

INPUT FOR THE 2022 STATE OF THE
WORLD'S VOLUNTEERISM REPORT

From care to where?

Understanding volunteerism in the Global South:

a multi-country study on
volunteering before, during and
beyond COVID-19

This study was commissioned by the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme as an input to the fourth edition of UNV's global flagship publication, the State of the World's Volunteerism Report (SWVR), which will be released in December 2021.

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Key findings:

- Survey data from eight Global South countries show that **at least three quarters of all adults volunteered in the past year** as countries and communities grappled with COVID-19. The majority of each demographic group—by gender, age and employment status—reported having volunteered during a time of great need due to the pandemic, and as having even greater solidarity.
- **Changes in people’s voluntary participation were complex and often without a clear overall pattern when looking at individuals and groups.** Volunteering is evidently affected by the interplay of macro factors, such as the scale of the pandemic and national responses (e.g. lockdowns), with micro factors, including illness. When net participation was taken into account, some countries saw overall declines in voluntary action, while others saw moderate increases. Most worryingly, civic participation declined across seven of the eight survey countries.
- In terms of future volunteering, as people struggle with health, livelihoods and well-being, **many people had plans to volunteer** over the next 12 months, with the survey countries exhibiting varied participation levels. People’s plans also revealed greater appetite to diversify their volunteering roles beyond mutual aid and service delivery. There was high demand to participate in civic affairs and to work with others on innovative solutions to local problems, two or three times more than seen previously, even when taking the pandemic into account.

Implications for policymakers:

- Member States and their partners should build on the strong interest in diverse forms of volunteering beyond service delivery, including social innovation and civic engagement, by **creating opportunities for people to shape countries’ pathways out of the pandemic and beyond through volunteering.**
- As seen in the Global North, **only a minority of volunteers in the survey countries were attached to one arrangement or cause**, which should be taken into account when developing new volunteer-led programmes and initiatives that can fit in with people’s work, leisure, needs and interests.
- **Men’s surge in volunteering during the pandemic should be sustained**, with more research needed on time spent volunteering by gender, along with a greater understanding of how women’s availability has been affected by wider care-giving and domestic responsibilities during the pandemic.

- Given the declines in civic participation during the pandemic, **channels for providing feedback, participating in decision-making and engaging with authorities must be re-established or replaced with pandemic-proof options.** These mechanisms must also address the predicted gender gaps in who plans to participate in volunteer action in the future.

Introduction

Volunteerism is an essential fabric of all societies and a critical resource for peace and development.ⁱ While much is known about volunteerism in the Global North, there has been far less research on the shape of volunteering in the Global South.ⁱⁱ

Meanwhile, as efforts are taken to better understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals and institutions, there is a risk of evidence gaps growing ever wider, even as the world's 1 billion volunteers constitute or contribute to the safety nets and social protection systems available to some of the most vulnerable populations.

To start bridging these evidence gaps, this study presents patterns of volunteer action and experiences in eight Global South countries during the COVID-19 pandemic, along with voluntary participation plans in the year to come. Specifically, the study draws on interviews with over 8,000 people¹ in Bolivia, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Senegal, Thailand, Turkey and Uzbekistan to address three questions:

- What did volunteering look like in 2020 and early 2021?
- Did volunteering participation change compared with previous years?
- What is understood about people's plans to volunteer in the future?

Nationally representative telephone surveys² were conducted in all eight countries between March and April 2021. The methodology for the study can be found in appendix 1. The full questionnaire can be found in appendix 2.

Part I. Volunteer action in the Global South in 2020–2021

This section provides baseline information on who volunteers, how they volunteer and with whom they volunteer. These data are not presented as a replacement for the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme's global estimates that were produced for the State of the World's Volunteerism Report using national official

¹ Persons aged 15 years and older.

² Due to the coronavirus pandemic, Gallup collected all data for the study using telephone interviews only, rather than face-to-face interviews. As telephone penetration is relatively limited in some of the survey countries, Gallup expects there to be a larger coverage error (i.e. percentage of target population not accessible for interviewing due to lack of phone ownership) than in its normal survey operations. Gallup has estimated the approximate coverage error rates for each country included in this study, which are as follows: Bolivia (approximately 11 percent); India (less than 8 percent); Kenya (less than 10 percent); Lebanon (approximately 8 percent); Senegal (less than 4 percent); Thailand (approximately 10 percent); Turkey (less than 9 percent); and Uzbekistan (less than 20 percent).

statistics.ⁱⁱⁱ However, a dedicated multi-country survey can add value to national systems in terms of understanding short-term changes or providing more detail on types of volunteering activities and arrangements.

Although a universal phenomenon, volunteering can differ greatly depending on the context. For this reason, the study measured volunteering participation using a 'volunteer action' rate. In the past 12 months respondents had participated in at least one of the forms of volunteerism presented in Figure 1, which builds on experiences of measuring volunteering across diverse contexts under the joint UNV-International Labour Organization (ILO) measurement project^{iv} and the Gallup World Poll.^v A full list of the survey questions can be found in appendix 2.

Figure 1. How the volunteer action rate was defined and measured – activities included in the volunteer measurement rate for this study



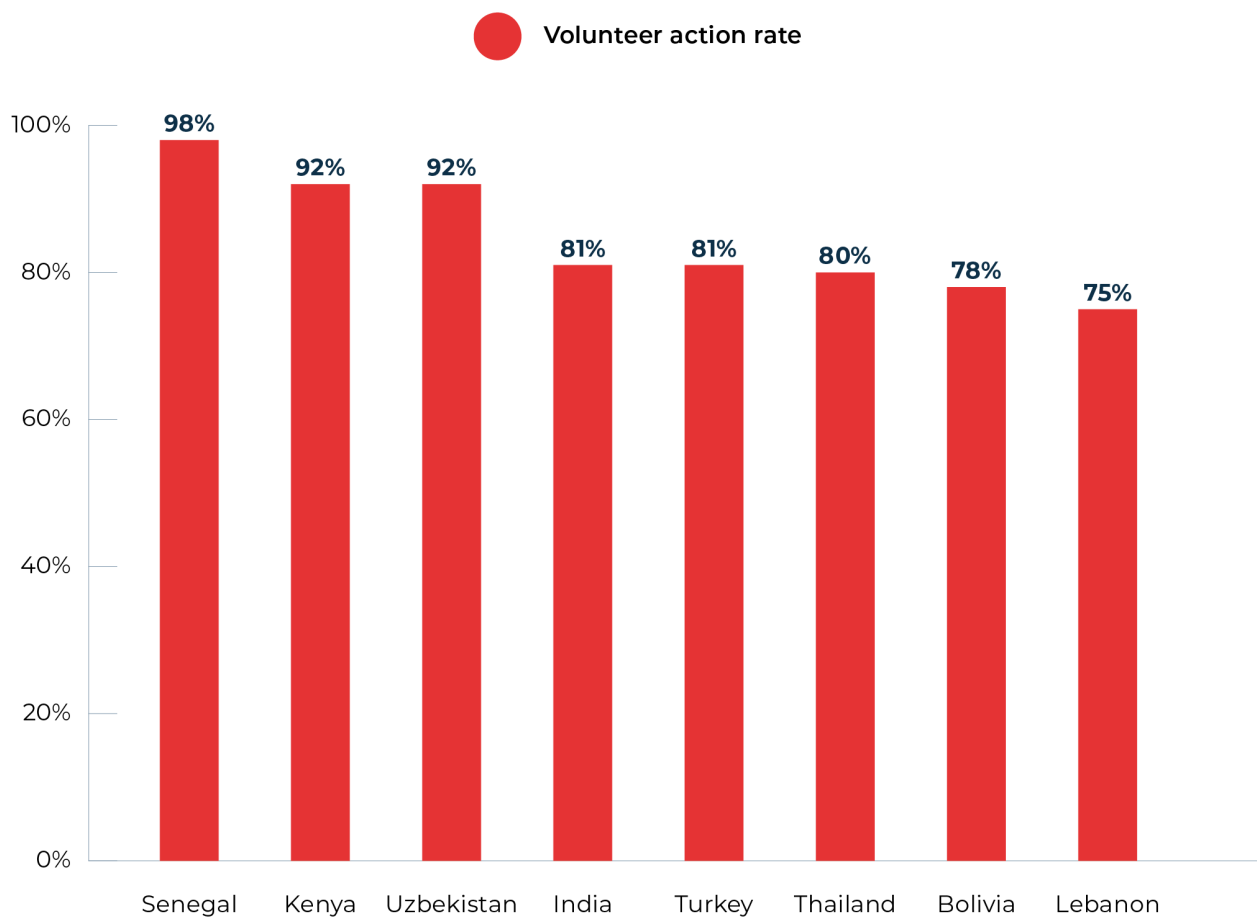
WHO VOLUNTEERS?

The vast majority of people in the eight survey countries reported having volunteered in some form during the pandemic, including activities that were challenged to some degree by pandemic-related restrictions. In surveys conducted in March and April 2021, three in four or more residents in all eight countries reported having volunteered in some form in the previous 12 months.

Volunteer action was almost universal among adults in Senegal (98 percent) and was very high in Kenya (92 percent) and Uzbekistan (92 percent). Roughly three in four or more people in India (81 percent), Turkey (81 percent), Thailand (80 percent), Bolivia (78 percent) and Lebanon (75 percent) volunteered in 2020.

Chart 1. Three in four or more adults engage in volunteer action in the eight Global South countries

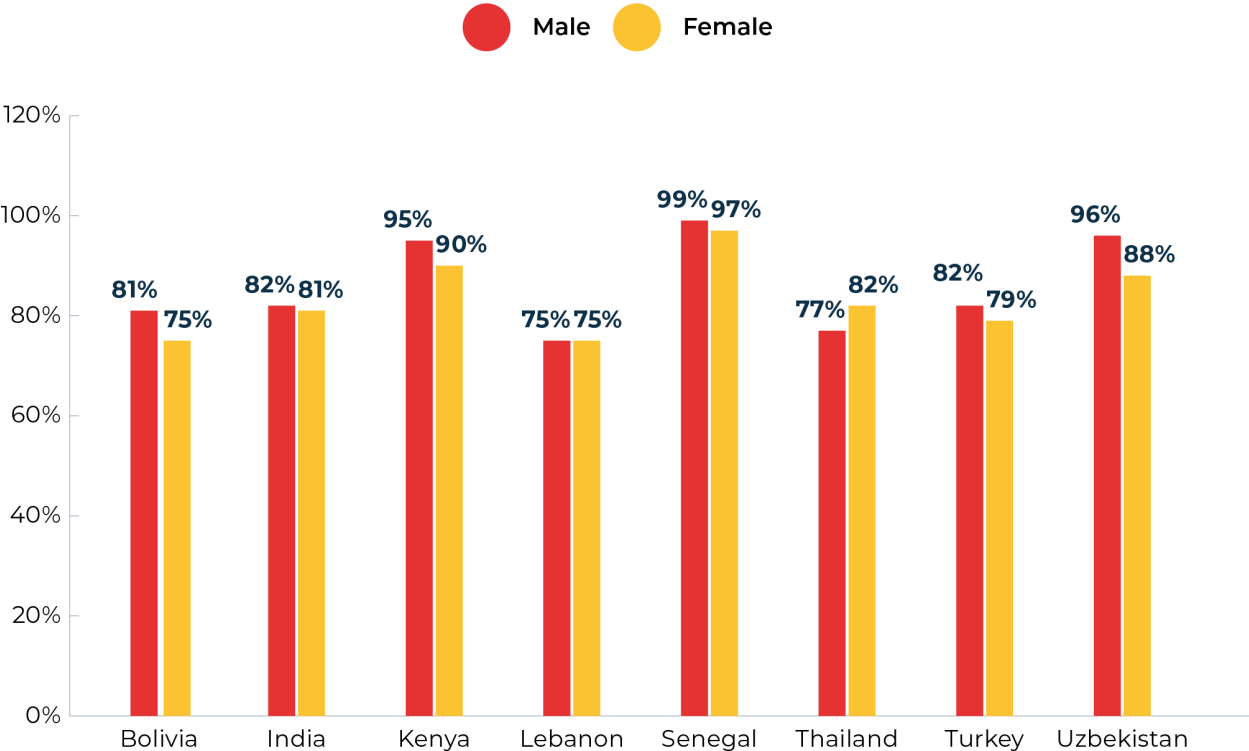
Current volunteer action rate in 2020–2021, by country



In general, men were slightly more likely to have volunteered in 2020, with the exception of Thailand, where women were more likely to have volunteered. It should be noted that the figures for each country represent volunteer participation rates among the population and not the time commitments to volunteering.

