2022 State of the World's Volunteerism Report

Chapter 1

Volunteerism: Building equal and inclusive societies

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

UN VOLUNTEERS

1.1. Why this report and why now?

Against the backdrop of 21st Century challenges such as increasing inequalities, the climate emergency and the COVID-19 pandemic, volunteerism is often presented as a global and local asset which can help localize and achieve development goals through people-centred relationships.[1,2] Volunteerism could play a role in "building forward better" by transforming the underlying economic, political, environmental and social systems, especially as fragilities within existing systems—such as health and well-being, employment, trade and sustainable livelihoods—have become more visible and often, more severe.[3] The UN Secretary-General has called for a "new social contract for a new era",[4] a dynamic and evolving agreement between people and the state founded on new norms, systems and governance structures that delivers for all. Building more equal and inclusive societies is central to these endeavours.

There is a need to approach development differently, as a process to which volunteers can contribute. But the way forward is not yet clear.

> The UN Secretary-General has called for a "new social contract for a new era", a dynamic and evolving agreement between people and the state founded on new norms, systems and governance structures that delivers for all.

How can a global reset towards building more inclusive societies be achieved in this context? This will depend on the voices at the table and the interests that are prioritized. There is now a recognized need for "a reconfiguration of a range of relationships that have become sharply imbalanced–those between state and citizen".[5] Stakeholders—and the volunteers among them—will need to work in new ways so that the most marginalized and vulnerable groups, namely women, persons with disabilities, slum-dwellers and the urban poor, can participate as equals. This means not only new structures and opportunities that facilitate participation, but also a change in the mindset of all actors.

This chapter introduces the rationale and conceptual starting points that frame the 2022 State of the World's Volunteerism Report (SWVR) on the theme of Building Equal and Inclusive Societies. Section 1.1 discusses how volunteering itself is changing and how it could serve as a tool for responding to issues of the 21st Century. Section 1.2. outlines the scope of the report and defines the key terms used. Section 1.3 explains how the SWVR is structured.

1.1.1. The dynamic potential of volunteerism

Since 2011, UNV has published an SWVR every three years to develop a strong knowledge base on the role of volunteerism in peace and sustainable development. The 2011 report, Universal Values for Global Well-being, found that many people around the world view volunteerism as a route to individual and community well-being, social inclusion, sustainable livelihoods, management of disaster risk and prevention, and recovery from violent conflicts.[6] The 2015 report, Transforming Governance, showed that volunteerism could be a pathway to ensuring governance accountability and responsiveness.[7] The third report in the series, published in 2018, focused on Volunteerism and Community Resilience, demonstrating how communities can join together to develop collective resources to cope with shocks and stresses, particularly in marginalized contexts where state provision is limited.[8]

The 2022 report explores the theme of Building Equal and Inclusive Societies, focusing particularly on volunteerism and a new social contract. It builds on insights from previous SWVRs on the role of volunteerism within local governance, and on the importance of partnerships between volunteers, volunteer-involving organizations and the state. In 2011, for instance, SWVR argued that despite volunteers' contribution to development, volunteerism should not take the place of actions that are the responsibility of the state.[9] The 2018 SWVR, meanwhile, highlighted the importance of local government support to enhance community resilience.[10] This SWVR develops this further, asking:

- *What role could volunteerism play in developing people–state relationships?*
- *Given that volunteers do not work alone, does volunteerism's unique contribution to development lie in its capacity to facilitate new forms of collaboration and partnerships,[11] including with various state authorities?*

To understand these new partnerships, this report introduces the idea of a new social contract between volunteers and the state.

For decades, volunteers and volunteer-involving organizations have worked with governments to provide services to the most vulnerable and marginalized.

Yet, it has been shown that volunteer participation can go beyond consultation, resulting in much-needed knowledge production and innovative governance practices.[12, 13]

Some volunteers have influential leadership roles in their communities. In Kenyan villages, for example, village elders working voluntarily in public administration not only bring fellow community members' concerns into public policy, but also help facilitate community uptake of government programmes.[14] Research has found that community members often have higher expectations of these village elders than elected officials and paid officers.[15]

During the COVID-19 pandemic, informal, spontaneous, people-to-people volunteering has endured.[16] Communities have continued to respond to the crisis in significant ways, despite limited mobility and resources. From fund-raising and distribution of food packages for daily wage workers in major cities in India,[17] youth-led radio-based COVID-19 awareness programmes in Tanzania[18] and refugee UN Volunteers joining the medical workforce in Jordan,[19] to community pantries in the Philippines,[20] community soup kitchens in Colombia,[21] and driving local doctors to home visits in the Russian Federation,[22] volunteer responses are often local and carried out by people who themselves are facing similar constraints to the people they are "serving".

While the need for volunteers has increased, pandemic-related challenges have reduced volunteer engagement in many countries. For example, in Australia, two in three volunteers stopped volunteering between February and April in 2020.[23] A survey of students in Saudi Arabia[24] reported low volunteer participation during the first two months of the pandemic because of concerns around personal health and safety. In Mongolia, despite continued volunteer commitment, following countrywide lockdowns[25] in 2020, there was a 30 percent decline in volunteer participation in programmes organized by the Network of Mongolian Volunteer Organizations. In terms of international volunteering, in a February survey of 130 volunteer-involving organizations, 47 percent of the international volunteers surveyed reported that they had been repatriated due to COVID-19, with many

being offered a variety of alternative activities such as remote work.[26]

Some volunteer groups have changed their approach as the crisis has evolved.[27] Volunteers who are usually involved in campaigning have reverted to more "traditional" volunteering activities such as providing services to meet the basic needs of their immediate community.[28] It remains to be seen how these shifts might affect the ability of volunteering to contribute to more inclusive state–society relationships.

1.1.2. Report objectives

> Against the backdrop of these issues, this fourth SWVR explores how volunteering can help to shape people–state relationships and build equal and inclusive societies, through the development of an inclusive 21st Century social contract.

