



NEW ZEALAND
RED CROSS

RĪPEKA WHERE AOTEAROA

Reimagining Volunteering Research report



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Executive Summary

This report is a collection and assessment of research undertaken within the movement and current trends within the volunteering sector. The report explores people's motivations for volunteering, particularly the six volunteer functional index that was used in the Reimagining Volunteer survey. The six motivations are values, understanding, enhancement, career, social and protective functions. From these functions, we can understand why people volunteer and develop a meaningful volunteer experience that meets the person's motivation and appropriately recognises them.

There are many barriers to volunteering including time commitment as there is increasing demand on people's time, the western/colonial model of volunteering that Māori, Pasifika and Migrant communities don't relate to, the complex recruitment process, misalignment between volunteer roles and the interests of volunteers, bureaucracy and expense.

There are many emerging volunteer roles to reduce a number of these barriers including:

- Project based – where volunteers engage in an ad hoc basis on a project of interest.
- Episodic – short term, time limited volunteering opportunity like volunteering at an event for a few hours.
- Microvolunteering – small groups of volunteers work together on small tasks that take no more than 60 minutes to form part of a bigger project.
- Digital volunteering – volunteers engage in online tasks from home.
- Corporate volunteering – corporates offer staff time and talents to non-profit organisations.
- Spontaneous volunteers – volunteers contribute on impulse to help during and following a disaster.
- Information volunteering – people provide community, family and individual support to others in an unstructured or unmanaged but committed way.

Best practice volunteering is explored through the Volunteering Australia National Standards for Volunteering Involvement which includes leadership and management, commitment to volunteer involvement, volunteer roles, recruitment and selection, support and development, workplace safety and wellbeing, volunteer recognition and quality management and continuous improvement.

Red Cross needs to adapt the types and models of volunteering opportunities offered or we will struggle to engage the diverse groups that characterise New Zealand.

The Research Project

This research project aims to support the findings gained from New Zealand Red Cross' Reimagining Volunteering Survey, Focus Groups and Volunteer Sector Consultations as part of the development of New Zealand Red Cross Volunteer Strategy.

“Kia whakatomuri te haere ki mua”, meaning “To walk into the future, our eyes must be fixed on the past”. As New Zealand Red Cross looks forward to the next ten years, it is important to be informed by the organisation's history, and its past volunteer engagement, and to gain the insight and learnings from these experiences as a new approach to volunteer engagement is established at New Zealand Red Cross.

Internal Federation of Red Cross (IFRC)

“IFRC Strategy 2030 re-imagines volunteering that capitalises on the opportunities of self-organising, and networked groups. The Red Cross and Red Crescent will find creative ways to connect volunteers across countries and regions, expanding from rigid national volunteer models to a distributed network of volunteers across borders, co-creating and driving impact together. This will require a mutually transformative shift from utilising volunteers purely to deliver service, but rather to expand and support people in their own efforts to drive the change they seek in the world.

1. Re-imagined volunteering will use innovation, and digital engagement tools.
2. Re-imagined volunteering will be much more inclusive and diverse across multiple domains and of different identity and demographic groups.” (Solferino Academy, n.d.)

New Zealand Red Cross Strategy 2030

We will attract and engage a diverse New Zealand Red Cross membership – and together with our existing members work collectively to contribute in ways that make the biggest impact (New Zealand Red Cross, n.d., 11).

The Research

Developing meaningful roles

Volunteers extend the capacity of the organisation to meet aims and goals. Volunteers provide their time, skills, expertise and points of view that enable the organisation to pursue programmes and activities that benefit the community.

Volunteering provides an opportunity to be involved in activities that reflect the volunteer's interests and engages their skills. Meaningful roles promote a sense of belonging and general wellbeing. Volunteering can also be a way to develop skills, potential pathways to employment or a way to contribute existing skills for common good (Volunteering Australia, 2015).

Tobi Jackson (2021) has outlined four core elements required for a meaningful volunteering role:

- Ownership
- Responsibility for results - they are held responsible for achieving a task or outcome.
- Authority - trusted and empowered to determine the best approach to complete the task or achieve an outcome.
- Accountability - they know how they are doing and what impact they are making.

Researcher Nancy Franz (n.d.) has described transactional and transformative volunteering roles as a means to provide deeper and more meaningful roles. Transactional volunteering is when a volunteer provides time, resources and skills to the organisation and in exchange, the organisation allows the volunteer to help others and be recognised for their service. This approach focuses mainly on tasks to be completed and programmes to be delivered and include a specific job description for volunteers. The organisation provides learning focused on technical, content and skills-based learning.

Transformative volunteering occurs when in the process of “doing” volunteers often experience profound personal change that transforms who they are or how they see the world. It is defined as “the development of revised assumptions, premises, ways of interpreting experience or perspectives on the world by means of critical reflection” (Cranton, 1994, as cited in Franz, n.d., 3). In this approach, individual learning is not solely about tasks or programme delivery, but also about nurturing individual volunteer development and holistic organisation change. Change is transformative when individuals and groups gain new perspectives and actions that differ from past views and behaviours. The organisation provides this type of support and facilitates this type of learning by creating conditions for individual and group growth. This transformational learning enhances and deepens volunteers experience. Transformation learning can be achieved through:

- An environment that promotes critical reflection where individuals review old assumptions and reflect on these.
- Diversity in the people who work together including different personalities, work styles, worldviews and backgrounds.
- Roles with interdependence where joint work is strong but individual autonomy is valued.

One aspect that makes a volunteers role meaningful is that it aligns with their motivation to volunteer.

