



***Zimbabwe National Volunteer  
Strategy 2021-2025- 2nd Draft  
by Dr. Tracy Kandeya***



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## Acronyms

FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
Gvt	Government
IEC	Information Education communication
ILO	International Labour Organisation
NVSF	National Volunteer Strategy Formulation
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoYSAR	Ministry of Youth Sports Arts and Recreation
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
VCC	Volunteer Coordinating Committee
VIO	Volunteer Involving Organisations
VIONET	Volunteer Involving Organisations Network
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas
YBZ	Youth Build Zimbabwe
ZVA	Zimbabwe Volunteer Association
ZYC	Zimbabwe Youth Council



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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## Zimbabwe National Volunteer Strategy

2021-2025

“Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a term, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in” Marjorie Moore, Lord Mayor of the City of Sydney, Australia, 2013, stated.

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## FOREWORD

(Minister of MoYSAR)

### OVERVIEW

Ensuring that volunteering is inclusive, encouraged, supported, coordinated, promoted, strengthened, recognised, and valued is a key priority for the Zimbabwean Government.

The National Volunteering Strategy sets out the Zimbabwean Government’s vision/purpose for volunteering in Zimbabwe over the next 5 years. The purpose of the strategy is to ensure that by 2025 volunteering is standardised, encouraged, supported, coordinated, and recognised by all Zimbabweans.

The volunteering system is changing because of wider social, economic, and technological change. Technology has changed the method we use in communicating and working. Governments, businesses, Volunteer Involving Organisations, and communities now work together in different ways.

While traditional types of volunteering are still common, new types are evolving. As society transforms, the ways in which people want to volunteer are also transforming. More people want volunteer roles that are flexible or require shorter hours or a shorter-term commitment. Governments, businesses, organisations, churches that use volunteers and the wider volunteering sector must all respond to such changes by reimagining volunteering.

Volunteering benefits our nation, our local communities, and individual Zimbabweans. This is the first volunteerism strategy of its kind; this strategy is a call to act for Zimbabwe’s volunteering community. It provides strategic directions for all levels of government, civil society, the private sector, the church, and the broader volunteering sector.

The call is for all Zimbabweans to work together to encourage, empower and support volunteerism in Zimbabwe.



## Executive Summary

The Zimbabwe Volunteer Strategy 2021-2025 is a framework to guide Zimbabwe in promoting, supporting, and celebrating the active involvement of volunteering across Zimbabwe. The strategy pursues to add value to current programs within the community and strengthen the social capital in the volunteer sector.

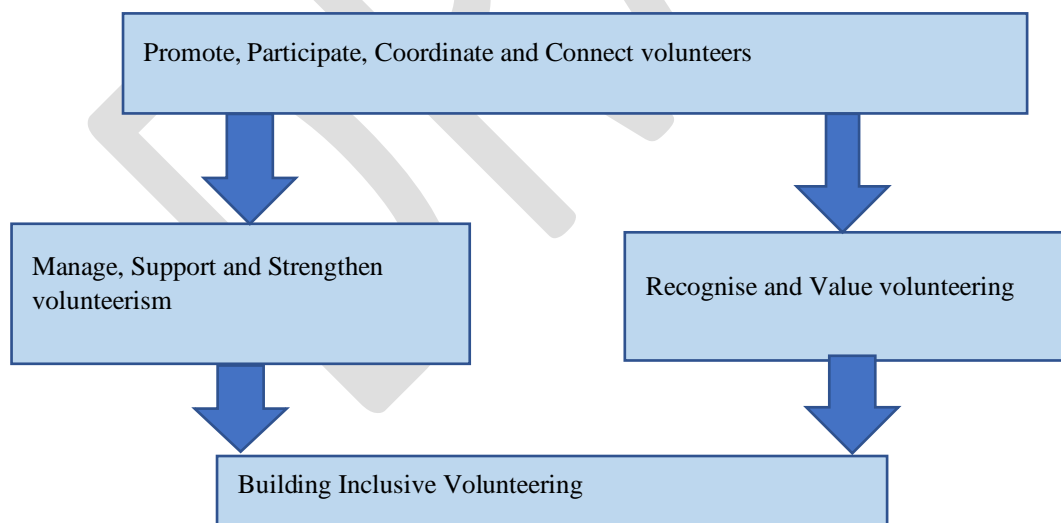
The Government's aim is to make sure that volunteering in Zimbabwe is standardised, coordinated, inclusive, encouraged, supported, recognised, valued, and empowering to the volunteer sector.

Volunteering can achieve this aim in Zimbabwe by adding social and economic benefits to the community through the provision of opportunities to connect with and participate in civic life, as well as making people who give their time freely to feel supported and valued for their contributions.

The Government of Zimbabwe is providing various types of support towards volunteering and through community organisations that run volunteer programs in the country. This support is in the form of skills development and training, coordinating the sector, community grants, and facilitating partnerships. There is an opportunity to build on this support and formalise what Zimbabwe does as the Government.

The strategy development process, drawing on research and extensive stakeholder engagement, identified four key priority areas, where the Government of Zimbabwe can play a role in better supporting a healthy and unified volunteer culture in our country.

The following are the key priority areas:



This strategy is expected to achieve the following key outcomes:

1. Establishment of voluntary opportunities in all the voluntary sector of the country.
2. Development of a volunteer knowledge and resource linkage platform (including database of volunteers)
3. Development of standards or guidelines for volunteerism in Zimbabwe



4. Integration of volunteerism in national policies or legislation

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## Introduction

Volunteer involvement is a critical part of Zimbabwean society. It contributes to community life and active participation in building strong, inclusive, and resilient communities. It underlies innovation and social change, our responses to community need and community challenges, and it brings together and supports the local strengths and assets of communities.

Volunteerism offers an opportunity for volunteers to be involved in activities showing their interests and using their skills. Meaningful activity in turn promotes a sense of belonging and general wellbeing. Volunteering can also be a way to develop skills, possible opportunities to employment, or a method to contribute current skills for the public good.

Volunteer involvement is a two-way relationship, providing an opportunity for organisations to achieve their goals by involving volunteers in their activities, and for volunteers to make meaningful use of their time and skills, contributing to social and community outcomes.

In Zimbabwe both formal (taking place within organisations in a structured way, including institutions and agencies). UNV, States of the World Report 2015 defined Formal volunteering as organized through formal organizations and usually requires volunteers to work to organizational agendas, where the terms and conditions of volunteering are laid out within policies and structures for volunteering, and their work and contribution are measured against the targets set for the organization using organizational indicators. According to UNV, 2015, the range of formal volunteering is wide and includes employee volunteering in the private sector, volunteering within CSOs as well as participation in government volunteer schemes. While, informal volunteering (takes place outside an organisational setting). UNV, 2015, states that Informal volunteers range from those without literacy to educated people who work without legal protection and often with minimal training; they often learn on the job. The evidence suggests that those who start volunteering informally in their communities, schools and hospitals learn new skills of organizing, participating and raising awareness and that this learning enables some to go on to enter new and more formal spaces to lobby, to represent the community and the women or people with disabilities and to ask for their voices to be heard and their rights respected.

According to UNV, 2015, Africa is a continent of growth and one of vibrant volunteerism primarily based on long held values that underpin the concept of volunteerism in the region. “Elements of the philosophy of Ubuntu, common throughout southern Africa, are found in many traditions around the world. Ubuntu values the act of caring for one another’s well-being in a spirit of mutual support. It is based on recognition of human worth, communal relationships, human values and respect for the natural environment and its resources.” Traditionally volunteerism has filled many gaps in service provision for poor people, and much volunteering is done by the poor for the poor. Most volunteering in Africa is informal. Volunteerism is strong in east and southern Africa and parts of west Africa. Two areas that have been especially strong across the continent have been work on HIV/AIDS, and movements promoting women’s rights. (UNV, SWVR, 2015).