Chart 2. In general, with the exception of Thailand, men are equally likely or slightly more likely than women to have volunteered in the past 12 months

Current volunteer action rate, by country and gender



There were no significant disparities in terms of volunteer action rates across rural and urban populations. Significant differences between the two groups were only found in Bolivia, where 85 percent of those living in rural areas volunteered compared with 75 percent of those living in urban areas.

The eight countries each had unique volunteer patterns across age groups, though there were strong levels of reported volunteer action rates (at least 70 percent) for all age groups in all countries.

In most countries, employed adults³ were slightly more likely than unemployed adults to have volunteered in the past 12 months. In India, Senegal and Thailand, however, the differences in volunteer action rates between the two employment groups were small or non-existent.

Regardless of these differences, most adults across all countries reported having volunteered in the past 12 months, indicating that employment status is not a major factor in an individual's volunteerism.

TYPES OF VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITY

Volunteering is a complex social practice, with people understanding and perceiving volunteerism and taking volunteer action in many different ways. In 2020, a paper published under the Plan of Action to Integrate Volunteering Under the 2030 Agenda identified five main categories of volunteering for peace and development:



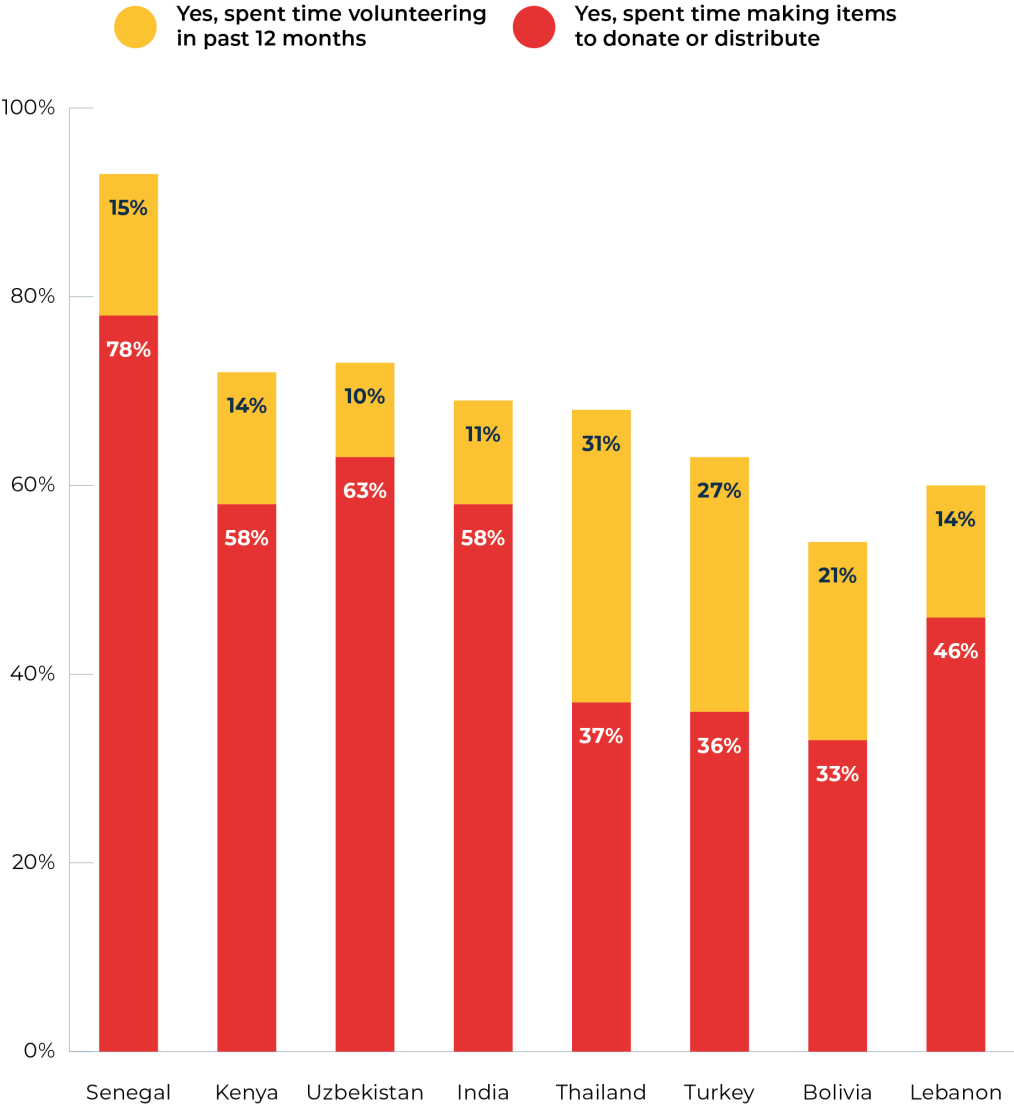
Although this survey was not able to explore these categories individually, the most common forms of participation were aligned with more traditional perceptions of 'volunteering as a service'. As well as spending time helping others outside the family or through organizations, based on ILO experiences of measuring volunteer work in the Global South this also includes the time involved in preparing in-kind donations to others, which was significant across all countries.

³ The employment measures used in this chapter may not reflect data from the survey countries' national statistics. Gallup questions include: "Are you currently employed by an employer?" and "Are you currently self-employed or helping in the family business?"

Chart 3. How people volunteered in the past 12 months – self-reported volunteer action or time spent making items or distributing donations

Survey question: Now, I will ask you some questions about volunteering. Volunteering refers to SPENDING TIME helping people outside your family or with organizations, such as those that help people, animals, or the environment. Did you spend ANY time volunteering or giving UNPAID help in the past 12 months, or not? (Percentage yes)

Have you spent any time making items to donate or distributing donations, such as food, clothing, equipment, or other goods in the past 12 months? (Percentage yes of all respondents)⁴



⁴ This question was only asked to those who did not respond “yes” to the previous question. However, it is recalculated here to be shown as a percentage of all respondents.

The volunteer action rate provides information on the category of civic participation, which includes attending a neighbourhood meeting or contacting a public official to provide an opinion. In most countries, the civic participation rate was lower than other forms of volunteering. At the highest end, roughly half of adults in Kenya, Senegal and Uzbekistan reported having taken up some form of civic participation in the past 12 months. Fewer than one in eight adults in Lebanon and Turkey had participated in these activities.

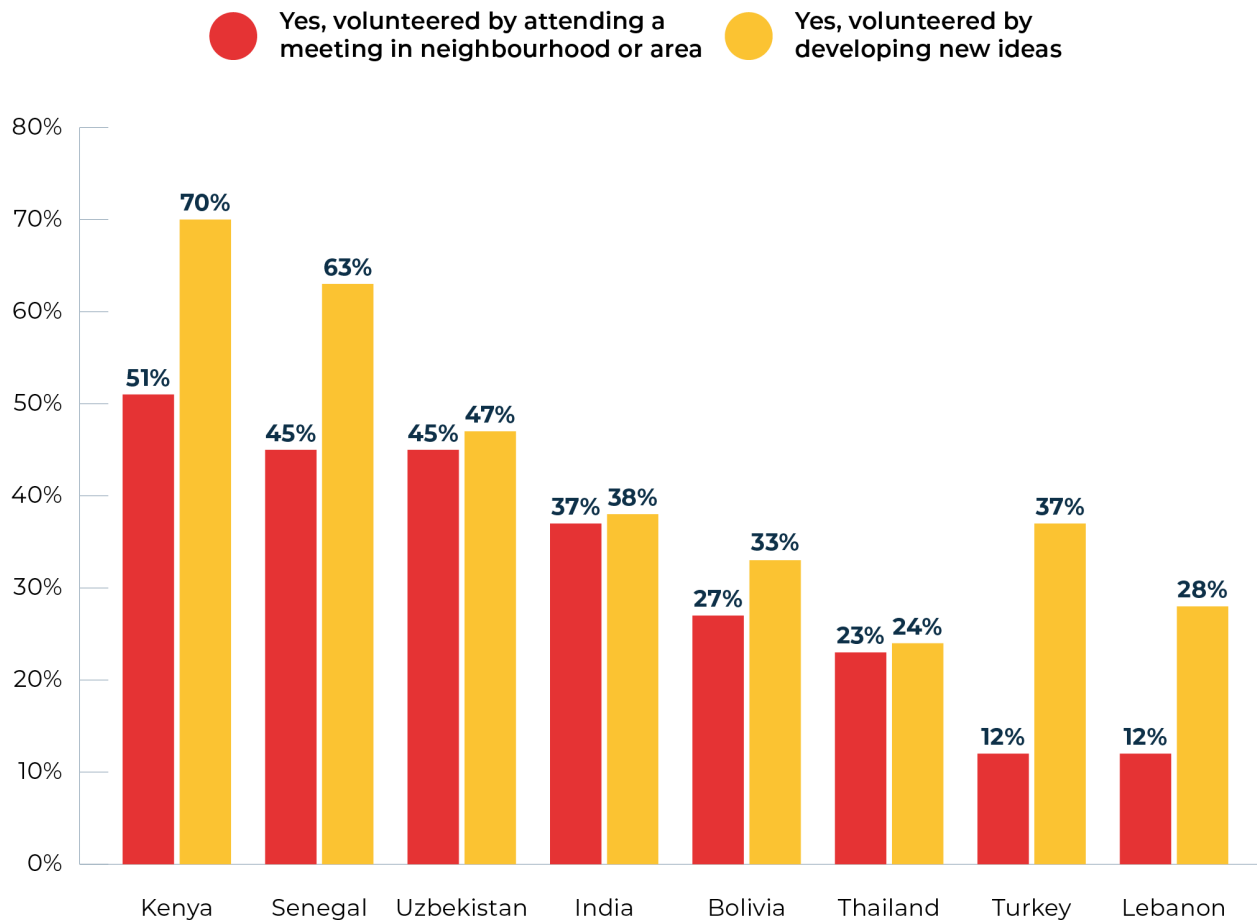
The final component of volunteer action recorded in this study was on social innovation, which measured the percentage of adults who reported volunteering their time to develop new ideas or solutions to an issue or problem. Social innovation is not a distinct type of activity, but helps shed some light on the extent to which volunteers feel that their work enables them to contribute new ideas and solutions, thereby increasing their ownership and autonomy in development processes.

Participation in voluntary activities that involve social innovation varied greatly across the eight countries. Seven in ten Kenyans reported having spent time on social innovation (the most popular form of volunteer action in Kenya), which is the highest social innovation rate out of the eight countries. Social innovation was least common in Thailand, where roughly one in four said they had volunteered time to develop new ideas to solve problems.

Chart 4. Volunteer civic participation and social innovation in 2020–2021

Survey question: Did you volunteer by attending any meeting in the neighbourhood or area where you live or by contacting a public official to give your opinion in the past 12 months? (Percentage yes)

In the past 12 months, did you volunteer your time to develop new ideas or solutions to an issue or problem? This could be by yourself or with other people. (Percentage yes)



Patterns of civic participation and social innovation volunteerism differed to some degree between rural and urban residents. In Bolivia, Thailand and Uzbekistan, volunteerism was more common among those living in a rural area or small town than those living in a large city or suburb. In other countries, there were no noticeable differences between civic participation and urbanicity. With respect to social innovation, however, urban residents more often responded that they were involved in creating solutions than rural residents, except for in Bolivia.

HOW PEOPLE VOLUNTEERED

Another key objective of the survey was to understand the ways in which people organized themselves to volunteer. Respondents were asked if they volunteered as part of a government programme, campaign, initiative or project, if they volunteered with an organization or group, or if their efforts were organized to help friends or neighbours. Participation in multiple categories was possible.

