



▶ **Submission to United Nations Volunteering
Zero Draft of the 10 year Plan of Action 2016 - 2025
Submitted online, 5 December 2014**

▶ **Contact Details**

This submission is from a group.

Name of Organisation: Volunteering New Zealand
Contact person: Vanisa Dhiru, Chief Executive
Postal Address: PO Box 25333
Featherston Street
Wellington 6146
Email: office@volunteeringnz.org.nz
Phone: +64 4 384 3636

▶ **Background**

Volunteering New Zealand

1. Volunteering New Zealand (VNZ) is the “voice of volunteering” in Aotearoa. Our vision is for a New Zealand that promotes, values and supports effective volunteering for the benefit of individuals and communities – and our mission is to promote, support and advocate for volunteering.
2. We are the only national organisation in New Zealand that focuses purely on volunteering, volunteer management and is the “voice of volunteering”. We hold the ‘big picture’ and are in a position to liaise, work with, and advise government and business sectors. This works

to ensure that volunteering occurs within a positive environment where it is encouraged and fostered.

3. For over 13 years, VNZ has raised the profile of volunteer groups, volunteer management and volunteering and its value to New Zealand society through sharing stories; producing tools like the Best Practice Guidelines and Competencies for Managers of Volunteers; and giving voice to volunteering in Aotearoa.
4. We can see the big picture when it comes to volunteering in New Zealand as we work with numerous organisations across the voluntary and community sectors. This big picture view means we are best placed to give advice on matters related to volunteering.
5. We work to ensure that volunteering occurs within a positive environment, where it is encouraged and fostered. We envisage a society that promotes, values and supports effective volunteering for the benefit of individuals and communities.
6. We have a membership of 45+ national and regional member organisations that involve volunteers achieving their missions. We advocate on behalf of member organisations and other groups aligned to our mission and values who may not be members.

New Zealand's voluntary sector

7. New Zealand has more than 97,000 non-profit organisations, contributing 2.6% to GDP. This increases to 4.9% of GDP when taking into account the volunteer labour contribution and is similar to the contribution of the entire construction industry. We have been ranked as fifth in the world for volunteer participation in 2014¹.
8. The most up-to-date data on the New Zealand volunteer sector suggests that there are more than 1.2 million volunteers who give over than 270 million hours of unpaid labour to the sector. In 2008, 67% of the community and voluntary sector workforce was made up of volunteers; 90% of New Zealand non-profit organisations employ no staff, and rely solely on volunteers².

How VNZ collated this submission

9. VNZ's submission is based on responses from our members and networks to the four questions asked by UNV regarding the Zero Draft of the 10 year Action Plan.

¹ From the World Giving Index 2014:

https://www.cafonline.org/PDF/CAF_WGI2014_Report_1555AWEBFinal.pdf

² From the *The New Zealand Non-profit Sector in Comparative Perspective*, 2008

10. We received 3 responses, one from an individual member, one from a regional Volunteer Centre and one from a national volunteer involving organisation. The following submission provides a thematic analysis of these submissions with verbatim comments to illustrate specific points.
-

► Submission

QUESTION 1: In the coming decade, what are the three key issues organisations involved with volunteerism should focus on to help address sustainable development challenges?

11. The three key issues that volunteer-lead or volunteer involving organisations must focus on in the coming decades to help address sustainable development challenges are:
 - Changing demographics due to increasing migration
 - Advances in volunteer related technology
 - Recognition from government.

Changing demographics due to increasing migration

12. The report Our Futures: Te Pae Tawhiti was released earlier this year by an expert panel of the Royal Society of New Zealand, it analysed data from the 2013 Census and other population based sources. Seven key themes from the Census data and analyses were identified for the report -- diversity, population growth, tangata whenua, migration, households and families, regional variation and work.
13. Authors of the report said the country had become more diverse in new ways over the last twenty years, through increasing migration from Asia and an increasing proportion of the population born overseas. The implication for New Zealand is that it is, increasingly, a country with multiple cultural identities and values. The findings of this report highlight what our changing world does and will look like in the future. We must be cognizant of the underlying challenges and opportunities that these changes present, and as a sector we must think about how to address them through policy, process and infrastructure.