Volunteers commit their valuable time to make a difference to the lives of Zimbabwe's most vulnerable groups. This is a clear way to demonstrate how volunteerism is playing a fundamental part in the support of societies. Even though volunteers give their time freely, with no desire for gain, volunteerism is not for free. To manage and develop the work volunteers do; resources are required. Around the globe, we have witnessed a growing interest and increased efforts by Governments and Volunteer Involving organisations to better manage and support their valuable volunteers. Zimbabwe is taking volunteering development more seriously than ever before, therefore it has pledged to establish a good volunteer management system to suit the situation of the country. The situational analysis findings indicate that volunteers in Zimbabwe are the nation's strength. They are what defines most volunteer organisations and what makes them unique developmental organisations in the country. Therefore, one of the focuses of MoYSAR, ZYC, UNV, VSO and Higherlife, is on supporting the volunteers and giving them the tools and resources, they need to meet the high demands and expectations that volunteer organisations, the donors and recipients need. Zimbabwe having recognized the value of volunteerism, it has set up to develop National Volunteer strategy, which will govern and measure the operations of the volunteer sector. The development of a first national volunteering strategy, 2021-2025 by MoYSAR, UNV, ZYC, VSO and Higherlife represents an important step towards developing a coherent understanding of the role and value of volunteers. This strategic plan is designed to guide the volunteer sector toward a sustainable, thriving future.

Several countries from global, and regional have taken an initiative to formulate legislations/frameworks related to volunteerism. Sweden, Peru, Brazil, Australia, Zambia, Kenya, and South Africa have made great strides in coming up with volunteer Frameworks which are coordinating all their volunteer activities. These frameworks are helping nations to advocate for volunteer's interests, establish national standards for volunteer programs, produce guides to help voluntary organisations reach world required standards. It is against this background that the Government of Zimbabwe wants to come up with its national volunteer strategy.

## Defining volunteering

There are many definitions of volunteering used nationally and internationally by government departments, VIO, ILO. The Government of Zimbabwe will use the following definition which states that '**volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain**'. This definition includes both formal and informal volunteering

### Informal

When volunteering, people voluntarily provide their time through participation in their local community in a wide range of ways, such as:

- Community education and learning activities
- Environmental groups



- Community support groups
- Community and political groups
- Organised social groups
- Collective community actions
- Community events, festival, and celebrations
- Organised sport, recreation, and leisure activities
- Organised groups such as church, community, or professional groups
- Parental participation in schools and children's activities
- Social entrepreneurship
- Corporate volunteering
- Episodic and spontaneous volunteering (e.g. emergency assistance)
- Service delivery (e.g. individuals giving to or supporting recipients)
- Decision-making (e.g. advisory committees)
- Virtual (online) volunteering

## **Benefits and value of volunteering**

Volunteering is a great way for people to get involved in the community and make a positive contribution. In addition, to the satisfaction of helping for the benefit of others, there are many reasons people volunteer. The benefits of volunteering are significant for our nation, for our local communities and for individuals. The benefits are economic, social, cultural, and environmental.

Volunteers play a significant role in local communities across the country. Zimbabweans contribute their time, energy, and expertise in many sectors, but particularly in the community development, education, religion, and sport sectors. Volunteers' assistance during natural disasters and pandemics is crucial, as is their contribution to the arts and environmental sectors. Volunteer Efforts report reveals that volunteerism in Zimbabwe has equipped over 3,585 youth with employability skills through self-help groups, micro – entrepreneurship trainings and other skills development programs which has greatly complemented the labour market in Zimbabwe and directly contributed to the country's GDP, peace and development hence contributing to SDG 8 (Volunteer Efforts Contribution Report, VSO,2020).

Volunteers working with NGOs and Government of Zimbabwe, especially those under Youth Build Zimbabwe, led by MoYSAR, have made tremendous efforts in Ending hunger and achieving food security for all: strengthening livelihoods of the poor, ensuring sustainable and healthy food production systems and improving the lives of all thus contributing to SDG 2, 3, and 17. In Zimbabwe, Chikurubi Maximum Security prison is the largest prison averaging 2,600 inmates, many classified as high risk with long sentences. Seventeen percent of the prison population is HIV+ and in dire need for HIV health services and peer support. VSO has trained 178 volunteer peer educators to train inmates about the importance of ART adherence and set up support groups to



provide psycho-social support for prisoners and scaling up their positive-living level. The result has been a huge uptake in ART treatment (increased from 50% to over 95%) and a sharp reduction in prisoner deaths.

In efforts to achieve SDG 16, VIOs and volunteers in Zimbabwe assisted OVCs to acquire legal documents, assisted sexual abuse victims with referral systems, conducted social accountability workshops with political and traditional leadership, Conducted peace and justice activism lobbying and advocacy activities through national summit, community campaigns, radio and social media campaigns.

Youth Build Zimbabwe has contributed immensely to community development, for instance in rehabilitation of roads, construction of school blocks, clinics, bridges, dams, livelihoods, and food distribution.

Zimbabwean Parliamentarians, local authorities (councillors) and legislators are not employed but are “volunteers” since they are not on salaries but are given allowance. Thus, they fall within the working definition of a volunteer and their work is within the volunteer work as well.

As evidenced by several examples given above, Zimbabwe has indeed witnessed great contributions from national, regional, and international volunteers in humanitarian work, health, disaster prevention and recovery efforts and more recently, in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the volunteer effort in Zimbabwe has contributed towards all the 17 SDGs in various extents and impacts. Volunteering has huge benefit to the society, as a result most governments are reimagining volunteerism, indeed Zimbabwean government need to rethink about the way it is coordinating the sector.

Volunteering strengthens community connectedness and social cohesion. Social connections, such as those developed through volunteering, can provide meaning, purpose, and satisfaction in people’s lives. The experience of helping others can lead to stronger social ties with different groups of people, and to higher levels of trust. Volunteering can also contribute to broader community benefits, such as reduced crime.

His Excellency President Mnangagwa’s insightful initiative of clean-up campaign every first Friday of the month. Is a good example of volunteerism work, it shows leading by example to inculcate a mind-set shift for clean environment, which in turn will prevent water born-diseases, boost health, reduce cost and promote tourism. The president has successfully mobilised Zimbabweans to voluntarily participate in the clean-up campaigns. According to the Environmental Management Agency (EMA), the objectives of the clean-up campaign are to ensure the environment is safe, clean and healthy, ensure environmental sustainability, promote environmental awareness, restore community pride, promote local trade and tourism, restore wildlife habitats, engage communities in long-term environmental initiatives and to eradicate diseases, such as cholera and typhoid, which thrive in dirty environments.

For individuals, volunteering brings health and wellbeing benefits, such as reduced stress, better physical and mental health, and greater longevity. For example, the situational analysis found out that becoming a volunteer, getting involved in the community and being dedicated to things and people beyond oneself is a major predictor of a long life.



In summary the benefits of volunteering are as follows;

- Connecting with others and improving social ties and positively engaging
- Being active within the community
- Experiencing new challenges
- Raising awareness and supporting important community issues
- Interacting with different cultures
- Contributing to social change
- Developing professional networks and exploring different career and job opportunities and finding a pathway to getting a job, course, or training
- Developing new skills or gaining experience in a variety of roles
- Bridging networks which is especially important for connecting people from diverse cultural backgrounds

Given the enormous benefits from volunteering, all sectors of society can do more to encourage and support it.

Emerging trends in volunteering

The National Volunteering Strategy formulation process identified the following trends regarding volunteering in Zimbabwe:

- More volunteers want roles that are flexible or require shorter hours or a shorter-term commitment.
- People are increasingly time poor and volunteering competes with greater work and caring responsibilities.
- People are more mobile than in the past so volunteers are less likely to stay for many years in a single role.
- The frequency of natural disasters requires a ready supply of skilled emergency volunteers.
- There are more people volunteering now, but for less time than in the past.
- Social isolation and loneliness have come more into focus in recent times. A trend of virtual (online) volunteering has appeared over the past decade, which benefits people with restricted mobility or other special needs that might not be able to undertake traditional face-to-face volunteering roles. Virtual volunteering can include tasks like research, software development and writing articles.

