

‘ V o l u n t e e r s a n d V o l u n t e e r i s m i n E g y p t ’
Workshop Report
Cairo, November 4th 2002

Introduction

Building on the momentum of the International Year of Volunteers (IYV), a research proposal on ‘Volunteers and Volunteerism in Egypt’ was developed by the Center for Development Services and the United Nations Volunteers programme in Egypt.

Thanks to the generous contribution of Japan for IYV follow-up workshops, both the Center of Development Service and the United Nations Volunteers Programme in Egypt seized this opportunity to present the research proposal to a representative sample of stakeholders in the area of volunteerism in Egypt. The research aims to measure volunteer action across Egypt.

The workshop was found to be a great opportunity to make this research more participative and transparent but also to use it as a reason for gathering participants sharing a great interest in volunteerism.

Some 15 organisations were represented during the workshop, which made the whole discussion more lively and interesting. Representatives from NGOs, grassroots organisations, education system, private sector, Embassy, International Volunteer organisations, students and volunteers themselves were present at the workshop.

This one-day workshop aimed at facilitating participation from all present thus avoiding one person presentation. The ‘Open space technique’ was used as the best means of brainstorming, allowing all participants to take part in more than one group by moving from one to another. It is important to note that when applying this technique, both the person running the discussion and the record keeper should be quite adamant.

Participants broke into three working groups to discuss the research proposal itself, best practices of volunteer work in Egypt and support to the research and follow up to the workshop.

This report presents, in Section 1, the summary recommendations and statements or decisions made by the participants during the workshop. Section 2 attempts to summarise the discussions that took place during the day, either in the plenary or in the working groups. The agenda of the workshop as well as a list of participants are attached at the end of the report for information.

I. Summary recommendations and decisions

Based on the three working group brainstormings and plenary presentations, a number of statements, recommendations and decisions were made:

General statements:

- Egypt is currently undergoing a shift in voluntary work from almost exclusively charity work to more substantive contributions to development
- It was the first time in Egypt that stakeholders were actually asked to participate in the preliminary stages of an activity prior to its undertaking
- This workshop should be used as a trampoline for further cooperation among the participants present at the workshop
- What the volunteer movement is missing in Egypt is synergy and networking among the many volunteer based organisations

Recommendations on the research:

- The research including the changes suggested during the workshop, has been endorsed by the participants in that it is useful and will be a working document for all present to enhance the contribution of volunteerism to development
- A research on volunteers and the volunteer movement in Egypt is much needed to further enhance the already existing shift in voluntary work from charity to development
- The research proposal requires some amendments regarding the desk review and needs to take some important issues and facts into consideration (see Group 1 findings). It should start by gathering all the information available before starting the research itself (some information already available is mentioned under group 3 reports)
- Data collection should be carried out through existing networks like the 330 NGO members of the Alliance for Arab Women
- The recommendations made upon the results of the research should be practical and to the extent possible based on existing case studies (good or bad practice)
- The recommendations should make suggestions for pilot projects to be implemented/experimented by the volunteer based organisations directly
- The research proposal should be presented for cost sharing to a number of Donors (JICA, GTZ, EU Commission Delegation); UNDP, UNV and CDS have already agreed to financially support the research

Follow up to the workshop itself:

- Workshop report to be sent to all participants by 26 November
- Reviewed research proposal to be shared with all participants in January 2003 and to start also at the beginning of 2003
- An electronic network of the participants to be launched within 15 days after the end of the workshop. This network should use the email modality to start with and be used to share information, request assistance, make proposals.
- Some ideas have taken shape during the discussions that could be implemented as a follow up to the workshop: create a list of volunteer based organisations, pilot activity on how to include volunteerism in the school curricula, training of NGOs on how to manage volunteers

- 14 December 2002 will celebrate International Volunteer Day in Egypt with an Open Volunteer Day: an exhibition of the work of volunteer-based organisations in Egypt.

