experience of volunteering in informal created community spaces can enable individuals to develop the confidence and agency to participate, the skills, knowledge, and tools to influence, and the collective voice to influence governance and stave off political pressure from dominant groups. As John Gaventa notes: "Power gained in one space, through new skills, capacity and

Volunteering in informal created community spaces can enable individuals to develop the confidence and agency to participate

experiences, can be used to enter and affect other spaces."[93]

In the face of conflict, natural disasters, ill health, poor education and lack of water, local communities find ways to survive and even improve their conditions. Many work in claimed spaces, and usually nothing is known of their work beyond the local area. Others find their work picked up and supported and extended, sometimes with external help, including funding, but often for only a limited time.

It is volunteers working at this level who sustain the work required in many areas: to encourage girls into school through mothers' clubs, combat violence in the community, promote better practices in health and sexual and reproductive rights, and raise awareness and change attitudes and beliefs about violence against women, female genital mutilation (FGM), HIV/AIDS and Ebola. Their work on challenging social norms through delivering essential services, care and support is essential to address urgent and long-term needs.

One example now illustrates the importance of local, claimed spaces for combating HIV/AIDS. It also shows how skills and understanding developed in those spaces can lead to participation and voice in arenas farther from home, even to the international level. It also demonstrates how difficult it can be to be heard at higher, formal and more influential decision-making levels and how little support is going to the ground to promote and encourage the critically important work of staff and volunteers there. In 2015, only 3.6% of the UNAIDS budget will be allocated for work at the community level.[94]

The work of Stepping Stones was born out of the work of a group of Ugandan women activists experiencing the impact of HIV/AIDS in Uganda two decades ago. A formal training programme was developed participatively under the guidance of Alice Welbourn,[95] a qualified and experienced development worker, herself HIV positive. This programme trains men and women, young and old in communities about the causes of HIV, especially the issues of violence, and gender and age inequality. Volunteers in each community become the trainers and mentors of others in the village, promoting new attitudes, tackling prejudice and discrimination, teaching women and men the importance of consensual sex, and much more. There are now communities all over the world with trained volunteers exploring how best to tackle HIV/AIDS, and there is a web-based community of practice.[96]

From this experience, many women and men have become articulate about the issues that affect them most: the need to include those with HIV in all decisions about them, to address violence against women as a cause of HIV/AIDS, to oppose laws and policies that stigmatize those with HIV, to have the right to choice and information around testing, and so much more.[97]

Volunteer participation in both invited and claimed spaces at community levels can lead to wider civic engagement and demands for change. The data suggest, however, that it is often hard to get governance institutions to respond, and much depends on the openness of governments and other governance players.

MAKING GOVERNMENTS MORE ACCOUNTABLE

Where volunteers can make their voices heard and participate in decision-making processes, service delivery becomes more effective and equitable. Some new mechanisms or tools to improve accountability are the result of targeted organization-led interventions that mobilize volunteers to address governance needs. There are also many examples of volunteers independently

mobilizing at the local level to address governance issues affecting them.

Claiming new spaces to hold governments to account

The tools and strategies that local volunteers use to call for more accountability are wide-ranging. They can be organized informally as locally focused actions. They can also become supported (with funds and training, for example) or even initiated by international and national NGOs and other external governance players, including local government. Often actions that start small in one village or slum may be taken up by others and scaled up. Other communities may see what is going on and replicate collective action that may reach beyond the local area. For example, volunteers used report cards (often developed by NGOs) in schools to assess attendance. Volunteers are encouraged and trained to collect information to monitor government service delivery projects. And service-user feedback may be crowd-sourced to highlight consistently poor service delivery. Accountability strategies may grow from local concerns and activities to become more formally designed projects. But once project funding or NGO programmes are completed, the local volunteers may well continue the work into the future, if it has proved to be of value in their lives.

Awareness raising in northern Uganda

In northern Uganda in 2012, five communities were part of a project to ensure that local people were aware of the government resources they were entitled to. Selected community members were trained to improve their capacity to understand information on financial flows and related development processes and appointed as resource-tracker volunteers.[98]

The volunteers, aware of their right to information, demanded information from key governance actors such as local councillors. They were also trained to give feedback on the ability of these resources to meet their needs as well as the quality and relevance of programme funds. They began to question the National Agriculture and Advisory Services (NAADS) programme, which aimed to improve food security. And they asked for information from local governance actors, as one volunteer, Toobalo Churchill Otim, describes:

> *We were aware of our rights to access information and we were fully skilled and equipped to play our role in the entire complex development process. In collaboration with the local councillor, we called a village meeting and invited senior councillors. In the meeting we expressed our desire to know why we weren't benefitting from the on-going government programmes of income support and food security.[99]*

In response, the local councillor invited the NAADS coordinator to a follow-up meeting where he provided the list of enterprises funded in their subcounty. The coordinator helped the community to understand their entitlements and communicated the NAADS guidelines, which provide advisory services in the area. As a result, 42 community members and six market-oriented farmers found that they were entitled to receive hoes, goats and heifers. The farmers had also been unaware of a change in market prices that entitled them to more seed.

This example shows that volunteers have a key role in championing the right to information and providing feedback to local governance institutions. Supported by organizations to develop the necessary skills or access the required technologies, this increased capability can produce tangible gains, as citizens become aware of their entitlements and begin to ask questions to ensure that information-sharing systems reach out to society's excluded groups, putting them in a better position to call governments to account.[100]

Bottom-up accountability in Brazil

In Brazil volunteers claimed new spaces to

Volunteers have a key role in championing the right to information and providing feedback to local governance institutions

use bottom-up accountability mechanisms in response to a lack of transparency and the misuse of public funds in Maringa, a city and municipality in southern Brazil.[101] In 2000, an incident where more than US$57 million was misappropriated by the mayor and one of his secretaries led to civil society organizing itself to fight corruption. Activities initially focused on raising awareness of corruption, but the movement gave rise to the Ethically Responsible Society (Sociedade Eticamente Responsável) to conduct preventative audits on public spending by the local administration.

Expanding participation of young people in local groups nurtures greater electoral and political participation

The Society created the Maringa Social Observatory to monitor all bids and expenditures conducted by the mayor's office and the city's legislative council. Run by volunteers (coordinated by a small team of employees), the Observatory tracks all municipal bidding processes from formulation to product delivery, and analyses the operating costs of the legislative council. Volunteers in all project stages are important: volunteers, mostly retired professionals or university students, are members of the community who work to eliminate corruption and prevent loss and misuse of tax revenues.

Working at the Observatory, volunteers created spaces for "social control" of the use of public resources.[102] Recognizing that creating a culture where citizens are aware and can hold governments to account is critical for ensuring responsive government in the long term, volunteers conducted public awareness activities, including programmes in schools and universities. Volunteers thus work to prevent corruption by building awareness of the issue, training citizens to monitor public spending and fostering public sector collaboration in monitoring.

The project was responsible for saving the public treasury US$7.3 million over four years from 2004–2008. It helped to repay funds, cancel fraudulent acquisitions, reduce prices of public tenders and redefine quantities. In the long term it is hoped that the Observa-

tory's fiscal education activities (conferences, seminars, research, essay competitions, documentary films and theatre) will lead to more ethical conduct and a greater sense of civic responsibility. Increasing the involvement of citizens in calling governments to account and improving responsiveness of governance institutions, the model has been replicated widely, with more than 50 observatories across Brazil.[103]

ENGAGING IN INVITED SPACES

Competitive elections provide formal accountability mechanisms for policy-makers and citizens and can be a way for citizens' views and preferences to influence policy decisions. Volunteering may be a catalyst for individuals, particularly young people, to participate in the political realm, notably at the ballot box. A report by Mercy Corps in 2012, Civic Engagement of Youth in the Middle East and North Africa, showed that expanding participation of young people in local groups nurtures greater electoral and political participation. Volunteer activities in their community can build greater confidence among youth in their ability to influence broader issues and take action in the political realm.[104]

Local elections in Indonesia
In the 2012 Jakarta election, informal volunteers supporting the governor and vice-governor candidates Jokowi and Ahok changed the way electoral politics is conducted at the grassroots level in Indonesia. This also led to greater involvement of volunteers in government processes following the candidates' victories, particularly in creating or improving new governance accountability mechanisms.[105]

Volunteers organized informally and spontaneously to support the two candidates. Many were motivated to volunteer, regardless of their party affiliation. The volunteers had a range of religious affiliations, ethnici-

ties, social classes and professions. Many had no previous affiliation to the two candidates' political party, or were previously affiliated with a different party. But they chose to cast this identity aside to support the candidates. Their number is difficult to estimate because of the diversity of their activities and the informal nature of mobilizing. The number of official volunteers stationed in polling stations was about 45,000 (three per polling station), but the unofficial volunteers outnumbered them.

On 28 September, the Jakarta General Election Commission announced that Jokowi–Ahok had won the election with 54% of the vote, 7 percentage points more than Foke–Nara. The pair were inaugurated as governor and vice-governor two weeks later. Some argue that this has changed the electoral tradition in Indonesia, with political parties increasingly aware that cooperation with social movements is crucial for success in campaigning.[106]

Many volunteer to ensure that the administration is effective and responsive. Some have indirectly joined government programmes or are volunteering to help initiate or implement the governor's promises. Others have become participatory watchdogs – not opposing the government but ensuring the transparency, effectiveness and efficiency of public service delivery on the ground.

EFFECTING INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIVENESS

Volunteers are also applying pressure to ensure that governments respond to their calls and adopt new mechanisms to improve accountability and responsiveness.[107]

This example from Bangladesh shows how volunteers use advocacy, alliance building and collective action to make local governance more responsive.

Combating violence against women in Bangladesh

Naripokkho, an organization that works to combat violence against women in Bangladesh, has used its alliances with various governance actors and collective action to create mechanisms that make local governance institutions more accountable and responsive. It has connected its work with women affected by violence to improve understanding of the issue. It lobbied governance actors to allow its volunteers to monitor state interventions to combat violence against women, increasing responsiveness to women's needs.

Naripokkho relies on alliances and partnerships to do its work all over Bangladesh. One of its primary alliances is with Doorbar, a women's network focused on political empowerment and preventing violence against women. Volunteers with Naripokkho and the Doorbar network are primarily women. They come from very different economic and educational backgrounds ranging from neo-literate to master's degree holders. Their activities include monitoring, reporting and supporting court officials, doctors, police and other public servants to engage sensitively and respectfully with victims of violence, and campaigning, lobbying, and mobilizing to shape and influence public opinion.

The network is useful for their monitoring skills and for collecting information on violence against women. It also collects information on cases of violence against women filed at police stations across the country. By using the information from volunteers at frontline service sites, national information on incidence, and feedback from grassroots women's bodies, the organization feeds back their findings on progress and limitations in the quality of government, police, hospital and court services to national programme managers.[108]

Advocacy for responsiveness

One aspect of strengthening governance is about influencing and shaping policy

agendas. This can mean challenging or even rejecting the dominant values, ideology or development agenda of the state, and voicing alternative opinions to try to ensure that government institutions recognize and respond to specific groups' needs. Such challenges may have less chance of being heard through the usual governance spaces.[109] Where issues are contentious or where groups have a weak negotiating position with formal governance actors, their actions for change are often taken outside formal governance spaces. The examples here show how this action can lead not only to policy changes but also to shifts in public opinion and cultural norms – while revealing that it can also be ignored by government or even lead to government reprisals.

Some groups' values and understanding of development are at odds with ideologies that favour economic progress at the expense of the environment. For many indigenous communities across the world, their livelihoods, culture and traditions are rooted and dependent on the land's biodiversity and their access to natural resources.[110] Policies that favour economic expansion and resource extraction are greatly affecting indigenous communities and making their relationship to the land less stable.

From outsider to policy operator in Chile
In Chile, policies promoting the large-scale agro-food industry have been met with resistance by local volunteers, who feel that such policies sideline small farmers and risk eradicating indigenous practices. A key issue is protecting seeds and seed sovereignty. In recent years, attempts to update existing laws on seed and plant patenting to ensure the international competitiveness of Chilean agro-business have been opposed by bodies such as ANAMURI, which argue that changes to legislation would be a barrier for farmers to use strains of seeds that have been used by indigenous farmers for generations. They argue that such changes would prevent such traditional practices

as seed exchanges while enabling corporations to monopolize the sale, import and export of seeds.

ANAMURI has 10,000 members – women volunteers from indigenous and rural communities across Chile.[111] It was originally an outsider group, with little access to mass media or institutionalized contact with government. Its campaigning success therefore depends on working in informal spaces and creating new networks. Local initiatives include organic gardens, farmers' markets, traditional food tastings, seed exchange fairs and seed saving (preserving seeds passed down through generations). Volunteers also take part in rallies and demonstrations across the country.[112]

Local ANAMURI activities influence public opinion and raise awareness about the importance of seed and food sovereignty, but transnational alliances have enabled the organization to lever power. ANAMURI has applied pressure on national policy-makers by forming alliances with La Via Campesina (a broad, worldwide coalition of more than one billion peasants, farmers and others who campaign for land tenure, food sovereignty and agro-ecology).

ANAMURI has begun to work with Chilean legislators and increasingly gains direct access to informal policy-making spaces, despite originally being an outsider group. Gaining access to more formal governance spaces has been crucial: it now represents the interests of rural and indigenous women directly on government forums, including the Agricultural Ministry's Agricultural Export Council and Agricultural Area Council. ANAMURI's co-director Alicia Muñoz visited parliament five times in 2013–2014 to persuade legislators to reject the seed-patenting bill the group feared would affect seed sovereignty and traditional practices. In March 2014 the government withdrew its plans to update the law.[113]

ANAMURI used multiple strategies that influenced various stages of the policy process. From being an outsider group, ANAMURI inserted itself into the policy process, and now has a place in influencing policy on national and transnational seed patenting.

Grassroots activism on environmental issues in China

In countries where civil society is weak, volunteers have to develop informal ways of acting collectively to ensure that government institutions hear their voices and respond to their needs.[114] Grassroots activism on environmental issues in China, for example, has surged in the last two decades. Many environmental organizations operate in areas that do not conflict with the interests of the government – for example, promoting environmentally friendly lifestyles that focus on individual behaviour rather than government policy and development agendas.

In Chinese cities local volunteers have mobilized over air quality, especially smog in cities. Despite government attempts to tackle poor air quality in recent years, it remains a major problem for cities.[115] In 2011, local bodies initiated a grassroots air-quality testing campaign, urging the government to measure and announce pollutants' levels publicly and accurately, largely because official evaluations did not always include the more dangerous airborne particulates of less than 2.5 micrometres (PM2.5).

Starting in Beijing – but copied in other cities including Wuhan, Chongqing and Nanjing – environmental organizations invited members and new volunteer recruits to measure PM2.5 at various locations in the cities, borrowing the necessary equipment, learning how to use it and posting their measurements online. They trained volunteers in using the equipment, maintaining it and measuring and uploading data in a standard way. Local residents volunteered to measure pollutants regularly, sometimes in loose organizations of school teachers or

students who posted air quality diaries online on micro-blogging sites. Activists used social media to form discussion threads, arrange group meetings, recruit new members locally, raise funds and organize lectures and short tours. They aimed to provide test results regularly as an open and independent alternative source of information.

In this way the volunteers raised awareness of the harmful effects of air pollution and highlighted citizens' right to accurate information on issues affecting their daily lives. Some government agencies responded by measuring and publicizing PM2.5 levels, and city environmental agencies have increasingly modified their standards and started including this measure in broadcasts. In Wuhan in 2012, the Environmental Protection Bureau complied with a request by a local volunteer group to publicize PM2.5 levels after the agency set up multiple monitoring stations around the city. In some cities, environmental bureaux have added new measurement spots in densely populated or industrial areas to increase the accuracy of measurements.

A collective identity emerged across the cities among volunteers as the defenders of the public's right to know, which seems to have a broad resonance among urban Chinese.[116] The grassroots network of volunteers may lead to further communal action that urges reductions in pollution and pressures governments to make environmental issues a higher priority.

Volunteer advocacy influencing governance actors: Mexico and Ecuador

Volunteer action can influence public opinion, shifting cultural boundaries that may make governments more responsive to the needs of excluded groups and individuals. It can also make issues more visible or legitimate by drawing on powerful alliances, mobilizing collectively or using technologies to gather information. But such action is often highly localized and informal, as residents

> **In countries where civil society is weak, volunteers have to develop informal ways of acting collectively**

defend their turf, forming loose groups to gain leverage against powerful actors – official or corporate.

Members of Paso de la Reyna in Mexico show how those with limited resources and organizational support may have to rely on direct action to make their voice heard. In 2009 the government of Mexico's Federal Electricity Commission proposed to build a hydroelectric dam on the Rio Verde, Oaxaca, which would affect 43 communities in six regions.[117] Members of one community, a small village of 500 inhabitants, began in 2009 to blockade the only bridge to the village at the entrance to the communal land holding, to prevent government officials and engineers from entering and surveying the area. Their campaign has been supported by other at-risk communities.

The blockade is a nonviolent protest, where villagers take turns staffing the blockade during daylight hours, often taking time from paid work to ensure a continuous presence. Volunteers watch the river and monitor attempts by government officials to survey the area. Over time, the residents have become more organized, forming a council to develop nonviolent strategies. They also contacted an organization that had experience of the impacts of other dams in the area to raise awareness of the project's implications, and counter what they regarded as the one-sided information from the Mexican Federal Electricity Commission. The blockade has halted construction of the hydroelectric project.

But having to rely on time-consuming strategies to effect change because of limited influence in formal spaces can change individuals' and communities' livelihoods and well-being in the long term. Action outside formal spaces, particularly if direct or coercive, also risks reprisals from state institutions. In Ecuador, local resistance to a mining project has been ongoing since 1995. Environmental impact assessments had shown that the mine could contaminate water supplies and displace 100 families.[118] Local volunteers have opposed the project using roadblocks and marches towards Quito. Some residents also occupied the mining company's camp, drawing reprisals. In 2006, the local leader of the resistance was arrested, but two years later, a judge ruled against detention. And in 2014 another local leader was reportedly detained for 90 days while the government conducted investigations.

CONCLUSIONS

Millions of volunteers across the world are contributing to governance at the local level. In response to governments creating local mechanisms that encourage participation in decision-making processes, volunteers are increasingly involved in shaping policies and making decisions on issues that directly affect their lives. In addition, volunteers operate outside formal local governance structures to ensure that their voices are heard and that their governments respond to their needs.

When they raise their voices, volunteers can influence and shape societies' cultural and social norms and values. They can widen the parameters of debate, putting new ideas on policy agendas and challenging the status quo. While this may not always directly influence key decision-makers or affect policy outcomes in the short term, it can shift opinion and lead to long-term societal change. It can also promote a plurality of opinions that in some contexts can make governments more responsive to a wider range of needs.

Volunteerism at the local level enables people to teach each other new skills and those previously excluded to understand and claim their rights. It also helps individuals to develop the skills to engage and participate beyond the household or village; to monitor and track government commitments and spending; and to build women's groups to move beyond the local to the national and

even global. It builds their capacity to partner with local government institutions and national or international CSOs.