Some of the key challenges faced by policy makers, including local government, in relation to the future of volunteering are to make it more attractive and accessible for individuals, to consider the stereotypes around volunteering, and to encourage inclusivity and greater recognition across our Zimbabwean society of the diversity in the volunteering.



## VALUES

To have a coordinated, standardised, promoted, participatory, connected, coordinated, recognised, valued, and built inclusive volunteering, the volunteer sector partners will be guided by the following set of values:

### **Integrity**

We believe in every volunteer being recognised, valued, protected, respected and we practice what we preach by seeking ways to pursue it for ourselves and others.

### **Accountability**

We will be responsible to each other, Clients/beneficiaries and Stakeholders for decisions and actions that we take. This also includes taking ownership for the decisions that we take. We will own up to the consequences of choices and decisions that we take. We will take full responsibility for all our activities and acknowledge our obligation to account for the resources entrusted to us in a transparent manner to all our stakeholders. We will demonstrate a practical commitment to prudence and honesty in all financial matters.

### **Commitment**

We commit to do all we can to promote and facilitate an environment where government is committed to coordinating the work of volunteers, recognising, valuing, respecting the skills and individual needs of volunteers. The government and VIOs will commit to provide accurate information, training, and assistance of volunteers. The volunteer sector will ensure supervision and provide job assessment and feedback.

### **Inclusiveness and Gender Sensitivity**

In delivering our services, we will not discriminate based on origin, nationality, race, gender, tribe/language, culture, disability/ability, religion, or political affiliation. We will recognize diversity and engage participatory principles in our decision-making processes and openly share information among ourselves and other stakeholders to enhance ownership and commitment to volunteer sector

## OVERVIEW OF VOLUNTEERISM CONTEXT IN ZIMBABWE

The world over, about half of volunteer organisations and governments have a national volunteer policy or strategy, while slightly fewer have a volunteer development plan. Many more have dedicated human resources for volunteer management and development at national level. According to Red Cross estimate figures suggest there are around 20 million active volunteers worldwide.

Situational analysis findings reveal that Several National Societies are testing new approaches to enhance the diversity and involvement of volunteers in decision making and implementation. Reinforcing volunteering development in general, and volunteering in emergencies, optimizes the strengths of our core volunteer base.



The ability of the Government of Zimbabwe and volunteer organisations to mobilize and retain volunteers is increasingly being called into question. Volunteers' participation is decreasing and those who are into volunteerism are quitting. These challenges require the government of Zimbabwe and other stakeholders to recognize the valuable contribution of volunteers to development work, as key links between communities and national and local authorities.

The partnership between the MoYSAR, ZYC UNV and VSO has greatly contributed to the revalidation of volunteering and to concerted efforts to foster an environment that enables and optimizes the full potential of volunteering.

Progress in this field has been positive and more work is needed. The way that governments and legislators act regarding volunteering and voluntary organizations has a great impact on their viability and effectiveness.

### Development of the Strategy

The methodology used to develop the strategy included both qualitative and quantitative approaches including:

- A benchmarking analysis and desktop review into other national, regional, and international strategies and evidence of support for volunteering.
- Consultation with various government Ministries in Zimbabwe, Volunteer involving organisations, religious institutional staff, community, and individual volunteers across relevant organisations, and representation of the community - including volunteers, people who manage –volunteers. This process helped to determine national volunteerism strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the Government to better support volunteering in Zimbabwe and to ensure a range of stakeholder's views are reflected in the strategy (See annex 2 on SWOT analysis)
- Research to identify best practice approaches in the country in relation to the volunteer sector, referring to Government and VIO policies.
- Review of existing Zimbabwe volunteer policies and strategies and support approaches.

From this research, it is considered that there is no one best practice but rather a combination of relevant strategies/policies, systems, processes and structures are required in order to provide meaningful support towards a healthy culture of volunteering and participation in the community.

A common message that reverberated clearly and distinctly throughout this analysis is that valuing volunteerism requires effective coordination, recognition, support, and resourcing.

### **OUR PILLARS / STRATEGIES**

The proposed pillars for volunteerism in Zimbabwe are therefore: Promote, Participate, Coordinate and Connect volunteers, Manage, Support & Strengthen volunteerism, Recognise & Value volunteering, and Building Inclusive volunteering. These pillars will be synchronized into M&E



plan for the volunteer strategic plan. The key objectives and interventions to achieve the pillars will be guided by Key performance indicators to be pursued over the period 2021- 2025.

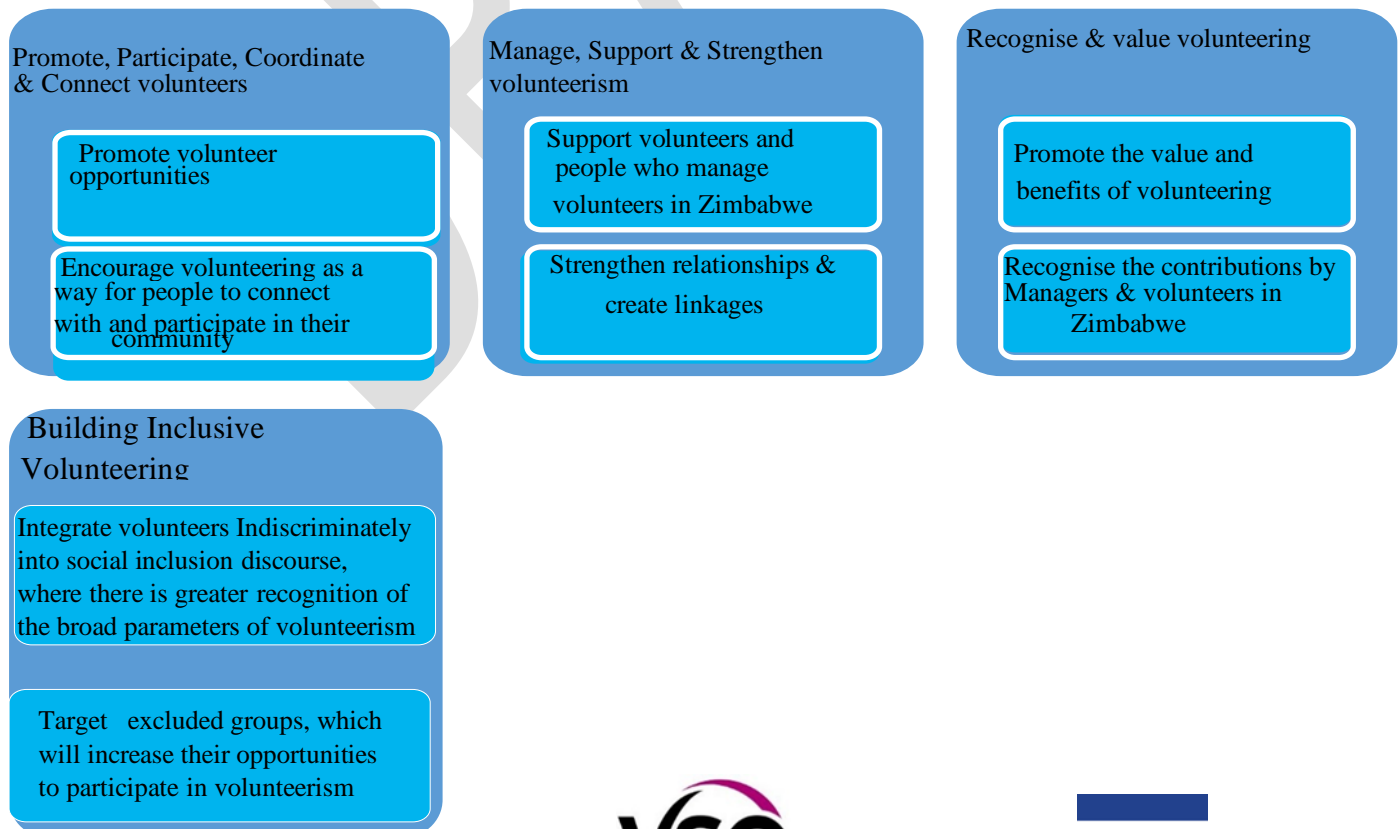
## WEIGHTING OF THEMATIC/PILLARS OR STRATEGIES

Key Volunteering Pillars/Strategies	Brief Description of the Pillars	Weight
Pillar/Strategy 1	Promote, Participate, Coordinate and Connect volunteers	20
Pillar/Strategy 2	Recognise & Value volunteerism	30
Pillar/ Strategy3	Manage, Support & Strengthen volunteering	20
Pillar/Strategy 4	Building Inclusive Volunteering	30

## THE KEY FOCUS AREAS OF THE STRATEGY

These themes from community feedback, and analysis of demographic data, current trends, international, national, state and local policies, have been used to inform the 4 key priority areas and the related strategic directions where the Government of Zimbabwe can play a role in supporting volunteering across the country.

