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INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

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Working group on Measurement of Volunteer  
Work

**Expressions of support for the proposed  
Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer  
Work**



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE GENEVA

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**Center for Civil Society Studies**

Lester M. Salamon  
Director

**EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT  
FOR THE PROPOSED  
*MANUAL ON THE MEASUREMENT OF  
VOLUNTEER WORK***



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**Center for Civil Society Studies**

Lester M. Salamon  
Director

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Mr. Geoff Bascand, Government Statistician, Statistics New Zealand  
**Re:** Support for Proposed ILO *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work*  
Scheduled for Consideration at the 18<sup>th</sup> ICLS  
**Date:** November 14, 2008

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Dear Geoff:

I am writing to you in your capacity as the Chairman of the forthcoming 18<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Labour Statisticians to follow up on the conversation we had during my visit to New Zealand in August and to make you aware of the considerable groundswell of support that has emerged for the draft ILO *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* that we have developed in cooperation with the ILO and that is scheduled for consideration at the ICLS Conference.

I also want to solicit your help in making sure that a Working Group is formed around this topic during the ICLS and to encourage you to identify a Statistics New Zealand representative to participate in it given Statistics New Zealand's considerable experience in this area.

**Background**

As you may remember, the Statistics Bureau of the International Labour Organization formed a partnership with our Center at Johns Hopkins in August 2007 to develop a method for producing regular, comparative, and cost-effective statistics on volunteer work around the world in view of the growing scale and importance of such work and the need for data on it in order to implement the recent United Nations *Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions in the System of National Accounts*.

Since then we have worked with a Technical Experts Group convened by ILO to formulate an acceptable definition of "volunteer work," resolved a number of technical issues, and formulated a draft survey module that could be inserted as a periodic supplement into regular labour force surveys. This module has now been tested in three countries—Canada, France, and Korea—and the key chapters of a *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* drafted for use as a room document at the ICLS.



## Expressions of Support

These documents have been met with considerable enthusiasm among civil society and volunteer promotion leaders, political figures, statistical offices, and international organizations around the world, as evidenced by the following partial list of actions that have been taken in support of positive ICLS action on this topic:

- The **European Volunteer Centre (CEV)** has notified its 66 member organizations and some 20 European networks about the initiative, noting:

“The ILO is for the first time ever considering including a module on volunteering into its regular surveys! ...This is a ‘once in a lifetime’ chance. Let’s use it.”

- Dr. Kang-Huyn Lee, President of the **International Association of Volunteer Effort (IAVE)** has written to Sylvester Young, Director of Statistics at the International Labor Organisation:

“to acknowledge and express our support for the proposed new *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* that is being developed through a joint initiative of the International Labor Organisations (ILO) and Johns Hopkins University.”

As Dr. Lee explained:

“The International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) ... exists to promote, strengthen and celebrate the development of volunteering worldwide. As the only international organization of this nature we recognize the need for a reliable and standard mechanism for the measurement of volunteer work. *The current work of the ILO and Johns Hopkins will be critical in this regard and we congratulate you on this important project.*

“To further demonstrate our support we will be encouraging our 500+ members to write to their governments and/or statistical agencies asking that they commit to adopting the proposed *Manual*. ”

- **United Nations Volunteers** similarly wrote to its program officers throughout the world asking them to draft letters to those attending the ICLS from their host countries urging favorable action on the proposed *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work*.
- Prominent political leaders have also spoken out in support of the ILO *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work*. Thus, for example:

- **Ursula Stephens, Australia’s Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector** reported in a recent speech that:

“Australia has ... made a commitment to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the John Hopkins Centre for Civil Society Studies...to provide support for a manual on the measurement of volunteer work through official labour force [surveys]. *This project continues to be very important as we consider the opportunities that volunteering provides for creating pathways to sustainable employment.*”

- **Member of the European Parliament Marian Harkin of Ireland** has contacted the French Presidency of the European Commission urging its support for the measurement of volunteering in Europe, noting:



“This is one area of the statistical system that touches the citizens of Europe in a direct way and therefore validates the involvement of citizens in voluntary activities by giving it explicit visibility in the statistical system for the first time.”

- To date, civil society leaders in at least 15 countries (Argentina, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, Mexico, Belgium, Israel, United Kingdom, Sweden, Guyana, Ireland, Canada, Bosnia and Herzegovina) have contacted representatives of labour statistics departments to urge their support for this *Volunteer Measurement Manual*. As the representative of **Volunteering England** put it:

“This proposal represent[s] a **state-of-the-art, feasible and economical way of measuring volunteering, which is notoriously problematic**. There is a need for a more accurate measure especially one that could be applied at local and regional levels, and also could be used for cross-national comparisons– including within the UK and within the European Community.”