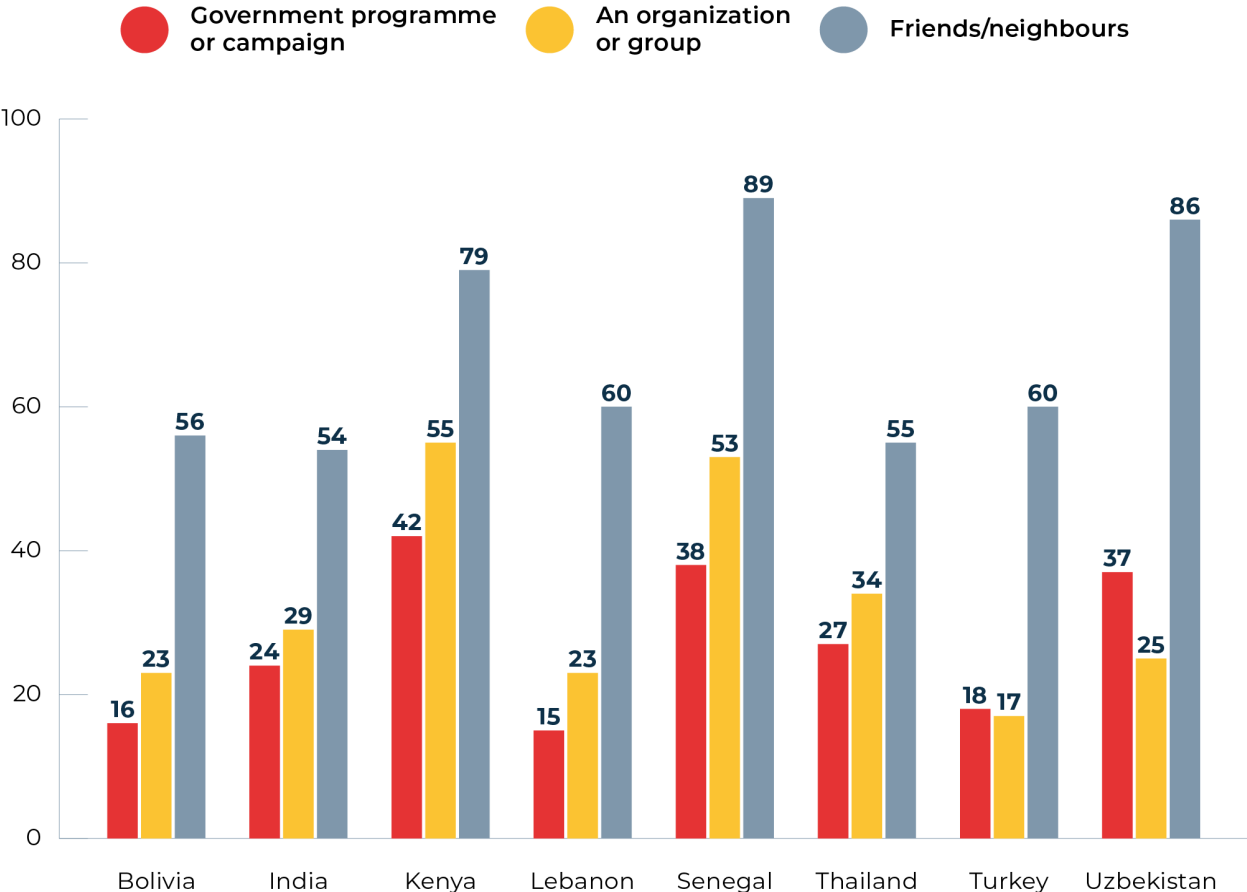
In line with previous UNV estimates, people from all eight countries were most likely to report having volunteered informally by giving help to friends or neighbours.^{vi} Informal volunteering refers to direct actions arranged between individuals, without the involvement of any organization or institution.

While small majorities of residents in Kenya and Senegal reported having volunteered for an organization or a group, less than half of adults in the remaining six countries volunteered this way, which depends more on available opportunities and infrastructure for volunteering.

In general, residents across the eight Global South countries were less likely to report having volunteered with a government programme or campaign. However, this form of volunteering comprised a significant proportion during the COVID-19 pandemic, as governments recognized the advantages of working with volunteers on issues from community health messaging and awareness to supporting the delivery of health and social services.

Chart 5. People are more likely to report providing unpaid help to friends or neighbours compared with organizations

Survey question: Did you volunteer or provide unpaid help to any of the following in the past 12 months, or not?



Analysing the results by gender reveals that men and women equally carried out these forms of volunteering in Bolivia, Lebanon and Thailand, with men tending to carry out such volunteering more than women in India, Kenya, Senegal, Turkey and Uzbekistan, with the exception of government programme volunteerism in India and Senegal, which had gender parity. In addition, women were as likely as men to have helped a friend or neighbour in Senegal and Turkey.

Each country had unique age patterns across the three forms of organization, with young adults more likely to report volunteering through each form in Lebanon and Uzbekistan. Meanwhile, employed adults⁵ were generally more likely than unemployed adults to volunteer through each arrangement, with the exceptions of Senegal and Thailand, where the two employment groups measured somewhat equally.

There were no consistent differences across the countries in terms of the types of organizations with which urban residents volunteered compared with those living in rural areas.

Part II. Changes in volunteering between 2019 and 2020–2021

The survey also looked at how respondents' volunteering behaviours in 2020 compared with their volunteerism in 2019, shedding light on trends and any impacts of the pandemic on volunteerism in the Global South.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the data reveal significant changes in volunteering in most countries between 2019 and 2020, with less than half of adults in each country reporting that their volunteering was “about the same” in both years.

Beyond this, there was no clear pattern in how volunteering changed across the countries. This may have been due to degrees of infection, the scale of lockdowns and the severity of public health restrictions varying widely across countries leading up to and during the survey's implementation. These are likely to have had complex effects on volunteering participation across ages, genders, wealth categories and employment statuses. A recent study from the United Kingdom found similar effects on volunteering participation, with relatively stable ‘net’ participation during the COVID-19 pandemic, though it also identified many shifts in individual-level or gross participation behaviour.^{vii}

⁵ The employment measures used in this section may not reflect data from the survey countries' national statistics offices. Gallup questions include: “Are you currently employed by an employer?” and “Are you currently self-employed or helping in the family business?”

The following table is not intended to be an exhaustive list, but instead provides some background to understand possible changes in volunteer activity during the previous 12 months from secondary sources.

Chart 6. Measures of COVID-19 preparedness and impact by country

Country	COVID-19 cumulative cases per 100,000 population ^{viii}	COVID-19 reported deaths per 100,000 population ^{ix}	Health system preparedness to respond to COVID-19 ^x	Social protection measures during COVID-19 ^{xi}	Estimated GDP as a percentage change, 2020 ^{xii}	Gender-sensitive policies on unpaid care during COVID-19 ^{xiii}
Bolivia	2,534.8	109.5	Moderate	18	-8.8	1
India	1,229.0	13.9	Low	24	-7.3	1
Kenya	290.7	4.8	Low	7	-0.3	No
Lebanon	7,612.9	104.3	High–moderate	5	-20.3	No
Senegal	239.4	6.6	Very low	4	-0.7	No
Thailand	79.5	0.2	Moderate	9	-6.1	No
Turkey	5,444.0	45.1	High–moderate	12	1.8	1
Uzbekistan	266.0	1.9	High–moderate	13	1.6	3

Subtracting the percentage of those who reported having volunteered “less” than in the previous year from the percentage who volunteered “more” revealed that net participation levels were roughly stable in Kenya, Lebanon and Thailand. Reports of volunteer action in 2020 were higher in Senegal and Uzbekistan and lower in Bolivia, India and Turkey.

Overall, volunteering was fairly resistant in many countries. Gallup World Poll data (separate from this study) show a similar trend for Global South countries. From 2019 to 2020, the percentages of people who reported having volunteered their time to an organization “in the past month” in each of the survey countries were fairly stable, particularly compared with emerging estimates from Global North countries,^{xiv} where public health restrictions affected higher levels of organization-based volunteering (though in some cases this was offset by a rise in informal volunteering and gross-roots action).^{xv}

Chart 7. Gallup World Poll data showed consistent volunteer rates from 2019 to 2020

Gallup World Poll question: Have you done any of the following in the past month? How about volunteered your time to an organization?

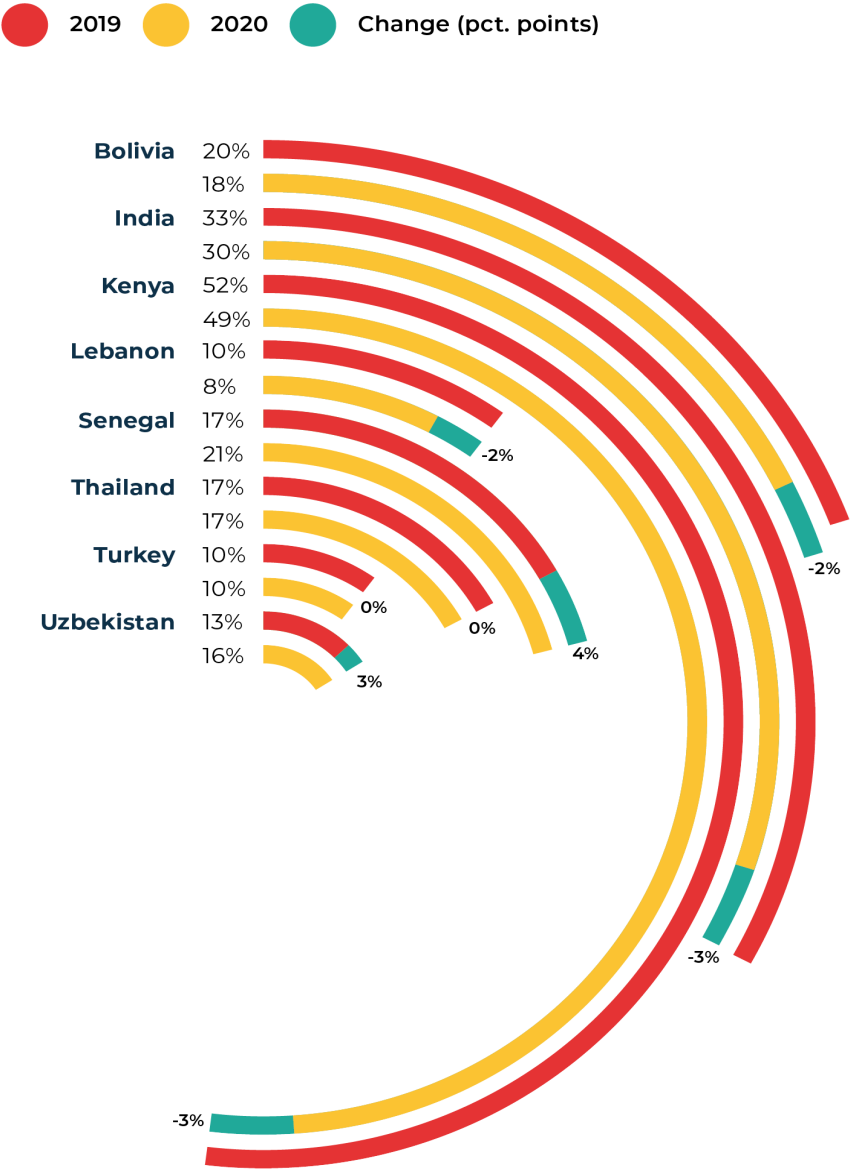
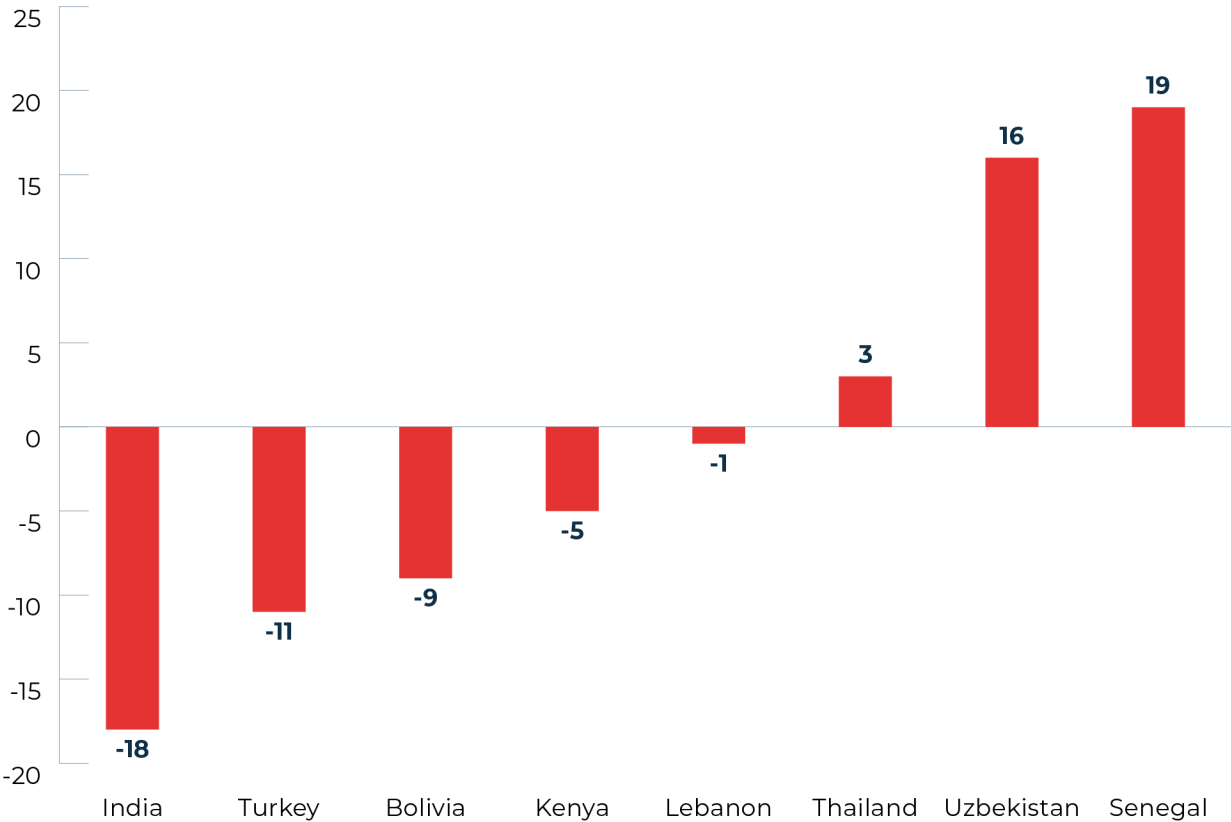


Chart 8. Senegal and Uzbekistan are the only countries where a high percentage of people reported volunteering more than the previous year

Survey question: In the past 12 months, would you say you volunteered or helped others outside your family MORE, LESS, or about the same compared to the year before that?

