

POST-2015 VOLUNTEERING WORKING GROUP ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

The [Lima Declaration](#) is a call to action for volunteers, international volunteer cooperation organisations and volunteer-involving organisations. In less than a year, the United Nations will announce a new set of development goals, likely to be called the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), that governments, civil society and the private sector will refer to as the foundation for their own contributions to development cooperation.

This represents a rare opportunity to ensure that the role of volunteerism is recognised and supported in this framework. The experience of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has taught us that in order to be sustainable, development cooperation must look beyond technical and financial assistance to people-centred approaches and solutions devised from the ground up. Volunteers are central to this approach.

The Lima Declaration outlines key asks and messages for volunteerism in the SDGs. The purpose of this toolkit is to empower volunteers, international volunteer cooperation organisations and volunteer-involving organisations to deliver these messages to decision-makers who can, in turn, advocate for their inclusion in the SDGs to be adopted by the United Nations Member States in September 2015.

The Post-2015 Volunteering Working Group Advocacy Toolkit provides background information on the post-2015 process and suggests a number of ways in which we can influence its outcomes. It draws on the [Advocacy Toolkit: Influencing the Post-2015 Development Agenda](#) produced by CIVICUS and Stakeholder Forum, which can be consulted for more detailed analysis, advice and case studies.

Background

As we approach the deadline for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the end of 2015, attention has turned to deciding on a global framework for international development to succeed the MDGs. The successor to the MDGs will establish global goals for development cooperation to be achieved by 2030, which will guide the work of governments and civil society.

The new framework will be made up of:

- An introductory declaration
- Sustainable Development Goals, targets and indicators
- Means of Implementation and a new Global Partnership
- Framework for monitoring and review of implementation

With the post-2015 framework, we will see an increased focus on sustainable development and a universal approach with the goals, targets and indicators applying to all Member States, not just low-income countries.

The **Post-2015 Volunteering Working Group** leads and coordinates the post-2015 advocacy activities of volunteer involving organisations, scaling up efforts to make the impact of volunteering more visible in the post-2015 process and supporting a more systematic integration of volunteerism as an enabling factor for implementation of the SDGs.

To date, the post-2015 process has been dominated by two distinct tracks:

1. **Member State-led** (UN General Assembly) intergovernmental process to develop SDGs
2. **UN Secretary-General-led** discussions on what should replace the MDGs, supported by global stakeholder consultations

Key milestones in these processes include:

- July 2013 – publication of the [Report](#) of the [High-Level Panel](#) of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda
- July 2014 – [Outcome Document](#) of the [Open Working Group](#) on Sustainable Development Goals, proposing 17 goals and 169 targets
- December 2014 – [Secretary-General's Synthesis Report](#), which pulled together all of the inputs gathered by both tracks

In September 2014, the UN officially drew together the two tracks of the post-2015 process and decided that the Outcome Document of the Open Working Group will be the basis for the upcoming intergovernmental negotiations, although other inputs, including the Secretary-General's Synthesis Report, will also be considered¹. Because this Outcome Document will be central to the next phase of the process, Appendix 1 to the Lima Declaration includes an analysis of how volunteers, international volunteer cooperation organisations and volunteer-involving organisations will further commit to the different goal areas if they are given proper recognition in the Outcome Document.

In January 2015, the intergovernmental negotiation process commenced, which will agree on the post-2015 development agenda in time for a high level summit at the United Nations in September 2015.

National level engagement

Signatories to the Lima Declaration commit to working with their national governments to champion volunteering for development in the post-2015 negotiations. Between now and September 2015, our focus will be on advocacy aimed at national governments. To succeed in this work, members of the Volunteering Post-2015 Working Group, signatories to the Lima

¹ [A/68/L.61](#) Item 14/SDGs

Declaration, our volunteers and our colleagues in civil society will have to communicate the messages in the Lima Declaration clearly and consistently to their own governments. Here we set out a step-by-step plan for you or your organisation to follow:

1

Step 1: Understand the priorities and messages set out in the Lima Declaration and how they relate to your work or the work of your organisation.

2

Step 2: Frame your position as concrete suggestions on how specific language on volunteerism can be included in the Outcome Document of the post-2015 development agenda. See Appendix 1 of the Lima Declaration for volunteer commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals.

3

Step 3: Understand your government's position on the post-2015 process and identify areas where our messages could add to or strengthen government policy. Government policies and priorities, and opportunities for civil society, will differ from country to country, and some governments will have more influence in the post-2015 process than others.

