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One of the key messages noted in the *State of the World's Volunteerism Report 2015* published last month by the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is that *global volunteer networks promote voice, participation, accountability and responsiveness*.

As the only global membership organisation committed solely to promoting, strengthening and celebrating volunteering in all of the myriad ways it happens throughout the world IAVE's ongoing role in continuing to develop its network of individuals

and organisations with a commitment to volunteering is clear and I am proud of the work that members of the IAVE network(s) play in their own countries and communities in promoting voice, participation, accountability and responsiveness through volunteering.

During June, I had the opportunity to attend the 5<sup>th</sup> African Regional Volunteer Conference to observe, and hear, first-hand the work of those in IAVE's network in Africa. A particular focus of those present – and a theme that cut across all countries represented – was the critical link between the role of volunteering social and economic development,

**Promoting Voice,  
Participation,  
Accountability and  
Responsiveness**

**Kylee Bates, IAVE World President**

especially for young people.

Not only were the presentations passionate, insightful and inspiring, those present were eager to share with one another their challenges, successful practices and programs from across the African continent. They also expressed a strong desire to continue build on the intra-continent networks they'd formed during the conference, highlighting IAVE's important role as both a facilitator and convener of global networks on volunteering.

As we move closer to September and nations' consideration of a new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), evidence that highlights the role of these networks and the role that volunteers are already playing in development are critical to our advocacy that volunteering be recognised as a strategic asset in the achievement of the SDGs. It is for this reason that the *State of the [World's Volunteerism Report 2015](#)* is important and timely. I encourage you to read it.

## IAVE Launches Search for 2018 Conference Site

IAVE has begun the process for identifying the host organization for the 2018 World Volunteer Conference and World Youth Volunteer Conference. (Yes, we begin this far in advance!)

The formal Call for Proposals has been sent to all IAVE members, all national leadership organizations for volunteering and select international NGOs. Potential applicants are asked to submit a "statement of interest" to enable us to work with them to determine whether they will ultimately submit a formal proposal.

The process calls for proposals to be submitted by November 30, 2015; for the search committee to complete its work and make its recommendation to the IAVE board of directors in April 2016; and, for the next host to be announced at the conclusion of the 2016 World Conferences in Mexico in November.

The search team is chaired by IAVE's Vice President, Eugen Baldas (Germany), who also is Regional Representative for Europe to the IAVE board. Iraidá Manzanilla (Venezuela), Regional Representative for Latin America, and Mark Molloy (Scotland), are the other members of the team. Secretariat support is provided by Kenn Allen, IAVE Senior Consultant.

For more information or to receive the Call for Proposals, please email [2018worldconferences@iave.org](mailto:2018worldconferences@iave.org).

## News from IAVE Members

### The Canadian Volunteer Landscape

By **Volunteer Canada**, IAVE National Representative, Canada

Earlier this year, Statistics Canada released [the latest data on giving, volunteering and participating in Canada](#). Canadians continued to be generous by volunteering an average of 154 hours per year, or close to 2 billion hours in total. However, 12.7 million Canadians (44%) volunteered in 2013 compared to 13.3 million (47%) in 2010.

Thanks to Statistics Canada's [Volunteer in Canada, 2004 to 2013](#) report, we can now take a closer look at the patterns and trends in the Canadian volunteer landscape. This information can help charitable and non-profit organizations with their volunteer recruitment, engagement and retention strategies.

#### The big picture

Despite a slight decrease in the volunteer rate, 17 million Canadians have volunteered at some point in their lives – that's 59% of Canadians aged 15 and older.

Additionally, 82% of Canadians volunteer informally, meaning helping people directly, without the involvement of an organization or group. This is almost double the formal volunteer rate! The most common types of informal help are housework, home maintenance, health-related or personal care, shopping and driving someone to a store or appointment. The informal volunteer rate is highest (91%) among young Canadians aged 15-19 and decreases with age,

with just over half of Canadians aged 75 and older volunteering informally.

## Level of involvement

37% of Canadian volunteer activities are episodic, meaning occurring one to four times a year. Episodic volunteers give an average of 36 hours per year. On the contrary, the 7% of Canadians who volunteer on a daily basis contribute 526 hours per year.

