

From Volunteers to Active Citizens.



16.▶

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Charo Lanao Madden putting the question to us, 'What does it mean to be an active global citizen in the context of international volunteering?'



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▲ THE AHA MOMENT

Illustration capturing Aha Moments, one of the themes explored during the curriculum development



Introduction

This curriculum has been developed to support the learning journey from international volunteering to active citizenship.

Context

We are a group of 7 EU-based organisations working with returned international volunteers across Europe: GVC Italia (Italy), Alianza por la Solidaridad (Spain), Inex-SDA (Czech Republic), Zavod Voluntariat (Slovenia), Volunteurope (UK/ Europe), Deineta (Lithuania), Comhlámh (Ireland). As a group of peer organisations with a shared interest, we sought to build the capacity within our organisations, and beyond to other organisations within Europe and more globally, to deepen volunteers' ongoing learning and engagement in international development. The idea emerged to share best practice of development education in volunteering, through the design and production of a common curriculum for engaging returned volunteers in ongoing action for global justice. This document is the result of this initial idea, and we hope that the content within will enable those working with volunteers to further build the capacity of volunteers to address the structural and underlying causes of inequality and injustice to participate in social change making.

Through their personal experience at grassroots-level, returned volunteers have the power and will to mobilise greater support for action against poverty and injustice by promoting sustainable ways of living and changing attitudes towards the global south in their own societies. They have experienced first-hand the effects of inequality and injustice in other countries, and can bring that knowledge home to educate others and raise awareness. They are also in a position to reflect on the structures and obstacles that are common to their home countries and the ones in which they volunteered, to identify ways in which change is blocked by the status quo, and to take action to challenge this.

Aim Of The Resource

The curriculum aims to guide volunteer sending agencies to support volunteers in the critical reflection aspects of the experiential learning cycle: this is a key part of the journey from international volunteering to active citizenship, but one that can often be overlooked. Helping volunteers to engage in this process is crucial in supporting their development as active citizens who contribute to the push for change in the structures that create and perpetuate global poverty and inequality.



Using This Resource

Drawing on the experiences of the seven EU-based organisations that work with international volunteers, the curriculum contains contextual information and activities relating to different stages of the learning journey. The importance of continual inquiry is reflected in the content: rather than providing set answers, we focus in some cases on the key questions that need to be asked. This approach will, we hope, assist organisations in their work to encourage radical new ways of looking at the world and new means to interact with it, in order to rise to the challenges being faced by communities globally.

Throughout the resource we will have topics, and activities to support these topics if you were to explore with your volunteers. As such, it can be read cover-to-cover, as well as with the invitation to 'dip in' at the pages which are most relevant to you.

Thank You's

GROUPING THE ISSUES



Piotr, Sandra Victoria and Jara grouping the various issues we tried to address in the pan-European workshop we shared in Ireland.



CONTRIBUTORS

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Grainne O'Neill (Comhlámh) played the lead role in bringing this resource together: her expertise and creativity guided all stages of its development, and we extend our sincere thanks to her.

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NUMBER ONE

Embarking On A

Learning Journey

Volunteering in an international context is not just going about overseas, ticking the box, and coming back home to get on with life. Rather, international volunteering can be a learning journey that begins from the moment the seed is planted to want to go overseas, and can last throughout a person's life.

► This resource is written from the frame of a learning journey through international volunteering. The timeframe for when this happens will have less focus than how this happens, how organisations can nurture lifelong learning for the the volunteers we are working with. The term for the approach we will use for this is development education: however, rather than putting the focus on a definition of development education, we will apply the principles and approach of development education to how we can nurture transformation and support volunteers in their journey towards becoming active citizens. An international volunteering experience is an invaluable opportunity to taste with all the senses an experience which often has a significant and long lasting impact on the volunteer. The learning that comes from this is a learning that moves away from books and exams, to a learning that is lived and experienced.

“Active learning engages the whole person, not just the intellectual mind. When people try to do things and fail or succeed, emotions are triggered, and these have a significant effect on how we remember.”

- from *Active Learning*, www.changingminds.org

The greatest life lessons are those gained through experience, and these profoundly affect how we see the world, the skills we develop, and can even influence what we go on to do. Volunteering overseas can provide a significant life experience that can greatly influence those volunteers who have that opportunity. The personal and professional skills gained through an overseas experience are unique

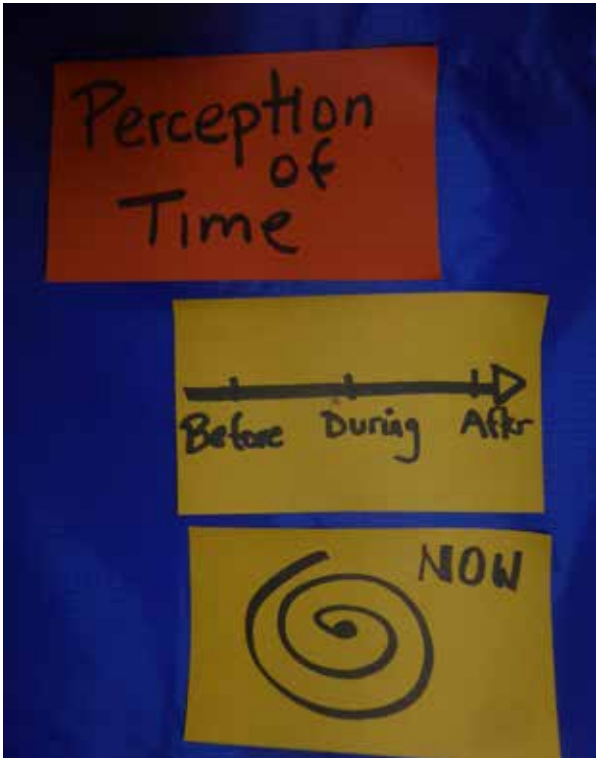


and can shape volunteers in a way that reading from a book will never be able to achieve. The magic is in the experience itself and how it gets under the skin into the fabric of our lived experience.

Walk Out, Walk On.

Pioneered by Margaret Wheatley and Deborah Frieze (2011), Walk Out Walk On is a movement, an invitation and a learning journey for anyone who wants to 'dare to live the future now'. The book and website (www.walkoutwalkon.net) understand a Learning Journey as something propelled by 'curiosity, a desire to experience ways of thinking and living different from our own... step out of the familiar and discover people in other cultures and places who accomplish their work by relying on beliefs and assumptions quite different from the conventional wisdom' (xv, 2011).

The volunteers that enter into the journey overseas are stepping out of their comfort zone into an unknown that has the potential to unsettle and disturb their dominant worldview up to that point in their lives. Transformative learning is not so much desirable as inevitable, and it is crucial to consider how best to support this so that it can be a safe learning space and one that helps people to consider other ways of seeing the world and understand that their worldview is actually incomplete and not the



◀◀ PERCEPTION OF TIME

Rather than situating the manual across a 'continuum' of time (pre-departure, overseas and return), we decided to situate the development education work with volunteers in the 'now', as development education is something happening, and can happen, with volunteers wherever they are at in the continuum.

Learning & Change

Taking this to another level, and applying this learning lens to social change-making potential, learning from the communities volunteers go to live and work with can manifest some incredible results. This starts with recognising and liberating ourselves and volunteers from the post-colonial lenses that result in patronising (often well-intentioned) motivations to help countries in the global south through critical literacy and a conscious unpacking of what has shaped our perspectives. Only then can volunteers be free to truly learn from the communities where they will temporarily participate, and to walk with members of the community through their lived realities, including learning from what communities are already doing in response to some of the challenges facing them.

The stories and examples of change-making from communities in other parts of the world, different from our own community, have exciting potential for what volunteers can bring home in their rucksacks and suitcases:

What is already going on in the community that is working?

What can be learned from the resilience and approach of people in local communities?

Is there anything happening that we can learn on this side of the world, ideas to be transported from the south to the north (e.g. resilience, sustainability, creative ways to manage waste, co-dependent living, etc.)?

What are the ways of managing social and global changes that can be shared and scaled up and across between communities across the world?

whole story.

'Confusing moments are wonderful opportunities to observe our minds more closely... welcome those moments when you feel confronted, surprised. Each one is an opportunity to see your own mind, to notice your beliefs and assumptions. And to be open to change.' (p15, 2011)

So consciously entering into this unknown world, full of learning potential, and supporting volunteers to recognise their own lenses and what has informed these, can subsequently result in a learning that will ultimately result in transformative learning that will undoubtedly shape their lives and ways of seeing the world going forward.

“Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever.”

— Mahatma Gandhi

“I have read that Africans all over the world are linked by slavery, but it's not true. We are linked by our resilience, that inbred evolutionary ability to live and grow and love against all odds.”

-J. Nozipo Maraire, Zimbabwean author and physician, from 'Walk Out Walk On' p102

Reflections on Development

Your understandings of development may change throughout your volunteer placement, from what you thought before going overseas until long after you come back home. This section can be an opportunity to have ongoing reflection, and an interesting space to revisit from time to time.

What you see and experience while overseas will impact on your understanding of the term 'development', and what is your understanding may be very different from that of the people you meet in the host community.

What do I understand by the term 'development'?

.....

What is my current understanding of the major issues/themes within development?

.....

What are the major challenges facing the country I am going to?

.....

Are there any common development challenges facing your own country and the country you will travel to?

.....

If development is about creating an ideal society, what do you think the elements of an ideal society should be?

.....

.....

If you want to do some further research here are some websites you can visit

- Guardian Global Development section: www.guardian.co.uk/global-development
- New Internationalist blog: <http://www.newinternationalist.org>
- One World: www.oneworld.net
- World Bank Resource on Poverty Reduction and Equity: www.worldbank.org/poverty
- Map of the world by different criteria: www.worldmapper.com
- The Guardian Development Studies Student Resources: www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/students/resources
- All subjects: www.ajazack.com
- Indymedia: www.indymedia.org

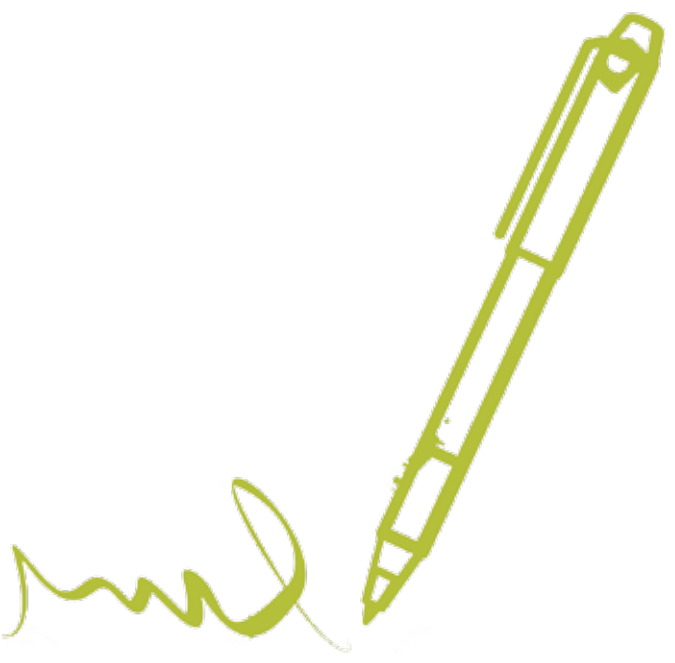


◀ **COMHLÁMH'S LEARNING JOURNAL**
 This is an extract from a Learning Journal which has recently been created by the Volunteering and Development Education group at Comhlámh. The journal was designed as a resource to support volunteers throughout their programme in the form of a personal reflection space.