It looks at how volunteers and volunteer-involving organizations and governments are working together to collaborate and co-create more inclusive structures (referred to in this report as "volunteer–state relationships") and mechanisms that are fit for the challenges of the 21st Century.[29] It also provides much-needed evidence on the processes involved in creating and strengthening people–state relationships through volunteerism. Specifically, this report:

i) explores emerging models of volunteer–state relationships, their central features and mechanisms, and their strengths and weaknesses; and

ii) identifies strategies for effective collaboration between volunteers and states to help shape inclusive processes and equitable development outcomes.

The report draws on case study research[30] across five regions: Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Arab States, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Based on this evidence, the SWVR proposes strategies on policy measures and partnership mechanisms that support action and collaboration between state actors and volunteers, volunteer-involving organizations, and their wider communities. It is also intended to help policymakers in Member States, governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to identify strengths and areas for improvement when assessing their own work on volunteer action.

Volunteers engage in nature conservation work as part of the Lomas Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) project in Peru. The lomas are local ecosystems that rely on fog for moisture. *Source*: UNV.

1.2. Scope, focus and definitions

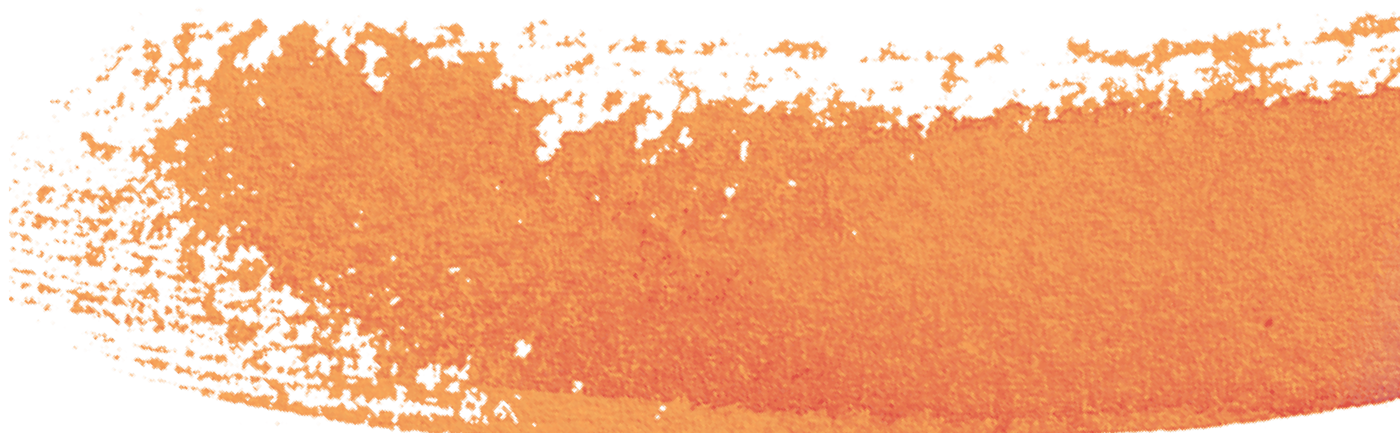
1.2.1. Volunteering in the 21st Century

The global commitment to recognizing and harnessing the role of volunteerism within government action continues to increase. The 2018 UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution[31] on "Volunteering for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" encouraged governments to galvanize the position of volunteering within national and international frameworks of action for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It recognized the need for greater ownership of the development agenda by all by integrating volunteering into national, sectoral and local plans and processes.

Definitions of volunteering vary. This report uses the definition adopted in the 2002 UN General Assembly resolution, which describes volunteering as "a wide range of activities, including traditional forms of mutual aid and self-help, formal service delivery and other forms of civic participation, undertaken of free will, for the general public good and where monetary reward is not the principal motivating factor."[32]

This definition recognizes that volunteering activities are diverse but have three core characteristics: they are undertaken of free will, for the good of others and are not primarily motivated by monetary benefits.

However, volunteering is a complex social phenomenon that means different things to different people. Cultural and community-based values influence how volunteering is practised,[33, 34, 35] and the spread of new technology has diversified the ways in which volunteers contribute and gather.[36] Informal, community-based, episodic and spontaneous volunteering are also increasingly recognized.[37, 38] These forms of volunteering challenge the popular view that volunteering only happens within an organization. With volunteering often considered "unpaid", the blurred boundaries between volunteering, skills development and livelihoods—particularly in resource-poor contexts—also challenge the idea of volunteer remuneration.[39, 40, 41] When discussing volunteering, the focus is most often on the contribution that volunteers make to society. However, the benefits of volunteering for volunteers themselves are also becoming increasingly clear, and it is important to understand how these influence many volunteers' motivations.[42, 43, 44]



A volunteer restores a temple gate in Nepal.
Source: UNV.

In 2020, a paper published under the Plan of Action to Integrate Volunteering into the 2030 Agenda proposed a new model for understanding volunteering practices in the 21st Century.[45] This new model takes a broad view of volunteering. Whereas before, the characteristics of volunteering were precisely defined, in the new model, volunteering is defined according to five components,[46] each representing a dimension of volunteer action: structure (formal and/or informal), site (online and/or offline), intensity (episodic and/or regular), aspiration (self-building and/or community-building) and category (service, mutual aid, participation, campaigning and leisure; these are not mutually exclusive).