Representatives of the **Center For Frivilligt Socialt Arbejde** in Denmark similarly expressed their support for this *Handbook* in communication to the Danish representatives to the ICLS, noting:

“We have, as mentioned, created a unique database, but we also need forward-looking actions that can follow up and further develop our knowledge of voluntary work and how volunteering helps to ensure the cohesion of society and relieve social, cultural, health, education, and environmental problems and challenges. **The ILO manual can help us.**”

- **National accountants in at least six countries implementing the UN *Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions*** (Uganda, Vietnam, Mali, Thailand, Cameroon, Canada) have reported contacting their labour statistics colleagues to express their support for the proposed *Manual*.
- As further evidence of the growing support for the UN *NPI Handbook* and its call for the measurement of volunteer work, the **Government of Norway** has just allocated **NOK 1 million** in the Norwegian State Budget for 2009 for the development of a satellite account on the nonprofit sector, **including the measurement of volunteer work**.

These and other expressions of support we have received provide strong evidence of the considerable enthusiasm for this *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* within the international civil society community, and among a number of public officials, government agencies, and international organizations. Our task now is to ensure that this *Manual* receives careful consideration and a vote of confidence at the ICLS so that it can proceed to the next phase of development.

Your encouragement and support were crucial in promoting the effective implementation of the UN *Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions* in New Zealand and I am confident that with your support it will be possible to move the *Handbook on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* forward at the forthcoming ICLS session in Geneva. I look forward to seeing you in Geneva and to working with you to this end.

Yours truly,



Lester M. Salamon  
Director



## Summary of Expressions of Support for the ILO *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work*

### European Union

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**Member of European Parliament, Marian Harkin**, asked the French Presidency of the Commission for its support of the measurement of volunteering in Europe, saying:

“This is one area of the statistical system that touches the citizens of Europe in a direct way and therefore validates the involvement of citizens in voluntary activities by giving it explicit visibility in the statistical system for the first time.”

### Australia

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In a speech delivered to the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Volunteering, **Senator Ursula Stephens**, the **Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector**, noted that the Social Inclusion agenda calls for developing a greater understanding of the Voluntary Sector, and to that end stated:

“Australia has also made a commitment to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the John Hopkins Centre for Civil Society Studies for the ILO to provide support for a manual on the measurement of volunteer work through official labour force [surveys]. *This project continues to be very important as we consider the opportunities that volunteering provides for creating pathways to sustainable employment.*”

### Croatia

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**The Association for Civil Society Development, SMART**, in support of the *National Strategy for the Creation of an Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development* operational plan for 2006-2011, sent letters of support for the adoption of the *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* to key stakeholders. When it heard about the plan, the Croatian Network of Volunteer Centres also decided to support the initiative.

A meeting was held on 25 September between representatives of the **National Office for Statistics**, the President of the **National Board for Volunteering Development**, the head of the **Croatian Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs** and a representative of the **Ministry of Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity**. Conclusions from that meeting include:

- National Office for Statistics supported the idea, thinks it is important and agreed to support the initiative in Geneva.
- National Office for Statistics is open for further cooperation in order to set up the systems needed to gather statistical data within Croatia on NPIs and volunteering.
- The Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs agreed to provide the National Office for Statistics with the initial administrative information needed to measure the economic value of the non-profit sector and volunteering in Croatia. (Attachment 1)



## Denmark

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Mette Hjære of the **Center For Frivilligt Socialt Arbejde** has written to the Danish Representative to ICLS, Mr. Sven Egnose and his Advisor Mr. Bente Dryberg, urging their support for the ILO *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* in light of previous research showing the profound impact of volunteering on the Danish economy. She went on to stress the need to take the next step in this research:

“We have, as mentioned, created a unique database, but we also need forward-looking actions that can follow up and further develop our knowledge of voluntary work and how volunteering helps to ensure the cohesion of society and relieve social, cultural, health, education, and environmental problems and challenges. **The ILO manual can help us.**”  
(Attachment 2)

## United Kingdom

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**Volunteering England** contacted colleagues in the following government agencies in the UK England to encourage support for the *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work*: Office of the Third Sector; Department of Culture, Media and Sport; Department of Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform; Department for Communities and Local Government; Office of National Statistics; and the Audit Commission. Volunteering England officials noted that:

“The attached proposal...has been developed by Lester Salamon and his team at the Johns Hopkins University Institute for Policy Studies, who have a high reputation for numerous national studies of voluntary organisations, after consulting with colleagues, including ourselves....

This proposal does, I think, represent a **state-of-the-art, feasible and economical way of measuring volunteering, which is notoriously problematic**. There is a need for a more accurate measure especially one that could be applied at local and regional levels, and also could be used for cross-national comparisons– including within the UK and within the European Community.”