Learning Journals.

Learning Journals have been used in different ways within international volunteering programmes as tools to capture reflection, prompt questioning and act as a companion to the volunteer throughout the volunteering experience and beyond. There are different formats that these can take:

- **Unstructured (blank) diary-type journal** - invite volunteers to decorate them on the first session and write in them as they go; the focus would be on individual (unseen) reflections and they would rely on the individual volunteer motivation and interest to use them;
- **Structured journal** – providing questions for prompts throughout, which can be designed by the organisation depending on where you wish the focus to be. Feedback from volunteers in an Irish study (Comhlámh, 2013) showed that the volunteers like having questions as prompts, but also valued a balance between open ended, thought-provoking questions and blank spaces that allow them to write freestyle, inspired by the questions;
- **Accreditation** – recognising the skills and competencies of volunteers and their learning through an international volunteer experience can be valuable for future career choices and personal/ professional development purposes. Such learning journals would be specifically linked to an agreed (formal or informal) and often accredited framework for learning. Examples of existing frameworks include Youthpass (under Erasmus+ and only eligible for volunteers under the age of 30).





ACTIVITY ONE

what has shaped you?

Aim of activity

To support participants to understand what has shaped their lenses and worldview.

Length of activity

- One hour

Materials Needed

- Lots of crafty materials! Old magazines (especially magazines with a global justice theme like New Internationalist, National Geographic, etc.)

- Glue
- Scissors
- A3 sheets of paper

To debrief the activity, you can ask the following questions.

Can you think of a situation where your worldview was different from someone else/ a group?

How did you feel about this? How did you react to this encounter?

What learning did you take from this situation that can inform future encounters where different worldviews meet, e.g. during an overseas volunteer placement – either within the volunteer team or with colleagues from the host community? What are ways to manage and learn from this situation?

Steps For The Activity

Explain to participants that we will take some individual time for this exercise.

Firstly, have a group discussion about what can shape the way individuals see and experience the world. Examples may include: family influences, education, culture, significant events and people, gender, etc. Recognise that while every person will see and experience the world uniquely, that at the same time there may be similarities within and among cultures.

Give everyone an A3 sheet of paper and have the craft materials spread around the room.

Invite participants to consider the different influences on their way of seeing the world. They can take a few minutes to jot down what comes up for this.

Then, invite them to make a collage using the materials in the room to represent the different things that have influenced them. Leave 30 – 45 minutes (depending on how they are getting on) for this. It can create a nice atmosphere to play music while the collage-making is taking place.

Create a gallery of everyone's collages by inviting them to place them somewhere in the space. Invite all participants to walk around to one another's collages and invite comments on what they observe. It can be interesting to note what similarities there are between the collages.



USING COLLAGE

Piotr, Jara and Veronika explore what has shaped their outlook and worldview through this collage activity. Collage can enable free thinking and the resulting posters can reveal even more than the artist intended!

ACTIVITY TWO

INQUIRY FOR LEARNING

Aim of activity

The activity will be a chance for participants to recognise a time when they experienced learning at its best.

Length of activity

- One and a half hours.

Materials Needed

- Sheets of paper A5 for each person with Appreciative Inquiry questions on it

Steps For The Activity

Facilitator to introduce the process of Appreciative Inquiry, a process of focusing on seeking out what is already good and working about a situation, an individual, organisation, etc. The process uses a '4-D cycle': Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver. We will use this process to explore how the volunteers can pro-actively learn while they are overseas during their volunteer placement.

DISCOVER: Individually, invite participants to do the first step by themselves – see handout below. Invite them to think of a time when they 'learned well', that is, a time when they entered into a process of learning that was impactful and transformative. Invite them to write about that situation using the handout provided What did you do that worked, what did others do that worked? Invite them to write down some of their thoughts around these questions.

Then, in pairs, invite participants to go for a walk and share with one another their reflections around the time that learning took place. Encourage the one to who is listening to the other to be active in their listening skills, asking further questions and be encouraging. Ensure that there is enough time for both people to talk (30 – 40 minutes in total).

Still in pairs, find out between each other what elements are common to the moments of greatest learning.

DREAM: this stage bridges the best of 'what is' with speculation or intuition of 'what might be'. This stage stretches the realm of the status quo, challenges



common assumptions or routines, and helps suggest real possibilities that represent desired possibilities for the individual. Invite participants to imagine a future where the high points in the stories they have been telling are everyday reality, so in this case, what would positive learning experiences be like if all learning situations were the same as the example you have been talking about? What are conditions that nurture greatest learning?

DESIGN: At this stage, invite participants individually to write steps they can take to maximise their learning and nurture their pro-active participation in their learning journey during their volunteer placement. At this design stage, get them to think of concrete and actual steps they can take (e.g. writing, spaces for reflection, etc.) and keep it open to be added to or modified during the placement. Encourage them to continuously keep the learning lens they have been reflecting on during this activity 'alive' while they are overseas.

For some, a Learning Journal could enable this process, and if possible, direct them to a Learning Journal they can use while overseas. Otherwise, there could be a workshop space created whereby participants could 'make their own' learning journal – agreeing what are those questions they would like to reflect on while they are overseas, and leaving space for unstructured thoughts. This will be a resource they can use while they are on placement, and can be picked up and read at a later stage.

DELIVER: This stage will be done throughout the volunteer programme – reflection and learning can begin before they leave, and should continue long after they are home.

Hand Out



Describe the situation when you experienced active learning at its best. It could have happened anywhere, in a formal or an informal setting.

When and where did it take place? Who was involved? What happened and how did it happen?

What is significant about the example you have chosen?

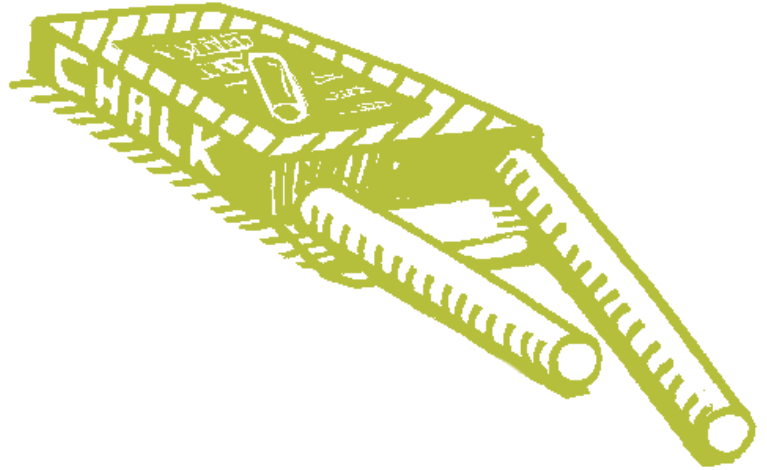
What are some of the factors that enabled learning to take place?

What words would you use to describe the change brought about in you by this experience?

Reference:

This activity is taken from 'Partners Intercultural Companion to Training for Transformation: exercises, processes, resources and reflections for intercultural work' – by Maureen Sheehy, Frank Naughton and College O'Regan.

Development Education IN VOLUNTEERING



DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Mariachiara explaining her understanding of development education in volunteering. 'The sole act of volunteering shows that you want to change things. Development education touches the heart and the mind, and this then leads on to action, which always emerges from "a-ha" moments that leads to a desire to act. Volunteering touches many people, and they are enabled by the help of other organisations and resources.' (quote from Maria Chiara)

Development education in volunteering involves introducing global issues throughout the volunteer continuum (pre- departure, overseas and on return). It is about developing skills of criticality and questioning - of ourselves and of interrogating the reasons behind injustice and inequality.

Development education is about learning from diverse perspectives, particularly those of colleagues and co-participants in the global south countries volunteers travel to, to inform and deepen volunteers' ways of seeing the world and create intercultural learning and solidarity between cultures. It is about participation – active participation in the volunteer experience, as well as participation as an active global citizen in whatever way this manifests for each individual. It is about planting seeds and curiosity for volunteers to continue their learning journey in active global citizenship long after they have touched down in the airport of their home country. It is about host communities' and listening with

and participating in their experience of development. It is about volunteer sending agencies having the confidence and competence to inform, challenge, and embed development education within and across volunteer programmes so that development education is an integral approach to how programmes are delivered. It is happening now, connecting with current issues and deciding with volunteers what needs to be done now at this moment, no matter what stage they are at in the volunteer continuum - now is always the right time for volunteers to be active citizens, and development education is the way to do this.

In order to explain further the understanding we have of the significance of development education in volunteering, here are some reflections by the seven organisations involved in developing this manual.

DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND VOLUNTEERING IS...

'Through the experience of volunteering you can get 'a-ha' moments, and this in itself can lead on to lots of different things. Development education can create spaces to experience and reflect, therefore informing our attitudes. The emotion is really important in global education'

'The sole act of volunteering shows that you want to change things. Development education touches the heart and the mind, and this then leads on to action, which always emerges from "a-ha" moments that leads to a desire to act. Volunteering touches many people, and they are enabled by the help of other organisations and resources.'

'Volunteering is never ending, we are always on this journey. Development education is the thing to power the bicycle - powers good volunteering. We need to talk with others (on the bike, also on the same journey) to fertilise our own ideas and knowledge - we do not cycle on our own. Volunteering enriched by development education in turn flourishes and fertilises the environment and people around are affected positively, and will want to include others.'

'Development education helps volunteers to go in the right direction, while volunteering helps development education to stay relevant. Development education is the bigger picture, and volunteering is supporting it'



A mapping survey carried out in 2011 with 19 volunteer sending agencies across Ireland (Comhlámh, 2011) found that the role of development education manifested in the following ways within volunteer programmes:

- development education as part of the core underlying principles and organisational approach;
- development education as the way in which to deliver the training of volunteers (including content, approach and methodologies);
- development education as the overseas experience;
- development education as awareness-raising of global justice issues from Ireland;
- development education activities to engage in on return;
- Some organisations mentioned that there was little or no focus on development education within their organisations.

Consider these different ways that development education can manifest in volunteer programmes, and think about where your organisation lies within this spectrum.



▲▲ CRITICAL THINKING

Veronika contemplates the role of critical thinking in volunteering. The question that was put to her was, 'What do you want to see in 2015 the European Year of Development' #EYD2015

Active Citizenship IN A GLOBAL WORLD

Volunteers are active citizens through their contribution overseas, their contribution however big or small to the communities they work with, in the country they go to visit. However, we would be missing a very huge opportunity if this active citizenship was to be limited to just this contribution overseas.