Net change = percentage more minus percentage less



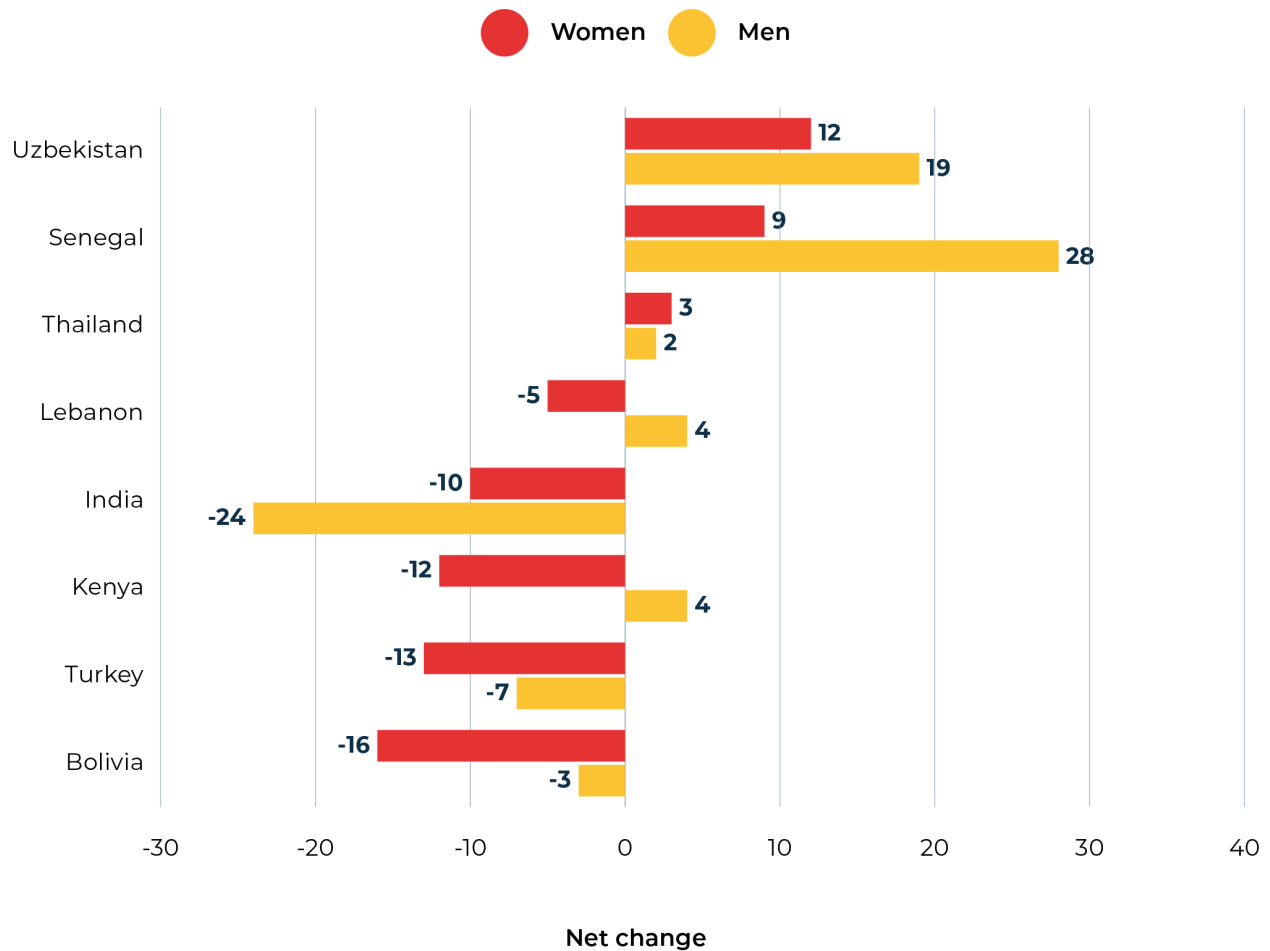
Country	More	Less	About the same	Did not volunteer/help others in the past 12 months	DK/Refused
Bolivia	17%	26%	32%	21%	4%
India	17%	35%	14%	18%	15%
Kenya	32%	37%	29%	2%	0%
Lebanon	20%	21%	31%	27%	1%
Senegal	49%	30%	14%	2%	5%
Thailand	20%	17%	41%	20%	2%
Turkey	20%	31%	42%	4%	2%
Uzbekistan	38%	22%	23%	14%	3%

Changes in volunteer action trends varied across gender and employment status subgroups in the region. In terms of gender, men’s volunteer action surged from 2019 to 2020 in Senegal and Uzbekistan; women in these countries also increased their volunteer action, but to a lesser extent. In most other counties, volunteer action declined among women. India was the only country surveyed that experienced a greater decline in volunteer action among men.

Chart 9. Largest ‘net change’ in volunteer rate is likely to be seen among men in Senegal and Uzbekistan

Survey question: In the past 12 months, would you say you volunteered or helped others outside your family MORE, LESS, or about the same compared to the year before that?

Net change = percentage more minus percentage less (by country and gender)



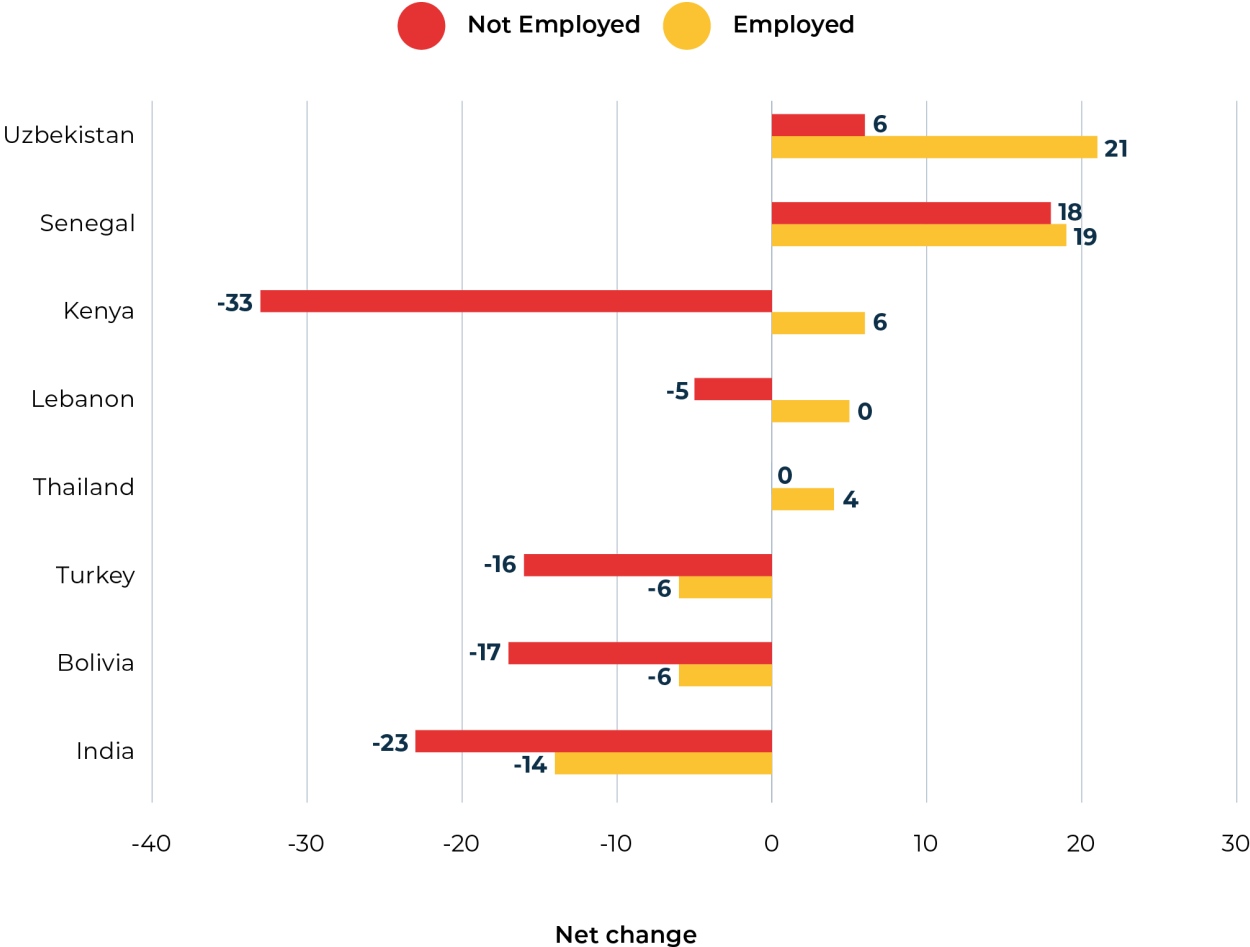
Employed adults in the eight Global South countries generally increased their volunteer action, while unemployed adults tended to decrease such action. Among employed adults,⁶ volunteer action increased to large degrees in Senegal and Uzbekistan, and to smaller degrees in Kenya, Lebanon and Thailand. Volunteer action decreased substantially among unemployed adults in Bolivia, India, Kenya, and Turkey, and to a lesser extent in Lebanon. No change was recorded among unemployed residents in Thailand.

⁶ The employment measures used in this section may not reflect data from the survey countries' national statistics offices. Gallup questions include: "Are you currently employed by an employer?" and "Are you currently self-employed or helping in the family business?"

Chart 10. People who were not employed in Bolivia, India, Kenya and Turkey saw the biggest decrease in volunteer behaviour

Survey question: In the past 12 months, would you say you volunteered or helped others outside your family MORE, LESS, or about the same compared to the year before that?

Net change = percentage more minus percentage less (by country and employment status)



In some countries, there is evidence that wealthier individuals—those whose household income is in the top quintile of the national income distribution—increased their volunteering to a greater degree than those with lower incomes. In Lebanon, for example, the richest quintile registered a net change score of +18, compared with -6 for those with an income in the bottom two quintiles. Those in the wealthiest income quintile also recorded the largest net changes in Uzbekistan (+29), Senegal (+16) and Kenya (+11).

Chart 11. Wealthier individuals saw greater increases, or smaller decreases, in volunteerism across most countries

Survey question: *In the past 12 months, would you say you volunteered or helped others outside your family MORE, LESS, or about the same compared to the year before that?*

Net change= percentage more minus percentage less (by country and household income quintile)



Even in countries where there was no noticeable change in the wealthiest quintile’s 2020 volunteer behaviour compared with 2019, there were significant changes (decreases) in the volunteer activity of poorer households. Bolivia is one such example, with no net change in overall volunteering observed among people in the wealthiest quintile, but a net change score of -16 for the two poorest quintiles, and -7 for the middle two quintiles.

CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH SUFFERED IN 2020

Civic participation volunteering was impacted significantly in 2020. Fewer people attended neighbourhood meetings or contacted public officials in 2020 compared with 2019 in all countries except Thailand.

Chart 12. Civic participation declined in 2020

Survey question: Did you attend neighbourhood meetings or contact public officials MORE, LESS, or about the same in the past 12 months compared to the year before that?

	More	Less	Net difference
Turkey	18%	47%	-29
Uzbekistan	29%	46%	-17
Bolivia	21%	37%	-16
India	33%	46%	-13
Kenya	36%	43%	-7
Senegal	40%	44%	-4
Lebanon	20%	23%	-3
Thailand	25%	23%	2

It is likely that civic participation suffered due to pandemic-related restrictions, as local meetings may not have been as frequent—if held at all—in 2020. However, the biggest declines in participation, for example in Turkey and Uzbekistan, are difficult to explain in terms of both the number of cases and overall impact on the economy (as a proxy for social and economic activity in general).