## Finland

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Ulla Grönlund of **Citizen Forum**, expressed her organization’s enthusiastic support for the Project, as it addresses an extant need which her group had already identified:

“Indeed, we were pleased to hear about the process, as we also have been thinking about possible action to be taken in order to promote an establishment of official statistics of volunteering here in Finland. At the moment, there are no official ones.

“Hence we will of course do our bit over this end to support the initiative. We have a fairly extensive network of Finnish voluntary organizations, and are circulating the letter addressed to Finnish participants to the Geneva meeting to all those organizations.”

A meeting was later held with four representatives of Statistics Finland. Ms. Grönlund reported that they had indicated support for the idea.

“**Statistics Finland** seemed to have a positive view towards your initiative, and I am pretty confident they will give their vote to it.”





## Norway

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Stian Slotterøy Johnsen of the **Association of NGOs in Norway** contacted his members and received an enthusiastic response. Members arranged to meet with ICLS Norway Representative Helge Næsheim on 30 October.

“On October 22, the government of Norway announced that **NOK 1 million** in the Norwegian State Budget for 2009, would be set aside for the development of a satellite account for the nonprofit sector, including the measurement of volunteer work.”

## Ireland

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**Marian Harkin, European Member of Parliament**, has written letters to the Central Statistical Office's head of National Accounts, Irish Minister for Finance, and the Irish Minister of State, asking for implementation of the UN *Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions* and the *measurement of volunteering* in Ireland.

“We have also written to various voluntary organisations throughout Ireland asking them to write to the CSO Head of National Accounts (we have already received a positive response from many organisations who have written to the CSO).”

## Thailand

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Tongta Kiewpaisal, Officer in Charge, Programme Division, United Nations Development Programme, Thailand wrote to ICLS participant Mr. Anton Juntavich to urge support for the adoption of the *Manual*, concluding:

“We believe the adoption of this manual will significantly boost volunteering in Thailand and assist in reflecting more accurately the available human resource base. We urge you, therefore, to support this initiative at next month's ILO Conference, and to work towards its implementation.” (Attachment 3)

## European Volunteer Centre (CEV)

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Markus Held, Director of the **European Volunteer Centre (CEV)** sent an email notifying 66 member organizations and some 20 European networks about the initiative and urging them to contact their countries' ICLS Representatives in support of the *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work*:

“The ILO is for the first time ever considering including a module on volunteering into its regular surveys! This would mean that in all countries we would have basic and comparable data on volunteering such as the number of people who volunteer, their age and the economic value of their volunteer work.

However, we need to ensure that the statisticians recognize that these data are needed and requested by volunteer organisations. So it is important that we write to them as civil society organisations expressing our wish to have ongoing and comparable data on volunteering. The CEV General Assembly concluded that the economic value is not the only value of volunteering - but that it can certainly be an instrument to raise awareness and get public attention for volunteering, especially in the political arena where often a ‘what you cannot count does not count’ approach prevails ...

***This is a ‘once in a lifetime’ chance to get this kind of data. Let's use it.*** (Attachment 4)



## **International Association of Volunteer Effort (IAVE)**

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Dr. Kang-Huyn Lee, President of the **International Association of Volunteer Effort (IAVE)** wrote to the Mr. Sylvester Young, Director of Statistics at the International Labor Organisation in strong support of the *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work*:

“I write to acknowledge and express our support for the proposed new *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* that is being developed through a joint initiative of the International Labor Organisations (ILO) and Johns Hopkins University.

“The International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) was founded in 1970 and exists to promote, strengthen and celebrate the development of volunteering worldwide. As the only international organisation of this nature we recognise the need for a reliable and standard mechanism for the measurement of volunteer work. ***The current work of the ILO and Johns Hopkins will be critical in this regard and we congratulate you on this important project.***

“To further demonstrate our support we will be encouraging our 500+ members to write to their governments and/or statistical agencies asking that they commit to adopting the proposed *Manual*.” (Attachment 5)

In addition, IAVE included this initiative as a featured item in their July/August Newsletter to members, urging them to act in support of adoption of the *Manual*:

“The role of national and regional volunteer centres and major volunteer organisations in advocating on this issue within their own countries cannot be underestimated in this context.” (Attachment 6)



## Actions taken by Association for Civil Society Development SMART related to the statistics on economic value of volunteering

### Background info

During 2005 Croatia has developed the *National Strategy for the Creation of Enabling Environment for Civil Society Development* including the operational plan 2006-2011. The strategy consists of different chapters including the chapter devoted to volunteering development. As a part of the operational plan there is a defined objective related to the contribution of economic value of volunteering in to the national GDP.

