Becoming Global Leaders for Volunteering

At the end of the day, it is not enough for companies to have great volunteer programs or to encourage other companies to get involved. They also must become active advocates for volunteering writ large. Their knowledge, their resources, their skills, their images and their reach can make a critical difference – particularly in communications – in bringing to life and sustaining the needed enabling environment for volunteering.
Major Takeaways

- A framework is emerging for companies to demonstrate an integrated approach to global leadership for volunteering.

- Companies around the world are recognizing and responding positively to opportunities to play public leadership roles in the development of volunteering through their public advocacy on behalf of volunteering, creation of corporate volunteer programs and openness to engaging people beyond active employees in those programs. Increasingly, corporations are providing visible, substantive leadership for and investment in the development of the infrastructure needed to support volunteering.

- Peer-based networks – locally, nationally, and regionally – offer effective ways for those responsible for employee volunteering to learn from and support one another but their reach and impact remains limited.

- In Latin America and Europe, companies are demonstrating how they can work together regionally to strengthen corporate volunteering, both for participating companies and more broadly for their regions. Similar efforts are underway in numerous countries around the world.
Overview

Like many global movements, advancing the cause of volunteering depends on distributed leadership throughout the world, from all sectors of society. To create and sustain a vigorous, enabling environment for volunteering requires leadership at all levels from all sectors, including business.

Marcela Cristo Vaca, former Sustainability Director for Latin America at AB-InBev, recognized that when she said, “As a company, spokespersons and leaders know we have a tremendous ability to bring people together and make a positive impact on communities. So, with this great power, we have a great responsibility. If we know and are aware of what we can add, we have a great responsibility to continue inspiring... because we know that every time a call comes out, there are thousands and thousands of people who want to participate. This is a great responsibility.”

Companies are giving external leadership for volunteering in a variety of ways. Their examples can be replicated by many and, hopefully, are a call for broader leadership by more companies worldwide. This chapter looks first at a proposed framework for what integrated global leadership might look like and examines how two companies, UPS and Telefónica Foundation, have brought that leadership to light. It then looks at how companies are working together through regional, national and local peer networks to strengthen the field of corporate volunteering and, finally, at examples of how companies are working to build a public profile for volunteering.
Building an Enabling Environment for Volunteering

The phrase “enabling environment” first emerged as a developed concept in the 2015 State of the World’s Volunteerism Report produced by United Nations Volunteers (UNV). Many ways have been put forward to describe the “enabling environment” for volunteering. The following six requirements encapsulate the primary elements as IAVE views the concept. It is easy to see how the business community as a whole and individual companies can lead the way in ensuring such an environment is developed and sustained – through advocacy, leadership, engagement and investment.

1. A supportive legal and regulatory framework that gives permission to volunteer and removes barriers to involvement.

2. A viable infrastructure of national and local organizations that have as their primary purpose to promote and support volunteering, ensure the safety of volunteers and provide appropriate training and resources as well as effective program management.

3. High public visibility for volunteering that reinforces its value to society broadly, local communities, the public sector and non-governmental organizations and to the volunteers themselves.

4. Encouragement of and opportunities for everyone to get involved by volunteering their time, talent and energy, with proactive work to remove barriers to participation.

5. Capacity-building for volunteer involving organizations – NGOs, community-based groups and public sector agencies – to ensure they are equipped to plan and prepare for volunteer involvement. They must be able to manage volunteers effectively and ensure the development of the necessary knowledge and skills to make the greatest contribution. And they must document and make visible the work and its impact.

6. Leadership from the private sector through public advocacy on behalf of volunteering, creation of corporate volunteer programs, with openness to engaging people beyond active employees and visible, substantive leadership for and investment in the development of infrastructure to support volunteering.
Integrated Global Leadership for Volunteering: A Framework

Integrated global leadership for volunteering may yet be aspirational for companies. But what might it look like? Here are some essential elements of such leadership.