II The workshop, 4th November 2002 - proceedings

The workshop on ‘Volunteers and Volunteerism in Egypt-a research proposal’ was held at the Conrad Hotel for one day. More than 30 participants took part representing NGOs (whose activities involved dealing with volunteers or extending the concept of volunteerism in society) educational establishments, the media, international organisations, the private sector.¹

1. Mr. Hisham El-Rouby, Center for Development Services, greeted all participants and emphasised their competent role in reviewing the research proposal, as well as inserting any necessary modifications to reach a final research proposal. Mr. El Rouby also stressed that the objective of the workshop is to thoroughly analyze the ‘Volunteers and Volunteerism in Egypt’ research proposal through proficient and positive participation of all presents.

Despite the numerous efforts in this field, he continued, there is still a great need of more collaboration and coordination in defining the true objectives of volunteerism. The workshop also aims at highlighting certain points such as, “How far do NGOs count on volunteers to carry out their activities?”

2. A brief outline of the research proposal was then shared with participants:

- The origins and history of volunteerism in Egypt.
- The various definitions of volunteerism as held by different stakeholders, and within the context of the Egyptian society and development.
- Main reasons for volunteerism, whether personal, social, economic, or religious or spiritual
- Reasons that stop/hinder people from volunteering.
- The relation between volunteerism and personal development.
- The relation between volunteerism and community development.
- The relation between volunteerism and having a sense of belonging and Loyalty
- The relation between volunteerism and economic development.
- The relation between volunteerism and employment.
- What youth aspire for and the relation between their aspirations and the development of Egypt in general.
- The problems and obstacles that face volunteerism in Egypt today, and the means of mitigating and overcoming them.
- The means by which development organizations can use volunteers for fulfilling their development goals and objectives.

The main objective of the research proposal is to give a snapshot of volunteers and volunteerism in Egypt to make recommendations on how to best utilise volunteers for development. The research will therefore take a closer look at the relationship between volunteerism and social concepts and values such as an individual’s personal development, belonging and loyalty, social development, economic development, as well as employment. The discussion will also highlight the obstacles that confront

¹ List of participants attached.

volunteerism in Egypt, how to overcome them, as well as the means by which NGOs can utilize volunteers in achieving their developmental goals.

3. Mr. El Rouby, then suggested to do an **ice breaking exercise**: each participant will briefly introduce him/herself, share a volunteer experience and the reason for attending this workshop. A sample of these testimonies and presentation is reproduced below. The workshop agenda (2) was then presented².

Ice breaking exercise - samples:

Mrs. Manuela Soler, volunteered to be the first one to do the exercise. She introduced herself as the United Nations Volunteers Programme Officer in Egypt and seized this opportunity to greet all participants again and thank them for taking a whole day to discuss the research proposal. She placed the workshop under the umbrella of IYV +1 and the special Japanese funds made available to do some concrete follow up to the year. The reason for her being here today was to get some feedback on the research proposal, make it more participatory. She mentioned that this workshop could also be the start of a more systematic cooperation among stakeholders in the areas of volunteerism.

Dr. Magda Barsoum: Representing the Department of Cultural Affairs in the United States Embassy emphasized that the communication between all workers in the field of volunteerism is quite vital; many events take place without being acknowledged for. This is due to the lack of systemization among different associations related to volunteerism and volunteers. “There are also numerous publications on this issue that need to be shared and discussed”, she adds. “I think this workshop will be quite fruitful where volunteerism is concerned.”

Amal Oweida: Representing ‘Al Shabab’ magazine. Ms. Oweida has participated in many events relevant to volunteerism but has not done so quite frequently lately due to lack of time. “I’m rather convinced,” She says, “that we should contribute some of our time for serving others. This is what I put forth effort in doing through my work, and indeed today by participating in this workshop.”

Magdy Aziz: “I represent Upper Egypt governorates; I have worked in the field of volunteerism since 1975 and in the development field since 1984. I have participated in many volunteerism and charity activities especially during crisis times such as when numerous villages in Upper Egypt were exposed to sever floods. Dealing with such situations extremely influenced my personality and career.