The key priority areas and relevant objectives are:





## **Implementation of the strategy and Future Action**

The Zimbabwean Government is committed to ongoing dialogue, engagement, and collaboration with all key stakeholders to ensure that the goals of this strategy are achieved.

Over the next 5 years, the government will:

- carry out the priority actions outlined in the strategy
- use the strategy to guide its own policy development, decision making and investments
- continue to develop ways to implement the strategy
- report on progress and evaluate the strategy's implementation and effectiveness.

The government will do this in close consultation with the VIOs, including UNV, the national volunteer strategy implementation coordinating committee, Line Ministries, the church and private sector.

### **Priority area 1**

#### **Promote, Participate, Coordinate & Connect volunteers**

Few organisations and governments currently collect data and information about volunteering. Government should leverage opportunities to collect better data.

Opportunities exist for researchers and the volunteering sector to work together to make the best use of existing data and information, coordinate research and survey work, and shape the research agenda to meet contemporary challenges in volunteering.

Improving the quality of information about volunteering, Government, volunteer Involving organisations and research organisations have a role in collating and disseminating findings to ensure that information is easy to find, accessible and relevant. Efforts must be made to share and improve data and to monitor and report on volunteering.

The Zimbabwean Government will produce a study report on trends in volunteering every three years. The report will enable the Government to report on the progress of the strategy— whether the key goals of the strategy are being met by the efforts of governments, private sector, the VIOs and the broader volunteering sector. In addition to providing a progress report on the strategy these studies will also be used to inform the priorities for taking forward into the next strategy.

The report will draw on existing available quantitative data, such as data from:





- Line Ministries
- The United Nations Volunteers “State of the World’s Volunteerism Report”
- Volunteer involving Organisations
- Zimbabwe Central Statistics.
- NVS Evaluation Reports.
- NVS Monitoring and Evaluation Reports
- University Reports.

The report will also draw on qualitative data from the Volunteering Zimbabwe case studies and success stories.

The Government has a key role to play in terms of promoting opportunities for volunteers to connect with and participate in community life to enhance social and mental wellbeing. The Government will build on the promotion of information about volunteering in Zimbabwe through a range of media and activities.

## **Strategic Commitment**

### **1.1 Promote volunteer opportunities in Zimbabwe**

Promote volunteering through a range of multimedia channels, events and other activities using both face to face and digital methods. This includes facilitating a dedicated volunteering in Zimbabwe webpage and exploring a suitable online platform to best promote local volunteer opportunities. Promote the benefits of volunteering and encourage more people to get involved.

### **1.2 Encourage volunteering as a way for people to connect with and participate in their community**

Encourage diverse partners in the community to be involved in volunteering, offering alternative and flexible options and information on how to access them. This includes access across all demographics for example retirees, young people, war veterans and recently arrived residents.



## Priority area 2

### Manage, Support and Strengthen volunteerism

Government will provide opportunities to manage, support and strengthen the capacity of volunteers and people who manage volunteers, and assist with developing collaborative, sustainable relationships to support volunteering in the community. The building of networks and partnerships between Government and the volunteering sector is essential for increasing capacity to deliver better outcomes for the community and enhance the experience of volunteers.

Good volunteer management and support are central to attracting and engaging volunteers. The Government will achieve this by providing more effective information, training, and resources to volunteer managers and volunteers.

The volunteer sector to ensure effective recruitment, deployment, protection, and recognition of volunteers and make sure to have strong management and planning capabilities. The volunteer managers to be equipped with the right knowledge and skills.

The sector must have better volunteer management which is important to improve the effectiveness of volunteers and to improve the volunteer experience. Volunteers are often unsatisfied if their expectations are unclear, if grievance procedures are poor, or if they do not participate in decision making or have their ideas heard. Therefore, the sector must ensure that all the desires of the volunteers are met.

It was noted that there are many highly professional, passionate and innovative volunteer managers in Zimbabwe but due to lack of resources some organisations do not have a dedicated volunteer manager, neither do they have well-structured plans and strategies in place for using volunteers. Literature revealed that a lack of staff skilled in volunteer management is an impediment that can prevent organisations using more volunteers. Hence, the need for Government of Zimbabwe and the sector to encourage the use of qualified management.

Organisations that invest in volunteer management are more likely to attract and retain their volunteers as valuable and effective members of their teams.

For volunteerism to be successful, the VIO should be expected to prepare for their volunteers, plan and to organise their placements well, develop roles that use the skills of the volunteer and, where necessary, provide support to build new skills. The study showed that the majority of the organisations were not doing this.

Government and VIOs should have the necessary skills and knowledge to manage volunteers professionally and meet their regulatory obligations. They should collectively provide strategic direction, manage risks, accept responsibility for decisions, and provide guidance and support for all staff, including volunteers.



Government of Zimbabwe have an important role in assisting the volunteer sector to improve their volunteer management, particularly through the provision and coordination of information, training, and management tools. Stakeholders consulted during the preparation of this strategy stated that a more standard governance training and national regulation and standards would assist volunteer managers. As such, this collaboration and greater sharing of resources and tools would reduce the administrative burden.

## Strategic Commitment

### 2.1 Support volunteers and people who manage volunteers in the Zimbabwean community

- Support organisations that involve volunteers and help develop the skills of volunteer managers, such as promotion of the 'National Standards for Volunteer Involvement' Framework, training opportunities and continue to provide in funding
- Help connect volunteer managers from different organisations including supporting the establishment and implementation of initiatives like networks, events and digital platforms.
- Advocate for volunteer's rights and responsibilities, for example working closely with Volunteer Networks, consulting volunteers on important matters and empowering volunteers through access to opportunities.

### 2.2 Strengthen relationships and create linkages

- Strengthen our partnerships and help link volunteers, organisations, and groups across the country. One way to do this is to formalize existing partnerships.
- Develop pathways to help people into employment opportunities within Zimbabwe community via volunteering.
- Continue to find innovative ways to keep up to date with current and emerging trends and respond to changes in the volunteer sector. This includes regular evaluation and exploring new methods and tools for effective engagement e.g. digital platforms.



## Priority area 3

### Recognise and value

Volunteers and people who manage volunteers are central to the success of volunteering; so it is imperative that these roles are recognised and the impact of their contribution is valued. The Government of Zimbabwe will continue to provide meaningful ways to acknowledge and celebrate volunteers and those who actively contribute to the development of the community. Promoting the value and positive benefits of volunteering will help attract a diverse range of ages, cultures, and abilities, in addition to facilitating growth of the local sector.

Greater recognition of volunteers and the contribution they make to Zimbabwean society will inspire more Zimbabweans to volunteer.

It is vital that more Zimbabweans recognise the contribution that volunteers make to our nation, to their communities and to individuals.

