Understanding Volunteerism for Development in South-Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States: Lessons for Expansion

SUMMARY REPORT

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 UNV 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.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the United Nations' global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources that help people build a better life. UNDP is on the ground in 166 countries, working with national partners on their own solutions to global and national development challenges.
The Bratislava Regional Centre (BRC) is a major hub for UNDP's work in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). A BRC team of in-house policy specialists, backed by an extensive roster of outside experts, provides user-driven advisory services, access to knowledge, and technical support to 24 UNDP country offices in the region. The BRC team carries out its mission by flexibly integrating regional programming, advisory services, knowledge management, and capacity-building. BRC also serves to connect the region to a global network of development experts, and forges new partnerships so that the region's countries may achieve their development goals.

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FOREWORD

With five years to go to the MDG target date of 2015, the prospect of falling short of many of the goals is quite real, but not inevitable. We can still reach the goals, if we reaffirm our commitment and pool all available resources. While it is clear to many that volunteerism can play a crucial role in realizing these goals, it is equally apparent that a more focused and systematic study of the contribution of volunteerism to peace and development is required to provide measurable evidence of this contribution.

This study on the state of volunteerism in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States aims to do just that, by addressing the key questions of how volunteerism can help achieve the MDGs in the region, what are some of the key challenges it encounters and how its impact can be enhanced.

This publication, which is a summary of the main research study, is the first of its kind for the region, and provides new and powerful information on a unique history of volunteerism in this part of the world. By demonstrating the particular issues and nature of volunteerism in this vast region, it builds on the ever growing global knowledge in the field.

In the context of the forthcoming ten-year anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers (IYV+10), UNV will publish a global State of the World Volunteerism Report in 2011 that will both inform on and advocate for the recognition of the role and contribution of volunteerism to peace and development.

This regional study represents a major input to this global report, and provides useful analysis, data and examples to foster the recognition of the positive impact of volunteerism in the region, so as to fully realise its potential.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the UNDP Regional Centre in Bratislava for its cooperation and support, and Canada International Development Agency for its financial contribution to the conduct of this study.

I would also like to invite you to read and benefit from the main study report which is published on UNDP Regional Centre Bratislava and UNV websites.

Flavia Pansieri
Executive Coordinator, United Nations Volunteers
Bonn, August 2010

CONTENTS

Introduction 6

Traditions of Volunteering 8
Pre-socialist practices 8
Socialism's 'mixed' influence 10
Volunteerism during the transition 14

Current trends in Volunteerism 17
Assessing the numbers 17
Assessing the opportunities 24
Assessing volunteer policies 30

Bonding and Bridging 35
Volunteerism for the modern era 36
Dual framework for development 38

The Way Forward 43

About the Study… 46

References 47

Over the past decade, countries in South-Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) have overcome significant challenges to make progress in many areas of human development.[1] As a whole, these countries - collectively referred to within these pages as 'the Region' – have decreased absolute poverty levels, increased primary school enrolments, and raised their gender parity rates. Yet, as in many parts of the world, the Region still sees mothers die in childbirth for the want of basic care. People with special needs face a life of exclusion from education, from employment, and from the rest of the community. Minorities such as Roma live in levels of poverty that should long ago have been confined to the history books. In some countries, industries continue to damage the environment almost unchecked; in others, women have little more freedom than they did centuries ago. Certainly, much work remains. The need for progress has become all the more urgent as 2015 approaches, when the Region – and the world - must assess its commitments to human development in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Volunteerism[2] can play a crucial role in realizing this progress by fostering human development. Clearly, it is very hard to precisely measure the contribution it makes to the eight numerical targets that are defined within the MDGs (see box), and to decisively attribute any changes in these indicators to the work of volunteers. However, the MDG framework, and the Millennium Declaration that underlies it, is about much more than the rise or fall of national incomes and numerical targets. It is about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their needs and interests. Indeed, the human development paradigm considers people as the real wealth of nations, where development is about expanding the choices people have to lead lives that they value. Fundamental to enlarging these choices is building human capabilities — the range of things that people can do or be in life. The most basic capabilities for human development are to lead long and healthy lives, to be

Millennium Development Goals
The MDGs are eight broad development goals, with 20 more detailed targets. Each target has between one and five numerical indicators for tracking progress. In addition, countries localize the MDGs by expanding and fine tuning the assessment indicators based on local circumstances.

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

1. "In general, the standards of living that are covered by the UN MDGs have begun to improve in these regions (CIS and South-East Europe) since the beginning of this decade, reversing the decline of the previous decade." (UN Department of Information, 2008)
2. Defined as "an expression of people's willingness and capacity to freely help others and improve their society." (UNV, 2009)

knowledgeable, to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living and to be able to participate in the life of the community. Without these, many choices are simply not available, and many opportunities in life remain inaccessible.

This booklet explores how volunteerism can make a positive impact in the Region and support progress towards achieving higher levels of human- centred development. The information presented herein is based on findings from a 'first-of-its-kind' study on volunteerism in South-Eastern Europe and the CIS.[3] Chief among those findings: an enormous potential exists in the Region for achieving human-centred development and bettering people's lives through volunteerism. Realizing this potential, however, requires an understanding of how volunteerism currently functions throughout the Region, both in all its diverse manifestations as well as in its common, self-empowering feature as an activity that anyone can do.

To develop this understanding, Chapter 1 examines volunteerism from an historical perspective. It looks at different forms of volunteerism that have been typical in the Region, from ancient times, through the socialist period, and during the transition since 1989. Indeed, in many parts of the Region, there is a rich history of voluntary activity, and this past influences people's perceptions of volunteerism today.

Chapter 2 focuses on the current state of voluntary activity in the Region. It presents both quantitative and qualitative survey data to provide a picture of who volunteers, what kind of volunteer activity takes place, and where. The chapter also considers opportunities for expanding volunteerism through strengthened approaches in both programming and policy-making.

Chapter 3 takes a closer look at the two essential ways in which people practice volunteerism in relation to beneficiary groups. While some people are involved in volunteering within their own closed-knit community circles, others get involved in more structured types of volunteer programmes. The chapter examines the positive and negative aspects of each approach, and considers how both can contribute to further developing volunteerism in the Region.

Finally, Chapter 4 offers some action-oriented strategies for stakeholders to consider in order to expand volunteerism based on their unique circumstances. Strategy areas include promotional activity; law and policy development; integration into the education system; use of volunteer networks; coordination with local and state institutions; corporate volunteerism; and exchange programmes.

This booklet, thus, provides principal stakeholders – government authorities, civil society and development organizations, educators, and private sector actors – with an understanding of how they can capitalize on the volunteer culture that already exists in the Region, while also creating new opportunities to promote the expansion of voluntary action in their communities.

3. For further information about the full study, see p. 44.

TRADITIONS OF VOLUNTEERING

UNDERSTANDING THE TRADITIONS OF VOLUNTEERISM THAT HAVE EXISTED IN THE REGION IS ESSENTIAL IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND WHAT VOLUNTEERISM MEANS FOR PEOPLE NOW, AND WHERE THE GREATEST OPPORTUNITIES LIE FOR LEVERAGING VOLUNTEERISM IN ORDER TO ADVANCE HUMAN-CENTRED DEVELOPMENT.

PRE-SOCIALIST PRACTICES

Each country has its own specific traditions of community mutual support that existed well before socialism, and most of them overlap with our current understanding of volunteerism, as a form of social behaviour that is undertaken freely, without financial motivation, and in order to primarily benefit others. In most cases, there are at least traces of these traditions left today.

Using Tradition for Development

A joint EU and UNDP initiative in Uzbekistan is the Enhancement of Living Standards (ELS) Programme, which has been working in various regions of Uzbekistan since 2005. One of three key elements is 'empowering local communities for improved social welfare by encouraging communities to implement self-help schemes and undertake rehabilitation of social services infrastructures.' The ELS team meets with the respected members of a local community - village elders, women activists, or representatives of the local authority - and helps them to select the most pressing issues of that particular area by using the MDGs as a starting point. Local residents decide for themselves what should be done to make their community life better. Then, the EU and UNDP estimate the funds that are needed to solve the problem.

One of the unique concepts of the ELS project is that it engages the time-honoured practice of *hashar*. Local people do not usually have money or resources to donate, but they can contribute their time and labour. In this way, the ELS project reinforces people's belief in their capacity to influence their own development.

This model has been used to encourage members of a village to work voluntarily for the benefit of the whole community. The project, which aims to improve the water supply in the regions of Karakalpakstan and Namangan, has helped around 5,000 people gain access to clean, running water in their communities.

(Waterwiki.net, 2009) The information provided in this case study has been released under CC-BY-SA -: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/

Informal approaches in rural communities

The traditions of *hashar* and *asar,*[4] joint assistance of a village or nomadic community to any family in need of help, are two of the most fundamental expressions of volunteer tradition that continue today. They have been common in Central Asia for at least several hundred years, going back even be-

4. 'Hashar' is the predominant term used in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, while 'asar' is more commonly used in Kazakhstan.

fore the introduction of Islam into the Region,[5] and are a reflection of the collectivist spirit that is inherent in rural life everywhere.

Organized by separate individuals or community members, *hashars* and *asars* are frequently held in times when a person can not manage to individually complete a large-scale work, such as ploughing the land, harvesting crops, building a house, or preparing for a wedding. They are based on the premise that although people often have limited funds, they can still guarantee their livelihood, and that of their communities, by sharing their knowledge, skills, equipment and labour. However, this tradition also has a wider impact in reinforcing interpersonal relations and communal ties to strengthen the community, at large. As an extension of this idea, collective *hashars* to carry out some kind of public work (e.g. digging out a ditch, fixing a road or cleaning a pond) are also a part of this tradition.

Primarily found in ethnic (rather than Russian) regions, *hashars* are self-regulated, and no village authority is required to decide who receives assistance on a specific day. If two families require *hashar* on the same day, then they resolve the time conflict by mutual agreement. A person hosting a *hashar* is responsible for providing meals during the day(s) until the work is completed. In the case of public works, participants are responsible for providing their own meals.

Although best known in Central Asia, forms of this tradition also exist in Eastern Europe. A very similar practice in Bosnia and Herzegovina is called *moba*. Indeed, all over the Region's rural areas, it is common for extended families and even whole communities to participate in cleaning their neighbourhoods before weddings, festivals, baptisms and funerals.

Recently, these informal traditional practices have successfully been leveraged by international agencies to create more formalized human-centred development programmes (see box, p. 6).

Organized charity and women's influence

More formalized approaches to volunteerism also have roots in the past. Indeed, a very early written reference to volunteer work in the Region can be found on the mosaic floor of the atrium in the bath house at the pagan temple of Garni in Armenia. The building dates back to the 3rd century A.D. The inscription in Old Greek, which can still be made out, is: "We worked without pay."[6] These words can probably be best understood as an expression of good will, as a complaint would probably not have been fitting in this royal palace.