Motivations

British Red Cross completed research to explore motivations for volunteering in their context. They completed focus groups with over 100 volunteers. They identified nine different reasons people volunteer with them (Brittian, 2014).

Personal connection with the Red Cross
One-third of volunteers had a personal connection and this was one of the reasons they volunteered. For many of these volunteers, social interaction was also important.
To gain experience and enhance skills
Over one-quarter of volunteers indicated that they had been motivated to volunteer to gain new skills enter into, or complimenting existing study or employment. Others wished to gain skills in a particular area without having the responsibility that might be expected of a professional role.
To make friends and socialise
The chance to make new friends and socialise was a motivation for one-fifth of the volunteers. Volunteers wanted to expand their social circle wanting to meet new people that had different interests and backgrounds from their own.
To fill spare time or avoid in life
Just under one-fifth of volunteers were motivated to fill their spare time or a gap in their lives. This was due to retirement, losing a spouse or unemployment.
A different challenge or role to paid employment
Over one-fifth of volunteers wanted less pressure or responsibility than a paid role, whereas others were simply looking for a different type of challenge than provided in their paid role.
The reputation of the Red Cross
Under one-fifth of volunteers felt that the principles or reputation of the Red Cross was a driving motivator to join. While volunteers were attracted by the principles of the Red Cross, the majority of volunteers were not fully aware of these before joining.
Particular interest
Personal interest in the type of volunteering roles would often dictate a person's choice of organisation or charity.
To do something worthwhile and gain personal satisfaction
Helping others was a motivation for over half of the volunteers and was more frequently cited by volunteers over fifty. Several volunteers mentioned that they felt more worthwhile and experienced greater personal satisfaction when seeing direct impacts on their local community.
Develop confidence
Younger volunteers in particular were looking to develop confidence with future employment in mind. This was particularly seen in volunteers in retail shops.

Researchers Gil Clary and Mark Snyder (n.d.) developed a functional approach to volunteer motivations. They developed six motivations for volunteering.

Value function
The person is volunteering to express or act on important values. They want to connect to the organisation's mission and personal values and an opportunity to meaningfully serve others.
Understanding function
The volunteer gains knowledge skills and ability. The volunteer wants professionalised training, reflection and a variety of assignments to explore.
Enhancement function
The volunteer wants to grow and develop through the role. They want a positive experience with the opportunity for leadership development.
Career function
The volunteers have the goal of gaining career related experience through volunteering. They want skill development and networking opportunities.
Social function
Volunteering allows the person to strengthen their social relationships. The volunteer wants opportunities to socialise and acknowledgement from peers.
Protective function
The individual uses volunteering to reduce negative feelings such as guilt to address personal problems. The volunteer wants reassurance that their contribution has value and an emotionally supportive environment.

(Mercadante, 2021).

Barriers

While people may want to volunteer there can be many barriers to volunteering.

1. Time commitment

There is an increasing demand from people's time with both parents working, childcare and domestic duties, and the increasing responsibility to look after older relatives. People also have more options than ever before on how they spend their free time and there is a wider choice of volunteer opportunities. The total number of volunteer hours in New Zealand has decreased due to this increasing demand for people's time (Fire and Emergency New Zealand, 2019). The time commitment is particularly difficult for people who work or study long hours with little free time, people with irregular or changing shift patterns, or others with imminent change of circumstances and were, therefore reluctant to commit to long-term volunteering (Brittian, 2014). The Helping Out national volunteering survey in the United Kingdom reported that eighty percent of respondents reason for not volunteering was lack of time (Low et al, 2007).

2. Volunteer 'culture'

The western model of volunteering assumes or projects a globally consistent type of personal or community bond and obligation. This means locally specific models of

volunteering can either be ignored or not recognised, or they are required to adapt to an externally conceived model (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2015). For many Māori “the usual concept of ‘volunteering’ did not accurately reflect their worldview or their own experiences of and motivations for carrying out unpaid work for *whānau*, *hapū*, *iwi* and other Māori organisations and individuals” (Just Change, 2008). The concept of *mahi aroha* is deeply rooted in *tikanga* – Māori values and world views. When asked about their motivations, some people thought the question in itself was odd. *Mahi aroha* was rarely a choice, but “part of life”, identity and a cultural obligation, and cultural survival was a core motive (Just Change, 2008).

The term ‘volunteer’ was reported by several National Societies as being unfamiliar, despite strong practices of volunteering in the culture of the country. In Australia, the term volunteer is sometimes received negatively, carrying with it implications that there are obligations to the volunteer organisation that would take precedence over family or community commitment. The Australian Red Cross had to work with local communities to adapt the model and concepts of volunteering so that it made sense to aboriginal culture. For example, the term volunteer was replaced by ‘community helper’ in some communities (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2015).

Lack of cohesion between the local culture and the Red Cross ‘culture’ decreases the engagement of volunteers (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2015).

3. Recruitment process

Formal recruitment processes including registration forms, interviews and vetting with the additional time delay to process these can discourage people from volunteering (Havering Volunteer Centre, n.d.). The American Red Cross notes this as one of their top barriers to recruiting potential volunteers (Volunteer strategies, 2018). Additionally, a commonly identified barrier for volunteers is the perception that training is too long or complex (Johnson, n.d.).

4. Volunteer roles

Increasing misalignment between the volunteering roles people are interested in and the roles that organisations are offering (mpConsulting, 2018). Last year, more people wanted to volunteer, with the supply of opportunities unable to meet demand. Seek Volunteer website had four people interested per role listed with a commitment of fewer than six months compared to 0.8 per role with a commitment of more than six months. An Australian study shows that three out of four volunteers in short term roles continue to have an ongoing relationship with the organisation after six months (Millar, 2020).