Figure 1.1. A model for volunteering practices in the 21st Century

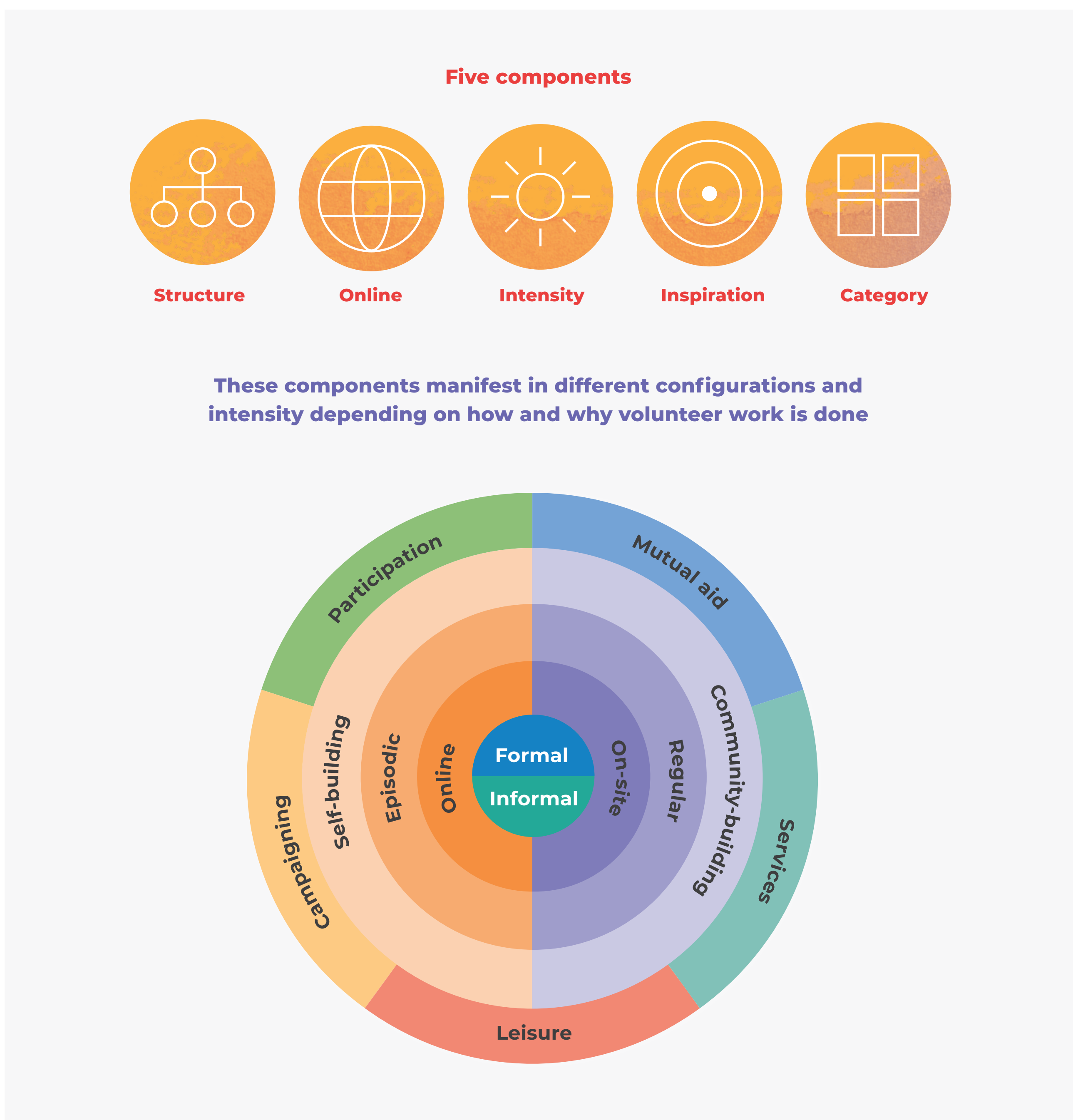
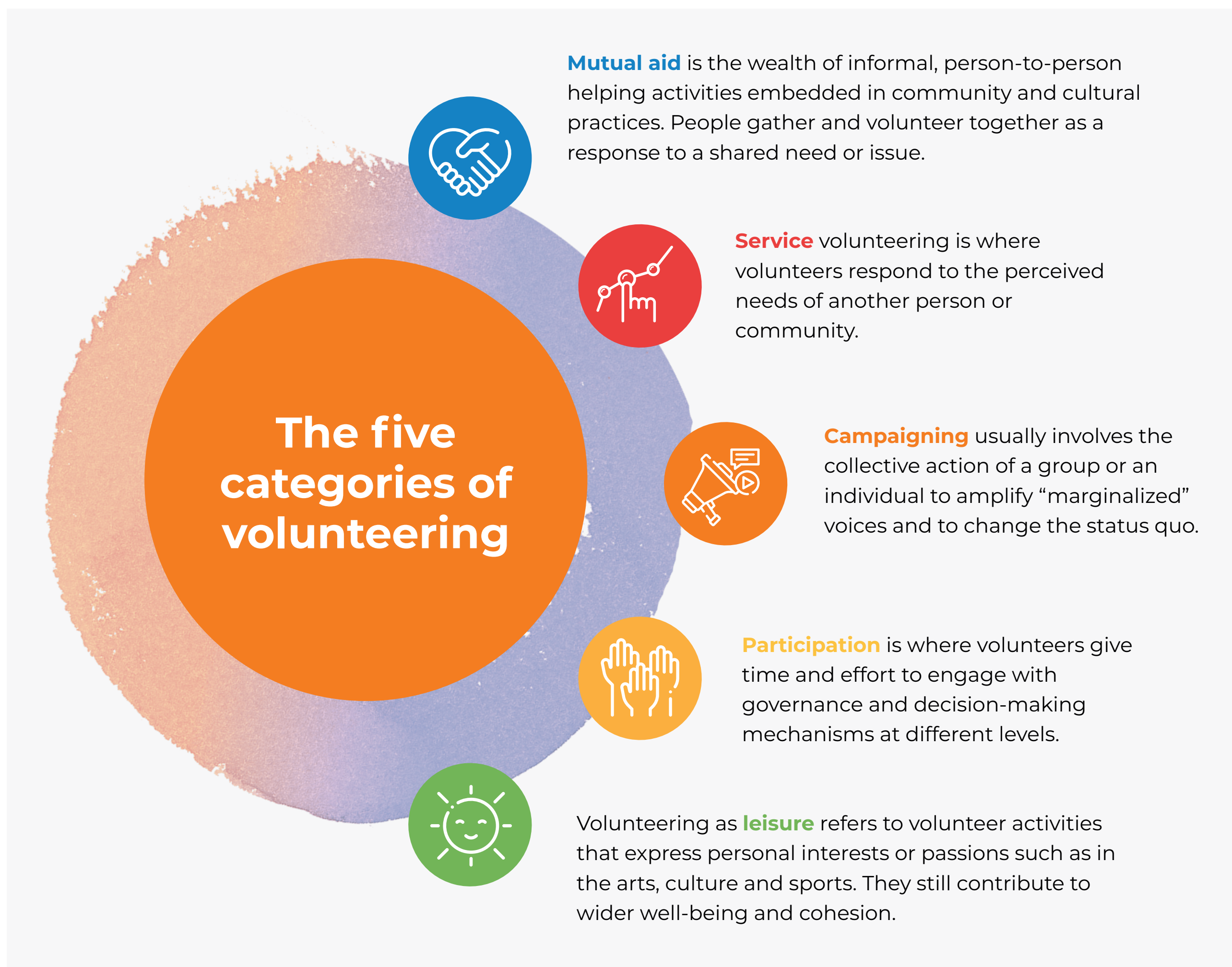