Recognition should include practical measures, such as improved resourcing, accredited training and skill development, more paid leave for staff to volunteer, and greater recognition of the role of volunteer managers. Zimbabwe has a long history of volunteering, but we need to continue to build a modern culture of volunteering by raising awareness and recognition of the value of volunteering to individuals, communities, and the nation. Therefore, increased recognition in ways that are meaningful to individual volunteers is vital to keeping volunteers engaged. Recognition needs to be tailored to volunteers' motivations for being involved and the ways they like to be engaged.

For people who are motivated by 'giving back to the community' or 'making a difference', the forms of recognition and reward include:

Making them feel like part of the team, listening to them, seeking their feedback or ideas and including them in decision making, informal acknowledgement that shows their efforts are valued and that they are making a difference celebrating achievements through certificates or social gatherings, nominating them for public awards, address them by job titles, e.g. Advocacy & Policy Advisor instead of volunteer. The name volunteer is demeaning, the professional advisor feels unworthy.

For people motivated by a desire to acquire skills and training, including those who are using volunteering to improve their employability, recognition can be provided through:

- teaching new skills and sharing experiences on the job
- formal accredited training (either provided directly or provided by subsidized external trainers)
- duties or projects that 'stretch' them, giving them opportunities to gain new skills or take on greater responsibilities
- statements or certificates of attainment that recognise the skills they have acquired and the contributions they have made
- references to use in future job or education applications



- For people motivated by social interactions and the opportunity to meet people and make new friends, the volunteer sector's best approach may be to create opportunities for them to share and network, including through social media, to celebrate important occasions and achievements.
- Government of Zimbabwe, businesses, and volunteer organisations will use opportunities such as International Volunteer Day to celebrate the contributions of their volunteers and promote the benefits of volunteering. These events provide ideal opportunities to thank and reward volunteers publicly.

## Strategic Commitment

### 3.1 Promote the value and benefits of volunteering

Highlight the economic and social value of volunteering in Zimbabwe.

### 3.2 Recognise the contributions by volunteers and people who manage volunteers in Zimbabwe

Acknowledge Zimbabwe's volunteers and managers and celebrate their achievements through a variety of meaningful events, activities, awards, and promotion

## Priority Area 4

### Building Inclusive Volunteering

Volunteering is an essential part of an inclusive society in which all Zimbabweans feel valued and have the opportunity for meaningful social participation.

Volunteering can contribute to a greater sense of belonging and help individuals feel more connected to their local communities, despite their race, gender, demographic, age, and physical ability. Volunteering should provide important pathways to participation and employment for every Zimbabwean despite disregarding vulnerability of a person.

The experience of helping others can lead to stronger social ties with different groups of people, and to higher levels of trust. The sector should engage volunteers with a diverse range of experiences



and backgrounds, this will enable organisations to build stronger links to their local communities. This will also create greater social cohesion.

## Strategic Commitment

4.1 Engage volunteers with a diverse range of experiences and backgrounds regardless of their social status

4.2 Integrate volunteers Indiscriminately into social inclusion discourse, where there is greater recognition of the broad parameters of volunteerism

### Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

These priority areas will guide the development of key actions over the coming five-year period 2021-2025 that will promote, support, strengthen, coordinate, recognise, value, build inclusive volunteering, management and volunteering across Zimbabwe.

An M & E Framework with measurable tasks will be used to implement, monitor and evaluate the progress of the strategy's initiatives over a 12-month financial period. An annual report on the implementation of the actions will be presented to MoYSAR/government whilst seeking approval for the following year's actions. This will be reviewed and reported on an annual basis. MoYSAR will offer opportunities for the Zimbabwe community and other stakeholders to provide feedback to ensure that we continue to respond to emerging trends and issues and deliver a meaningful volunteering strategy. Therefore, for qualitative data, the sector is expected to come up with testimonials, as well as stories of significance changes of those who are already living the change it is trying to achieve. These personal stories provide hope and inspiration that change is possible.

## Data informed evidence

Data is the lifeblood of decision making as it facilitates to in-form policy and improve accountability. Innovative data-driven approaches already benefit various sectors through improving strategies and increasing efficiency. Data provides new opportunities to inform decision making as it enables to in-form policy and improve accountability

The data which the government and VIO gather will help the sector to demonstrate volunteering success to the key stakeholders and the donors in a clear, comprehensive, compelling, and innovative manner. In this age it is important to make the operations of a country as transparent and accountable as possible. Therefore, our volunteering sector's successful development programmes should be grounded in its careful planning, rigorous data collection, meticulous implementation, and thorough analysis and reporting and this is where data use comes into play.

Greater transparency and accountability



One of the greatest benefits of volunteer sector data collection is that it will help it to track, analyse and report on relevant information and data throughout the five-year plan. The data which will be collected will be allowing the voluntary sector to provide robust evidence for all their actions and decisions to Government, Key stakeholders, donors, and Religious institutions. On the other hand, stakeholders and donors acquire the information and understanding they need to collaborate, communicate, provide inputs, and make informed decisions about strategy improvements and volunteerism operations. Additionally, availability of Voluntary sector data helps its supporters to weigh the efficacy of their funds in volunteerism operations, which influences their current and future funding plans. As a result of data collection voluntary sector will be able to share its improved performance and how it has been effectively allocating its resources.

#### Promotes learning & data-driven decision making

Volunteerism, M&E data provides quantifiable results to help the involved parties to learn from volunteerism successes and challenges and be more adaptive. Involved parties are better prepared to respond to the ever-evolving project situations, determine what worked and what did not and why it did not work and how it could be improved and make revisions based on data evidence, rather than assumptions. The volunteer sector will be able to establish links between the past, present and future actions to improve its operations and to identify what could be replicated and scaled up for sustainability of the sector and for future endeavours.



## Annex <sup>1</sup> M & E Framework (2021- 2025)

### Priority area 1: Promote, Participate, Coordinate and Connect

#### 1.1 Promote volunteer opportunities in Zimbabwe

Objectives	Outcome 1	Actions	Responsibility	Resources	Timeline
1.1.1 Improve promotion of volunteering opportunities through a range of multimedia channels, events, and other activities.	Establishment of voluntary opportunities in the voluntary sector of the country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Review of information that has been presented by Volunteer Sector and develop a coordinated and consistent approach to promoting volunteer opportunities and the different options available to people wanting to volunteer in Zimbabwe.</li> <li>•Engage the media; such as ZTV, social media, printed flyers, video, radio to ensure the information is accessible and inclusive. This might include working with local organisation's promotion outlets e.g. Great Zimbabwe University community radio to use volunteers on a program focused on volunteering</li> </ul>	MoYSAR/Government of Zimbabwe, ZYC, UNV, VSO, Higherlife, VIOs associations-VIONET, Volunteer coordinating committee (VCC)	M & E Personnel Funds Computers Data Analysis Software Researchers, Information Education communication materials (IEC)	Dec 2021
	Development of a volunteer knowledge and resource linkage platform (including database of volunteers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Develop a dedicated website for volunteering in Zimbabwe, facilitate and manage it.</li> <li>•Participating in commemoration events to promote volunteer opportunities through volunteer day, Mandela day etc.</li> <li>•Bring out the benefits of volunteering as a social good and not as a substitute for paid work. This can also be</li> </ul>	MoYSAR/Government of Zimbabwe, ZYC, UNV, VSO, Higherlife, VIOs associations-VIONET, VCC	Website Designer, Funds, IEC materials	2021 June  Every year  Every year





		<p>promoted through social media and for marketing campaigns during National Volunteer Week or Global volunteer day.</p>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to promote volunteer opportunities across all demographics in Zimbabwe, youth, people with a disability, older people, etc. This might involve establishing regular promotional methods, for example posts to MoYSAR Youth Build Zimbabwe 's Facebook page to engage with young people and face-to-face pop up stalls to engage with older people.</li> <li>•Continue to promote Government's existing volunteer programs and make it clear what Government does and does not provide. Explore ways to better promote existing programs and services.</li> <li>•Collaborate with existing events and activities to promote opportunities and/or deliver information sessions about volunteering, for example volunteer expos</li> </ul>	VCC, and VIONET	Personnel Funds, IEC material	2021 Dec





		and universities to promote volunteering during National Student Volunteer Week.			

