



Volunteer Groups Alliance 2020

A global network of 60+ volunteer-involving organizations working in over 150 countries, the **Volunteer Groups Alliance** (VGA) works together to promote and amplify the role that volunteers play in achieving the United Nations' 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For more information, visit <https://forum-ids.org/about/vga/>. Formed in 2015, VGA seeks to:

- Promote and highlight the contribution of volunteers in delivering the SDGs
- Connect organizations working with Volunteer Groups across the world to help amplify the collective impact of volunteers in national, regional, and global SDG follow up and review processes
- Gain recognition for the crucial role of volunteers in successfully monitoring and ultimately achieving the SDGs

National Level Engagement

The SDGs, global in nature and in scope, will only be achieved at the local and national level. Each year, a subset of national governments self-selects to produce reports detailing their progress towards achieving the SDGs. These Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) are publicly presented at the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) at the UN in July. Governments are instructed to consult and collaborate with civil society, including VGA members, in the production of these reports. VNRs are tangible ways to interact with member states and align VGA work with the overall *UN Plan of Action: Integrating volunteers in the next decade*, which calls for governments to establish “regular and long term dialogue with volunteer-involving organizations during domestication of the sustainable development goals and throughout the planning, implementation and monitoring stages, to ensure continuous engagement with people.”

In the coming year, VGA members will view reports as the beginning of longer term conversations to advocate for the recognition and support of volunteers within members states. VGA members will choose processes to contribute to and analyze how accurately and effectively they reflect the contribution of volunteers towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Analysis will result in a position paper to be shared with governments and that can be used by members in national level work. Of the 50 countries scheduled to present reports in July 2020, 24 have already submitted previous reports, including Argentina, Armenia, Bangladesh, Belize, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Honduras, India, Jordan, Monaco, Morocco, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Samoa, Slovenia, Uganda, Kenya and Zimbabwe. For 2020, VGA members will:

- Build capacity and knowledge of our networks and members to engage in the SDG review processes through sharing materials, collaborating with each other, and inviting to global events
- Identify good examples of volunteer contributions in existing Voluntary National Reviews
- Determine in which of the VNR countries they are working
- Contribute to and analyze VNRs, including:
 - Highlighting gaps where volunteering could have been included
 - Sharing positive examples from peer VNR reports
 - Providing example language for future reports
 - Identifying country-level examples of volunteer contributions to SDGs
 - Commenting on the enabling environment for volunteers and provide improvement recommendations

- Critiquing the report drafting process with a focus on how effectively volunteer contributions were solicited
- Building a collective narrative about the importance of including volunteering in the reviews as a result of an inclusive and participatory national process

In 2020, VNR analysis will provide a way for the sector to productively educate member states on the specific contributions of volunteers to the SDGs and will build off VGAs work in [2018](#) and [2019](#). The goal of the analysis is to have volunteering recognized by member states in every VNR and increased recognition and support of volunteering at the local level.

Global Engagement

As an official Stakeholder Group outlined in UN General Assembly Resolution A/res/67/290, VGA will continue to take advantage of the space and the rights afforded Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS) at the HLPF, acknowledging member resource constraints will dictate the level of participation.

For the HLPF in July 2020, VGA will be active in the following ways:

- Members will author and submit to the UN for publication a statement on how volunteers contribute to sustainable development under the HLPF's theme
- Members will draft two-minute statements to be delivered in-person at the HLPF, in accordance with MGoS process, on the SDGs
- VGA Coordinator will ensure members are able to attend the HLPF in New York and have access to official meetings in accordance with UN guidelines
- VGA Coordinator will help members to ensure the participation of volunteers in the HLPF per processes established by the MGoS and UN DESA
- VGA will organize a Side Event on the UN campus during the HLPF
- VGA will participate in the General Technical Meeting (GTM) being organized by the United Nations Volunteers (UNV)

Communications – Telling the Story

VGA maintains a presence on social media through:

- Twitter at www.twitter.com/volunteergroups
- Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/voluntergroups/?modal=admin_todo_tour
- LinkedIn at <https://www.linkedin.com/company/volunteer-groups-alliance/?viewAsMember=true>

The VGA Coordinator maintains these accounts and amplifies the messages of members in the following ways:

- Following all existing member twitter accounts
- Retweeting and posting of volunteer stories
- Tweeting during select events, such as HLPF and International Volunteer Day
- Adding followers and connections as appropriate
- Retweeting and reposting select UN and SDGs messages

The VGA focus on the National and Global engagement along with sharing and communicating the contributions of volunteers will lead to the increased recognition and support of volunteering.