Consistent with previous years, over half of all volunteer hours are given by 10% of volunteers. Most of these volunteers volunteer on a daily or weekly basis, giving 372 hours or more annually. Combined, the top 25% of volunteers give 77% of all volunteer hours.

## Age

Canadians aged 15 to 19 have the highest volunteer rate, with 66% of youth volunteering. This could partially be attributed to community service requirements, as 20% of youth volunteer because they are required to go do. However, almost half of volunteers under 35 are motivated by possible job prospects, so volunteering can be seen as a way to hone skills and gain experience.

The volunteer rate drops through early adulthood, rebounding slightly with Canadians aged 35 to 44, likely due to parental volunteer roles in schools and after-school programs. 60% of Canadians with school-aged children volunteer, compared to 38% of those without.

With Canadians over 45, the volunteer rate continues to drop, with 27% of Canadians aged 75 and older volunteering. 64% of Canadians in this age group cite the physical inability to participate in volunteer activities as a barrier to volunteering.

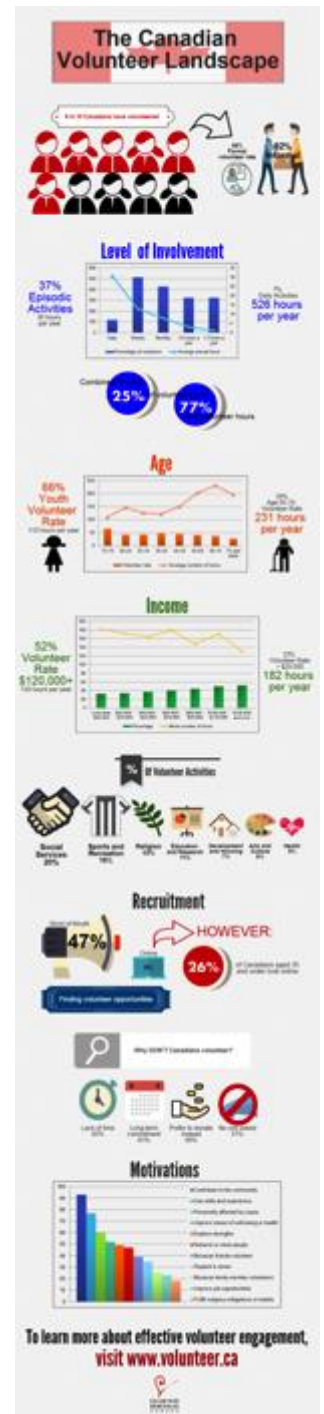
Interestingly, despite the lower volunteer rate among Canadian volunteers aged 65 to 74, they give the most hours annually, at 231 hours. Comparatively, youth give the least: 110 hours per year.

## Income

Although Canadians with a household income of \$120,000 and over have the highest volunteer rate of 52%, they give the lowest average number of hours per year: 130. On the contrary, while Canadians with household incomes of less than \$20,000 have the lowest volunteer rate, 33%, they give the highest average number of hours, 182.

## Volunteer activities

The most popular sectors where Canadians volunteer both in terms of the volunteer rate and percentage of volunteer hours are social services, sports and recreation, education and research, and religion, with 64% of all volunteer hours being devoted to them. The most popular volunteer activities among Canadians are organizing events and fundraising, with almost half of Canadians volunteering for both. However, fundraising only accounts for 9% of



all volunteer hours. A third of Canadian volunteers sit on a committee or board.

## Recruitment

Almost half of volunteers actively sought out their volunteer opportunities. The next most common way volunteers got involved was through simply being asked to volunteer. Interestingly, only 6% of Canadian volunteers got involved by responding to an online ad, and 8% to a poster or newspaper ad. Yet, 26% of Canadians aged 35 and under looked for volunteer positions over the Internet, indicating that recruiting youth online can be an effective avenue.

Two-thirds of Canadians who don't volunteer don't get involved due to lack of time. Similarly, 62% feel they aren't in a position to make a long-term commitment. Offering short-term, casual opportunities and micro-volunteering can be a great way to let potential volunteers test the waters of an organization. Still, with 51% not getting involved because no one asked and 27% because they did not know how to become involved, there is clearly an opportunity to better promote how to volunteer.