My participation in this workshop aroused my concern as I read that the study will involve one of the governorates of Upper Egypt. As for the near future I am planning to work with youth form schools and colleges to enhance the concept of volunteerism. I chose this age range due to my profound belief that development mainly aims at promoting human resources, thus I thought the best way for them to learn more about volunteerism would be through their personal experience.”

Dr. Yehia Tomoum: “I represent the Egyptian Red Crescent Association. I have participated with the Red Crescent during the ‘earthquake’ crisis, which reflected

² Working agenda (2) attached.

quite a positive reaction from society members, as well as associations. One of the strong points of this experience was that there was a good chance for establishing a sort of systematization between different organizations involved or interested in volunteerism.

Due to my previous experiences with several workshops on the same subject, I recommend we apply the concept of the research with a more practical method.”

Ambassador Omran Shafie: “I have been working with the Egyptian Red Crescent Association for quite a while, and I consider volunteerism one of its major activities. I am quite concerned that volunteerism would double in value for the Egyptian society, and that it would be one of the major activities of charity and development.”

Mohamed Mohie: “I work as the First Aid Workshops Manager at the Egyptian Red Crescent Association. I have participated in many volunteerism activities especially during the ‘earthquake’ crisis. The Association plays a very vital role in development projects, for its concerns are not restricted to crisis handling only, it also extends developmental services and benefits to youth. I have accepted to attend this workshop since I believe that participation and sharing points of view can enhance the concept of volunteerism in Egypt.”

Sarah Sabry: “I work at ‘Fathet Kheir Association’ (*A path to goodwill*) where volunteerism has positively affected my life. I had worked in the field of commerce for a while but later I decided to experience volunteerism and work in the development sector. The American University in Cairo (AUC) has acquired a new approach, ‘Learning through Providing Social Services’; and from all my previous experiences I have come to learn the true value of volunteerism. I am attending in this workshop today to find out different means of cooperation between the various participants.”

Naglaa: “I am a volunteer from EVC. I consider volunteer work a great pleasure. I have participated in many volunteerism activities with several associations; I strongly believe that working in the field of volunteerism will positively affect my personality, plus the fact that I must contribute with my previous experiences in order to acquire and develop new skills.”

Heirosh Foro Kawa: “I have worked for the past two years as a Volunteer Project Coordinator at Japan International Cooperation Agency (JAICA). I am quite accustomed to volunteer work; I volunteered to work as a teacher in Ghana for many years, and today I am attending this workshop to learn more about volunteerism and the means of achieving goals in volunteerism in Egypt.”

Mohamed Abu Al Dahab: “I work as a Volunteer Program Assistant Coordinator at JAICA. I am participating in this workshop to learn more about volunteerism and the participants representing different organizations interested in volunteerism. Recently, I have been working on the Japanese volunteerism sector; we are trying to exploit Japanese expertise and benefit from them in many branches of volunteerism activities in Egypt. As for my personal experience, I have taken part in many activities, but the most influential part of my experience came from dealing with people with disabilities or with special needs.”

Hala Mohsen: “I have been working in the field of volunteerism for the past seven years, and I am attending this workshop today to learn more about the participating associations and to make use of their experiences.”

Dr. Awny Al Ani: “I participated in many volunteerism and development activities after I graduated from college. I was the Regional Deputy for UNICEF in the Arab region, I also worked in Libya and Yemen. I currently volunteer with the United Nations Volunteers Program (UNV) as I am convinced that volunteerism is one of the most important methods of development. I am developing a UNV strategy for the Arab region, which is the reason why I am here today: to listen to all participants, and have the opportunity to present the draft background paper on the strategy.

Inas Fateem: “I represent the Alliance for Arab Women. We have acquired experiences in the field of volunteerism four years ago. Until now we have managed to include 318 members to our alliance. One of our projects was to introduce volunteers to different NGOs to participate in their activities, but we have not succeeded until now. Today I am participating in this workshop to contribute in enhancing the role of volunteerism and to motivate youth to be volunteers despite the rough economic status. I look forward to find volunteerism embedded in the Egyptian education system, like Japan.”

