Humanitarianism and the Global Calls for Volunteerism in the Decade of Action - A Scoping Assessment

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Abstract

The year 2020 sparked off a decade of value driven and high impact action to deliver the Agenda 2030. However, with less than seven years to go, the efforts being made to advance sustainable solutions to end poverty, reduce inequality, bridge gender gaps, rescue the planet, close the finance gap, and build a peaceful world, are far from the speed or scale required. More so, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and other humanitarian disasters across the globe have negatively impacted the gains of SDGs. These have necessitated the need for transformative recovery from the pandemic to reduce risks from future disasters and re-launch the implementation initiative aimed at delivering the global goals and its Agenda during the Decade of Action. Accordingly, the UN calls for the global, local and people-oriented action. The global level action aims at securing effective leadership, resources, and resolutions for implementing the SDGs. The locally oriented action aims at embedding emerging issues into governments, cities and local authorities' institutional policies, plans, budgets, and regulatory frameworks. The people-oriented action aims at generating coalition of movement among the relevant key stakeholders including non-governmental organization, civil society organizations (CSOs), the media outfits, private sector, academic community, youth, and among others for advancing the required transformations.

Implementation of these three levels of action demands volunteers who will a) create high level movement linking humanitarianism to Global Goals; b) identify risks aimed at ensuring that no one is left behind; c) eradicate extreme poverty; d) act fact to beat the race against climate change (RCC); e) eradicate social injustice and gender inequality, and f) hold leaders to account for the actualization of the SDGs. With less than seven years to go, literature is sparse on the global call for volunteerism during the decade of action. Consequently, this study attempts a review of existing literature on this pertinent issue. The study concludes that volunteerism is one of the veritable tools of intervention in the two distinct fields of operation.

Keywords: Volunteering; Volunteerism; Humanitarianism; development & Decade of Action

Introduction

Volunteerism is a pervasive global phenomenon born out of people's free will to serve as agent of change and render support during emergencies and developmental necessities rather than being beneficiaries' aids. Universally, volunteering is a veritable tool for the sustainability of the nonprofit sector, social action, collective action and humanitarian action. Volunteerism is the principle of social responsibility and the act of freely donating time, skills, resources, energy, and labour towards a greater cause, such as community service, or supporting a non-profit organization [1].Volunteering is a product of compassion and necessity [2]. It is a highly effective form of giving which provides platforms that enable people to help and serve others selflessly [3]. It is part of a cluster of helping behaviours, entailing more commitment than spontaneous assistance [3].

With the recognition of Year 2001 as the United Nations Year of Volunteerism, there was an increase in policy concerns, dialogues, conceptualizations, and movements about volunteerism. Thereby resulting in the definition of volunteerism, volunteering and voluntary activities as a diverse range of interventions initiatives and support offered freely for the general good and well-being of all with monetary reward or gain being the motivating factor [4]. Examples of such activities include relief aid, psychosocial support, service delivery, civic engagement, and advocacy or campaigns [5].

Volunteers are responsive to the values of solidarity, reciprocity, social inclusion, social cohesion, individual empowerment, and social well-being. The central mandate of volunteerism is the active engagement and continuous mobilization of individual citizens or groups of people

for community action and social responsibility. Globally, many people and societies in crisis have benefited from the unflinching support of countless volunteers during humanitarian crises such as climate change related disasters, pandemic and epidemics, poverty, and other catastrophes. For instance, during the 2014 Ebola crisis in Guinea, volunteers improved disease surveillance, facilitated greater trust and community engagements, and strengthened the capacity of health workers [6].

Volunteerism is a fundamental strategy adopted by civil society organizations for harnessing the potentials of individuals to actualize sustainable peace, freedom of expression, equality and fairness, safety, and social justice for all. It is a veritable tool for the expansion and mobilization of constituencies and citizens' engagement/involvement in planning for and implementation of the SDGs and other social policies. Volunteerism has had significant impacts in extending the reach of humanitarian and development aids to the poor and most marginalized communities. It has been instrumental for strengthening local ownership of development initiatives; creating new forms of collaboration among key stakeholders to lead social innovation; creating pathways for active participation and citizenship; and modelling different norms [7]. In the U.S., the work of volunteers has had an incredible impact on nonprofit organizations by contributing about $172.9 billion in value to recipient organizations [8, 9].