## Motivations

The single biggest reason that Canadians volunteer is to contribute to the community. Although 77% of volunteers want to use their skills and experience, only 23% volunteer to improve their job opportunities. About half of Canadian volunteers consider volunteering to be a great way to network or meet people.

In terms of specific skills gained through volunteering, 63% of volunteers feel that getting involved has

improved their interpersonal skills. Improved communication skills and organizational or managerial skills are also noted by about two-fifths of volunteers. Canadian youth are more likely to gain skills through volunteering, so it is important to offer skills-based opportunities.

To learn more about effective volunteer engagement, Volunteer Canada recommends following the [Canadian Code for Volunteer Involvement](#) and [Bridging the Gap](#).

# Pedaling Forward: An Unintended Social Enterprise in Bolivia

By Aaron Faust, Co-Founder,  
Cochabamba Pedal Project

Freddy Candia Aguilar, affectionately known as “MacGyver” for his uncanny ability to make something out of nothing, proudly held a banner with the words “Cochabamba Pedal Project” emblazoned on it. He had been providing free bike tune-ups all day to participants in Cochabamba’s first Bike and Pedestrian Day, while promoting his new social enterprise.

While Bike and Pedestrian Days are common in Bolivia, it was the first time Cochabamba Pedal Project participated. The organization came to life with the help of two Bolivian NGOs, a

U.S.-based non-profit, two innovative American volunteers, and funding from an American social enterprise. At the time of the Bike and Pedestrian Day, held this past April, Cochabamba Pedal Project was months in the making and at the very beginning, was never intended to be more than a month-long volunteer project.

## The Beginning

The story began with another Freddy, Freddy Rosa Echeverria, the principal of a small school in Tiquipaya, on the outskirts of Cochabamba.

Principal Freddy smiled broadly as his elementary school students clamored to demonstrate to two American visitors the correct method for washing their hands. “Just one volunteer,” he bellowed, but the children couldn’t contain their excitement. A dozen or more rushed to the front of the classroom. Freddy’s smile grew even more. He allowed them all to participate in the exercise. The students mimed the method they used for washing their hands. They lathered their hands intently, not wanting to miss any crease or crevice.

“This is how we wash our hands,” Freddy proudly told us.

Washing hands was such a big deal at Freddy’s school that students wanted to start a soap making business. With help from [Cochabamba Pedal Project](#), the school began realizing that dream.

Few Bolivian children knew such basic hygiene. Only 32 percent of schools nationwide have access to handwashing facilities, while only 61 percent have sanitation systems of any kind. Without appropriate hygiene infrastructure, health problems abound: food poisoning, diarrhea and staph infections are common and infectious diseases spread unchecked.

Fortunately, schools like Freddy’s have help to face this crisis. [Fundacion SODIS](#), a Cochabamba-based public health non-profit organization, partners with schools to educate teachers and students about the importance of proper



hygiene and hand-washing.

“Students must learn appropriate hygiene practices at school,” said Elsa Sanchez Montaña, Executive Director of Fundación SODIS.

*Only 3 percent of families in Bolivia have a place to wash their hands with soap and water after they use the latrine. Proper hygiene is not being taught at home, so it must be done in the schools.”*

Educating students was of the utmost importance, but Freddy and Elsa were doing more. The Tiquipaya school treated its water by a solar disinfection method and produced its own soap -- handmade by the students -- for everyday use. The students learned the chemical process of soap making and, of course, the health benefits of using soap.

The ultimate goal for this joint project was to create a self-sufficient, sustainable business, producing enough quality soap to sell to the local municipality for distribution to other schools in the region. The Tiquipaya school’s business model, if successful, would be replicated throughout Bolivia at other schools and communities.

### **An Idea Comes to Fruition**

The plan was good, but Freddy needed help to make it a reality. What the school needed, he said, was soap making machinery to increase the efficiency and quality of the soap production.

No one knew it that day, but the seed was planted that grew into Cochabamba Pedal Project, a small social enterprise that harnesses the power of pedal-powered machines to improve the daily lives of Bolivians.

Working with [Sustainable Bolivia](#) we met with Freddy to brainstorm ways to increase the school’s soap productivity and quality. After some research, we found the designs for a pedal-powered soap mixer that were developed by an engineering professor in Nigeria. After getting the go-ahead from Principal Freddy, we went to work.