- A sustained, long-term commitment to volunteering as a priority part of company culture.
- An aspiration to be a leader for the field, including as a thought leader.
- High priority on innovative, impactful volunteering to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Demonstrated support and personal engagement from the C-suite.
- Active public advocacy for volunteering, including partnerships with NGOs, governments and other companies to develop and promote high impact volunteering.
- Financial investment in support of volunteering as a priority through the company’s philanthropy.
- Invitation to others to volunteer, moving beyond active employees to include other companies, retirees, families, customers, vendors and the general public.
- Service on behalf of local, national and international leadership organizations for volunteering.

A company need not be truly global in the scope of its operations, but the nature and quality of its volunteering and its aspiration for leadership must be global bests.

Two companies – UPS and Telefónica Foundation – stand out among global companies as coming closest to meeting this model.
No other company in the world has demonstrated the same level of integrated, sustained global leadership for volunteering as **UPS**.

That commitment began with the founder, Jim Casey, who began the company with close friend Claude Ryan in 1907. Today’s UPS is a direct descendant of the values and practices they built into the company. Casey believed deeply in service to UPS customers, employees and the community. He was an advocate for employees to give back to their communities. As a result, volunteer service is deeply ingrained in the company’s culture and practices.

In 2014, then CEO-elect David Abney announced a company-wide commitment of 20 million hours of volunteering and community service by the end of 2020, a truly unique promise, reflective of the priority UPS top leadership has always put on volunteering. That goal was accomplished in 2019.

Today, employees can use the UPS Neighbor-to-Neighbor global platform to record their own volunteer hours and those of family members, neighbors and friends. Those hours may include time contributed to a company-organized project or to volunteer opportunities employees have sought out in their own communities.

The **UPS Road Code** program leverages the expertise of UPS safety professionals including UPS delivery drivers, serving as volunteers, to teach safe driving to teens, using a company-developed five-hour curriculum. The program began as a partnership with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America and has expanded to China, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, Austria, Canada and Mexico.

Globally, UPS is a founding member of the Logistics Emergency Team, an international group of responders connected to the World Food Programme’s (WFP) Global Logistics Cluster Teams. In each region of the world teams train and prepare to respond when requests come from WFP, typically in situations where more than a half million people are affected by a natural disaster. In the U.S., UPS has partnered with the American Red Cross to create Logistics Action Teams which are UPS volunteers that will respond and assist the American Red Cross in times of crisis.

When leadership for volunteering is called for, UPS is there through the active engagement of its executives, the specialized expertise of its workforce, its thought leadership for the field and commitment of financial support for volunteering leadership organizations. UPS is a founding member of IAVE’s Global Corporate Volunteer Council, a Founding Partner of Impact 2030, and a major supporter of Points of Light in the U.S., serving on the boards of directors for each of these. Recognizing the value of leadership development, learning and capacity building, UPS has been a major sponsor of IAVE’s world and regional conferences, its global research on corporate volunteering, its mutual learning exercise bringing humanitarian organizations and global companies together and its field research on the impact of COVID-19 on volunteering.

The UPS Foundation is one of the few corporate funders that consistently has made financial support for volunteering one of its priorities. Funding has included support for the operations of local, national and international leadership organizations that promote and support volunteering. In 2021, in its most recent strategic planning, the foundation announced that one of its four focus areas going forward will be “Local Community Engagement: To leverage human capital to inspire and mobilize volunteers and organizations to deliver systemic impact to their local communities.” This reflects and expands on its long-time priority funding for volunteering.
Telefónica Foundation is committed to complete transparency about their volunteering, seeking always to share not only what they are doing but what they are learning with other companies to encourage replication and adaptation. For over a decade, they have been a thought leader for corporate volunteering in Europe, Latin America and globally. Telefónica’s global leadership is built around these fundamentals:

- A strong corporate heritage of and commitment to service to their communities and to society.
- A well-established multi-faceted volunteer program.
- A willingness to build on the company’s core competencies to innovate.
- An openness to leading through example and sharing without reservation their experience and learning.
- A strong relationship with partners built on consistency and long-term commitments.

Telefónica employees and corporate leaders are all driven with enthusiasm and energy for the work they are doing and the messages they are bringing. “We think we have something to say.” Headquartered in Madrid, Spain, Telefónica Foundation in 2020 had over 56,000 volunteers in 25 countries where the company has a business presence. Their intent: to mobilize every employee wherever they are and whatever their job responsibilities.