Priority area 2: Manage, Support & Strengthen

2.1 Support volunteers and people who manage volunteers in Zimbabwe

Objectives	Outcome 2	Actions	Responsibility	Resources	Timeline
2.1.1 Improve support for volunteer involving organisations and groups to manage volunteers and help develop the skills of volunteer managers.	Development of standards or guidelines for volunteerism in Zimbabwe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Promote and encourage Zimbabwe National Standards for Volunteer Involvement framework to organisations and groups who involve volunteers to support best practice in volunteer management.</li> <li>•Connect people who manage volunteers with donors and local resources specially to support volunteer management.</li> <li>•Assist community organisations in seeking grant funding and discounted use of government venue hire to support volunteering.</li> <li>•Explore processes to help make it easy for volunteers and volunteer groups by reducing red tape by providing advice and assistance, e.g. Induction policies and permits/licenses/processes for activities such as fundraising</li> <li>•Assess needs and gaps regarding best practice in volunteer management and investigate free or low-cost training and skills development opportunities, more specific to volunteer managers.</li> <li>•Continue to promote existing free community training sessions through resource mobilisation programmes.</li> </ul> <p>Ensure training times/days are as inclusive as can possibly be within capacity of Government resourcing and Lead VIO.</p>	VCC, Government of Zimbabwe, VIONET, Zimbabwe Volunteer Association	Personnel Funds	2021- 2024 Dec
					2021-2024 Dec
					2021-2024 Dec
					Every year
					Every year



2.1.2 Provide ways for people who manage volunteers to connect	Development of a volunteer knowledge and resource linkage platform (including database of volunteers) Development of standards or guidelines for volunteerism in Zimbabwe	Organise and convene quarterly Meetings with the possibility of additional working groups specific area of operation Encourage people who manage volunteers in Zimbabwe to connect with other support networks like Volunteer Involving Organisation Network and Zimbabwe volunteer Association	Government of Zimbabwe, UNV, VIONET, Volunteer Strategy coordinating committee	Personnel Funds	Every year
2.1.3 Advocate for volunteer's rights and responsibilities	Development of a volunteer knowledge and resource linkage platform (including database of volunteers) Development of standards or guidelines for volunteerism in Zimbabwe	Develop stronger advocacy in relation to the needs of volunteers, the volunteer sector and community by promoting the impact of key policy reforms and resulting program changes within the volunteer sector, for example child safety policies and making organisations more welcoming for volunteers. Volunteers to be engaged in opportunity for volunteers to have a say in consultation.	MoYSAR, ZYC, VCC, UNV, VSO, Higherlife,	Advocacy Advisor, Funds,	2022

## 2.2 Strengthen relationships and create linkages

Objectives	Outcomes	Actions	Responsibility	Resources	Timeline
2.2.1 Mobilise resources on joint initiatives to strengthen partnerships and link Zimbabwe's volunteers, organisations and groups.	Development of a volunteer knowledge and resource linkage platform (including database of volunteers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate opportunities to link and enhance community organisations with shared interests on volunteering, for example cross promote volunteer opportunities when capacity has been reached.</li> <li>Formalise partnerships e.g. MoYSAR, ZYC, VSO, UNV, and Higherlife</li> <li>Develop partnerships with volunteer support networks and Government line</li> </ul>	VCC, Gvt & VIONET  Government & VCC	Personnel. Funds	2021  2021  2021-2023 Dec



		Ministries, to pool resources and knowledge and connect similar organisations.			
2.2.2 Develop pathways to volunteer and employment opportunities in Zimbabwe	Development of standards or guidelines for volunteerism in Zimbabwe Establishment of voluntary opportunities in the voluntary sector of the country,	-Scope ways to provide more structured volunteer pathways to employment. This might include mentoring internships and apprenticeships with local organisations -Raise awareness about the benefits of volunteering	VIONET, Government, & VIONET	Funds, Personnel, computers	2021 July
2.2.3 Continue to find innovative ways to keep up to date with current and emerging trends and respond to changes in the volunteer sector		-Evaluate and measure impact of Government's support for volunteering via regular feedback and consultation, surveys, forums, and events. -Connect with relevant networks and volunteer organisations to stay abreast of emerging issues and trends, for example UNV, VSO, Higherlife and VIONET. -Explore the role of digital technology and how it can add	VCC, Government, VIONET	Funds, M & E Personnel	2022 & 2024



		value, empower, and cultivate a connected volunteering environment including in the ways some people want to volunteer.			
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### Priority Area 3: Recognise and Value

#### 3.1 Promote the value and benefits of volunteering

Objectives	Outcomes	Actions	Responsibility	Resources	Timeline
3.1.1 Highlight and promote the economic and social value of volunteering in Zimbabwe	Development of a volunteer knowledge and resource linkage platform (including database of volunteers) Establishment of voluntary opportunities in the voluntary sector of the country,	- Undertake an audit of local organisations, groups and grant recipients to quantify the economic and social value of volunteering. This data can be used to raise the profile of Volunteer Sector and enhance promotion of volunteering. -Collate data from existing research such as UNV, Red Cross/Crescent, VSO and Zimbabwe Central Statistics.	Gvt, VCC	Funds, Personnel, Computers	2021

#### 3.2 Recognise the contributions by volunteers and people who manage volunteers in Zimbabwe

Objectives	Outcomes	Actions	Responsibility	Resource	Timeline
3.2.1 Acknowledge Zimbabwe volunteers and managers and celebrate their achievements.	Development of a volunteer knowledge and resource linkage platform (including database of volunteers) Integration of volunteerism in national policies or legislation	-Develop a recognition program, such as an annual awards ceremony -Produce a profile of volunteers to showcase through a range of media e.g. social media, including a diverse representation from youth, people with disability, old people, and different cultural background. -Establish a working group to organise and facilitate an annual national event to celebrate volunteers during National Volunteer Week.	VCC, VIONET, Gvt of Zimbabwe	Funds Personnel Chairpersons	Every year



		<p>-Liaise with VIONET to cross-promote other recognition activities across Zimbabwe.</p> <p>-Liaise with VIONET to establish program of volunteer champions to advocate for volunteering in Zimbabwe.</p>			
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Priority Area 4: Building Inclusive Volunteering

4.1 Integrate volunteers Indiscriminately into social inclusion discourse, where there is greater recognition of the broad parameters of volunteerism

Objectives	Outcomes	Actions	Responsibility	Resources	Timeline
4.1.1 Identify and develop appropriate ways to make volunteer accessible and inclusive to all demographics including young people, older people, people with disabilities and culturally diverse group.	<p>Integration of volunteerism in national policies or legislation</p> <p>Development of a volunteer knowledge and resource linkage platform (including database of volunteers)</p>	<p>-Engage volunteers with a diverse range of experiences and backgrounds which will enable organisations to build stronger links to their local communities. This can create greater social cohesion.</p> <p>-Develop a volunteer Access E-Learning Resource Kit, a tool for volunteer managers who are interested in making their volunteer teams more inclusive and diverse. The kit should include resources to help make volunteer teams more open to people with disabilities, the elderly, ex-inmates and those recovering from mental ill health.</p>	Gvt, VCC, UNV, VSO, Higherlife, Jairosi Jiri, Ford base & NASHCO,	Funds and Personnel Social Inclusion and Gender Advisor	2021-2022

4.2 Target excluded groups, which will increase their opportunities to participate in volunteerism



Objectives	Outcomes	Actions	Responsibility	Timeline
4.2.1 Promote and encourage participation of excluded groups in volunteerism	<p>Integration of volunteerism in national policies or legislation</p> <p>Development of a volunteer knowledge and resource linkage platform (including database of volunteers)</p>	<p>-Conduct awareness raising campaigns on the importance and benefits of inclusive volunteering</p> <p>- Connect with umbrella disability organisations e.g. Jairos Jiri and the two umbrella disability associations, that is Fordbase and NASHCO</p> <p>-Develop IEC materials on inclusive volunteering and share them</p> <p>-Encourage the use of the printed IEC materials</p> <p>-Register all interested people with disability on a platform where they will be on the waiting list to volunteer/ keep a database of those interested in volunteerism</p> <p>-Establish a quarter system for inclusion</p> <p>-Identify and develop the advocacy messages, develop a volunteer advocacy plan and advocate for their rights</p> <p>-Inform, communicate, and educate the excluded group</p>	Gvt, VCC, UNV, VSO, Higherlife, Jairosi Jiri, Ford base & NASHCO	2021-2025





## Annex 2 Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

The NVSF Situational Analysis process used a SWOT analysis tool which is a high-level strategic planning model, it helped the process to identify where volunteerism in Zimbabwe is doing well and where it can improve, both from an internal and external perspective.