5. Bureaucracy

Red Cross volunteering models are largely top-heavy, bureaucratic and steeped in process and procedure (Hazeldine, 2018). Several volunteers mentioning increasing administrative and regulatory burdens was a major barrier to effective volunteering in the Volunteer New Zealand survey in 2020. (State of Volunteering, 2020). The Helping Out national

volunteering survey in the United Kingdom reported that nearly fifty percent of respondents were put off by bureaucracy (Low et al, 2007).

6. Expense

With the very definition of volunteering, being an unpaid role, this means it is more accessible to those who can afford to participate. The risk is that volunteering is gentrified. (Hazeldine, 2018). On average volunteer organisations are reimbursing only one dollar for every eight dollars a volunteer spends on volunteering. This means that on top of valuable time, volunteers are donating AUD 6.70 per hour after reimbursements or AUD 1,700 per year. This cost is a significant barrier to volunteering (Forster, 2021).

7. Transport

Travel issues were considered a barrier, especially in rural areas. This is especially a challenge for those that are reliant on public transport or lifts to appropriate volunteer roles (Brittian, 2014).

8. Child care

Finding safe, affordable child care is a barrier for many people especially those on a low income. People will often wait until they were in a better position to be able to devote more time to volunteering (Brittian, 2014).

9. Worrying that they lack the necessary skills

Volunteering can be a great way to learn new skills and build on existing ones, but potential volunteers might worry that they lack the necessary skills from the start (Havering Volunteer Centre, n.d.).

10. Criminal record

Depending on the role an organisation may screen potential volunteers. Having a criminal conviction may feel like a barrier to someone as they may be embarrassed to disclose this and not apply for any roles (Havering Volunteer Centre, n.d.).

Different ages and ethnicities tend to have different motivations and barriers for volunteering. Younger volunteers, older volunteers, Migrant, Takatāpui and/or Rainbow community (LGBTQIA+), Māori communities, Pasifika communities, Migrants and people with disabilities will be explored in further detail.

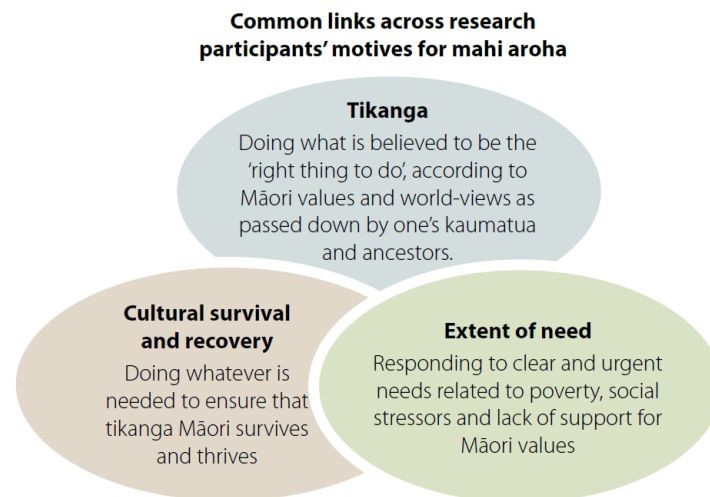
Māori communities

Within Māori communities, the concept of volunteering is alien and in another sense an essential part of everyday life. The word ‘mahi aroha’ – work performed out of love, sympathy or caring and through a sense of duty, was considered more appropriate (Just Change, 2008).

While many Māori have been or were involved in mainstream volunteering especially those with church affiliations, the large majority of mahi aroha undertaken was for Māori individuals or organisations. Assistance to Māori was seen as having priority either because of whanaungatanga connections or because of a sense of duty to cultural recovery. While those involved in volunteering for mainstream organisations were committed to their work, it was not their main

priority. If their circumstances changed, this volunteering would be sacrificed rather than assistance to their whānau (Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector, 2007).

There is a broad range of motives for mahi aroha. The common link across the motives are shown below.



Researchers have looked at organisational and contextual factors that may influence Māori and support mahi aroha, this includes:

- Friends and work associates committed to supporting kaupapa Māori
- Sympathetic employers who are flexible regarding kaupapa Māori work
- Good communication technologies reduce the need for travel (Smith, 2010).

Pasifika communities

The word 'volunteering' was not appropriate to identify the contribution Pasifika people make. One participant in a study commented that volunteering is a "horrible" word. They believe that volunteering is what they do for strangers (Webster, 2008).

Pacific elders and young people consider that Pasifika people have a moral and ethical responsibility to care, support, and assist aiga (extended family). Aiga is not a choice, it is a cultural obligation to give one's time to look after family or care for something that holds traditional value. This sense of cultural identity is based on the foundation of respect. Volunteering for strangers is not required if some Pasifika families and communities need help (Webster, 2008).

Researchers have looked at organisational and contextual factors that may influence Pasifika communities in volunteering, this includes:

- At the Mataula Centre, volunteers are supported by being able to work as a Tokelauan community where cultural values and way of life is important.
- At the Canterbury Fiji Social Services Trust volunteers are supported by a sense of belonging, being part of a relationship, and the mutual respect that comes from sharing cultural awareness.
- For Samoans, the opportunity to contribute to the wellbeing of the aiga (extended family) made for successful volunteering because it contributes to one's wellness.

- Keeping integrity with ancestors and future generations is important (Smith, 2010).

Migrant communities

As mentioned with Māori and Pasifika communities, the term ‘volunteer’ is not universally understood. Many migrants will drive one another to a doctor’s appointment or watch each other’s children however they would not label this as volunteering. When working with migrants using words beyond ‘volunteer’ such as ‘help’, ‘give’ or ‘support’ would be better understood (MAVA, 2018). As previously mentioned, the Australian Red Cross uses the word ‘community helper’ in some communities (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2015).