Despite this early secular example, religious institutions throughout the Region were amongst the first to provide an organized structure for charity and volunteerism. While charity purely in the sense of giving money is not considered to be volunteerism, giving of money (often historically a religiously-based alms-giving tenet on the part of the better-off towards the less well

5. (Nakipova, 2008)
6. (Wages, 1986. p. 120)

-off) is usually surrounded by volunteerism. Firstly, the charitable faith-based groups themselves are often run by volunteers and, secondly, these organizations frequently implement voluntary activities that may be of a purely civic nature. Indeed, Albania's documented history of volunteerism bears testament to its expansion from early religious influences:

> Voluntarism has become a basic feature of coexistence, part of culture and a mentality of our society. It is a manner for the individuals to testify their humanity … voluntarism and all the elements entangled with it were regulated by rules and laws of ethics and behaviour. Voluntarism has gone through judicial regulations and was presented as a legal institution. Not only in the regional canons such as the Canon of Lek Dukagjini (15th century), Canon of Skenderbeg, Canon of Dibra, but also in civic craftsmen Statutes, voluntarism, civic help and support had their legal regulations, being treated as usual phenomena. A quick investigation of the canons and statutes of that time shows that voluntarism was judicially and legally elaborated, its contents functions and target groups were detailed, so was its status and nomenclature.[7]

Secular forms of charity often, but not always, associated with patriotic movements became more common during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In Armenia, charitable organizations started to take shape during this period, along with the influx of refugees and orphans from the Ottoman Empire before and after the turn of the last century.

Notably, women took a leading role as participants in such charitable organizations, and by so doing, in developing charity and volunteerism in the Region. Russia's documented history from the court of Catherine the Great, who reigned from 1762 to 1796, provides a strong example. Both she and the Empress Maria Fedorovna, who followed her, encouraged philanthropic activity. They founded numerous charitable institutions and started the Russian system of social charity and orphanage.

For over a century, much of the charity and volunteerism before the October Revolution in 1917 had a tradition of civic and democratic leanings. The Russian Female Charitable Society of Mutual Help at the beginning of the twentieth century century provided vocational training and an employment bureau for women, in addition to a housing advice group. The Russian Female Charitable Society of Mutual Help received the Gold Medal for Charities in 1900 at the World Fair in Paris.[8] In one of the largest Moscow charitable organizations, the Society for Care of Children in Need, volunteers collected donations and visited poor families and people in need. Indeed, at the turn of the twentieth century, there were thousands of charitable establishments in Russia, and elsewhere across the Region.

7. (Mediaj, 2003, p. 1)
8. (Liborakina, 1996)

With the arrival of socialism, volunteer traditions that existed throughout the Region were varyingly embraced, transformed or suppressed. Although the regimes in most countries of the Region insisted on monopolizing the philanthropic and voluntary activity taking place, today people in the Region feel differently about this control, and the influence it had on their activity. A large proportion of the population in each of the Region's countries surveyed identifies with these activities as volunteer participation, and is proud of their involvement. For others, the centrally controlled nature of much of this activity and the frequently weak state accountability of charitable funds has left them bitter about the past, and even suspicious about current state involvement in volunteer programmes.

Obligatory participation and the roots of mistrust

After the October Revolution, for example, the Bolsheviks attempted to integrate and appropriate existing forms of unpaid labour. The scale and content of *hashars* increased in some cases to include unpaid state-run construction of irrigation systems, power stations, canals, and roads.[9] At the same time, independent social movements were outlawed in the Soviet Union. After 1917, a special decree was passed that abolished charitable institutions and societies for the disabled in order to transfer their funds to the executive committee of crippled soldiers; centrally-controlled social welfare and insurance became the main form of social support. Charity foundations were created only under government auspices, and they had emphatically political aims. Volunteerism was, instead, harnessed in the name of helping communist movements across the world - 'oppressed' workers of various countries.[10]

Throughout many parts of the Region, a *subbotnik* was (and still is in some of the successor States) a day of unpaid work, usually carried out on a Saturday in order to support some sort of public works project or cause. The name comes from the Russian word for 'Saturday.' Communist *subbotniks* became obligatory political events in the Soviet Union and its satellite countries, and an annual 'Lenin's Subbotnik' was regularly held around Lenin's birthday on 22 April.

Subbotniks, through the mass participation that they garnered, were an effective way of mobilizing people to support localized development needs. They also served to encourage collectivism and identification with socialist ideals. This mass participation was shaped by a multitude of organizations, many focused at youth, whose purpose it was to support Communist Party initiatives in building the State, the economy and its culture: the Russian Communist Youth Union, the All-Union Pioneers Organization, the Timurov movement, and Student Construction Brigades were just some of these.

9. (Valentini, 2004, p. 27)
10. (Nakipova, 2008)

As in earlier times, women played an active role in mobilizing social activism during the Soviet period. Although women's formal representation in the Communist Party hierarchy (and the corollary societal level of sexual equality during the Soviet era) has been criticized for being limited and disproportionately low,[11] there were women's sections within the organizational structure at various levels that primarily focused on involving women in the economic life of their communities.[12] In the case of Russia, these activities largely sprang from the *Zhenotdel*, which was the official women's arm of the Communist Party that was assigned the dual purpose of recruiting women into the party and addressing women's needs. Through this structure, *delegati* (women's delegates) devoted their spare time to schools, orphanages, health clinics, and shelter construction. Such women's activities took place across many of the satellite states. In Kazakhstan, for example, their indigenous prototypes were the Red Yurtas (nomad tents) and the Red Cottages.[13]

Hence, this kind of 'volunteerism' played a very significant part in the life of the Region's people, and a significant proportion of the infrastructure was built in this way. But was it volunteerism? What motivated people to participate, to the extent that they had any choice at all? Certainly, some forms of state-instigated 'voluntary' action amounted to human rights abuses. The Chernobyl nuclear disaster in the Ukraine, during which people were recruited or volunteered to participate in the rescue operation without being informed about the risks of exposure, is one of the starkest examples. Yet, other voluntary practice during this time is not so clear-cut. A youth volunteerism study on Albania captures the contradiction:

> There are two views related to this issue. First, there are those who argue that volunteerism was used as a means to cut costs and enslave the people in a country which was isolated and had to produce and live with its own efforts and resources. The second opinion supports the idea that volunteerism was a solution to respond to the problems affecting the country at that time: destroyed and underdeveloped by consecutive wars through many centuries, as well as religious and geographical division.[14]

Benefits from fellowship and collective purpose

Undeniably, socialism added its own models and traditions of mutual help. All countries in the Region experienced various forms of unpaid work programmes during the socialist era. Though some of these models cannot precisely be called 'volunteerism' due to a certain level of state imposition, these activities did encourage the development of pro-social mindsets, on which the development of a volunteer culture depends, and which serve, or could serve, to encourage volunteerism today. Indeed, often people viewed their involvement as the realization of their inner convictions and personal moti-

11. (EON, 2007)
12. (Hutton, 1996, p. 65)
13. (Nakipova, 2008)
14. (Gjeka, 2009, p. 14)

vations to help others and to support the development of their society. A collectivist ethic was fostered that remains, albeit in a weakened form, among the older generations.

For example, the report on youth volunteerism in Albania points out that most of the older people who had participated in compulsory youth mass work programmes actually had very warm memories of them.[15] Massive youth 'voluntary work' projects, including so-called 'Enver days,' helped to stave off the worst effects of the increasing economic crisis, especially after the death of Enver Hoxha in 1985. During and particularly towards the end of the regime, the most characteristic form of such activity was short-term (from a day to a couple of weeks) mass campaigns of physical labour that mostly involved young people. A related form of volunteerism was longer-term manual work placements for students. This was considered part of their studies, and represented a 'giving back' to the society, which provided secondary, higher and post-graduate education free of charge.

Additionally, state influence over many of the activities, whether perceived with fond memories or not, was not absolute. In Yugoslavia, for example, it was possible to volunteer in the Red Cross and in charity-run kitchens (organized mainly by different churches) in order to prepare and serve free food for poor people. Yugoslav forms of community mutual help characteristic of the villages and small towns (where everybody knew each other), such as help with the harvest or in building a family house, also continued in parallel to the official system. This was in keeping with the more flexible attitude about private property in that country. Mass work actions began at the start of the republic (in the period after the Second World War), when mainly young people contributed voluntarily to the reconstruction of the country.

> Our men, women and youth gave [...] in 1947, 6,122,886, and in 1948, 13,168,009 voluntary work days, the value of which in money amounts to 4 billion dinars. In the action against the problem of illiteracy, 11,543 women and youth participated as volunteer teachers.[16]

Other activities were centred on protection of the environment. In the 1960s, a voluntary movement for architectural restoration was founded in Russia, which later continued to operate within the framework of the All-Union Society for Protection of Monuments of History and Culture. In the mass media of that time, appeals for help with the work were often published, and volunteers went to work during weekends to preserve, for example, unique constructions of a museum-ensemble in Tsaritsino. Other interesting examples are voluntary teams for wildlife preservation, which were created in the early 1970s through natural science departments of various universities in the former Soviet Union. These teams, which could be considered to be amongst the first NGOs in the Soviet Union, were engaged in fighting illegal hunting and forestry.

15. Ibid.
16. (Bagić, 2006)

Some scholars believe that the semi-legal and underground environmental movements that grew during the 1980s played a key role in mobilizing grievances against governments at that time, as well.[17] While many of these movements were absorbed into the new power structures or disappeared after the transition, others remain active. 'Memorial' is a movement that arose during the years of Perestroika. Its main task was keeping alive the memory of political persecution in the former Soviet Union. Now, Memorial provides assistance to former political prisoners through its network of regional associations, which account for some 10,000 active volunteers.[18]

Indeed, it is important to emphasize that 'the transition' is a never-ending process. Volunteering in some of the Region's countries may bear the hallmarks of socialism, with strong state sponsorship and central control of volunteering. Additionally, the years since 1989 have meant war and economic crisis for many – both of which have greatly influenced development in the Region, and the type of volunteerism practised as a result. For example, between 1992 and 1996, Tajikistan's gross domestic product shrank by a factor of more than three. The long-term effects of war in the Region include continuing tensions between communities (with implications for volunteer involving organizations), increased numbers of disabled people, large numbers of single mothers and orphans, economic stagnation and, in some cases such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, a continuing political stalemate and a leadership that maintains a strong grip on policy and government structures.

In countries such as the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan, where there was less of a clear break with the past, there tends to be greater continuity with past practices in volunteerism. For example, one of the most remarkable initiatives in the Region is the 'Spring Week of Good,' which is fashioned after Lenin's Subbotnik. After the collapse of the regime, this celebration continued as a voluntary, occasional spring cleaning action in various regions. In Moscow during 1992, for example, it was called 'Easter Charity Week' and later, in 1997, evolved into organized annual all-Russian activities for World Youth Service Day and the Spring Week of Good. These events are still held in April, during the third or fourth week. They thus act as a transformation of an explicitly Communist tradition (both in its iconography and also in its mass-activity nature), coupled with an event from the Christian calendar. At the same time, these initiatives also explicitly promote a primarily secular message of 'doing good' for the benefit of the larger community.