### After the General Assembly in Ljubljana SMART took following actions:

- Introduced the idea presented by Lester Salomon, director of the Johns Hopkins University to the Croatian Network of Volunteer Centres and to the members of the National Board for volunteering development
- Sent the letter to the key stakeholders responsible for the development of volunteering in Croatia introducing the idea and proposing the joint action towards the Croatian Central Bureau of Statistics. Following stakeholders received letter: **National Board for Volunteering Development** - a governmental advisory body, which works on issues of promotion and development of volunteering. **National Foundation for Civil Society Development** - supported volunteering by providing funding opportunities and cooperated with volunteer centres in organizing annual volunteering conferences. The Foundation played also a role in the process of creating law on volunteering providing it's input and lobbying within the ministries and other government bodies. **Croatian Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs** - coordinates the work of ministries, central state offices, Croatian Government offices and state administrative organizations, as well as administrative bodies at local level in connection with monitoring and improving the cooperation with the non-governmental and non-profit sector. **Ministry of Family, Veterans' Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity** - leading institution at the government level, participating in the work of National board for development of volunteering and coordinating volunteering issues at the national level.

### Results of actions taken:

- Croatian Network of Volunteer Centres supported the initiative
- Croatian Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs organized the meeting with representatives of National Office for Statistics. Meeting took place on September 25th. Representative of SMART/President of the National board for volunteering development together with the head of Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs and representative of Ministry of Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, have been present at the meeting.

#### Main conclusions from the meeting:

- o National Office for Statistics, supported idea, think it is important and if other countries will support they will support to
- o National Office for Statistics is open for further cooperation in order to set up the systems/mechanism of gathering statistical data within Croatia from different currently existing administrative sources.
- o Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs will provide the list for the National Office for Statistics what are the needed data related to the measurement of economic value of non-profit sector and volunteering in Croatia
- Conclusions from the meeting were disseminated to the members of Croatian Network of Volunteer Centres and members of National Board for Volunteering Development.

### Further actions:

Development of the action plan with clear define roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders. The Action Plan will be developed in coming month by Government Office for Cooperation with NGOs in cooperation with the representative of SMART and representative of Ministry of Family, Veteran's Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity.

## Frivilligt arbejde i arbejdsmarkedsstatistikker – ILO konference, Geneve

Kære Sven Egnose,

Vi vil med dette brev gerne henlede din opmærksomhed på den manual om frivilligt arbejde og arbejdsmarkedsstatistikker – *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* – der skal drøftes på den nært forestående International Conference of Labour Statisticians i Geneve. I den forbindelse beder vi om din opbakning og støtte til forslaget – og til implementeringen af manualen i dansk sammenhæng.

Manualen er udviklet af ILO i tæt samarbejde med Johns Hopkins University. Det amerikanske universitet står bag et stort internationalt forskningsprojekt, der har til formål at kortlægge og estimere værdien af den frivillige nonprofit sektor, og Danmark er et af de 42 lande, der har gennemført undersøgelsen. Du kan læse om den danske undersøgelse *Frivillighedsundersøgelsen* på [www.frivillighedsus.dk](http://www.frivillighedsus.dk)

Det internationale, såvel som det danske, forskningsprojekt har givet os en enestående og pålidelig viden om den frivillige sektors størrelse, omfang og betydning. I Europa er mere end 100 millioner mennesker aktive i det frivillige arbejde, og i Danmark er det omkring 1,5 millioner eller 35 pct. af befolkningen. I 2004 bidrog den danske frivillige, nonprofit sektor med næsten 100 mia.kr. til samfundsøkonomien, men regnes værdien af det frivillige arbejde med, stiger tallet til næsten 135 mia. kr. svarende til knap 9,6 pct. af BNP.

Vi har som omtalt fået skabt et unikt datagrundlag, men vi har også brug for fremadrettede tiltag, der kan følge op og videreudvikle vores viden om det frivillige arbejde og hvordan frivilligheden bidrager til at sikre sammenhængskraften i samfundet og afhjælper sociale, kulturelle, sundheds-, uddannelses-, og miljømæssige problemer og udfordringer.

Det kan ILO manualen hjælpe os med.