The majority (74%) of recent migrants volunteered for the purpose of contributing to their communities and building connections with others. Another reason migrants volunteer is to develop professional skills specific to the New Zealand context (Volunteering New Zealand, 2019).

Challenges migrants face include bias, discrimination, and racism while volunteering; difficulty accessing information about volunteering opportunities in New Zealand; differing nature and expectations of volunteering compared to their country of origin; and lack of trust and support during volunteering. These challenges are especially acute for recent migrants volunteers who were former refugees, people of colour and those for whom English is not their first language (Volunteering New Zealand, 2019). Additional challenges may include financial and travel limitations (MAVA, 2018).

Younger volunteers

Young people are motivated to volunteer for external reasons like a desire to help people or contribute to an important cause and internal reasons like learning a new skill to increase employability and make new friends. Young people fit volunteering around their education or work commitments (Smith, 2010). Volunteering also provides school leavers with the opportunity to build confidence and develop valuable professional and workplace skills. Many school leavers are on a journey learning where their interests, skills and strengths lie, volunteering can be an avenue to explore this (Victoria Alive, 2019a).

Younger people have four key barriers to volunteering, lack of awareness of volunteering opportunities, time constraints, financial and travel limitations. They value online recruitment and virtual volunteering as it can fit around their schedules (Curtin University, 2019).

Older adults

Older people are motivated by the social aspects, making a difference in their community, being intellectually stimulated, or sharing skills (Smith, 2010). They prefer to be asked to contribute their education and skills to tasks and are more likely to volunteer when there are incentives such as mileage reimbursements (Curtin University, 2019). Common barriers for seniors are health, mobility, and fitness concerns, financial barriers, and lack of time. Research suggests marketing to recruit older people before they retire so it becomes built into their retirement plans (Smith, 2010).

Takatāpui and/or Rainbow community (LGBTQIA+)

There seems to be a lack of research in this area. The limited research recommends that data collection forms and other documents allow for gender identities other than male and female. Takatāpui and/or Rainbow community identities are considered in monitoring and evaluation of volunteers (Volunteer Scotland, n.d.). In New Zealand research has been completed on Takatāpui and/or Rainbow community in the workplace. This has identified that they experience more discrimination in the workplace, and this often goes unreported for many reasons including the recipient would have to out themselves to make a complaint. Instead, they leave the job. This high risk of experiencing discrimination leads many people to conceal their diverse sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions, or sex characteristics in the workplace. Those with diverse gender identities often experience unique and greater barriers. 74% of participants in Counting Ourselves reported concealing their trans or non-binary status in the workplace due to discrimination. This can have an adverse effect on their productivity and mental health (New Zealand Human Rights Commission, 2020). Almost a third of survey participants in the WeCount survey felt uncomfortable bringing their whole selves to work (State Service Commission, 2019). A workplace that values diversity and inclusion enhances a company's reputation as a good employer, attracts a larger pool of candidates, reduces the risk of discrimination and harassment and drives innovation (New Zealand Human Rights Commission, 2020).

People with Disabilities

Volunteers with disabilities will be motivated to volunteer for a variety of reasons, this may include keeping active (Victoria Alive, 2019), gaining more independence and developing a routine (Victoria Alive, 2019a). While volunteers with disabilities gain confidence and independence they made need some additional support. This may include flexibility and adaptability in both hours and tasks, a buddy or assistant for the volunteering tasks and regular meetings to see how everything is progressing (Victoria Alive, 2019).

Volunteering should be an option for everyone. In this world, with the risk we have seen with the COVID pandemic, we need everyone to be empowered to help (Forster, 2021). To increase volunteer diversity there are many aspects to consider including:

- Have an Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedure clearly stating that you welcome all sectors of society and do not tolerate discrimination.
- Have a flexible approach to the volunteer roles including different times of the day, remote and virtual volunteering opportunities.
- Review where you promote volunteer roles and the images used to target diverse volunteers.
- Review recruitment methods and ensure application forms are accessible for people with a learning difficulty, sensory impairment or who do not have English as their first language.
- Reimburse transport costs and other expenses related to volunteering.
- Provide resources and equipment to enable people with disabilities to carry out their volunteering activities.
- Ensure social activities reflect the diversity of your volunteers and include different activities to suit everyone.

- Ensure people from underrepresented groups are in management and decision making roles such as board members (East Sussex Volunteer Centre, 2019).

Emerging roles to reduce barriers to volunteering

There are many emerging volunteer roles that when incorporated into the volunteer opportunities can remove barriers to volunteering.

Project based volunteering

Over the last several years volunteering in New Zealand has been moving away from long term regular volunteering towards short term and project based volunteering. Instead of volunteering each week, volunteers are choosing to engage in an ad hoc basis on a project of interest. This trend is due to the difficulty in balancing other commitments such as career, educational, social, and caregiving commitments (Volunteering New Zealand, 2020).

Organisations should not be concerned with volunteer retention instead planning for turnover with volunteers moving from project to project. Providing opportunities for them to make decisions, network, and contribute their ideas (McLay, 2016).

The organisation needs to consider support and resources that are available when planning roles to provide volunteers with coaching, feedback, and importantly and social inclusion in the workplace (McLay, 2016).

Episodic volunteering

As with project based volunteers, time constraints tend to be a barrier for episodic volunteers. They prefer short-term, time-limited or irregular volunteering opportunities (Randle et al, 2017). For episodic volunteers the social component of volunteering is important. They want to complete a specific task, tangible results or satisfaction gained. Episodic volunteering tasks include volunteering for a few hours at an event.