Given the volunteers' contributions, gradual understanding the critical roles, behaviour and impacts of volunteerism to the acceleration of the SDGs, agenda for humanity and a host of humanitarian agenda during the Decade of Action is very germane for the ultimate measurement and evaluation assessment by 2023 is highly necessary at this time. Thus, this paper on volunteerism, humanitarianism and the SDGs during the Decade of Action is an important attempt at bridging the gaps in the literature and an effort towards this assessment of the role of volunteering in this dual sector - humanitarian-development nexus.

Rationale for the Study

The Decade of Action aims at speeding up and scaling up strategic initiatives to accelerate the actualization of the global goals through individual and collective action at the individual, local and global levels [10]. Thus, volunteering is an untapped major resource for actualizing gender-responsive, people-centric and social inclusive sustainable community-level development, as well as humanitarian

and peace-building interventions [11]. Volunteers are the public face of activism, rallies, and major mass movements in the global community. The upsurge of the pandemic (COVID-19) highlighted the roles of formal and informal modes of volunteerism in the dissemination of information, awareness raising and development of localized solutions and strategies for meeting the critical needs of vulnerable groups [12]. Volunteers are one of the critical elements of community capacities and resources [13], demonstrating and providing local solutions necessary for reaching the socially marginalized groups and those often left behind [14]. Volunteerism aids in reducing poverty, delivery of basic healthcare services, improving education system, tackling environmental issues, and addressing social exclusion [15].

Clearly, the 2020s have been declared a decade of urgency for the attainment of global goals by 2030. Consequently, the year 2023 which marks the first quarter of the decade of action is a timely period to examine the scope and scale at which humanitarian and development agencies have been leveraging volunteerism (the people power and people action of volunteers) to shape and accelerate the course of humanitarianism and the 2030 Agenda cum sustainable development. However, little appears to be known concerning the global calls for volunteering during the decade of action with the prevailing humanitarian crisis in the global community. Hence, this paper presents a scoping analysis of the literature on the nature of volunteerism and the global calls for volunteers during this important decade.

Research Questions

1. What are the global calls for Volunteerism in the Decade of Action?
2. What is the role of Volunteering in the Humanitarian-Development Nexus during the Decade of Action?
3. Who are the volunteer-involving organizations during the Decade of Action?
4. What are the Sectoral Implications for Promoting Volunteerism in the Humanitarian-Development Nexus during the Decade of Action?

Objectives

1. Identify the global calls for Volunteerism in the Decade of Action.

2. Highlight the role of Volunteerism in the Humanitarian-Developmen Nexus during the Decade of Action.
3. Identify the volunteer-involving organizations (VIOs) during the Decade of Action.
4. Identify the Sectoral Implications for Promoting Volunteerism in the Humanitarian-Development Nexus during the Decade of Action.

Methodology

Research Methodology and Selection of Articles

The research method adopted for this paper entails a scoping review to determine the volume of existing literature on SDGs, Humanitarianism and the Global Calls for Volunteerism in the Decade of Action. It further utilized narrative analysis techniques for the interpretation of the existing literature on the focus of study. The purpose of this study was to identify and make sense of the complex literature, and to highlight the different types of global calls.

The study conducted a review of related articles available in the Google Scholar search engine through the permutations of terms such as "volunteerism"," volunteering", "global calls", "sustainable Development Goals", "Agenda 2030" and "decade of action". The method gave access to a wide variety of citations in peer-reviewed journals; articles in edited conference proceedings and workshop proceedings; as well as published articles in local and international journals on the focus of study.