At the core of this commitment is the company’s mission: “We want to make our world more human by connecting people’s lives.” Solidarity and volunteering are critical elements in bringing that mission to life.

One of the key facets of Telefónica Foundation’s leadership is a commitment to transparency. “We have a responsibility to share with other companies both our best and worst practices” so all can learn and grow together. It is about “bearing witness to what we do to encourage others” to make their own commitments.
Telefónica Foundation actively encourages employees to enlist and influence others to become active volunteers. Building on their core competencies, they actively promote what they term “self-volunteering,” using digital tools to sensitize, raise awareness and stimulate individual action. It is built on the belief that everyone, even with a small action, can contribute in a very large way to transforming society. Self-volunteers are considered to be “solidarity influencers” as they use a broad range of digital tools and networks to educate about critical issues, share stories of what works and provide a framework for individual and collective action.

Telefónica Foundation is an active leader in coalitions designed to promote and strengthen corporate volunteering: a member of IAVE’s Global Corporate Volunteer Council (GCVC) almost from its inception; a founding member of the Employee Volunteering European Network (EVEN) of the European Volunteer Centre (CEV); a “managing partner” of Voluntare in Europe; and a founding member of CLAVE: The Latin America Corporate Volunteer Council.

The company has been a thought leader for the field through its sponsorship and active participation in IAVE’s global research on corporate volunteering, both the original and this current study. Telefónica Foundation has sponsored and helped to publish *The Big Tent: Corporate Volunteering in the Global Age*, now available in multiple languages. It has been a key contributor to IAVE’s Research Working Group on Disaster-Related Corporate Volunteering. In addition to its active participation in IAVE’s 2016 *Forum on the Corporate Volunteering Response to the Refugee Challenge* in Berlin, the company served as the host, in Madrid, of IAVE’s 2017 *European Conference on Corporate Volunteering: Partnering for Impact*. 
Learning, Growing and Leading Together

Through Peer Networks

The first peer networks for corporate volunteering were the local “corporate volunteer councils” (CVCs) that emerged in the United States in the early 1980s. By mid-decade, there were 26 active CVCs with another 13 in development. In a national survey published in 1986, some 600 companies reported that they were members of one or more CVCs.

The work of these networks is remarkably like that of many later-generation peer networks today:

- Exchanging information about their activities; that is, learning from each other what works and what doesn’t and serving as a support group for those responsible for managing their company’s programs.
- Expanding the field by helping new companies start programs.
- Learning together about community needs, from their own experiences and from NGOs, government agencies and community groups.
- Creating collaborative projects to address issues too large or complex for one company to handle alone.
- Serving as ambassadors for corporate volunteering, raising its visibility and credibility through community-wide activities and recognition events.

The original CVCs were creations of the member companies themselves, typically motivated by a single company with a deep commitment to volunteering, an energized individual leader and a willingness to invest time, energy and image toward institutional leadership. As CVCs grew and moved beyond simply sharing information with one another, it became more difficult for member companies to provide the staff support required to manage the activities they wished to undertake. Over time, the responsibility for sustaining CVCs fell to community organizations like Volunteer Centers and the United Ways. Today, there are peer networks for corporate volunteering active at the global, regional, national and local levels. They offer needed mutual support and serve as professional associations for those responsible for volunteering in their member companies. These networks are leaders in building the strength, visibility and impact of the field.

But, like their predecessors, many are resource-poor, with limited dedicated funding and heavy reliance on already over-taxed corporate members to provide leadership and to implement collaborative programs in the absence of dedicated staff. Many have small memberships relative to the number of companies with programs that could be members. The strongest have built mutually beneficial partnerships with NGOs or have retained consultants who can leverage what the members bring to the table to increase impact for the members and for the communities they are serving.
Below is a sampling of the local, national, regional and global peer networks identified through this research.