Part III. Volunteer action plans for the next 12 months

The turbulence of the pandemic disrupted peoples' lives and livelihoods, which could have a significant impact on people's economic, social and political participation going forward. Policymakers are keen to understand the pandemic's longer-term impacts, including people's future volunteering plans. The results of this study provide an early look into volunteerism in a world in which COVID-19 is now a factor.

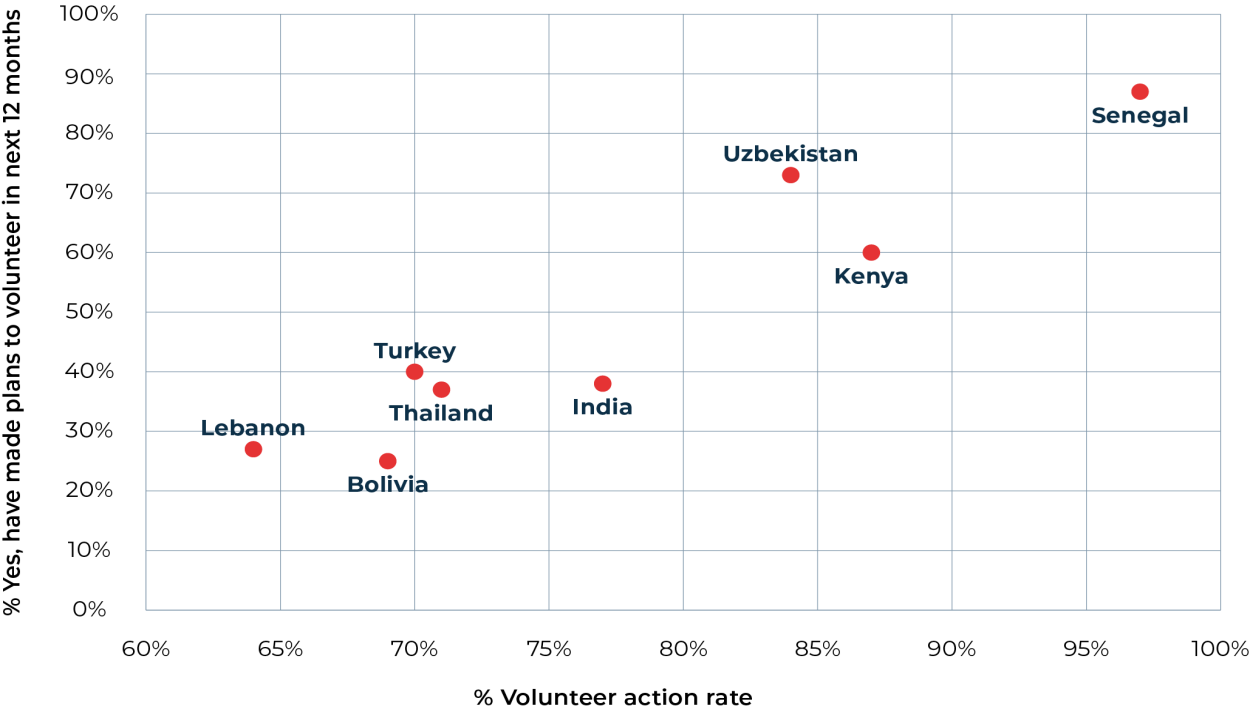
A promising finding across the eight countries is that volunteering is unlikely to fall below pre-pandemic levels, with participation rates ranging from 30 percent in Lebanon to almost 90 percent in Senegal.

People in countries with higher volunteer rates were much more likely to report having near-future plans to volunteer more in the coming year. Conversely, people in countries with lower volunteer rates, such as Lebanon, were less likely to report having future volunteering plans.

Chart 13. In general, countries with higher current volunteer rates also had higher prospective volunteer rates for the next 12 months

Survey question: Have you made plans to volunteer or provide unpaid help in any way in the NEXT 12 months?

Percentage yes by 'current volunteer rate' by country compared with percentage of current volunteer rate



Further analysis of demographic traits or other characteristics related to a person's future volunteer prospects provides a clear finding: past volunteer behaviour or how a person volunteered was often (though not always) strongly predictive of their future volunteer prospects, even more so than demographics such as personal wealth, education or gender.

More information about this analysis can be found in appendix 3.

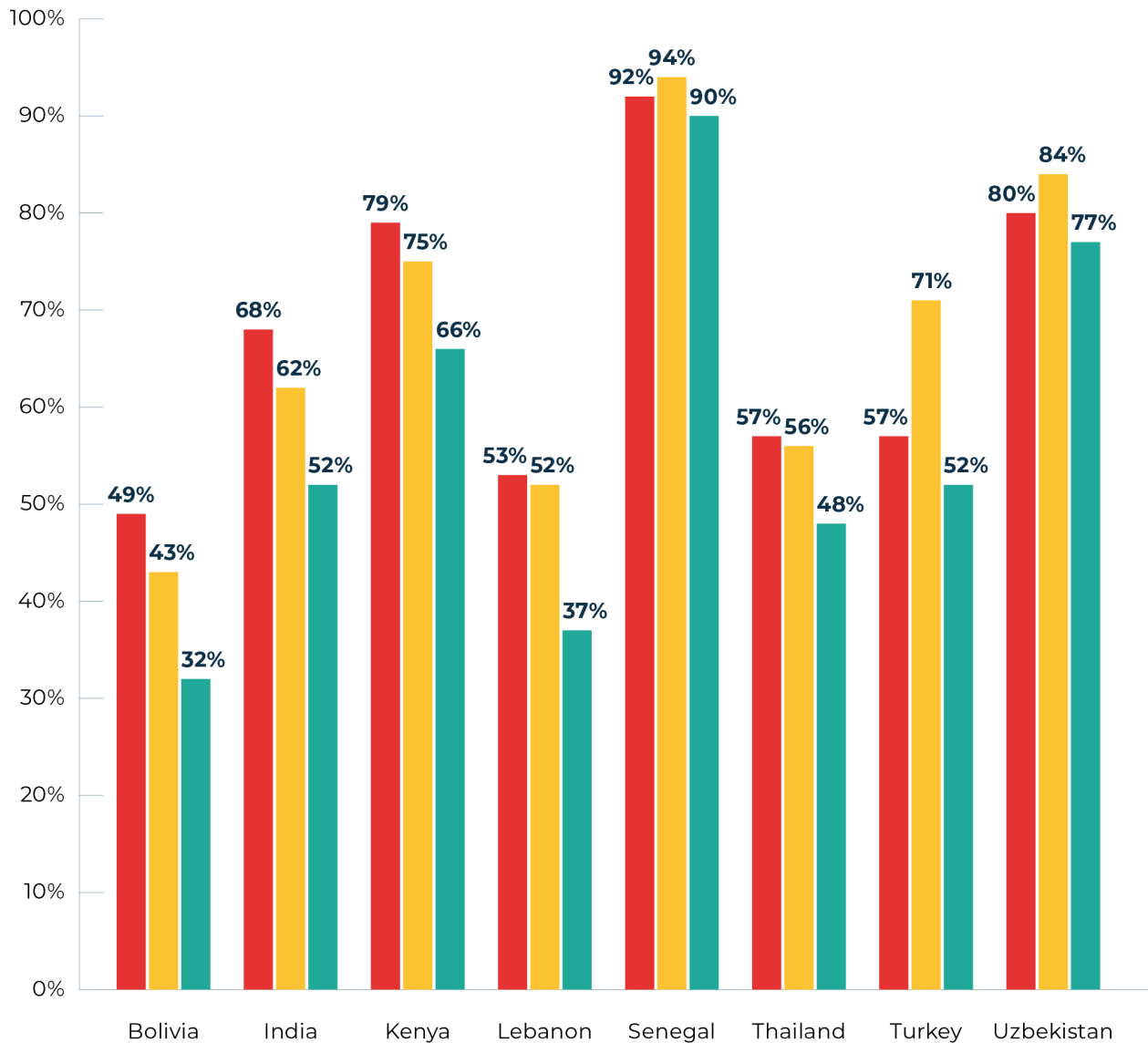
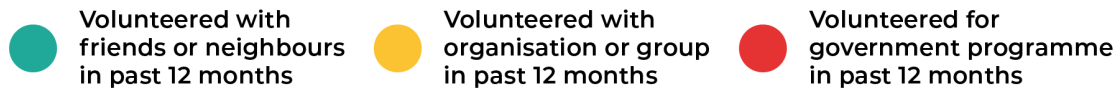
INDIVIDUALS WHO VOLUNTEER THROUGH GOVERNMENT PROGRAMMES AND ORGANIZATIONS ARE MORE LIKELY TO VOLUNTEER AGAIN

People in the eight Global South countries who reported having volunteered through a government programme or an organization or group in the past year were more likely to volunteer again in the future (in any way) compared with those who reported only volunteering informally to help friends or neighbours. This key predictor of future volunteering behaviour is not surprising, since such engagement is likely to be more sustained and planned, rather than spontaneous. These findings to some extent also echo the key theme of the 2018 State of the World's Volunteerism Report,^{xvi} that for local grass-roots volunteering to be resilient requires ongoing support from external stakeholders.

Chart 14. People who volunteered through a government programme or with an organization were more likely to have plans to volunteer in next 12 months than those who volunteered for friends or neighbours

Survey question: Have you made plans to volunteer or provide unpaid help in any way in the NEXT 12 months?

Percentage yes among those who volunteered through government programmes, with an organization or group OR for friends or neighbours in past 12 months



DIVERSITY OF VOLUNTEERING PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Another striking fact is that most people who volunteer plan to do so in multiple ways. Adults who plan to take future volunteer action were asked about five forms of volunteering they could plan to do in the coming year.

Future volunteers in the Global South countries planned to volunteer across a broad range of activities, with many reporting plans to engage in up to three or more of the five activities.

In Kenya and Senegal, almost half of future volunteers reported plans to engage in all five volunteer activities. Future volunteers in Bolivia, Lebanon and Thailand were also more likely to report participating in all five activities, but to a lesser extent.

Chart 15. In Kenya and Senegal, almost 50 percent of people reported that they were likely to engage in all five activities in the next 12 months

Survey question: Are you likely or unlikely to do each of the following over the next 12 months? (Percentage likely by country)

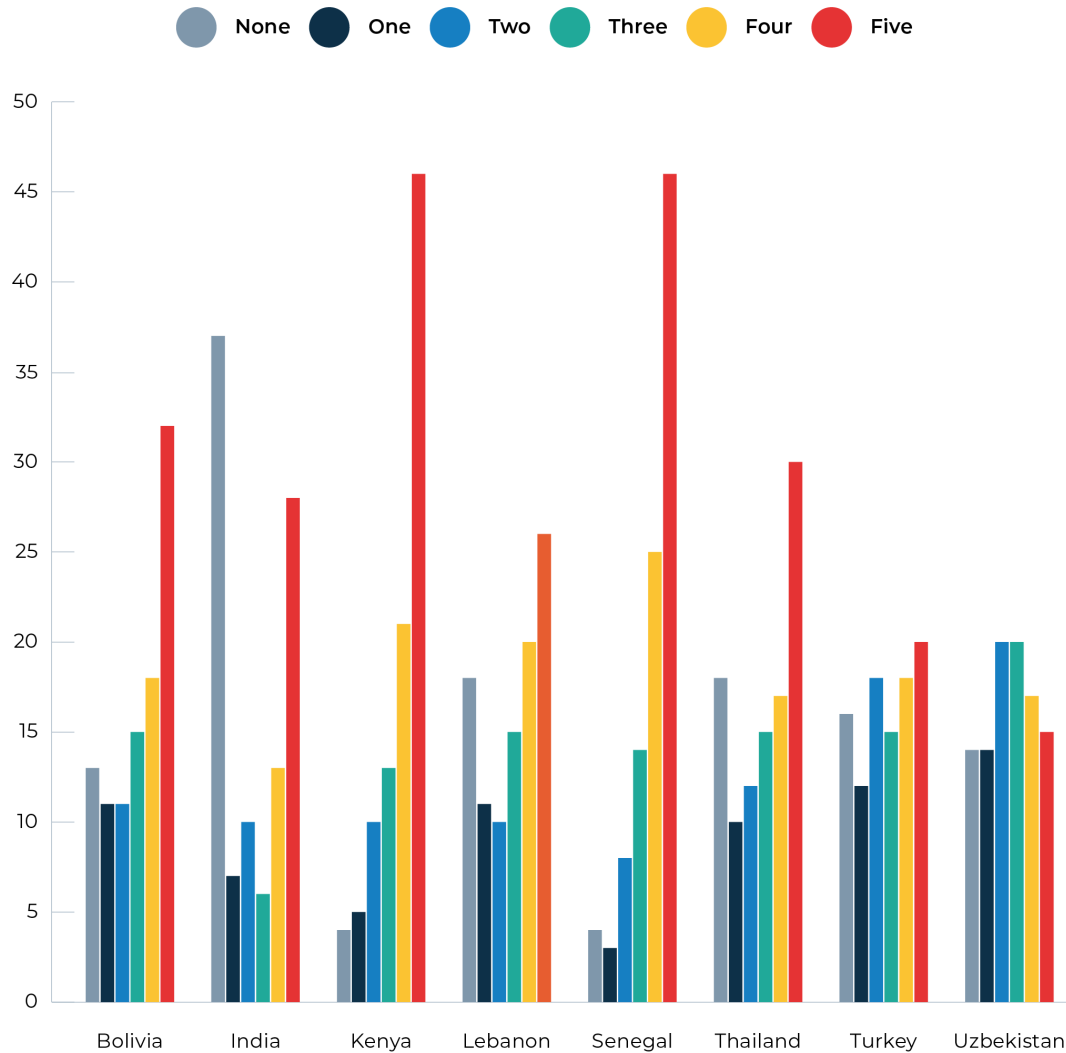
Q8A. Spend time directly helping people you know outside of your family

Q8B. Be part of a group or organization that provides assistance

Q8C. Give your opinion to local authorities or help them plan or provide local services

Q8D. Be part of a campaign or initiative to raise awareness of an issue, either online or in-person

Q8E. Contribute new ideas or solutions to an issue or problem, either by yourself or with other people



In terms of future volunteer action plans by gender, men were more likely to participate in each of the five activity types. Men and women were found to be equally likely to engage in some future activities, such as contributing new ideas and giving opinions to local authorities (India and Senegal).