Hana’a Saad: “I work as an interior designer in a private company. I had previous experiences in volunteerism through working with youth. I was quite tempted to participate in this workshop to take a closer look, as well as finding out how the private sector can contribute in dissemination of the volunteerism concept. I have profound belief that volunteerism greatly contributes in self development”

Dina Safwat: “I have worked in the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) for the UNV for almost two years now. I started working in the International Year of Volunteers (IYV) where I began as a volunteer then worked in UNV. I am participating today as part of my work as well as my personal interest. While I was a volunteer in UNV I was glad such an experience allowed me to work on a daily basis.”

Adham Al Nadim: “I have participated in many volunteer activities concerning monument reconstruction, and in many associations involved in industry and export. In Egypt, there is no problem in volunteerism that deals with handling crisis and critical conditions, the problem is when we need organized volunteerism i.e. when a person with a certain experience volunteers where this specific experience may be required.”

Shadia Samaha: “I represent the Cairo American College in Maadi (CAC) where I run a volunteer program for high school students. This program was founded in the seventies but has only been demanded six years ago. Today 130 students take this program annually, bearing in mind that ‘volunteerism’ is an elective in school, not a major. In this program students learn how to create a work plan and how to provide volunteer services to offer to society. Junior high students (elementary stage) participate in social services in cooperation with the school’s counselors, whereas high school students’ volunteer activities are quite independent. Today I participate in

this workshop hoping to introduce ‘volunteerism’ as a subject in Egyptian schools, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education.”

Dalia Zein: “I am currently a student at the Cairo American College, but I have previously worked as a volunteer with orphans. I also participated with the UNDP in Siwa. Volunteer work changed my life and I decided to dedicate part of my time for volunteer work. My experience was quite vast with many individuals in this field, which made me believe that youth must learn the value of volunteerism by practicing it. Today I represent youth in Egypt.”

Hisham El-Rouby: “I am a Unit Manager at the Center for Development Services (CDS). I am also the Chairman of the Youth Association for Population and Development (YAPD). Being a volunteer in the International Conference for Population and Development (ICPD), 1994 has changed my career. Through my volunteer work I have felt the true value of being a volunteer and sharing time and effort in providing for others. Today, I’m attending this workshop because I represent one of the partners conducting the study.

4. Three working groups then started working on the following three issues:

1. Comments on the research itself
2. Current initiatives and examples of best practices in the field of volunteerism.
3. Support to the research and follow up to the workshop

The groups worked for two hours, followed by a presentation of recommendations and suggestions from each group. Participants moved from one group to another as time allowed and depending on interest.

GROUP ONE: COMMENTS ON THE RESEARCH

This group presented a general evaluation of the study in three parts:

The Objectives

All participants agreed on the twelve objectives/areas of the research and suggested the following points to be taken into consideration while conducting the research:

1. Dividing the period of time suggested for the research so that the first month would cover the whole desktop review concerning volunteerism in general and specifically in Egypt
2. The need to begin where other researches ended, as well as to look for and correct some of the drawbacks found in previous workshops on volunteerism.
3. The necessity to invite a team from the participants to form a ‘think tank’.
4. The importance of categorizing the volunteers according to their abilities and skills so that the volunteer would later benefit in his/her career.
5. The importance of having a law to systematize volunteerism and the volunteers.

6. Motivating volunteers. A volunteer must not be considered cheap labor. Organisations should give volunteers recommendation letters or training certificates to establish a strong bond between the volunteer and the organisation benefiting from the volunteer's time and efforts.
7. Focusing on providing different alternatives of activities for the volunteer so as to maximize the use of his/her capabilities.
8. Advocating both the private and the governmental sectors to contribute in community development through volunteerism
9. The importance of the role of the media in highlighting volunteer work. The media has recently shown interest in volunteerism, but this interest is restricted to public figures of society only. Volunteers should be recognized and rewarded for their work no matter who they are (public figure or not).

The Working Methods

- Emphasizing the concept of participation and specifying the tasks of each participant.
- Participation should be equally divided amongst those involved directly in conducting the research and other organizations who have an interest in volunteerism (including participants to the workshop)
- Specifying the rights, responsibilities, and authorities to the volunteers.