Figure 1.2. Categories of volunteering



The 2022 SWVR uses this broader definition of volunteering rather than strict definitions that do not capture the many and diverse volunteer practices that people engage in. As the models show, volunteering can be described as having certain core characteristics, but looks very different in different contexts.

The report also places emphasis on volunteering as civic participation.

Not all forms of civic participation are volunteering (and vice versa) but there are overlaps between the two.[47]

Civic participation is often defined as collective action undertaken to improve society and civic life.[48, 49] It includes activities such as voluntary service to local communities, but also occasional charitable donations[50] which may not be seen as volunteering. It also includes political participation at the personal (e.g. voting in an election) and collective (e.g. membership of political parties)[51] levels, or people volunteering their time to actively participate in government decision-making or co-implementing state programmes.

When seen in this light, volunteering allows individuals to intervene "in the solution of existing social problems which require a certain interaction between society and the state."[52] Many of the volunteering practices in this report have to do with volunteering as civic participation, such as individuals contributing new ideas to local authorities to address local problems, and attending neighbourhood and council meetings.

1.2.2. Inclusion and social contracts for the 21st Century

To focus on the potential contribution of volunteering towards building equal and inclusive societies, this report refers to the idea of the social contract, which has been described as "a dynamic and tacit agreement between states, people and communities on their mutual roles and responsibilities, with participation, public goods, public policies and taxation chief among them".[53] Social contracts are dynamic: the relationships between people and states, and the power dynamics between them, continue to be reshaped, repurposed and reimagined in response to new challenges such as aging, gender inequalities and climate change.[54]

Useful distinctions have been made between "old" and "new" social contracts over the last two centuries.[55] These social contracts, particularly in the early 20th Century, were influenced by shrinking public services, and there was less consideration of the needs of the planet and the environment. Furthermore, the roles and responsibilities of "people" and "state" tended to be seen as separate.

In the 21st Century, there has been a shift to what has been described as a new "eco-social contract"[56] with an overall emphasis on inclusion.

This new social contract consists of the following three priorities:

i) Ensure human rights for all by extending social contracts to marginalized sectors of the society.

ii) Be inclusive and recognize multiple inequalities that act as barriers to the engagement of certain groups—for instance, women—in relationships with the state.

iii) Protect the planet, ecological processes and people's relationship with nature.

With this new focus on inclusion, the idea of social contracts is no longer limited to Western contexts, and relationships are increasingly complex. For example, in parts of Africa, social contracts are believed to be enshrined in ubuntu, a philosophy of community and reciprocity.[57] Social contracts may also look different in fragile states, protracted crises, war or violence. In these contexts, governments might have limited resources and revenues, and a lack of legal and policy capacities to meet its peoples' needs: "the main challenge is not government's willingness but its ability to deliver on citizens' expectations."[58] It is therefore important to consider how the relationships between people and the state can contribute to building peaceful societies.[59] This report recognizes that no one social contract between people and states will fit every situation. Instead, there will be a variety of social contracts and players, for instance between specific segments of the society and certain government institutions operating at multiple levels. In addition, "people" and the "state" will have different expectations and opportunities depending on the context: the social contract "defines what we can expect from each other in society"[60] and "what a reasonable set of expectations should be."[61]

Where in the past, many social contracts have explicitly excluded women from participating in and making social decisions,[62] going forward, they will be shaped by factors such as inequalities in power, influence, gender and technology.[63, 64]

In addition, just as individuals have multiple identities, roles, functions and alliances in society, states have a variety of institutional capacities that influence how they respond to communities' expectations. These range from effectiveness of state institutions, quality of leadership, accountability and transparency, to the resources they have available or their capacity to learn, adapt and innovate.

Box 1.1.
Defining social contracts

"Social contracts" are dynamic and evolving agreements between diverse groups of people. This report focuses on volunteers and volunteer-involving organizations on the one hand, and state actors and institutions at various levels on the other. These agreements should outline the mutual responsibilities of volunteers and state actors for joint social action towards building equal and inclusive societies. In other words, social contracts are created, developed and maintained through various forms of people–state relationships.

"People–state relationships" is a more general term that refers to how population groups work with the state. "Volunteer–state relationships" refer more specifically to when volunteers, volunteer groups or volunteer-involving organizations work with state institutions and government officials.

Source: UNDP (2016).

To add to this complex network, relationships between people and the state are shaped by various formal and informal structures and technologies.[65, 66] For example, volunteers as individuals will not only engage with the state and other actors through voluntary activities; they will also engage by being citizens, workers and consumers. Volunteers could face unique opportunities and challenges when working with state authorities compared with, for instance, paid staff or service users.

It is clear from a social contract perspective that relationships between volunteers, volunteer-involving organizations and the state can go beyond a partnership in which the role of the volunteers is to ensure that the state is accountable and call them out when they fail to honour their commitments:[67] volunteers and state authorities can also co-own and co-create initiatives at multiple levels.