Analysis of the results by age shows that young adults aged 15–29 were generally more eager to take on the various forms of future volunteer action. However, in India, little difference was found between age groups on most measures. In half the countries, older adults were most likely to report plans to give opinions to local authorities.

TYPES OF VOLUNTEERING PLANS

Across all countries, and similar to past behaviours, future volunteers were generally most likely to say they would spend time directly helping people they know outside

their family. In nearly all countries, Global South residents were less likely to report plans to be part of a group or organization that provides assistance, give their opinion to local authorities or be part of a campaign or initiative to raise awareness of an issue.

Chart 16. Over the next 12 months, people are most likely to contribute new ideas or solutions and spend time helping people they know outside their family

Survey question: Are you likely or unlikely to do each of the following over the next 12 months? (Percentage likely by country)

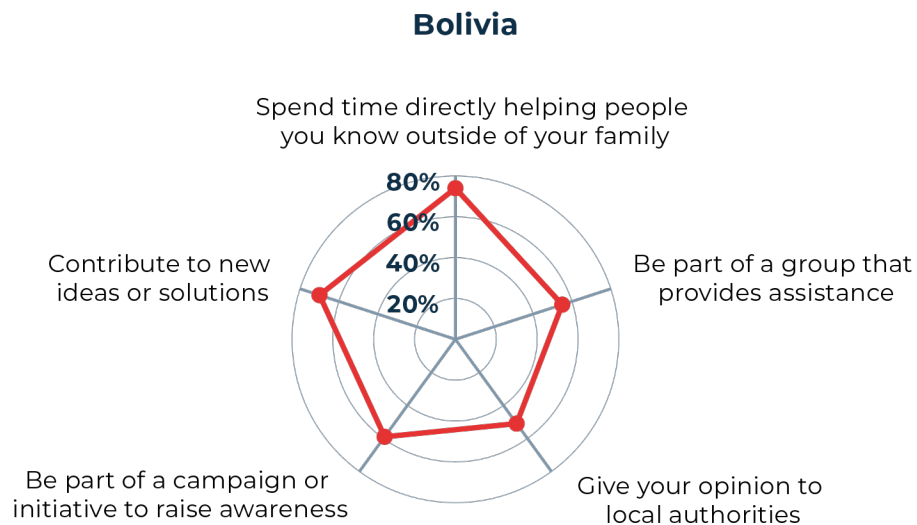
Q8A. Spend time directly helping people you know outside of your family

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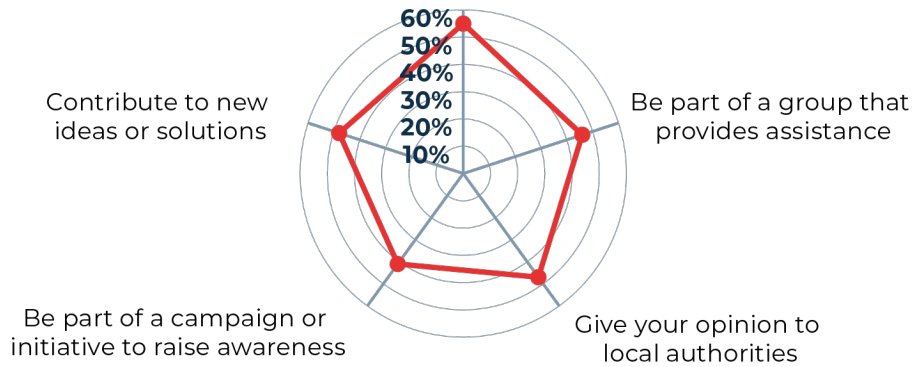
Q8D. Be part of a campaign or initiative to raise awareness of an issue, either online or in-person

Q8E. Contribute new ideas or solutions to an issue or problem, either by yourself or with other people



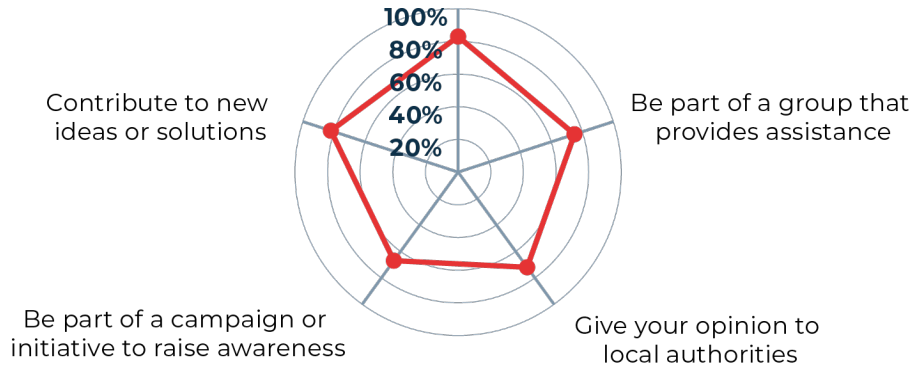
India

Spend time directly helping people you know outside of your family



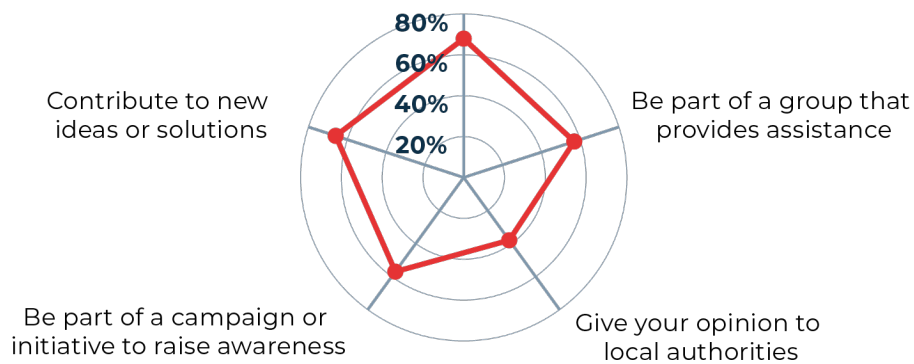
Kenya

Spend time directly helping people you know outside of your family

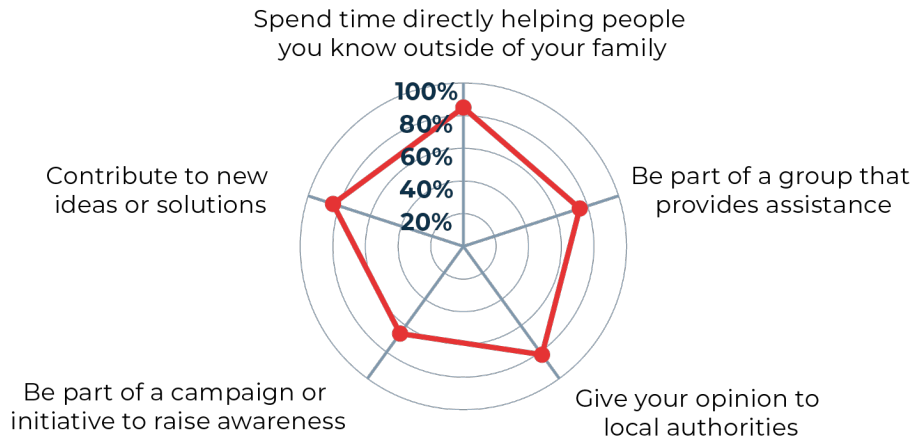


Lebanon

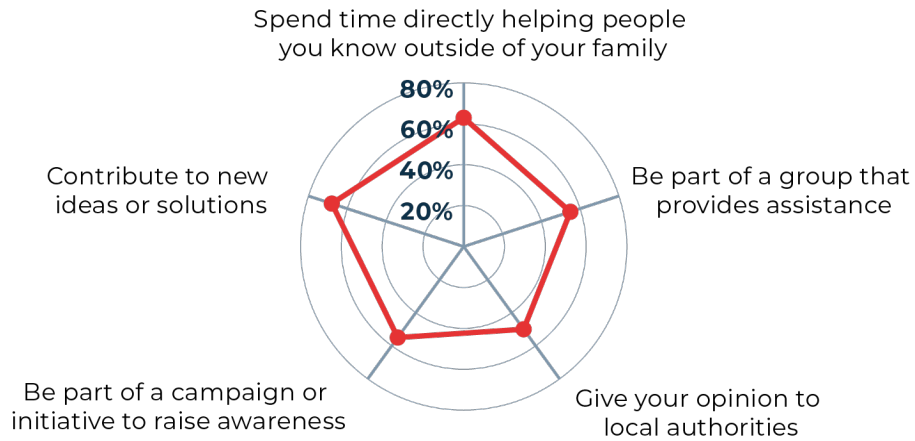
Spend time directly helping people you know outside of your family



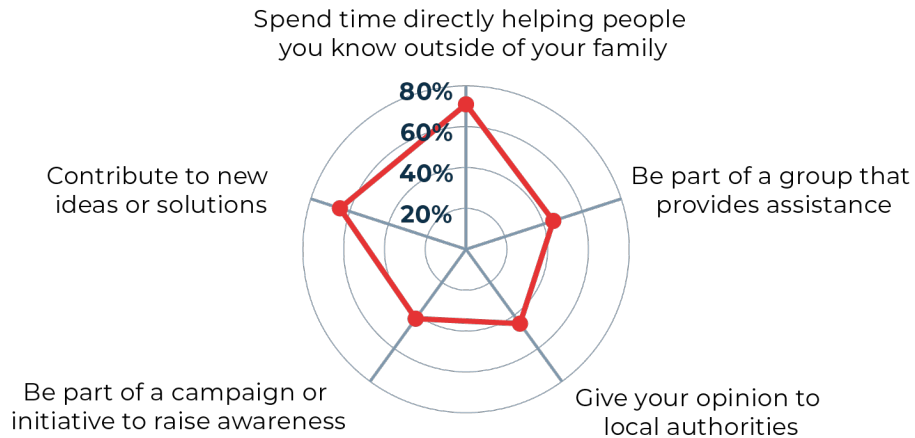
Senegal



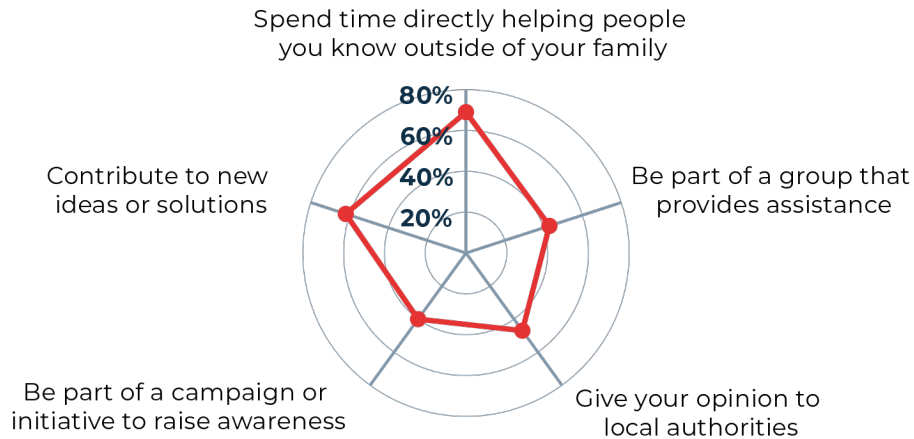
Thailand



Turkey



Uzbekistan



However, a striking feature is that there is a much stronger appetite to engage in broader forms of volunteering (such as social innovation or civic participation) in the future than past behaviours would indicate.