Local Networks

In the mid-1980s, there were perhaps 40 local Corporate Volunteer Councils (CVCs) either operating or in development in the United States. A 2012 survey by Points of Light, the U.S. national organization focused on volunteering, identified some 60 CVC-like structures. Today, the best estimate is about 25-30 in the U.S. A handful in large cities are independent nonprofit organizations – in Atlanta, New York, Boston, Houston and Minneapolis-St. Paul. But the majority are programs within other organizations, primarily local United Way and local affiliates of Points of Light.

The website of the Corporate Volunteerism Council Twin Cities (Minneapolis-St. Paul) lists five organizational goals that have guided the Council’s work since 1983. They are very representative of the work of CVCs today:

- To promote corporate volunteerism.
- To build bridges between corporations and the nonprofit sector.
- To communicate new developments in the field of employee involvement and new opportunities for employee volunteers.
- To develop cooperation and communication between companies.
- To promote professional development of corporate volunteer coordinators.

Virtually all of the work of CVCs today fits into those five areas.

Corporate Volunteers of New York City, founded in 1972, is the longest continuously operating CVC. It has a membership of over 200 professionals from 50+ major corporations. A major focus is on providing professional development opportunities for members.

The primary members of many CVCs are local representatives of global or national corporations. But there are exceptions. In Brown County, Wisconsin, population 270,000, for example, the Workplace Volunteer Council is a program of the Volunteer Center. It has over 180 members, mainly local companies, businesses and other employers. It is “a local resource for encouraging, educating and connecting businesses that support employee volunteer programs as a business strategy.”

While Points of Light no longer prioritizes active leadership and technical support for CVCs, it does present two CVC-related awards at its annual conference – the “CVC of the Year Award” and the “CVC Fast Start Award.” The latter recognizes outstanding performance by CVCs established within the previous three years. Both awards are selected through competitive processes.

The Corporate Volunteer Council of Western Australia is a coalition of businesses that recognize and promote the importance of workplace volunteering and their positive impact on the community and employees involved. The CVC shares good practices in corporate volunteering and encourages more businesses in the region to implement effective volunteering programs. Every year, corporations that are members of the Council bring a senior executive from their business to volunteer as a CVC group during National Volunteer Week, demonstrating their commitment to leadership in volunteering. Corporate Volunteer Council members include: Woodside, Bankwest, Beyond Bank, RAC and Deloitte. Woodside chairs the CVC and also sits in the Minister’s roundtable for volunteering council.
The Greater Philadelphia Corporate Volunteer Council (GPCVC) has partnered with the Philadelphia Foundation since 2019. It describes itself as “a community of practice of members dedicated to increasing the collective impact of employee volunteer engagement by sharing best practices and helping advance employee volunteering programs.” Established in 2010, GPCVC is guided by a steering committee drawn from its 40+ members. In 2021, the GPCVC was named “CVC of the Year” by the national nonprofit Points of Light “for its success in maximizing its operations, effectiveness and accomplishments.”

Its partnership with the Philadelphia Foundation created important synergy with the foundation’s existing Key Skills Hub, a service that matches volunteers with community nonprofits needing assistance with business strategy, marketing, accounting, graphic design, human resources, website development and more.

GPCVC and the foundation are currently developing a new signature program focusing on matching highly skilled retirees with identified “mission-critical” projects of selected regional nonprofit organizations.

Note: The Philadelphia Foundation is one of the 12 sponsors of this research project.
National Networks

Companies interviewed for this research identified a range of volunteering-related national organizations and networks with which they engage. These examples illustrate the diversity of relationships companies are building in support of their own volunteer efforts and of the broader field of corporate volunteering.

**GRACE**, founded in 2000, is the leading association dedicated to corporate social responsibility in Portugal, bringing together more than 180 companies to share good practices, influence public policies, build national and international partnerships and provide technical support to members. Volunteering is a key part of their agenda, including sponsoring skills-based volunteer projects. **EDP** is an active leader/member.

The **Corporate Service Council of Points of Light** in the United States, established in 1990, brings together some 90 companies and consultancies for corporate volunteering to benefit from its online Community for Employee Civic Engagement that provides curated content and experts; peer-to-peer learning opportunities; advisory services; virtual discussions, webinars and courses; and, recognition activities. Ten of the companies participating in this research are members of the council.