Community-based volunteering employs a variety of strategies to gain greater voice and participation to influence decision-making processes affecting their communities. Sometimes local volunteers work alone; however, the need to work in alliance with external actors such as national or international CSOs is clear, as is the need to partner with local government institutions in making governance processes more participatory and inclusive.

Volunteerism provides a means for the marginalized to find and create pathways to stronger voice and participation. For instance, it is not accidental that there is much evidence of volunteerism empowering women at the local level. When marginalized groups are able to effectively raise their voices, governance agendas are more likely to

take their unique needs into account and to allocate resources for ensuring services.

Volunteerism at the local level is not without challenges. There is a risk of governments shifting the burden of work to volunteers particularly at the local level. In addition, the continuing domination of elite groups in participatory spaces could replicate rather than reduce inequalities in access to decision-making. Some 'tokenistic' participatory fora may lack real power. And some volunteers face reprisals from those opposed to their views.

Despite these challenges, local volunteering has the potential to expand and improve services, make voices of those most marginalized stronger, incorporate local knowledge, provide checks and balances, and encourage a diversity of opinions. All this, depending on the broader context, can lead to greater voice and participation, and more accountable and responsive governance.

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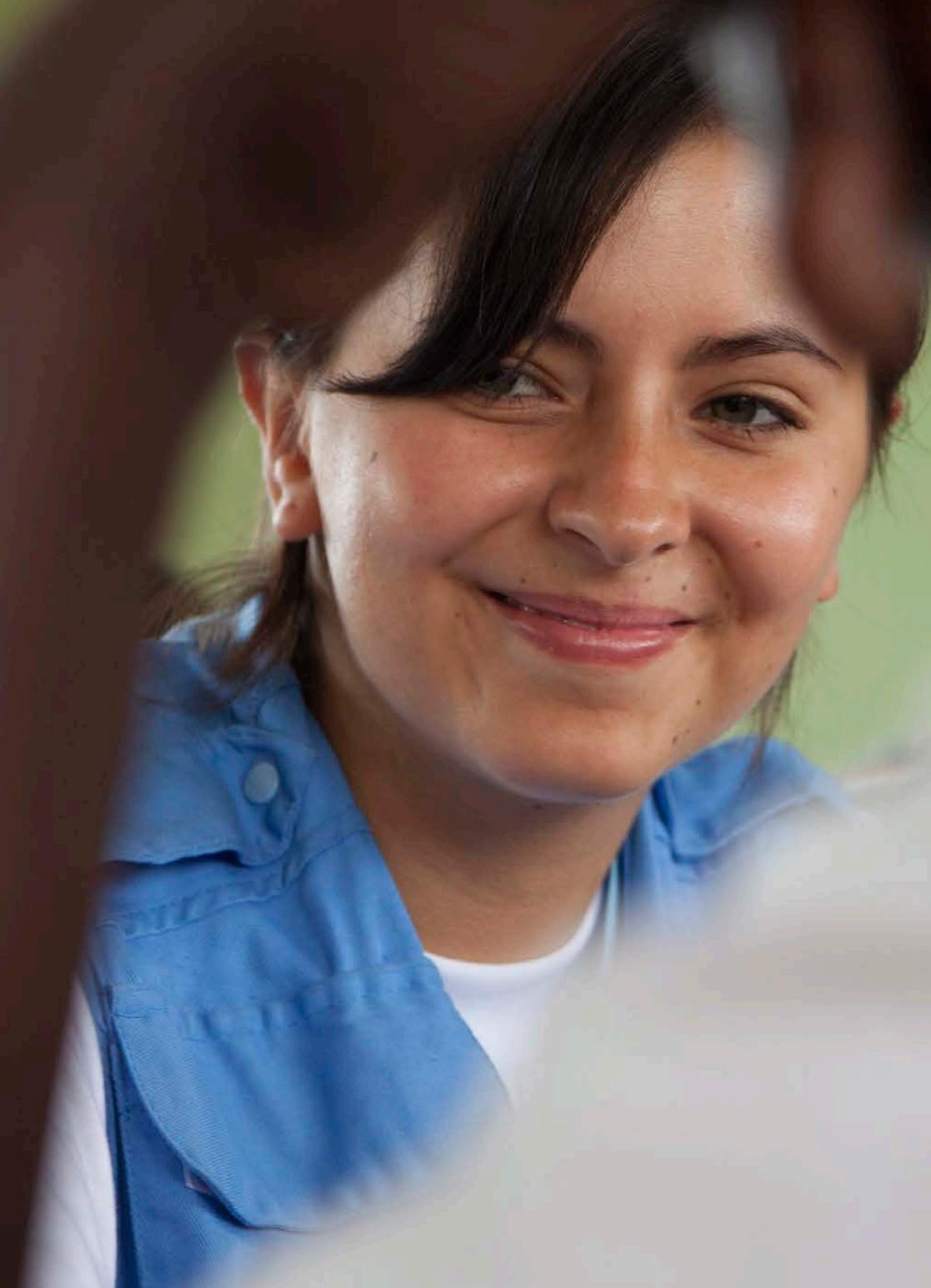
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Impacts of volunteerism at the national level

"We want a new system which is based on the people's rights and on social contract between the governors and the governed through which the international values of human rights such as democracy, justice, equal citizenship, gender equality, freedom of speech, and press are respected." Tawakkol Karman[119]

Volunteerism is a force for harnessing the power of peoples' voice and participation to influence governance, and enhanced voice and participation are associated with more responsive and accountable governments.[120] Historically, volunteers have often worked at the national level, engaging with governments to find ways to seize and/or create opportunities, moments and channels where citizens can act to potentially affect services, policies, discourses, decisions and relationships that affect their lives and interests. At this level (as at other levels), the power of volunteerism lies in its ability to be a channel that enables people to exercise their agency through civic engagement. By being a conduit for the voices of the poor, most marginalized and excluded, volunteerism can under the right circumstances improve the quality of democratic processes and make them more inclusive and responsive to the needs of people. By mobilizing a wide cross-section of voices, volunteerism can also elicit greater accountability and responsiveness from governments. It achieves these ends primarily by influencing legislation, institutions and the rules of engagement among different actors.

Different governance actors are involved at the national level including the international financial institutions – World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) – in many countries; MNCs increasingly involved in running contracted-out state services and in the management of key natural resources such as oil, diamonds, water and land; through to international and national CSOs, religious organizations and traditional authorities. All play different roles in different contexts and contribute to shaping the way government works. In different contexts different governance actors are more or less significant and able to influence governments in their favour. One increasingly common feature of the current global context is the significant increase in corporate sector engagement in all aspects of development work, utilities and service delivery, which can complicate lines of accountability between citizens and governments. Contracting out state responsibilities to the private sector, national and international, and to CSOs (with NGOs running health and education services to a considerable extent now in some countries) raises questions: Who is accountable to whom and for what? What mechanisms exist for negotiation and dialogue (participation and voice)? How to get responsiveness?

This chapter will, however, largely focus on the relationship between volunteerism and governments. Governments continue to set the rules, laws and policies that affect the allocation of resources, quality of services and interactions between people, markets, corporations, media and other elements of civil society. The chapter discusses the various ways that volunteers enhance citizens' voice and enable participation to influence governance at the national level, calling for better services and ways to meet their needs and rights, for new laws and policies, and working on issues of accountability and more responsiveness.

Much of the governance-related volunteerism at the national level involves volunteers, often working with CSOs, engaging directly or indirectly with different arms of national government. Some governments, in turn, have leveraged the power of volunteerism to help to achieve development goals and enable them to deliver better on their obligations to citizens. While volunteers can contribute directly to changing laws and constitutions – the formal governance mechanisms – this is often done through influencing the more informal governance institutions of customs, traditions, and social and economic norms. Mobilizing changes in these is difficult for governments to do alone and requires long-term work with people, which volunteers are often well placed to do.

Two questions are explored in this chapter. First, how do governments leverage the power of volunteering to strengthen voice and participation in decision-making to inform and enhance formal and informal governance? And second, how do volunteers harness people's voice and participation to influence and elicit changes in how governments govern, especially in relation to the three pillars of voice and participation, accountability and responsiveness? Whether an initiative is top down or bottom up affects the spaces that volunteers have access to – and calls for different strategies for engagement at the national level. For instance, when governments leverage the power of volunteerism, the majority of volunteer engagement and people's participation happens in invited spaces. The majority of volunteers able to operate at this level in invited spaces are formal volunteers, national or international, and some volunteers from the grassroots who have learned the skills and confidence to enter these spaces. Governments can choose to open spaces that were previously closed, such as in policy-making bodies, and ease the entry of marginalized groups into invited spaces where these groups are not well-represented. On the other hand, when people seize the initiative and the impetus comes from the volunteers, a lot

of the initial activity takes place in claimed spaces (see the end of chapter 1).

It is governments that can establish a more or less enabling environment for citizen engagement in governance issues. Trends are widely variable with some governments opening new spaces through decentralization, referendums, online discussions, increased access to decision-makers, new volunteer structures and encouraging the growth and development of a vibrant and independent voluntary sector (CSOs and volunteers). At the other end are governments closing civic space in a number of ways: restricting access to certain kinds of funding, passing laws limiting advocacy and lobbying by civil society, curtailing freedom of the media and association, and increasingly subcontracting the voluntary sector, including the volunteers, to deliver on highly conditional contracts that limit their autonomy and ability to question trends, policies and new laws.

The rest of the chapter focuses on what is being achieved and can be built on to promote good relations between governments and volunteers to increase the benefits of development for the poorest and most vulnerable and ensure that governance decisions, processes and procedures include and build on the needs and rights of ordinary citizens, especially the most marginalized.

HOW GOVERNMENTS LEVERAGE VOLUNTEERISM

Many governments have leveraged volunteerism to achieve development goals and deliver better on their obligations to citizens. Some governments have created legal and institutional frameworks to enable greater volunteer engagement in government and to open up spaces for volunteer initiatives. Others have engaged volunteers in many areas of state functioning and electoral processes, including participatory law and policy-making as well as citizen monitoring of public administration. Still others have worked with volunteers to repair fractures in their societies.

It is governments that can establish a more or less enabling environment for citizen engagement in governance issues

THE NORWEGIAN DECLARATION ON VOLUNTARY WORK

Norway has a long tradition of voluntary work. Mountain ranges, deep fjords and remote islands, which characterize the country, historically made travel and communication difficult. This forced small and isolated communities to rely on their own joint efforts to solve the tasks at hand.

The unique Norwegian word dugnad, translating into something like collective voluntary work, is used to describe pooling of local labour or financial resources within a social group such as family, neighbourhood, community, geographical area or professional sector.

Traditionally, tasks solved through dugnad could be building community roads, bridges and harbours, or building a community house. Dugnad could also be used to support the less fortunate, such as doing farm work for widows.

Today, Norway is said to be one of the countries in the world with the highest levels of organized voluntary work. Substantial amounts of labour and monetary contributions are laid down in various community services as well as in the leisure sector supporting local sports, culture and other organized activities, especially for children and youth.

Norway also has a very strong tradition of international voluntary service, which continues. Thousands of people of all ages have worked in developing countries both through missionary organizations and NGOs, or facilitated by public agencies such as FK Norway.

Volunteerism and the voluntary sector thus comprise an important area for public policy. The last White Paper on the subject was discussed in the Norwegian Parliament in 2007. On 5 December 2014, International Volunteer Day, the Government of Norway presented a Declaration on Voluntary Work for wide consultation.

The Declaration is above all a policy statement recognizing the importance of the voluntary sector as an arena for social participation and democracy-building. It underlines the government's continued support and commitment to volunteerism and volunteer-involving organizations, and outlines the mechanisms for the political inclusion of the voluntary sector.

It is designed to promote predictability and a long-term perspective in interaction between the government and the voluntary sector. It sets out a framework for engagement to facilitate the voluntary sector's participation in political processes, ensuring overall accountability for joint endeavours. The Declaration also underlines the importance of research and knowledge management for the sector.

The government, through the Ministry of Culture, which coordinates the voluntary sector, has invited volunteer-involving organizations in Norway to an extensive process of consultations around the Declaration until March 2015, after which it will approve the final policy statement.

*Special contribution by **FK Norway**.*

Creating legal and institutional frameworks

One of the more potent means for governments to leverage volunteerism is to create structures and institutional mechanisms for volunteerism to thrive and for it to contribute to national development goals. Having frameworks of laws and institutions in place, provides volunteers with ready opportunities and structures to volunteer within. It enables governments to mobilize and deploy volunteers systematically. Putting these legal and institutional mechanisms in place also enables governments to draw on specific target groups – for example, youth – as volunteers for a range of purposes such as increasing social cohesion by providing a space for them to explore issues of difference and identity, to build new national commitments for their voices to be heard, and to increase their participation in decision-making processes.

As a result, where governments have created new structures and institutional frameworks to enable volunteerism, the promotion of national development goals and social inclusion have featured clearly in the stated purposes of the organizations established. In other words, governments that have actively promoted volunteerism have viewed it as a key means of implementation of their development agenda and as instrumental in addressing specific development challenges.

Volunteers, in turn, have played important roles in promoting and informing laws and institutional frameworks that enable volunteerism. Further, they have engaged with governments, participated in government programmes, enhanced their own skills and capacities, and contributed to national discourses through these mechanisms. In contexts with long-established traditions and structures of volunteerism, recognizing the value of volunteer work and indicating support for the sector has enabled governments to reap similar benefits. The volunteer sector, too, has benefited because of greater political inclusion and greater policy stability.

Enacting laws to promote volunteerism

The governments of Honduras, Mozambique and Peru have passed laws promoting volunteerism to reap the benefits of volunteerism for national development goals, while the government of Togo encouraged and enabled youth volunteerism specifically to address the problem of youth unemployment. In the first three countries, high levels of stakeholder participation were encouraged by the governments in the course of law making. Other governments, such as those of Ghana and Kenya, have similarly brought in formal volunteer structures, underpinned by law and resources, to encourage young volunteers to give their time to promoting health and education in rural areas, to be gainfully employed, and to learn the purpose and value of civic engagement.

In Honduras, the National Congress passed the Ley del voluntariado in September 2011. The primary purpose of the act is to foster organized and responsible volunteerism and leverage the potential of those able, willing and dedicated to volunteer (particularly youth) in public, private and not-for-profit organizations for the development of the country. The spirit of the act also protects the rights and duties of volunteers and host organizations, and promotes synergies between different volunteering efforts.

The volunteerism bill was introduced to Congress by the head of the Youth Commission, supported by the Secretary in the Office of Youth. The draft law was developed through workshops held by member organizations of the Honduras volunteer network under the coordination of the Office. The act recognized the value of volunteerism as human capital, which must be properly valued, and as a powerful resource that serves a dual purpose of enhancing the welfare of citizens and contributing to the country's economic development.[121]

In Mozambique, the government approved a volunteering law in 2010. The law was developed by a National Volunteer Council that the government had set up in 2009 to strengthen CSOs, and to engage them in supporting the national strategy against poverty. A highly participatory process was established for supporting the assessment, drafting, implementation and monitoring of the law. The law had two sets of objectives. One was to promote national development goals including democracy, human rights, national unity, social welfare, public healthcare, natural disaster response and environmental protection; the other involved enabling, supporting and recognizing volunteerism and providing mechanisms for effective volunteer management.[122]

For its part, the government of Peru, in addition to creating a legal framework, sought to institutionalize volunteerism by creating a department on volunteering.

An enabling environment requires more than legislation and policy (although these are essential building blocks). Processes, institutions, practices and strong partnerships should all enable the participation of more people in decisions that affect their lives.

Since 1988, more than 2.5 billion children have been immunized against polio thanks to the unprecedented cooperation of more than 200 countries, generous international investments and the community mobilization of more than 20 million volunteers. All three factors have been critical to success. To ensure that individuals, communities and nations receive the full benefits of volunteerism, an enabling environment, including supportive laws, policies and resources, is important. Engagement by all sectors of society – government, civil society, media, business and academia – is essential.[123]

ESTABLISHING STRUCTURES TO FACILITATE VOLUNTEERING IN PERU

Peru has a longstanding tradition of volunteer work, which is part of the tradition of the Andean communities. In the 1980s' social and economic crisis, groups of volunteers, mostly women working in soup kitchens and in rural organizations, put the country back on track.

In 2013, the government, collaborating with UNV, created a department on volunteering within the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations as a result of a volunteerism-institutionalization project. This department is responsible for gathering the principal stakeholders in Peru to implement a volunteer infrastructure, ensure an enabling environment for volunteerism, and promote best practices from volunteer organizations, international and local.

The SoyVoluntari@ network, supported by the government, is an expression of cross-sectoral collaboration between the government, CSOs, the private sector and development cooperation agencies at the national, regional and local levels. The network enables the articulation, dialogue and discussion on volunteering, and creates synergies between these sectors to strengthen volunteerism as a strategic resource for development.

The department on volunteering and the network methodology are the two pillars of success to keep improving the volunteer infrastructure in Peru and to harness the power of volunteerism to meet development challenges.

Some achievements of this collaboration are mass advocacy events for International Volunteer Day, recognition awards for volunteer organizations, alliances between universities for investigation on volunteering, mobilization of volunteers towards social state programmes, training tools on volunteering, a national quality brand for volunteerism activities as well as a manual to systematize volunteer experiences.

The volunteer infrastructure has established a common understanding of volunteerism and is adopting diverse approaches to mobilize and facilitate volunteerism to boost citizen participation in Peru. But one of the big challenges is ensuring sustainable funding and fostering an enabling environment for volunteer mobilization towards state social programmes. Institutionalized funding is key in guaranteeing that volunteerism as a development resource is used strategically for the people of Peru, no matter the changes in local and national administrations.

Peru is on its way to becoming a developed country. We believe that clear and strong policies to promote volunteer infrastructure and initiatives are a sign that we are on the right track.

*Special contribution by **Fernando Bolaños Galdós**, Vice Minister of Vulnerable Populations, Peru (part of the Ministry of Women and Vulnerable Populations).*

Creating innovative channels for youth employment in Togo

The government of Togo, like those of several other countries in Africa, used volunteerism as a channel for addressing the challenges of youth unemployment. Youth unemployment is above 8% and underemployment above 20%. The national programme for promoting volunteerism (PROVONAT) was launched by the government in September 2011 to train young people and engage them as volunteers in public, private and civil society institutions.

Over its first three years, the programme engaged 4,280 young people (40% of them women) in fields such as communications, health, agriculture and the environment, linked to national priorities such as maternal and infant health, preventable diseases, sanitation, rural development and social protection. The programme improved the employability of young people, with more than 40% finding paid employment as a result of their volunteer experience. More than 635 Togolese organizations now provide volunteer placements, and a database set up by the programme includes more than 20,000 young candidates.