The Research Recommendations

The group agreed that the research recommendations should include the following points:

- The recommendations should be as practical as possible and not mere statements
- The recommendations should be based on case studies when appropriate, positive or negative, to demonstrate the validity of the recommendation
- The recommendations should be as detailed as possible on the volunteers, their where about and their numbers
- The recommendations should organize the relationship between the NGOs, the private sector, and the governmental sector in order to create a volunteer movement in Egypt

General Recommendations

- There is a need to revamp the role of Public Service, as it is very weakly implemented in Egypt for the time being.
- Issuing a monthly newsletter on the research development process. In addition to some case studies from the field of volunteerism.
- The need to highlight the contribution of volunteerism in the economy.

Participants' Comments on Group One's Presentation

Most of the comments on group one's presentation came in favor of their suggestions, and there were additional suggestions as follows:

- Maximizing the role of the University's Vice President for Environmental Affairs and Social Services.

- Considering the study to be a baseline for quantifying volunteer work, and setting some indicators to measure the contribution of volunteer work in development.

GROUP TWO: CURRENT INITIATIVES AND EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICES IN THE FIELD OF VOLUNTEERISM.

The group presented the best practices in the field of volunteerism. They began their discussion by defining the volunteer as someone who can:

- Be qualified and has experience and commitment.
- Be capable to give time, effort, and money.
- Be within any age range (from a child up to a senior citizen).

The group then stated why people want to volunteer, there were various reasons as follows:

- Personal motives – A person may want to volunteer in a hospital because a relative or a friend was ill.
- General motives – These usually come from the individual's beliefs; one may view volunteerism as a religious duty, another may see it as a social duty.
- Self-benefit motives – These depend on the individual's desire to use time wisely, acquire new skills, and meet new people.
- A person may just want to share, or have the ability to help others.

The group presented a number of best practices of organised volunteer work in Egypt:

Caritas – This association provides systematized volunteer activities for all age ranges.

Fathet Kheir Association - It started with a group of youth who wanted to contribute in social services by designing a micro-credit scheme for deprived people, as well as providing social and educational awareness. The Association's activities started in the 'earthquake' area in Mokattam. The first loan was 250 L.E. It gradually increased until it reached 950 L.E. These loans were used to create small projects. The projects' ideas always came from the beneficiaries themselves, not imposed on them by the association. One of the most important projects was establishing a tailor's workshop. The association's objective is to develop local volunteers to be responsible for managing the association in the future.

The American University in Cairo – The idea is to have a place inside the university where there are networking activities between students and the community. One of the objectives is to include the concepts of volunteerism to be part of the syllabus.

The Egyptian Red Crescent Association – A central NGO with 27 branches all over Egypt and 177 associations all over the world. One of its most important roles is crisis management. There are mandatory trainings that volunteers must take such as first aid. The association organizes some cultural seminars for the volunteers, as well as providing incentives as a mean of motivation.

One of the successful activities of the association is the Environment Project in Helwan where volunteers are responsible for preserving the environment of this area as it is highly polluted. The association also has other activities in the field of illiteracy and adult learning. There is a suggestion that the association's activities expand outside Egypt to provide services in countries such as Bosnia and Palestine.

Youth Association for Population and Development (YAPD) – The Youth Association for Population and Development (YAPD) is a central NGO, having its headquarters in Cairo. It was the idea of the youth "Friends of the Forum" who assisted in preparing and organizing the International Conference on Population and Development - Cairo 1994 to found this association. It believes in the importance of the youth serving society through volunteer work. Through its work, the YAPD accumulated a wide range of experience and innovations in the fields of research, advocacy, training, facilitation and technical assistance. The aims and interests of the YAPD cover a wide range of issues of concern including: Employment, women and children, health, information and international communication, Environment, Education, rural-urban immigration and Training. And it is through combining all these interests and professional work together that the association aims at serving the youth and Youth serving organization.

By engaging in different projects YAPD has entered into several partnerships with various international, as well as governmental institutions. Some of them are UNFPA, UNV, CEDPA, Social Fund for Development (SFD), the Egyptian Ministry of Health and the Ministry Youth.