There was no way we could do it alone, however. With the help of another local NGO, [CECAM Bolivia](#), run by Freddy Candia Aguila and his wife, Rosio, the sourcing of raw materials and the construction of the bike machine

or “bicimaquina” began to take shape. Funding for the project was provided by [Soapbox Soaps](#), a one-for-one beauty care enterprise located in the United States.

Three weeks (and a lot of sanding, cutting, welding, and painting) later, the completed pedal-powered soap mixer was delivered to the school. A school assembly featured soap making, a lesson on how to better merchandise the soap, and a performance from the school marching band.

The project was a huge success.

### **The Birth of Cochabamba Pedal Project**

Several months later, Freddy and Rosio contacted us, with news that a second pedal-powered soap mixer had been built and donated to a second school.

Could utilizing simple pedal-powered devices, like the soap mixer, be a sustainable and economically viable solution to the difficulties that many Bolivians face on a daily basis?

The staff at Cochabamba Pedal Project think so.

Freddy and Rosio have already started devising new ways to implement the pedal-powered machines--from pedal-powered clothes washers and water pumps to bike-operated corn shellers and smoothie makers. The possibilities for this simple, yet effective technology are endless.

Freddy and Rosio are the heart and soul of Cochabamba Pedal Project. They hope to create a sustainable social enterprise by refurbishing and selling bikes to community members for transportation, then use the funds created by the bike sales to construct and donate more bicimaquinas.

It will take a collaborative effort from community members, local NGOs, and volunteers, but we are confident that this social enterprise will flourish.

We are excited about what lies ahead for Cochabamba Pedal Project as we continue **#pedalingforward** to increase public health outcomes in Bolivia.

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Originally published in [Mercy Corps’ Global Envision Blog](#).  
Permission for repost granted by author, Aaron Faust.

## **Volunteering in Vindolanda’s Archaeological Study**

By **Eugen Baldas**, IAVE Vice President, IAVE Regional Representative, Europe

There are still excavations in progress for remnants of the old Roman Empire in England and Scotland, which was once the bordering region of the ancient empire. Since the 1970s, the Vindolanda Trust carries out excavations for

volunteers, students, and archaeological staff members. 450 volunteers become involved in Vindolanda's excavations annually. Since its inception, Vindolanda has worked with a total of approximately 100,000 volunteers. Although the most in demand volunteer activity is digging, there are other options available for volunteers such as cleaning and prepping excavated materials, and archiving the findings in the museum.

Vindolanda is named after a Roman fort and village near the Hadrian's Wall in the Northern frontier from 80 to 410 AD. The area still has remains of Roman architecture and roads. Inscribed stones, coins, jewelry, pot rims and lids, shoes, writing tablets, leather, medical instruments, and other goods have been excavated and still remain buried within the area. Volunteers in the excavation team are contributing to this ongoing research in Roman archaeology titled "Vindolanda in transitions".



Volunteers from all over the world, from different social and professional backgrounds, have joined and continue to join the Vindolanda Excavation Team. Learn more about the excavation [here](#) and visit the research blog [here](#).

## A Long-Standing Friendship: IAVE Taiwan and St. Michael's Health Group

By IAVE Taiwan, IAVE National  
Representative, Taiwan

Delegates from St. Michael's Health Group (SMHG, Canada) finished their 10-day study trip in Taiwan on June 11, 2015. Since 2012, IAVE Taiwan has had a long-standing friendship with SMHG. Stan Fisher, former IAVE vice president and president/CEO at SMHG, answered IAVE Taiwan's request for a volunteer exchange program, Journey of Dreams (JOD), in 2012. At that time, IAVE Taiwan sent a group of volunteers to have hands-on experience at SMHG facilities. Our volunteers were warmly welcomed, and learned a lot during their stay at SMHG. We planted a seed of experience exchanges between IAVE Taiwan and SMHG.

This year, SMHG sent their distinguished delegates to Taiwan. In order to make the most of their visit, IAVE Taiwan planned their trip and contacted over 15 well-known local organizations.