Som forskningscentre bag Frivillighedsundersøgelsen – og som videnscentre, der også fremover skal bidrage til viden, støtte og udvikling af den frivillige sektor i Danmark, håber vi meget, at du vil bakke op om forslaget på konferencen i Geneve. Vi står gerne til rådighed for en nærmere dialog, og ønsker du flere oplysninger om ILO manualen, er du velkommen til at kontakte projektteamet ved the Johns Hopkins University via e-mail: [megan.haddock@jhu.edu](mailto:megan.haddock@jhu.edu)

Venlig hilsen

**Bjarne Ibsen**, centerleder, Center for forskning i Idræt, Sundhed og Civilsamfund, SDU:  
[bibsen@health.sdu.dk](mailto:bibsen@health.sdu.dk)

**Thomas Boje**, professor, Institut for Samfund og Globalisering, RUC: [boje@ruc.dk](mailto:boje@ruc.dk)

**Torben Fridberg**, seniorforsker, Det Nationale Forskningscenter for Velfærd SFI: [tf@sfi.dk](mailto:tf@sfi.dk)

**Mette Hjære**, konsulent, Center for Frivilligt Socialt Arbejde: [mh@frivillighed.dk](mailto:mh@frivillighed.dk)

## Frivilligt arbejde i arbejdsmarkedsstatistikker – ILO konference, Geneve

Kære Bente Dyrberg,

Vi vil med dette brev gerne henlede din opmærksomhed på den manual om frivilligt arbejde og arbejdsmarkedsstatistikker – *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* – der skal drøftes på den nært forestående International Conference of Labour Statisticians i Geneve. I den forbindelse beder vi om din opbakning og støtte til forslaget – og til implementeringen af manualen i dansk sammenhæng.

Manualen er udviklet af ILO i tæt samarbejde med Johns Hopkins University. Det amerikanske universitet står bag et stort internationalt forskningsprojekt, der har til formål at kortlægge og estimere værdien af den frivillige nonprofit sektor, og Danmark er et af de 42 lande, der har gennemført undersøgelsen. Du kan læse om den danske undersøgelse *Frivillighedsundersøgelsen* på [www.frivillighedsus.dk](http://www.frivillighedsus.dk)

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Vi har som omtalt fået skabt et unikt datagrundlag, men vi har også brug for fremadrettede tiltag, der kan følge op og videreudvikle vores viden om det frivillige arbejde og hvordan frivilligheden bidrager til at sikre sammenhængskraften i samfundet og afhjælper sociale, kulturelle, sundheds-, uddannelses-, og miljømæssige problemer og udfordringer.

Det kan ILO manualen hjælpe os med.

Som forskningscentre bag Frivillighedsundersøgelsen – og som videnscentre, der også fremover skal bidrage til viden, støtte og udvikling af den frivillige sektor i Danmark, håber vi meget, at du vil bakke op om forslaget på konferencen i Geneve. Vi står gerne til rådighed for en nærmere dialog, og ønsker du flere oplysninger om ILO manualen, er du velkommen til at kontakte projektteamet ved the Johns Hopkins University via e-mail: [megan.haddock@jhu.edu](mailto:megan.haddock@jhu.edu)

Venlig hilsen

**Bjarne Ibsen**, centerleder, Center for forskning i Idræt, Sundhed og Civilsamfund, SDU:  
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**Thomas Boje**, professor, Institut for Samfund og Globalisering, RUC: [boje@ruc.dk](mailto:boje@ruc.dk)

**Torben Fridberg**, seniorforsker, Det Nationale Forskningscenter for Velfærd SFI: [tf@sfi.dk](mailto:tf@sfi.dk)

**Mette Hjære**, konsulent, Center for Frivilligt Socialt Arbejde: [mh@frivillighed.dk](mailto:mh@frivillighed.dk)

Dear Khun Juntavich,

11 November 2008

**Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work**

I am writing to call your attention to the proposed *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* that the International Labour Organization will introduce for consideration at the forthcoming 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians to be held at the ILO Headquarters in Geneva on 24 November to 5 December 2008.

Increasingly the international community is recognizing the vital contributions volunteers make to improving health, education, and social welfare in developing countries, and contributing to the quality of life in many other ways as well. On the other hand, the economic value that results from volunteer work remains largely invisible. In addition to robbing volunteering of needed visibility and credibility, this has an inevitable detrimental impact on policy setting by underplaying the overall human resources available for meeting existing development challenges.

The recently adopted United Nations *Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions in the System of National Accounts* calls on countries to correct this situation by including data on volunteer work in the regular "satellite accounts" on nonprofit institutions that it recommends countries produce. The proposed ILO *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* will provide a standardized mechanism for generating the comparative data needed to comply with this mandate through a regular supplement to existing labour force surveys. The *Manual* has been developed with inputs from a Technical Experts Group consisting of a wide array of statistical officials and volunteering experts from a number of countries, and supported financially by UNDP/UNV.

We believe the adoption of this manual will significantly boost volunteering in Thailand and assist in reflecting more accurately the available human resource base. We urge you, therefore, to support this initiative at next month's ILO Conference, and to work towards its implementation.