### STRENGTHS

Four major strengths were identified among many others in Zimbabwe. One strength that was strongly emphasized through SWOT analysis is that of UNV, VSO, MoYSAR, and Government of Zimbabwe support rendered to the volunteer sector. Skilled and Experienced volunteers, have exceptional professional acumen, and bring a great wealth of connections, partnerships, and experience to the country from different regions across Zimbabwe. Also, the highly experienced VIO staff and volunteers view themselves as a part of a strong volunteer team and recognize the value in having a positive, conducive working environment. They are passionate about volunteer work and have great respect for each other.

The third most prevalent strength identified is that of quality programming, which is leading in the upholding of the living conditions of the people of Zimbabwe. The volunteer sector takes pride in its work to bring exceptional volunteer programs to Zimbabwe, and works diligently to provide proper trainings, and programmatic support. This is accomplished through its pool of dedicated professional, and non-professional volunteers from Universities, schools, communities, churches and across the globe who are working with VIO and the Government of Zimbabwe. Therefore, they share different backgrounds (race, religions, culture, and gender abilities). Which contributes to our development. The UNV is viewed as a national volunteer leader among other VIO and is also nationally recognized for its work to coordinate volunteers and donations in disasters. On the other hand, MoYSAR is supportive of the youth volunteer work and its Youth Build Zimbabwe has brought a lot of sustainable development in the country.

The fourth identified strength is that of project sustainability, volunteer approach of involving communities in project identification, is leading to the community appreciation of volunteer work, as it addresses areas that communities say require attention. There is ownership and accountability of the project by both the communities and volunteers. Community based volunteers have knowledge about the problems faced in their communities and they can come up with community-based approaches to development of their own areas. Some community-based volunteers can continue running the project even after the implementing partner has left.

### WEAKNESSES



Six major volunteering weaknesses were identified, the first major one being the lack of volunteer framework to guide the operations of the sector, which has resulted in poor coordination of the sector. Poor coordination has resulted in several problems, namely double dipping e.g. VIOs find one volunteers representing even 10 organisations when they try to do data collection, which is leading to distortions. Coordination is important here. Absence of a framework or labour law which guides the operations of the sector has also been criticised for promoting discrimination of volunteers.

The second key weakness is limited resources, the sector has limited funding, which has resulted in poor volunteer infrastructure, poor safety net, poor security measures and poor budgetary allocation for volunteerism. The respondents expressed fear that the sector may end up collapsing if no support is given. The sector does not have information to share because no researches have been conducted because of lack of funding. Due to lack of funding the sector is not able to give stipends to volunteers, hence it is losing important resources, because there is volunteer exodus, going for greener pastures. This has resulted in lots of movement from one organisation to another looking for an organisation which gives better benefits. Hence, organisations which have a pool of volunteers are not growing because of the rate of turnover. The volunteers are failing to complete their volunteer circle which leads to failure to achieve the project set targets. The biggest reason why volunteers are demanding for stipends/ benefits is economic challenges which is forcing people to seek for payment for every minute given to any participation in community/ national work. All things being equal volunteers are free to render their services for free. Most management indicated that the food for work in the rural communities is a serious threat to volunteerism. Volunteers now think of payment first, yet they are supposed to do community development free of charge.

Third issue is that of lack of volunteer recognition and valuation. The sector is failing to report the contribution of the sector to the Gross Domestic Product. Volunteers are excluded from decision making which affects their well being, there is no consultation. The work they do is not evaluated, hence they are not acknowledged.

Fourth weakness is the unavailability of volunteerism information, the media is not reporting more intensively on news and events related to the field of volunteerism. There is no regular, periodical data collected from representative samples. Society receives little information about the benefits and importance of volunteering, and about ways of getting involved.

Fifth weakness is that disabled access to volunteer programmes is often missing. Few organisations are prepared to work with people with disabilities. The overwhelming majority of recipient organisations are still not sufficiently prepared to receive and sustain volunteers, especially those with disabilities. They think disability is inability.



Finally, it was noted that few organisations demonstrate strategic thinking when it comes to volunteer programmes. Hence, no protocol has been drawn up for involving volunteers in dealing with disasters and pandemics such as Covid 19 and cholera, so in many instances those willing to help are only able to participate spontaneously in preventing damage or in cleaning-up, and in some cases are even unable to reach the scene of the disaster. In some cases, they become victims of the pandemics, because they are not well equipped, they do not have sufficient protective clothing.

## OPPORTUNITIES

There are great opportunities to strengthen the volunteer sector in Zimbabwe. Recent new communications efforts have helped to give a new identity to the volunteer sector. Also, more frequent interactions with stakeholders and the media have helped to elevate the understanding of what volunteerism is and how the sector operates. Government, ZYC, UNV, VSO and Higherlife are also currently strengthening the partnerships.

The ongoing formulation of the National Volunteer framework to guide volunteerism is an opportunity, will set volunteer ethical standards to be adhered with, therefore, having a national volunteer strategy soon is important. Therefore, the development of the National Volunteer Strategy will result in the smooth coordination and recognition of the volunteer sector. The presence of the strategy will result in the creation of new opportunities for volunteers to engage themselves in a variety of activities. Human resources education will be enhanced because a strategy will come up with the requirement to train the volunteers. This strategy will come up with a mechanism for measuring and reporting the contribution of volunteerism to development. The participants hoped that the proposed strategy will incorporate support of the volunteer sector as one of its key focus areas. The establishment of Government & VIO accreditation and certification systems, capacity building trainings, government Food for work programme, VIO incentives motivate volunteers to volunteer. The emerging of several VIOs is leading into the promotion of volunteerism within organisations, schools, and communities.

Availability of government line Ministries volunteering frameworks / policies, such as the Sport National volunteering policy, Zimbabwe National Youth Policy, The Social Protection Policy which is guiding the operations of community volunteers is a good opportunity for the volunteering sector to copy from.

The existence of the National Youth Service department to mobilise volunteers and supervise them during the implementation of volunteer projects promotes accountability. Income generating projects in National Youth Services training centres help in raising funds for mobility of staff involved in the projects. Skills profiling within youths in the communities helps the sector to know the strength available in each community, such information helps to determine which community projects to carry out first.



Availability of National training centres is an opportunity which will facilitate in the coordination, management and training of volunteers and their managers. Zimbabwe culture of volunteering which is rooted in the history of Zimbabwe, e.g. the building of the Zimbabwe Ruins, and the sacrifice to fight during Chimurenga war is a good sign of Zimbabwe's Ubuntu which has resulted in the establishment of the Chief Zunde Ramambo, Nhimbe and assistance of each other during time of need such as funerals.

We have only one umbrella framework which protects the rights of the volunteers by virtue of them being human, that is the Zimbabwe constitution. The engagement between civil society, community, VIO & Gvt on volunteerism being led by UNV and the government of Zimbabwe is creating an opportunity for networking and promoting volunteerism awareness for instance during the volunteer day.