Such achievements of the programme led the government to pass a law in June 2014 creating a public agency to manage the national volunteers. PROVONAT is now an autonomous institution linked to the Togo Ministry of Community Development, Craft and Youth Employment. PROVONAT has enabled many regional and local youth-led initiatives, which have had profound development impacts, especially for young women. For instance, a palm oil project in Kpalime provides 400 young women with technical advice and cooperative banking, enabling much higher production and income. In Kara, a young female lawyer has been working at the regional directorate for the Ministry for the Promotion of Women, translating the rights of women into local languages to raise awareness about these rights.

A positive secondary effect of the programme comes from its ability to bring volunteers from the south of the country to the north, and vice versa. This is important in Togo, where there have historically been political tensions between the two regions.

Leveraging the success of PROVONAT, a new government-led initiative called PROVONAT–JDS is targeting out-of-school youth and school dropouts. It will be run under the PROVONAT infrastructure, with the aim of mobilizing 5,000 school dropouts or unschooled youth between the ages of 15 and 35 to volunteer on local development projects for six months, after which they will receive training or apprenticeships.

Other initiatives where governments have leveraged the power of volunteerism to improve an aspect of governance can be categorized into three groups on the basis of the evidence: informing laws and policies, improving electoral processes and peacebuilding.[124]

INFORMING LAWS AND FRAMING AND IMPLEMENTING POLICIES

Some of the most fundamental duties of governance at the national level are to create the laws and policies shaping government and citizen behaviour, roles, and responsibilities. It is, therefore, crucial for laws and policies to be truly representative of the interests of all, not merely of the majority or the strongest interest groups. It is the case in some contexts that decentralized and highly participatory processes are more likely to yield laws and policies that are representative of local interests and beneficial to non-dominant interest groups and minorities. Some governments have leveraged volunteer efforts to enhance the number and diversity of voices that come together in consultations, decentralized structures and referendums to better inform laws and policies.

But even good laws and policies may not benefit the most marginalized if they are not implemented uniformly for all segments of the population, and several governments have taken special measures to enhance the reach of beneficial laws and policies to marginalized groups. Volunteers have been instrumental in helping governments to raise awareness of new laws and so take the benefits of policy to those groups. Volunteers have been able to enhance engagement between people and governments in both directions, such as in bringing new voices into formulating laws and policies and in taking their benefits back to the marginalized.

Engaging citizens in Brazil's health policy

Some governments have engaged citizens more systematically over the long term to inform and implement policies. In Brazil, close connections between the state and civil society enabled the formulation of a new health policy that significantly reduced inequalities in the distribution of public healthcare. A multi-level volunteer movement, active especially at the community level, advocated for healthcare as a basic human right and for citizen participation in the formulation, management and monitoring of health policy. The 'Citizen Constitution' that Brazil adopted in 1988 declared health to be a universal right of citizens, and replaced the old public health system with the Unified Health System. In the following two decades, the distribution of public health resources between regions has become more balanced. Not only have inter- and intra-regional inequalities been reduced, health inequalities within the population as a whole and for some of Brazil's most vulnerable groups have declined as well.[125]

These outcomes stem partly from innovations made possible by extensive civic engagement, which emerged in response to a sharp rise in demand for health services and the unequal distribution of public resources, and coalesced around the struggle for universal healthcare. Many volunteers were workers in the public health system: the movement forged alliances between progressive bureaucrats and citizens, leading to a bottom-up process with initiatives created and successfully tested at local and state levels before national adoption. As one researcher noted: "The distributive achievements […] were dependent on a policy process that helped the development of a porous boundary between state and society actors, which made it easier to advance a specific institutional arrangement that promoted regular debate between policy-makers, health professionals and service user representatives."[126]

Including citizen voices in legislation in India

The power of volunteer engagement was crucial in achieving a much-needed change in India's laws to prevent violence against women. It was an instance where massive volunteer-driven mobilization sensitized the government to the need for legal reform and for holding state agencies accountable for implementation. The government was responsive, and the same volunteers helped the government undertake the reform quickly. The massive protests in India after the rape and subsequent death of a woman student in New Delhi in December 2012 received widespread media coverage worldwide, and much was written about popular anger against institutional apathy in dealing with violence against women. Usually reticent middle-class youth took to the streets in protest, and the Indian government modified the laws to enable rapid convictions for charges of rape. What is far less known is the way the government mobilized volunteer energy to support this revision of the laws.

The government set up a committee headed by a former chief justice to review the laws and recommend changes. In a public notice the government asked civil society to share its ideas, knowledge and experience to inform the committee's recommendations. Even though the notice provided

> **Volunteers have been instrumental in helping governments to raise awareness of new laws and so take the benefits of policy to those groups**

two weeks for suggestions, the committee received more than 80,000 responses from women's groups, CSOs and overwhelmingly from individuals acting in their personal capacity.[127] These volunteers scoured the relevant laws, reported on the way police treat victims of violence and harassment, examined the way doctors and hospitals engage with victims of rape and domestic violence, looked into the deeper and less visible factors that enable violence against women, and sent the committee thousands of suggestions for change.

As a result, the committee addressed not just legal reform for addressing rape and sexual assault but also verbal and other forms of sexual harassment, acid attacks, offences against women in conflict areas, child sexual abuse, police reforms, governance of redressing crimes against women, and electoral and education reforms. The volunteers provided hours of labour to undertake a massive review in a short time – and provided a diversity of perspectives on the numerous arenas and ways Indian women suffer violence.

The law was amended to accept a subset of the committee's recommendations, leaving out some key demands of the people and recommendations of the committee.[128] The committee had been appointed on 23 December 2012,[129] and the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance was promulgated on 3 February 2013[130] – a remarkably short period given the size of the changes. The volunteers helped speed up the changes by sensitizing the government and legislators through protests, and then by assisting the committee with the review.

Enhancing access to justice in Niger
The government of Niger engaged volunteer lawyers to deliver the benefits of its legal reforms to the most vulnerable. It recognized that accountability and responsiveness cannot be achieved only by building these into fair and progressive laws. For the most marginalized sections of society to benefit, spe-

cial efforts are needed. In this case, expert volunteers provided the human resources to allow the government to effectively implement its policy.

In 2003, the government initiated a judicial reform support programme to modernize the legal framework and its distribution, provide better access to justice for litigants, and improve the functioning of the judiciary. In 2006, the Ministry of Justice partnered with several external agencies (UNDP, the European Union, and the French government) to extend the benefits to the most vulnerable in the prison system.

Currently 32 national and international UN Volunteer lawyers are serving in prisons in eight regions to educate inmates about their rights and to monitor their cases in the relevant courts. They also coordinate sensitization activities in the legal clinics of the National Association for the Defence of Human Rights. The volunteers, about a third of them women, support hotlines in the prisons to counsel inmates, assist prisoners with the formalities of court sessions and provide advisory services to court users. Even within the vulnerable group – prison detainees – they seek to target and provide special assistance to women detainees.

Since 2003, more than 1,800 detainees have received free in-situ legal advice and assistance, and almost 2,500 have received awareness training about their rights and obligations. Better relationships between the inmates and officials have resulted in better protection of human rights. The success of the project has led to discussions about extending it to the rest of the country.[131]

Institutional reforms may not automatically benefit the vulnerable segments, so special initiatives are often needed. And even within vulnerable populations, some are more vulnerable than others, and volunteer-led initiatives can extend the benefits of institutional reforms to reach these groups. In capacity-

constrained situations volunteers can help marginalized groups access the benefits intended for them as set out in the law or policy.

Incorporating citizen voices into the process of legislation and policy-making cannot only make laws more people oriented but also reduce inequalities in implementation and so better achieve their intended outcomes. Engaging volunteers in implementing policies can be crucial in ensuring that the benefits of progressive laws reach the most marginalized groups. Improved outcomes may also be observed in the successful leveraging of volunteerism in public administration.

IMPROVING ELECTORAL PROCESSES

Traditional understandings of volunteer involvement in state functioning and processes centre primarily on alternative budget exercises and the capacity development of government agencies by formal volunteers training local government officials or working in government offices. Yet there are many instances of governments leveraging the efforts of people working in their volunteer capacity to enhance many different elements of state functioning, including the electoral process.

The distinguishing feature of these cases is that they do not involve people standing on the outside holding governments to account, but instead involve governments taking the initiative to enhance the accountability of their own agencies and processes using the efforts of citizen volunteers. Given that the interactions between volunteers and governments take place within somewhat formal mechanisms, accountability is mutual. However, since governments are the initiators of these mechanisms, the engagement can fail if a government chooses to step back.

Whether monitoring the performance of key government departments and partners,

encouraging people to vote in elections or monitoring the electoral process, volunteers have helped governments improve state functioning and enhance the accountability of processes.

Monitoring elections

Electoral integrity is a fundamental aspect of good governance. The role of volunteers as election workers and observers in fragile situations is well documented. In Afghanistan in 2013–14, hundreds of national and international formal volunteers registered voters, counted ballots and observed and monitored the complex, long-drawn-out electoral process. Hundreds of national volunteers worked as citizen journalists to monitor, document and disseminate information on political activities in remote areas.

In the 2012 Jakarta gubernatorial elections (chapter 2), it was primarily informal volunteers who engaged in a social movement that challenged the tradition of money politics influencing elections. The 2014 presidential election for Indonesia saw an even larger scale mobilization of mostly informal volunteers. Volunteers motivated people to participate in the elections and vote for their candidate. Social media played an important role. Many voters used a phone app called iWitness to upload and share on social media photos of C1 forms showing the final tabulation of votes in each polling booth.[132] Indonesia's national election commission uploaded results from each of 480,000 polling booths to its website. Three software professionals with 700 others culled that information from the website and checked the results. The extent of citizen participation in ensuring the sanctity of the electoral process led to this being called the "crowdsourced election."[133]

Electoral observation is a long-standing tradition in many countries in Latin America, where they have had the technical support of the Organization of American States (OAS). In the last few decades, probably 200

Volunteers have helped governments improve state functioning and enhance the accountability of processes

observation missions have been conducted exclusively by volunteers; such missions are a key collective, multilateral instrument for promoting and sustaining representative democracy. Measured by their frequency and the diplomatic and public attention devoted to them, the missions have changed the hemisphere's approach to democratic governance. Before 1989, OAS observers were dispatched occasionally to monitor elections, but most of the missions were small – and they usually arrived on election day as formal mechanisms. Today's missions are more sophisticated, using a standardized methodology and technologies capable of monitoring the entire process, from the announcement of an election to the vote.[134]

The governments of Kenya and Zambia have engaged volunteers to assist with peaceful and orderly elections. Zambia accredits electoral monitors and observers. The monitors are from local civil society, and when they observe irregularities in the electoral process they may bring it to the attention of designated officials. The observers are from the international community, and while they cannot report irregularities to electoral officers, they can inform the election commission in writing.[135]

In each of these cases – service delivery and elections – monitoring by national and international volunteers, and formal and informal volunteers working in different ways, enhanced the legitimacy of the entity (government department) and the process (elections). Creating formal mechanisms for citizen monitoring of policy implementation and service provision can greatly enhance the capacity of governments to improve their functioning. Whether these approaches will continue as services are contracted out to private providers remains to be seen.

All these cases involve governments – even those with limited state capacity – that own and acknowledge their obligations to their people, and where the people accept the government as the central authority and duty-bearer.

REPAIRING FRACTURES AND BUILDING PEACE

In fragile situations, typically in conflict and post-conflict scenarios where inter-group trust is low and people are unwilling to accept the government's writ, governments (or in their absence other governing powers) have engaged volunteers to heal societal fractures. This is also an arena where spontaneous, informal, bottom-up volunteering contributes significantly.

A crucial precondition for lasting peace and healing social fractures is widespread participation and scope for all voices – especially those of the most harmed – to be heard. A degree of responsiveness from the government, ruling group or elites is essential to create the conditions for such engagement. Thus, unlike in conditions of stability and peace, responsiveness might need to precede voice and participation.

In such situations, external, often formal, international volunteers have played constructive roles in peacebuilding. In many cases this has required the same volunteers to address deficits in service provision, address violence against women and children, and attend to inter-group cohesion.

Governments have partnered with volunteers to create safe spaces for exchanging views and addressing concerns. Most truth and reconciliation commissions are largely made up of volunteers who have some degree of independence from government. In assessing the role of formal external volunteers in building and consolidating peace, it is important to remember that peacebuilding involves long and complex processes, complicated by the multiple actors with diverse interests and allegiances, and the history of each community or country.

Formal mechanisms for citizen monitoring of policy implementation and service provision can greatly enhance the capacity of governments to improve their functioning

Reconciliation in Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, formal and informal volunteers were critical in enhancing the engagement of citizens in the process of healing once a more responsive government took the first steps towards reconciliation. Following the end of the civil war between government forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in 2009, the government of Sri Lanka in 2011 endorsed the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) Report and Recommendations, which highlighted a number of

BOX 3.1. **VOLUNTEER VOICES:** VOLUNTEERS PURSUE RIGHTS OF REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

Antoine, Emmanuel and Naiel have assisted refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Côte d'Ivoire, Central African Republic and Guinea Bissau. They focus their assistance on addressing gender-based violence; access to community services such as education, health, income-generating activities, and capacity building; and peaceful coexistence with local populations.

Antoine Monemou (from Guinea) is an international UN Volunteer Reintegration and Community Services Officer with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in the south-west of Côte d'Ivoire. He works with refugees, IDPs and Ivoirian returnees. He reports that, in 2014, more than 1,600 refugees, mainly from Liberia, received medical assistance; more than 337 were issued passports as part of local integration policies; 150 children had access to education; 16 wells and 14 water pumps were rehabilitated; building of houses for 100 returnee families was supported; five cases of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) involving minors were managed; and a 16-day awareness campaign against SGBV was conducted. He encourages peaceful habitation between refugees and the local population (who think refugees are getting "special" privileges) and promoting and training jointly attended schools and other mixed associations as a way to promote exchanges and understanding.

Agbonon Emmanuel Ehouman (from Côte d'Ivoire) found being an international volunteer helpful in his work with Muslim IDPs in Central African Republic as they distrust other national populations and officials. With the continued existence of armed groups he strives to explain the right of displaced persons to return and live freely in their places of origin, as well as their rights to have access to justice and request assistance from authorities regarding their situations and lost properties. At one point, about 8,000 IDPs were gathered at the mosque of the Hausa area, and only about 200 displaced persons had returned to their homes, with many continuing to sleep in the mosque at night. The overwhelming majority of the IDPs are women and children, who are particularly at risk in a challenging security environment.

Naiel Saiti Cassama is a national volunteer working with refugees with UNHCR Guinea Bissau. Around 8,000 refugees, the majority from Senegal, are living in rural areas together with host communities. In the rural areas where agriculture is the only income-generating activity, access to land is the main issue between refugees and the local population. Naiel and his colleagues have been raising awareness with traditional land owners regarding a project for a new law on land owning and recognizing refugees' right to ownership. Pursuing peaceful coexistence is an ongoing challenge, which Naiel strives to address through awareness campaigns, participatory assessments, meetings and training in remote rural areas; training national and local authorities to recognize official refugee papers; and organizing SGBV protection groups.

All three volunteers shared challenges of lack of cohesion between refugees and local populations, lack of sufficient human and financial resources to support activities, and recurrent uprisings and violence which limit their services. Nevertheless, Antoine clearly reaffirmed their dedication to ensuring that the refugees and IDPs "should enjoy human rights that are articulated by the international human rights conventions and customary law."

Source: Interviews with Antoine Monemou, Agbonon Emmanuel Ehouman and Naiel Saiti Cassama by UNV, November-December 2014.

priorities including a clear role for partnership between civil society and local government. One included enabling vulnerable people to participate in governance through structured dialogues and better access to services.

Five national CSOs that had previously received international volunteers to work with people affected by conflict and VSO Sri Lanka provided an accessible analysis of the LLRC report in English, Sinhala and Tamil. They brought civil society and local government together in seven districts to engage people and enable them to set priorities for local reconciliation issues. And they supported partnership and relationship building between members of the coalition to overcome prejudice and improve interethnic relationships.

Several project design elements helped the formal volunteers navigate such a contentious political space to enable CSOs and like-minded individuals to practise working together for a common agenda. For a start, the project had the endorsement of both local and national government and provided safe spaces for discussing district priorities for reconciliation, building on and supporting the government-endorsed LLRC report. Accessibility through multiple languages and culturally sensitive locations also served the project well.[136]

Consolidating peace in Sierra Leone

After peacebuilding and reconciliation comes the process of ensuring that peace endures. Volunteers have contributed to reintegrating combatants into mainstream society and getting local development and peace processes underway. At the end of the 11 years of civil war in Sierra Leone, formal national and international volunteers assisted communities in 12 districts with reintegration and the transition to peace after the government completed its demobilization, disarmament and reintegration programme.

The volunteers worked with local organizations to fund micro-projects in communi-

ties. The 83 projects included social healing through peace camps, sports and cultural events, training and workshops on themes like HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, gender, human rights, confidence-building activities and advocacy. Through these activities, volunteers helped ex-combatants, built some trust in the peace process, improved public awareness of citizen rights and responsibilities, and enhanced voluntary action in the country. The micro-projects also helped national volunteers to build relationships with key stakeholders, including communities, governments and implementing partners. The volunteers linked UN agency programmes and the grassroots. A key element of success was that the project " supported reintegration throughout by not giving assistance based on an identity of 'combatant' or 'victim' but instead targeted activities to all youth, the population most vulnerable to frustration and violence."[137]

The focus on youth is particularly important in conflict and post-conflict situations, as most combatants tend to be young males. Youth are often among the first to offer the hand of reconciliation, and overcome territorial and behavioural barriers in post-conflict regions. Thus young national volunteers can be particularly effective in building peace.[138]

WHEN PEOPLE SEIZE THE INITIATIVE

At the national level, most volunteer initiatives effect change through collective action to engage with governments and other repositories of power, and to influence decision-makers from the outside in spaces where the volunteers are excluded. When volunteerism can amplify the voice of the poorest and most marginalized, and catalyse collective action, it can help reduce inequalities in power and influence.

It is at this level, more than any other, that increased voice and participation can lead to accountability and responsiveness being

Most volunteer initiatives effect change through collective action

included more in laws and policies. Volunteers work to hold governments and their agencies accountable not merely in passing laws but also in their implementation and monitoring that implementation. Volunteer initiatives have time and again sought to influence laws, institutions and policies, as well as the informal rules of engagement among groups.

Most of the bottom-up initiatives that influence governance at the national level are undertaken by informal volunteers working in claimed spaces, often in alliance with CSOs and in other formal volunteers – for instance, in public meetings, online, on the street and in other fora. Several successful initiatives have used the media as a claimed space for eliciting and amplifying people's voices using the power of large-scale mobilization to influence decision-making in closed spaces from the outside.

Volunteer initiatives that influence governance at the national level are broadly categorized here into three groups on the basis of the weight of the evidence. They are not exhaustive or mutually exclusive. They influence legislation, institutions, and practices and terms of engagement among groups.

INFLUENCING LEGISLATION

To influence governance at the national level, volunteers work with different actors and use different strategies depending on the cause they are championing, the sociopolitical context, and the availability of spaces to engage. The success of their endeavours depends on a range of factors including the power dynamics, the strength and diversity of alliances they can build, and – to a large extent – the responsiveness of governments. 'Influencing' legislation could involve generating political support and momentum for enabling laws, getting discriminatory laws amended or repealed, or blocking the passage of new laws that might hurt the interests of the poor and marginalized.

The primary role of volunteers in influencing laws is in raising awareness, mobilizing civic participation, working with diverse stakeholders, applying pressure on elected legislators and sensitizing governments to issues of the marginalized and the underrepresented. Some attempts are successful, others not, as the example of the 2003 march of up to two million people in the United Kingdom against the invasion of Iraq showed (the failure of which still shapes national memory and public policy in the United Kingdom). A wide range of examples show the diverse contexts and the different kind of volunteers who adopt different strategies – sometimes forming alliances, at other times using interlocutors. Examples include a range of initiatives with high degrees of volunteer participation leading to changes in or blocking the passage of laws that hurt the interests of marginalized groups. Each of these illustrate where mobilizing voice and participation of citizens led to responsiveness from governments.

Since legislatures are closed spaces, volunteers influence legislation indirectly by generating popular pressure (which can be more effective in representative democracies), working in alliances with international actors (if governments are not sufficiently responsive) and recruiting allies and interlocutors within the existing power structure. They can do this by creating new informal spaces to bring together various parts of the government and people, by finding entry points into invited spaces, conveying stakeholder voices to other restricted spaces like academic journals and policy notes through expert volunteers, and by expanding existing spaces for change.

Amending discriminatory nationality laws in the Middle East and North Africa

The movement to amend discriminatory nationality laws in several countries in this region is testament to the self-sustaining nature of volunteerism and its ability to persist and innovate in the face of institutional and cultural obstacles. In many countries in the

region, women married to foreigners are legally denied their right to pass on their nationality to their children, while men automatically transfer their nationality to their children.[139] This violates women's right to equal citizenship, causes untold hardship for families excluded from social services and property ownership, and restricts employment opportunities.[140]

Formal and informal volunteers have engaged in campaigns for the past two decades to repeal these laws and assist the victims. Faced with indifference, ignorance of the extent of suffering and patriarchal traditions, volunteers have raised awareness by building a body of knowledge through participatory action research, disseminating it through deft media campaigns and mobilizing communities at local and national levels. Other strategies included building and brokering alliances and networks at local, national, regional and global levels (particularly with community groups, women's CSOs, the media, researchers and government and religious authorities). Still others include political lobbying and providing services to affected women and children.

The campaigns helped to increase government responsiveness and accountability, as evidenced by a change in legislation in

BOX 3.2. **VOLUNTEER VOICES:** ARAB WOMEN'S RIGHT TO NATIONALITY – ELICITING, AMPLIFYING AND DISSEMINATING TO INFORM, ENGAGE AND MOBILIZE

Lina Abu Habib, Executive Director of the Beirut-based Collective for Research and Training on Development Action (CRTD-A), which spearheads the regional campaign for revising nationality laws, recalls: "Nationality has become a big political and media issue now. It was not when we started in 2002. It was a marginal issue. When we started talking to the media, they were interested in facts and figures and human interest stories. We did not have any. We lacked hard data. So we went to square one – research."[141]

The participatory research that CRTD-A conducted and coordinated in seven countries gave both voice to the families affected and visibility to the issue. Wajeeha Al Baharna, Vice President of the Bahrain Women Association, describes how they went about the research: "We put a notice in newspapers and the outcome was astonishing: 140 women came to our office one day and told us of their painful stories. Nobody had asked them before about their suffering."[142]

One woman says she was surprised to learn that she is one of tens of thousands of women who suffer because of this law, not only in Syria but over most of the Arab world. "I was so glad when I found out I was not alone, and that there are many cases similar to mine. This gave me hope that things would improve," she said.[143]

Based on this research, CRTD-A spearheaded a region-wide campaign under the slogan 'My Citizenship is a Right for Me and My Family' to exert peaceful pressure on governments to address the discrimination against women embedded in the citizenship laws.

According to Iman Bibars, volunteer board member of the Association for the Development and Enhancement of Women, which spearheaded the campaign in Egypt, the success in engaging the national media was due largely to the Association's ability to frame the issues in a manner that resonated easily with the public: "We thus reframed the cause not as one of the 'rights and freedoms of women' but as the 'protection of women and children'." This approach, while traditional, increased visibility and garnered sympathy and allies from a broad spectrum of society, including religious groups. This was essential for putting pressure on the government to eventually change the law and illustrates how strategies need to be adapted to different contexts to be effective."

Source: UNV 2014c.

several countries and new programmatic approaches in others. Egyptian women won the right to pass on their citizenship to their children in 2004, Algerian women in 2005, and Moroccan women in 2007. Presidential decrees also won it for women in Tunisia. Programmes were set up to reach out and support women and their families in countries that have yet to make these changes, including Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

Beyond these changes in law and policy, a key achievement of the movement was giving voice to affected women (box 3.2). Participatory action research played an important role in eliciting the stories of suffering of women married to foreign nationals. The media helped disseminate them. Volunteers and CSOs complemented each other's efforts. The nationality law campaign attest to the staying power and persistence of volunteers. The nationality law campaign is also testimony to the women in NGOs who have committed months and years to this campaign as paid staff and volunteers.

Blocking the passage of laws in Africa and Latin America

While pushing for new laws to be enacted or existing laws to be repealed involves long-drawn out struggles, blocking the passage of laws requires rapid mobilization to generate sufficient pressure on the legislature in a short time. This is often preceded by long periods of campaigning with volunteers undertaking similar activities and drawing on the same range of strategies as above.

Examples come from popular movements among indigenous people in, for example, Chile and Guatemala, which led to the Monsanto Law being blocked; and to the operations of the Alliance of Rural Democracy in South Africa. In each case, the national legislature was about to pass laws that did not include the voices of the people or reflect their best interests. And in each, the communities rose in protest, mobilized public opinion, lobbied lawmakers and prevented the law's

passage. They found ways to influence decision-making in spaces from which they had been excluded and in some cases to create new spaces to engage with decision-makers, calling them to account and heightening government and institutional responsiveness.

In 2012 in South Africa, a group of NGOs formed the Alliance for Rural Democracy, which led a public campaign against a new law strengthening the role of traditional courts in the legal system but threatening to undermine other elements of the country's constitutional guarantees for citizens' rights. There were worries that excluded groups, particularly women, would have been deprived of rights to land and property. The alliance informed and educated stakeholders, engaged with the media and held public events to mobilize voluntary action by the rural communities most affected. As a result, only two provinces of nine supported the bill, and, with growing civil society pressure, it was withdrawn in early 2014. The South African Women's Legal Centre described the outcome as a "victory for rural women's land and property rights, which are fundamental to their health and well-being."[144] The Alliance, bringing together informal volunteers as well as CSOs, was able to influence the closed space at the national level by influencing decision-making first in the closed spaces of the provinces.

On other occasions laws have had to be blocked more directly. For instance, the campaign to protect seed sovereignty, and to protect countries from genetically modified crops, spans continents. It is an example of conflict between local and international interests playing out at a national level or transnational politics being played out on a domestic level.[145] There have been major campaigns against seed-patenting laws in Mexico,[146] Peru[147] and the United States.[148] In Colombia, farmers protesting such a law took part in a national agricultural strike in 2013. In Chile, indigenous farmers prevented

the passage of such a law (chapter 2). Massive mobilization by indigenous farmers in Guatemala led to the highest court declaring the law passed by parliament in 2014 unconstitutional. Eventually the legislature repealed the law.[149]

These successes have significance beyond national borders and even beyond Latin America, as farmers in Ghana, for example, are now campaigning against the law that parliament is set to consider.[150] An element in the success of these initiatives was the support they received from within the government and legislatures. Recruiting interlocutors within the power structure can enhance the effectiveness of community-level informal volunteer initiatives to influence legislation.

INFLUENCING INSTITUTIONS AND PRACTICES

Laws provide critical frameworks, but the impact on people's lives comes from the implementation of those laws. At the national level, volunteers are working in many countries to influence the better implementation of laws, to enable people to claim their rights, to ensure accountability and responsiveness of states, and to give people voices in decisions that affect their lives. A key component of the right-to-information campaigns in many countries (Bulgaria, India and Mexico, for instance) is to educate people about their rights, enable them to claim those rights by helping them fill in forms, act as interlocutors between people and government officials, and monitor the implementation of government projects.

These efforts to influence processes tend to be continuous and hard to evaluate. Success in holding a state agency accountable on one occasion does not mean the agency will continue to be accountable in future. Success in enabling meaningful participation of a marginalized group in a decision-making forum on one occasion does not ensure its meaningful participation in the same forum around another decision. The evidence shows however, that there usually are some "markers" of success. One is scaling up of local initiatives when volunteers in different regions of a country emulate a local initiative or an organization repeats the process in several areas until it becomes a national programme. A second is when a marginalized group gets a seat at the table in a decision-making space and that becomes a norm rather than an exception. Volunteers – formal and informal – influence institutions, mechanisms and practices through continuous mobilization, capacity building and advocacy (with the government and the group it represents).

Monitoring public interventions to prevent violence against women in Bangladesh

A key factor in the effectiveness of Naripokkho, discussed in the previous chapter, is the collaborative way it engages with the government and state institutions. It obtained written approval from the Inspector General of Police, Director General of Health Services, the Supreme Court and the Ministry of Law to monitor how public services respond to women victims of violence.

It also took a supportive stance towards state agencies that came up short. Instead of "naming and shaming" the failures of public services in their interactions with victims of violence, the volunteers were oriented to gently offer suggestions and encouragement to the service providers to behave more sensitively towards women. They built capacity, for example, by assisting court administrators to take complete case notes that the women can use in the courts. As a result, the volunteers gained the trust and respect of service providers and improved the quality of care provided. Naripokkho has received high-level government approval and support, and when the government amended the Prevention of

Violence against Women and Children Act in 2000, it incorporated a majority of Naripokkho's recommendations. Five new ministries were also persuaded to pilot a new delivery approach that could serve women victims of violence better. With its use of the media, the programme increased the visibility of violence against women in Bangladesh and "helped shape public opinion against it."[151]

Technology-enabled election monitoring in Africa

The fast-growing information and communications technology (ICT) industry in Africa has provided enabling conditions for the younger generation of middle-class Africans to build tools for crowd-sourcing information that is typically hard to gather in real time by a centralized agency – and for using this information to monitor and report on elections. The African Elections Project and the Ushahidi tools are examples.

Pioneered by volunteer Eric Osiakwan and his team, the African Elections Project is a regional initiative with dedicated spaces for country-specific platforms. Formed in 2008, its vision is to enable professional and citizen journalists, as well as the news media, to provide more timely and relevant election information and knowledge while monitoring specific and important aspects of governance.[152]

This volunteer-based e-democracy project is a multipartner initiative led by the International Institute for ICT Journalism with funding from the Open Society Initiative for West Africa and for Southern Africa, among many others. Ten volunteers work 10 hours a week and up to full time during election days to provide training for senior editors, journalists and reporters, as well as other tech-based activities. The team has developed a system to present results in graphics, tables and maps, among other techniques for observing elections. It has also contributed to voter education and created awareness about the electoral process, fostering the accountability of electoral management

bodies by making them stakeholders. It has dedicated country-based web portals in 11 countries.[153]

Similarly, Ushahidi is a path-breaking and globally known crowd-sourced reporting tool first developed to track post-election violence in Kenya in 2007.[154] It has sparked a wave of election-monitoring projects that use the tool in Africa and elsewhere.

INFLUENCING THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Even when the formal institutions of governance are working well, people's ability to claim their rights and participate in decisions that influence their lives are affected by informal institutions of governance, including traditions, practices, customs and norms. Even within functional democracies with representative institutions, the poor, the uneducated and members of historically repressed groups may not have a seat at the table where decisions that directly affect them are made, even though on paper they have an opportunity to be present and heard. Even when they are physically there, they may not have the confidence to speak up or advocate, especially when secrecy and complicated bureaucratic procedures give public officials an advantage over citizens, thwart accountability and reduce responsiveness.

Thus the rules of engagement between privileged and marginalized groups, rights-holders and duty-bearers, the rich, the poor and the middle class, are manifestations of relative power. And development at the most fundamental level involves redistribution of power among members of society.

The rules of engagement can be challenged in multiple ways, none of them easy or straightforward. For instance, when access to information on the activities of governments becomes a right in practice rather than a privilege or even a right in principle, it

> **Development at the most fundamental level involves redistribution of power among members of society**

fundamentally changes the terms of engagement between public officials and people. Similarly, when marginalized groups acquire entry into spaces where they were denied entry by convention rather than law (as in peace negotiations), and when they consolidate their presence in these spaces, it changes the way they participate and influence decisions.

Right to information

Easy access to timely and relevant information is a precondition for transparent and accountable governance. Vested interests and corruption often thrive when citizens lack easy access to this information. Further, the right to know is one of the fundamental rights of people. Making public access to government information a right instead of a privilege, and implementing it, can have a deep impact on the terms of engagement between government officials and the people.

Several governments have enacted laws to enable citizens to have access to information from government institutions. Civil society has a key role to play in creating the demand for, formulating and implementing such laws. A study of the passage of access to information laws in Bulgaria, India, Mexico, South Africa and the United Kingdom shows several ways that civil society in these countries influenced the process – through advocacy, building popular support, participation in drafting and shaping legislation, lobbying members of the legislature, helping citizens understand the law and use it to access information, training public officials in handling requests for information, promoting awareness of best practices and using the law to promote social goals.

Usually there are two phases to movements for the right to information. In the first, public opinion is garnered and political pressure generated for the government to enact the right. This phase is usually led by specialized CSOs and by professionals. Volunteers can be informal in the early stages but tend mainly to be formal volunteers working with organizations, although the lines between professional work and volunteerism can be blurred as people move in and out of both roles.

For instance, the early phase of the access-to-information movement in Bulgaria and Mexico was led by groups of expert volunteers who quickly acquired external funding and created professional organizations – the Access to Information Programme and Oaxaca Group. The movement in India was an exception in that it was a grassroots movement, which involved informal expert and non-expert volunteers far more.

The second phase involves implementing the right to information, enabling people to ask for information and enabling public officials to comply. It usually relies equally on formal and informal volunteers who make citizens aware of their right, assist them in filling in applications to demand information, and build platforms to monitor the applications and compliance.

Demanding transparency in government in Tunisia

Secrecy confers power to holders of privileged information, so transparency can be a powerful tool for challenging the status quo. OpenGovTN is a comprehensive online and offline programme advocating for the institutionalization of open government and transparency as a policy priority in Tunisia. An informal collective of interested citizens, it was formed in the aftermath of the 2011 Tunisian revolution to consolidate gains in institutional transparency and accountability after the fall of Tunisia's closed, authoritarian regime. Although OpenGovTN uses ICT in many of its projects, it credits its ability to deliver on measurable outcomes to its structure as a voluntary, inclusive, ad hoc and horizontal movement.

The programme is primarily an offline campaign designed from the outset to overcome some of the digital divide and social

stratification challenges faced by ICT-supported good governance projects across the region. Its strategies include coordinated media and educational campaigns, direct advocacy of policy-makers and legal action through Tunisian judicial structures. But it continues to report challenges in communicating its mission in a manner that meets the priorities of less affluent interior cities and rural society.

It decided to operate as an ad hoc, unincorporated entity to preserve its autonomy. But this deprives it of the legal qualifications to receive donor funding, limiting its capacity to administer projects beyond the voluntary resources of its members. Although it has been extremely effective in engaging the Tunisian media, much of its own campaign communication and messaging was in French, a language spoken with greatest fluency by the educated elite.

OpenGovTN has run campaigns related to the opening of Tunisian government at the national and regional levels. These campaigns have addressed the demand for freedom of information legislation, advocacy for institutionally open data, and transparency in the Constitutional Assembly. Its current campaigns include efforts to institutionalize open data on the country's national budget. Many of the campaigns have advanced policy and public discourse, making OpenGovTN an effective civil society movement for good governance in Tunisia.[155]

Women of Liberia claiming a seat in peace negotiations

When the formal institutions of governance fail to function well, as in fragile situations or failed states, informal institutions that favour some groups over others can have a debilitating impact on marginalized and nonmainstream groups. Without a functional state and affirmative laws, marginalized groups are not merely left out of decision-making – they also suffer greater insecurity and less access to public goods.

Volunteers are often on the frontlines in such situations where, in the absence of any other recourse, they take the initiative to redress their community's grievances, often stemming from systematic discrimination and repression of voice. In addressing the immediate needs of the group in the face of non-responsive institutions, volunteers may end up challenging and influencing the traditional rules of engagement between groups – as with the peacemaking efforts of women in Liberia.

Two civil wars in the country (1989–1997 and 1997–2003) decimated state institutions, destroyed infrastructure and left more than 250,000 dead and 500,000 exiled. Women endured rape, abduction, enslavement, deaths of male family members, losses of homes and livelihoods and insecurity of the most horrifying proportions. Numerous peace talks since 1990 had failed to generate sustained peace – at these talks the warlords and combatants were all male, and there was no place at the table for women.

With no end to the war in sight, women started lobbying for peace and organizing public meetings, petitions, vigils and marches. Starting with a few women in 1994, their numbers increased to thousands, spanning a wide spectrum of demographic and religious backgrounds. A small group of women flew to the various peace talks, and though they were never allowed into the formal negotiation processes, they came to be admitted as observers. They also exerted their influence by lobbying rebel delegates outside meetings. Since the women were speaking for ordinary Liberians, they had access to all parties. They also mobilized public opinion by organizing a Liberian Women's Forum alongside the peace talks – where women could reflect on progress in the talks and continue stressing the main goal of peace without getting side-tracked by the politics surrounding the talks. This was a way of creating a more formal space for women to exercise their voice in the peace process. The women

remained politically neutral, not favouring one faction over another or aligning with any faction. Their only call was to end the war.

In 2002, Leymah Gbowee, president of the women's organization at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Monrovia, and Comfort Freeman, president of the National Lutheran Church Women in Liberia, met to initiate the Liberian branch of the Women in Peace Network (WIPNET).[156] The common experience of violence and suffering of Liberian women of all religions was grounds enough for the peace initiative to be expanded to support the participation of Muslim women.

The group escalated its mobilization – petitioning to end the war, organizing sit-ins in public places, and protesting through prayer, dancing, chanting and singing – while persisting in its neutral stance. The members wore the same white headscarves and shirts to erase signs of their economic differences. Adapting to the sociocultural norms, the women highlighted their role and suffering as mothers. This enhanced their legitimacy and power in a system that excluded them. The use of the white dresses and removal of jewellery also enabled the shared experiences of loss and suffering to emerge as a unifier. The involvement of women of all religions increased the extent and reach of the movement.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2003 was one of the first peace agreements to include gender-specific policies, including the participation of women in government.