Study Method and Thematic Analysis of Selected Articles

The desk review of 54 articles published in learned journals and proceedings (between 2000 and 2023) was conducted for this study. The narrative analysis technique adopted for the review detailed relevant themes in existing observational studies and other publication types. The comprehensive themes identified across the reviewed literature were used for the thematic analysis and organization of the presentation and discussions of findings on Humanitarianism and the Global Calls for Volunteerism in the Decade of Action.

Results

What are the existing global calls for Volunteerism in the Decade of Action?

1. **Universal Declaration on Volunteering**: Volunteering is a practical, effective action, which symbolises the power of people to change the world [16]. It upholds the fundamental human rights of all (every woman, man, girl, boy and child) to freedom of association and volunteering irrespective of their socio-economic status, cultural background, ethnicity, religious background, gender, age, and physical ability. The Declaration affirms that it is the basic rights of all people in the global community to participate in individual or collective action aimed utilizing their resources (time, talent and energy) to help those in need and to their communities without expectation of financial reward [16].

2. **The Agenda for Humanity**: The Agenda for Humanity [17] called on the world leaders to stand up for the reduction of humanitarian catastrophes, reduction of human distress, and reduction of vulnerability to disaster. It specifically highlighted the collective actions to be deployed by government agencies, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other relevant key stakeholders for the prevention and elimination of human suffering. The highlighted key stakeholders include civil society organizations (CSOs), volunteer networks and associations, faith-based organizations (FBOs), members of private sector, and community-based organizations within the affected communities. The Agenda for Humanity require global leaders to collaborate and support the implementation of the 5 core responsibility areas, 24 transformations and 32 core commitments [17]. Volunteerism is at the centre of the strategic actions and changes required to deliver the Agenda for Humanity during this decade. For effective delivery of the aid system and development projects during this decade, the call for global action emphasized the need for the humanitarian relief agencies and development society for the incorporation of new actors, volunteers and new technologies into their work [17].

3. **The 2030 Agenda**: The main trust of the 2023 agenda is to secure a sustainable future (without hunger, inequality and poverty) on the principles of inclusion, shared goals, collective action and active participation of citizens [18]. Agenda 2030 explicitly recognizes volunteer groups as part of the critical

stakeholders for actualizing the 17 SDGs with special focus on SDG 3, SDG 10 and SDG 17 [18, 19].

4. **Plan of Action for Integrating Volunteering into the 2030 Agenda**: This framework focuses attention on three major objectives - ownership, integration and measurement [20]. The plan emphasises the enhancement of people-oriented ownership of 2030 Agenda; integration of volunteerism into national and local plans and programmes; and development monitoring and evaluation measures to determine the impact of volunteerism on 2030 agenda. The framework emphasized mobilization of governments, volunteer-involving organizations, international UN donor agencies, and other relevant key stakeholders for strengthening people's ownership of the agenda. A lot of progress and collective efforts have been made by the United Nations Member States and its System, volunteerism-related non-governmental organizations and other key actors to integrate volunteerism into the 2030 Agenda [20].

5. **Reimagining Volunteering and 2030 Agenda**: The global technical meeting (GTM 2020) took place on 13–16 July 2020 to push forward the discussion on reimagining volunteerism for the global goals and its 2030 Agenda. The GTM 2020 acknowledged, celebrated and applauded the actions, contributions and efforts of all volunteers geared towards advancing humanitarianism and sustainable development in the global community during this Decade of Action [21]. The GTM 2020 is committed to boosting the values of the global goals by:

    a. Fostering platforms for raising volunteers who will make targeted investment for rebuilding the resilience of people and communities with different risks and vulnerability experiences.

    b. Establishing volunteering mechanism for whole-of-society partnerships geared towards the acceleration of progress in addressing prevailing and urgent global challenges such as inequality, poverty, and climate change; and

    c. Acting together with volunteering as a veritable channel for strengthening ownership and promotion of development initiatives that will enable the voice of often marginalized and excluded groups to be heard, most especially women and girls, people with disabilities, refugees, and other indigenous groups.