▶ International volunteering as an experiential learning opportunity can imprint on the lives of volunteers to enable active citizenship, long after their return home from an international volunteering experience. So what do we mean by Active Citizenship, and what is the role of volunteer sending agencies in nurturing volunteers as active citizens throughout their lives?

A challenge put to us, the NGO community, by researcher Kate Nash in her article 'Global Citizenship as Showbusiness' (2008) is around how to make 'national' citizens into 'global' citizens, and the paradox (illustrated by the contradictions within the Make Poverty History campaign) that, if we were truly to aspire towards a global citizenship that really changed the structures of the world to end poverty, would we be willing to ask people as global citizens to relinquish their privilege and wealth as a result? Nash asks the uncomfortable question of NGOs - are we working towards an 'anti-poverty' agenda, within the existing structures of global governance which continue to perpetuate inequality... or should NGOs be agents in an 'anti-capitalist', 'anti-globalisation' agenda, and reject those institutions and structures in a call for a new terrain on which all nations can participate equitably?

This is a question to consider in your work as you come to understand what kind of active global citizenship you are seeking to nurture among your volunteers - one that works within the existing system, or one that works towards a radical shift in how the world is. How far are volunteers prepared to go to change the world, even if it means changing their place in the world?

This is a shift in worldview, for volunteers to understand active citizenship as involving citizens of the global north to ask challenging and critical questions about their role

in addressing the systems that perpetuate injustice. One frame that can help to understand this shift is that of 'soft' and 'critical' global citizenship by Andreotti.

'To be successful, the (Make Poverty History) campaign had to enable people to understand themselves as part of a global community, intimately connected with the lives of people far away... through a world economic system in which they find themselves not only the super-privileged rich in relation to others but also, as the citizens of powerful states, in a powerful position to alter the life-chances of their fellow human beings around the world. Only if national citizens come to understand global citizens as able and obliged to hold politicians to account for injustices systematically perpetrated on people in developing countries to further their own 'national interests' would politicians act to alter 'politics as usual'.

- Nash, 2008



What should be the role of Volunteer Sending Agencies to support volunteers to be active citizens?

The seven participating organisations asked the question about what the role of organisations to support volunteers to become active citizens should be. The starting point was to consider what we understood by the idea of active citizens: from this, we created some tips for organisations about how to best nurture active citizenship among volunteers.

1

Stick to your principles and values.

- Know what are your values as an organisation; ensure volunteers know and understand your values (check in with them)
- Create space for debate about certain issues, topics, current issues and challenges both social justice issues as well as issues within the organisation and volunteer programme itself
- Search for funding only based on what you feel is most important and which reinforces your values. Do not apply for funding for the sake of it, or to a funder who would compromise your values (e.g. bank, oil company, etc.)

2

Involve volunteers

- Involve volunteers in your organisation. Consult them on meaningful questions that will enrich your understanding as an organisation, for example at the AGM.
- Invite them to events and conferences and bring back the learning they acquire
- Involve volunteers in meaningful ways in the fabric of your organisation, e.g. to join the board of management
- Don't just contact them when you need something! Involve them and be open to new

ideas and actions emerging from the volunteers themselves, not just involve them in restricted spaces you have created.

3

Well-being

- Look after your volunteers - firstly because it is the right and responsible thing to do. If you look after them, they also may want to stay involved and speak well of your organisation
- You can offer support, both at a distance (e.g. linking with other regional volunteers, use of communications and social media) and on-ground support (in person, central space to meet, etc.)
- Debriefing – should be essential for every volunteer (both operational and personal debriefing). Anyone offering a personal debriefing should have had training, and approach the debriefing as confidential (not as feedback for the organisation). Offer debriefing as 'OPT OUT' rather than 'opt in' for volunteers, so that debriefing becomes the norm rather than the exception
- Recognise disillusionment – when volunteers return home they sometimes can feel more disillusioned about development than before they started - so look after them and host these questions first before you bombard them with 'asks' and continuous engagement offers.
- Promote self-care tools that will be available through the course of the volunteer journey, but which will serve volunteers well for any future challenges or stress they may encounter long after their international experience. Tools such as mindfulness and stress management can be easy to use and promote in trainings with volunteers.

4

Provide trainings

- Ensure the trainings are compulsory and dedicate time to training at all stages - pre departure, while overseas (if applicable) and importantly, on return- sometimes enthusiasm can wane at this

stage, so make it irresistible for volunteers to want to come!

- Invite ex-volunteers as guest speakers and facilitators - they will bring legitimacy, but make sure they have had space to unpack their own baggage so that they are coming to the training with impartiality
- Explore online training options for volunteers who are not based locally or have access problems
- Have trainings spaces for emergence so that the new ideas from volunteers are captured and can grow

5

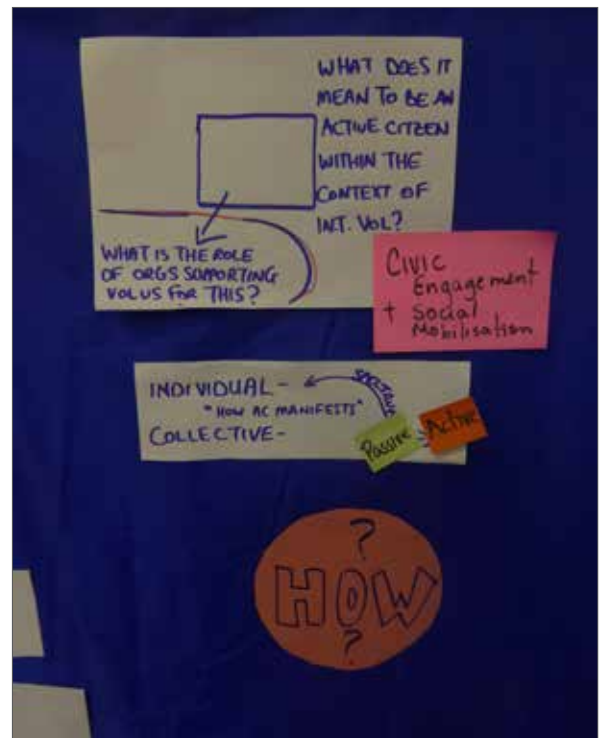
Provide opportunities

- Start with what the volunteers are interested in; identify volunteers' needs and explore, search out and animate opportunities to match these
- Explore the concept of youth ambassadors within your organisation - be clear what this role will mean and the responsibilities for your organisation and for the volunteers who become ambassadors
- Encourage volunteers to participate in conferences and local politics - and create spaces and carve out spaces whereby this can be accessible and possible

6

Secure your space in policy dialogue

- Use existing methods and contacts within policy arenas to find out what is going on already and signpost volunteers here
- Use the feedback and design from other initiatives and programmes to inform policy - link in with networks, access literature on the area of policy you will explore and identify what needs to happen
- Participate in relevant/visible/participatory events as much as possible - attend with your volunteers, and encourage them to attend also on behalf of your organisation



SUPPORTING VOLUNTEERS

How can volunteer sending agencies play a role in this? One of the questions from the shared workshop that informed this resource.

Moving from 'soft' to 'critical' volunteering

Critical Literacy

Inspired by the work of Andreotti, V. (2006) on critical literacy, and in particular her work on 'soft versus critical global citizenship', we have applied her framework to the context of volunteering.

Critical literacy is understood as a 'reading the world in a way that involves the development of skills of critical engagement and reflexivity: the analysis and critique of the relationships among perspectives, language, power, social groups and social practices by learners. Critical literacy is about providing the space for volunteers to reflect on their context and their own and others' assumptions: how we came to think/be/feel/act the way we do and the implications of our systems of belief in local/global terms in relation to power, social relationships and the distribution of labour and resources.

Critical literacy is based on the strategic assumption that all knowledge is partial and incomplete, constructed in our contexts, cultures and experiences. Therefore, we lack the knowledge constructed in other contexts, cultures and experiences. So we need to engage with our own and other perspectives to learn and transform our views,

identities and relationships - to think otherwise. An international volunteer experience is fertile ground for learning from experiences and perspectives very different from our own, which is why we feel that this work is relevant to apply to the international volunteering context, in order to promote and support more critical volunteering programmes.

As part of the work done by the authors, Andreotti's work on 'soft and critical global citizenship' was applied to international volunteering. This is what we came up with, and as it is an emerging idea - please feel free to take this and develop it yourself for the context within which you are working!

What do we mean by 'soft' and 'critical' volunteering?

'Critical' does not mean to criticise, rather the ability to critique and look deeper into understandings of the world, what assumptions are behind how we see it and what are other ways to see it that may not be within the dominant discourse. In contrast, what we mean by 'soft' volunteering is an uncritical view which is left unchallenged, and often is based on a single view of the world.



OPEN YOUR MIND

A picture created by Oisín Clancy to express the intended purpose and impact of education, however how much do our current education systems enable this?



	SOFT	CRITICAL
<u>PRE-DEPARTURE TRAINING</u>	Focus on fundraising, the task, safety, limited time invested	Training includes community, exchange of learning, importance of process
<u>PURPOSE OF VOLUNTEERING</u>	Charity model, generate income or raise the profile of organisations	Justice model, capacity building, solidarity
<u>ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS</u>	One way education, transfer of knowledge, provision of goods or services	Focus on wider responsibility as a global citizen, learn from communities how they understand development
<u>PERSPECTIVES ON CULTURE</u>	Cultural supremacy: acknowledge other cultures but feel that own culture is right, 'us and 'them'	Understand and value difference, curiosity, recognise wealth in diversity and complexity of cultures
<u>'WHAT NEXT' AFTER VOLUNTEERING?</u>	Fundraise for the sending organisation, sponsor a child, send money to the project directly, speak uncritically about experiences, reinforcing negative and patronising perceptions of global south	Interrogating the complexity of development and a critical view on lifestyles in global north, identifying actions based on an understanding of interdependence
<u>PERCEPTION OF COMMUNITIES IN GLOBAL SOUTH</u>	Helpless, simplistic generalisations, seeing what communities lack rather than what they have	Willingness to learn from communities, recognise agency of people within communities and work already being done, acknowledgement of shared humanity in context of unequal world
<u>HOST PERSPECTIVE ON VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMME</u>	Limited knowledge of the programme or the role of volunteers	Knowledge of wider volunteer programme, reciprocity as core, potential for relationship building
<u>IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERING</u>	Limited to short term gains separate from wider context of development	Long term and complex view of development and recognition of the contribution of communities in the global south

ACTIVITY THREE

TUNING INTO OUR ENVIROMENT



Aim of activity

To develop thinking as an active global citizen, to tune into the local environment and connect to the environment

Length of activity

- Two hours

Materials Needed

- chalk
- acetate
- white board markers
- cut-out speech bubbles
- thought bubbles
- cameras/ camera phones



THOUGHT BUBBLES

Blanka uses thoughts bubbles to express some questions she has about volunteering. As the workshop progressed, some questions popped into our heads and these thought bubbles were there to catch our thoughts as they arose.

Steps For The Activity

Divide the group into smaller groups of 3 – 5 people. Give each group a set of Questions and Tasks (see below – more questions can be added if you like) and let them know they have 2 hours to carry out the task. This is best done in an urban environment.

Provide each group with a set of all the materials as listed above. Then let them go explore and tune into the local environment!

After 2 hours when they return, invite each group to make a slide show of the photos they took as a result of the activity.

Debrief

What surprised you about the experience?

What did you see that you would not normally see?

How did the activity help you understand active global citizenship in your local environment?

What could be some of the roles you could play as an active global citizen locally?





Questions and Tasks

Find something that annoys you

Find something that makes you smile

Find ways the local environment depends on another part of the world

Find something that connects with your passion

Find something that needs to change. How might it change?

What words would you use to describe the change brought about in you by this experience?

Find something that represents Active Citizenship for you

Reference:

This was taken from the 'Creativity, Resilience and Global Citizenship: workshop publication', by Creativity and Change.

ACTIVITY FOUR

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A GLOBAL CITIZEN

Aim of activity

To deepen a sense of interdependence and connection with the rest of the world

Length of activity

- 30 minutes

Materials Needed

- Peter's projection

Steps For The Activity

Invite participants to think about their daily routine, from the moment they wake in the morning until they go to sleep at night. Give a few moments to reflect quietly on this. Things could include what they eat, how they travel, what they do, what they wear, etc.

Now ask participants to consider how all the different elements of their day is related to another country, e.g. in which country did your cereal grow, where are your clothes made, where does the oil come from to fuel your car?

In silence, invite each person to put a sticker on the map on the countries they believe they make a connection with during a normal day.

Acknowledge that, each day, we rely on sources from all over the world just to carry out our daily routines.

Debrief

What can this tell us about how our decisions and actions can impact communities across the globe, both positive and negative?

If we were to cease all connections with the rest of the world tomorrow, what impact would this have?

How can we find out more and make positive choices as an active global citizen based on a deeper understanding of interdependence?



DISPOSABLE FASHION

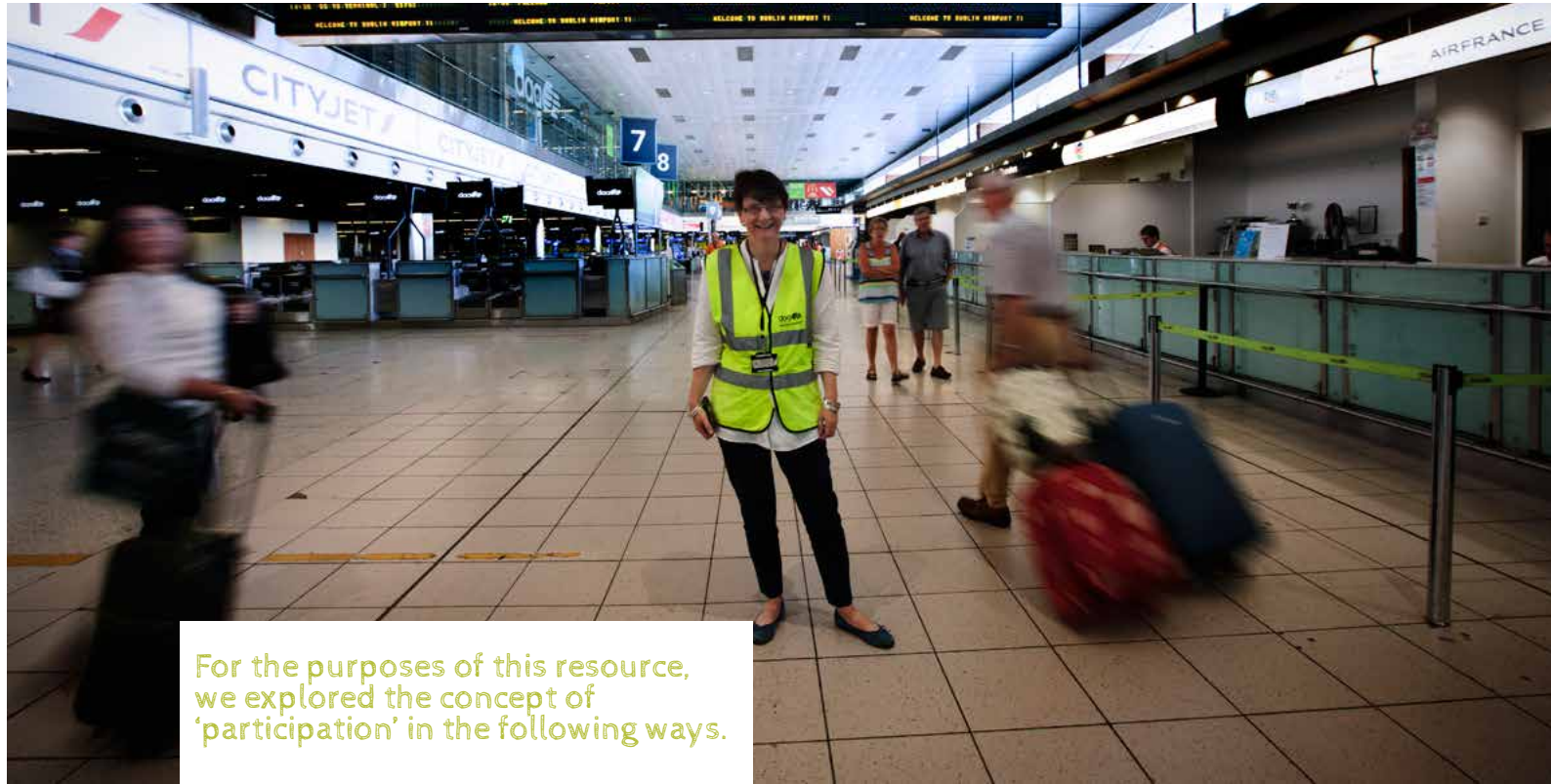
Elena Garcia asks #whomademyclothes as part of Fashion Revolution. On 24 April 2013, 1133 people were killed and over 2500 were injured when the Rana Plaza factory complex collapsed in Dhaka, Bangladesh, the worst ever industrial disaster in the fashion and textile industry. It is symptomatic of how little respect is given to the people who make our clothes and the environment they work in. Fashion Revolution says enough is enough.

Reference:

Adapted from 'Values and Visions: a handbook for spiritual development and global awareness' (NODE, 1995).

NUMBER FOUR

What We Mean BY PARTICIPATION



For the purposes of this resource, we explored the concept of 'participation' in the following ways.

- Participation in volunteer programmes and within the sending agency - who is left out?; how to get the voice of your volunteers; how to involve volunteers meaningfully'– engagement; ongoing contact and communication, not just when we need volunteers;
- Participation with the host community – respecting your role as a visitor and learner to a new community and learning ways to participate that recognise the limitations of what can be achieved and valuing the agency of the host community
- Participation within wider society (locally and globally) – starting where volunteers are at to increase their confidence and ability to participate in whatever form they wish. This will include options to participate (continuous engagement) and the role of organisations (e.g. providing options, signposting, supporting people, staying in touch).

▲ RETURNED DEVELOPMENT WORKER

Mary Pierce, a returned volunteer from Zanzibar, Tanzania. Photo taken by Jekaterina Saveljeva as part of the 'Volunteer Stories' project

“Participation is the ‘active, informed and voluntary involvement of people in decision-making and the life of their communities (both locally and globally). Participation means work with and by people, not merely work for them.”

(DFID-CSO Youth Working Group, taken from 'Global Agreements, Global Advocacy: youth and governance in a Post 2015 world', Restless Development)

4(a) Participation in volunteer programmes

Why do we want volunteers to participate? And for those who are involved, how can we nurture their participation? This section will explore some of these questions, drawing on the experience of volunteer sending agencies in Czech Republic and Ireland to shed some light on these issues.

► Participation of Volunteers within the Organisation

by Veronika Uhlířová, Inex-SDA

“The majority of our volunteers (around 600 a year) start their engagement through short term voluntary projects, so-called workcamps. One of our aims is to foster a long-term voluntary engagement and therefore we create various opportunities to engage in our projects and activities. Some of the volunteers continuously join short term projects or continue their journey through volunteering in long term projects, such as LTV or EVS.

Others become interested in global education and deepen their theoretical knowledge and various skills while becoming ambassadors of our educational projects such as Football for Development or GLEN (Global Education Network of Young Europeans). Numerous volunteers stay engaged through the “Volunteers’ club“, a platform opened to everybody interested in monthly informal thematic meetings, and through so-called INEX Pubs and various gatherings organized by INEX-SDA. The “volunteers’ club” offers a space for volunteers engagement in civil society and social activism: everybody interested is welcome to participate in various working groups which, with mentors’ support, create and implement various small projects on topics of international volunteering and global learning.

We promote an idea of Peer2Peer learning, while using this approach during our trainings. Experienced volunteers may become facilitators of our trainings, mentors of working groups, tutors. Recently we established a “Volunteers’ academy” which is another space for Peer2Peer learning, where everybody interested may propose workshops and share his or her skills or particular knowledge with other volunteers, peers.

Last but not least, many of our volunteers engage as Camp Leaders of international voluntary projects which we organize in collaboration with various partners around Czech Republic. In the past, several volunteers also proposed and organized their own projects and became our local partners hosting international workcamps.”



▲ SHARING EXPERIENCES

Veronika Uhlířová, INEX-SDA, sharing some of her experience of volunteers’ participation in the organisation.

▶ How inclusive is your organisation?

One area that jumped out when we were exploring the area of 'participation' was the question of 'who is involved in volunteering, and who is left out?' 'How inclusive are our organisations?' 'What ways can we better include volunteers?' Helen Walmsley from Irish organisation, VSI, has this to share.

"Many VSAs send volunteers to work on inclusion issues overseas yet we may not realise that we sometimes exclude people in our own societies from our organisations. We may presume that people who want to volunteer respond to our communications and calls for volunteers yet we may not realise that our volunteers generally come from the same backgrounds and that we may not reach many other potential volunteers. People from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, those with disabilities, people of colour and older people are among those that are underrepresented in international volunteering.

People from excluded groups have skills, qualifications, experience and insights and welcome opportunities for learning as others do yet they are often not given the opportunity to use and share these through volunteering. An opportunity to increase development education amongst excluded groups and a wider audience in Ireland is also missed when certain groups of people are excluded from volunteering.

People who face exclusion in their own societies can have shared experiences with the people that we work with in the south. This can lead to deeper understanding, easier communication, increased learning and solidarity for individuals and for our organisations.

To become more inclusive, equality and inclusion must be embedded in our organisations' ethos and practice. We can reach out to excluded groups and include them as active participants in our work as volunteers. We may not realise that the messages we send and our recruitment methods put some people off volunteering with us. If for example we recruit only from universities and colleges then we are only reaching certain types of potential volunteers. If for example we use only images of able-bodied and white volunteers in our marketing and communications we send messages about who our volunteers are, people with disabilities and people of colour may choose not to volunteer with us if they are not represented.

We can broaden our communication networks and promote our volunteer programmes to wider audiences. There are many organisations here in Ireland that we



HOW INCLUSIVE IS YOUR ORGANISATION?

Nerijus Jancauskas, Blanka Rihter, Jara Henar and Gráinne O'Neill devise forum theatre piece on the theme of participation

could seek support from and work with, for example community development groups, disability organisations and youth organisations working with young people with fewer opportunities. We can learn from our partners in the south who work on inclusion about how they work and also discuss with them how our volunteer programmes could benefit from including volunteers with shared experiences from Ireland. "

Reference:

'Access to International Volunteering Amanda Moore McBride Center for Social Development' Benjamin J. Lough Center for Social Development.

'UNV Youth Volunteering Strategy 2014-2017 Empowering Youth through Volunteerism.'

What do we mean by continuous engagement?

When we use the term 'continuous engagement', we are talking about the ways that volunteers can engage as active global citizens through out the volunteer experience. In reference to volunteer programmes in particular, the 'continuous' nature of this is something we hope will start at the beginning when the volunteer comes on board, and that the motivation, skills and experience they generate through the volunteer programme will be the inspiration to participate as active global citizens for the rest of their lives. Continuous engagement therefore involves providing pathways and information so that volunteers will carve out their own way and feel able to engage as active citizens to raise awareness and take actions to contribute to a more just and equal world.

What supports volunteer engagement?

Here are some tips that the group of organisations who came together came up with. You might have some more to add from experience!?



Make a contract of agreement of the different roles anticipated.

Responding to volunteers' needs and interests.

Requirement to engage post-return, good infrastructure in place.

Putting a human face to the organisation.

Showcase results and celebrate.

Giving a voice and making sure volunteers feel part of the organisation.

Recognising volunteers.

Have a human contact/ point of reference for volunteers.

Having clear infrastructure for participation.

Put volunteers into contact with networks and training opportunities.

Inspire the volunteer to decide an action and support to make a start on this action.

Creating spaces for emergent participation.

Personalise how to engage and capitalise on people's skills.



As sending agencies, the key is to raise volunteers' consciousness about why it is important to act as global citizens, not separate but embedded within the fabric of volunteer programmes, as previously mentioned. Included here are some tips for how to engage volunteers, and some options identified by the seven organisations as pathways and immediate options for volunteers to engage with, either directly through our organisations, or through signposting to initiatives outside our organisations.



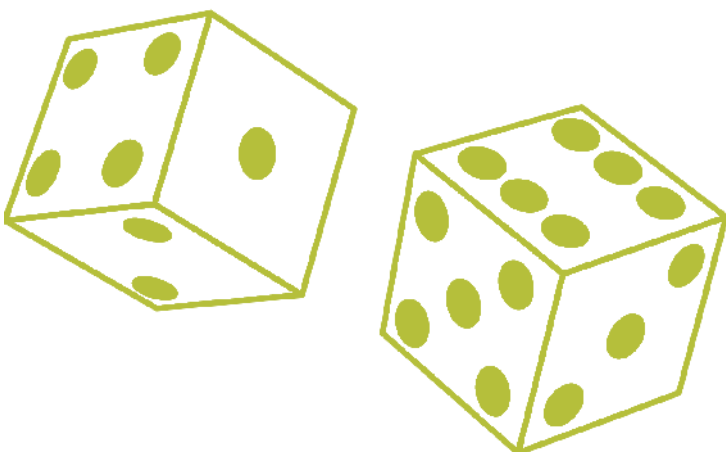
WORLDS BEST NEWS

Picture of returned volunteers who were distributing the World's Best News newspaper on the streets of Dublin. This is an example of an action project developed by returned volunteers in Ireland, taking the Danish Worlds best News model and applying it to the Irish context. Dochas host this initiative in Ireland, to draw attention to the positive and unusual stories from developing countries that don't make it to the mainstream news, or which don't receive much coverage.



Individual and collective options for volunteers to engage

<u>WORKSHOPS IN SCHOOLS</u>	<u>GIVING TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS</u>	<u>FURTHER EDUCATION (E.G. MASTERS)</u>	<u>DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION COURSES</u>
<u>FUNDRAISING</u>	<u>DEBATES ADJUDICATORS IN DEBATES</u>	<u>PURSUING A CAREER IN DEVELOPMENT</u>	<u>INTEGRATING A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE INTO WIDER LIFE/ CAREER AREA</u>
<u>ACTIVISM</u>	<u>VOLUNTEERING LOCALLY</u>	<u>JOIN A BOARD OF A CHARITABLE ORGANISATION</u>	<u>INFLUENCE DEVELOPMENT POLICY INCLUDING GOVT. LED CONSULTATIONS</u>
<u>SET UP A PROJECT</u>	<u>LINKING TO LOCAL INJUSTICE ISSUES/ GROUPS</u>	<u>DEVELOP AN ACTION PROJECT</u>	<u>NETWORKING EVENTS FOR RETURNED VOLUNTEERS</u>
<u>DEVELOP A NETWORK OF RETURNEES ACROSS IRELAND</u>	<u>FACILITATING PRE DEPARTURE AND COMING HOME TRAINING COURSES ON BEHALF OF VSA</u>	<u>INDIVIDUAL LIFESTYLE CHANGES, E.G. ETHICAL CONSUMERISM, RECYCLING</u>	<u>CAMPAIGNING</u>
<u>WRITING ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATIONS/ NEWSLETTERS</u>	<u>ENGAGING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA</u>	<u>MEETING/ RECRUITING POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS</u>	<u>VOLUNTEER OPTIONS WITH THE SENDING AGENCY</u>
<u>WORKING WITH LOCAL MIGRANT/ MINORITY GROUPS</u>	<u>RETURNEES AS A RESOURCE TO SUPPORT DEV ED ORGANISATIONS</u>	<u>ENGAGING WITHIN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY</u>	<u>NOT GETTING INVOLVED</u>



VOLUNTEERS COUNCILS
WITHIN
ORGANISATIONS

VOLUNTEERS AS
AMBASSADORS

PARTICIPATION IN
SENSITISATION
CAMPAIGNS

SHARING THEIR STORY
WITHIN PUBLIC ARENA

FURTHER TRAININGS IN
DEVELOPMENT EDUCA-
TION AND OTHER SKILL
BASED DEVELOPMENT

VOLUNTEER ALUMNI
SCHEMES

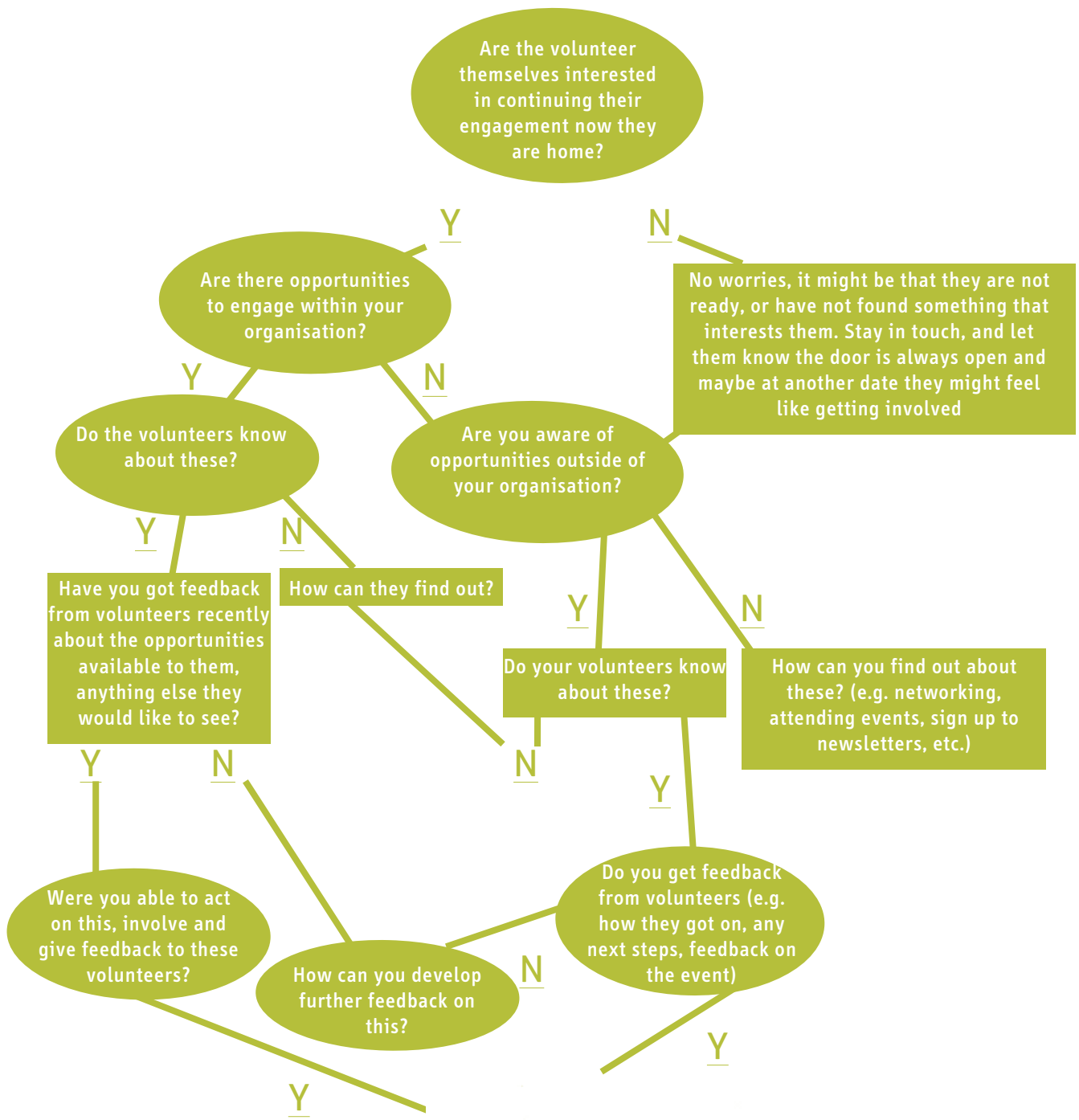
ORGANISING FILM
SCREENINGS, DEBATES,
ETC. (COULD INCLUDE
THOSE OUTSIDE YOUR
ORG



STAYING ENGAGED.

Options to stay engaged in options and activities as a returned volunteer

How to keep volunteers engaged



4(b) Participation with the host community

Walk with us

Help us to discover our own riches.

Don't judge us poor because we lack what you have.

Help us to discover our chains.

Don't judge us slaves by the type of shackles you wear.

Be patient with us as a people.

Don't judge us backward because we don't follow your way.

Be patient with our pace.

Don't judge us lazy because we don't follow your tempo.

Be patient with our symbols.

Don't judge us ignorant because we don't read your signs.

Be with us

and be open to what we can give

Be with us as a companion who walks with us.

Neither behind nor in front In our common journey.

- Bienvenido S.Tudtud. Bishop of Marawi, Philippines

Weltwärts - study on participatory and transcultural quality development

Host perspectives on volunteering are often quite difficult to come by, acknowledging the power dynamics present, access to people, etc. amongst other barriers. However the report on the Weltwärts program (2011) was able to capture host perspectives from Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, Ukraine, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Cambodia.

A few emerging conclusions include how the hosts felt it was important for volunteers to:

- Genuinely 'play a part' in the project work
- There was a desired 'reciprocity of learning' between



ANNE DEIGHAN

A returnee who volunteered in Palestine. The image shows her beside the peace walls in Belfast, her home town.

the host project and the volunteers and their sending agency - indicating a preference for reverse models of volunteering to be more common.

- Relationships of trust are needed in order to establish effective communication, and asymmetry in power dynamics and decision making
- There was a lack of information shared with hosts about the goals of the volunteer programme, and misleading expectations of the expertise levels of the volunteers before they arrived
- Direct involvement of host organisations in selection and preparation of volunteers can make an enormous contribution to the quality of the volunteer programme
- There should be greater focus on matching volunteer skills with the partner project
- There is need for best practice guidelines and national networks of support to be developed for volunteer

Four Quality Models of volunteer services were identified by the hosting organisations involved in this study:

- 1** The learning orientated model .
Volunteering as a social service; focus on individual learning experience;
- 2** The service orientated model .
Voluntary service as the provision of a service to the hosting organisation; host community as recipient;
- 3** The quality model based on reciprocity .
Voluntary service as a model of mutual support with reciprocal benefits and transcultural learning on both sides;
- 4** The quality model focused on long term and global impact .
Development of long term networks and how these can be made to work beyond the phase of the voluntary service itself; includes processes of global learning which can be of benefit to the development of a global society in awareness, consumer behaviour, etc.

power dynamics in an intercultural setting.

Something which often needs negotiation within volunteering projects is power relations between international volunteers and the host community. This can manifest in how and why the programme has emerged in the first place, the 'entry' point into communities, as well as the 'white privilege' that can blind volunteers from proper learning with the communities they visit. Unequal power dynamics can begin to be addressed once they are recognised, and steps taken to prepare the host community (by way of support workshops and training, mentoring); supporting volunteer sending agencies to respond to locally identified needs and programmes as opposed to the volunteer-demand for opportunities (are hosting partners involved in the selection of volunteers and their skills to match their local programmes?); and, importantly, support and training for volunteers to become aware of their privilege and the context of post colonialism which is often invisible but can do a lot of damage.

Some of the activities listed are intended to draw awareness to volunteer privilege and power dynamics with local communities.



THEATRE EXERCISES

Sandra, Piotr, Maria Chiara and Veronika strike a pose during forum theatre exercises to explore the theme 'participation'. This frozen image shows someone who had been excluded as being welcomed in to the circle of people.

Some questions to explore with volunteers.

- Who are you as you enter the community? What baggage are you bringing?
- What are the positive attributes you will bring as well as your unique lens?
- With whom will you connect during the placement and are there power dynamics you need to be aware of?
- How will you learn from the community you will visit?

This section has explored the delicate nature of participation with and within the host community, and planted some questions to consider. Quality volunteering programmes can minimise conflicts and maximise the potential value of a volunteer placement overseas. Before moving on, it is important to remember all the good work that is going on, to acknowledge that volunteering is valuable



LOST IN CONVERSATION

Jara Henar and Charo Lanao during a wider group discussion. Charo played the role of facilitator and host during the workshop that brought us all together. ¡Muchos besos, querida hada!



Newsflash! Volunteers Are Valuable!

New research on the valuable - yet often understated - contribution of volunteers in the fight against poverty has been released by VSO and the Institute of Development Studies, 'Valuing Volunteering'. The research explores how volunteers impact on community development and social change in developing countries, as well as the factors that can prevent them from doing so.

The research was undertaken in Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal and the Philippines between 2012 and 2014 in the areas of health, education, governance and the environment. It engaged more than 3,700 participants, including community, national and international volunteers, government officials, young people, community leaders, teachers and health practitioners – making this the largest study of its kind to date.

The research findings highlight that it is not just what volunteers do, but how they support change that makes their contribution unique. It found that volunteering has a unique role to play in contributing to sustainable development in the following ways;

- **Inclusion:** extends the reach of public services to the poorest and most marginalised
- **Innovation:** creates new forms of collaboration that lead to social innovation
- **Ownership:** strengthens local ownership of development processes
- **Participation:** creates a pathway to people's participation and active citizenship
- **Inspiration:** modelling different norms

Lead IDS researcher Danny Burns said: "This two-year action research project has found that it is not just what volunteers do, but how they support change that makes their contribution unique. Their very embeddedness within communities and organisations helps create strong personal bonds and relationships that can lead to a different kind of collaboration, one that transforms volunteers' image as "experts" into an experience that is based on a mutual appreciation of each other's knowledge, skills and networks.'

VOLUNTEERS ARE VALUABLE

Participants on the What Next course in Cloughjordan Eco Village. What Next is a residential course for returned volunteers who have been overseas in a short term capacity, set in Ireland's first eco-village as an example of sustainable communities, sustainable lifestyles and demonstrates what is possible when a small group of people walk on to something different.





ACTIVITY FIVE

POWER AND THEATRE

Aim of activity

To use forum theatre to unpack the theme 'power' .

Length of activity

- 1 hour

Materials Needed

- None

Steps For The Activity

First, here are some warm up games, taken from Boal, A. 'Games for Actors and Non-Actors'.

Columbian Hypnosis

1. Invite participants to get into pairs. One will be 'A' and one will be 'B'. 'A' will be the hypnotiser and 'B' will be the person who gets hypnotised.
2. 'A' holds their hand about 20 -40 cm from 'B's' face. They must maintain this distance throughout the exercise. 'A' starts a series of movements with their hand – up, down, back forwards, right, left, etc. 'B' must contort their body in order to follow and keep the distance between their face and the hand of 'A'.
3. Ensure that safety is honoured in this exercise, and that respect is shown between each pair.
4. When this exercise has gone on for some moments, 'A' and 'B' swop the roles of hypnotist and hypnotised.

The Machine of Rhythms

1. Invite the group to stand in a big circle.
2. Invite a participant into the middle of the circle, imagining they are a part of a machine. Invite them to do a movement with their body and a sound to go along with it.
3. As people feel like it, they can enter the circle to join the machine to add to the original sound and movement.



ACTING OUT

Maria Chiara moulds Gráinne into a frozen image during the warm up activities leading up to the forum theatre session.

4. This continues until most people have joined in and there is a workable machine.

Frozen pictures

1. Invite the group to move around the space, until you call out a number. Participants must get into groups with that number of people.
2. In these groups, call out a word (e.g. football match, disco, beach) and everyone in the group creates a picture of that word together using their bodies and facial expressions. Do a few easy words quite quickly to help people lose self-consciousness. The less they think the better!
3. Then introduce more complex words: development, poverty, equality, justice.
4. When groups have found an image together, get them to 'freeze' in this image. Invite the groups to observe each other and to say what they see. You can press "play" on the images and ask for a few moments of sound or movement. You can also tap individuals within the scene on the shoulder and ask them to share one thought their character would be having in this scene.



Power

Then, once participants are warmed up, invite someone from the group to make a frozen image of 'Power'.

When they have done this, invite someone new to add to this first image, but to try to make themselves more powerful than the person standing there. One by one, add people to try and make the image more powerful. Continue until the group has reached a place where the image has come to the most powerful, or when you feel it has reached a conclusion.

Unpack the activity by discussing the different actions that people took to make themselves more powerful.

The Sculptor and the Model

Arrange participants to line up in two lines facing each other. There should be an equal number of people in each line. One line are sculptors; the other are models.

With the pairs that are facing each other, invite the sculptors to 'shape' the models into whatever shape they want. There should be no words exchanged, and the sculptors cannot use their own bodies to illustrate what they mean. It must be done in silence.

Building on this, ask person A to "sculpt" person B into an image of a state of being. For example "someone in power". B then makes A into the opposite, "someone downtrodden or oppressed".

Ask all the A's to stand in a line, and ask the rest of the group to describe what they see. What does "power" or "oppression" look like? There is no right or wrong answer; we all see different things in the same image. These pictures can start to give us a sense of stories of conflict, power and difference.

Group Work

In small groups of 4 – 5 people, invite everyone to make a still image of how they understand power. This could be a situation of power and inequality experienced while volunteering, or can be a potential scenario (if the group have not yet gone overseas). Allow groups to discuss for 5 – 10 minutes first of all what the situation will be that they want to represent. Then, start to play with the bodies in the group to come up with a still image to represent this.

After 15 minutes, invite groups to come to a close, and one by one, the wider group will view each still image. What do they see when they look at this still image? What is the situation of power that is being represented? How can this situation be resolved?

To end the forum activity thank everyone for their participation and, if appropriate, to give a round of



POWER

Veronika and Nerijus moulding a frozen image of 'power'. These and other forum theatre activities have been taken from Augusto Boal's work on 'Games for Actors and Non-Actors' (1992 first published)

applause for all the 'actors' and 'spect-actors'!

Debrief

To debrief this activity, invite participants to discuss in pairs the following questions:

- What are some of the power dynamics that can be experienced overseas?
- What are some of the ways that unequal power relations can be minimised?
- What message would you give to yourself or other volunteers about respecting existing local ways of working?

Reference:

'Games for Actors and Non Actors', Boal, A.

ACTIVITY SIX

CAROUSEL

Aim of activity

To consider different voices in international volunteering placement

Length of activity

- 30 minutes

Materials Needed

- 3 Chairs in a circle
- paper

Steps For The Activity

1. Break the wider group into 3 groups. Invite each group to consider a situation from the perspective of (a) Host partner organisation; (b) international volunteer; (c) sending agency
2. Give out a scenario (e.g. making a decision about the project without the involvement of the local community; addressing the inappropriate dress code decisions of volunteers, the volunteers want to organise a party for themselves and the local community – but this will cause friction. What to do?)
3. Invite one person from each group to sit in the circle and join in a debate/ conversation from the perspective of the role they were given (host partner, volunteer or sending agency representative). At any stage, invite others to take their seat (replace them) if they have a point they would like to make.
4. It is important that the facilitator plays a strong role in this, to ensure that the conversation keeps moving, that it doesn't become laboured or drawn out, and inviting in others to keep the movement going in this activity.



TAKING PART IN THE CAROUSEL

Jara, Piotr, Nerijus and Blanka participate in 'Carousel' activity, facilitated by Veronika.



ACTIVITY SEVEN

PLAYING POWER CARDS.

Aim of activity

To recognise power within our multiple identities, and how to exercise this power.

Length of activity

- 30 minutes.

Materials Needed

- Playing cards

Steps For The Activity

Arrange the playing cards, enough for all participants, declaring that 'ACE' is the lowest and King is the highest. Allow participants to pick their own card, but they must not know what is on the cards and so they are not to look at it.

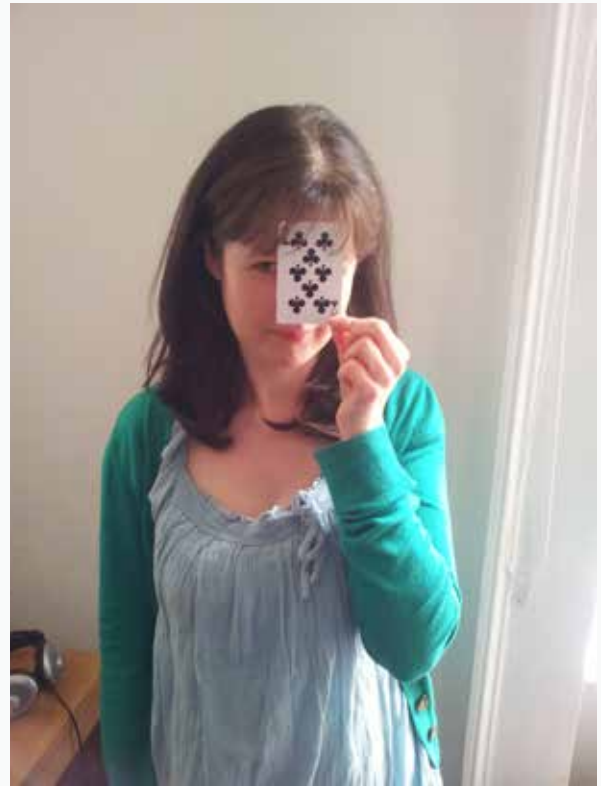
When everyone has a card, invite them to hold the card on their forehead, so that everyone else can see the number on their card, but they cannot see it themselves.

Explain to participants that 'ACE' being the lowest represents someone with little power; and a 'King' is someone with a lot of power. The cards in between are along this spectrum of power.

As people walk around and pass each other, they should greet one another according to the amount of power the others have (depending on the card on their forehead).

After 5 minutes or so, after people have interacted, invite participants to line up in order of where they think they are in the spectrum. Share why they feel they are standing in that place.

Once everyone is in a line, invite them to look at their own card. Debrief



EIGHT OF SPADES.

Susan sports a playing card in the Playing Power Cards Activity

Debrief

How did you feel doing that exercise (particularly those at each end of the spectrum)?

In relation to the spectrum, Ace being lowest and King being highest, where would you stand when you consider power in relation to your identity as a:

Returned volunteer.
Consumer;
Voter;
Parent;
Local volunteer;
Student;
Unemployed person;

As people move towards the place in the line, challenge them, e.g. "as a consumer you can feel powerLESS

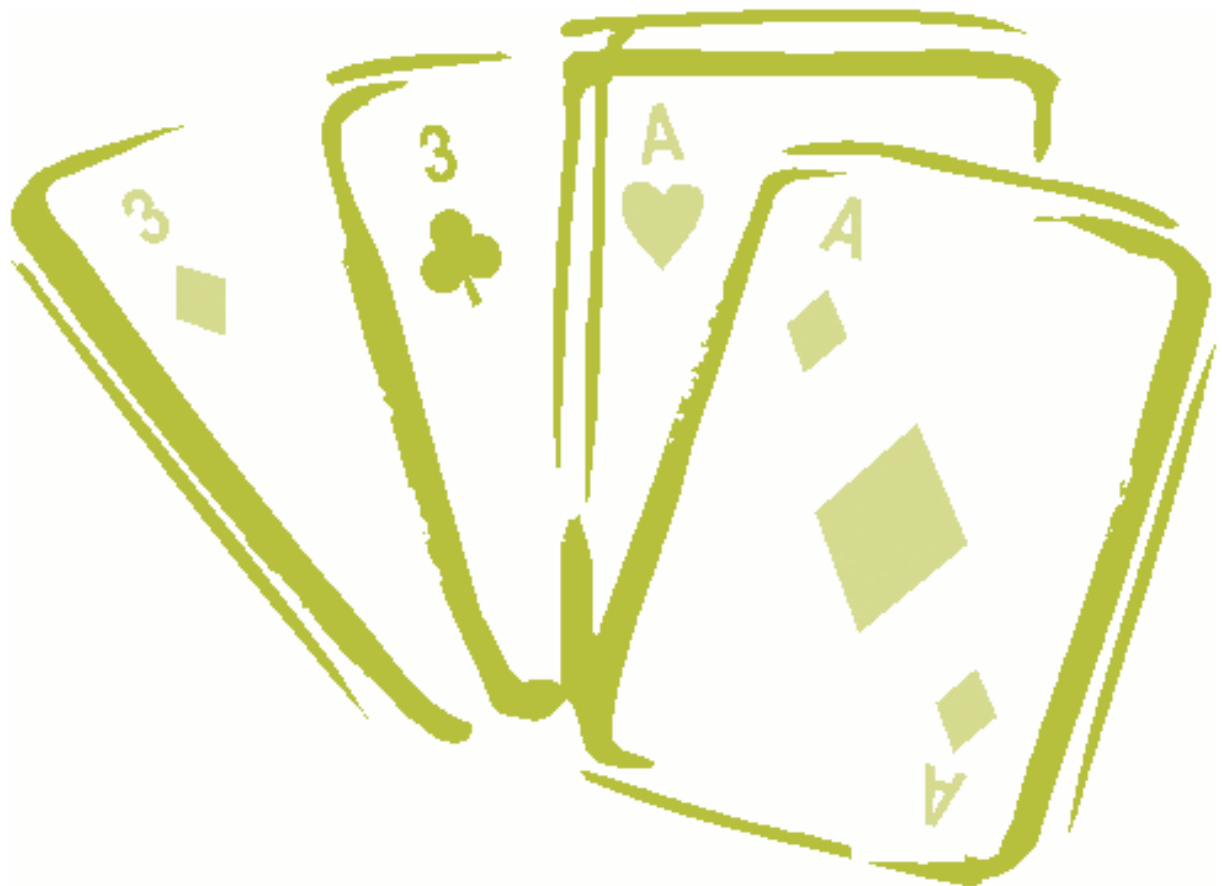
when faced with all the unethical companies and advertising forcing people to buy... but you can also feel powerFUL as a consumer when you make informed ethical consumer decisions.”

Acknowledge that we have multiple identities and this is significant in relation to returning to Ireland: any form of continuous engagement can be multi-faceted and tailored to what we as individuals are most interested in. We need to recognise the power we have within our different identities and how to maximise this power for social change making purposes.

Individually we can be powerful; collectively we can be even more powerful.

Reference:

‘Taken from Comhlámh’s Coming Home Training Handbook for Volunteer Sending Agencies’



4 (c) Participation in Society

When we talk about creating social change, what are we talking about? Where are examples from across the world of communities and social movements of people who are coming together and creating the world and the changes they wish to see in the 'now'?

This section explores the role of the individual to participate in society as a change-making agent. In this section, the focus will shift from the individualised actions previously mentioned to the possibilities that happen when individuals meet other individuals with a shared vision and, without top down leadership and tight structures, citizens, groups, movements find a voice and participate at the level of societal change.

'Because I am a Girl: State Of The World's Girls 2014' draws on the voices of young women to recognise the importance of collective action and collective energy, highlighting how more voices can make more noise and by campaigning in a supportive group environment can give young women the confidence and inspiration needed. For the purposes of this document, the energy that is created when any group gets together for a collective cause can be inspirational and a motivating factor to continue on the path of activating for a better world. Drawing on one of the voices from a young woman referenced in the report, from Cecilia Garcia Ruiz (Mexico),

'You have to raise collective awareness... you have to communicate with other people, because a single person can't change the world. An idea can, certainly, but you need other hands, other eyes, other voices to make it a stronger initiative'.

A report by CIVICUS (2011) argues that volunteering and social activism are important strategies for fostering people's participation in social change and human development. Examples from both volunteering and social activism find that the two arenas can be purposeful and change-orientated, e.g. influencing agenda-setting, policy making and decision making, or else contribute to personal transformation, e.g. changing individually held beliefs, perspectives and everyday behaviour after a new awareness from

experience. Likewise, the report found that volunteers' interaction with 'marginalised' communities can provide opportunities for participatory development processes within these communities.

Below we have outlined some recently emerging models of participation in society. The examples are quite different in the form and shape they take, but all explore alternative models of interaction between citizens and the state. We learn from Podemos in Spain, Participatory Democracy in Venezuela and the validation of civil societies' role by the Norwegian government, in recognition of the importance of this space in driving true democracy.



▲
▲
POSSIBILITIES

Graphic summary of a world cafe discussion on communities creating change. The graphic shows the range of ways that people can engage.

► 'Podemos' - they can in Spain!

In my opinion, Podemos started as a political alternative in Spain. Spain for many years has been bi-partisan with alternative governments of PP and PSOE and with Izquierda unida as a 3rd party (and there have been different realities in Basque country and Cataluña).

This monopoly has excluded the rest of the parliamentary forces from taking any political responsibility and exacerbates the tensions between institutions and forms of democratic participation. People's negative perception of parliamentary representatives focuses especially on the structural corruption of political institutions and on the separation between the political elite and the rest of society. So that's why Podemos emerged.

Podemos has done so by empowering the people's political participation, holding open primary elections, developing a participatory political program, and constituting more than 400 circles and popular assemblies worldwide in support of the initiative. Podemos relies exclusively on crowdfunding and popular donations, refusing to receive any funding from the financial institutions that are responsible for the crisis, and all its expenses are available online. All its representatives will be revocable, and subject to a strict limitation of their mandates, their privileges and their salaries.

Podemos' political program, elaborated with the contributions of thousands of citizens, makes manifest and expresses a hope shared by millions around the world: to break with the neoliberal logic of austerity and the dictatorship of debt; a fair distribution of wealth and labor among all; the radical democratization of all instances of public life; the defense of public services and social rights; and the end of the impunity and corruption that have turned the European dream of liberty, equality and fraternity into the nightmare of an unjust, cynical and oligarchic society.

What is so unique is the use of open and participatory methods. Personally I have been a witness of Podemos assemblies. They are held in public spaces, in the squares. People sit down in a circle and everyone has a word, everyone has a vote, and they use this vote to make decisions. They are divided by areas and inside the areas they are divided by sub district and area. So a big area has small districts and each district has one assembly. This means there is not a huge amount of people in each assembly. I was witness in Plaza de Sol in Madrid, where I saw thousands of people take part in an assembly. Even then, everyone has a voice, so someone will speak publicly and say their ideas, and then people



YES WE CAN.

Flickr user Cyberfrancis captures some of the leadership of Podemos at a popular assembly.

vote by clapping. The way of clapping is how the deaf do it - they raise their hand and move it because they don't want to be very loud or disturb others not taking place in the assembly. So they don't make noise when they clap. This is very visual because then you know who is voting yes or no.