Organisations need to consider how they connect them to the big picture, providing task variety and keeping the volunteering fun (Nonprofit and Community Learning Centre, n.d.)

Microvolunteering

Micro-volunteering is an increasingly sought after type of volunteering that involves small groups working together to form part of a bigger project. Those involved in microvolunteering generally tend to not want to be committed to an organisation or spend longer than 60 minutes completing the activity (Curtin University, 2019). Microvolunteer tasks have included transcribing documents, online mapping and fundraising.

Microvolunteering allows volunteers to decide how much time they want to volunteer. Instead of volunteering each week, volunteers choose a bite sized amount of time to volunteer, from one minute to one hour. There is no regular commitment, some volunteers may return at irregular times that suit them, while others may only volunteer once (Help from Home, n.d.).

Microvolunteering may enable house-bound, those with disabilities or criminal records to volunteer. There is no recruitment or induction process rather minimal training, often reading instructions (Help from Home, n.d.).

Organisations need to consider providing visible feedback as volunteers don't see the outcome which may be frustrating for results orientated volunteers. Providing exposure to results as part of the volunteer increases repeat volunteering experience for example provide a photo gallery of the work volunteers complete and statistics (Help from Home, n.d.).

Digital volunteering

There are many advantages to digital volunteering including access to volunteering without physical constraints, or having to commit to strict time requirements or social obligations. One volunteer for the Swiss Red Cross stated "Finally, I can now do voluntary work for the Red Cross on this digital path, even with my disability". (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. n.d., 5). An advantage for the organisation is skills become more easily accessible.

Many current volunteering tasks can be changed to become digital volunteering roles (Kacprowicz, n.d.). When considering digital volunteering, thought must be given to the roles as resourceful and interesting online activities are needed to attract volunteers that will keep them motivated. Digital volunteering can be isolating which decreases motivation. Some National Societies are already using digital volunteers for:

- Communication activities - translation, design, developing and reviewing content
- Developing e-learning and training modules
- Pro-bono digital services, for example, by developers and consultants
- Data and digital services - mapping and GIS
- Research tasks - desk-reviews, report writing
- Community support - chat rooms and phone lines (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. n.d.).

The Australian Red Cross provides good use of digital spontaneous volunteers. "The Australian Red Cross ran a crowd-sourced model of digital volunteering to activate people as ambassadors or activists during the bushfires that struck the country for various months from late 2019 to early 2020. The National Societies created a digital community to support digital advocates focusing on supporting people to take humanitarian action in their households and communities. The digital community is a space where people can join up and talk with each other and self-organize (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. n.d.).

Volunteers through the United National Volunteer's Online Volunteering service complete 20 thousand assignments each year and have a 90 percent satisfaction rate (UNV Online Volunteering Service, 2016).

Organisations need to consider reimbursement for using the internet and personal equipment or providing devices to ensure they can complete their digitally enabled tasks. Organisations should foster digital community building (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. n.d.) through regular and open communication, virtual platforms where they can communicate with other volunteers and staff (Ellis, 2000).

Corporate volunteering

Corporate Social Responsibility is the impact a company has on their staff, community and society as a whole. It has been estimated that the world's largest 500 companies are spending US\$20 billion a year on corporate social responsibility activities. Corporate social responsibilities initiatives include partnering with non-profits, payroll giving, providing goods in kind, sponsoring events and employee volunteering (Volunteering Waikato, 2019).

Corporates offer staff time and talents to non-profit organisations as it provides employee engagement and achieves results in the community (Volunteering Waikato, 2019). Corporate volunteering can be hands-on such as painting, gardening or skill-based where people share their technical knowledge (Volunteer Ireland, 2015).

Skill based volunteering gives employees the opportunity to enhance their skills, gain experience mentoring others and have the satisfaction of completing tasks for an organisation that would normally need to pay consultants (Volunteer Ireland, 2015). Employees may also work with vulnerable people which may broadens their worldview (Volunteering Waikato, 2019).

Organisations need to consider what they hope to achieve through corporate volunteering. Whether they want to develop employee skills, increase capacity, enhance public perception, create better networks or source additional funding (Volunteer Ireland, 2015).

Spontaneous volunteering

Spontaneous volunteers are those who seek to contribute on impulse, offering to help during and following a disaster and who are not previously volunteering for the organisation and may not have the relevant training, skills, or experience (Whittaker, 2015). This is becoming more common due to the amount of coverage an event receives in the media, along with the desire to help those affected (Australian Government, 2010). Lowe and Fothergill conducted a small scale study on the motivations and experience of the 9/11 spontaneous volunteer. They found that the most common motivation was to allay their distress. Motivations were so strong that some people lied and queue jumped to increase their chance of being accepted as a volunteer. The experience positively impacts the volunteers as they felt interconnection, healing and empowerment (Hain, 2010).

Spontaneous volunteers offer skills and resources to supplement an organisation. The ability of an organisation to use these skills and resources is dependent upon the organisation's ability to handle the complex task of recruiting, vetting, and inducting these volunteers. This has the potential to overwhelm organisation, which has clear roles to respond to and assist those affected by the emergency (Australian Government, 2010).

There are many advantages in utilizing spontaneous volunteers including the local knowledge volunteers have of their community, an understanding of available resources, and the trust of the affected community. They also aid the community to recover and help build community resilience (Australian Government, 2010). For example, a study of the 2011 Rena oil spill in Maketu, a successful clean-up was attributed to the knowledge and cultural values of the local people (Whittaker, 2015).