However, to maximize the potential of this kind of collaboration, these social contracts cannot be assumed to be harmonious, good or necessary. Rather, their weaknesses and limitations and areas of disagreement need to be identified.[68]

1.2.3. A focus on the dynamics of people–state relationships

To understand how social contracts are developed, we need to look at how the dynamics of people–state relationships are created and maintained. When people participate in state actions, the aims of the relationship and the time and resources required from both state institutions and community members need to be clear. Table 1.1[69] presents three types of people–state relationship that can lead to more equitable and inclusive partnerships: deliberation, collaboration and connections. It also outlines the role volunteering can play in each type of relationship.

Table 1.1. Types of people–state relationship

Relationship	Description	Examples where volunteering could play a role
Deliberation	People talk and listen to each other to develop plans and mediate various levels of state authority. As well as consensus, conflict may arise and will need to be addressed.	Deliberative governance mechanisms such as town-hall meetings, co-designing local policies; policy forums such as hackathons, and community campaigning.
Collaboration	Collective action is undertaken between people and their local/national government towards solving social issues. These partnerships could be considered as a spectrum between state-led and people-led.	Co-creation and co-implementation of social protection programmes and services through planning and delivery initiatives, community response teams and mutual aid groups.
Connections	Effective and enduring relationships are forged between people and states. These connections and relationships are embedded within existing governance systems and frameworks, and are subject to institutional change and contestations, due to the changing characteristics of the political contexts and the institutions themselves.	Community health volunteers as part of a devolved national health system; national volunteering programmes; neighbourhood governance; local councils; climate boards, and social entrepreneurship.

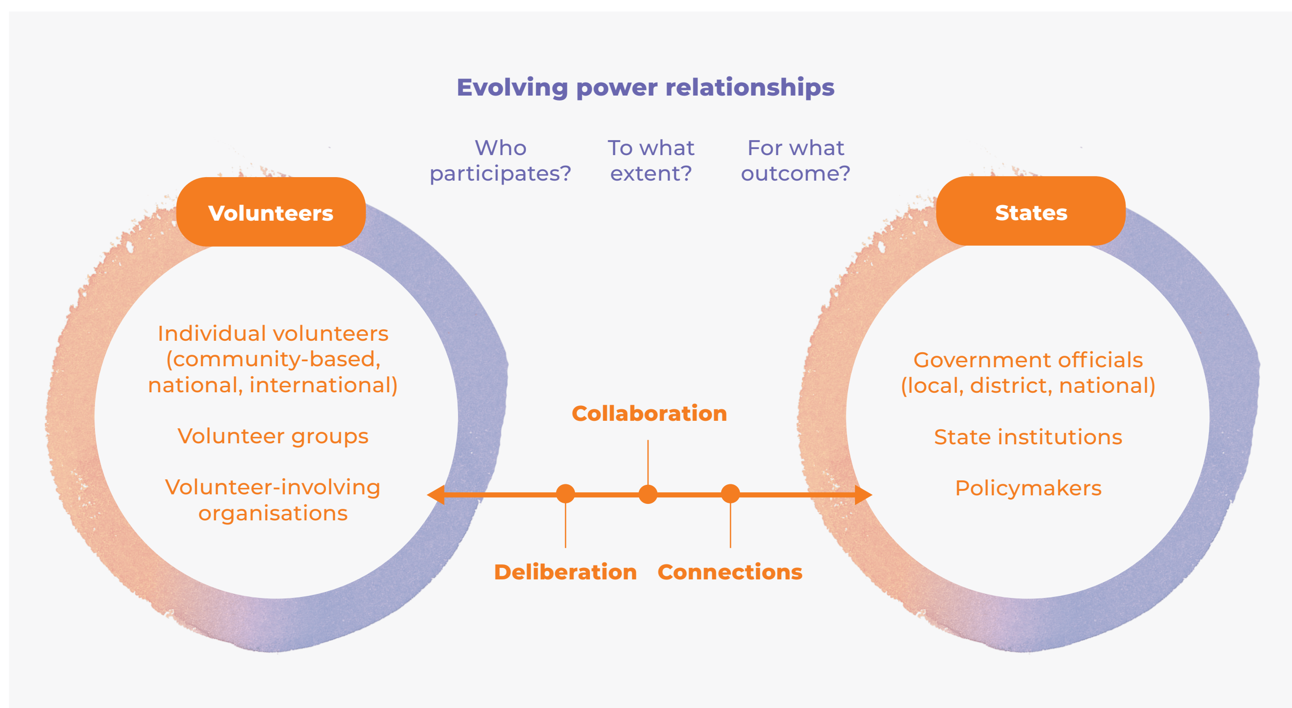
These types do not exist in isolation; they evolve in response to wider power inequalities, and are not necessarily harmonious. In many people–state relationships, conflicts arise[70] which, at times, reflect wider polarization.[71] At the same time, opening up spaces for various ideas to be deliberated, and even disputed, can be central to achieving inclusive social contracts and public policymaking.[72, 73] In Argentina, contestations between the government and social groups on how best to respond to the spread of COVID-19 led to a post-pandemic reconstruction plan that focused on reviving the economy in the country's poorest cities.[74]

Five years into the implementation of the SDGs, Voluntary National Reviews of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development increasingly recognize the potential of volunteering as a vehicle for participation and consultation.[75] Volunteering enables people's participation through community participation for resilience-building; the use of apps, platforms and social media; and participation in consultations for policies that directly affect volunteers themselves. In the United Arab Emirates, youth councils led by local volunteers ensure that policies empower young people and volunteering organizations. In Paraguay, volunteers and the government engaged in a consultative

process which led to the development of volunteering legislation.

This report describes i) the extent of volunteers' and volunteer groups' involvement in volunteer–state relationships; and ii) the shifting power relationships and dynamics of control between volunteers and state authorities.[76] As Figure 1.3 shows, volunteer–state relationships evolve through deliberation, collaboration and connections.