I thank you in advance for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Tongta Kiewpaisal  
Officer in Charge  
Programme Division

Mr. Anon Juntavich  
National Statistical Office  
Lorn Luong Road  
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Brussels, 16.09.2008

**CEV Members briefing on  
*Campaign for statistics on the economic value of volunteering***

**Background: Johns Hopkins University and CEV work on measuring the economic value of volunteering**

Over the last years the issue of measuring the economic value of volunteering became more and more salient. The Johns Hopkins University (JHU), as one of the first academic institutions, has been conducting research on the contribution of the voluntary sector and volunteering to national economies and their Gross Domestic Product (their co-called “Comparative Non-Profit Sector Project”) providing data on the so far invisible and not measured economic value of volunteering. The Johns Hopkins’s findings from studies completed in 37 countries give the impressive results: When counted,

- Volunteers represent the equivalent of 3-5% of the economically active population in many countries,
- Volunteers make a \$400 billion contribution to the global economy,
- The number of full-time equivalent volunteers is approximately 140 million people
- and if volunteers were a nation, they would be the 9th most populous country in the world

JHU has also developed the “United Nations Handbook on Non-Profit Institutions in the System of National Accounts” in 2003 that gives the tools for National Statistics Offices to include this kind of data in satellite accounts. So far only few countries in Europe have these kinds of accounts.

CEV has joined efforts with JHU to get European countries as well as Eurostat, the statistical office of the EU, on board. The CEV General Assembly April 2008 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, was dedicated to the theme “Putting volunteering on the Economic Map of Europe” and it was acknowledged, that volunteering is much more than *only* an economic activity – but that it is has *also* a value that can be counted in economic terms. There was agreement within the CEV membership that presenting the economic value of volunteering can be a good way of winning recognition for volunteering especially with policy makers.

**The current situation: International Labour Organisation (ILO) is considering collecting statistical data on volunteering on a regular basis!**

In autumn 2008 the International Labor Organization (ILO) will review its labor force surveys and is for the first time ever considering including questions on volunteering. ILO and Johns Hopkins University have formulated a survey module on volunteering that ILO could incorporate into the labor force surveys in all countries over the world on a regular basis. Labor force and other

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surveys have been successfully used to measure volunteer work in a number of countries (like U.S.A or Canada). The final decision on this will be taken during the ILO international conference of labor statisticians (ICLS) scheduled to convene **between 24 November 2008 and 05 December 2008 in Geneva, Switzerland**. If adopted and implemented, this will revolutionize the information available about the work of volunteers and help boost the visibility and credibility of volunteering throughout the world. The ILO only meets every 5 years to approve recommendations for changes in labor force surveys.

### What can CEV members do about this?

Every country will send representatives of National Statistics Agencies to the meeting in Geneva. They will only decide to include a survey module about volunteering if they have the feeling that volunteer organizations and civil society do actually want it.

You as CEV members can contribute to this:

1. **Write on behalf of your organization to the representatives of your country who will be attending the conference in Geneva to inform them of this volunteering survey initiative (Johns Hopkins/ILO *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work*) and encourage them to support it; and**
2. **Contact your national affiliates, members and partners asking them to support your letter.**
3. **Let us know about your actions! Please copy Kamila Czerwinska from CEV ([kamila@cev.be](mailto:kamila@cev.be)) and Megan Haddock from JHU ([megan.haddock@jhu.edu](mailto:megan.haddock@jhu.edu)) in your Emails.**

We have prepared together with JHU

- A model letter (in English) – please translate it into your respective languages and send to your national statistics agency
- A contact list of the statisticians who will actually be attending the ILO conference in Geneva and decide about whether or not including a module on volunteering.

You can find more background information on: <http://www.jhu.edu/ccss/volunteering/index.html>

Rue de la Science 10  
B-1000 Brussels  
☎: (+32 2) 511 75 01  
☎: (+32 2) 514 59 89  
cev@cev.be  
<http://www.cev.be/>

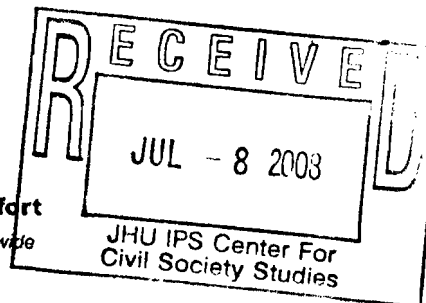




**International Association for Volunteer Effort**

Promoting celebrating and strengthening volunteerism worldwide

[www.iave.org](http://www.iave.org)



Mr Sylvester Young  
Director of Statistics  
International Labor Organisation  
4 Route des Morillons  
CH-1211 Genève 22  
Switzerland

30 June 2008

Dear Mr Young:

I write to acknowledge and express our support for the proposed new *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* that is being developed through a joint initiative of the International Labor Organisations (ILO) and Johns Hopkins University.