The final phase of the movement benefited from its international connections. The movement lobbied the international community, sought alliances, and benefited from WIPNET's mobilization in other countries. Their efforts garnered domestic and international media attention. The peaceful protests spread to other sites in Monrovia, and bishops and imams came to show their support. The group continued lobbying both the government and rebel faction during the

peace talks at Accra in 2003. With the talks stalling, at one point the women barricaded the entry to the talk venue, refusing to let the men leave till they took the talks seriously.[157]

These highlight the ways that volunteers forge alliances across clans, religions and nations, and claim spaces within exclusionary and restrictive sociopolitical systems to get their voices heard. They also influence decision-making in spaces initially closed to them, and claim entry into these spaces. That upends the mainstream narrative of women as "victims" of conflict and highlights their agency when the state and the international community fail them.

Influencing informal institutions of governance is difficult to achieve and to sustain. These are not one-off changes but require ongoing efforts to shift mindsets and patterns of behaviour. Because these mindsets depend on existing social, political and cultural norms, volunteer activities and their successes show large variations – but some common threads emerge.

CONCLUSIONS

The chapter shows that national governments can find that creating space for volunteerism will bring greater social inclusion, improved social and development results, and smoother-running services. Returns on engagement with volunteers and volunteerism are maximized when enabling conditions, like freedom of speech and association, and an atmosphere of vigorous political debate, are already in place. It also shows that as well as governments creating spaces for volunteer engagement, volunteers also generate actions and engage to raise their voices, develop accountability mechanisms and ask for responsiveness, all essential for improving governance.

Putting in place structures to enhance volunteer engagement has enabled governments

to systematically leverage volunteerism and created scope for volunteers to seize the initiative in areas important to national development plans. For volunteerism to maximize its contributions to the common good, it needs an enabling environment. Where governments have created a conducive environment for civic engagement, and more particularly for volunteers to participate – or where they have been responsive to volunteer-led community initiatives – more people have participated in decision-making.

Volunteers most successfully enabled governments to govern better where certain enabling conditions like freedom of speech and association, and an atmosphere of vigorous political discourse, were already in place. While these conditions have an intrinsic value in enabling people's human rights, they also have an instrumental value in enabling synergies between people and their governments. Volunteerism is a powerful catalyst in magnifying these synergies for peace and development.

Large-scale mobilization is essential to the success of many bottom-up volunteer initiatives. To achieve it, volunteers often work in alliances. CSOs and champions within the government and legislature can be key allies. Where the stakeholder group has been small, cross-national alliances and recruitment of interlocutors have generated support.

Many volunteer initiatives rely on the media to raise awareness, sensitize policy-makers and mobilize public opinion. A new generation of technology-enabled volunteers is developing tools to provide real-time grassroots information. It also complements the mainstream media by offering news and perspectives on their own websites and through blogs, lowering people's dependence on traditional media, and in some cases putting the onus on traditional news sites to stay relevant.

A key influence in the success of volunteer-driven initiatives at the national level is the presence of a responsive government. Sometimes the movements themselves generate the political pressure necessary to make their government more responsive; at others, volunteer initiatives are enabled and facilitated by a receptive government. Thus most successful bottom-up volunteer initiatives have sought to engage collaboratively with governments in certain spheres even as they contested and questioned them in others.

Demonstrators attend the People's Climate March in New York.
An estimated 300,000 people participated in the march,
making it the largest climate march in history.
© Kena Betancur/VIEWpress, 2014

4

Impacts of volunteerism at the global level

"Ours is a world in which no individual, and no country, exists in isolation. All of us live simultaneously in our own communities and in the world at large. We are connected, wired, inter-dependent. Faced with the potential good of globalization as well as its risks, faced with the persistence of deadly conflicts in which civilians are primary targets, and faced with the pervasiveness of poverty and injustice, we must identify areas where collective action is needed – and then take that action to safeguard the common, global interest."

Kofi A. Annan, former UN Secretary-General[158]

Voice and participation, accountability and responsiveness – the three elements of governance where the greatest evidence on volunteer efforts and contributions are seen – take on a form at the global level different from that at the national and local levels. Absent at the global level is the clarity of roles of government actors as duty-bearers and of citizens as rights-holders that enables people to seek accountability and responsiveness at local and national levels. The reason? Most global organizations answer to national governments and states, not to the people of the member states; most MNCs answer to their boards; and many international CSOs answer to donors more than to the people whose lives they affect.

While accountability is inherent in the relationship between the state and its people, non-state actors often define accountability in relation to stakeholders. So, influencing governance at the global level and calling global organizations to account is a more complex endeavour and may involve working in alliance with a broader range of actors, including governments.

Access to invited spaces at the global level can be limited by the practical considerations of physical distance between where decisions are made and where people are. Options to create and claim spaces were traditionally limited for the same reasons. This has changed in recent times because of technology and better organization. The Internet over the past decade has enabled the creation of new global virtual spaces for volunteer voices to be heard and conveyed to decision-makers across borders and often in real time. Increasingly ICT systems and networks of affiliation are linking diverse people across the world. One global example is the massive global invited space, the World We Want 2015 web platform,[159] co-hosted by civil society and the UN to elicit people's voices to inform its discussions on the post-2015 development agenda.

While there is no global government, a variety of global resolutions, conventions, agreements, standards and legal rulings on a multitude of issues and concerns are agreed on by the governments of sovereign states. A significant portion of volunteer action at the global level relates to influencing the content, implementation and monitoring of these agreements. Transnational volunteer movements also engage volunteers in campaigns and alliances to enhance voice and participation of national and local actors to highlight the global significance of local issues; to advocate and educate on behalf of global agreements, policies and standards; and to support responsive decision-making by multinational actors and hold them to account. Many local and national volunteer initiatives base their case on global treaties and conventions, like the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), to promote awareness of global policies, strengthen alliances and support compliance. Volunteers also often engage in linking local, national, regional and global levels through mutually coordinated vertical alliances.[160]

Volunteers face challenges at the global level, some of which are different from those faced at the national and local levels. This is because global and regional enforcement mechanisms are limited and power dynamics can hinder compliance with international accords and rulings. Often, global volunteering must confront closed spaces for voice and participation.

In addition, the sheer size and influence of non-state actors have been rapidly growing, exceeding the influence of national governments on some issues. For example, civil society, including faith-based actors, trade unions and grassroots associations, are playing advocacy, activist and policy-making roles at all levels of governance.[161] The major international corporate engagement in some sectors, such as extractives, services and manufacturing, affect local and national governance of fiscal, natural and human resources. Intergovernmental institutions, like the World Bank, and agreements, such as the Arms Trade Treaty, can affect financial, trade, aid, human rights, disaster, crisis and environmental policies.[162]

Even with states, demands for accountability from international governance actors, such as donors and MNCs, may conflict with their responsibilities to citizens. Volunteer engagement can strengthen both internal and external accountability and transparency. Research shows that accountable and responsive governance is more often linked to claimed and invited spaces where multiple stakeholders engage in voluntary alliances.[163]

Increasingly ICT systems and networks of affiliation are linking diverse people across the world.

Despite these challenges, as global citizens, volunteers engage through not only vertical but also horizontal networks and exchanges to strengthen the accountability of various governance actors.

This chapter explores the role of volunteers in engaging with elements of governance at the transnational level – sometimes global, sometimes regional – in a variety of ways. Such engagement takes three primary forms. First, volunteer efforts are crucial in amplifying people's voices and transmitting them to transnational forums to inform the global policies and to draw attention to issues of global concern. Second, volunteers continue to work at the national and local levels to localize global policies or to use global conventions and agreements in support of their ongoing initiatives. Third, a lot of volunteer energy is concentrated in seeking accountability of transnational actors who are not directly accountable to people.

MOBILIZING PEOPLE'S VOICES TO INFORM GLOBAL POLICIES AND STANDARDS

Global policies and standards are set in forums by member governments. The voices of people affected by them do not always reach these bodies directly, and the decisions made there do not always reflect their best interests. So, substantial energy by volunteers is dedicated to eliciting and amplifying the voices of people so that they might be heard in these forums. A related agenda is to mobilize and generate enough public opinion to elicit accountability and responsiveness from the governments of the people affected, as well as other governments and governance actors. In this respect, volunteers act as agents enabling global citizenship.

These initiatives fall into two broad categories – those that target and influence specific global policies and those that mobilize global public opinion on issues of concern where

policy-makers may not be acting with urgency. The Jubilee 2000 campaign to cancel the national debt of poor countries and the campaign for the adoption of an arms trade treaty belong to the first category, while the Occupy Wall Street movement and the People's Climate March belong to the second.

As global access to communication widens, volunteers are diversifying their strategies. Many activists, mostly without formal affiliations, are linking across countries on common concerns, seeking to engage voices from diverse sectors and cultures to increase accountability and responsiveness to citizens. Formal and informal volunteers are contributing time and expertise to promote transnational agreements, policies and standards to strengthen universal respect for human rights.

Jubilee 2000 campaign for cancellation of third world debt

The international Jubilee 2000 campaign for cancellation of unpayable third world debt was one of the most successful challenges to the negative effects of unequal power relations between countries through specific calls for action by volunteer citizens.[164] This is an example of how volunteers can express voice to push against closed spaces, such as international finance, to develop a mass global movement that moves governance actors to become more accountable and responsive.

The campaign was broad-based, South and North, and locally rooted. The context included favourable political shifts among European and North American leaders and similar potential pro-poor shifts among intergovernmental organizations, such as the UN (for example the UN Millennium Campaign), World Bank and IMF. The "big tent" diverse involvement of faith-based groups, international CSOs, trade unions, businesses, academics, artists, media stars and remote villagers was ground-breaking. There were 69 coalitions worldwide, with 17 in Latin America, 15 in

Many activists, mostly without formal affiliations, are linking across countries

Africa and 10 in Asia. A key to success was the international and local breadth.

Policy-makers were surprised to be approached not by the usual activists, but by "ordinary people" – parents, students, religious laypeople, shopkeepers, well-briefed grassroots citizens engaged in letter-writing campaigns, petition signing, and calls and visits to decision-makers.[165] Some 1,850,000 Peruvians signed the international petition in just three months. Globally 17 million people from more than 160 countries signed the petition, presented to G-7 leaders in Cologne, Germany, in June 1999. There, leaders agreed in principle to cancel an additional US$45 billion of the bilateral and multilateral debt owed by 41 qualifying countries.

At the end of 2000, the massive voice and participation by formal and informal volunteers achieved increased recognition of accountability and initial responsiveness worldwide to issues of global poverty. The IMF and World Bank made an effort to get 20 countries through the first stage of debt relief, although benefits varied – Mozambique was to have 72% cancelled, Uganda 42%, and Cameroon 15%.[166]

Control Arms campaign for the first global Arms Trade Treaty

In October 2003, Oxfam, Amnesty International, the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and other organizations across the world launched the Control Arms campaign. The aim was to reduce armed violence and conflict through global controls on the arms trade, and the primary objective was an international Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). This objective was obtained through a 10-year campaign powered to a large extent by volunteer efforts, underlining the resilience and staying power of volunteer movements, and their ability to significantly affect policies.

The ATT campaign focused on identifying governments willing to champion the cause, building an international volunteer campaign, expanding the coalition, sharing technical expertise to shape the treaty and placing the ATT onto political agendas.[167]

When the campaign began in 2003, only Cambodia, Costa Rica and Mali publicly associated themselves with the call for an ATT. The early focus was to place the concept of an ATT before key countries through popular grassroots campaigns. National, regional and global strategies sought to increase the number of champion countries, persuade those that were undecided and counter the sceptics. In 2006, a global petition called 'Million Faces' was given to then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Global and national campaigning was supported by volunteer individuals and organizations from diverse groups including medical professionals, survivors of armed violence, women, religious leaders and parliamentarians. It even came to include some defence industry companies from the "responsible end" of the arms industry, and a number of retired generals and former war correspondents.

The campaign began outside a closed space, but from 2008 to 2011 the focus shifted to working closely with some governments in invited spaces as the UN process got under way. The IANSA Women's Network supported advocacy for including a gender-based violence criterion in the ATT. More than 100 states gave a joint statement calling for such a criterion. Article 7 of the treaty requires states to consider risks of gender-based violence in their arms transfer decisions.[168]

In April 2013, the decade of campaigning paid off as the ATT, the world's first global treaty to regulate the transfer of conventional arms and ammunition, was adopted by an overwhelming majority at the UN in New York and opened for signature two months later. In September 2014, eight states – Argentina, the Bahamas, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Czech Republic, Portugal, Saint

Lucia, Senegal and Uruguay – ratified the ATT at a special event at the UN, pushing the number of state parties up to 53. This meant that 90 days later, on 24 December 2014, it entered into force, one of the fastest ever approval processes.[169]

The campaigners are continuing to pursue more ratifications and signatures, through outsider and insider strategies. Armstreaty.org[170] is an interactive tool for volunteers to track positions of states on key issues in the ATT and allows them to help fill the gaps. This global volunteer-based campaign will keep the focus on the ATT to monitor and support national and global implementations of this international treaty.[171]

Building bridges between small rural producers and policy-making processes
Chapters 2 and 3 discussed the struggles of indigenous farmers in some Latin American countries to block the passage of the Mon-

santo laws, which were sought to be adopted pursuant to the Central American Free Trade Agreement. Too often, regional agreements such as these are not informed by the voices of people whose lives are going to be the most affected by them. In some cases though, people's voices have influenced international decisions that directly affect their livelihoods. Global and national networks and platforms are consolidating and capacitating local voluntary groups to strengthen their voice and their ability to claim space at policy levels. At national and global levels, multi-stakeholder platforms and consultative forums are helping small producers voice their concerns and interests in policy-making processes. The informal volunteering grassroots and self-help groups, local associations and cooperatives are being connected to form larger and more formal producer unions, federations and networks. These in turn bridge with similar organizations to pool assets, competencies and

> **Global and national networks and platforms are consolidating and capacitating local voluntary groups to claim space at policy levels.**

BOX 4.1. **VOLUNTEER VOICES:** AN ATT VOLUNTEER

Julius Arile, a young man from the Rift Valley province of north-west Kenya, has been both a perpetrator and a victim of armed violence. Julius got involved in armed violence as a young man. His brother had just been shot dead in a cattle raid on his village and so he picked up a gun and joined other young men in retaliatory raids.

"[Life] was very difficult. We didn't know what was ahead of us, so we used to fight and we used guns. One day, the Karamojong [an ethnic group from Uganda] came to us, to attack our place. Then we were fighting. My friend was killed beside me. When I saw him die, I ran. And that's when I realised 'this is not good.' Next time it could have been me. So I took off my gun."[172]

That was when Julius decided to tell others to do the same; lay down their weapons and move away from violence and fighting. He gave up his AK47 to become a peace activist and volunteer leader in his community, as well as embarking on an exciting new life for himself, as a marathon runner.

In 2006, Julius came as part of the Control Arms Coalition team to hand over our "Million Faces" petition calling for an ATT to the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. In his plea to leaders at the UN, Julius called governments to give one unified message: to support an ATT that really makes a difference to lives and communities like his.

Julius is symbolic of the problem of the poorly regulated arms trade, of communities living with armed violence, and the link between arms and poverty. He is also symbolic of the immense progress volunteers can make and will need to continue to make to implement the ATT on the ground effectively so it really does save lives and protect people.[173]

negotiating powers, including developing national apex organizations.

The Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producer Organizations of West Africa is a regional apex farmer organization from 10 West African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo). In 2001, it negotiated a West African Regional Agricultural Policy with the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS). Consultations were organized with each of its national platforms within ECOWAS countries. Providing tools, resources and external expertise, it improved small-scale farmers' capacities to analyse the implications of the ECOWAS policy on rural development. This enabled local farmers and their representatives to understand the concepts underlying agricultural policy and to propose alternatives. National farmers' organizations developed and presented a joint proposal to government officials, increasing ownership by farmers' organizations of the ECOWAS Agricultural Policy. Based on facilitated discussions among farmers from different countries on the policy, farmers' organizations developed and sent to ECOWAS a common proposal on how to develop the agricultural sector and jointly identified the challenges, roles and responsibilities of the various actors involved.

As a result of these grassroots volunteer-based multilevel alliances, small-scale producers' interests were included in the new regional policy. The regional agricultural policy sets out a vision of "a modern and sustainable agriculture based on effective and efficient family farms." Its general objective is to "contribute in a sustainable way to meeting the food needs of the population in the Member States."[174]

Another global initiative that has drawn immense volunteer energy is the set of consultations on the post-2015 development agenda. The agenda is envisioned to impact the lives of billions of people in the next decade and a half. To bring the voices of people into the process of determining the agenda, the UN and civil society partners undertook a massive global consultation – and opened up a massive global invited space and clusters of local and national invited spaces. Volunteers were crucial in getting people's voices to these spaces, and in capacitating people to participate, whether face to face, via mobile phones or online.[175]

Informing the post-2015 sustainable development framework

A global participatory research programme to capacitate the poorest and most marginalized people is seeking to inform decision-makers in the post-2015 process. Between 2012 and 2014, the Participatory Research Group of 18 international and national civil society and academic organizations committed to embedding participatory research, and thus community participation and volunteer voices, into global policy-making.

One member, ATD Fourth World, conducted a participatory evaluation with people living in poverty or extreme poverty from early 2011 to late 2013. It involved more than 2,000 people, mostly volunteers, from 22 countries. They focused on 12 countries (Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Burkina Faso, France, Guatemala, Haiti, Madagascar, Mauritius, Peru, the Philippines and Poland). Two developed countries were included to demonstrate that chronic poverty exists around the world, not only in countries targeted by the MDGs.

In each country, ATD Fourth World teams set up meetings with volunteer participants who discussed development issues through weekly or monthly meetings over six months to two years. The participants carried out interviews, gained experience in voicing their concerns and built collective knowledge together. The coordinating team members were international volunteers.

This preparation with participants living in poverty and extreme poverty was mirrored by a process carried out with other partners. In different countries, representatives of academia, NGOs, trade unions, civil servants from various ministries (education, social affairs, employment, professional training) and officials from international bodies such

BOX 4.2. **VOLUNTEER VOICES:** LOMBE TEMBO, RESTLESS DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTABILITY TASK TEAM VOLUNTEER

"Young people should be part of the conversation, and not only the conversation. They should be actively involved in the monitoring, the evaluation, the reporting of these policies. But in reality it is not happening at all. And I want to see a change in that." Lombe Tembo, Task Team on Governance and Accountability youth volunteer.

The Youth Governance and Accountability Task Team, a joint NGO initiative of Plan UK, Restless Development, the British Youth Council and ActionAid, is a youth-led coalition that is changing the role of young people in governance and accountability processes globally. The 18 Task Team members from 16 countries, 20–28 years old, engage and join voices with national and international stakeholders and create subgroups and partnerships with other young people and youth organizations.

Lombe Tembo is one of the Task Team volunteers. She is an economics and statistics graduate from the University of Zambia with a passion for international development. In Zambia, she combines project work for international and national organizations with volunteering in the area of gender and human rights.

"I had been accepted as a delegate to the World Conference on Youth in Sri Lanka when the call for applications (to be part of the Task Team on Governance and Accountability) arrived in my inbox. So I applied and was selected. I saw it as an opportunity to give voice to the worries of the youth in my country, and to share insights about the state of young people's involvement here in Zambia."