Figure 1.3. Evolving volunteer–state relationships



The framework recognizes that "volunteers" and "states" are not homogeneous groups and zooms in on the various elements that shape these relationships. The report poses three core questions:

i) Who volunteers or participates?

ii) What is the extent or quality of such participation?

iii) What outcomes are facilitated as a result?

i) This question addresses voice and inclusion in volunteer–state relationships. Certain groups such as women, young people, people with disabilities and indigenous peoples might face barriers when volunteering in partnership with state authorities in decision-making, co-production and social innovation, and their participation may also be constrained.

ii) This question asks how participation in people–state relationships fosters ownership. Differences and inequalities in power, gender, socio-economic status and influence affect participation through volunteering.

iii) This question asks what outcomes are facilitated when volunteers and the state work together rather than separately. In doing so, it identifies the added value of these partnerships in the context of the SDGs.

These questions are used as the starting point for exploring real-world scenarios of volunteer–state relationships, to identify their strengths and potential as well as limitations and conflicts.

1.2.4. Volunteer–state models

To discuss real-world scenarios of volunteer–state relationships, this report categorizes them according to: i) the actors involved; ii) the relationships between them; and iii) the extent to which their activities address voice and inclusion, innovation and ownership. The report identifies three models: the deliberative governance model, the co-production of services model and the social innovation model.

The **deliberative governance model** (chapter 4) demonstrates how diverse voices and aspirations are, and can be, brought into states' decision-making processes. Inclusion of these voices requires careful attention to issues of inequalities such as the gendered dimension of volunteering and volunteer–state relationships.

In the cities of Porto Alegre and Belo Horizonte in Brazil, for instance, participatory budgeting became a way to shape financial priority in favour of the poor.[77] During the Tunisian government's transition, civil society organizations (CSOs) played a role in ensuring public dialogue in policymaking processes. This helped reduce public scepticism and increased buy-in on implementation.[78]

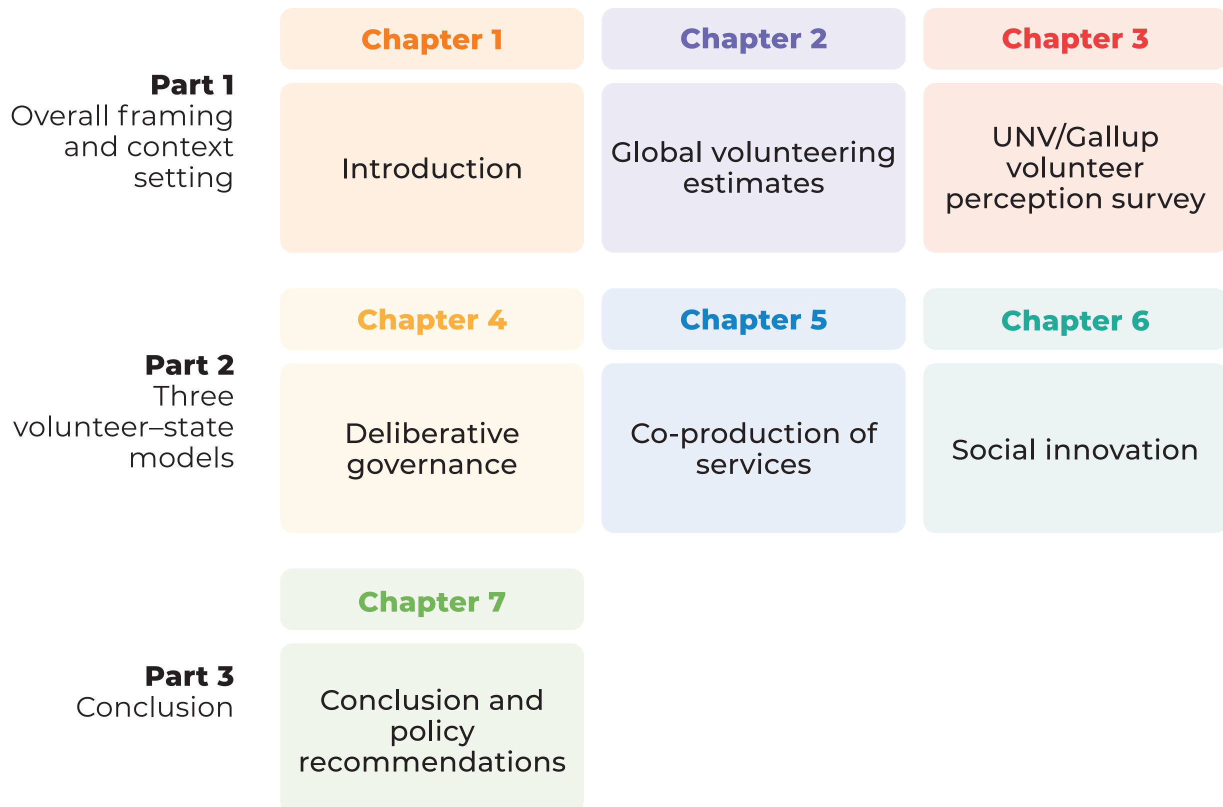
The **co-production of services model** (chapter 5) demonstrates the extent to which volunteers can shape public policies and programmes, from design to implementation to evaluation. Through this process of co-production, volunteers also shape their own work and priorities, exercising agency to ensure that their safety is protected and that their relationship with the state is equitable. In a study of local volunteers in the Korogocho slums in Kenya, for example, the participation of low-income volunteers was sometimes limited because local institutions already had pre-set programme objectives prior to engaging with the community.[79] The Tuberculosis Task Force in the Philippines has co-designed legislation on TB contact tracing. They are now leading this contact-tracing effort on behalf of the local government.[80]

The **social innovation model** (chapter 6) explores how volunteers may be involved in generating, implementing and disseminating new ideas and practices aimed at addressing ongoing and emerging social challenges. For instance, in Central Asia, several health care volunteer groups have devised new practices in response to the pandemic[81] such as the installation of home oxygen machines for at-risk patients, organized by Egzu Agmal in Uzbekistan. While many examples of contemporary social innovation focus on technological and digital projects, the SWVR reviews community-based social innovations in many contexts where resources are scarce.