The **Corporate Community Engagement Council (CCEC)** is a program of **Volunteer Canada**, the national leadership organization for volunteering. Its 20+ members create a “community of practice” for mutual support and learning, information exchange and professional development. CCEC members have access to consulting services, leadership opportunities in Council activities, toolkits for National Volunteer Week, as well as a mentoring program to assist “employer members” of Volunteer Canada to develop their own volunteer efforts. CCEC members
Accenture, RBC and Randstad, participated in this research.

The National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) in Singapore focuses on both volunteering and philanthropy, aiming to build a “giving culture” through its City of Good initiatives. A key element is the Company of Good program in partnership with the Singapore Business Federation Foundation (SBFF). Three companies participating in this research called out their partnership work with NVPC: Cognizant, Keppel and Nikko.

Grupo Terra participates in the Red Honduras Voluntaria whose members are organizations that work with volunteers.

Bancorp relates to Empresas que Inspiram (Companies that Inspire), a platform in Peru developed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) that promotes corporate volunteering and enables companies to connect with one another and to work together.

Banco General in Panama participates at the national level in CAPADESO (Panamanian Chamber of Social Development), a union of NGOs. “It is very important for us because it is a foundation of foundations. Efforts by NGOs to improve their management are essential, because we depend on them to do our volunteering well.”

Polar in Venezuela is an active member of Dividendo Voluntario para la Comunidad (Voluntary Dividend for the Community), which brings together companies for collaborative projects designed and organized by Dividendo staff. For example, in March 2020, they aligned with SDG 6 Clean Water around a World Day of Water, organizing a campaign with educational and recreational activities. Dividendo also has begun an online conversation focused on issues related to corporate volunteering, “Manzanilla con Iraida” or “Tea with Iraida Manzanilla,” a member of IAVE’s corporate research team.

AIA-Philam engages with the Zero Extreme Poverty consortia, a program of Philippines Business for Social Progress.

Cognizant participates in India in chambers of industry and trade such as the NASSCOM Foundation, the social arm of the technology industry body, and in the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) as well as the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC) in Singapore.
Collaborative Leadership in Brazil

There are four organizations that play significant leadership roles for corporate volunteering in Brazil. They work in parallel, with overlapping memberships and with support from professional consultants specializing in support for corporate community involvement and volunteering.

**GEVE - Grupo de Estudos de Voluntariado Empresarial** (the Corporate Volunteering Study Group) was begun in 2009 at the initiative of specialists/consultants in the field to bring together a broad range of companies, organizations and professionals with relevant experience and expertise. It now has more than 700 participating enterprises. It provides free bimonthly meetings that combine lectures, workshops and face-to-face as well as online discussions, all focused on building collective knowledge about the field. Meeting content is organized and published online along with relevant content from beyond Brazil. The network, which does not charge a participation fee, currently has a membership of over 700 enterprises.

**CBVE - Conselho Brasileiro de Voluntariado Empresarial** (the Brazilian Council of Business Volunteering) is “a network of partners of great reference in volunteering and an innovation space for sharing and creating experiences. Our meetings and exchanges generate relevant content about corporate volunteering that we share with society. We inspire other people and organizations to align efforts on behalf of a shared future that leaves no one behind, considering the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, and ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) criteria. We continue to collaborate so that these programs impact communities, engage employees, promote brands and inspire even more.” In addition to free meetings open to the public, companies and consultancies, it provides training and research for its 19 members who pay an annual fee.
CMVC – Conselho Mineiro de Voluntariado Corporativo (the Minas Gerais Corporate Volunteering Committee) is a program of CDM – Cooperation for Development and Human Morada, a nonprofit organization in Minas Gerais, a major agricultural and industrial state in Southeastern Brazil. The main objective is to bring together companies and organizations that develop or want to develop and structure a volunteer program, making it a space for sharing experiences in the governance of social transformation programs. Together, they hope to create synergy among volunteering experiences developed by members, foster the social responsibility of companies through corporate volunteering and disseminate the Minas Gerais experience of corporate volunteering. There are 30 members of the network.