By Elena Hermosa, returned volunteer, Ireland

Social Participation IN NORWAY

The following is an extract from a declaration on the government's interaction with the voluntary sector in Norway. This declaration values the agency and objectivity of a strong civil society as a way to inform and make relevant and effective any decision made by the government.

This is an example of participation nurtured by a government body, while still keeping the agency of civil society intact, not taking away from any emergent or bottom up approaches that are part of this participation.

'The government's objective is to promote a strong civil society sector that counterbalances the power of the State. At the same time, Norway has a long tradition of collaboration between the voluntary and public sectors. The government's policies are based on freedom and trust. This declaration on voluntary work is an expression of the government's appreciation of the voluntary sector, and a framework for productive, positive interaction in the years ahead... The government recognises that voluntary organisations are arenas for social participation and democracy-building.

The declaration then goes on to outline three sections:

1. The basis of interaction.
2. The framework of interaction.
3. Follow-up of the declaration.

For the purposes of this handbook, we will just share a part taken from the second section, the 'Framework of Interaction':

The government wishes to facilitate the voluntary sector's participation in political processes. This will improve the quality of decisions, ensure that social diversity is better reflected, build broader support for decisions and promote mutual learning and democratic development. The development of fruitful, well-functioning processes demands measures in support of participation. The right of local participation is laid down in, for example, the Planning and Building Act and the Public Health Act. This declaration is designed to secure more uniform practice regarding the voluntary sector's involvement in political processes at the national level.

The government aims to strengthen the participation of the voluntary sector in political processes by:

- Actively facilitating the participation of voluntary organisations to secure a broad decision-making



NORWAY

Norway's government has highlighted its support for a strong civil society, to counterbalance the power of the state.

base.

- Inviting the voluntary sector to give feedback at an early stage of political processes in which voluntary activity is an important component.
- Making it easy for volunteers to participate, for example by scheduling consultation meetings after normal working hours.
- Setting sufficiently long hearing periods. The aim shall be to apply a three-month hearing period in cases that concern the voluntary sector directly.
- Making information about political processes and decisions readily accessible.
- Strengthen knowledge about the voluntary sector by:
 - Supporting research and studies on civil society and the voluntary sector.
 - Making such research available to the voluntary sector.
- Improving the public administration's knowledge of the voluntary sector and its social importance and qualities.

Volunteer Stories.

The personal journey from being a volunteer to becoming an active citizen!

I volunteered for the first time in 2008, when I started studying the University. And I took it pretty seriously as I volunteered for two organizations at once – both engaged with global issues and international development. I was studying development studies and perceived volunteering as a good complementary practice to the theoretical knowledge. But soon after my first experiences I realized I have been volunteering for all my life. I found out it is part of my nature, something of my very own. Within the first year of Uni I was volunteering also for other organizations and took part in several short-term projects; for example workcamp leadership with

INEX-SDA, which brought to me the first intense experiences with international volunteering. But that was not enough for me; I needed some real hands-on experience abroad. So in 2011 I went for GLEN internship to South Africa. I experienced situations I would never find at home and these helped me to realize that I am not only a volunteer. How? I discovered that my motivation for volunteering was not necessarily to help others, but to be active and to stand up for changes in the society I want to see. Since then I took part in both international and local projects with more focus on local issues in my town, coz I wanted my voice to be heard. Now I perceive myself as an active citizen, who is ready to reasonably contribute to society.

By Veronika Ambrozy, with Inex-SDA, Czech Republic



VOLUNTEERING

Veronika Ambrozy while on her volunteering placement in South Africa. Veronika volunteered with Czech agency Inex-SDA

Cape Town is at first sight as any modern European city. But I believe the work at the SAEP enabled me to see the other side of South African reality.

Although I would like this to be taken with a reservation, because this is my way of seeing it and as I stayed there for only three months, I do not consider myself an expert for assessing the political, environmental and cultural situation, so I will work from my observations, which are of course altered because of my lens of seeing things.

So going back, I believe the work enabled me to see some consequences which apartheid left on the people, and how it created the current political, social and environmental situation.

I would say the biggest challenge for me during the internship was to let go of my stereotypes and prejudices. I thought I did not have them, but then there were situations where I caught myself thinking about something very biased. I also did not like being perceived as one that knows better than some teachers. I did not know better and it

was hard for me to make clear I was the one also learning here. But I believe the greatest solutions to this are being aware of such things: this is the first step.

I am sure I have learned a lot, this will especially show during the future experiences, projects, life decisions I will be part of, but even now I can understand and ask better questions (without trying to give too many answers) to future volunteers going abroad and have a better understanding of how things work. My Global Education Action was informing the potential volunteers about possibilities abroad and sharing some of my insights. And also being involved even more as a trainer of volunteers going abroad through Zavod Voluntariat and now also as a GLEN tutor.

By Tina Trdin, Zavid Voluntariat, Slovenia.



THINKING ABOUT YOUR TIME AWAY

Tina Trdin, Zavid Voluntariat, Slovenia, writes about her time in South Africa.

Conclusion.

We very much hope that this document provides a useful resource for volunteer sending agencies, stimulating thinking about their role in supporting the journey from international volunteering to active citizenship and offering practical guidance and activities to be incorporated directly into work with people returning from placements in the global south.

Our experience and reflections on how we engage with returnees - from Ireland and the United Kingdom to Czech Republic and Slovenia, from Spain and Italy to Lithuania - helped us to identify common themes and issues that need to be considered if we are to genuinely consider new ways of looking at the world in order to rise to the challenges being faced by communities globally. These include:

Viewing international volunteering as part of a learning journey: This voyage begins from the moment the seed is planted to want to go overseas, and can last throughout a person's life. It is crucial that organisations focus on activating a learning lens through which volunteers begin to see the world around them: this can incorporate tools such as learning journals to bring experiences from the global south into action for change in the global north.

Development education

Plays a key role in volunteering. By applying the principles and approaches of development education throughout our programmes, we can nurture transformation and support volunteers in their journey towards becoming active citizens.

Active citizenship

The resource also examines what we mean by active citizenship in volunteering, including practical tips gleaned from the experience of the seven organisations and an analysis of the movement from soft to critical volunteering.

The crucial issue of participation

This covers participation in volunteer programmes and within the sending agency; participation with the host community; and participation within wider society. We have included testimonials that illustrate volunteers' movement along the pathway of participation, and believe that these are the most effective way of conveying the transformative influence that international volun-

teering can have in encouraging individuals' growth into active citizens.

As we put together this resource, the new Sustainable Development Goals that will take the place of the Millennium Development Goals and will run until 2030 are in the process of being finalised. Whether or not volunteerism is specifically included in the final wording, volunteers will continue to play a key part in the journey towards equality and justice at the global levels, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to assist volunteer sending agencies in supporting this unique role.



CHANGE

There are many different ways to deal with change. Here's how our workshop signposted some of them.

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



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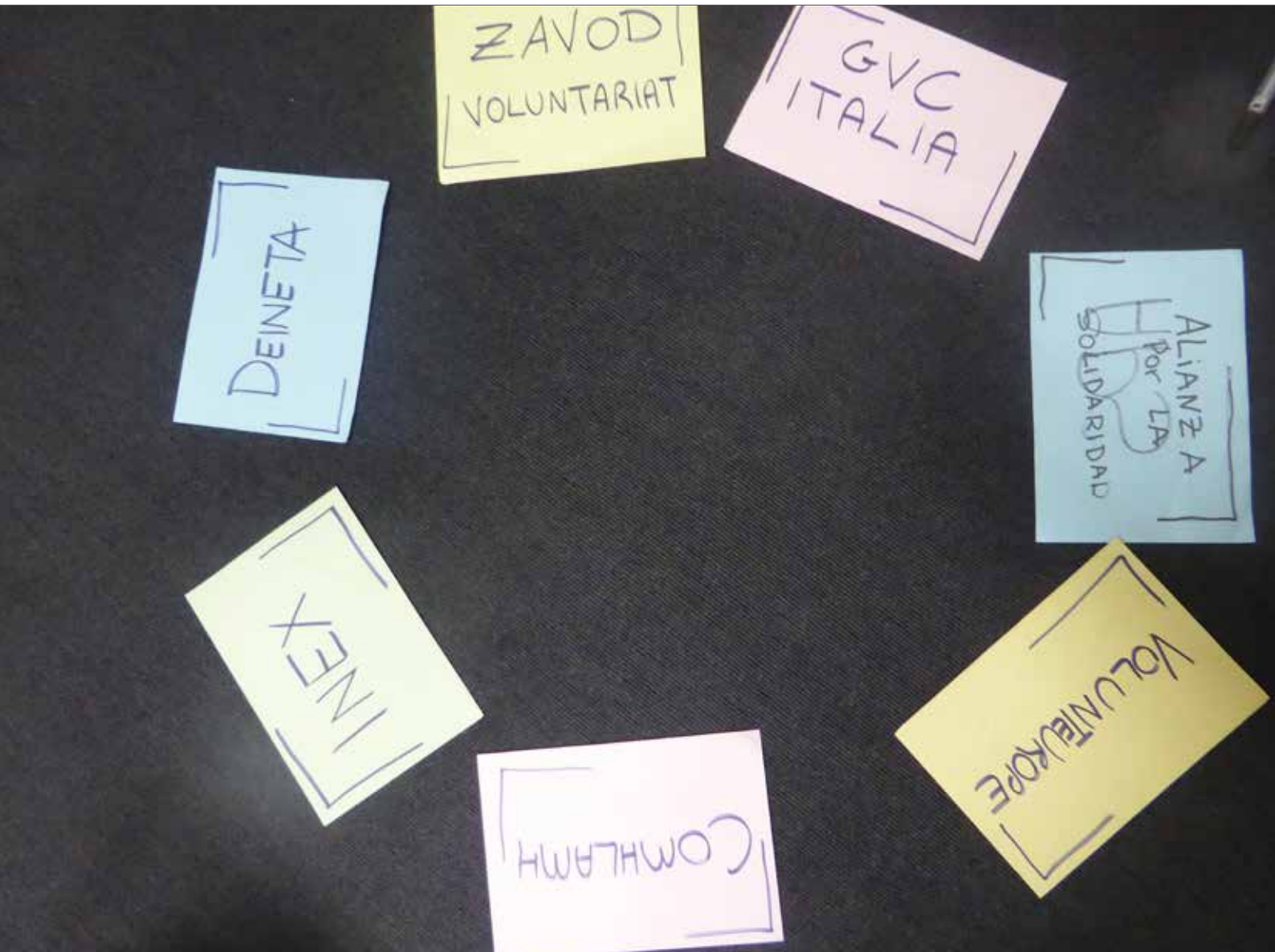
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ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THIS RESOURCE

GVC Italia (Italy), Alianza por la Solidaridad (Spain), Inex (Czech Republic), Zavod Voluntariat (Slovenia), Volunteurope (UK/ Europe), Deineta (Lithuania), Comhlámh (Ireland)