1.3. How to read this report

The SWVR 2022 follows an anthology format: each chapter is stand-alone so that the report can be read in whatever order is most helpful. Nevertheless, chapters are linked together by the overall theme of Building Equal and Inclusive Societies. The report kicks off a set of four reports that provide both evidence and thought leadership on specific areas of focus under the Call to Action on Volunteering in the Decade of Action. The forthcoming editions of the report will explore how volunteerism can be a transformative force in the Decade of Action and beyond. The SWVR 2024 will examine volunteerism and measurement, building on chapter 2 of this report. The SWVR 2027 will explore volunteerism and inequalities, and the 2030 edition will take stock of volunteers' contribution to the 2030 Agenda and the Decade of Action.

Figure 1.4. Structure of the report



The first part of the report consists of three framing chapters. These present the main ideas that underpin the report and introduce concepts for investigating the potential contribution volunteerism can make to building equal and inclusive societies. Following the introduction, the next two chapters survey global and regional patterns of volunteering with a special focus on Global South countries, investigating how COVID-19 has impacted volunteering and its future directions. This part of the report provides a "state of the world's" view of volunteering, and global and regional trends.

The second part of the report focuses on the three models of volunteer–state relationship: deliberative governance, co-production of social services and social innovation. Each chapter investigates the "process" and "action" components of its respective model and discusses the drivers, challenges and barriers. To do this, the SWVR draws on research case studies from Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Arab States, and Latin America and the Caribbean (see Table 1.2.; see Appendix A for the full case study methodology).

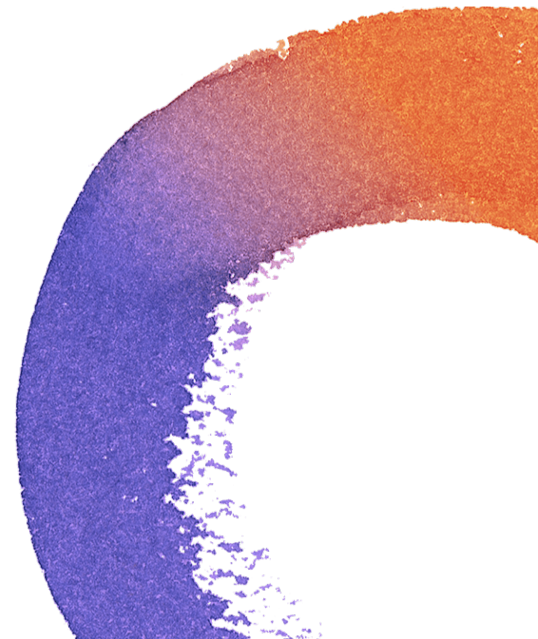


Table 1.2. List of case studies per chapter

Chapters	Theme from the analytical framework	Maxi case studies	Mini case studies
Volunteer–state partnerships and deliberative governance	Voice and Inclusion	Guthi and Barghar (Nepal) and Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano (Ecuador)	Agricultural and Rural Management Council (CARG; Democratic Republic of the Congo – DRC), Nebhana Water Forum (Tunisia), Alga (Kyrgyzstan)
Volunteer–state partnerships and and co-production of services	Ownership	Amel Association International (Lebanon)	China Disabled Persons' Federation (China), Center for Vocational Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (Kazakhstan); Bajenu Gox (Senegal), Sairon (Kyrgyzstan)
Volunteer–state partnerships and social innovation	Innovation	Art & Global Health Center (ArtGlo; Malawi)	The Volunteer Center of Trinidad and Tobago (Trinidad and Tobago), Model of Integral Care for Rurality (Colombia), Muungano Alliance (Kenya); Markets for Change (Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands)

The final chapter discusses key policy principles and offers further recommendations for policymakers on building equal and inclusive societies through development of inclusive and sustainable social contracts with volunteers.

Each chapter also features "Volunteer voices" and "Special contributions" sections. Volunteer voices are first-hand accounts from volunteers across the globe reflecting on a particular contemporary volunteering issue such as partnerships, gender and urbanization. Special contributions are think pieces by policymakers, international organizations, governments and volunteers.

Volunteer voice: Makan Dramé from Mali on the challenges and impacts of volunteering

Volunteering is a complex social process that means different things to different people. When COVID-19 reached Mali, Makan Dramé immediately volunteered to support his local government officials in their response despite experiencing a number of challenges. Below, Makan reflects on the impact volunteering can have on both communities and volunteers.

My passion for volunteering dates back to my childhood. Raised in a family that prioritized solidarity and mutual support, I spent much of my time working as a community volunteer—a deeply enriching experience.

Having worked as a national volunteer with the National Centre for the Promotion of Volunteerism (CNPV), I was among 60 volunteers who were selected to participate in the United Nations Community Volunteers for the COVID-19 response. As team leader, I engaged volunteers in raising awareness and informing and mobilizing communities to fight COVID-19 in public spaces by observing preventive measures. For 11 months, the volunteers worked in health centres, families, mosques, markets, community gatherings (grins) and on the streets.

In November 2020, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, which is responsible for civic education and citizenship-building in Bamako, supported a two-day awareness-raising campaign on the pandemic, launched by UNV Mali in partnership with the CNPV. As part of the campaign, thousands of people including women, young people, vulnerable people and internally displaced persons (IDPs) were reached. During the campaign's launch, which mobilized volunteer-involving organizations and associations to raise awareness on COVID-19 prevention measures, community volunteers were commended for their commitment to COVID-19 control efforts.

Most people do not understand the importance of volunteering and the role that volunteers play in building citizenship. It is not easy to be a volunteer. As we are not full-time employees with a permanent contract, we are sometimes not respected in society because of our status. Very often, the negative opinions towards volunteers come from family, friends and acquaintances... And yet every citizen can and must contribute to building their country.

What I am most proud of is having contributed to the collective effort to fight COVID-19. We successfully accomplished our mission because our daily activities helped to change attitudes and save lives.