There is some risk utilising spontaneous volunteers, they often arrive without the necessary equipment to perform the role or keep themselves safe and may become a distraction to the regular responders (Australian Government 2010). Untrained volunteers may cause injury to themselves, community members, or property. This can also be mitigated through assigning tasks that have minimal safety risks and they complete the task only when they have both the skills and knowledge to complete the task successfully (Whittaker, 2015). Some volunteers become dissatisfied with the organisation if they are unable to complete the task they aspire to due to lack of training or experience (Hain, 2010).

During the COVID pandemic, the National Health Service advertised for Volunteer Responders with seven hundred thousand volunteers accepted in this role. Of these, only three hundred thousand were utilised. Four hundred thousand volunteers were accepted into the programme and received nothing to do as the supply of tasks lagged behind the supply of volunteers, with many of these volunteers becoming very frustrated (Jackson, 2020a).

Frustrated and unused spontaneous volunteers can lead to future disengagement with volunteering. An effective communication strategy is needed to overcome this through regular communication during the emergency including why offers of help were not being taken up and information on future volunteering opportunities (Australian Government, 2010).

A spontaneous volunteer plan is essential to reduce confusion within the community regarding how to volunteer appropriately and provide clear policies and procedures to emergency response staff and volunteers regarding how to work with spontaneous volunteers. The success of the response is dependant on volunteers understanding their roles, responsibilities and chain of command. This will take serious investment in planning and the commitment of resources long before an emergency eventuates to develop sound volunteer management strategies that enable the organisation to harness the goodwill and energy of spontaneous volunteers (Hain, 2010).

Informal volunteering

Informal volunteering is volunteering not coordinated by an organisation or institution. People provide community, family and individual support to others in an unstructured or unmanaged but committed way. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many self-directed volunteers emerged including a woman who handed out masks to street cleaners in Wuhan. People also leveraged their social media platforms to organise volunteer efforts including arranging temporary houses for medical professionals to help in hospitals or delivering food and supplies to those who can't leave their homes.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, informal volunteering rose to new levels as neighbours found creative new ways to help their community. Even before the COVID pandemic, the majority of volunteering was informal. The United Nations research shows that 70 percent of the world's volunteering is completed informally.

Informal volunteering is more personal and directly connected to the needs of the community. It is less bureaucratic with no applications, formal screening, interviewing, vetting, orientation and chain of command. It is flexible, innovative and adaptable.

This provides an opportunity for organisations to provide guidance, coordination and support or to collaborate with informal volunteers in order to assure maximise service to all communities (Bulman, 2021).

Best Practice

Volunteering Australia has developed National Standards for Volunteer Involvement to assist organisations to

- incorporate the values and maximising the benefits of volunteer involvement.
- develop effective volunteer involvement strategies and practices.
- involve volunteers in meaningful and useful activities that contribute to the outcome of the organisation's work.
- ensure the rights of volunteers are protected and that they are supported to carry out their roles and responsibilities (Volunteering Australia, 2015).

This next section will explore volunteer best practices using these national standards. The guidelines from these standards will be provided in italics with further research on the topic provided below.

Standard 1: Leadership and Management

The governing body and senior employees lead and promote a positive culture towards volunteering and implement effective management systems to support volunteer involvement. This is outlined in four key criteria:

- *Responsibilities for leading and managing volunteer involvement are defined and supported.*
- *Policies and procedures applying to volunteers are communicated, understood and implemented by all relevant staff across the organisation.*
- *The organisation's risk management process are applied to the organisation's volunteer involvement.*
- *Volunteer involvement records are maintained (Volunteering Australia, 2015).*

The importance of paid staff being responsible for managing volunteers is a reoccurring feature in good volunteer management practices. Lower levels of adoption of all management systems and processes were reported in organisations with unpaid or no volunteer manager. Organisations with paid managers experienced fewer recruitment challenges and demonstrated greater adoption of an array of volunteer management practices. However, a paid volunteer manager does not increase the retention rate of volunteers (Smith, 2010). IFRC reports that National Societies operating in highly developed countries have a staff to volunteer ratio of 1:9 while in the least developed countries that ratio is on average 1:180 (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2015).

Volunteer management software can assist with volunteer records and provide 'nose to tail' solutions for volunteer management, everything from advertising vacancies, online application forms, screening tools, scheduling and rostering mechanisms, reporting of hours and other metrics, and reminders about compliance checks. In addition, some enable online training to be developed for your team as well as mechanisms for enhanced and streamlined communications. Volunteers can often download an app and sign up for shifts, download their schedules, keep their information up to date and communicate with the organisation (Fryar, 2021).

Standard 2: Commitment to Volunteer Involvement

Commitment to volunteer involvement is set out through vision, planning and resourcing and supports the organisation's strategic direction. This is outlined in three key criteria:

- *The organisation publicly declares its intent, purpose and commitment to involving volunteers.*
- *Volunteer involvement is planned and designed to contribute to the organisation purpose, goals and objectives.*
- *Resources (including time, funds, equipment and technology) are allocated for volunteer involvement (Volunteering Australia, 2015).*

Reimbursing volunteers for expenses related to volunteering is critical in ensuring equality of opportunities, the capacity of people and communities who are experiencing poverty to access volunteering opportunities is a central issue for National Societies. This also assists with the efforts to recruit people and communities as genuine partners rather than just as 'beneficiaries' who have things done 'to' and 'for' them. This is important to promote diversity in the volunteer pool. No one should be prevented from volunteering because they cannot afford it (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2015).