Plan UK and Restless Development builds the capacity of the volunteers in the Task Team to engage in the global discussion and to get their voices heard. Lombe travelled to New York in 2014 for the UN General Assembly to launch the Overseas Development Institute report Partners for Change: Young people and governance in a post-2015 world. As a Task Team member, she also attends high-level events, such as those held in Azerbaijan, Copenhagen and Morocco. There she advocates and proposes avenues for youth participation in governance and accountability processes, particularly with regards to the post-2015 agenda.

An important aspect is strengthening national level engagement. Many Task Team members are heavily engaged in leading advocacy with member states, raising awareness with national officials about the importance of the new framework and ensuring that youth priorities are taken into account.

"We are working at the grassroots level, at the national level, and also at the global level. We are working with other organizations that have deeper reach and can enable youth involvement. This is not just going to remain something that someone dreamt about somewhere. Our work is reality. It is changing lives," Lombe stated.

The new groups and alliances formed through the work of the Task Team have attracted the attention and support of leading figures, including the UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Ahmad Alhendawi. Most especially, the Task Group is changing established practices on youth participation in policy discussions: from being a passive audience, young women and men are starting to sit at the table as participant leaders shaping the development priorities of the future.

"Before I started attending any conference, the norm was that the Minister of Youth Affairs would attend in the place of a young person, which really, if you think about it, doesn't make sense. How can you talk about youth experiences without young people?" [178]

as the European Union, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNESCO, UNDP, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the World Bank met and prepared for a dialogue with people living in extreme poverty.

All the participants came together in eight seminars in different regions. The analysis and recommendations from these seminars then fed into the synthesis seminar at the UN in New York. Those living in poverty shared their evidence with relevant UN agencies and with civil society partners such as International Trade Union Confederation and Social Watch – as citizen inputs to the dialogue on the post-2015 sustainable development framework.[176]

The "merging of knowledge" methodology empowers the poorest to analyse and reflect on their situation, develop an understanding and ownership of what they have control over and give voice and voluntarily engage in worldwide public and political processes for the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. At the same time, a middle ground is created for policy-makers to engage with those affected by decisions.[177]

Highlighting concerns on climate change and economic justice

Not all volunteer-driven initiatives lead to concrete global policies or agreements. Some movements draw attention to urgent issues that national governments and intergovernmental bodies may not be acting on. Some of these movements in recent times have served to change the state of discourse on topics of global interest.

The Occupy Wall Street movement sought to draw attention to a wide range of issues relating to economic justice, rights to employment, healthcare and basic services, financial deregulation and how "Wall Street greed" had not only contributed to the corruption of the democratic process worldwide, but also to the 2008 recession, which left hundreds of millions without work, stripped of entitlements and, in developing countries, starving.[179]

Occupy Wall Street first emerged in Canada. But for a brief period in the autumn of 2011 it multiplied to nations throughout the world – Argentina, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Chile, France, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Mexico, Spain, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and many others.[180] And of course, in New York, protestors set up a "tent city" in Zuccotti Park and "occupied" Wall Street.

Disgruntled taxpayers, seniors, students, immigrants, labour unions and women's groups – the self-identified '99%' – flocked to various Occupy protests. They demonstrated against everything from widening income inequality to banking deregulation and the corruption of the political process by moneyed elites.

To what extent did the mass voluntary action of Occupy Wall Street contribute to the global discussion on development? It is hard to be sure. Nevertheless, before the movement eventually petered out, it is clear that it did help educate policy-makers on the extent to which the public was becoming angry over how wealth was concentrated in fewer pockets. This strongly volunteer-based movement attempted to make decisions on a consensual basis through democratic peoples' assemblies. It increased awareness of opportunities and means for citizens to voluntarily express voice and participate.[181]

Almost three years after Occupy Wall Street, the People's Climate March attracted not only multitudes from among the general public but significant numbers from the so-called "establishment." Held on 21 September 2014, it was the largest protest on climate change in history. The estimated 300,000 marchers in New York City included UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, former US Vice President Al Gore, actor Leonardo DiCaprio and elected officials from the

Some movements have served to change the state of discourse on topics of global interest.

United States and abroad. It was linked to some 2,500 marches by "ordinary" men and women in 162 countries, including Afghanistan, Bulgaria, France and the United Kingdom. These sought to send a message to the UN-hosted summit to discuss reducing carbon emissions. Speakers at the conference, from the UN Secretary-General to US President Obama, to Brazilian President Rousseff, all cited the marches as their call to action.

The New York City march, described as an organizational triumph by The Guardian newspaper in the United Kingdom, was the product of a digital network of individual volunteers communicating across the physical and temporal barriers of space to campaign for change.[182] Two online digital activist groups – Avaaz and 350.org – were among the key organizers. Avaaz presented a petition with more than 2.1 million signatures demanding action on climate change,

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BOX 4.3. **VOLUNTEER VOICES:** PEOPLE'S CLIMATE MARCH: A POST-MODERN PHENOMENON

It's 11:30 am in New York City and the day is overcast and heavy. Yet the air crackles with anticipation. Approaching Central Park, I am increasingly being carried along by a gathering sea of bodies flowing down 8th Avenue, more and more people swelling into the streets. I overtake a man carrying a young girl on his shoulders: "Look mum, no future," reads the placard she holds above her head. Above the assembling masses, one lone helicopter hovers low in the grey skies, enjoying an enviable viewpoint of what is to become the largest climate change protest in history.

These climate demonstrations seem to resemble "traditional" forms of activism. Indeed, for those marchers old enough to remember the civil rights movement or the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament of the eighties, this was "just like old times." With online campaigning networks playing a significant role in the realization of this activity, however, the global nature of the People's Climate March is perhaps better understood as a phenomenon of post-modernity.

Unlike the centre–periphery models of activism and volunteerism of the past, this action was leaderless and in many ways borderless, with much of the facilitation online and across physical and temporal divisions. One component of this strategy was the release of a short movie called 'Disruption' a few weeks before the march. Produced by 350.org, in just over 50 minutes the film clearly and emotively sets out the case for urgent and immediate action in response to climate change. The film concludes with a count-down from 10 to 0, at which point the movie's central question is repeated again and again, reverberating until the credits role: "Are you ready to march?" it asks. And the fact is, I was. Along with hundreds of thousands more.

Two months after the march, I'm in Amsterdam, attending an event curated by students campaigning for the city's major universities to divest from fossil fuels. Catalina Von Hildebrand, one of the organizers, has been campaigning as part of the 'Fossil Free' movement since 2012. She was motivated to join this widespread push for institutions and organizations to withdraw their investment from the fossil fuel industry after watching a previous documentary by 350.org.

These virtual networks of campaigners open up possibilities that didn't exist previously, changing the way people see political engagement, according to Daniel Isler, an involved member of 'Fossil Free.' "This undermines the argument that these organizations are simply breeding a generation of 'clicktavists.'" Rather, it seems that much of the power of these online movements is as a mobilizer, providing individuals and groups with a flexible framework within which they have the autonomy to translate the political and social agenda to make it relevant to them.

Source: Hannah Wallace Bowman, Partner Strategist at rnw.org

bringing together otherwise disparate individuals and communities to unite towards a common goal.

The strategy was calculated, combining social outreach and offline engagement with an aggressive public relations campaign and social media activity, to engage the voice and participation of the demographic group that does not necessarily identify itself as political.

The march is over, but its website provides means to stay involved with URLs according to issue, location, skill set or common identity. Partner sites provide briefings on upcoming climate change discussions and opportunities to continue to engage.[183]

LOCALIZING GLOBAL POLICIES TO ENHANCE INTERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Martin Luther King, Jr., Aung San Suu Kyi, Rigoberta Menchú, Nelson Mandela, Wangari Muta Maathai and most recently Malala Yousafzai and Kailash Satyarthi – all Nobel Peace Prize winners and volunteers – have linked local social change with global impacts.

The most effective forms of global volunteer action align efforts at local, national and regional levels, ensuring that they are mutually reinforcing.[184] Local informal volunteer groups championing concerns for women, indigenous people, small rural farmers and youth, have linked to platforms across borders and engaged in international dialogues to make their recommendations known. Since the 1992 Earth Summit, the UN has recognized the need for participation by diverse sectors of society and types of people. Nine "Major Groups" and other stakeholders engage with intergovernmental processes at the UN, including those on sustainable development and the post-2015 framework.[185] Such forums enable the merging of local, national and global voices and participation. In turn, intergovernmental and international resolutions, conventions, frameworks and agreements can add legitimacy and potential for alliances of local and national campaigns for accountability and responsiveness.

The examples of volunteer initiatives to use domestication of international policies and conventions as tools for enhancing accountability are wide ranging. Some conventions like CEDAW have been used to hold both governments and the private sector to account on discrimination against women. In other cases, adoption of ILO's Convention 169 on indigenous peoples' rights into national legal frameworks has empowered indigenous peoples to engage with MNCs on a less unequal footing. In some cases, just bringing their concerns to international attention has enabled groups to elicit greater responsiveness from governance actors.

Localizing CEDAW

CEDAW promotes women's full participation in economic, political and social lives. With the help of CEDAW, volunteer-based women's organizations and networks have helped guide and provide language for changed policies, evaluated state actions, built capacities to deliver on CEDAW and thus increased responsive accountability for the human rights of women. They have formed alliances and collaborated with many actors including governments.[186] For instance, a group of women in Japan successfully sought support from the CEDAW committee in their efforts to end workplace discrimination. In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, women campaigned to align land codes with Article 16 of CEDAW. In Afghanistan and Bangladesh, reporting on CEDAW compliance was a tool to raise awareness and add weight to demands for upholding women's rights.

Japan ratified CEDAW in 1985 and enacted important reforms, including an Equal Opportunity in Employment Law. But women continued to face discrimination in the workplace. A group of female employees filed a wage discrimination case against the Sumitomo Electric Company in Osaka Appeals

Court. The Working Women's Network appealed for support from the CEDAW Committee. The case was settled with compensation for some plaintiffs and a court order to amend the Equal Opportunity in Employment Law to reduce de facto discrimination against women. Following the combination of legal action and women's voluntary actions through networks to highlight other issues such a child care leave, the Government of Japan has taken additional accountability actions to improve workplace equality through policies and public awareness campaigns.

In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, comprehensive land reform involving decollectivization and privatization had unintended discriminatory impacts on women, leaving many without a chance to own land. Volunteers with women's groups launched media and advocacy campaigns to reform the land codes in both countries to align with Article 16 of CEDAW, which calls for equality between spouses including in relation to property. Awareness-raising and resources were provided to government institutions, local officials, women's cooperatives, and individual women, to build alliances and increase effectiveness and responsiveness. Between 2002 and 2008, the proportion of women owning family farms in Tajikistan rose from 2% to 14%.[187]

When governments are more responsive, volunteers use the CEDAW provisions as the basis for expressing voice. In Afghanistan, where the government has ratified CEDAW but has never reported, women's organizations used CEDAW as a tool to educate women and urge the government to implement the treaty, promoting women's voluntary voice and participation.[188]

In Bangladesh, a CEDAW forum was formed and launched in 1992, comprising individuals and organizations dedicated to the women's cause and the implementation of CEDAW. Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association, Mahila Parishad, and Naripokkho (chapters 2 and 3) were among the leading organizers. With the help of the International Women's Rights Action Watch, workshops, training courses and CEDAW forums were conducted for different groups, from lawyers to journalists to ordinary citizens, to raise awareness and understanding.

A combined 6th and 7th Alternative Report to the UN CEDAW Committee was prepared by the Citizens' Initiatives on UN CEDAW-Bangladesh, a citizens' platform comprising 38 women's and human rights organizations. The contents of the thematic reports were developed through consultations with more than 500 grassroots organizations across the country.[189]

In each of these cases, volunteers and activists anchored their long-standing demands on a global norm that enabled them to question discriminatory traditions and added greater weight to their demands. Aligning with global standards also enabled volunteers to present their issues to the global community and mobilize its opinion. In some cases, it enabled volunteers to seek intervention of the global body to assist with their campaign, as in Japan, which resulted in a positive response.

Shadow reports as a tool of accountability

Like CEDAW, civil society groups have produced shadow reports on other international human rights treaties as a tool for advocacy, alliance building and awareness raising. Government reports tend to focus on successes, sometimes overlooking or minimizing lapses in human rights protection in practice. Producing shadow reports, which record instances of non-compliance and shortfall, are typically very labour intensive and require detailed grassroots information. Volunteer groups play a crucial role in providing treaty-monitoring bodies with information and examples of problems and noncompliance, and ensure that a broader diversity of voices are included in the report.

The Foundation for Human Rights Initiative in Kampala, Uganda, collaborated with Human Rights Watch to produce a shadow report relying heavily on volunteer efforts. The collaboration with Human Rights Watch brought it international visibility and expertise, and elicited additional attention from the government. As a result of the shadow report, the UN Committee against Torture included a recommendation on the Amendment to the Uganda Prisons Act.[190]

The Australian Civil Society Report to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was compiled from consultations, including online submissions, with people with disability and their representative and advocacy organizations, evidence from government and community-initiated inquiries, and various reports and submissions produced by CSOs involved in the protection and promotion of human rights for people with disabilities. The CRPD Shadow Report Project Group, made up of leading disability and human rights organizations, led a large volunteer effort to generate the report. This Project Group received significant pro bono support from DLA Phillips Fox and undertook consultations throughout Australia with the support of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.[191]

Monitoring activities of national and local actors with respect to transnational concerns

The African Network on the Right to Food held training workshops in Benin and Uganda on the FAO's Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food. National focal points and network members were required to have a culture of voluntary service, shared values and readiness to be part of the national and pan-African defence and promotion of the right to adequate food. The Benin national coalition now makes volunteer radio broadcasts on that right. The Uganda national coalition monitors government actions,

supports and coordinates CSOs in their fight against hunger, and advocates for sanctions in cases of violations of these rights.[192]

Enactment of voluntary frameworks by businesses can be challenging and requires continual monitoring by volunteer groups. Starting in January 2007, the Rainforest Action Network and its allies organized volunteers in more than 60 public protests at Citibank branches across the United States as well as orchestrating online actions to pressure the company. In February 2008, three of the leading US banks – Citibank, JPMorgan Chase and Morgan Stanley – released their own "Carbon Principles," which call for greater due diligence by banks and utilities in assessing the climate and economic risks associated with the construction of new coal power plants.[193]

Since the principles were released, Wells Fargo, Bank of America and Credit Suisse have also signed. These were among the first banking statements specifically addressing climate change and carbon-intensive investments. However, in January 2011, the Network released a report reviewing bank investment from January 2008 to June 2010 which found no evidence that the Carbon Principles stopped or slowed financing to carbon-intensive projects or that they spurred more investment in clean energy. It is again organizing volunteer campaigns for developing a more accountable framework.[194]

Domestication of ILO Convention 169 on indigenous peoples' rights

When applied, global policy frameworks can strengthen capacities of governments to promote responsiveness to citizens by other governance actors, such as businesses.

Volunteer-driven campaigns have led to several governments in Latin America adopting indigenous rights global policies, such as the ILO Convention 169, into domestic legal frameworks. Increasing formal recognition of indigenous peoples' rights by Latin

Volunteer-driven campaigns have led to several governments in Latin America adopting indigenous rights global policies

American governments is enabling greater equity in the relationships among indigenous peoples and global businesses interested in extractive projects on indigenous land.

Three types of policies – granting cultural, territorial and consultation rights – have strengthened recognition of indigenous rights in Latin America, reducing conflicts with extractive industries. At least 10 Latin American governments have recognized indigenous cultural rights within their constitutions. Governments, including those of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru, have ratified ILO Convention 169. Some Latin American countries, including Bolivia, Colombia and Panama, have gone beyond recognition of cultural rights to grant partial territorial rights and control. The Convention also recommends government implementation and regulation of consultation processes. This right to prior consultation is now in nine national constitutions.[195]

These global policy packages with supporting national legal frameworks, largely accomplished through national volunteer campaigns, have supported governments in their engagement with extractive industries. As a result, governments and businesses are increasingly negotiating extractive projects on indigenous lands, rather than simply imposing them. For governments, the benefit of respecting indigenous rights is that approved projects would be more socially sustainable.[196]

Governments can create invited spaces for communities to engage with global governance actors, and some have done so with success in mediating disputes between indigenous peoples and extractive MNCs. Governments in Latin America are increasingly supporting community referendums on mining projects to give people and groups voice in decisions that can heavily affect their lives.[197] Bolivia created such a space for consultation on a proposed hydrocarbon exploration project by the Argentinean Company Pluspetrol on Guaraní indigenous peoples' ancestral territory. The result was an agreement between the indigenous community and the Bolivian government to allow Pluspetrol to begin exploration.[198]

Dalit women in India against caste and gender-based discrimination

The Dalit women's movement, which moved from national to global and back to local, is an example of the synergies that international networks, conferences and commissions provide in internationalizing domestic struggles. Dalit (formerly known as untouchable) women suffer from multilayered subordination and exploitation because of their caste and gender. In the 1990s, the National Federation of Dalit Women and the All India Dalit Women's Forum were formed, along with various subnational regional Dalit women's organizations, to add caste as part of the women's movement in India.

Not content with the states' response, which held caste issues as a purely domestic issue, the Dalit women's movement in India played a key role in an alliance among various Dalit groups and lower-caste activists in other South Asian countries like Nepal and Sri Lanka. They mobilized support in the UN World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in 2001 in Durban, South Africa. Earlier, the International Dalit Solidarity Network was established in 2000, with its secretariat in Copenhagen, and member organizations and networks across the world, including seven European countries.

Volunteer transnational activism resulted in the UN Commission on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination affirming in its 2002 General Recommendation of the International Convention that discrimination based on descent is defined to include caste. The World Social Forum has also provided a platform for transnational activism. The Dalit Network Netherlands, with others, organized

a conference on human rights and dignity of Dalit women in The Hague, in November 2006. The conference declaration, The Hague Declaration on the Human Rights and Dignity of Dalit Women, argued that domestic governments have an obligation to take up all the required policy measures to facilitate the realization of Dalit women's human and fundamental rights.

The Government of India extended permission to UN Special Rapporteur to investigate in India.[199] While transnational linkages can exert pressure on domestic governments, strong domestic volunteer alliances must be sustained in order to maintain legitimacy with local constituents and domestic governance actors.[200] The Dalit Women's Access to Justice and Dignity project was launched in November 2006 in partnership with the Department of Justice, the Government of India, and UNDP to do just that.[201]

Mobilizing public opinion within and across borders

When Ben Rattray founded Change.org from his San Francisco house in 2007, he had the modest but worthy vision of establishing a multipurpose online positive social change site for activists to raise money, volunteer or sign petitions. The site was not very successful.

Then in 2011, Ndumie Funda, a woman from South Africa, visited an Internet café in Cape Town and used the site's petition tool to end "corrective rape." Lesbians were reportedly being raped in South Africa, especially in the townships, and sometimes even killed to "cure" them of their sexual orientation. Funda demanded that this human rights abuse be stopped. Her petition went viral, gathering more than 171,000 signatures from 175 countries and getting international media attention. Subsequently, the South African government formed a team to tackle the issue.