Through the years, the association expanded to include a large number of members (reaching over 1000 members from both sexes, and coming from different academic backgrounds and disciplines). The association also has expanded all over the country with local focal points in Alexandria, Beni Sweif and Minia, in addition to its central office in Cairo. Now, the association has more than 200 well experienced trainers, around 100 in Cairo and the other 100 distributed in the different other governorates. One of the main programs related to volunteerism was establishing the first volunteer matching center in Egypt, the Egyptian Volunteer Center (EVC).

The Egyptian volunteer Center (EVC) - It is a joint project between YAPD and the Center for Development Services. The volunteer center bridges the gap between the efforts of volunteers and organizations that require human resources. It is located in YAPD headquarters in Cairo. The aim of this pilot project is to promote volunteerism in society and mobilize volunteers with the ultimate aim of supporting and strengthening development initiatives in Egypt. Furthermore, the project would represent a model for an applicable volunteer center to be replicated in Egypt and the Arab world. The model is to fit with the cultural and societal framework of the Arab region. Undoubtedly, this would benefit youth all over Egypt and organizations in need of volunteers and the local community served by the organizations. The center provides orientation sessions for new volunteers about volunteerism and development, the nature of NGOs and their role in development. Among the achievements of the project is the design of a database program that facilitates the matching process of volunteers with organizations.

Currently, EVC developed two kinds of manuals. The first one discusses how to establish a volunteer center, and the second one is about volunteer management.

The Technical Office of Member of Parliament, Dr. H. Badrawi. This is a very original structure as it is a technical office established by a member of Parliament made

up only of volunteers. The volunteers organised in a Technical Office, assist the Member of Parliament in all research, studies, surveys, analysis related to legislation but also within the constituency that elected the MP. The Technical Office ensures that the Member of Parliament remains close to the people who elected him.

Christian Girls' Association – It is a Christian association, established in 1864 with a large hostel for young girls. One of its most important activities is organizing summer camps for youth to acquire various skills.

Addiction Awareness Association – This association is entirely based on youth. It provides training on awareness against drug addiction.

The Egyptian Association for Developing Volunteer Efforts – This association trains volunteers and aims at creating a favourable-conducive environment to best utilise volunteer efforts in development. It introduces new concepts of volunteer work, such as:

- People with Disabilities, as well as deprived people are the ones who volunteer the most
- Youth volunteers must gain some sort of reward whether psychological, social, or financial
- Volunteer work must provide the volunteer with a skill which will later enable him/her to enter the labor market.

Association of the Friends of the National Cancer Institute – Work in this association began four years ago in the National Tumors Institute, with only nine volunteers. Work began at the reception of the institute, with training course every three months. This association greatly developed lately; its ideas became more logical and scientific, and aimed to improve its volunteer management system, for example: the volunteer has to sign a contract as a form of commitment.

Youth's Role in Development Project – This is present in three governorates (Cairo, Asuit, and El Menya). Its objectives are spreading the concept of volunteerism, as well as creating a volunteer information center.

Participants' Comments on Group Two's Presentation

Comments on this group were that they mentioned best practices of volunteerism but did not mention any negative experiences such as the new law on NGOs. Another issue that was not mentioned was the problems volunteers confront in the associations/organizations that are not prepared to receive volunteers (for example a volunteer may spend an entire day without achieving any work thus lose interest). These negative practices do exist and ways must be found to overcome them.

GROUP THREE: SUPPORT to the Research Proposal and FOLLOW UP

This group mainly discussed the possibilities of technical or financial support for the research and follow up to the workshop. It started by mentioning the new trend in volunteer work in Egypt, slowly shifting from mainly charity volunteerism to 'volunteers for development'. Because this approach is still quite vague and is not

reported in any manner, it was strongly suggested that the research proposal should include it in its main objective and analyze it. The group presented the most important existing information resources related to volunteerism in Egypt:

- “Volunteerism in the Arab World”. This book comprises three case studies in Egypt, Palestine, and Jordan. The Arab Network for NGOs was responsible for its publishing and distribution.
- UNV Measuring kit for measuring volunteerism. This kit measures how volunteerism contributes to the economy.
- The National Council for Population and Development initiative for creating four volunteer centers in four governorates in Egypt.