As previously discussed, transport, child care and lack of devices may be a barrier to volunteering. For example, providing a transportation stipend, providing child care at volunteer events or gatherings may be a factor that allows a parent to attend (MAVA, 2018), reimbursement for using the internet and personal equipment or providing devices to ensure they can complete digitally enable tasks (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies n.d.) enable people to access volunteer who may not otherwise be able to.

Standard 3: Volunteer Roles

Volunteers are engaged in meaningful roles which contribute to the organisation purpose, goals and objectives. This is outlined in four key criteria:

- *Volunteer roles are designed to contribute to the organisation's purpose, goals and objectives.*
- *Volunteer roles are appropriate for the community, service user and stakeholder groups with which the organisation works.*
- *Volunteer roles are defined, documented and communicated.*
- *Volunteer roles are reviewed with input from volunteers and employees (Volunteering Australia, 2015).*

Volunteers are paid with meaning so time must be invested in developing meaningful and motivating roles that will provide a positive volunteer experience. The following needs to be considered when designing the role

- Volunteers' time
- Skills, talents and experiences volunteers bring to the organisation to help achieve the organisation's purpose and goals (Jackson, 2021 Three tips).
- Volunteer motivation (as previously discussed)
- Appropriate role for the task – for example, traditional, digital, microvolunteering, project-based or spontaneous (as previously discussed)

- Ensure the volunteer role include the four elements of ownership, responsibility, authority and accountability (as previously discussed).

Standard 4: Recruitment and Selection

Volunteer recruitment and selection strategies are planned, consistent and meet the needs of the organisation and volunteers. This is outlined in four key criteria:

- *Planned approaches are used to attract volunteers with relevant interests, skills and attributes.*
- *Potential volunteers are provided with relevant information about the organisation, the volunteer roles and the recruitment and selection process.*
- *Volunteers are selected based on interest, knowledge, and skills or attribute relevant to the role, and consistent with anti-discrimination registration.*
- *Vetting processes are applied to volunteer roles that help maintain the safety, security of clients, volunteers, staff, community and organisation (Volunteering Australia, 2015).*

The IFRC volunteer policy states the National Societies should “remove physical, economic, social and cultural barriers to participation and recruit volunteers based on their potential” (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2011, 2). American Red Cross states that having a recruitment strategy and engaging the right people to invite others to volunteer increases recruitment success while engaging too many methods of recruitment can be counterproductive (Volunteer Strategies, 2018).

Changes can be made to recruitment strategies to enable greater engagement with diversity. For example, translating materials, having targeted recruitment drives (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2015) and focusing recruitment messaging on volunteers functional motivations is a powerful means for capturing volunteers’ interest (Johnson, n.d.).

Additionally, asking or giving former clients or those an organisation has supported information on volunteering may increase the recruitment of diverse volunteers. It is a natural human feeling to want to give back to an organisation that has supported you. Many people who have been supported by an organisation may wonder if they are needed or wanted as a volunteer (MAVA, 2018).

Research shows that timely responses to enquires capitalised on individual enthusiasm. Minimising the bureaucratic hurdles, while undertaking vetting which is appropriate for the role and organisations is important to retain a volunteers interest and protect the organisation (Smith, 2010). The Australian Red Cross has developed a framework for volunteering roles. Roles are divided into three categories with varying recruitment and onboarding requirements. The lowest category requires a requisition and registration form only so the volunteer can complete the recruitment in approximately 10 minutes (Australian Red Cross, n.d.). During the COVID pandemic, the National Health Service in the United Kingdom asked for Volunteer Responders. The application process took five minutes on a smartphone and people were approved within thirty-six hours (Jackson, 2021a).

The Australian Red Cross is convening a growing multi-sector collaboration that brings together private, public and for-purpose stakeholders to develop shared trust standards and design

principles that are needed to enable portable credentials. A double-sided digital credential marketplace allows people to demonstrate their identity, trustworthiness and reputation via verifiable digital credentials and provide organisations with the ability to easily issue and receive these credentials (Australian Red Cross, 2020).

Standard 5: Support and Development

Volunteers understand their roles and gain the knowledge, skills and feedback needed to safely and effectively carry out their duties. This is outlined in five key criteria:

- *Volunteers are provided with orientation relevant to their role and responsibility*
- *Volunteers knowledge and skills are reviewed to identify support and development needs.*
- *Volunteers knowledge and skill needs relevant to their roles are identified, and training and development opportunities are provided to meet these needs.*
- *Volunteers are provided with supervision and support that enables them to undertake their roles and responsibilities.*
- *Changes to the involvement of a volunteer are undertaken fairly and consistently (Volunteering Australia, 2015).*

Orientation enables volunteers to understand your organisation so they are equipped to represent the organisation to the public accurately. It also enables them to become familiar with the organisational culture and how they are completed. This is the time to provide a clear picture of the commitments and the rewards for volunteering for the organisation (Johnson, n.d.).

A well planned onboarding process can reduce the replacement costs of volunteers, reduce the loss of services to clients of the community, accelerate the time it takes a volunteer to reach competency and redefine the level of productivity.

The onboarding process must consider:

- Providing interpersonal connection within volunteers and staff. This is especially important for those with the social motivational function. This may include: mentoring, peer socialising and sharing roles.
- Understanding the organisational culture including the mission, vision and values, team members roles and the scope of tasks and level of responsibility.
- Training needs to be provided once they are appointed in bite-size pieces to keep volunteers engaged. If this is not possible, a training date needs to be provided once they are appointed.
- Understanding organisational strategies, programme level aims and objectives. This can help volunteers align their goals with those of the organisation (Johnson, 2017).