Seeing how this seemingly powerless woman could galvanize real change convinced

Rattray to reboot and make it a petition-only site. In the succeeding two years, Change.org became a significant web presence. The website, now with staff in 28 countries, records 85 million users worldwide, meaning the number who have signed on to petitions, and has participants in 196 countries.[202]

INCREASING THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF TRANSNATIONAL ACTORS

Globalization has resulted in increased involvement of global actors, such as international NGOs, MNCs, public and private donors, and intergovernmental organizations in local and national governance. Many of these actors are not directly accountable to the people whose lives they influence. Further, given the transborder nature of their operations, national governments may not have adequate power or authority to monitor their activities and hold them accountable. Volunteers have been instrumental in energizing movements at global, national and local levels to increase the accountability of non-state actors on a large variety of human rights issues. These movements typically stretch over several years and rely heavily on volunteers. Power inequalities are a significant challenge that volunteers deal with.

Calling international financial institutions to account

International financial institutions are among the most powerful global governance actors and can be resistant to voices calling for accountability and responsiveness. Reflecting the power relations and economic priorities of their powerful member states, those like the World Bank and IMF have been the target of years of mass volunteer campaigning that has had limited success.

Activists have persuaded the World Bank to establish some civil society consultative groups, define mechanisms of accountability for projects, and consider the negative impacts of its lending operations on the en-

Volunteers have been instrumental in energizing movements at global, national and local levels to increase the accountability of non-state actors

vironment, involuntary resettlement and indigenous people. Public complaints can be filed and reviewed by the Inspection Panel or Compliance Advisor/Ombudsman. Consultation mechanisms exist to obtain the perspectives of relevant stakeholders when policy revisions are under consideration.

However, continuing power inequalities mean – despite policies and mechanisms – that implementation may not be accountable or transparent. Civil society has provided inputs, but it is increasingly frustrated by the impact of consultations on final decisions. Critics, including governments, civil society, volunteer activists, other international institutions, academics and World Bank staff, observe that it is not sufficiently representative, transparent, open to public participation or accountable to those affected by its operations.[203]

Scrutinizing labour practices and third world manufacturing

Globalization of manufacturing has raised issues of accountability and ethics, galvanizing volunteer labour actions.

The collapse of the Rana Plaza factory in Bangladesh on 24 April 2013 killed 1,129 people. It was the worst in a string of disasters, which include other building collapses and regular murderous fires. Eighty percent of the workers were young women.[204] Horrific images of this tragedy became a global media event, flashing instantly worldwide. Rana Plaza triggered a global outcry and huge pressure against importers around the world as well as garment-industry owners and the Bangladeshi government. Thou-

sands of Bangladeshi workers went on strike after the factory collapse. Globally, formal and informal volunteers engaged in online campaigns and offline demonstrations by international trade unions, students, fashion industry activists and the general public, which rapidly spread.[205]

In 2005, Bangladesh's independent labour movement, led by Kalpona Akter and other young leaders and its allies overseas, had drafted a tough safety agreement and struggled unsuccessfully for years to persuade the powerful Western retailers to sign it (box 4.4). With Rana Plaza, loud voices arose for government, factory and garment industry accountability. Citizens, including those in Australia, the European Union and the United States, asked international clothing manufacturers to sign the safety agreement, called the Accord.

Responding to the power of volunteer voices demanding greater participation and accountability, and aided by social and mainstream media, the Accord has so far been signed by more than 150 apparel corporations from 20 countries in Asia, Australia, Europe and North America. It has also been signed by two global trade unions and numerous Bangladeshi unions. The ILO acts as the independent chair. The Accord includes independent safety inspections at factories and public reporting of the results of these inspections. Where safety issues are identified, retailers commit to ensuring that repairs are carried out, that sufficient funds are made available to do so, and that workers at these factories continue to be paid a salary.

BOX 4.4. **BATTLING POWER INEQUALITIES FROM THE GROUND UP**

Kalpona Akter, child labourer at 12, union president at 15, is the current head of the Bangladesh Centre for Worker Solidarity. She rushes to the latest Bangladeshi garment factory disasters to help and console victims, and to get inside the factory, even if it is still smouldering, to collect labels of the clothing sewn there. "The big European and American importers sometimes deny that their brands were sourced in that factory," she explains.[206]

Since Europe takes 60% of Bangladesh's manufactured clothes, the agreement by the big European businesses, like H&M and Zara, is a very significant victory for accountability. It represents a good example of how volunteer voice and global volunteer mobilization has led to a greater awareness. However, achieving accountability and responsiveness can be a long journey. Most of the biggest US importers, like Walmart and Gap (which also owns Old Navy and Banana Republic) continue to refuse to sign the Accord. They have announced a voluntary, nonbinding alternative with a much smaller financial commitment, endorsed by the US government.[207]

Around the world, volunteers are refusing to forget the Bangladeshi garment workers and are continuing to keep the campaign pressure alive. On the global stage, fair-trade pioneer Carry Somers and fashion activists Lucy Siegel and Livia Firth declared 24 April an annual fashion revolution day, encouraging people all over the world to wear their clothes inside out. "We want people talking about the provenance of clothes," says Somers, "raising awareness of the fact that we aren't just purchasing a garment, but a whole chain of value and relationships. [Fashion revolution day] will become a platform for best practice – for brands to show off what they are doing to improve things."[208]

Student volunteer groups have persuaded 15 American universities – including Cornell, Arizona State, Penn State and Syracuse – to press VF Corporation, which owns JanSport Apparel, producer of branded school gear, to end their business relationships over its refusal to sign the Accord. This national alliance is targeting other universities.[209] The potential of voice and participation to open the closed spaces of powerful actors continues to motivate them.

Holding multinational actors accountable
Social, ecological, economic and political factors can unite or divide community groups, creating challenges for volunteer groups. For example, local volunteers from affected communities and local environmental groups are trying to hold Arcelor Mittal, which describes itself as the "only truly global steelmaker," accountable for negative social and environmental impacts. But environmental issues are vying with economies and jobs.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Romania, Trinidad and Tobago, South Africa, Ukraine and the United States, the company has been held responsible for polluting air and water, destroying local communities, exploiting labour and permitting unsafe working and living conditions, resulting in some fatalities. A long struggle by the community with a steel mill in South Africa to stop pollution and be compensated for loss of health and livelihood failed. Steel production was considered central for growth and jobs, so trade unions favoured jobs over community voices.

A coalition called the Global Action on Arcelor Mittal, linking volunteers in the highly polluted Vaal Triangle with local activists in other affected countries, organized simultaneous protests in eight countries to mark Arcelor Mittal's 2008 Annual General Meeting. Through local linkages, the coalition is trying internationally to link environmental justice to both jobs and nature. But, in the face of Arcelor Mittal's stress on its role as an employer to governments and labour, success has been limited. International trade unions continue to cooperate with the company to favour jobs over the environment.[210]

Accountability of CSOs
As international NGOs increasingly accept governance contracts, they have received more calls to ensure their own accountability and transparency. This includes volunteering institutions, which also need to ensure that their internal forms of governance are participatory, transparent and accountable. Irresponsible practices and poor internal governance can do enormous damage to reputation and credibility.[211]

Volunteers have been supporting civil society self-regulation initiatives as CSOs seek to strengthen their internal organizational effectiveness and responsiveness. CIVICUS, for example, has recently published a guide to serve as a reference and compendium of best practices. Volunteers are cited as useful to maximize self-regulation initiative resources, and initiatives include volunteers in the assessment process. Volunteers can also build capacities and add specialized knowledge to activities. Volunteers from civil society or the private sector with accounting, auditing, monitoring and evaluation skills can be very useful. Online volunteers add diversity and widen geographical spread to assist in assessments and outreach.[212]

Civil society needs to resist tendencies towards institutionalization in managing alliances to ensure responsiveness and diversity of voices. In 2001, the first World Social Forum was organized in Porto Alegre, Brazil, with a "VIP Lounge" for the influential global affinity groups of predominantly male elite and globalized activists. The 2003 World Social Forum focused on mass lectures to a passive audience. But by 2005, the Porto Alegre session stressed participants taking part in meetings and discussions, with organizations arranging panels and speeches. Since then volunteer grassroots activists have successfully pushed to maintain open space and a participatory and horizontal organization, enabling more diverse voice and engagement despite complicating decision processes and event management.[213]

COMMON STRATEGIES

The examples of volunteer action discussed in this chapter, though very diverse in aim and context, display some common characteristics. The first is that volunteers often come together from outside stakeholder groups and countries in support of a local or national cause. For instance, cases as disparate as Jubilee 2000 and the Rana Plaza

event drew support from volunteers from countries affected and those not. A second is that many volunteer actions at the global level have national and local links – such as bringing voices of the people into international decision-making forums, or helping localize global policies and standards. Thus volunteerism at the global level is a force for multilateralism, particularly in arenas where norms and standards are set.

The evidence on volunteerism at the global level reveals three common strategies: building alliances for greater accountability and responsiveness, creatively using the Internet as a virtual space for voices to be heard and using international scrutiny to influence domestic actors.

Working in alliances

No single group or organization can achieve the scale of mobilization needed to effect changes in policy at the transnational level or the state of the discourse at the global level. Building of alliances across different stakeholder and other groups has been instrumental in the success of initiatives like Jubilee 2000. The Control Arms campaign depended on the diversity and extent of alliances that were built across countries, actors and stakeholder groups. Farmers and agrarian producers of West Africa were able to influence regional policy by virtue of their strength as a network, not of individuals but of organizations. To implement the post-2015 agenda consultations, the UN deliberately sought to engage in partnerships with civil society and volunteer-involving organizations to expand its reach in the grassroots. Both the Occupy Wall Street Movement and the People's Climate March relied on numerous alliances to build up the momentum and the reach to generate debate globally and to be heard across the world.

Alliances have been important, not just for mobilization, but also for eliciting accountability from global actors. A positive factor for accountability and responsiveness by global

Volunteerism at the global level is a force for multilateralism, particularly in arenas where norms and standards are set

actors has been alliances within and across sectors. In the absence of direct accountability, allies can elicit a degree of responsiveness that the principal stakeholder groups may not be able to elicit from a global actor. For instance, governments have been the key ally in empowering indigenous peoples to negotiate with extractive industry firms in Latin America. However, the formation of such alliances is not a given since power equations and contrary interests can reduce the incentives of different stakeholder groups to come together. As the struggles of groups to hold Arcelor Mittal accountable for the pollution it causes show, governments and even trade unions may not necessarily side with people who are affected by an MNC.

Using virtual spaces for cross-national engagement

Virtual spaces are innovating volunteer participation. Both Occupy Wall Street and the People's Climate March relied heavily on the Internet to make their voices heard, to coordinate activities across the globe and to mobilize public opinion. Change.org has enabled thousands of initiatives locally, nationally and globally. However, online activism is not without its detractors.

Such mass action has been criticized as 'slacktivism' and armchair activism, easily done more to make people feel good about themselves than to achieve social change.[214] But change is being achieved. Brandon Evans of Crowdtap, a social marketing platform in New York, says "Social technologies have enabled people to mobilize much more quickly and connect over issues that become important to them."[215]

The Digital Activism Research Project, sponsored by the University of Washington, the National Science Foundation, the Institute of Peace and the MacArthur Foundation, analysed about 1,200 cases of digital activism worldwide. It found that successful campaigns use combinations of online and offline tools to target a specifically defined

goal. Facebook and Twitter dominate overall as tools, but usually multiple tools, including digital video and e-petitions, are engaged. There were considerable regional variations, with more video in Eastern Europe than micro-blogging; the reverse in West Africa, Latin America and many Asian countries, most e-petition use in North America. There is not one best tool for any specific outcome.

The Project found that a few digital tools and modest street participation can be sufficient in the global context. Digital activism campaigns are most successful in drawing public demonstrations when the government is the target, especially with authoritarian regimes or when multiple digital tools are used. Campaign success when the target is a business, civil society group or individual is linked to a strong democratic political context.[216]

A second problem with digital activism is the limit it imposes on participation by the poor and often by women. Access to the Internet is still limited in many countries of the world (figure 4.1), and fewer women have access to the Internet than men. In 2013, only 17% of the population of Sub-Saharan Africa and 14% of South Asia's population had access to the Internet compared with 84% of North America's population. Globally, only 38% of people have access. This is despite the fact that between 2000 and 2013, Internet penetration has grown phenomenally in the developing world, over 4,662% in Sub-Saharan Africa, 4,210% in the Arab world and over 3,404% in South Asia. In addition, the majority of the global online conversation takes place in English, even though sites like Change.org enable engaging in several different languages. This limits who can participate, and who can be heard.

Global scrutiny for local impact

Not all volunteer initiatives discussed in this chapter involved volunteers engaging at the global level or with other global actors. Volunteers and volunteer involving organizations have often used international

FIGURE 4.1: EXTENT AND GROWTH OF INTERNET USAGE BY REGION

Internet penetration as a percentage of population in 2013

Growth of Internet in 2000 to 2013
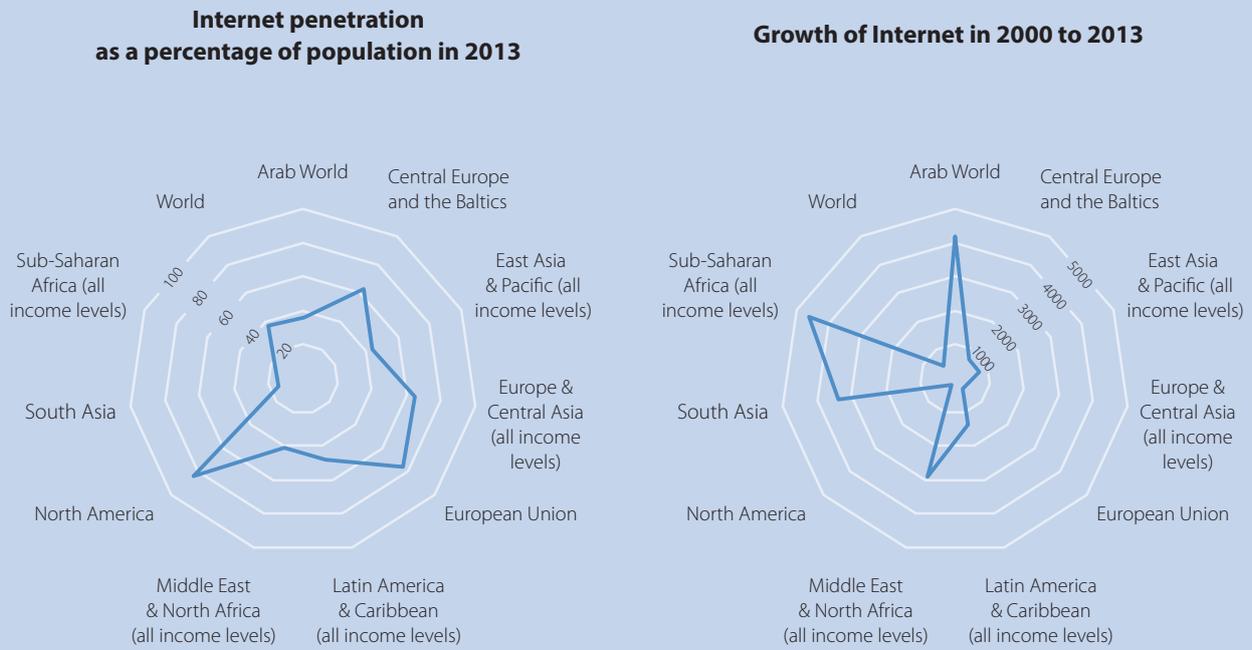
Source: The World Bank Group, World Development Indicators 2014

scrutiny as a means of eliciting accountability and responsiveness at the local and national levels. For instance, the International Dalit Solidarity Network focuses the spotlight on the scourge of untouchability in South Asian nations, specifically to generate pressure on their respective governments to act. Shadow reports use the same strategy in highlighting the shortfalls in implementation of international treaties and conventions, not just to generate debate internally but to inform an international audience. Petitions on Change.org can do the same.

Engaging globally may open opportunities in spaces not usually open at the national level. Through going global, voluntary networks, such as the Dalit women's movement,

can gain legitimacy and resources that can be used for local or national mobilizations. "The UN declaration provides a great framework for us to work within, so that we're not kept away from what is the most important thing. It really helps to guide our work, and guide our struggles," said Ethel Long-Scott of the Women's Economic Agenda Project.[217] But this is not an unalloyed good.

For volunteer networks, going global can risk facing more closed spaces nationally. Governments may distrust global activities.[218] There may be accusations of foreign manipulation. Similarly the pursuit of global policies and resources may alienate grassroots supporters who question whose interests the network represents.[219]

Engaging globally may open opportunities in spaces not usually open at the national level

Building alliances within and across sectors and levels can enhance accountability and responsiveness of global actors

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has focused on volunteerism that addresses the governance pillars in the context of the diverse cross-sector of global governance actors which are impacting all levels of society – local, national and global. Global engagement through volunteerism most often encounters closed spaces, because governance actors, including sometimes governments, tend to prioritize other stakeholders, such as donors, member states, shareholders and investors, over citizens and communities.

Volunteering campaigns that have linked transnationally have sometimes been able to claim local, national and global spaces to increase accountability. Strategies to link global policies and conventions with national volunteer voice and participation have raised accountability issues, sometimes with positive responses. However, CSOs with roots in local volunteerism must resist globalization pressures that weaken links to local constituents and legitimacy with local governance actors.

Building alliances within and across sectors and levels can enhance accountability and

responsiveness of global actors. Volunteers from business, government or civil society build alliances, share expertise and enable citizens to engage with diverse governance actors at all levels more effectively. Governments can open invited spaces for communities and non-state governance actors to consult and mediate.

Technology is a powerful tool for civic engagement that needs to be developed globally in a way that allows for its inclusive potential to be realized. It is enhancing the speed, breadth and diversity of volunteering engagement opportunities, whether online or in person, to address local, national and global issues. There is a need to address the digital access divide in rural, marginalized and poor communities.

Volunteers, using diverse strategies that can engage back and forth among local grassroots constituents, national policy-making and global forums, are effectively promoting voice and participation, accountability and responsiveness among the diverse global governance actors.

Beneficiaries of a project to improve widows' rights in north west Cameroon.
© Cuso International, 2013

5

Capacities for the new development agenda

"As we seek to build capacities and to help the new agenda to take root, volunteerism can be another powerful and cross-cutting means of implementation. Volunteerism can help to expand and mobilize constituencies, and to engage people in national planning and implementation for sustainable development goals. And volunteer groups can help to localize the new agenda by providing new spaces of interaction between governments and people for concrete and scalable actions." [220] United Nations

Volunteerism creates a path where there is no road. It organizes where there is no structure. And it brings resources and capacities when it is not apparent where these will come from. It is a vehicle for the most marginalized to connect with others in solidarity, creating a power base that can change laws, systems and the direction of travel. It is an act of citizenship that requires an environment where it can be nurtured for the common good.