The group then emphasized the importance of creating connections with national, regional, and international organizations, as well as the private sector in order to obtain financial or in-kind support. The research currently receives support from the following organizations: UNDP, UNV, and CDS.

Suggested Organizations for Financial Support:

- GTZ
- JAICA
- International Business Leaders Forum
- EU Commission

Suggested Organizations for In-kind Support:

- The Egyptian businessmen community such as the Alliance for Woodcraft Industry.
- Using the 330 NGO members of the Alliance for Arab Women in the data collection phase.

Related ideas/suggestions:

Volunteerism and Education - Because volunteerism is essential in the development process, it is vital to include it in our educational system. This could be done through a small pilot project with some private schools suggesting that they include volunteerism as a subject in their curriculum. If they succeed, this could be replicated and implemented in all schools. Some international schools, such as the German School or the Cairo American College, have already experimented this system and could therefore be used as models and resource centers.

Defining Volunteerism According to the Egyptian Context - It is quite important to reach a specific definition for volunteerism in Egyptian context. This will be done throughout the research.

Volunteerism is not restricted to any social rank, gender, or age group, thus anyone willing can volunteer.

The definition of volunteerism varies from one country to another according to its culture, for example in Japan the percentage of volunteers is noticeably high, whereas in Bulgaria, there are hardly any volunteers at all.

Volunteerism and Employment - Volunteerism is viewed as one of the gates to employment. One of the recommendations in the Youth Employment Summit, September 2002, Alexandria, Egypt declared that youth need to acquire new skills through participating in voluntary work so as to seek apt professions. Another recommendation was that education, volunteerism, and employment should be viewed as inter-related.

Parents should be involved in enhancing the concept of volunteerism. They must understand the importance of volunteerism in developing their children's personalities.

Issuing a directory for NGOs working in the field of volunteerism

Training NGOs on Volunteer Management – This will support the volunteer movement and encourage NGOs to rely more on volunteers in carrying out their activities.

December, 14th 2002 will mark the Open Volunteer Day to celebrate the International Day of Volunteers originally celebrated on December 5th of each year. This event will allow the NGOs to present their experiences in volunteerism. It will also give volunteers a chance to find new volunteer opportunities.

4. Ms. Manuela Soler then presented the recommendations and decisions of the workshop as follows:

- The participants will receive a final copy of the research study
- The potential donors will receive the modified research proposal
- The initiation of the E-group between all participants to start an electronic network
- Revitalizing the concept of Public Service in Egypt as a potential entry point for common activities
- Including the concept of volunteerism in the education system
- Training NGOs on volunteer management
- Issuing a directory for NGOs working in the field of volunteerism
- The research will start in January 2003 until June 2003, depending on funding
- Reaching a definition for volunteerism according to the Egyptian context
- Issuing an electronic monthly newsletter on the research development process. In addition to some case studies from the field of volunteerism.

5. Dr. Alani, Consultant to the UNVs Arab States, Latin America and the Caribbean Section, briefly presented a background paper for a **UNV Strategy for the Arab Region**. Copies of the paper in both English and Arabic were distributed and participants agreed to be part of a readers' group for the draft strategy.

6. Closing of the workshop

Finally, **Mr. Hisham El Rouby and Ms. Manuela Soler** thanked all participants for their active participation and their cooperation in improving the research. Mr. El Rouby said that all the recommendations would be included in the research proposal.

This will be a good step towards creating an Egyptian volunteer movement. Special thanks went to:

- The four young volunteers from the Egyptian Volunteer Center who assisted the organisers during the workshop with the registration
- Mr. Gamel El Khateeb for acting moderator of group 2 upon very short notice
- The Japanese Government for allocating special funds for concrete follow up to the International Year of Volunteers. One of the 'by products' of this workshop actually being a full day of cooperation among the various stakeholders in the field of volunteerism and the natural networking deriving from it.