Atados HUB is the largest volunteering platform in Brazil, with more than 3,000 social organizations recruiting volunteers through it. A primary business focus of Atados, an NGO, is to assist companies in the development and execution of their volunteer programs. The platform’s main objective is to bring together companies and organizations that develop or want to develop and structure volunteer programs. Atados provides a space for sharing experiences, disseminating guidelines and contributing practical solutions for companies in managing their programs.

GEVE, CBVE and Atados reach companies throughout Brazil while CMVC is focused on companies within the state of Minas Gerais. All have as members or participants global companies doing business in Brazil.

These four groups have now begun to work together through JUNTOS, a network of networks, focused on strengthening corporate volunteering. Joining them in this collaborative effort are CLAVE, the Consejo Latinoamericano de Voluntariado (Latin American Council on Corporate Volunteering) and Voluntare, the Spanish and Latin American corporate volunteering network.
Regional Networks

CLAVER, the Consejo Latinoamericano de Voluntariado (Latin American Council on Corporate Volunteering), is a space for innovation and collaboration in corporate volunteering for the sustainable development of Latin America.

The Council is a unique initiative in the region. Its members are CSR and corporate volunteering leaders in Latin America and the world. Together they have become powerful allies, working together toward CLAVE’s ultimate goal: to generate high-impact and long-term changes in the community, in the culture of the companies and in their businesses. Having a regional space for dialogue, reflection and collaborative actions maximizes the impact of the corporate volunteer programs.

CLAVER was born in 2015 with the support of IAVE and its Global Corporate Volunteer Council (GCVC). Representing the business sector, CLAVE has a leadership role in raising the standards of corporate volunteering in Latin America, promoting sustainability through practices with positive impact. Its three lines of action are strategic networking, collaborative projects and knowledge exchange and dissemination.

CLAVER’s eight corporate members are Disney, DIRECTV, Banco General, Dell Technologies, Itaú, AB InBev, Grupo Terra and CEMEX.

In 2019, IAVE and CLAVE partnered to organize a “by invitation” convening of key leaders from throughout the region to focus on critical issues that will shape the future of volunteering, to create together a plan of action and to lay the groundwork for a sustained partnership to achieve that plan.

The 98 participants from 20 countries represented civil society, business, academia and government. They were challenged to collectively envision and design the volunteering scenario of the future through a structured, facilitated and collaborative process.

Voluntare is a Spanish and Latin American corporate volunteering network in which close to 100 companies and NGOs work together to foster the practice of more professional corporate volunteering, with a greater impact and a growing number of volunteers and companies promoting it.

Founded in 2011, Voluntare is a think tank that develops and spreads knowledge, promotes research, convenes thematic working groups, develops and shares tools with its more than 7,000 users worldwide through its social networks, newsletters, webinars, lectures and conferences. Voluntare promotes networking within its membership through dedicated tools and innovative, multi-actors volunteering projects.
Its activities include the publication of a review of academic literature on corporate volunteering, a 2020 study on corporate volunteering in Europe and Latin America and research on employee engagement through corporate volunteering.

In Voluntare’s best networking event, “Volunteering Spot,” its members present their best projects in an elevator pitch format. The event provides tools such as a guide for resuming face-to-face corporate volunteering programs after the pandemic. The network also fosters thematic working groups on pro bono and skill-based volunteering as well as on such topics as the best practices of corporate volunteering in the energy industry.

Other events, such as its international corporate volunteering conference and its formal training on corporate volunteering, have earned Voluntare recognition and reflect its deep commitment to fostering knowledge and awareness about corporate volunteering through the active participation of its members and international alliances.

In 2021, CLAVE and Voluntare began a collaborative project involving two companies and two NGOs in Latin America and three companies and two NGOs in Spain. Multidisciplinary teams of volunteers from the companies will contribute to the search for solutions to challenges NGOs are facing because of COVID-19. The challenges are framed around SDG 4 – Quality Education and SDG 9 – Decent Work and Economic Growth.