Special contribution: Partnership between volunteers and the state

Reflection by H.E. Dr. Nivine El-Kabbag, Minister of Social Solidarity, Egypt

Egypt believes in the importance of developing the capacities and potential of young people as future leaders in order to achieve sustainable development and Egypt Vision 2030. Recent history and events have shown that young people are active actors in society and have the awareness, capacity and determination to bring about constructive social change, and positively impact the lives of millions of people in the most vulnerable groups and the victims of disasters or accidents.

For Egypt, youth are valuable resources whom we must support and invest in, and we must embrace their ideas and energies to address the social problems that we are solving. The Ministry of Social Solidarity, in partnership with other sectors of the government and society, is working to ensure that young people from all backgrounds, from rural and urban areas, volunteer in various areas of development, thereby enhancing the opportunities of young people to deal with their personal and community challenges and enjoy team spirit, cooperation and innovation.

The Ministry of Social Solidarity provides capacity-building programmes and communication channels for young people to volunteer to participate and respond creatively to Egypt's development challenges. Youth have participated as volunteers in all the presidential initiatives and major development projects undertaken by the Egyptian state over the past few years, such as the national initiative for the development of Egyptian villages; and Hayah Karima and Waii, the community awareness-raising programmes. Moreover, the Ministry of Social Solidarity has depended on the strong contributions from volunteers in critical moments of disasters and crises through their voluntary work with the Egyptian Red Crescent. Furthermore, youth are playing a major role in shaping a safe future for their peers through their voluntary activities done with the Fund to Combat Addiction and Substance Abuse. These initiatives strengthen the leadership role of young people in the community and humanitarian work, and boost their motivation, resilience and potential for the development of their communities as active citizens, future responsible leaders and role models for younger generations in Egypt.

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Endnotes

1 Burns and others (2014).
2 Aked (2015).
3 Leach and others (2021).
4 Taken from the UN Secretary General's Nelson 2020 Mandela Annual Lecture, "Tackling Inequality: A New Social Contract for a New Era", available at https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/a-new-social-contract-for-a-new-era/.
5 United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD; 2021, p. 3).
6 UNV (2011, p. 93).
7 UNV (2015).
8 UNV (2018).
9 UNV (2011, p. 92).
10 UNV (2015).
11 Burns and others (2014).
12 Kwiatkowski and others (2020).
13 Couvet and Prevot (2015).
14 Mutua and Kiruhi (2021).
15 Mutua and Kiruhi (2021, p. 7).
16 See also Hazeldine and Baillie-Smith (2015) in the context of humanitarian emergencies and crises.
17 Monbiot (2020).
18 Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO; n.d.).
19 UNV (2021).
20 Cabato (2021).
21 Eisele (2020).
22 Sherwin (2020).
23 Volunteering Australia (2021).
24 AlOmar and others (2021).
25 Please refer to Gombodorj (2021).
26 Perold and others (2021).
27 Youngs (2020).
28 See Green (2020). A group of activists in the US who identify as queer people of colour with disabilities have set up support (e.g. distribution of home-made hand sanitizers, N95 respirator masks and gloves) for fellow people with disabilities and other underserved populations, such as those who are homeless.
29 UNV (2020).
30 See Appendix A for the full case study research methodology.
31 United Nations General Assembly (UNGA; 2018).
32 UNGA (2002).
33 Dekker and Halman (2003).
34 Butcher and Einolf (2017).
35 Anheier and Salamon (1999).
36 Amichai-Hamburger (2008).
37 MacDuff (2005).
38 Twigg and Mosel (2017).
39 Baillie Smith and others (2020).
40 Lewis (2015).
41 Hazeldine and Baillie Smith (2015).
42 Hustinx and Lammertyn (2003).
43 Rochester and others (2010).
44 Stebbins (2013).
45 UNV (2020).
46 Ellis Paine, Hill and Rochester (2010).
47 Butcher and Einolf (2017).
48 Adler and Goggin (2005).
49 Serrat and others (2020).
50 Adler and Goggin (2005).
51 Ekman and Amnå (2012).
52 Butcher and Einolf (2017).
53 UNDP (2016).
54 Shafik (2021).
55 These distinctions were heavily drawn from UNRISD (2021).
56 UNRISD (2021).
57 Chemhuru (2017).
58 Shafik (2021, p. 185).
59 McCandless (2020).
60 Shafik (2021, p. 25).
61 Shafik (2021, p. 6).
62 Coole (1994).
63 Hickey (2011).
64 Shafik (2021).
65 UNDP (2016).
66 Shafik (2021).
67 For instance, volunteers as actors to support social accountability systems. Here, volunteers make the state accountable for their actions, policies and priorities.
68 Loewe, Zintl and Houdret (2021).
69 This table was drawn from the work of Lee and Levine (2016) on various forms of citizen engagement, from the UNDP (2016) concept of resilient and inclusive social contracts, and from Mahoney and Thelen's (2010; see pp. 18–20 in particular) modes of institutional change.
70 UNRISD (2021).
71 Abers, Rossi and von Bülow (2021) discuss this in the context of Argentina and Brazil.
72 See for instance, Cook, Smith and Utting (2012) in relation to policies on g reen economy and sustainable development.
73 Volunteer–state relationships could, for instance, be understood as part of what Cornwall and Coelho describe

as a “participatory sphere” or “spaces of contestation as well as collaboration” (2007, p.1).
74 Abers, Rossi and von Bülow (2021). The uncertainty of the pandemic led to a reconfiguration of the role of social movements within Argentina’s government coalition as strong social groups – such as the piquetero movement of informally employed and unemployed poor people – had increased participation. The “Creole Marshall Plan” was developed to urbanize 1,600 shanty towns in the Buenos Aires Metropolitan area, home to 3.5 million inhabitants, most of whom are the country’s poorest populations.
75 UNV (2020).
76 Chambers (2005); Guijt and Shah (1998).
77 Suoza (2001). Participatory budgeting is a process by which people are involved in decisions as to how public money is spent. While it has been effective in taking into account poor people’s priorities, more marginalized segments continue to be sidelined.
78 Mahmoud and Súilleabháin (2020 p. 112).
79 See Lewis (2015).
80 See Milllora and Ahmed (2020).
81 Radjabov (2020).