SUBSTANTIALLY MORE PEOPLE PLAN TO VOLUNTEER THROUGH SOCIAL INNOVATION OR CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN THE FUTURE

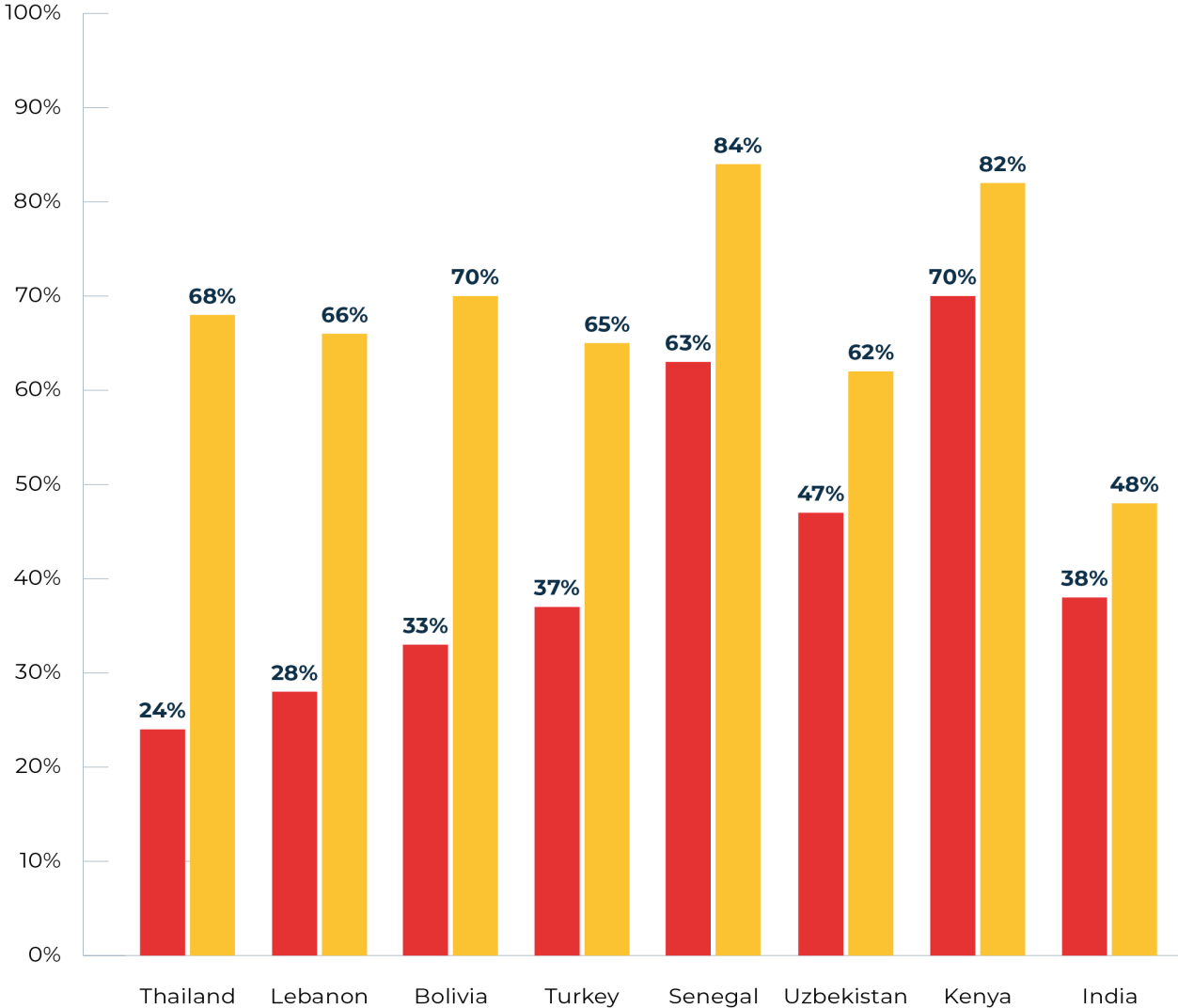
In most survey countries, even taking shifts during COVID-19 into account, substantially more people say they are likely to volunteer through social innovation in the next year than did so in 2020 or 2019.

This overall difference is most notable in Thailand—where 68 percent say they are likely to volunteer their time over the next 12 months to contributing new ideas or solutions to an issue or a problem, compared with just 24 percent who said they did volunteer in 2020 by developing new ideas or solutions—a 44 percentage point gap. On social innovation, similar gaps are apparent in Lebanon (38 percentage point gap), Bolivia (37 percentage point gap) and Turkey (28 percentage point gap). Only two countries register relatively low social innovation volunteerism past-versus-future gaps: Kenya and India. In Kenya, where the gap is 12 percentage points, it is worth noting that volunteerism through social innovation in 2020 was already quite high, leaving less room for growth. In India, only 48 percent say they plan to volunteer through social innovation in the next 12 months—the lowest of any of the countries included in this analysis.

Chart 17. Comparing social innovation volunteerism in 2020 with intentions to do so in 2021

Survey question: In the past 12 months, did you volunteer your time to develop new ideas or solutions to an issue or a problem? This could be by yourself or with other people (Percentage yes) Are you likely or unlikely to do each of the following over the next 12 months? – Contribute new ideas or solutions to an issue or problem, either by yourself or with other people (Percentage likely)

● Yes, volunteered through social innovation in 2020 ● Likely to volunteer through social innovation in next year



Change in social innovation volunteerism: percentage likely to volunteer in next 12 months MINUS percentage volunteered in 2020

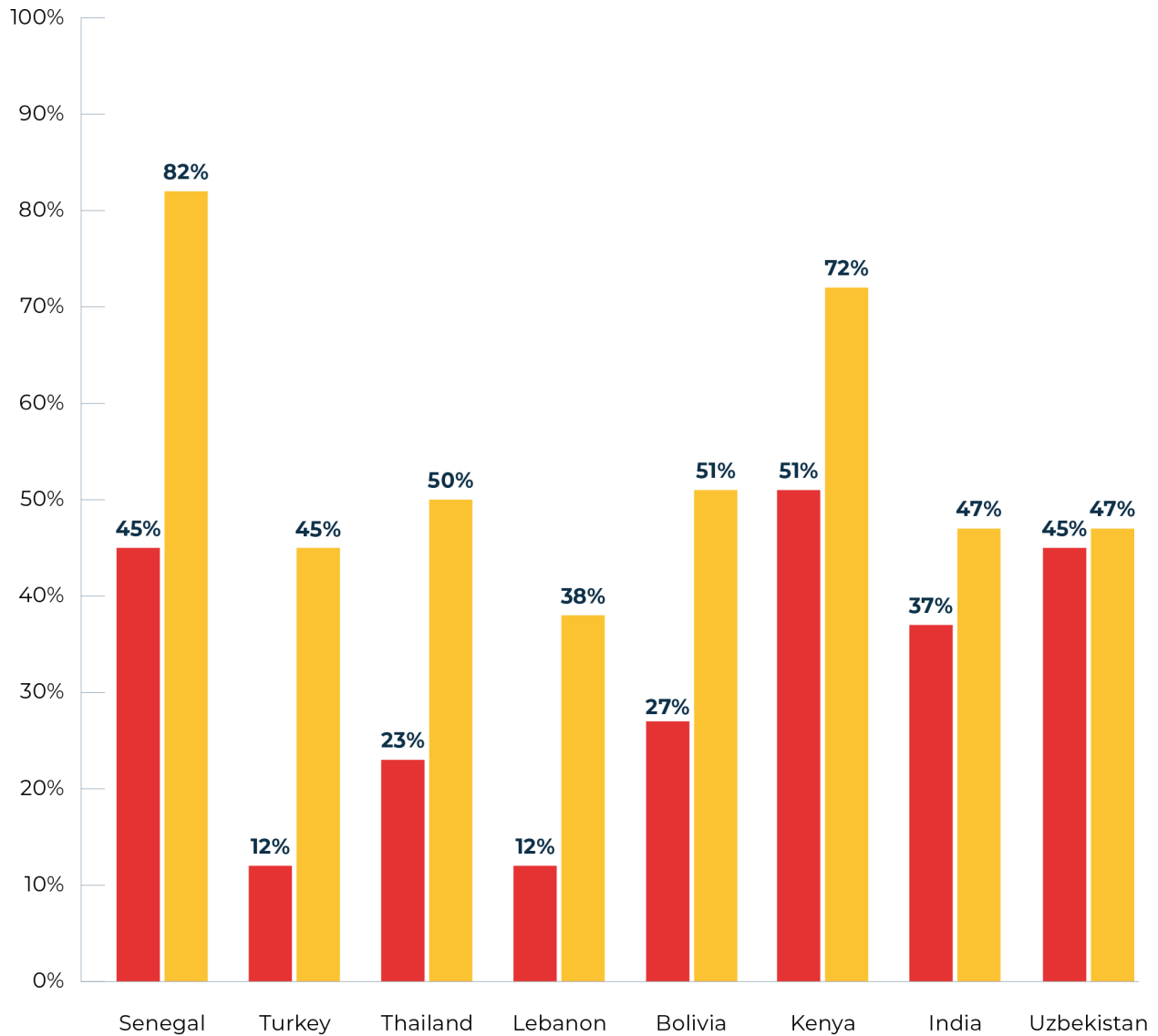


Likewise, there also appears to be a sharp divergence between how many people plan to volunteer through civic participation over the next year and those who actually did so in 2020. In Senegal, for instance, the percentage of people who plan to volunteer through civic participation in 2021 is nearly double that of the 2020 rate (82 percent vs 45 percent, respectively). In Turkey, the difference between the two figures is 33 percentage points, with 45 percent saying they are likely to give their opinion to local authorities or help them plan local services compared with 12 percent who said they volunteered in 2020 by attending a meeting in their neighbourhood or area or by contacting a public official. Other notable gaps include Thailand (27 percentage point gap), Lebanon (26 percentage point gap), Bolivia (21 percentage point gap) and Kenya (21 percentage point gap).

Chart 18. Comparing civic participation volunteerism in 2020 with intentions to do so in 2021

Survey question: Did you volunteer by attending any meeting in the neighbourhood or area where you live or by contacting a public official to give your opinion in the past 12 months? (Percentage yes) Are you likely or unlikely to do each of the following over the next 12 months? – Give your opinion to local authorities or help them plan or provide local services (Percentage likely)

● Yes, volunteered through civic participation in 2020
 ● Likely to volunteer through civic participation in next year



Change in civic participation volunteerism: percentage likely to volunteer in next 12 months MINUS percentage volunteered in 2020



Here the gender gap threatens to widen slightly, with more men than women planning to give feedback to authorities and to participate in campaigns. The difference is less significant for contributing new ideas and solutions to social problems, and in the two African countries. As such, there is a need to ensure that

women's opportunities to engage are increased, in order to avoid widening gender disparities in types of volunteer activity.

Chart 19. Gender gaps across future volunteering types

Survey question: Are you likely or unlikely to do each of the following over the next 12 months?

Country	<i>Likely to give your opinion to local authorities or help them plan or provide local services</i>		<i>Likely to be part of a campaign or initiative to raise awareness of an issue, either online or in-person</i>		<i>Likely to contribute new ideas or solutions to an issue or problem, either by yourself or with other people</i>	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Bolivia	48.2	53.6	59.7	59.3	65.4	74.9
India	47.3	47.2	38.5	42.4	48.0	48.3
Kenya	68.0	77.3	60.6	73.6	76.5	86.9
Lebanon	34.9	42.0	55.5	58.0	64.5	67.5
Senegal	82.9	82.0	66.2	66.4	84.7	82.7
Thailand	44.7	55.7	54.0	56.3	63.9	72.3
Turkey	40.8	48.4	39.5	49.2	58.9	70.6
Uzbekistan	42.3	50.6	38.6	40.3	52.4	70.2

Despite these demographic differences, informal and grass-roots action is likely to remain the bedrock of volunteering in the coming years. There is clear interest in a more diverse and multifaceted approach to volunteering among individuals. As has been seen in the Global North, people's engagement with volunteer action across all demographic groups is shifting to fulfil a range of needs and priorities, with loyalty to one theme, cause or arrangement seen by only around one in 10 volunteers across these eight countries (Chart 15).