On the eve of the negotiation and adoption of a new sustainable development agenda, two key lessons emerge from the last couple of decades of human development. First, development has left many people behind. Despite the impressive achievements in eradicating poverty and the major improvements in health and education that the MDG framework enabled, rising inequality, between and within countries, has been identified as one of the key challenges of our times. Second, if development is to be effective, if it is to make a real difference in people's lives and be sustained, it needs people's participation and ownership. This includes participation of those consistently more excluded, such as women. This is a time then to rethink not just the goals but also the manner of their achievement. It is an opportunity to look again at how the business of development is done.

A NEW TRANSFORMATIVE AGENDA WILL REQUIRE A TRANSFORMATION OF MINDSETS

Tackling these big issues requires a real change in mindsets. The prevailing development model largely sees governance as a top-down approach where governments are seen as the duty-bearers and citizens as the rights-holders, with a clear division of responsibilities between the two and a clear dichotomy of who demands and who provides services. This model no longer reflects current local, national or global realities. Instead, there is need for new ways of doing business – ways that look at the diversity of governance actors and their capacity to deliver equitable development outcomes and that respond to development challenges and those most affected by them such as excluded groups and communities. In a world where many environmental, social and economic issues do not obey national borders, and where people embrace transnational causes of global concern – with an increasingly clear understanding of how they link into the local realities they are facing – the roles of different actors in society will have to be reshuffled, and the way that the new development agenda is implemented and monitored will have to be reconsidered.

The roles of different actors in society will have to be reshuffled

This will require a shift in the way all governance actors at every level of action and operation discharge their responsibilities to allow for diverse voices to be heard, more people to participate, more spaces to be opened up, and more accountable and responsive governance. This shift requires a real change in how people are able to engage and/or are engaged in development processes. An approach that brings the voice of all stakeholders drawing on all available resources to accompany the implementation and monitoring of the new development agenda should go beyond the rhetoric and be seen and practised as a cornerstone of how governance is conducted. This report has shown that volunteerism will be a valuable resource in this context and that it has great potential and possibilities that are yet to be tapped. Volunteerism has worked as a vehicle for widening voice and participation, as a complementary mechanism to development efforts.

Placing people – in particular those who have been socially excluded, including those excluded because of gender, ethnicity or income inequality – at the centre of development will also require a change in how power is exercised and how accountability relationships are understood and exercised by all governance actors. This refers not only to governments but also to actors subcontracted to take on government responsibilities, be it civil society or the private sector. Accountability relationships will need to have a stronger element of answerability and enforceability, especially in the face of a diversity of governance actors, many currently outside the direct accountability relationship with the citizens. For example, in Bolivia, for a proposed hydrocarbon exploration project by the Argentinean Company Pluspetrol on Guarani indigenous peoples' ancestral territory, the government created a space for business, communities and the government to effectively and accountably engage.

Placing people at the centre will also require increased participation to be met with increased responsiveness from all governance actors – responsiveness that conveys a willingness to listen to the views of citizens and to modify actions accordingly. When the massive protests took place in India after the rape and subsequent death of a woman student in 2012, the government responded by setting up a committee to review the laws and recommend changes. Civil society players were invited to participate to inform the recommendations. To effect the change needed to reverse the impact of climate change, significantly reduce inequalities, eradicate poverty and uphold the fundamental rights and freedoms of every individual,

the responsiveness of governance actors needs to become the norm rather than the exception. Responsiveness will be needed to accompany the successful implementation of any sustainable development agenda.

At the global level, governments will need to respond to the millions of voices that recognize that there has been a shift in the social contract.

At the national and local levels, responsiveness of the different governance actors needs to translate into concrete acts that enable people to be included in decisions that affect them, to participate in the enjoyment of wealth and the full exercise of their rights, and to be joint stewards of resources.

CONCLUSIONS

Through a wealth of evidence, this report has identified a number of common themes, key strategies, challenges and opportunities for volunteerism that impact the three pillars of governance – voice and participation, accountability and responsiveness. Specific volunteer actions and strategies at the different levels – local, national and global – and the diverse ways in which volunteers have engaged in invited spaces, opened up closed spaces or claimed new spaces, have already been identified in the preceding chapters. Five major policy messages, which run across all the chapters, are worth highlighting.

Volunteerism can contribute to enhancing voice and participation, accountability and responsiveness with a range of actors and at all levels

Although not the only answer, volunteerism can contribute to the implementation of a truly people-centred development model. It provides a real gateway into engaging more voices, supporting civil society initiatives and complementing government efforts to widen participation, strengthen

accountability and draw out institutional responsiveness at all levels for sustainable peace and development. It does this in multiple ways, especially in the mobilization and engagement of local volunteers within communities who commit long term to addressing the problems of governance that shape their daily lives, such as on boards, on committees and in other governance mechanisms. Volunteers are key implementers of many frontline programmes, although rarely are they identified or named as volunteers or included in the analysis of success and failure. Participatory governance will thus require a shift in how volunteers are acknowledged and space is opened for more volunteers. It will also require other governance actors to listen to the voices of these volunteers, who may be expected to help to deliver the work but who are rarely involved in designing and planning the work, or evaluating it.

Even in contexts that are not very favourable, volunteers find ways of engaging. They may mobilize in less formal spaces, and use those spaces to lobby for entry into more formal spaces, and to build the skills and networks to draw on when conditions are more favourable for greater civic engagement to improve governance. Under more favourable conditions, volunteers can greatly enhance the effectiveness of governments, as shown in the case of health policy in Brazil.

Volunteers can bring new issues and critical new knowledge to the attention of policy-makers. In fact, one strategy used by volunteers across local, national and global levels is generating knowledge and evidence through participatory research, testimonials from excluded groups, art fairs, creative use of digital technology, and shadow reports to highlight issues and voices that do not always make it into formal government reports. Such knowledge provides a human face to issues, documents the scope and impact of issues from different perspectives, and flags issues that have an impact on vul-

Participatory governance will require a shift in how volunteers are acknowledged and how space is opened for more volunteers

nerable groups that may not be on the agenda of policy-makers.

The playing field of volunteerism must be level

Volunteers are of course a highly diverse group across location, the structures of volunteering, age, education, sex and abilities. The report has shown that volunteerism is itself not a level playing field and has its own power dynamics and hierarchies. Volunteer spaces are themselves gendered, and different volunteer groups have differential access to funding and support as well as access to people in power. Volunteers face different obstacles and have different opportunities as well as differential access to key spaces. So, for example, while in many communities and societies women are the majority – working as volunteers, providing caring and support roles as well as engaging and raising their voices in claimed and invited spaces – most do so without much funding or support. They are often subsidizing processes that governments cannot fund, and in the invited spaces created to enable more women's participation that they frequently find their voices are not listened to. Poor women often find it hard to access formal volunteering structures, for reasons of mobility, illiteracy, lack of experience in public spaces and a dearth of money for transport. There is also a real gender divide in access to new communications technology, which is key for engaging globally. The world's poorest are often excluded from accessing formal forms of volunteering at national and global levels, meaning their voices are still often not heard in national or global forums.

Creating an enabling environment is the sine qua non for volunteerism to fully contribute to the realization of any future sustainable development agenda

For volunteerism to maximize its contributions to the common good, it needs an enabling environment. The overall social, legal and political context matters greatly for what volunteers can or cannot contribute to improving governance. The political bargain between states and citizens, the constitution in place, the legal framework, the social fabric in different countries, the interaction between local, national and global governance, the diversity of governance actors working at any given level – all are elements that affect who can and who cannot enter the different spaces, whose voices are heard and who influences decision-making.

Where governments have created a conducive environment for civic engagement and more particularly for volunteers to participate – or where they have been responsive to volunteer-led community initiatives – more people have participated in decision-making. Volunteerism is most effective in enhancing civic engagement when the greater legal-institutional framework is enabling. This includes freedom of speech and association, and the presence of sufficiently inclusive spaces for engagement.

Some governments recognize the value of systematic legislation, policies, structures and programmes for volunteer engagement and have structures to enable more people to realize the opportunity to volunteer. In Nepal, the government is widening invited spaces in village development committees, and in Kenya, the government is using community-development fund management to engage people. Governments and other bodies involved in governance need practical mechanisms for relating to and interacting directly with citizens.

These spaces at times provide opportunities for volunteers to shape the policy and practice of how services are delivered and to monitor implementation – to try to hold governments and others to account. In Honduras, where the National Congress unanimously passed the Lei del voluntariado, the government facilitated the engagement of excluded groups such as young people and the elderly. Governments that have not yet

> **Volunteerism is itself not a level playing field and has its own power dynamics and hierarchies**

done so can adopt such an approach and create systems for widening participation.

At the local level, where citizens engage most directly with government services, local government has to create institutions and mechanisms that facilitate peoples' engagement in decision-making spaces. The analysis in the report shows that it is at the local government level where we see how governments can work with volunteers. Examples of local governments opening spaces are seen in village development committees, local health councils, village planning, and community development fund management across different countries. These initiatives can provide governments and other bodies involved in governance with practical mechanisms for relating to citizens and interacting directly with them. Under the right circumstances they can also provide opportunities for volunteers to shape the policy and practice of how services are delivered and monitor implementation.

However, government action alone is not enough to turn the tide in addressing such global challenges as poverty, inequality and climate change. Top-down action alone will not open governance spaces for volunteerism, whether closed, created or invited. This opening will require a wide range of different strategies, collaboration, partnerships and alliances across the board, and across different levels of governance.

Collaboration, alliances and building multi stakeholder partnerships are essential for volunteerism to succeed

Collaboration between governments and civil society has led to successful adoption of laws and structures, as in Honduras, where the government partnered with volunteer networks to ensure the participation of volunteers in consultations on the law, or in Peru, where the government is working with volunteer networks across the country to involve as many people as possible, or in Togo, where the government works closely

with youth networks to ensure that the voices of young women and men are part of the process. Enabling closer interaction between governments and CSOs can create channels for volunteer engagement to enhance the capacity of governments to implement policy.

Civil society has also sought to build alliances with government, the private sector and other actors, engaging volunteers for a common cause. In Bangladesh, in the case of Naripokkho, a key success factor to the scaling up needed to achieve national impact depended on alliances and partnerships, as well as on working with the media. The collaboration of government and state institutions created trust and respect, and the way Naripokkho worked with the media ultimately brought visibility to domestic violence and led to a change in legislation for women experiencing it. This can also be seen in the nationality laws in the Arab region, where finding key allies in governments, parliaments, religious authorities and the media was the key to success in all countries.

As communities gain in understanding and knowledge of the changing nature of the rules of engagement, especially through collective action at the local level in informally claimed spaces, they can see the value of building alliances and partnership as a necessary strategy for addressing the governance-related development issues that transcend local, national and global boundaries. As volunteers use their time, knowledge and expertise to address social, economic and environmental global challenges, they can complement, challenge and question government and wider civil society efforts. At the global level, volunteer groups with common agendas collaborate across borders and express voice and participate in global venues. Many opportunities exist for promoting supportive global agreements, policies, conventions and volunteer standards. These, in turn, can add legitimacy, knowledge and resources to local and national efforts.

Top-down action alone will not open governance spaces for volunteerism, whether closed, created or invited

For civil society, it is interesting to note that in situations where the variety and power of governance actors at the global level make accountability a challenge, policies and strategies that enable alliances among stakeholders and across levels seem to be the most beneficial and inclusive for all parties. Global mass movements, whether virtual or direct, involving mostly informal volunteer activists, can sometimes exert sufficient public, media, or peer pressure on closed spaces to encourage some accountability when working in collaboration with others.

In 2013, after a decade of mobilizing around the arms trade, the world's first global treaty to regulate the transfer of conventional arms and ammunition was adopted by an overwhelming majority at the UN in New York. Global and national campaigning were supported by volunteers from diverse groups to ultimately exert pressure on policy-makers. In a more recent case, the People's Climate March combined social outreach and offline engagement with social media to engage as wide a community as possible to put pressure on policy-makers and governments reluctant to address global warming.

There is a need to formally recognize what volunteers do in such movements, to listen to the voices of diverse volunteers, to understand the issues as they play out in specific and very different contexts, and to ensure more opportunities for discussions and negotiations for volunteers in a range of spaces and different levels accessible to greater numbers of people. This will require diverse and deliberate strategies to level the volunteering field, particularly for some of the more excluded groups. Those groups include poor women, who are systemically marginalized in most contexts and who face multiple barriers to accessing decision-making spaces. And they include young people, those with little or no education and those marginalized by poverty, ethnicity, class, caste or statelessness.

Deepening understanding through research is critical

This report starts a conversation on what volunteers bring to support participatory, accountable and responsive governance processes at different levels and in different spaces. But the data challenges remain real and must be addressed if the potential of volunteerism as a resource is to be fully realized over the coming years. One challenge is defining and describing the immense range and diversity of volunteer forms across the world. A second is capturing the size, scope and scale of different kinds of volunteerism through quantitative measures. A third is capturing the nuances, distinctions and complex contributions through more qualitative case studies rooted in the diverse contexts. All three would benefit from further interrogation. Also required is a serious commitment to better data collection, including qualitative data that are culturally grounded in how volunteerism is defined and practised in different countries.

Measuring the contribution of volunteers to development is clearly important. So is enabling volunteers to monitor and report on development locally, nationally and globally. To this end, technology coupled with people's willingness and determination to engage in development, to hold governance actors to account and to ensure responsiveness provides another opportunity to engage citizens as volunteer monitors and reporters of progress against any development agenda. Millions of people participated in the MY World survey, and volunteers facilitated community engagement to ensure maximum engagement. As more people have access to both Internet technology and mobile phones, the opportunity should be grasped to ensure that governance at all levels is participatory, accountable and responsive.

Annex – Methodology

The methodology involved:

1. An internal UNV research and writing team supported by an external research advisor, working with an internal advisory team and an external advisory board drawn from within UN and peers on volunteerism (academics and practitioners).

2. Literature review, focused especially on governance, volunteerism, the global context and issues of post-2015.

3. Consultations across UNV on volunteerism and governance issues.

4. Development of an analytical framework to guide the research.

5. Research papers commissioned from a range of researchers globally, including regional scans of key governance issues and volunteer actions, individual case studies and papers on specific topics arising from the scans.

6. An iterative process of writing up the data, among the team itself and with the advisory boards and UNV's Senior Management Team. Three meetings of the external advisory board.

7. Report draft sent out for wide consultation and feedback across UN.

Some key features were:

1. Most of the report is based on secondary sources – collected against clear criteria for accepting written data from books, reports, evaluations, grey literature, websites and so on.

2. A wide mix of written sources was used, avoiding self-promoting literature from organizations and where possible ensuring triangulation.

3. A few key informant interviews were undertaken, and some cases were written up for this report from original data.

4. There was a serious commitment to bring in representation from all the regions, while recognizing that some regions are much more widely written up than others and that volunteerism in the richer countries has been much more widely written about previously. The balance of the writing was in favour of volunteerism in the South.

5. While there was an emphasis on triangulating data, it was also recognized that some voices are rarely heard because they are not supported by other sources, so volunteer voices have been used at times even when not supported by other evidence. Organizational voices have been checked as far as possible.

6. A lot of the material is qualitative and not as comprehensive as the team would have liked in all cases. There is very little quantitative analysis of the scale and scope of volunteerism addressing the issues of governance and power. What exists is patchy and not comparable, so it has not been used in this report.

The limitations were the:

1. English language.
2. Huge area.
3. Lack of good data on volunteering, outcomes and role of volunteers in many projects.
4. Lack of good evaluations easily accessible.
5. Uncharted territory.
6. Need to leave a lot of detailed evidence out of the report, to keep it short and sharp, although this evidence is available to back up the statements made.
7. Criteria for selecting data for the case studies.

The material had to address the:

1. Specific role of the volunteers.
2. Contributions of the volunteerism to addressing the three governance pillars.
3. Issue of who the volunteers are.
4. Source of the information and its legitimacy.
5. Context in which it occurs.

Notes

CHAPTER 1

1. Clark 2015.
2. UNDP 2010, p. x.
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4. OECD n.d.
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34. UNV 2011a, p. 9.
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40. Mercy Corps 2012, p. 5.
41. ICP and the American University in Cairo 2011, p. 41.
42. UNDP 2011.
43. UNV 2013, p. iv.
44. Kadi 2011.
45. PRIA 2012.
46. Dahiya 2012.
47. Dahiya 2012; UN-Habitat 2011.
48. UN-REDD Programme 2014.
49. UNV and UNDP 2011.
50. Making all Voices Count n.d.
51. PRIA 2013.
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53. ICD 2012.
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56. Cruz 2014, p. 8.
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67. Caprara and others 2012.
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69. Helms and McKenzie 2014.
70. Joseph 2014, p. 19.
71. Gaventa 2006; Cornwall 2002.
72. McEwan 2005, p. 973.
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92. McGee 2014, p. 6.

93. Gaventa 2006, p. 27.

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101. Marulanda and Tancredi 2010.

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105. Suaedy 2014.

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107. The Citizenship DRC 2011.

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109. The Citizenship DRC 2011.

110. Pimbert 2008.

111. Mann 2014.

112. ANAMURI 2011.

113. DuMonthier 2014.

114. Xu 2014.

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116. Xu 2014.

117. Treat 2013.

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120. Causation is difficult to ascribe. In some cases greater voice and participation can elicit greater responsiveness and account-ability. In other cases more responsive and accountable governments can encourage greater voice and participation. Greater voice and participation and responsive and accountable governments can also all arise from a third factor, for instance, the political culture of a country or community.

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128. These include, for instance, criminalizing marital rape, and special provisions for violence against women by members of the armed forces.

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131. UNV 2014b.

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136. Aked 2014.

137. UNV and UNDP 2007, p. 8.

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139. Amawi 2000; Joseph 1999a; Joseph 1999b; UNDP 2002; CRTD-A n.d.

140. Joseph 1999a; UNDP 2002; El-Kholy 2002.

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143. Abdoush 2008.

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145. Mann 2014.

146. La Via Campesina 2013.

147. Gucciardi 2011.

148. Organic Consumers Association 2015.

149. Abbott 2014.

150. Walker 2014.

151. Thomas and others 2003.

152. African Elections Project n.d.

153. African Elections Project n.d.

154. Awan 2014; Ushahidi n.d.

155. Ionescu 2014.

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182. The Guardian 2014b.

183. People's Climate March n.d.; 350.org.

184. Gaventa and Rootes 2007.

185. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) n.d. Major groups are women, children and youth, indigenous peoples, nongovernmental organizations, local authorities, workers and trade unions, business and industry, scientific and technological communities, and farmers. Other stakeholders include local communities, volunteer groups and foundations, migrants and families, as well as older persons and persons with disabilities.

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189. CIC-BD 2010; AWORC 1998.

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199. Mahanta 2012.

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201. Mahanta 2012.

202. Reno 2013.

203. Ebrahim and Herz 2007.

204. Kakuchi 2013.

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206. North 2013.

207. North 2013; Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh 2015.

208. Jones 2014.

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210. Cock 2012; Räthzel and Uzzell 2013.

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