Other important activities that provide a volunteer context, and which are relevant both in the Region's traditional and more developed areas, are the regular, short-term events rooted in culture and involving different organizations. They often support some aspect of social development, such as a day of poverty, a day of hunger, a day of blood donors, first aid competitions, and education for all. While these kinds of campaigns are 'formal' in the sense that they tend to be regular, officially sanctioned and well organized, they

17. (Proskuryakova, 2005, p. 70)
18. (Memorial, 2009)

are 'informal' in the sense that the majority of volunteers have a loose, limited and short-term commitment to the campaign. Azerbaijan has many examples of these kinds of events: celebrating national holidays, having New Year parties, and holding musical/dance performances. Such events are particularly popular amongst minorities and, through ticketing and donations, also provide charitable and voluntary support to disadvantaged people in the local communities.

Resolving Conflict – A Renaissance of Effective Volunteerism
In Kazakhstan, some of the old traditions have been revived after the Soviet era. For instance, the Court of Elders — a feature of nomadic tradition — stopped functioning under socialism, as it was supplanted by the state judicial system. It has since re-emerged, and has been expanded into a national institution, the Council of Elders (*'Ulagat'*), which was established in 2003. This Council works in close cooperation with state agencies, public and religious associations and local governance institutions to facilitate the resolution of social conflicts between ethnic groups. The Council consists of different representatives of national cultural centres, associations, veterans and the most respected members of the community, who work on a voluntary basis.

(Galiev, 1998)

These kinds of events have also been specifically leveraged by modern campaigns. For example, Armenia's 'Days of Good Will, Good Deeds and Good Results' was initiated by the International Federation for Electoral Systems (IFES)/Armenia and held during the autumn from 2001 to 2003. It encouraged the volunteer movement and NGO activities as effective means of bringing communities together to solve local problems. The event gave the Armenians an opportunity to be active citizens and to make their contribution to the community development process, united by the principle of volunteerism. It was supported by various groups within Armenian society, and was highly successful: in total, 1,637 events were held, with 166,850 participants. The number of events and participants increased by more than 50 percent over the three years of the campaign.

In the West of the Region, the break from the past was somewhat more radical overall. During the wars in Bosnia and Herzogovina, Croatia, Kosovo and Serbia that heralded the break-up of the former Yugoslavia, many NGOs sprang up to deliver humanitarian and psychosocial help. Some involved volunteers, whereas others were exclusively professional. The amount of international money available to fund this kind of work had a decisive influence on the development of civil society in these countries. To this day, however, it remains quite donor-driven and, in many cases, lacks roots in the general population.[19]

Thus, overall, volunteerism in the Region before 1989 was actually more widespread, better integrated into the society and better accepted than now. On the other hand, there was more compulsion involved and, in many instances, it was associated with limited adherence to basic human rights principles. For this reason, it is hard, especially from the mind-set of many young

19. (Fioramonti & Heinrich, 2006)

people today, to understand how some people in the past enormously enjoyed doing hard work that they were more or less forced to do. The idea of working for free might now seem like an insult to one's sense of individual freedom, but this is a sentiment which was not so well developed in the Region in days past. Hence, the transition has caused a gloomy light to be cast on the mass work actions of the past, which were in fact enjoyed and celebrated by many. Any efforts to expand volunteerism in the Region must contend with this heritage, and accommodate both points of view.

IN CONCLUSION…

- Both the traditional and socialist-era forms of volunteerism present a very powerful background that still strongly influence volunteerism, popular attitudes to it, and its potential for development today.
- These complex traditions and people's ideas and recollections of them have to be understood by anyone wanting to understand or promote volunteerism in the Region now.
- In order to promote volunteerism, strategies should be differentiated according to the audience. For those who have positive associations with volunteerism, strategies can build on those images. For those who have negative associations, there are two options: the upsurge of interest in rebuilding civil society under a new national identity, and as an expression of individual freedom and expressing oneself through participation in personal interests/causes.

7. A social group as understood here can be constituted by many different kinds of ties: locality, kinship, ethnicity, religious allegiance, etc.

THE FOUR FORMS OF VOLUNTEERISM AS DEFINED BY THE UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS (UNV) PROGRAMME (SEE BOX) ARE ALL PRESENT IN THE REGION, BUT ARE CHANGING IN THEIR RELATIVE IMPORTANCE AS COUNTRIES UNDERGO TRANSITION. IT IS, THUS, NECESSARY TO UNDERSTAND THE START- AND POSSIBLE END-POINTS OF THIS TRANSITION AS IT RELATES TO THE UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES WITHIN EACH COUNTRY. WHILE A WHOLE SUB-DISCIPLINE CALLED 'TRANSITOLOGY'[20] HAS ARISEN TO DEBATE THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PROCESSES OF DEMOCRATIZATION IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES AND REGIONS, IT HAS NOT BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL IN PRODUCING TESTABLE HYPOTHESES OR IN ESTABLISHING A BASE OF SOUND EVIDENCE THAT COULD BE APPLIED TO CREATING AND IMPLEMENTING VOLUNTEER PROGRAMMING THAT SUPPORTS HUMAN-CENTRED DEVELOPMENT. HOWEVER, QUANTITATIVE DATA FROM THE WORLD VALUES SURVEY INDICATES THAT MEMBERSHIP IN, AND UNPAID WORK DONE FOR, A VARIETY OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS ACROSS THE REGION ARE NOT FAR BELOW THOSE IN THE WEST.[21]

This is particularly so in the Western Balkans. The levels seem to drop as one goes further East, but it is hard to be sure whether this drop is a real one, or if lower levels of 'visible' volunteering are complemented by higher levels of 'hidden' volunteering. Certainly, by examining the survey data in more detail, it is clear that current trends in volunteering can be strengthened across the Region, and new strategies for expansion formulated. Towards this aim, the following sections assess the region's trends in volunteerism by examining current numbers, potential opportunities, and policy development needs.

Forms of Volunteer Activity
Each of these types of volunteer activity is found in all parts of the world. However, the form taken and the balance of typology will differ from country to country in accordance with local traditions and particular cultural contexts.

1. Mutual aid or self-help
2. Service to others
3. Participation or civic engagement
4. Campaigning or advocacy

1. ASSESSING THE NUMBERS

Volunteerism encompasses a diversity of pro-social behaviour that is practised, in some form, throughout the world. However, because countries, cultures and languages are different, it is extremely challenging to assess volunteer practices through one concise definition. In Western countries, for example, unpaid work done within the family or for private gain is not considered volunteering; rather, there must be a public service dimension to the

20. (Tokés, 1999)
21. Fourth wave WVS data from 1999-2004

activity. In many countries, however, 'the family' does not have clear boundaries; 'private' is not so easy to distinguish from 'public'; and 'work' is not so clearly separated from 'private life.' As a result, survey attempts to measure absolute levels of volunteering for a given country – much less an entire region – may vary widely.

Hence, this study has taken two formal survey approaches to assess current levels of volunteering in the Region. The first approach seeks to overcome problems related to differences in definition by assessing behavioural characteristics and practices that are associated with volunteerism. For this approach, the World Values Survey (WVS) provides a substantial theoretical basis to evaluate volunteer culture, backed up by the best empirical dataset on human values available. It provides a broad range of information on sense of community; tolerance and xenophobia; and attitudes to and practice of, amongst other things, volunteering.[22] Information comes from representative household surveys carried out all over the world during 1981-84, 1980-93, 1989-1993 and 1999-2004. Data from these periods, termed 'waves,' are integrated into one dataset to facilitate time series analysis. Ideas about what transitions mean in terms of social values and behaviour can then be tested against survey data from the last thirty years.

The second approach uses data from the Civicus Civil Society Index (CSI), and measures feedback from civil society organizations (CSO) about the number of volunteers they engage, in addition to representative surveys of a given general population about their volunteer involvement. The CSI also employs an advisory group to estimate the breadth and depth of a country's civil society in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the data. Both surveys include questions about a range of different forms of volunteering, but mainly as practised through organizations. In this way, they primarily cover the second and fourth forms of volunteerism: service to others and advocacy/campaigning. The first form, mutual help, is not covered very well in the data, nor is the third form, participation/civic engagement (such as holding office in a local community).

To accommodate for this, and to further round out the quantitative data, the study also conducted focus group discussions with key volunteerism stakeholders.[23] These discussions provided invaluable first-hand information, offered examples of 'best practice,' and helped to identify practical strategies for improving the impact of volunteerism in the Region.

22. (WVS, 2009)
23. Focus group countries included: Croatia, Macedonia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia and Moldova. A minimum of four discussion groups were conducted in each country.

Social values and volunteer behaviour

Most countries in the Region, as most throughout the world, have developed both socially and economically over the last thirty years. What changes in the values relevant to volunteerism have they undergone during this process? From the vast amount of data gathered by the WVS, two dimensions emerge to explain much of the differences between countries in terms of the human social values that influence volunteerism: traditional values vs. secular-rational values, and survival values vs. self-expression values.

The shift from traditional towards secular-rational values is common in societies in which services are provided by the State. This shift is associated with lower numbers of people volunteering. However, the other trend from survival values to self-expression (or 'lifestyle') values tends to be associated with higher levels of volunteering.[24] Self-expression values are furthermore strongly associated with democratic cultures.

Overall, the trends in the Region in terms of volunteerism-relevant values and behaviour are positive.[25] However, developments since 1990 in the Soviet successor states are somewhat worrying, as certain countries have shown a retreat back towards survival values. Some social scientists[26] interpret this change as a phase of 'post-transition honeymoon decline' - in essence, not indicative of declining values about volunteerism and civic activism, but more a sign of attending to practical interests, such as pursuing employment.

Still, informal civic activism is not declining, but is actually increasing in the Region. This is important because some forms of spontaneous voluntary action are more strongly associated with other civic values than is membership in formalized voluntary organizations.[27] Moreover, the WVS time-series data shows that this kind of civic action (or rather, the self-expression values that drive it) in the 1990s was actually a predictor of good governance in 2000, whereas membership in traditional volunteer organizations was not. In other words, those countries in which the population was democratically-minded and took part in activism actually improved their standard of governance in subsequent years in comparison with other countries.

Such civic action as a complement to government policy can be a key to countries successfully managing further transition and ensuring that continuing human development remains a focus of policy. Thus, understanding how to respond to these social value trends is essential in order to effectively plan how much effort to dedicate to various types of volunteerism in different sectors of society.

24. (Inglehart, 2003)
25. (Welzel & Inglehart, 2006)
26. (Loukianov & Mikhailova, 2001)
27. (Welzel & Inglehart, 2006, p. 134)

Countries	CIVICUS Civil Society Index 2009 Percentage of population:		World Values Survey 1999-2004 Percentage of population:		
	member of CSO	taken part in collective community action	volunteer	volunteer with at least one organization	member of at least one organization
Albania				54.1%	67.4%
Bosnia and Herzegovina				22.6%	36.2%
Croatia	35% one CSO	20% participated in community activities	38.4%	17.5%	37.8%
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	13.71% more than one CSO	28.5% participated in community meetings	32.1%	31.5%	45.7%
Montenegro	45% more than one CSO		18%		
Kosovo					
Serbia	56% one CSO	17% participated in community meetings	43%	9.6%	30.6%
Armenia	21% one CSO	13% participated in community meetings	9%		
Kyrgyzstan				15.5%	39.7%
Belarus				15.4%	43.8%
Ukraine		48.4% participated in community meetings or community activities	57%	10.6%	32.6%
Moldova				34.2%	41.3%
Russia			50%	6.5%	32%
EU-new[28]				18.6%	30.4%
EU-old[29]				28%	52.9%

Table1. Comparison of estimated percentages of volunteering populations between the World Values Survey and the Civicus Civil Society Index*
Source: (Civicus, 2009); (WVS, 2009)

Cluster analysis approach

A comparison of WVS and CSI data, in Table 1, reveals little consistency in volunteerism scores for the same country. For example, CSI gives the percentage of volunteering in Russia as 50 percent, compared to 6.5 percent for WVS. In general, WVS gives lower estimates, which is to be expected since the questions posed in WVS ask specifically about volunteering for organizations, and so exclude hidden volunteerism that takes place outside of organizations. Yet, despite this potential for under-reporting, the WVS addresses a large number of questions about volunteerism within types of organizations. For this reason, it is particularly informative in identifying which population subgroups are engaged in which forms of volunteerism.

28. The countries who joined the EU in 2005
29. The EU 15, i.e. the EU in 2003, plus Cyprus and Malta, who joined in 2004
* Only countries for which data is available are shown.

In analyzing the WVS data, five major groupings of volunteer practice in the Region emerge:

- sports
- labour movement
- religious / cultural / educational / social welfare
- professional / health / peace / human rights
- youth / local politics / women

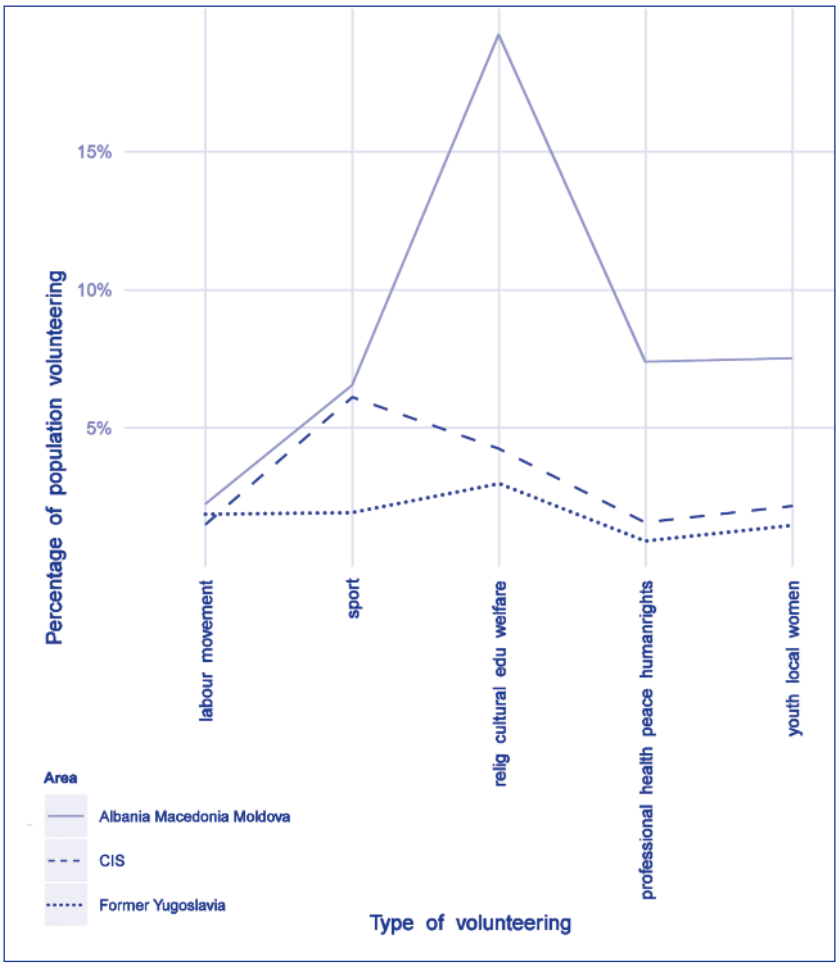

Figure 1. Percentage of volunteer population by country group, type of organization*
Source: (Powell, 2010)

By evaluating the volunteerism levels for each group, it is possible to cluster countries accordingly[30]:

Albania, Moldova and Macedonia - These three countries report very high levels of unpaid work for civil society organizations.[31]

30. Data was only available for these 10 countries.
31. Rather disappointingly, none of these three countries were included among countries that were selected for the detailed WVS report on volunteerism (Inglehart, 2003). The high scores for these countries are not found in other data sets, but they are confirmed in another analysis of the same data set. Interestingly, all three are close together in terms of global values.
* Reanalysis of data from WVS wave 4: 1999-2004

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia - These countries are very similar to each other and are also quite similar to the EU countries, both in terms of structure of the scores for volunteering and also in their global values scores.

Ukraine, Russian Federation, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus - The levels of volunteering overall are the lowest in the Region.

Across these clusters, there are some quite dramatic differences between the levels of different kinds of volunteering in different groups of countries, and also between men and women.

Overall, as Figure 1 illustrates, volunteering in religious and cultural organizations is the most popular form of volunteering. However, if we discount Albania, Macedonia and Moldova, volunteering in sport organizations is the most prevalent. Labour movement volunteering is almost equally popular in all three groups of countries, which means it is relatively unpopular in Albania, Macedonia and Moldova. The remaining two types of volunteer organizations are similar in level and popularity in the different groups of countries, with levels in Albania, Macedonia and Moldova much higher than elsewhere. Overall, the former Yugoslavia and the CIS countries are quite similar; levels are somewhat higher in the former Yugoslavia, where sport volunteering is particularly popular.

In terms of the level of volunteer activity within countries, Albania, Macedonia and Moldova are the most involved in nearly every type of volunteering organization, including the less popular types. It is notable that reported volunteer rates for these countries more than double those for the next highest cluster, the remaining countries of former Yugoslavia. Further dissection of the data - by age, gender, location, education and income – provides additional important insights[32] that, when combined with feedback from volunteer practitioners in each of the surveyed countries, builds a fuller picture of volunteerism in the Region:

Age

Results from all the surveys overwhelmingly indicate that volunteerism is most popular amongst young people. Indeed, UNV is currently supporting initiatives that target young people in the Balkans and CIS regions. Yet, while younger people do volunteer more on average, the picture is much more mixed when one takes a closer look at the types of volunteerism taking place. Different forms of volunteering are clearly more popular depending upon the age group involved. The WVS data tell an interesting story – for example, sport volunteering in the former Yugoslavia is very popular with all men above 50, but only with women up to the age of 30. In all the other countries, it is very popular with men up to 30, but not with women or older men.

32. Detailed graphing for each variable can be found in the full study (Powell, 2010)

For one reason or another, youth volunteerism is much more visible – at least to international agencies and their researchers – than volunteers of other ages. This may be due to the reported levels of youth unemployment in the region, which are quite alarming. Youth unemployment was nearly 60 percent in Macedonia; 65-95 percent in Tajikistan; around 30 percent and rising in Armenia; and at least 25 percent in Russia overall (and much higher in the south).[33] So, volunteering may be an essential option for a very large number of young people, both in order to give them something meaningful to do, and also to provide possible routes for employment.

On the other hand, a generally ageing population in most of the countries, and a tendency for the birth rate to reduce as countries develop, may mean increasing prospects for including greater numbers of older people in volunteering.

> **Volunteers are clearly demonstrating examples of civic spirit through their actions, are helping to form models of tolerant behaviour and social partnership, are improving the moral health of society and people's quality of life, and are reducing material inequities. By changing the social situation even in a small way, for example by working with young people, young volunteers 're-educate' themselves as well, making them less prone to social vices.**
>
> **(Nakipova, 2008)**

Gender

Overall, men in the Region are reported to volunteer a little more often than women. Focus groups reported that women are most likely to be found volunteering to help children, disabled people, orphans, and the elderly; whereas men tend to volunteer for management tasks, disaster mitigation and environmental protection projects. However, according to the WVS data, the differences are not so strong.

In some countries, there has traditionally been an expectation on women, especially from higher social classes, to do voluntary humanitarian activities. In Croatia at the beginning of the twentieth century century, there was even an obligation for girls between 18 and 20 years of age to serve as 'one-year volunteers.'[34] Some vestiges of this tradition continue today, and may be why the WVS interest profiles between men and women in the former Yugoslavia show the most difference.

Urban / rural

The nature and extent of volunteerism varies greatly from city to countryside. Some areas in the Region are so remote that they are completely cut off in the winter, and mutual cooperation is very strong. Particularly

33. Based on data gathered from the national statistical agencies of each country.
34. (Šilović-Karić, 2004, cit. in Bagić, 2006)

in remote areas, there are many opportunities for volunteer organizations to be involved in many areas of community life and, in so doing, effectively integrate and broaden their activities. For example, the volunteer organization Khirad operates in Khorog, Tajikistan, a remote part of the country that borders Afghanistan and China. Having started its activities by providing sports and other youth services, it has since constructed a cultural centre and a tuberculosis hospital, and provides educational programmes to promote gender equality and public health.

There is also a gender twist to the urban/rural distinction. In Albania, Macedonia and Moldova, men in rural areas are much more likely to be engaged in religious or cultural volunteering than in urban areas, whereas in the other countries, this is only true for women. Some focus group members reported a shortage of male volunteers - especially in rural areas - for service provision projects. On the other hand, many tasks involved in conducting a *hashar* involve heavy labour, and are nearly always carried out by men. This may, thus, be a case of 'hidden volunteering' going unrecognized because of its informal delivery (see Chapter 3, 'Bonding and Bridging').

Income / education

Although volunteering is perceived as being less prevalent amongst excluded groups, such as the Roma, the data on exclusion and ethnicity recorded in the WVS do not allow this question to be followed empirically in any straightforward way.[35] In nearly every case, people with higher education volunteer more than people with secondary education, who in turn volunteer more than those with only primary education. This difference holds across country groups and types of volunteering. However, the picture with regard to income is much less clear. Overall, those with high incomes volunteer more. Religious volunteering is an exception, however, with differences between the income levels being much less clear.[36]

2. ASSESSING THE OPPORTUNITIES

One challenge in outlining the opportunities for volunteerism in the Region is that the boundaries between paid work, informal and formal volunteering can be quite unclear. In Tajikistan, wages are so low that paid work has been described as a kind of volunteering.[37] Focus group participants in the east of the Region stressed more the idea that a volunteer is *entitled* to get something back in terms of job skill, potential employment, a trip abroad, etc. In

35. For example, the ethnic label 'gypsy' was available in some of the WVS surveys for some countries, but very few respondents used this label for their ethnicity.
36. This finding is confirmed by some research from Croatia (Ledić, 2001; Forčić, 2006): The population outside bigger urban environments helps the church more, especially on the (Adriatic) islands; respondents who have only completed primary school are far more likely to help the church than the ones with higher qualifications; and statistically, the examinees who are not members of associations help the church significantly more.
37. (VSOT Feasibility Study, 2008)

the west of the Region, the volunteering sector is more professionalized, and volunteerism and paid work are somewhat more clearly distinguished.

Furthermore, within the Region as elsewhere, 'hidden volunteering' probably dwarfs the kinds of 'visible' volunteering that is typically recorded by cross-national studies such as the WVS. Certainly, most volunteering in the East takes place outside the familiar context of service-providing VIOs (volunteer involving organizations). As mentioned in Chapter 1, this is especially so in rural and remote areas, where deeply held traditions of mutual help still predominate.

It is, thus, important to look at volunteerism, and the opportunities available for participating in volunteer efforts, outside of quantitative approaches. The following section, based on qualitative surveying of local VIOs and focus group feedback, provides a broader understanding of how volunteerism is practiced in the Region.

Local communities

Mutual aid and self-help; nonformal and informal community organization

In rural areas, this kind of volunteerism certainly involves more volunteers than all the formally organized voluntary organizations together. For example, a quite extensive list of key volunteerism organizations provided by Tajikistan gives a total of around 25,000 volunteers. If these were all the volunteers in the country, it would mean that less than half of one percent of the population volunteers. This figure is quite at odds with reports that most of the community in the villages take part in traditional forms of volunteering.

Similarly, in larger towns and cities, the local neighbourhood is the main unit of social solidarity. In many countries of the Region, volunteerism has a strong tradition through the *mahalla* (local community) system. In Uzbekistan, for example, community-based committees, which undertake initiatives at the local levels to improve the livelihood of citizens, are active in the *mahallas*. Indeed, since 1994, the *mahalla* have been given increasing responsibilities for channelling social assistance from the central government. Under Uzbek law, the Mahalla Fund is an officially registered non-government, non-commercial organization[38] Nauryz is a traditional New Year celebration across the Central Asian region. It encompasses not only festive celebrations, but also work for the common good. During Nauryz, a wide variety of work is carried out, from tree planting and cleaning streets and parks, to constructing new pavements and giving lectures on environmental protection for schoolchildren. Wealthy individuals organize charity campaigns for orphanages, boarding schools, old people's homes and people in need.

All over the Region's traditional areas, it is common for extended families, and even whole communities, to participate in cleaning their neighbourhoods before weddings, festivals, baptisms and funerals. Just about everybody volunteers in villages, from schoolchildren to pensioners. Families get involved in voluntary actions, whether for a common goal or for the benefit

38. (Coudouel, Marnie & Micklewright, 1998)

of other families, according to the motto, 'I'll help you today and you'll help me tomorrow.'

Advocacy, campaigning and activism

With the advent of new media technology, these kinds of volunteer opportunities are greatly expanding. Bloggers help to monitor progress on key issues relevant to development and governance in many countries of the Region. Activist blogs often address social issues and call for action. Some of their volunteer work can be followed on various web portals, such as globalvoicesonline.org, which itself is translated regularly by volunteers into Albanian, Serbian and Macedonian.[39] In Albania, the Mjaft! movement is extremely popular, with 10,000 members and about 1,000 regular volunteers.[40] The movement tackles a variety of issues, such as elections, environmental problems, and energy crises, while consistently applying and furthering its primary philosophy of combating civic apathy and promoting citizen participation.

Volunteer involving organizations

Local and national VIOs

Some VIOs that were important in the old regimes have succeeded in negotiating the transition well. Sport organizations, one of the most popular forms of VIO (especially for young male volunteers), are a good example. Sport volunteering not only promotes sport in local communities, but also makes larger special sporting events possible. In Kazakhstan, for example, a special department has been established under the organizational committee of the Asian Winter Games 2011 to recruit and train volunteers. It aims to recruit more than 1,000 volunteers for Astana and 2,000 volunteers for Almaty to help with organization of the games. Volunteers are expected to help with cleaning streets, regulating traffic, providing first aid and guiding tourists.

Another very important area in which there are currently a few VIOs operating (although the numbers are increasing) is religious and cultural volunteering. There has been a very rapid expansion - in some cases an explosion - of membership in religious communities and organizations. The two main religious groups in the Region are Russian Orthodox and Islam. Both groups are extremely powerful. Volunteers can help with the upkeep of places of worship, work in orphanages and hospitals, distribute meals for the homeless and needy, organize fundraising and teach children. On the cultural side, volunteers are frequently involved in activities such as theatrical performances, local festivals, and educational seminars.

Some of the Region's countries saw a massive number of new voluntary organizations spring up after the transition, with over 100,000 being formed in Russia in the 1990s.[41] The new breed of VIOs is very much modeled on their counterparts in the rest of the world; in fact, many are funded by foreign organizations and can be distinguished according to whether the project was

39. (globalvoices, 2009)
40. (MJAFT! Movement, 2009)
41. (Salamon, 2001, p. 4)

viable *before* the foreign money arrived. The 'new' VIOs tend to be better at advocacy and campaigning, whereas some of the 'old' VIOs provide substantial levels of service where State provision is weak. The 'old' VIOs mostly manage without foreign help, but may be supported by local or state governments.

Networks of local and national VIOs

A number of countries in the Region have Volunteer Information Points (VIP), which are local or regional centres that act as intermediaries between VIOs and volunteers. They help match volunteers with placements, and can help to ensure that volunteers are assigned to work that they are really motivated to do.

Networks and regional centres are not usually themselves VIOs, but they help to coordinate the work of their member VIOs. They also provide a unified voice for lobbying in the interests of volunteers and volunteerism. The overlap between Volunteer Information Points and local centre networks is fluid. These networks, where they exist and function, can play a very important second-tier role in supporting frontline VIOs, especially because the vast majority are small and have few resources. For example, the National Assembly of the Youth Organizations of Azerbaijan Republic (NAYORA) says it represents more than half of all youth NGOs in the country.

Networks can also be a good intermediary between foreign organizations and small local initiatives. Certainly, international networks also have an important role to play in this regard. Crucially, they can help to bring together civil society in neighbouring countries during or after a conflict by supporting East-to-East volunteer exchanges, promoting volunteerism and proactive citizenship, building the capacity of civil society to deal with local development and governance processes, and establishing regional cooperation between civil initiatives.[42]

In the Region, too, some of this second-tier functionality is now moving online. There have been some attempts to place volunteerism opportunities either in dedicated volunteering placement websites, or as part of larger existing job websites, such as in Armenia.

International VIOs

Many international organizations have local offices that involve in-country volunteers. A critical problem with some of these organizations is that they tend not to penetrate deep into society, especially in rural areas. In some cases, cooperation (even with the state sector) seems to be limited. Faith-based organizations and those with historical contacts, such as the Red Cross/Red Crescent, tend to fare better. Funding from international sources is also important for the activities of many local VIOs. They sometimes pay for rent and staff costs, as well as for project materials.

42. (RIVER SEE, 2008)

International volunteers are also active in the Region. Indeed, they were involved in initiating or helping to conceive some of the most interesting examples of 'new' VIO activity reported. Although some stakeholders in the region may see Peace Corps, VSO and other volunteering agencies as enforcing the foreign policy of the West, rather than supporting them for human development goals, the fresh perspective many international volunteers bring offers a community with unique cross-cultural exchange and learning opportunities. The Roma-Gadje Dialogue is an interesting example of a hybrid project that not only sends Western European volunteers to Roma communities (mostly in Eastern Europe), but also sends Roma volunteers to the West as well as from one Roma community to another (see Chapter 3 box, p. 38).

Businesses

Business in the Region both promotes and financially supports volunteerism, particularly in providing funds to VIOs as part of their corporate philanthropy activities.

One new example is a project in Ukraine funded by Intel, together with UNV and UNDP. The project addresses the issue of youth inclusion, a new concept for Ukraine, with the introduction of innovative approaches such as: using volunteerism as a tool for achieving local development goals; bridging the gap between young people from rural and urban areas; introducing ICT as a tool for youth social activism; creating an environment for social community projects; and fostering inter-generational dialogue.[43]

Corporate volunteering, on the other hand, is rare in the Region, and is generally only found in the big multinationals. In Azerbaijan and other oil-producing countries, big foreign oil firms such as Exxon are involved in corporate giving. In many cases, this kind of support goes beyond merely transferring money to include a more visible involvement with volunteerism organizations. It is amongst these firms where the biggest potential to introduce corporate volunteering exists.

Currently, UNV's Corporate/Private Sector programme (CPS) allows volunteers, mostly individuals who work for multinational companies outside the Region, to provide short-term advisory services to support business development in interested countries. Missions last between one week and a maximum of three months. Host institutions/clients are small and medium enterprises, associations of enterprises, local NGOs, and governmental institutions such as ministries of commerce, industry, and tourism.

Over the past several years, the concept of corporate social responsibility has been making a slow, but promising, start in some of the Region's countries, notably Croatia and Serbia. Unfortunately, this start is now being adversely affected by the current economic crisis, as feedback from focus groups noted a difficulty in getting responses from companies to enquiries. Nevertheless, a minority is beginning to implement programmes, and some recruiters say

43. (UNDP, 2009a)

they credit volunteering experience when evaluating employment applications, as well.

In Kazakhstan, a country strategy on social responsibility of business organizations (*'Paryz'*) has been initiated by the President. Coordinated by the Ministry of Social Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan, it covers agreements between business organizations and CSOs in the country. In 2008, at least 4,000 social project funding agreements between business organizations and local entities (schools, kindergartens, poor families, etc.) were signed[44] under this initiative. Similarly, private foundations are also involved in encouraging social responsibility. Since 1991, for instance, the Seimar Fund in Kazakhstan has been bringing together businesses to raise money for social projects that include voluntary activities. During 2005 to 2008, the Fund completed 85 projects on volunteerism, charity, and patronage, with a total expenditure of more than USD 7 million.[45]

Finally, companies across the Region are becoming interested in supporting the Youth Banks model, which has been extensively tested in the Caucasus by the Eurasia Foundation.[46] Although it is not primarily a volunteerism model (as well as funding youth-initiated social programmes, it also promotes entrepreneurship and small-business start-up amongst young people), those involved are usually volunteers.

Religious organizations

Religion is strongly related to concepts such as duty, community and virtue, which are key to shaping how different communities volunteer. Different religious traditions have different understandings of these concepts and, thus, have encouraged the development of correspondingly different volunteer traditions and institutions. Religious organizations are involved in volunteerism not only as VIOs, as discussed earlier, but also in a variety of other ways: in promoting more universalist values of volunteerism; as the beneficiaries of volunteerism (for example, when members of a local congregation volunteer to participate in the upkeep of a church, mosque or temple); and, through advocacy, as powerful social forces that can influence government policy and public opinion on a wide range of issues.

Media

Media volunteering – using both traditional forms of mass media as well as new technologies - is not yet well developed in the Region. Overall, media organizations are not important as VIOs. In terms of promoting volunteerism, however, the media are an extremely important stakeholder. As focus group participants noted, the picture presented of volunteerism and volunteers through the media is judged to be critical in determining volunteer involvement and growth.

44. According to an interview done by the Kazakhstan Local Expert with an expert of the Ministry of Social Protection of the RK, Tverdovskaya N.G.,
45. (SSF, 2009)
46. (Eurasia Foundation, 2009)

**Volunteering for Development…
and Cross-cultural Exchange**

An example of an organization in Russia which receives official government support is the Russian Union of Youth (RUY). Founded in 1990, this NGO now has offices in 75 regions of Russia and more than 200,000 individual members. Over a million young people have participated in its programmes. It also participates in a US – Russian volunteering initiative, the 'Russian-American Volunteer Initiative' (RAVI), which is a bilateral Presidential Initiative that was established by former presidents Vladimir Putin and George Bush. Launched in 2004, RAVI's goal is to strengthen friendship and understanding between the youth of Russia and the US by organizing youth volunteer internships in both countries. The programme has included the following topics: HIV/AIDS prevention, cultural and historical heritage preservation, informational and communication technology for marginalized groups, tobacco and drug addiction prevention, sexual diseases, sports, healthy nutrition and healthy life style, student self-government, help to children with limited abilities, help to people from social risks group, and volunteerism development.

(RUY,) http://www.ruy.ru/eng.html

Governments

Governments in the Region have a wide mix of attitudes to volunteerism, which vary from requiring it, attempting to control or suppress it, attempting to encourage it, co-opting it and cooperating with it in order to outsource service provision. In the east of the Region, governments often expect their volunteerism programmes to have patriotic themes and goals. One expert interviewed in Azerbaijan opined that volunteerism should be associated with national morale and reinforce the population's cultural values. Similarly, Russia's 'Strategy of the Russian Federation on State Youth Development Policy in 2006-2010' specifically highlights volunteerism as a way to increase patriotism.[47]

Further to the west of the Region, some NGO respondents complained that although they had freedom to do whatever they wanted, as soon as their volunteer initiatives meet with any success and positive feedback in the society, they are taken over by local government authorities. On the positive side, this can be seen as a sign that their programmes are recognized as useful and successful, and government support may make their sustainability more likely. Indeed, as discussed in the next section, government has a crucial role to play in developing and enforcing policies that can both expand volunteer involvement, and make it more effective.

3. ASSESSING VOLUNTEER POLICIES

In addition to direct involvement in volunteer programmes, national governments play an important role in creating an enabling environment for

47. (Blum, 2006)

volunteerism. Studies on global non-profit activity have shown that countries with the largest social welfare spending also have the largest non-profit sectors.[48] This dispels the often-heard argument that increasing the role of volunteerism will encourage governments to reduce their services to citizens, and indicates that the opposite is much more likely to be true.

One of the most important components in supporting volunteerism is policy backed by law. Based on focus group feedback, a comprehensive law on volunteering is considered the best way to ensure a legal environment that nurtures volunteering during the rapid changes experienced within the Region's civil societies. Virtually all of the Region's countries have, through their voluntary sectors, made serious attempts to introduce laws on volunteering. These attempts have had various degrees of success. A number of countries, such as Azerbaijan and Armenia, continue to struggle in efforts to adopt their draft laws.

For those countries that have adopted laws on voluntarism,[49] or are involved in drafting such laws (see Table 2), the experience has generally been positive. The process usually involves extensive consultation and the involvement of a range of stakeholder groups. Generally speaking, the laws and drafts are quite similar and go a long way to clarifying the status of volunteers in the Region. Most laws, and the drafts currently in preparation, provide for:

- a definition of volunteering, sometimes including length of service and the maximum compensation that can be paid to volunteers;
- the introduction of a formal legal instrument - a contract on volunteering - that specifies minimum rights and duties for both volunteers and for organizers of volunteering activities, provides general guidelines as to appropriate provisions for a volunteer contract, and permits volunteers and organizations to clearly define their relationship;
- the obligation to keep evidence from the volunteering work, including the issuance of a volunteer record book;
- fines for both parties in case of inappropriate implementation of the provisions of the law;
- in some cases, protection of unemployment and other insurance benefits for volunteers;
- in some cases, tax-free status for expenses associated with the volunteers, such as costs of food and travel; and
- regulation and encouragement of volunteering in the local and/or national government institutions.

It should also be pointed out that laws can have the effect of being restrictive, as well as enabling. The law in the Republic of Srpska, one of the two entities making up Bosnia and Herzegovina, actually forbids volunteering for longer than six months in an attempt to prevent volunteers from exploitation. This means that long-term voluntary service is not possible, or is not covered by the law. Some stakeholders in the focus groups expressed concern that laws could be too bureaucratic, and require too much time and paperwork from organizations that are already very thinly stretched.

48. (Salamon, 2001, p.12)
49. Although the word 'volunteerism' is preferred in this report, the word 'voluntarism' is used here because it is most frequently used in English translations of these laws.

Subregion	Country	Law on volunteering? If so, since when?	National youth strategy or policy
Balkans	Albania	no	yes, since 2007, mentions volunteerism
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	not at state level, various drafts	not at state level.
	Croatia	2007	2004
	FyR Macedonia	2007	yes, 2005, mentions volunteerism
	Montenegro		2006
	Kosovo	no	2009
	Serbia	no, various drafts	2008
Caucasus	Armenia	no, drafts 2004 and 2008	yes, 1999, 2006
	Azerbaijan	no, draft 2008	yes, 2002, mentions volunteerism
	Georgia		
Central Asia	Kazakhstan	no	yes, 2004
	Kyrgyzstan	no	
	Tajikistan	no	yes, volunteerism recognized
	Turkmenistan		
	Uzbekistan	no	
Other CIS	Belarus		
	Ukraine	no	
	Moldova	2010	2004-9, 2009-13, mentions volunteerism
	Russia	no	2005

Table 2. Volunteering laws and national youth strategies in the Region*
Source: Country reports and other information provided by the Local Experts

On the other hand, in many European countries with high levels of volunteering, such as the United Kingdom, there is no law on volunteering, and a law on volunteering cannot, in and of itself, guarantee an environment that nurtures voluntary activity. It is important to look at the entire legal environment, including other laws and regulations that affect volunteering, such as legal frameworks that are linked to employment, social security and health insurance.

Of all the other policy instruments that promote volunteering, the most frequently mentioned is a national youth strategy. Most of the Region's countries now have one, and the majority of them mention volunteering as desirable. However, respondents in many of the countries criticized the strategies as being 'empty words' and difficult to monitor.

Another set of laws and regulations that substantially affects volunteering are those concerning education. State education systems have a particularly powerful role to play in helping young people form an opinion about volunteerism and in promoting (or suppressing) pro-social values. In some cases, they also require or recommend volunteerism-like activities in their curricula.

* Where cells are blank, information was not available.

Indeed, in most countries, volunteerism-like service learning activities form some part of the educational programme for certain disciplines. Although participation in these activities is obligatory in order to complete a given course of study, and thus not considered volunteer activity, service learning is important to volunteerism because it can potentially develop pro-volunteering attitudes amongst students. However, the nature of this work can vary from something like volunteering, well supervised and officially recognized, to other forms that are essentially forced labour. Hence, it is important for education authorities, through the provision of well-run and organized programming, to make every effort to ensure that students take away positive experiences from such programmes.

Similarly, a country's military and civic service requirements can also influence attitudes towards volunteerism. While none of the Region's countries has compulsory general civic service, some do require military service. Russia and Armenia continue to have compulsory military service, but have taken initiative in allowing civic service as an alternative. As the civic service option is more closely geared towards development programming, experience from other countries that have the civic service option shows that it can, indeed, positively affect the volunteerism landscape after the obligatory service is completed.[50]

IN CONCLUSION…

- Volunteerism strategies should be aware of how the many forms of volunteerism in the Region are already making substantial contributions to social development, and seek synergies when creating new programmes.
- The proportion of people involved in mutual aid decreases most as a country develops economically, whereas the proportion involved in advocacy and campaigning increases the most. The countries in the Region are, on average, somewhere in the middle, although there are wide imbalances in distribution.
- People are motivated to volunteer for many different reasons. Past volunteer experience is also an influencing factor. The fit between a volunteer's motivation profile and the characteristics of a volunteer placement affects how attractive a placement appears to the volunteer. Attempts to motivate citizens to volunteer must take into account these different motivational profiles.
- While volunteering emphasizes service to others, volunteers report many positive benefits to themselves, as well. As more people volunteer, these benefits can add up to very substantial improvements to the human capital of a society in active citizenship, sense of well-being, mental health, physical health and standard of living.

50. (AVSO, 2005, p. 357)

- Just as in the rest of the world, there is a dearth of solid evidence on the impact of volunteerism in the Region. More attention should be focused on obtaining this information. Encouragingly, laws on volunteering are now being adopted in the Region to support more effective practices, which should include better data collection.
- Information technology is a major tool in the expansion of volunteer opportunities, both as outlets for volunteer activity, and as a way to build networks and strengthen communication among volunteer stakeholders. For this reason, it is essential for communities to develop their ICT capabilities through infrastructure and training.
- In the context of mass unemployment, volunteering can offer a unique opportunity to break out of the conundrum of 'no job without experience; no experience without a job'. Substantial numbers of people, especially young adults, travel within the Region and abroad to seek employment. Effective planning must consider how best to engage them to encourage human-centred development through volunteerism.

BONDING AND BRIDGING

VOLUNTEERING IN THE REGION HAS A RICH TRADITION AND SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL, WITH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASSOCIATIONS IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS. WHEN CONSIDERING STRATEGIES FOR EXPANDING VOLUNTEERISM THAT EFFECTIVELY ADDRESS HUMAN-CENTRED DEVELOPMENT, IT IS THEREFORE ESSENTIAL TO LOOK AT WAYS OF ACCENTUATING THE POSITIVE, AND AVOIDING THE NEGATIVE.

Understanding the concepts of 'bonding volunteering' and 'bridging volunteering' can be quite useful in this context. **Bonding** volunteering is carried out by a member of a social group for the benefit of that group, or for the benefit of another member of the same group, **bridging** volunteering refers to volunteering that is not primarily for the benefit of the same social group.[51]

> **Improving the impact of volunteerism in the Region isn't about teaching the East how to volunteer. It is about managing the changing balance between bonding and bridging volunteering.**

Thus, bonding volunteering is more frequent in smaller communities in which people adhere to traditional values, which are more common where a higher proportion of people work in agriculture. The volunteer and beneficiary usually know one another. The volunteer acts from a strong sense of social obligation, and they may not feel their activity to purely be a result of their free decision. Nonetheless, they dedicate their time and energy because they want to contribute to their community.

Bridging volunteering is more prevalent amongst people who come from backgrounds with higher rates of social mobility and urbanization. Bridging volunteering is more likely to be formalized and 'managed' by an organization. Like the workers in a factory, volunteers are usually interchangeable in the sense that anyone with the right skills is welcome to carry out any particular task. It is a valued component of civic society that is much more visible in the media and easier to report, assess and quantify. When VIO officers and volunteers throughout the Region say "we need to educate people about volunteering and encourage them to volunteer," it is probably in reference to bridging volunteering.

It is therefore quite likely that the extent of bonding volunteering is underreported compared to bridging volunteering. Bonding volunteering is considered to be a virtuous, but necessary, response to a problem or deficit, whereas bridging volunteering is seen - at least in the West - as a virtue in its own right: the virtue is in the lack of personal necessity to engage in the work. Yet, *both* 'bonding' and 'bridging' volunteering have long been present in the Region, and have made important contributions to civil society development

51. These terms stem from Robert Putnam's (Putnam, 2000) typology of 'bridging' and 'bonding' social capital, and are used here as an extension of the relationship between development of civil society, good governance and volunteerism.

and to meeting human development needs. For this reason, it is essential that volunteer programming includes or adapts both approaches into national social development plans, based on which framework may be more effectively implemented for a given purpose and target population.

Volunteerism for the modern era

Volunteering is often seen as being at some specific point on a scale going from purely bonding at one end to purely bridging at the other (see Figure 2). In this way, forms of bonding volunteerism are often considered by development theorists as bound in tradition and, thus, less socially evolved. Instead, emphasis has been placed on moving societies towards bridging volunteerism in order to widen the circle of potential beneficiaries and broaden the effects of civic engagement. The result, as noted in Chapter 2, is that many instances of bonding volunteerism are simply 'hidden' from standard statistical surveying practices because of their informal or localized, person-to-person nature. Yet, when one considers the scale of bonding-oriented volunteerism and the types of activities it involves, one cannot discount its economic and social contributions to human-centred development.[52] In fact, a better approach may be to encourage elements of bonding, and seek to incorporate them into modernized volunteer programmes that have both approaches working in tandem towards common development goals.

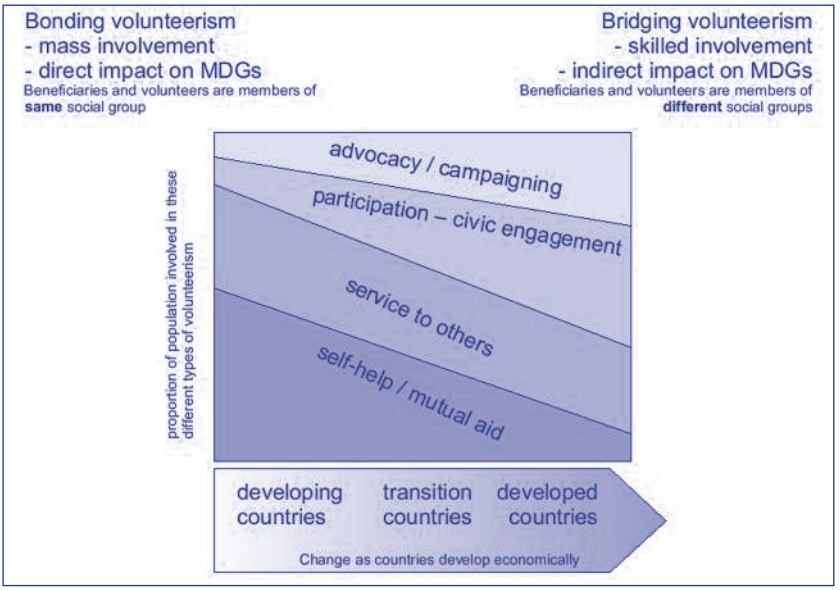

Figure 2. Bonding to bridging – Changing proportions towards development
Source: (Powell, 2010)

War provides a precedent

To understand the effectiveness of this dual framework, one need only look to the source of the largest recent volunteer mobilizations across the Region

52. (Schugerensky and Mundel, 2005)

– war. On the one hand, there has been massive popular involvement in militaristic and nationalist movements, not to mention volunteers for the army, which have played on both bonding and bridging motivational approaches. Of course, such militaristic and nationalistic movements do not fit into the standard definition of 'volunteerism' because they were neither peaceful nor respectful of human rights.[53] However, the humanitarian response to the consequences of war has legitimately involved even greater numbers of people in both bonding and bridging volunteerism.

In Azerbaijan and Armenia, for example, the first mass volunteer movement since independence appeared at the beginning of 1992 in connection with the Armenian-Azerbaijan/Karabakh conflict. Many people helped refugees and internally displaced persons, for example, by providing them with temporary living shelters; assisting in shelter construction; taking care of the young, elderly, and injured; and collecting clothes. While some of this activity was managed at a formalized level, much of it was done via bonding volunteerism.

Likewise, many refugees from the war in former Yugoslavia were unwillingly exposed to finding out how much help one could expect from these ties of biological and 'chosen' family and friendship, on the one hand, and anonymous charity, on the other. Massive numbers of people in Serbia and Croatia were involved in volunteering to look after refugees. During that conflict, over 400,000 Bosnian and Herzegovinian refugees were accepted into Croatia, alone.[54]

In Tajikistan, the 1992 civil war affected the development of the whole country. Amongst local and international VIOs, some (such as the Aga Khan Foundation) expanded operations in response, but others had to be suspended. Hence, much more of the recovery was done through localized, informal community efforts.

Natural disasters provide a second

Disaster response is another area where both bonding and bridging volunteer frameworks have worked in tandem. In Tajikistan, where every year there are up to 50 natural disasters, bonding and bridging efforts must be practised together in order to address the huge scale of the crises:

> Every year Tajikistan [...] is the site of […] natural disasters – earthquakes, mud and landslides, floods, droughts or cold waves. Complementing the efforts of the State and other organizations, the Red Crescent disaster response teams (DRT) [...] help people overcome the crisis. … "There are only 12 of us in the team and we know that without volunteers from the local community, we will not be able to put together a good operation," notes Nigora Sharifova, a 44-year-old nurse from the local hospital.[55]

52. (Schugerensky and Mundel, 2005)
53. (Pollock, 2001)
54. (UNHCR, 2009)
55. (ReliefWeb, 2008)

In fact, in some ways, bonding volunteerism has served to 'birth' more structured bridging efforts:

> Some of the strongest new VIOs in the Region have arisen out of spontaneous responses to natural disasters. An example highlighted from the best practice review conducted in Armenia for this report is Pyunic. Founded in 1989 to help children who were injured by the 1988 Spitak earthquake, Pyunic (became an official charitable organization in 1990 and) continues to serve disabled Armenians, including a new generation of those disabled during the Karabakh war.[56]

Preparedness for possible future disasters, as well, is an area in which CSOs can make very meaningful interventions in working at the grass-roots level. Indeed, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has already been active in this regard.

DUAL FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT

Certainly, this dual framework can also have a significant role to play in the Region's economic development, particularly because countries are at various transitional stages of development.

Indeed, one can understand different forms of volunteerism as responses to country contexts, in which one or the other framework may be more applicable. For example, bonding volunteerism is particularly relevant in poorer economies, such as those parts of Central Asia where the focus is on survival. Service to others is most important when the State is not strong enough to provide essential services, such as in the health and education sectors. Although these services were quite strong throughout the Region under socialism, they have greatly weakened in many areas since 1990.[57] In countries with stronger economies, however, it makes more sense for volunteers to concentrate their efforts either on persuading the State to extend the quantity and/or quality of social provision, or to complement the efforts of local or national government in functions that it is unable to provide.

Thus, in some ways, bonding volunteering and bridging volunteering tend to complement one another in the sense that where one is strong, the other tends to be weaker. One case is Tajikistan, where most of the country is rural and a large part of rural life depends on voluntary work. There is virtually no national-level support structure for bridging volunteerism. Yet, this may soon change. As countries transition, other volunteerism approaches that employ certain aspects of both bonding and bridging in complement are proving very effective. Just as has occurred out of disaster recovery efforts, forms of bonding volunteerism can evolve into 'scaled up' more formalized programmes that provide outside support while still meeting development

56. (Powell, 2010)
57. This is evidenced by the fall in HDI scores from 1990 to 2000 for some countries. (UNDP, 2000)

needs on a local level; conversely, many bridging VIOs already use community development approaches that tap into traditional, grass-roots community activity. Ideas for applying elements of both frameworks to human-centred development schemes are further examined below.

Strengthening from within

Bonding volunteerism at its best puts the principle of subsidiarity[58] into action: Local needs are met by direct local action without local or national government needing to be involved. Community-driven development (CDD), which has been adopted as a primary development tool of the World Bank and other development agencies, leverages traditions of bonding volunteering in the way it encourages and enables people who want to make improvements in their own local community. At the same time, there are challenges when applied within certain communities: as is well documented in social science literature and in the Civicus CSI,[59] CDD tends to activate local elites. While this is to some extent intended, it does also open these projects up to criticism about the lack of transparency and nepotism.

Another positive aspect of bonding volunteering is its wide-scale observance in the Region. Long-established cultural traditions advocating an ethos of service can provide fertile ground for introducing other volunteer activities, and for expanding networks of volunteerism. The concept of *hashar* is not only constructed around the idea of the extended community as family, but it is also driven by a strong sense of social duty that can transcend direct mutual help to reach out to other communities. In this way, it may also have characteristics of bridging volunteerism.

Certainly, too, informal, spontaneous and one-off forms of volunteerism in the Region remain very much alive. Yet, they, too, are changing in character. Neighbourhoods are still extremely important for volunteerism, especially in the east of the Region. However, the primary social groups are increasingly those brought together by causes and ideas: issue groups and 'tribes' constituted through new media, rather than through physical proximity.

Indeed, the meaning of 'community' is changing rapidly in the world. Although many of the Region's countries are not yet very well connected into new media, this situation is changing perhaps more rapidly than the citizens of the countries concerned may expect. The growth of Internet use from 2000 to 2008 has exploded ten-fold in some of the Region's countries.[60] That means that planning now has to take into account a level of 'common cause through connectivity' that may currently seem unrealistic, but which will certainly offer greater opportunities for both development and volunteerism in the Region.

Closely linked to this, there is some concern as to whether civil societies and education systems are ready for what pro-social behaviour is going to (have

58. Refers to the idea that 'functions which subordinate or local organizations perform effectively belong more properly to them than to a dominant central organization' (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2009: http://www.merriam-webster.com)
59. (Mansuri et al., 2003) (Fioramonti & Heinrich, 2006, p. 16)
60. (Miniwatts Marketing Group, 2009)

to) look like in ten years' time. While formal civic participation is still lower in the Region than in Western Europe, there are some indications that informal civic activism is already increasing quite fast and seems to be stronger than in the new EU countries. However, while the domestic environment in many of the Region's western countries is slowly approaching the EU's sphere of influence and values, the increasing influence of China and the return to influence of religions such as Islam and the Orthodox Church may revise this process in ways as yet unforeseen. Equally, although the influence of the Russian Federation decreased in the years following 1990, the situation is changing again now.

Broadening Skills and Expanding Perspective

Roma Gadje Dialog through Service (GDTS) is an innovative voluntary service programme that engages both Roma and non-Roma ("Gadje") volunteers in Roma communities in Europe, including Eastern European countries such as the Ukraine. RGDTS is active in:

a) giving the Roma, especially those from communities in Central and Eastern Europe, opportunities to journey outside their own communities. In so doing, they volunteer in social, environmental and cultural projects in Eastern, Central and Western Europe that will broaden their knowledge and skills, and enable them to contribute to the further development of their own communities after their service, and

b) putting non-Roma (Gadje) volunteers into local community projects involving Roma for one or two years. After their voluntary service, individuals are encouraged to become involved in public education activities in their own countries and regions.