Concluding remarks

Results from this survey in eight Global South countries show that most adults in these countries are inclined to help others in some way, with more than three in four people reporting that they have taken volunteer action in some capacity in the past year. In some countries—Senegal, Kenya and Uzbekistan—the volunteer action rate was nearly universal at more than 90 percent.

The survey also finds evidence that in these countries, volunteer habits changed between 2019 and 2020, but the pattern and direction of change varied across the countries and at the individual level. When net changes are taken into account, there were large increases in volunteer action in Senegal and Uzbekistan, and a significant decrease in India. Across nearly all countries, however, civic participation suffered—likely due to local meetings being unable to occur amid pandemic-related restrictions. It is important that opportunities to participate are reintroduced or increased in 2021 and beyond.

In terms of future voluntary action, at the country level, nations with high rates of current volunteer action have a stronger prospect of expecting returning volunteers in the coming year, whereas countries with lower current rates may have a more challenging task of leveraging volunteers in the future. Across all countries, volunteers were most likely to provide help to their friends and neighbours. Nevertheless, the most 'engaged' volunteers—those who said they plan to volunteer again in the near future—took volunteer action through a government programme or an organization, demonstrating the value of support from other stakeholders in sustaining and planning voluntary action.

Strikingly, all groups of people have fairly robust plans to volunteer in the next 12 months, and in increasingly diverse ways. Many of the most visible themes during the pandemic relate to care and coping strategies through mutual aid, basic needs and grass-roots action, reinforcing the idea of direct service to one's community. There is also high interest and many plans among volunteers of all types to participate in other ways (including through social innovation, campaigns and civic action) going forward. Women are slightly less likely to have plans in these areas, which it will be important to address since volunteering is an important pathway for

women's voice, representation and ownership of development processes. These findings serve to remind policymakers that the economic and social value of volunteering can go beyond the labour provided and services delivered, to be important channels for people to help shape countries' pathways out of the pandemic and beyond.

Appendix 1: Methodology

Although UNV Volunteerism in the Global South was fielded as a stand-alone survey, Gallup utilized similar survey-design, data-collection and quality-assurance procedures relied upon for the Gallup World Poll, a global survey conducted in more than 140 countries since 2005.

The Gallup World Poll has traditionally relied on two major modes of data collection—telephone and face-to-face interviewing, depending on the level of telephone penetration in a country. However, in 2020, as the scale of the coronavirus pandemic became clear, it became apparent that there was too much risk of community transmission to conduct face-to-face data collection. Instead a contingency methodology based entirely on telephone-based interviews was used.

As a standard practice, Gallup and our partners comply with all government-issued guidance from local authorities. We took this guidance into account throughout the interviewing process, including by using telephone interviews to comply with social distancing measures.

Final country selection

Country selection was based on a mix of low- and middle-income countries, representing diverse contexts and with coverage across UNV's programmatic regions. Since the methodology relied on phone interviews, phone coverage of the population was also an important factor. Even so, this approach excluded small sections of national populations who could not be reached through phone-based sampling frames.

Questionnaire design

The questionnaire was developed by Gallup and UNV, relying on a number of resources to produce a reliable survey instrument that effectively measured all the concepts and behaviours of interest. Gallup undertook desk-based research to identify and review existing survey questions relevant to the general research objectives and relied on International Labour Organization (ILO) model survey tools for measuring volunteer work. Additionally, survey methodologists from the Gallup World Poll provided expertise on how to construct an unbiased, reliable and effective survey instrument.

In total, the UNV Volunteerism in the Global South survey (including questions about respondent demographics or personal background) was designed to take, on average, five minutes. The questionnaire was translated into the major conversational languages of each country.

The final questionnaire was approved by Gallup's Institutional Review Board. Additionally, UNV asked Gallup to affirm that this research was in line with key elements of its own ethical requirements, including:

TARGETED POPULATION: This study does not directly target any vulnerable populations or groups. It is instead a general survey of the population aged 15+ in each of the selected countries. Gallup will not interview any individual under the age of 15.

TOPIC OF STUDY: None of the issues explored in the study have the potential to cause harm to any study participants.

CONSENT LANGUAGE: All respondents are required to consent to their participation in the study. Gallup's legal department and Institutional Review Board approve all consent language used in Gallup surveys. All consent language is General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliant. To ensure compliance with GDPR, no personally identifiable information (PII), such as name, address, telephone number or high-precision Global Positioning System (GPS) data, is transferred to the United States for data processing or any other reason. All computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) data are stored in a secure virtual private cloud in Ireland using Amazon Web Services. All PII data captured for quality control are firewalled so only the in-country partner can access it for validation purposes. PII data would typically be deleted one year after the completion of the project.

General methodological approach & data quality assurances

The sample size in each country was approximately 1,000 respondents.

Although historically Gallup has administered nationally representative surveys in the proposed countries using a face-to-face surveying mode, for the current project Gallup administered interviews through computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) to ensure study feasibility during the pandemic. This approach was designed to safeguard both respondents' and interviewers' welfare following international guidelines on containment measures, such as physical distancing. During the unprecedented situation that unfolded in 2020, Gallup was able to adapt and proceed with global data collection in over 115 countries.

Gallup employed a stratified dual-frame (landline and mobile) sample design where appropriate or a mobile-only sample approach if mobile penetration provided optimal coverage and conducted the in-country surveys in the languages specified

in the table below. Samples from each frame were generated through a pure or list-assisted random digit dialling (RDD) approach.

Table 1. Country data set information for 2021 UNV Volunteerism in the Global South survey

Country	Mode of interviewing	Languages
Bolivia	Mobile only	Spanish
India	Mobile only	Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu
Kenya	Mobile only	Swahili, English
Lebanon	Mobile only	Arabic
Senegal	Landline/mobile phone	Wolof, French
Thailand	Mobile only	Thai
Turkey	Mobile only	Turkish
Uzbekistan	Mobile only	Uzbek, Russian

Although this methodological approach was a necessity, in some countries surveyed it resulted in a greater degree of coverage error, i.e. the percentage of the target population who could not be reached through this sampling approach.

In some countries, this coverage error may result in greater imbalances in the underlying sample composition, in terms of the overall demographic profile of all respondents interviewed in a particular country. To help adjust for these imbalances,

Gallup (where considered necessary) relied on an expanded set of demographic factors when calculating post-stratification weights.

Data weighting

Data weighting is used to minimize bias in survey-based estimates in order to ensure samples are nationally representative for each country. It is intended to be used for generating estimates within a country. The weighting procedure was formulated based on the sample design and performed in multiple stages.

In countries where data are collected via telephone—as was the case for all countries in this study—Gallup constructed a probability weight factor (base weight) to account for selection of telephone numbers from the respective frames and to correct for unequal selection probabilities as a result of selecting one adult in landline households and for dual-users coming from both the landline and mobile frame. ***Adjustment to selection probabilities reflecting the relative frame sizes was a new improvement to the weighting process in 2020 and was implemented in all countries included in the 2021 UNV Volunteerism in the Global South survey.***

The base weights were post-stratified to adjust for non-response and to match the weighted sample totals to known target population totals obtained from country-level census data. Gallup made non-response adjustments to gender, age and (where reliable data were available) education or socio-economic status as well as, where necessary, additional factors such as employment status.

Appendix 2: Survey

	Wording	Response
Q1	Now, I will ask you some questions about volunteering. Volunteering refers to SPENDING TIME helping people outside your family or with organizations, such as those that help people, animals, or the environment. Did you spend ANY time volunteering or giving UNPAID help in the past 12 months, or not?	Yes No (DK)/(Refused)
Q2	(If 'No' or 'DK/Refused' in Q1 ONLY) Have you spent any TIME making items to donate or distributing donations, such as food, clothing, equipment, or other goods in the past 12 months?	Yes No (DK) (Refused)
Q3 SERIES	Did you volunteer or provide unpaid help to any of the following in the past 12 months, or not?	
Q3A	A government programme, campaign, or scheme	Yes
Q3B	An organization or group	No (DK)/(Refused)
Q3C	Friends or neighbours	
Q4A	Did you volunteer by attending any meeting in the neighbourhood or area where you live or by contacting a public official to give your opinion in the past 12 months?	Yes No
Q4B	(If 'YES' in Q4A ONLY) Did you attend neighbourhood meetings or contact public officials MORE, LESS, or about the same in the past 12 months compared to the year before that?	More Less About the same (DK)/(Refused)
Q4B_1	(If 'No' or DK/Refused in Q4A ONLY) Did you attend a meeting in the neighbourhood or area where you live or give an opinion to a public official in the year before that?	Yes No (DK)/(Refused)

Q5A	In the past 12 months, did you volunteer your time to develop new ideas or solutions to an issue or problem? This could be by yourself or with other people.	Yes No (DK)/(Refused)
Q6	In the past 12 months, would you say you volunteered or helped others outside your family MORE, LESS, or about the same compared to the year before that?	More Less About the same (Did not volunteer/help others in past 12 months) (DK)/(Refused)
Q6A	(If 'Did not volunteer/help others in past 12 months' in Q6) You said you did not volunteer or help others outside your family in the past 12 months. Please now think about THE YEAR BEFORE THAT. Did you volunteer or help others outside your family during that year, or not?	Yes No (DK)/(Refused)
Q7	Have you made plans to volunteer or provide unpaid help in any way in the NEXT 12 months?	Yes No (DK)/(Refused)
Q8 SERIES	Are you likely or unlikely to do each of the following over the next 12 months?	
Q8A	Spend time directly helping people you know outside of your family	
Q8B	Be part of a group or organization that provides assistance	
Q8C	Give your opinion to local authorities or help them plan or provide local services	Likely Unlikely (DK)/(Refused)
Q8D	Be part of a campaign or initiative to raise awareness of an issue, either online or in-person	
Q8E	Contribute new ideas or solutions to an issue or problem, either by yourself or with other people	

Appendix 3: Driver analysis on why people will volunteer next year

Special focus: A Look at the ‘drivers’ of the prospective volunteer rate

This section provides a statistical analysis of the demographic traits or other aspects of a person’s background, including past volunteer behaviour, that are strongly predictive of their future volunteer prospects (i.e. saying “yes” to the survey question about their intentions to volunteer in the next 12 months).

The analysis provided a clear takeaway: past volunteer behaviour or how a person volunteered was often (though not always) strongly predictive of their future volunteer prospects. The table below provides an estimate of how much more likely a person who said “yes” to any of the four question items about past volunteer behaviour or activity is to say that they will volunteer in the next 12 months.

In all of the eight countries, at least one of the items had significant and often sizeable effects. For example, in India, a person who reported being a volunteer in the past year was 7.86 times more likely than a person who did *not* volunteer in the past year to say that they plan to volunteer in the coming year.

Table 2. *Driver analysis of prospective volunteer rate—odds ratio estimates for key question items about past volunteer behaviour or activity*

Note: Only results that are significant at the 95 percent level are shown.

	Volunteered in past year	Volunteered with government programme	An organization or group	Friends or neighbours
<i>Variable name/Response</i>	<i>Volunteer action rate (“yes”)</i>	<i>(“yes”)</i>	<i>(“yes”)</i>	<i>(“yes”)</i>
Bolivia	3.94	2.33	Not significant	Not significant
India	7.86	2.93	Not significant	Not significant
Kenya	Not significant	2.71	2.19	Not significant
Lebanon	Not significant	1.78	2.46	2.66

Senegal	Not significant	Not significant	2.86	2.47
Thailand	Not significant	Not significant	1.98	2.06
Turkey	2.46	Not significant	3.39	2.41
Uzbekistan	6.05	Not significant	1.65	Not significant

By comparison, the demographic attributes included in this analysis often did not have a statistically significant effect on the likelihood of somebody saying they would volunteer in the next 12 months.

ⁱ United Nations Volunteers, 2018.

ⁱⁱ Plan of Action, 2020.

ⁱⁱⁱ United Nations Volunteers, 2018

^{iv} International Labour Organization, n.d.

^v International Labour Organization, n.d.

^{vi} United Nations Volunteers, 2018.

^{vii} United Kingdom, Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, 2020.

^{viii} World Health Organization, 2021.

^{ix} World Health Organization, 2021.

^x United Nations Development Programme, 2021.

^{xi} International Labour Organization, 2021.

^{xii} World Bank, 2021.

^{xiii} United Nations Development Programme and UN-Women, 2021.

^{xiv} Volunteering Australia, 2021.

^{xv} Volunteer Now, 2021.

^{xvi} United Nations Volunteers, 2018.

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