Advances in volunteer related technology (and those using these technological advances!)

14. We now lived in a deeply normalized 'convenience economy', a world that seamlessly, effortlessly shapes itself to human desire, satisfying each impulse in the physical world with the ease and speed of digital tools.
15. The way we share information and promote volunteering is changing too social media and networking collectively continues to be a growing market from a commercial standpoint, and it is surely impacting more of our lives at a personal level every day.

16. Digitalisation of our daily lives also means for a less cohesive community and for volunteering, a much more fragmented audience. There is a much more complex web of touch-points where potential volunteers can be reached, while this provides people more choice it also makes it harder to predict consumer behaviour and ensure meaningful engagement.
17. Not only is the technology changing but the people harnessing this technology are too. There is an emergence of a new species—"screenagers," the first tribe of "digital natives." That is a much-debated term that distinguishes the wired-from-the-crib from "digital immigrants," for whom the Internet is a second language.
18. All of these technological changes have led to the virtualisation of volunteering. The act of volunteering isn't just about doing a couple of hours in a soup kitchen once a week it is integrated as part of our wider lives, using the skills and talents we have learnt in corporate or professional environments and providing us the opportunity to volunteer from home. This also means that people will not volunteer for one organisation for their whole lifetime, rather will provide their skills to the wider community as and when needed.

Recognition from government

19. Recognition and meaningful support from the government was the third most identified issue from respondents. In New Zealand, the Government endorsed an official policy on volunteering. It recognises the "vital contribution to social development, the economy and the environment, government" that volunteering has.
20. The statement envisioned that New Zealand is based on a society with a high level of volunteering, where the many contributions people make to the common good are actively supported and valued.
21. However, in practice, even with this policy statement Volunteering New Zealand and its members continue to advocate and lobby for policy, legislation and sustainable funding pools that meaningfully support volunteering recruitment, training and retention.

QUESTION 2: In a best case scenario/set-up, what achievements would you expect to see from UNV's 10 Year Plan of Action, and what kind of investment (monetary/non-monetary) and partnerships would it take to accomplish this?

22. Meaningful partnerships at all levels (global, national, regional/local) are also important, taking the time to involve all necessary stakeholders. As much collaboration as possible, filtering down to the grass roots was also seen as essential.

"Not sure of the cost involved [but] it's about time and building relationships. Getting the right people involved."

QUESTION 3: What do you see as UNV's role in this regard, and what would you identify as a particular role for your country/entity, like Volunteering New Zealand?

23. UNV's role should consist of:

- Continued research, monitoring and understanding of volunteering programmes and initiatives
 - Continued promotion of the sector
 - Lobbying the government for policy or legislative change
 - Leading the volunteering sector globally with support from national bodies like Volunteering New Zealand.
-

QUESTION 4: In regards to UNV's 10-year plan, what kind of concrete actions, processes, and/or events could you foresee at a global, national and regional level, and how can progress be monitored and reported?

24. UNV has the leverage and clout to:

- Build sustainable and influential relationships with government
- Promote the volunteering sector through measuring and informing on outcomes from volunteering and ensuring that the research is accessible and attractively packaged
- Harness the enthusiasm that currently exists around volunteering on a local and national scale and help promote the people's stories at an international level.

25. Releasing the International Volunteer Day theme out earlier in the year would also help with annual planning for national bodies like Volunteering New Zealand.

26. Some innovative solutions provided by respondents included:

"...celebrating and recognising volunteering as an alternative 'career' where possible. For the young a stepping stone to the job they really want."

"...education amongst the elderly about the benefits of volunteering and the idea of giving people time off work for volunteering at a national level (hard I know with issues around minimum wages and maternity leave pressing on employers' doors)."

"Actions, processes, events: International Volunteer Day and International Volunteer Managers Day, social/public welfare advertisement, national and local activities by volunteers of all fields. To be monitored and reported by local, national and international volunteer organisations, such as UNV, Volunteering NZ, Volunteer Wellington/Auckland, etc."

"... [specifically in New Zealand] there are many volunteers from different ethnic backgrounds. In particular, Asian is the third largest ethnic group in which Chinese people has the biggest population, Chinese volunteer organisations and its members need to be more involved and represented accordingly..."