As part of the onboarding process, staff should work with volunteers to develop personal development plans for learning that will help them better map their new context. Hidden skills and talents may be identified as they have a better understanding of the organisation mission, vision, and programme level goals. Once a plan is developed volunteers will usually take responsibility for learning goals (Johnson, 2017). These need to be reviewed regularly. Volunteers need individualised time to receive feedback and set goals for future volunteering (Swift, 2019).

Research completed by the British Red Cross highlight that volunteers who were allocated a role were not always actively encouraged to explore other volunteering options, with some volunteers directly enquiring to Red Cross staff and others feeling unable to peruse other options (Brittain,

2014). Developing pathways within an organisation may assist staff as they review personal plans to encourage similar roles or development opportunities. Pathways could include administration or event pathways.

Within each pathway, there are some entry-level roles and roles that require further training or skills. As volunteers grow and develop other options can be provided to them. This also allows organisations with many departments to shift volunteers from one area to another to provide new volunteering opportunities with similar skillsets.

This approach also allows the organisation to see where they have many volunteers and where they are lacking which can assist recruitment drives or the need to change roles to make them more appealing (Swift, 2019).

Training is a process of re-recruiting existing volunteers. It shows volunteers that the organisation wants to keep them informed and educated (Swift, 2019). The IFRC states that training opportunities were the most important factor in terms of retention of volunteers as they faced particular pressures to enhance their employment opportunities (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2015).

Standard 6: Workplace Safety and Wellbeing

The health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers is protected in the workplace. This is outlined in three key criteria:

- *Effective working relationships with employees, and between volunteers, are facilitated by the organisation.*
- *Processes are in place to protect the health and safety of volunteers in their capacity as volunteers.*
- *Volunteers have access to complaints and grievance procedures (Volunteering Australia, 2015).*

Standard 7: Volunteer Recognition

Volunteer contribution, value and impact is understood, appreciated and acknowledged. This is outlined in four key criteria:

- *The governing body and employees understand how volunteers benefit the organisation, service users and the community.*
- *Volunteers are informed about how their contributions benefit the organisation, service users and the community.*
- *The organisation regularly acknowledges contributions made by volunteers and the positive impact on the organisation, service users and the community.*
- *Volunteer acknowledgement is appropriate to the volunteer role and respectful of cultural values and perspectives (Volunteering Australia, 2015).*

The IFRC reports that there are multiple accounts of volunteers feeling undervalued, perceived as mere “numbers” or “pairs of arms” (Smith 2021). The preferred method of recognition by volunteers and that offered by the organisation is very different, see table below.

Recognition method	Organisations utilizing this method	Volunteers value for this method
Provided formal letters of reference or recognition	70%	26%
Organised informal gatherings like morning teas	42%	38%
Communicated the impact of their volunteer work directly with the volunteer	55%	80%
Formal gatherings like banquets	64%	15%
Thanked in person on an ongoing informal basis	95%	70%
Recognised volunteers using public methods like nominating for awards, thank you adverts and writing about volunteers in various public media	50%	18%

Volunteers want recognition that is sincere and authentic, they prefer a personalised ‘thank you’ on an informal basis (McCurly2016).

As volunteers respond to different motivators, they also value different forms of recognition. (Roberts, 2017). Aligning volunteer’s motivations with their recognition activities is important. For example, a volunteer with the enhancement function may appreciate being invited to a focus group for a new project while someone with a values function may prefer to see the impact of their volunteering in newsletters while someone with a social function will prefer a morning tea (Johnson, n.d.).

A volunteer’s age, gender and cultural background are also potential factors in determining the form of recognition that means the most to them. As there are so many factors in determining a person’s motivation it is worth consulting with volunteers to determine their preferred method of recognition (Roberts, 2017).

Standard 8: Quality Management and Continuous Improvement

Effective volunteer involvement results from a system of good practice, review and continuous improvement. This is outlined in four key criteria:

- *Policies and procedures are implemented to effectively guide all aspects of volunteer involvement.*
- *Volunteer involvement is regularly reviewed in line with the organisation’s evaluation and quality management frameworks.*
- *The organisation’s performance with volunteer involvement is monitored and reported to the governing body, employees, volunteers and stakeholders.*
- *Opportunities are available for volunteers to provide feedback on the organisation’s volunteer involvement and relevant areas of the organisation’s work (Volunteering Australia, 2015).*

Researchers Burch et al (2016) have developed a tool that aligns volunteer engagement with the vision, mission and strategic goals of the organisation. This enables the organisation to measure performance and evaluate impact rather than report on the number of volunteers, hours or items delivered. Leaders have the basis for articulating the valuable contribution volunteers make. This would be particularly beneficial for those with the value functional motivation who want to

understand the impact of their volunteering. This process can also be used to continuously review each volunteer programme and ensure that volunteers are recruited and placed in strategic and meaningful roles.

Conclusion

Red Cross and Red Crescent must open up to more rapid, networked, decentralised and self-driven volunteering models. This will be a significant shift in the model. Red Cross and Red Crescent programmes have been about recruiting volunteers to deliver pre-designed services, and while this element will remain necessary, increasingly changes will come from supporting people to make the impact that they want to see in the world and providing the resources and support to do so (Hazeldeine, 2018).

For those volunteers who do want to participate in existing services, their increasingly busy and complex lives mean that there will be little time for models that require heavy engagement to deliver. The shifting social trends impacting people will likely mean that services that include volunteering will have to take on different shapes and forms to accommodate volunteering needs (Hazeldeine, 2018).

If National Societies cannot be flexible and adapt the types and models of volunteering opportunities they offer, as well as their outreach efforts, they will struggle to engage the diversity of groups that increasingly characterise their countries demographics (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies., 2015).

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