(RGDTS, 2009)

Reaching farther out

Advocacy and campaigning are forms of volunteerism that tend to require new and different skills. While they have always been present in the Region, they are becoming more common and are increasingly taking on bridging volunteering characteristics. At the same time, the character of these individual forms of volunteerism is changing to be more inclusive. For instance, civic participation is more likely to be for the benefit of marginal groups. This is a significant development because all of the Region's countries have socially excluded populations who are particularly vulnerable on all or nearly all of the dimensions of well-being as defined by the MDGs (see box, p.1).

Social exclusion is a complex and multi-dimensional process. It involves the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods, and services. It denotes an inability to participate in normal relationships and activities that are available to the majority of people in a society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political arenas. It affects both the quality of an individual's life and the cohesion of society, as a whole. Thus, activities that improve social inclusion can play a particularly important role in the Region's development and achievement of the MDGs. At the individual level, they have the important additional benefit of nurturing a sense of empowerment.

This movement towards activities to include the excluded is growing across the Region, particularly in the more developed western countries. This expansion is consistent with the empirical finding that the difference between the Region and the EU is not primarily on the traditional/secular dimension, but on the survival/self-expression dimension. Specifically, identifying with 'causes' outside one's own group – such as heterosexual people supporting gay rights – is a phenomenon most associated with self-expression values. These changes increasingly lead to the formalization of certain kinds of volunteerism, specifically voluntary service to others, civic participation and advocacy volunteerism. Boundaries become clearer, NGOs become more professionalized, and often smaller (but more committed) numbers of people are involved in any one particular voluntary service.

At the same time, VIOs that focus on these types of activities also face certain challenges:

- They often do not have a meaningful strategy development function, but instead concentrate mainly on project implementation.
- The majority are 'one-person shows' run by charismatic individuals. This is both a blessing and a curse. This means low turnover of leadership, and can be related to unproductive infighting between VIOs. The leader is often the only person providing direction and taking responsibility for fundraising activities.
- Their mission is very broad, which will allow them to apply to different projects, but also means that agendas tend to be set by donors.
- These kinds of organizations and their officers can be viewed with suspicion by many. This means that they may avoid the role of distributing aid because it could leave them open to accusations of corruption.[61]

Thus, both bonding and bridging approaches to volunteerism have their own strengths and weaknesses, depending on how they are implemented: one works through a foundation of social inclusion, while the other works to breakdown social exclusion. From a functionalist perspective, the more a voluntary action has bridging characteristics, the greater becomes the circle of potential beneficiaries - from the immediate family to the community, an ethnic group, a nation state, regionally or even internationally. Bridging volunteerism is practicable for wider communities, helping to care for beneficiaries who might slip through the net of the shorter-term (and more local) cost-benefit calculation - which drives bonding volunteerism. However, the reduced potential payback for individuals associated with bridging volunteerism implies that these broader communities need to employ other means to encourage it, such as social popularization, appeal to a religious imperative, or an attractive universalist ideology, such as environmentalism. Hence, it is the mix between bonding and bridging volunteering that needs to be taken into account if volunteering is to make the best possible contribution to negotiating the transition in support of human-centred development.

61. (Dervishi, 2002, p. 10)

IN CONCLUSION…

- Volunteerism in developing countries tends to be bonding. This applies to all four types of volunteerism, as defined by UNV (see p. 15). For example, even campaigning and advocacy will typically be for the benefit of members of the same group.
- Bridging volunteering is more likely to be carried out by small groups or individuals and tends to require more cognitive and organizational, rather than practical, skills. These activities are likely to have an indirect impact on the MDGs (for example, campaigning to change a law on health provision), as opposed to a direct impact (for example, directly caring for people with AIDS).
- Promoting volunteerism in the Region means managing the changing balance between bonding and bridging volunteerism.
- Advances in human development (and progress on the MDGs) can best be achieved by working together with VIO schemes that are better embedded in local communities and traditions, but apply operational principles of schemes that are more oriented to Western ways of working.

THE WAY FORWARD

NEARLY ALL THE COUNTRIES IN THE REGION HAVE QUITE RECENTLY BEEN THROUGH EXPERIENCES OF WAR, REVOLUTION OR NATURAL DISASTER. THE DRAMATIC EVENTS AND CHANGES EXPERIENCED BY MANY PEOPLE IN THE REGION DURING THE LAST 30 YEARS SHOW THAT, ESPECIALLY IN TIMES OF SOCIAL STRESS, NEARLY EVERYONE WILL ENGAGE IN BONDING, AND PERHAPS BRIDGING, VOLUNTEERISM.

In order to promote volunteerism as a means to reach the Millennium Development Goals, strategies should be differentiated according to the audience. For those who have positive associations with volunteerism from socialism, strategies can emphasize and build on those affirmative images and experiences. For those who have negative associations, there are two further options. Some have taken part in an upsurge of interest in volunteerism as a part of rebuilding civil society under the sign of a new national identity and as a reaction to the years of communism. Those who are not attracted by either of these types of movements might be better addressed by programmes and messages that emphasize individual freedom and the opportunity to express oneself.

Stakeholders throughout the Region agree that the most important and promising strategy for increasing the impact of volunteerism is to promote it as something attractive to do. But, this should not take the form of 'teaching volunteerism basics to people' (respondent in focus group in Azerbaijan), but as celebrating something that ordinary people *already* do. Other strategies identified for this study address law and policy development; integration into the education system; use of volunteer networks; coordination with local and state institutions; corporate volunteerism; and exchange programmes. This booklet concludes with a listing of action-oriented strategies for each area:

Promotional campaigns

- Build capacity on promoting volunteerism and provide professional consulting and resources, rather than assuming that anyone can promote volunteerism.
- Present volunteering as poly-motivated, something everyone can benefit from in different ways while helping (rather than as a specifically altruistic phenomenon), whether this motivation is related to career, employment, socialising, education, compensation or the pursuit of ideals, and whether it benefits the volunteers or their families or communities.
- Do not assume that one size fits all, or that all target / beneficiary groups can be covered in one campaign.
- Link volunteering to popular images (music, sports) and celebrity endorsements.
- Be aware of the gender and age aspects of volunteering; women and men of different ages in the Region usually volunteer in different ways, in different contexts, and for partly different reasons.
- Ensure that minorities are given an opportunity to volunteer.

- Affirm and leverage these various different forms without trying to rename them or appropriate them for a global initiative; (it does not matter what t-shirts the volunteers are wearing, and in fact many of them aren't the sort of people who wear t-shirts anyway).
- Highlight how volunteering can be an expression and exploration of one's self-identity.
- Stress links with existing forms and traditions of volunteering, and celebrate/encourage both bonding and bridging forms of volunteerism, as appropriate.
- Be open to the ideographic legacy of the socialist period, at least in countries with a more positive attitude to the socialist past.
- Provide opportunities for groups and/or families to volunteer, as well as virtual groups and networks.
- Link activities in with the 10th anniversary of the International Year of Volunteering in 2011.

Law and policy development

- For countries without volunteering laws, establish communication with IVO networks in countries that do have laws in order to learn from their experiences.
- For countries with established volunteering laws, ensure networking with the voluntary sector in countries with laws underway in order to ensure that the drafts are comprehensive.
- Give attention to improving health and social insurance coverage for volunteers.
- Develop a model for institutional recognition of time spent volunteering. Both educational credit and service/employment benefits should be considered.
- Work towards adopting policy that upholds quality standards in volunteering.

Integration into education systems

- Provide school authorities and students with opportunities to volunteer inside and/or outside of schools.
- Integrate volunteerism values and/or practices into the curricula. Consider ways of broadening opportunities outward to involve parents.
- Identify motivated teachers to coordinate volunteer activities, and ensure that they are credited for their participation.
- Set aside special class-wide or school-wide volunteer 'event days' that teach the values of volunteerism and promote a volunteer culture.
- Examine where unpaid voluntary work is required for acquisition of degrees, and adopt quality standards so that the experience is valuable for both the student and the beneficiary.
- Encourage students to volunteer throughout their lives, as a valuable component of lifelong learning.

Support to VIOs and volunteer networks

- Encourage information sharing among VIOs, especially of impact monitoring data and lessons learned, and between volunteers.
- Strengthen/expand networks through the use of websites and other new media. Consider designs and communication approaches that are attractive and easy to use.
- Support a network of decentralized volunteer centres and encourage CDD, which can help limit donor influence to the degree that it may detract from the relevance of programme activities.
- Highlight how volunteerism can be an alternative route to professional development and to increasing employability.
- Integrate exchange programmes among VIO staff with corresponding partnerships/networks
- Visit best-practice organizations.
- Provide capacity-building experiences that focus on strengthening both operational and promotional aspects of VIO programming.

Coordination with local and state institutions

- Encourage volunteer placements in state and local institutions such as schools, health services, public works, etc.
- Support training for managers in how to manage volunteer programming and work with volunteers.
- Create mechanisms to regulate the legal status of volunteers and the protection of paid workers.
- Establish local and regional placement databases. Consider linking up with libraries, either public or school-affiliated.
- Build relationships between VIOs and governmental authorities to identify needs and ways to develop volunteerism that are mutually advantageous. Consider methods of structuring these relationships through regular meetings and/or a formalized body.

Corporate volunteerism

- Explore ways of encouraging social responsibility in the business sector. For companies, assess ways to interest staff in volunteering and offer programming that instills a social conscience.
- Publish examples of good practice in the media. Consider appropriate ways of awarding those who actively participate.
- Provide companies/employees with opportunities for learning about volunteer opportunities, such as the establishment of a resource centre, regular e-communication, corporate sponsorship of events or programmes, etc.

ABOUT THE STUDY...

The information presented in this booklet is based on research that was commissioned under the UNV/UNDP 'Preparatory Assistance Project on Promotion of Volunteerism for Development in Europe and the CIS' during 2008 and 2009. From this research, UNV has produced a regional study on volunteerism across selected countries in Eastern Europe and the CIS. The study, *Understanding Volunteerism for Development in South-Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States: Lessons for Expansion*,[62] is the first of its kind for the Region.

Based on extensive investigation carried out in eight countries - Armenia and Azerbaijan (Caucasus); Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (South-Eastern Europe); Kazakhstan and Tajikistan (Central Asia); and Moldova and Russia (Western CIS) - the study features examples of best practice; findings from country focus group discussions and local interviews with key volunteerism practitioners; and strategies for increasing the impact of volunteerism. The report also examines the 'who' and 'how' of voluntary activity in the Region by presenting existing data from the Human Development Index and the World Value Survey, and by conducting further in-depth new analyses on the WVS data.

Important questions addressed in detail include:

- Why can volunteerism help to achieve the MDGs in the Region?
- What are the weaknesses of volunteerism in the Region?
- How can the impact of volunteerism be increased?
- What are the opportunities and risks for expanding the impact of volunteerism?
- Which is the best strategy for each of the Region's countries?

The full study can be accessed at: http://europeandcis.undp.org

62. Powell, S. (2010) Understanding Volunteerism for Development in South-Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States: Strategies for Expansion. Bonn: UNV/UNDP.

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