SMHG delegates visited The Garden of Hope Foundation, Huashan Social Welfare Foundation, Hand-in-hand teen's Service Center (Welldoer House), Eden Social Welfare Foundation, Hondao Senior Citizen's Welfare Foundation, Watersource Culture Foundation, Social Affairs Bureau of Kaohsiung City Government, and Formosa Diaconia



Foundation. Most of the organizations are related to what SMHG focus on-- senior caring, while the other organizations are those who focus on other underprivileged societal groups.

The highlight of their trip was the baseball game with the local elders. The baseball team DongXinLong belongs to the Evergreen Baseball League, which was formed by Hondao. There are four senior citizen baseball teams throughout Taiwan. The average age of all the players is around 70 years old. The playing time for each game is shortened, the fields are made smaller, and softer balls are used so that the elderly could participate and enjoy the game. SMHG delegates joined one of their weekly practices of pitching and hitting, and even participated in their games. It was a wonderful time under the sun.

IAVE Taiwan is very proud of have had SMHG here in Taiwan. During each of their visits, SMHG delegates have seen different ways Taiwan cares for the elderly and the underprivileged. Similarly, SMHG has brought different perspectives to our local organizations. The exchange program has helped both sides learn and develop through the experience.

# National Consultation Workshop on Volunteerism in Mongolia

By **Undral Gombodorj**, IAVE National Representative, Mongolia

On 15 June 2015, the Network of Mongolia Volunteer Organizations (NMVO) jointly with the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), Mongolian Red Cross Society (MRCS) and Mongolian Youth Federation (MYF) organized a National Consultation Workshop on Volunteerism in the UN House, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. The Workshop brought together over 100 participants from the government, civil society, volunteering organizations and private sector partners.

In recent years Mongolia has witnessed progressive dialogues and cooperative efforts towards the enabling environment creation for volunteerism in the country. There have been many promising discussions going on in relation to promotion of volunteerism, civic engagement and youth roles for peace and development, from the national to the regional and global levels in the run up to adopting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The National Consultation Workshop on Volunteerism aimed at helping all stakeholders to keep abreast of the recent developments, to suggest constructive recommendations to move further and to share common base for collaboration.

After welcome and opening remarks delivered by the representatives of UNDP Mongolia and the Office of the President of Mongolia, the Network of Mongolian Volunteer Organizations, BookBridge Mongolia, MRCS, MYF, National Emergency Management Agency and Zig Zag Autoservice made the presentations and shared current status of various issues related to volunteerism, and proposed recommendations for follow up actions by all stakeholders. The topics presented and discussed include enforcing the legal and regulatory framework on volunteerism; youth participation and empowerment through volunteering; disaster risk management, roles of volunteers and protective measures; and private sector's contribution in promoting volunteerism.

Participants recommended that Mongolia should have a framework law on volunteerism, policy and programs contributing to solving social development issues and promoting participation of different population groups in development of the country. It was strongly suggested that the Office of the President take more progressive leadership to head the progress and harmonize the process together with all stakeholders. The Consultation summary with major points of discussion and recommendations will be shared among the Workshop participants, and made public to facilitate further dialogues and cooperation.

## The Growing Influence of Corporate Volunteering

By **IAVE Taiwan**, IAVE National Representative, Taiwan

On June 2, Jeff Hoffman, president of Jeff Hoffman and Associates and former vice president of Disney Worldwide Outreach, spoke in Taoyuan, Taiwan on corporate volunteering and corporate social responsibility (CSR) at a forum organized by IAVE Taiwan in cooperation with the Garden of Hope Foundation, Rotary International District 3500, Yuan Ze University, St. Michaels Health Group (Canada) and other partner organizations.

Jeff has been an active member of the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) for 20 years and has been to Taiwan several times, twice at the invitation of IAVE Taiwan.

Mr. Hoffman shared some of his observation on corporate volunteering, from 'doing a nice thing for employees' to 'making corporate volunteering a part a business strategy'. The nature of volunteering is diversifying. Aside from simple tasks such as planting trees and tending to the elderly in senior homes, today's corporate volunteers are using their skills to add value to non-profit organizations. For example, accountants at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Taiwan help local charities manage their accounts, improve their bookkeeping, and increase their transparency, which makes these organizations more attractive to



donors.