6. **The Global Call to Action**: Volunteerism is a distinctive strategy for accelerating and actualizing the global goals

and its 2030 Agenda [22]. The global call aims at positioning volunteering as a people-driven solution for actualizing the sustainable development goals; uniting the global community through renewed collaborations and partnerships geared towards strengthening the next-generation of volunteers; and raising the global awareness on the urgency for the actualization of the SDGs and the need to integrate volunteerism into the Decade of Action. The main goal of this call is the creation of the urgency for the mobilization of the commitment of everyone, everywhere to volunteering for collective action geared towards actualizing the SDGs by year 2030 and to innovate highly ambitious supercharge ideas as solutions to meeting prevailing humanitarian and development challenges in the global community.

7. **Hyogo Framework for Action:** The strategic goals and five priority areas of action for this framework include disaster risk reduction (DRR) as a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation; identification and monitoring of disaster risk factors; utilizing education to build a culture of safety and resilience; reduction of identified risks; and strengthening disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels. This framework highlighted volunteerism as a functional tool for building individual and collective mechanisms and appropriate interventions [23] during all phases of disaster cycle, especially the recovery phase. The framework noted that volunteerism has been used to foster resilience and hope among people and communities in crises.

8. **The UNV Guidance Note on Engaging Volunteers and Volunteer Groups in Health Emergencies (specific reference to COVID-19)**: This Note calls for volunteers in health emergencies from affected communities [24]. These categories of volunteers are expected to demonstrate exceptional understanding of local priority needs, traditional norms and practices, decision-making structures, as well as access to opportunities and resources [24]. The Note affirmed that actors could be engaged as on the ground volunteers or online volunteering activities during emergencies at local, national, or international levels. The engagement may be full-time or part-time, short time or on a recurring basis. The Note affirmed that volunteerism supports civic engagement, upholds collective action and inclusion, expands collaboration and strengthens ownership of humanitarian efforts and development results [24].

What is the role of Volunteerism in the Humanitarian-Development Nexus during the Decade of Action?

Essentially, the main thrust of humanitarian action is the provision of prompt and almost instantaneous response to save lives, alleviate sufferings, and resuscitate the resilience of disaster victims; while development aid aims at helping people and communities to get out of poverty [25, 26]. However, they both operate as distinct enterprises within different time horizons, measures, and emphasis on structural change, principles and values underpinning their work. By nature, development aid is inherently political and relies heavily on partnerships with governments for effective implementation [27]. The core values of humanitarian action (impartiality, neutrality and independence) often inhibit actors from closely associating with development issues in order to protect their humanitarian space [28]. Thus, development work was viewed as incompatible with humanitarian principles [29].

In spite of these, Strand [30], Weishaupt [31] and Gokalp [32] identified existing commonalties of interests for humanitarian system and development agencies during prevention, preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery phases of humanitarian action and the management of development work. For instance, humanitarianism focuses on the provision of aids to and the empowerment of crises affected persons [33]. It is also concerned with accountability to beneficiaries of emergency relief and aids [33-35]. These synergize humanitarian efforts with development work. Furthermore, the Agenda for Humanity focused on acting together with different strategies to meet (humanitarian) needs and forge collaborations to strengthen commitments made for the actualization of the 2030 Agenda [36]. It also highlighted desired changes for alleviating human sufferings, reducing risks and vulnerability to disaster through the actualizations of the 5 core responsibilities, 24 sets of actions or transformation guides to make the agenda a reality and 32 core commitments. Part of the groundbreaking initiatives created for the advancement of the Agenda for Humanity is the Platform for Action, Commitments and Transformation (PACT). PACT was designed to make visible and track progress made in actualizing the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) commitments for mitigating the effects of humanitarian crises on vulnerable persons. These commitments entail a) the grand bargain which focused on the need to increase the efficiency of investments during humanitarian crisis, and b) the inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action and development projects.