You can read [statements by Member States](#) on the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform. Some Member States have published positions on post-2015, for example [France](#).

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Step 4: Understand what other organisations and coalitions in your country are actively engaging with in this process, especially volunteer-involving organisations.

View the living documents [Timeline for Post-2015 Volunteering Working Group](#) and [Mapping of National-Level Presence by Organisation](#) and add any events that you will be engaging in and countries where your organisation operates.

5

Step 5: Choose your messenger(s). This can be NGO staff, your organisation's director or a volunteer.

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Step 6: Identify your target audience and avenues and opportunities to deliver your messages.

Advocacy is often most effective when the same messages are delivered consistently through a number of channels that reinforce and complement each other. Three of the most common ways for delivering an advocacy message are:

- Petitioning and negotiating
- Public campaigns
- Working with or through the media

Given the nature of the post-2015 process, here we will focus on petitioning and

negotiating.

At national level, your target audience will include:

- Decision-makers, including members of parliament and ministers
- Advisors to decision-makers
- Influencers, e.g. newspaper editors, leaders in civil society
- Civil servants, especially in foreign affairs ministries

The negotiating positions of governments at the UN will be decided at national level, so if you can engage with your government in advance of global meetings, you will have a concrete opportunity to influence the outcome of the agenda.

Each Member State has negotiators who will be engaging directly with this process, and who will be key targets for direct petitioning/negotiating. Identify who these people are, seek a meeting with them and establish a relationship in which you can seek periodic formal meetings as well as less formal interactions at key times, for example to email them suggestions for language or call them with concerns or suggestions for a statement they have made. Offer yourself and your organisation as a resource that they can draw on for information or advice on volunteering for development.

Other methods of advocacy could include:

- Meeting with your government – ministers and civil servants from relevant departments, including foreign affairs, development, economic affairs, Head of State or government
- Initiating a debate in parliament, for example through a parliamentary question or private member's bill
- Meeting with other national level stakeholders
- Meeting with and briefing the national press
- Trying to get your members, partners or volunteers on official government delegations for UN events or pre-event meetings

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Step 7: Take stock and identify gaps. Develop an inventory of your advocacy resources, including a budget, previously established advocacy work, partnerships and alliances, the capacities of staff and other partners, and information and political intelligence available to you.

8

Step 8: Manage risks. This includes possible risk to your reputation, relationships and partners. Decide how you will identify, analyse and manage these risks effectively.

9

Step 9: Monitor and evaluate progress and impact. Check how your advocacy strategy is helping you to achieve your planned outcomes. This means monitoring and evaluating your advocacy work and taking action to adjust your strategy.

For more detail on steps 7, 8 and 9, see the [CIVICUS/Stakeholder Forum Advocacy Toolkit](#), Part 2, Section 5 – Steps to Develop Your Post-2015 Advocacy Strategy.

Volunteer Action Counts

The Volunteer Action Counts campaign was launched in 2012 to tell the world about the impact of volunteering by documenting the actions of volunteers across the globe. The campaign builds on the achievements of Rio+20, to further raise awareness about the contribution of volunteerism to peace and development and to promote the integration of volunteerism into the post-2015 development agenda.

The post-2015 section of the website highlights volunteerism's contribution to development at the country and global level and hosts a common space to document UNV, global and national volunteer involving organisations and the Post-2015 Volunteering Working Group's efforts towards integrating volunteering in the post-2015 development agenda.

The Volunteer Action Counts website continues to gather stories about volunteering and provide information about upcoming events, opportunities and best practices. Everyone is invited to join in, from individuals to entire organisations. Share your stories on volunteeractioncounts.org. Build a community. Show the world volunteering matters.

500 Days, 500 Ways

Volunteers and volunteer agencies have made a very real, but too often invisible, contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The case for the inclusion of volunteerism in the SDGs is strengthened by the fact that volunteers have been central to the implementation of the MDGs, and the knowledge that they will be central to the achievement of the SDGs.

500 Days, 500 Ways is a new initiative to highlight the many ways in which volunteering supports sustainable development – across continents and in a range of specialist functions. As we count down the last 500 days of these goals, from 18 August 2014 to 31 December 2015, 500ways.org will feature a new volunteer story every day.

Anyone can submit a story for the site, through the [website](#) or by [email](#). Stories should include a high resolution picture or video and a caption. They can also include longer text and a link to your website.

For questions or further clarification, please contact Adjmal Dooloo at adjmal.dooloo@forum-ids.org or James O'Brien at James.O'Brien@vso.ie