Zimbabwe is blessed by a pool of volunteers from Universities, colleges, schools, local communities, and the international communities who are dedicated and willing to volunteer. Also, the fact that there is high rate of unemployment is an opportunity for the volunteer sector because many people are willing to volunteer. In addition, the existence of locally available skills, resources, within Zimbabwe communities, will enable VIOs to use community-based approach for development and the donor dependence syndrome will be done away with.

Opportunities on the horizon include increasing media events and public awareness, strengthening volunteer programs through additional trainings and/or conferences, and collecting additional "success stories" to share from partners, perhaps through more data collection systems. There are also opportunities to apply for and secure additional funding, through volunteer sector, state funding or additional grants based on availability.

## THREATS

The biggest threat to the volunteer sector is insecure funding, additionally, Covid 19 pandemic has extensively impacted the operations of the sector as donors are withdrawing funding. While current staff have continued to systematically reduce expenses and operate more efficiently, budget cuts threaten the sector's ability to apply for and administer additional funds, and recent reductions in staff and volunteers could hinder the sector's plans for growth and expansion. Lack of resources to use in the community, resources are not being availed to volunteers, as a result VIOs are losing the frustrated volunteers. After their exodus organisations need to start again the recruitment process, the volunteer can also spread bad information about VIOs which does not support them, they are complaining about lack of support, and difficult to achieve results in time. It was reported that they lose focus and commitment when VIOs do not regularly visit them and give them support, respondent 10 of VIOs had this to say " *Our project in Chiundura failed, this is because we did not receive funding as was promised by the donor, we started with 54 volunteers who dropped along the way and we ended up with 10, this was also attributed to lack of planning*". At national level the sector has not been allocated a budget to coordinate the projects it is implementing. The sector is suffocating because of lack of support.



Political association of volunteerism has become a threat, volunteers' lives are sometimes at risk. Hence, volunteers perform poorly where there is political fear. Volunteers fear to participate in community projects because of fear of association. They do not want to be affected by political violence which usually causes injury and damage to property. It should avoid political affection and social groupings. Volunteerism should be based on needs and not associations to excel. Respondent 21 had this to say, *“community youth volunteers are doing good work, but sadly they are not appreciated because of the myth that they are supporting a part, they are referred to as “Green Bombers” the Bhodha Gezi team”*. This has stigmatised them instead of being appreciated. Therefore, it is paramount that the communities be made aware of what volunteerism is all about. Despite the good work Youth Build Zimbabwe has done, people are still confused about the purpose of volunteering.

One of the biggest challenges with Zimbabwe volunteers is that, most of them are young and still searching for greener pastures. As a result of the mobility of the volunteers, they come with previous organisation cultures which are difficult to change. On the other hand, some of them are not committed, they only come for stipends, the giving of stipends could lead to the nature of voluntary work being eroded. Some volunteers are not trained to handle pressure, they need counselling, psychosocial support around work, because some of them end up traumatised for example during Covid 19.

Low motivation due to the title (volunteer), no respect given to a volunteer, this has led to their demotivation because of the way they are treated. Most people think volunteers are not educated, they are frustrated because they cannot find jobs hence, they tend to resort to volunteering to earn ends meet. Their skills are not put to effective use, in some organisations they end up doing general work which does not match their qualifications. Respondent 16 had this to say, *“when I joined one organisation as a volunteers, they did not even think I was able to do something productive, they used to ask me to do dishes, filling of papers and buying their lunches, until till the day I demonstrated what I know best and solved their problem”*. This volunteer was never given an opportunity to do the work he had come to do, until he pushed his way through.

Professional volunteers stop sharing expertise with communities on end of agreement with the organisation, which makes the project fail to continue after the exiting of the donor, there is no project sustainability and ownership.



ANNEX 1 SWOT  
ANALYSIS.docx



## Annex <sup>3</sup> Volunteering strategy Governance Structure

### Organogram

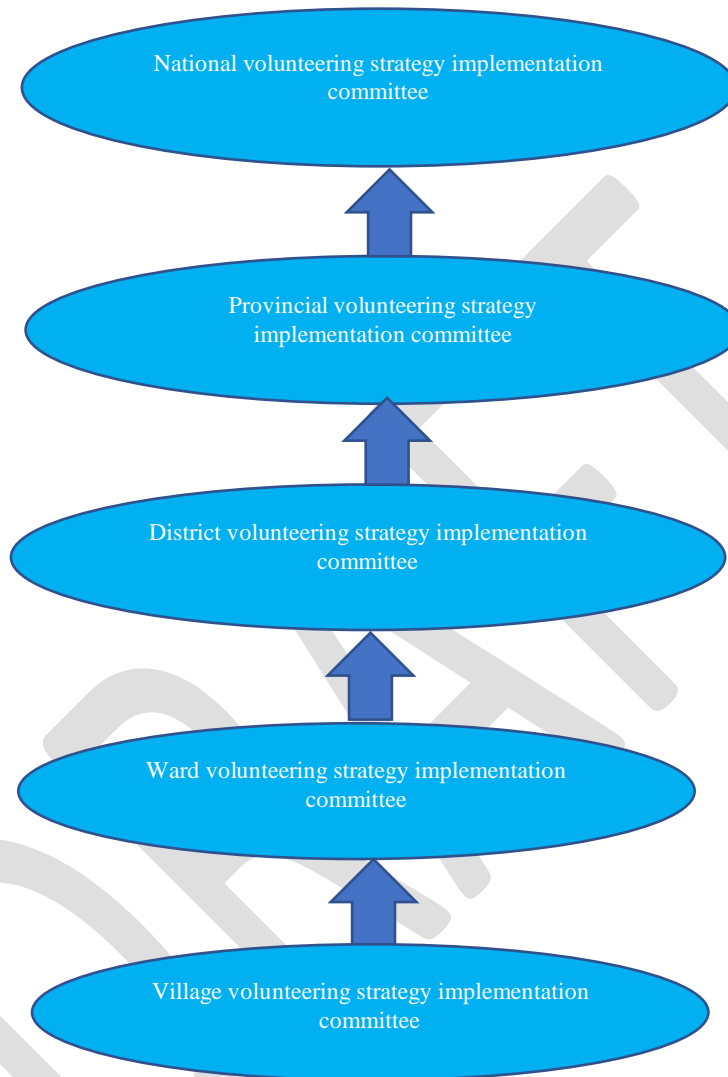


Figure 1: National volunteering strategy implementation organogram

Zimbabwe voluntary sector operates across the country, working with formal and informal volunteers. Its operations can reach every part of Zimbabwe. The proposed establishment of the volunteer strategy coordinating committee at each level of the society will facilitate its effective operations. The proposed governance structure is a representative of every group in society. The governance structure will comprise of a chair from government, a chair representing the UN, a chair representing international organisation, a chair representing VIOs and VIONET, a chair representing civic society organisations. It must coordinate the implementation of the strategy and



ensure the sustainability of the process. All these represented by senior officials on each level, such as the Permanent Secretaries, Directors, Provincial, District, Ward and village development coordinators. These will be coming in as chairpersons on each level. The village strategy implementation committee (VSIC), led by its chair will report to the Ward strategy implementation committee (WSIC). These two grass roots tiers will reach through the District, and the Provincial chairs and the volunteering strategy implementation plan, emanating from them, to the National volunteering Development chair at the National Government level. It is important to have intersectoral structure at each level because of the cross-cutting nature of the volunteer sector.

This Committee will plan, organise, coordinate, monitor, evaluate the implementation of the volunteerism strategy to attain the strategic goals. The committee will determine the strategy for delivering the results, seek ways to raise the necessary funding to support and guarantee the work. Each strategic key pillar will be addressed by volunteer governance committee as shown in the Priority Areas Responsibility. The strategic objectives and desired outcomes will guide the activities of the task teams.

The structure will require all voluntary sector of the country to report on volunteerism within their sector as guided by the M & E Framework of the strategy.

NB: This proposed structure will be discussed and adopted during stakeholder consultation and validation meetings.