The two teams will seek to create four project designs for the four different NGOs in Spain and Latin America. Their efforts will be monitored to measure project impact, with a special focus on the commitment of employees to this type of volunteer program. Done entirely in virtual format, the project will include direct intervention of an expanded number of volunteers. The teams will identify the type of volunteer profiles and dedication necessary for these projects to be implemented.

Another regional network, the Employee Volunteering European Network (EVEN) was created by the Centre for European Volunteering (CEV) in 2013. Founding members were Telefónica Foundation, Intel and Voluntarios de la Caixa, (now Voluntariado CaixaBank). CEV describes the work of the network this way: “Capacity building events, both online and face-to-face, and dedicated publications aiming to increase competencies and knowledge about Employee Volunteering. EVEN and CEV events also give members the opportunity to share experiences and have access to reliable and competent partners for employee volunteering projects.”
Building a Public Profile for Volunteering

Because of their own public profiles, their messaging capacity and their extensive networks, companies have a unique ability to contribute to building a strong positive public image for volunteering.

PIEDRA, PAPEL Y TJERA (PPT; “rock, paper and scissors” in English) is a game played throughout the world by people of all ages and often used as a way to resolve disputes. But for DIRECTV Latin America, a brand of VRIO Corporation, it is their signature high-impact corporate volunteer program and also its popular television show.

The strategy behind DIRECTV’s volunteering reflects the company’s way of doing business as well as its culture. Since its creation, the volunteer program has been conceived as a “product” that applies the same 360º methodology DIRECTV has for other business products. This means that it is developed from all areas of the business and with the expectation that it will last and not be replaced by another. It is a “product” that is designed, developed and expected to grow and improve over time.

The volunteer program aligns perfectly with DIRECTV Generation, the company’s social responsibility strategy in all of the nine countries in which it operates and with the SDGs the company has identified and contributes to.

PPT is known and supported throughout the company by senior and middle management and by employees. Consistent with DIRECTV’s culture of inclusion, it also brings together other stakeholders who actively participate in the volunteer activities led by the company – suppliers, local and national governments, NGOs, foundations, other companies and communities.

Every year, in each of the nine Latin American countries where the company is present, Direct TV employees, joined by those other stakeholders, undertake a physical project in a community physically remote from cities and public services. It could be repairing and renovating schools, houses and community places. Or it might involve building shelters for elderly people and children, constructing houses and multi-sport courts and gymnasiums in vulnerable communities. With careful advance planning and resource organization, these projects may take a day, a weekend or more.

For each project, DIRECTV prepares and shows a documentary video in the country
in which the project takes place. These programs represent real life demonstrations of how organizations and individuals can come together to affect the lives of communities. It is DIRECTV’s longest-running original content series on the air: 11 seasons, equivalent to over 5,000 minutes broadcast.

Once a year, a regional project is organized in response to a natural disaster that has occurred. Volunteers are enabled to come on site from throughout the region thanks to free air transportation provided by LATAM Airlines.

FirstRand Ltd. has taken the lead in stimulating the development of corporate volunteering in South Africa through its series of “Beyond Painting Classrooms” conferences for companies, NGOs and public agencies. It has tapped expertise from throughout the world as well as the experience and insights of local practitioners to challenge other companies to grow the nature and scope of their volunteer activities. The fourth biennial conference was held in 2019 in partnership with Charities Aid Foundation Southern Africa. The company feels it is now positioned to leverage the convening power and legitimacy it has built. FirstRand Ltd. hopes this will enable them to give greater visibility to and institutionalize volunteering among other companies.

FNC Entertainment in Korea leverages the power of its stars to raise public awareness of volunteering and encourage public participation. The social networking service (SNS) of the company’s public interest foundation has more followers than large domestic NGOs. Through social media, FNC celebrities constantly try to make people aware of places that need attention and people who need help. Thanks to these efforts, fans in the Philippines volunteered to help children in need in locations the artists visited. Many fans joined the artists’ support for social enterprises, creating what they called “a virtuous cycle” in society.

As described in the “Extending the Universe of Volunteers” chapter, companies such as AB InBev, Tata and Ping An also are inviting and enabling people outside the company to volunteer through public platforms. Such efforts build the profile and legitimacy of volunteering and offer direct connections to opportunities to get involved.