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Leaders will highlight volunteering as key to sustainable development at global conference

- As the world grapples with major, interconnected crises, “People Power: Creating a Sustainable Future through Volunteering” will call attention to the powerful ways volunteers are meeting global needs, including the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Since 1970, the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) has brought together global leaders in volunteering—from nonprofit, corporate, government, and academic settings—to strengthen relationships, share best practices, and inspire positive change.
- The conference anticipates the United Nations’ International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development in 2026.

BUSAN, REPUBLIC OF KOREA—This October, leaders in volunteering from nonprofit, corporate, government and academic sectors around the world will gather in Busan, South Korea, to call attention to the global impact that volunteer efforts are making for sustainable development.

The gathering will be the 27th World Volunteer Conference organized by the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE), sponsored by BNK Busan Bank and UPS, and hosted by Busan Metropolitan City Volunteer Centre from 22-25 October 2024 at the BPEX Busan Port International Exhibition and Convention Centre in Busan, Republic of Korea.

The conference theme is “People Power: Creating a Sustainable Future through Volunteering.” Conference sessions will feature presenters from more than 50 countries. Seminars and forums will focus on research and practical applications around the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Good Health & Well Being (SDG 3), Quality Education (SDG 4), Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10), Sustainable Cities & Communities (SDG 11), and Climate Action (SDG 13).

Since 1970, IAVE has organized biennial, in-person conferences that bring together a diverse cross-section of volunteers and volunteering organizations from around the world. Participants strengthen



relationships, share best practices, are challenged by thought leaders, and come away energized by the ways volunteer efforts are improving communities across the globe.

“In the three decades since we started organizing these World Volunteer Conferences, IAVE has seen the needs of the world become more and more complex and interconnected,” said **Wendy Osborne**, a senior consultant for IAVE. “Volunteers are indispensable for meeting these needs, but they are also fundamental for building the kind of cohesive, values-focused, resilient communities that drive sustainable development.”

The 27th IAVE World Volunteer Conference will acknowledge how difficult progress has been toward Agenda 2030—the set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by every United Nations member in 2015—but will make the case that volunteer action has untapped potential to help the world meet those goals. In December, the United Nations recognized this potential when it announced 2026 would be the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development.

“People Power: Creating a Sustainable Future through Volunteering is a vision of hope for a better world,” said **Nichole Cirillo**, executive director of IAVE. “It is also a jump start into action and awareness about volunteer contributions to sustainable development, in anticipation of the International Year of Volunteers in 2026.”

“Now, more than ever, we need to pay attention to the value of volunteering, and make sure volunteers are resourced and protected everywhere they work,” Cirillo said.

“The UN has declared 2026 as the Year of Volunteering for Sustainable Development, urging us all to take action to ensure the sustainability of our planet and its people,” said **Park Kyoung-ok**, Chief of Busan Metropolitan City Volunteer Center.

“In October 2024, as volunteers and global citizens, let's come together to devise solutions for the crises the world is facing and discuss our commitment to volunteering practices. We encourage global volunteering leaders to actively participate in the 27th IAVE World Volunteer Conference in Busan and unite in our dedication to the common good,” Park Kyoung-ok said.

“Busan is a beautiful coastal city with rich cultural and historical resources,” said **Park Heong-joon**, Mayor of Busan. “Through participation in the World Volunteer Conference this year, we hope you will experience the charm of Busan firsthand and share in the values and vision of volunteering at the same time.”

Learn more about the 27th IAVE World Volunteer Conference at wvc2024busan.kr.



About the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE)

Since 1970, IAVE has created a more just and sustainable world by enabling the leaders, organizations, and environments that empower volunteers. IAVE invests in advocacy, leadership development, and knowledge creation and sharing. Its diverse member network includes volunteers, government agencies, multi-national agencies and institutions, academics, NGOs, businesses, and volunteer leadership organizations in over 125 countries. In October 2024, IAVE will convene its 27th World Volunteer Conference in Busan, South Korea. Learn more at iave.org.

About Busan Metropolitan City Volunteer Centre (Busan VC)

Busan Volunteer Center, an agency of Busan city government, oversees 16 regional volunteer centers, more than 2,100 volunteer groups, and nearly a million volunteers. The first center of its kind to be established nationwide in 1996, Busan VC is committed to growing a vision for implementing sustainable volunteer policies with the citizens of Busan. Key missions include strengthening volunteering capacity through enhanced cooperation between the center and private entities, and expanding the field of volunteering by encouraging voluntary participation. Learn more at busan1365.kr.

About IAVE World Volunteer Conferences

Since 1970, IAVE has worked with local partners to organize more than two dozen international volunteer conferences across the globe. Volunteers, nonprofits, corporations, government agencies and academics come together to strengthen relationships, learn from thought leaders, share best practices, and be energized by how volunteer efforts are improving communities around the world. The first conference was held in Los Angeles in 1970. The Emirates Foundation hosted the last conference in Abu Dhabi in 2022. Learn more about the 27th IAVE World Volunteer Conference at wvc2024busan.kr.