The International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) was founded in 1970 and exists to promote, strengthen and celebrate the development of volunteering worldwide. As the only international organisation of this nature we recognise the need for a reliable and standard mechanism for the measurement of volunteer work. The current work of the ILO and Johns Hopkins will be critical in this regard and we congratulate you on this important project.

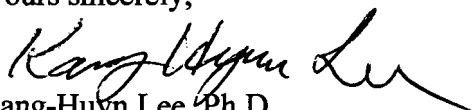
To further demonstrate our support we will be encouraging our 500+ members to write to their governments and/or statistical agencies asking that they commit to adopting the proposed Manual.

I understand that the proposed Manual is scheduled for discussion at the 18<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Labor Statisticians that will convene in November this year and hope that these discussions prove productive and successful.

I look forward to hearing about the progress of the project so that we may share updates with our members.

Should there be any other support that IAVE can offer in relation to this project we would be delighted to assist. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [president@iave.org](mailto:president@iave.org).

Yours sincerely,

  
Kang-Huyn Lee, Ph.D.

President of IAVE

cc: Professor Lester Salamon, Director  
Center for Civil Society Studies  
Johns Hopkins University

Ms Flavia Pansieri, Executive Director  
United Nations Volunteers

Mr Robert Leigh  
United Nations Volunteers



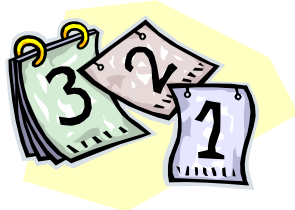
International  
Association for  
Volunteer  
Effort

July-August 2008

# E-IAVE

## NEWS FROM IAVE

### IYV+10...THE COUNTDOWN CONTINUES



The year 2011 (IYV+10) will be the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers 2001 – that's just 29 months away....The following article was prepared by Kylee Bates, Asia-Pacific Regional Representative to the IAVE board of directors as part of our continuing preparation for IYV+10.

#### **HELP US PUT VOLUNTEERING ON THE WORLD ECONOMIC MAP: How you can show your support**

IAVE members present at the Panama World Conference in April were privileged to hear a plenary presentation on the Volunteer Measurement Project, delivered by Professor Lester Salamon, Director, Center for Civil Society Studies, Johns Hopkins Institute of Policy Studies.

Announced in April 2007, the Volunteer Measurement Project aims to solve the problem of inadequate recognition of volunteer effort in statistical systems. Johns Hopkins University (JHU) and the International Labor Organisation (ILO) are collaborating to develop a recommended procedure for measuring volunteer work through official labour force surveys in countries throughout the world. The project is supported by a grant from United Nations Volunteers (UNV).

The proposed approach is to be presented to the International Conference on Labor Statisticians to be held later this year in Geneva from 24 November – 5 December and endorsement from this critical group will be sought.

While JHU and the ILO team are confident that they will recommend a sound and workable approach, the project will only achieve real success in putting volunteering on the world economic map if the approach is adopted by national statistical agencies around the world.

#### **IN THIS ISSUE:**

- About This Issue
- Bulletin: IAVE World President Trapped in Malaysia...

#### **NEWS FROM IAVE**

- IYV+10...The Countdown Continues...Help Us Put Volunteering on the World Economic Map
- From the World President
- Welcome New IAVE Staff Member

#### **NEWS FROM MEMBERS**

- Checking in with Liz Burns
- Volunteer Autobiography: Meg Villanueva
- Hong Kong Volunteers Pledge Support to Sichuan with Love
- News from GCVC: Disney VolunteARS Honored
- IAVE Member Now on You Tube
- NVPC Celebrates the Opening of the Giving Place

#### **NEWS FROM THE GLOBAL VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY**

- On the Calendar
- Resources You Can Use Today

**This is where IAVE members' active support is critical. The role of national and regional volunteer centres and major volunteer organisations in advocating on this issue within their own countries cannot be underestimated in this context.**

We are asking all IAVE members to do two things to demonstrate your support for the project and to help turn the shared goal of robust international measurement of volunteer activity into reality:

- Write to the Director of Labor Statistics in your national statistics agencies and/or national governments drawing their attention to the project and asking that they endorse the approach that is presented at the International Labor Statisticians conference later in the year.

To assist you in this task we have provided a draft letter that you can adapt as needed and send to your national statistical agency. We would also appreciate receiving a copy of any letters that you send so that we can get a picture of the level of support being encouraged. These can be mailed to Kylee Bates, Asia-Pacific Regional Representative at [kmb\\_71@hotmail.com](mailto:kmb_71@hotmail.com)

- Obtain the contact details of the key officials within your national statistical agencies and provide these to IAVE so that we can share this information with JHU and ILO to aid our efforts in gaining support for this project. Contact details can be provided to Kylee Bates – details as above.