The Global Goals for sustainable development are designed for the acceleration of strategies a) ending poverty and hunger; b) promotion of women's human rights; c) promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment; and d) the protection of the planet and its natural resources. All the 17 Global Goals and 169 targets are well integrated into socio-economic and environmental dimensions of the SDGs [37]. Thus, it is suggested that the short-term delivery of humanitarian aids for crucial survival needs of persons in crises should not impaired the long-term capacity development required for actualizing the SDGs by Year 2030.

During humanitarian crises, volunteers are usually at the forefront of medical, community and social responses. On volunteerism, Dunant [38] reiterated that "Would it not be possible, in time of peace and quiet, to form relief societies for the purpose of having care given to the wounded in wartime by zealous, devoted and thoroughly qualified volunteers? ... For work of this kind, paid help is not what is wanted. ... There is need, therefore, for voluntary orderlies and volunteer nurses, zealous, trained and experienced, whose position would be recognized by the commanders of armies in the field, and their mission facilitated and supported" [39].

Volunteers provide essential assistance for aid delivery in humanitarian settings and development communities [40]. Both humanitarian agencies and the development communities seek volunteerism for the effective implementation and delivery of the Agenda for Humanity and the global goals. Specifically, the two agenda demand multi-sector-specific volunteerism to mitigating the varying challenges individuals, communities, organizations, institutions and (sub)national governments in the following areas:

    a. usage of local volunteers to support and scale-up the scope of humanitarian action and development assistance [41];
    b. contributions of governmental and volunteer organisations in providing humanitarian aids and development assistance [42-44];
    c. localization and participatory design thinking and ethical provision of goods and services to the vulnerable in crisis situations [45]; and
    d. social entrepreneurship and vocational training for the poor in crisis situations [45].

Both the humanitarian system and the development sector have two categories of volunteerism - formal (to an organization) and informal [46-48]volunteerism. Informal volunteerism infers the art of

spontaneous rendering of personal resources and potentials (time, knowledge and skills) to mitigating the pressing needs of persons in emergencies - prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response or recovery phases. Informal volunteerism may be spontaneous, emergent, corporate, digital, or extending. Spontaneous volunteers [40, 49-51] are usually untrained and offer uncoordinated efforts which may endanger the survivors, emergency responders, and other volunteers to further harm. Extending volunteers operate as part of existing community-based structure such as faith-based organizations, religious group, community women's group, or service organisation with extensive understanding of the local challenges and capacity to utilize existing networks and resources for mitigating such needs. Emergent volunteers arise in response to humanitarian emergencies and disasters [52]. An example of emergent volunteers is digital volunteerism' utilizing sophisticated but simple technologies to pass information about the ongoing disaster [52]. Corporate volunteerism and donations during humanitarian crises are usually in line with their corporate social responsibility (CSR). Digital volunteerism enables citizens to utilize information and communication technologies most especially social-media handles and web-based mapping software for production and dissemination of emergency-related information [47].

Irrespective of their nature, types and forms, volunteerism will enhance the operationalization of the following during the Decade of Action:
   a. Engagement of citizens for the promotion of social harmony, cohesion, resolution, and trust through the promotion of individual and collective action for individual capacity development.
   b. Civic engagement for accelerating long-term institutional and regulatory changes necessary for national peacebuilding and, ultimately, global sustainable development.
   c. Engagement of volunteers at the forefront of medical, community and social responses.

The basic components of volunteer stewardship include:

   a. **Engagement:** This entails fostering collaboration between organizational staff and volunteers to create volunteer opportunities that best serve the community and have the greatest impact on the organization.
   b. **Onboarding Process:** This is a multi-step capacity building strategy that involves screening, positioning, induction, and training of new volunteers. It should be designed for their growth and development through the provision of access to

resource materials about the organizations - online policies and procedures manuals, annual reports, links to social media, etc.

c. **Recruitment**: Recruitment of volunteers to meet the needs of the organization

d. **Retention**: This requires relationship maintenance strategies to ensure a high level of volunteer satisfaction

e. **Involvement**: Ensuring the team focuses on the organizational mission.

Who are the volunteer-involving organizations (VIOs) during the Decade of Action?

a. **The International Development Forum for Volunteering**: This is also known as the Forum. The Forum exist as a global network of Volunteering for Development organisations [53] for information sharing, dissemination of good practices, and enhancement of cooperation across the volunteering corridors in the development sector.

b. **Office of the High Commission for Human Rights (OHCHR)**: The OHCHR works with international actors and local key stakeholders for the implementation of strategies and policies designed for the acceleration of the SDGs from human rights-based approaches and the principle of leaving no one behind [53].

c. **Volunteer Groups Alliance (VGA)**: The VGA (previously known as the Post-2015 Volunteering Working Group) is a global NGO that promotes and highlights the significant roles played by volunteers in accelerating the achievement of the SDGs [19]. VGA works with volunteers from coalitions of more than 80 CSOs in over 150 countries to enhance the attainment of the SDGs. VGA empowers member organisations by a) connecting those working with Volunteer Groups in the global community to amplify their collective volunteering efforts towards follow-up and review of relevant SDG related initiatives; b) acknowledging the crucial roles of volunteers in effectively monitoring progress on the SDGs at local, regional, and national levels and in UN processes; and c) celebrating their efforts for the advancement of the SDGs [19].

d. **International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE)**: It works for the creation of a more just and equitable society by equipping leaders, organizations, and environments with necessary skills through highly empowered volunteers [21]. The estimated 1 billion people worldwide who volunteer each year create a collective expression of civic engagement that

builds community cohesion and resilience that is fundamental to making a better life for us all.

e. **The United Nations Volunteers (UNV)**: The UNV fosters volunteering for advancing peace and development in the global community [53]. It particularly advocates for volunteerism for sustainable development; and integrates volunteering into development planning. It identifies the civilian capacities in post-conflict environments and deploys volunteers. UNV mobilizes volunteers with the United Nations .For instance, it recruited and deployed a total of 26 volunteers to work on the northern border of Peru with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), UN Population Fund (UNFPA), World Food Programme (WFP) and UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) as professionals in different sector-related needs- health, nutrition, security, gender, and humanitarian response and WASH- management [53].

f. **Global Volunteers**: This is a international network of volunteers who are committed to the well-being of children in the global community [54]. Through high-level associations, this international volunteer organization promotes protection children's security, strives towards eradication of hunger and poverty, improves community health, around the world. The Global Volunteers had assisted in teaching English Language to whole villages and facilitated the establishment of schools, health clinics and water systems where there were none. They have offered protection to numerous street children, as well as empowered pregnant women and new mothers with household gardens and professional assistance across the globe. The Global Volunteers is dedicated to building a foundation for world peace through mutual international understanding [54].

g. **African Impact**: This volunteer organization has since 2004 being delivering life-changing and accountable volunteer and internship programs in different local communities across Africa.

What are the Sectoral Implications for Promoting the Global Calls for Volunteerism on the Humanitarian-Development Nexus?

From a sectoral perspective, the humanitarian sector and development sector utilize the services of volunteers in their distinct fields of operations at national, regional and global levels. The Humanitarian sector needs to integrate volunteerism into intervention strategies targeting youth, health, and disaster management/emergency response. Similarly, the development sector

also needs the active participation of volunteers in national and community-based innovative initiatives targeting sustainability [7, 19, 20].

Through volunteerism, the two sectors will be able to build the legitimacy and gather voices of marginalized people, enhancing trust and ownership of the intervention plans, policies and programme implementation; widen the skill sets, fill data gaps and apply innovative solutions based on community needs to the implementation of intervention plans and policies; and to extend the delivery of government services, implements programmes in underserved areas and address emerging needs, allowing more effective implementation of intervention plans and policies [40]. Volunteerism allows men, women, girls and boys to function as change agents by participating in and facilitating community and national development activities. Young people are increasingly acting as a social transformative and change agents in the global community instead of being the beneficiaries of development and humanitarian aids.

Within the context of humanitarian catastrophes, volunteer action (as first responders) especially in local communities is often aimed at building community and individual resilience to disasters through community capacity building and voluntary initiatives. The upsurge of population explosion and exposure to humanitarian disasters such as insecurity, violence, and climate change risks, have heightened the need for volunteers to foster local ownership of community actions, development planning and emergency Management [25]. To sustain volunteerism for the advancement of humanitarian and development courses in the decade of action, both sectors will have to embark on continuous recognition of the value of volunteers, reward volunteers for their contributions and achievements and to motivate others to join or support the volunteers [1].

Conclusion

Volunteering constitutes an immense reservoir of knowledge and skills for humanitarian action and implementation of development programmes during the decade of action. Volunteerism is a product of necessity and compassion Communities during humanitarian emergencies and disasters. With the call for volunteerism during the Decade of Action, the humanitarian-development nexus requires strategic actions to sustain the interest of volunteers in the global community for effective implementation of the visions, goals and aspirations of the agenda for humanity, the SDG goals and other

important frameworks on volunteerism. This paper highlighted the various ways people can engage in volunteerism at various stages of humanitarian crisis (preparation, mitigation, response, and recovery) and development work. The paper posited that volunteerism may be in solo or collaboration with well-established associations or organizations at local, national, or international level. Volunteerism for the humanitarian-development nexus during the Decade of Action has the capacity to make aid delivery and development projects more effective and efficient by ensuring that they reach the target beneficiaries. It is a useful mechanism for building and strengthening local capacities and ensure holistic response to current needs and challenges.

Recommendations

1. Suggested strategies for promoting, influencing, stimulating, and facilitating volunteerism for humanitarian concerns: during the decade of action include:
    a. **Prevention and mitigation Actions:** Volunteerism may be used by international, regional and local non-governmental organization (NGOs) for the mobilization and engagement of individuals and communities associations for the prevention, mitigation and prompt response to humanitarian disaster.
    b. **Preparedness**: Community-based volunteers are usually the first line of response; thus, humanitarian agencies need to build their capacity for disaster preparedness programmes such as community-based training initiatives and periodic drills aimed at enhancing local capacities for mitigating and coping with disasters.
    c. **Response, Relief and Rehabilitation Efforts**: Volunteerism during emergencies and disasters is usually geared towards humanitarian response, relief and rehabilitation efforts and is often derived as a spontaneous reaction from proactive volunteers (residents and neighbours) in the affected area before the influx of foreign aid workers including other international volunteers.
    d. **Recovery**: This phase entails rehabilitation and reconstruction. Volunteerism could be used as a great resource during this period based on pre-existing societal and community-based mechanism

and norms for facilitating individual participatory and institutional response to recovery process.

e. **Online Volunteers**: There is an urgent need for volunteers who will freely disseminate geographic information necessary for effective humanitarian action during all disaster preparedness, prevention, response and recovery phases. A further growing trend in contemporary times is the need for virtual volunteers who will provide nationally, or internationally relevant information and services required for supporting emergency operations. This might entail digital mapping of disaster-affected locations, development of IT tools or provision of other forms of virtual support for mitigating vulnerability to humanitarian crisis.

2. Strategies for promoting, influencing, stimulating, and facilitating volunteerism for the development Sector during the Decade of Action include:

a. **Capacity-building, Advocacy and Awareness Creation**: Volunteering organizations could increase citizens' volunteer ability by effectively publicising volunteering, reducing the obstacles to getting involved and training would-be volunteers.

b. **Strategic Policy Engagement**: Volunteering should be recognized as a strategic policy resource necessary for promoting and supporting civic engagement, improving the quality of life of volunteers and clients for humanitarian action and sustainable development.

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