After talking in detail about corporate volunteering, Jeff touched on two other important issues. First, social enterprise and the growth of hybrid for-profit/not-for-profit organizations like Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles, which takes young people out of LA gangs by giving them gainful employment in profitable businesses, and feeding the profits back into drug rehabilitation programs.

Second, Jeff touched upon social impact investing as major trend in volunteering. For example, the Case Foundation plans its annual budget by focusing on specific issues and allocating funds to relevant programs, which will effectively make an impact on the focus issue.

Jeff's short talk led to a heated discussion among listeners who are all representatives of local organizations and corporations working in or with the volunteering field. It is indeed IAVE Taiwan's honor to bring Jeff to Taiwan, and share his inspiring and insightful ideas with us again.

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Adapted from an article by Anthony Carlisle in the Garden of Hope E-newsletter June 2015.

## Ramadan Volunteer Efforts in the Arab Region

By Dr. Patricia Nabti, IAVE Regional Representative, the Arab Nations

We are now in the midst of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting (this year June 17-July 17), in which Muslims throughout the world abstain from food, drink, smoking and other things from sunrise to sunset. It is a time when they engage in self-reflection and refocus attention on God. It is also a time when there are increased efforts to volunteer – to serve the needy and promote support for a broad range of service programs and institutions. While only 10% of the world's Muslims are in the Arab region, some 90% of people in the region are Muslims. And so, we are dedicating this article to the Ramadan volunteer activities in a number of Arab countries.

**Oman:** Dar Al Atta'a is collaborating with different institutions and organizations to make sure no one goes hungry during this blessed month. Their volunteers are providing Iftar (breaking of the fast) meals in 12 different mosques around the Sultanate. They are distributing Ramadan Iftar Packs containing food and beverages to needy families and clothes to children around the country for the Eid al-Fitr holiday which marks the end of Ramadan. Their volunteers are also operating kiosks where people can donate to the cause that they feel most passionate about (Iftar meals, clothing, student sponsorship, and family sponsorship.) (Reported by May Al Bayat)

**Iraq:** The Youth Development Foundation (YDF), the IAVE National Representative for Iraq, is one of the most important sponsors of the Ahalna (Our People) campaign, serving the needs of thousands of people who have been displaced from their homes because of the Daash/ISIS



extremist group. Ahalna brings together many Iraqi artists and dedicated young people of all religions and sects as volunteers, affirming Iraqi unity. Volunteers of YDF are regularly going out to the camps, providing activities and otherwise seeking to ease the burdens of the displaced refugees, with a special emphasis on this during Ramadan (reported by Essam Asaad).

**Syria:** Dr. Mohamad Eyad Alzaeim, the IAVE National Representative highlights the efforts of the Islamic Society founded by a number of men of Hama (a city in northwest Syria), including the Mufti and the Bishop of Hama, who have combined their efforts to provide shelter, education and skill building for orphans and the needy. Eyad visited and supported a special breakfast for the orphans. This initial step is to be followed by a lecture on voluntary initiatives in collaboration with the Directorate of Culture in Hama – as well as a number of volunteer initiatives.

**Sudan:** The Gana Voluntary Whatsapp group has focused its Ramadan volunteer efforts on the needs of some families whose mother/father or both parents are in prison. The group met with the deputy director



of the local prison and identified those who are in prison because they could not pay their expenses such as house rent or other debts. The group has collected money from community members to help 56 prisoners during Ramadan (reported by Hayam Abdel Wahab). In another initiative, the National Community Health Volunteer Program of the Sudanese Red Crescent in Kassala State organized activities in which volunteers held a cleaning up campaign in the elderly people's house and provided personal hygiene and mosquito net distribution (reported by Khalid Omer).

# An Overview of the 5<sup>TH</sup> IAVE Africa Regional Volunteer Conference in Rwanda: “The Role of Youth Volunteers in Community Development”

By Elizabeth Okezie, IAVE Regional Representative, Africa  
& Agnetta Nyalita Mumo, IAVE Youth Board Member, Nominating Committee Chair

The 5<sup>th</sup> IAVE Africa Regional Volunteer Conference held on June 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>, 2015 was a great success. Participants convened together in Kigali, Rwanda from different parts of Africa, including but not limited to: Uganda, South Africa, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Togo, Mauritius, Slovenia, Israel and of course Rwanda (our host country)! Representatives from different NGOs and companies were also present at the conference.

Furthermore, the conference was graced by dignitaries from the Rwanda National Iterero Commission, Rwanda Foreign Affairs Commission, One UN (UNV), VSO – Rwanda and Kenya, and Rwanda Red Cross and Girl Guides Also present were the Kylee Bates, IAVE World President, Nkiruka Elizabeth Okezie, IAVE Africa Regional Representative, Agnetta Nyalita, IAVE Youth Representative and Nominating Committee Chair, Kathi Dennis, IAVE Executive Director, and Ramona Dragomir, an IAVE consultant. In total the conference welcomed 69 attendees, with 61 active participants.

The conference presentations, which focused on the Role of Youth Volunteers in Community Development, were extensively and diversely discussed. Ideas on how to sustainably develop youth involvement in volunteerism were shared. The challenges of sustainable youth volunteerism were also addressed and different solutions proffered and discussed.

Undoubtedly, the conference was educating and enlightening. It broadened the perception of the participants and equally re-invigorated and propelled everyone towards exploring more volunteer frontiers within and outside their regions, equipping them with strategic information to aid in volunteer promotion within their organizations and communities. The friendly atmosphere and setting encouraged dialogue and cordiality. The interaction between the volunteers from different parts of Africa shed light to some of the challenges and achievements of volunteerism in Africa.

The conference ended on a high note with great expectations for the next regional conference!



# News from the Global Volunteer Community

## Adiós y Hola!

Marian Antonia Juste Picon who has managed the Telefonica Foundation's global volunteer program for the past 3½ years has been named Director of Public Affairs for Latin America for Telefonica. Marian was an important colleague and partner for IAVE and our Global Corporate Volunteer Council. She was our champion in supporting our work on [youth, volunteering and employment](#) and in publishing [The Big Tent: Corporate Volunteering in the Global Age](#). We deeply appreciate her support and know we will miss her a great deal.

At the same time, we are pleased to renew our partnership with her successor, Lucila Ballarino. We first worked with Lula when she was coordinating Telefonica's international volunteer programs. She was an active supporter of and participant in our Global Corporate Volunteering Research Project and inspired The Big Tent as the next step in that work. For the past 2½ years, she has been responsible for Telefonica's Think Big program in Europe. We look forward to working with her again.

## UNV Issues its Annual Report

In June, United Nations Volunteers has released an online interactive annual report for 2014. It presents an excellent overview of their work through infographics and other media. See it at <http://www.unv.org/annual-report-2014/>. Six primary downloadable chapters summarize its volunteers' work in providing access to basic social services, building community resilience for environmental and disaster risk reduction, peace building, youth development, national capacity development and innovation & knowledge.

## Sombath Somphone: Remembering a Colleague

By Kenn Allen, IAVE Senior Consultant

When I was in Seoul, Korea last month for IAVE, I was speaking with Theresa Youngsoo Oh, now Director of Seocho Volunteer Center, a leading local volunteer center in Seoul.

We were remembering past IAVE regional conferences and that led her to the story of Sombath Somphone from Laos who spoke at the 2011 IAVE Asia Pacific Regional Volunteer Conference in Korea.

He founded the Participatory Development Training Center, PADETC, in 1996 to provide training for young people and local government officials in community-based development. In 2005, he was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership.

In the abstract for his presentation on Volunteering and Poverty at the IAVE conference, he wrote, "Today, many young Lao are preparing themselves to be agents of change. They learn and share knowledge with the community. They learn to be compassionate and caring for each other and for the environment. Such an inclusive and holistic approach to education will help young people in Laos to better appreciate the value of balanced development and sustainable living."

Sombath Somphone was abducted in Vientiane on the evening of December 15, 2012 when he was stopped in his vehicle by police and then transferred into another vehicle, as surveillance video from that day showed.

Despite efforts by the United Nations, governments, NGOs, activists and media throughout the world, there has been no news of him since then.

At the time of his disappearance, he had been campaigning to upgrade youth training, improve the rights of the poor rural population and to protect the environment.

Further information is available at <http://sombath.org/>.

Thanks to Theresa for reminding us of this story. Join us in remembering a colleague and his brave work in a hostile environment.