While the support of as many countries as possible is vital, we understand that the support of Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand, and India may be especially important to the outcome at the November conference. Therefore we encourage special efforts from IAVE members and lead national volunteer organisations in those countries to garner the support of statistical agencies in those countries.

Information about this important project is available from the JHU website at <http://www.jhu.edu/~ccss/> and we will keep you informed as any developments come to hand.

#### Draft Letter to Invite Support

To: Director, Labor Statistics  
[Name of national statistical agency]  
[Address]

#### *DRAFT LETTER TEXT – FOR ADAPTION BY IAVE MEMBERS AS REQUIRED*

Dear Sir or Madam:

We/I are/am writing to urge your support for a proposed new *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* being developed by the International Labour Organization in cooperation with the Johns Hopkins University, and scheduled for discussion at the forthcoming 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians that will convene this coming November in Geneva.

Volunteers contribute importantly to the solution of a wide array of health, education, and social welfare problems in our country and help improve the quality of life in many other ways as well. At present, however, the work of volunteers is totally overlooked in labour force surveys.

The recently adopted United Nations *Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions in the System of*

*National Accounts* calls on countries to produce regular "satellite accounts" on nonprofit institutions and to include the value of volunteer work in them. Over thirty countries have already adopted this *Handbook* and many others are considering doing so. The proposed ILO *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* will provide an internationally standardized mechanism for gathering data on such volunteer work through a regular supplement to existing labour force surveys. The *Manual* has been developed with input from a Technical Experts Group convened by ILO.

As a proud member of the International Association of Volunteer Effort (IAVE) [*and include any recognised status held in own country*] we / I urge your positive endorsement of this approach at the forthcoming International Conference in Geneva.

Yours sincerely



Afghanistan

13 November 2008

Dear Mr. Ghafoori,

I am writing to call your attention to the proposed *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* that the International Labour Organization will introduce for consideration at the forthcoming 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians to be held at the ILO Headquarters in Geneva on 24 November to 5 December 2008.

Increasingly the international community is recognizing the vital contributions volunteers make to improving health, education, and social welfare in developing countries, and contributing to the quality of life in many other ways as well. On the other hand, the economic value that results from volunteer work remains largely invisible. In addition to robbing volunteering of needed visibility and credibility, this has an inevitable detrimental impact on policy setting by underplaying the overall human resources available for meeting existing development challenges.

The recently adopted United Nations *Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions in the System of National Accounts* calls on countries to correct this situation by including data on volunteer work in the regular "satellite accounts" on nonprofit institutions that it recommends countries produce. The proposed ILO *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* will provide a standardized mechanism for generating the comparative data needed to comply with this mandate through a regular supplement to existing labour force surveys. The *Manual* has been developed with inputs from a Technical Experts Group consisting of a wide array of statistical officials and volunteering experts from a number of countries, and supported financially by UNDP/UNV.

We believe the adoption of this manual will significantly boost volunteering in Afghanistan and assist in reflecting more accurately the available human resource base. We urge you, therefore, to support this initiative at next month's ILO Conference, and to work towards its implementation. I thank you in advance for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Manoj Basnyat  
Country Director

Mr. Abdul Rahman Ghafoori  
President General  
Central Statistics Office  
Ministry of Economy  
P.O. Box 1254  
Kabul, Afghanistan

Received  
08  
15  
17

**SRI LANKA**

Dear Mr. R. H. S. Abeynayake,

I am writing to call your attention to the proposed *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* that the International Labour Organization will introduce for consideration at the forthcoming 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians to be held at the ILO Headquarters in Geneva on 24 November to 5 December 2008.

Increasingly the international community is recognizing the vital contributions volunteers make to improving health, education, and social welfare in developing countries, and contributing to the quality of life in many other ways as well. On the other hand, the economic value that results from volunteer work remains largely invisible. In addition to robbing volunteering of needed visibility and credibility, this has an inevitable detrimental impact on policy setting by underplaying the overall human resources available for meeting existing development challenges. .

The recently adopted United Nations *Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions in the System of National Accounts* calls on countries to correct this situation by including data on volunteer work in the regular "satellite accounts" on nonprofit institutions that it recommends countries produce. The proposed ILO *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* will provide a standardized mechanism for generating the comparative data needed to comply with this mandate through a regular supplement to existing labour force surveys. The *Manual* has been developed with inputs from a Technical Experts Group consisting of a wide array of statistical officials and volunteering experts from a number of countries, and supported financially by UNDP/UNV.

We believe the adoption of this manual will significantly boost volunteering in Sri Lanka and assist in reflecting more accurately the available human resource base. We urge you, therefore, to support this initiative at next month's ILO Conference, and to work towards its implementation.

I thank you in advance for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Neil Buhne  
UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative