

MEASURING THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF VOLUNTEER WORK: THE PHILIPPINE EXPERIENCE

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Volunteerism is a worldwide phenomenon with the scale of voluntary work varying from country to country implying that volunteerism could be culture-bound. Recognizing the value of volunteer work is an important requisite towards harnessing successfully volunteerism as a renewable economic resource for development and the creation of social capital and social cohesiveness.

In the Philippines, volunteerism has had a long history and there is a wide network of civic engagements. Formal recognition of volunteer work began as early as 1964 with creation of the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency. At the global level, the UN General Assembly passed several resolutions on volunteer service, notably A/RES/40/212 adopted on 17 December 1985 inviting governments “to take measures to heighten awareness of the important contribution of volunteer service”. The United Nations Volunteers cited 2011 as the 10th Year Anniversary of “International Year of Volunteers” recognizing the services rendered by various volunteers for peace and development, and help achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

But to be able to recognize the full value of volunteerism, statistics are needed. Toward this end, a growing number of government statistical agencies and international organizations have supported efforts to measure the contribution of volunteer work. Out of these efforts, the UN Statistics Division came up with a “Handbook on Non Profit Institution in the System of the National Accounts”. In addition, the International Labour Organization released the “ILO Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work”. In the Philippines, the National Statistical Coordination Board, the highest policy making body on statistical matters in the country is spearheading the work on the inclusion of volunteer work in the Philippine System of National Accounts in the context of a Satellite Account as articulated in the 1993/2008 SNA.

This paper presents the pioneering efforts and lessons learned in the formulation of a conceptual and statistical framework for the measurement of the contribution of volunteer work in the Philippines. From a developing country perspective, the pilot investigation and operationalization of the measurement of volunteer work in the Philippine Statistical System offers distinct experiences and insights that can enrich the international efforts to develop valuation methodologies in quantifying the economic contribution of volunteer work. It also presents some institutional framework and practical approaches on capturing information on volunteer work in the statistical system of a developing country. Lastly, it describes some issues and challenges encountered and proposes a way forward.

Key Words: volunteer work, non-profit institutions, contribution / economic value, Philippine Statistical System

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Introduction: Importance of Volunteerism

Volunteerism is a worldwide phenomenon. Volunteerism has existed for centuries and varying from country to country implying that volunteerism could be culture-bound. Whether described as *letsema or mephato*¹ in Bostwana, *minga* in Ecuador², *gotong royong* in Indonesia, *dobrovolchestvo* in the Federation, *shramadana* in India or *harambee*³ in Kenya, and *al taawun wal tawasul* in many Arab States, volunteerism is a universal human phenomenon that occurs across all cultures, economic levels, genders, and ages. With such phenomenal contribution of volunteerism, in order to gather empirical and in-depth relevance, we need information, we need the vital role of statistics.

Volunteerism is an expression of people's willingness and capacity to freely help others and improve their society. Under its many cultural names, guises, and dimensions, volunteerism remains embedded in the tradition of sharing. It brings significant benefits to individuals and communities and helps to nurture and sustain a rich social texture and a strong sense of mutual trust and cohesion, essential to the stability of society.

Recently, a growing number of international organizations have come to recognize the contribution and importance of volunteer work (see [16]). In 1985, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly invited governments of member nations to observe annually on every 5th of December the International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development and urged them to take measures to heighten awareness of the important contribution of volunteer service. The 2001 Resolution of the UN identified volunteering as "an important component of any strategy aimed at poverty reduction, sustainable development, health, disaster prevention, and management" [see [20] & [21]]. In this view, the current worldwide efforts led by the United Nations to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 will require engagement of millions of people through volunteer action. Through the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), the UN recognizes clearly that putting prime importance on the economic contribution of volunteer work will create volunteer infrastructures responsible for creating an enabling environment towards sustainable peace and development. Relatedly, the European Parliament identified volunteering as "perhaps our most sustainable form of renewable energy" (see [5]). And in an effort to "raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering", in 2009, the European Commission declared 2011 as the European Year of Volunteering (see [6]). Data generated by the Johns Hopkins Comparative Non Profit Sector Project in 37 countries reveal that approximately 140 million people in these countries engage in some volunteer activity in a typical year (see [19]).

From the point of view of social science, volunteer work has had various social and direct economic benefits to the communities through the generation of social capital. There is increasing evidence that the formation of social capital is essential to sustainable economic development, and empirical studies suggest that as the social capital of a community increases, violent crime and mortality levels decrease, while educational outcomes and household incomes increase (see [16]). Relatedly, social capital can motivate "outsiders" to participate in volunteer work and might form new relationships which will bring collective action toward common goals of the community or groups. Overall, the act of volunteering demonstrates a balance between an individual's self-interest and the public interest (see [2]). Indeed, we seem to be in the midst of a "*global associational revolution*," a massive upsurge of organized private voluntary activity in virtually every corner of the globe (see [17]). As the 10th year celebration of the International Year of Volunteers is celebrated this year, 2011, opportunities for a new pace and direction of volunteerism emerge.

Despite the contributions that volunteer work makes to the volunteers and to the beneficiaries, notwithstanding the recognition that volunteer work is sizable and creates significant economic value, efforts to measure volunteer work have been sporadic and frequently uncoordinated, leaving us without up-to-date, reliable, and comparable data. The lack of systematic data on volunteer work is not simply an academic matter. It also limits the ability to make the most effective use of this important renewable resource (see [8]). Volunteer work can be most effectively managed with good returns to investments in volunteer management if there is reliable information on the various management approaches on the recruitment and retention of volunteers. Without reliable information on the value of volunteers, it is hard to make sensible decisions about volunteer management strategies and approaches (see [9]).

¹ In Bostwana, *letsema* reflects mutual self help; and *mephato* is participation in the construction of community infrastructure.

² Including other Andean countries like Venezuela, Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia.

³ Ancient East African Tradition, a Swahili for "pulling together".

Not only does the lack of adequate information complicate decision-making, it also obscures the real value of volunteer work and therefore fails to encourage volunteerism.

The recent developments in volunteering, particularly the increasing visibility of volunteers, have called attention to the need to analyze and document the economic contribution of volunteer work. In this regard, in 2003, the United Nations Statistics Division published the “UN Handbook on Non Profit Institutions in the System of National Accounts”. It is the first ever officially accepted international guidelines in capturing basic information on non profit institutions (NPIs) including the volunteer work they harness. Its features include (a) a detailed definition of NPIs, which makes it possible to identify them as a group, (b) the valuation of volunteer labour, which is significant in the activities of NPIs and (3) introduction of a detailed classification of NPIs by function (see [22] & [23]). In addition, the International Labour Organization released the “ILO Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work”. While there exists a variety of forms of voluntary work, one of the most crucial aspects of its structure and dimension is the differentiation between paid and unpaid work. Volunteer work belongs to unpaid work, both the formal and direct volunteering. To date, some countries like Australia, Canada, France, United Kingdom, have managed to produce statistical measurements of the economic contribution of volunteer work (see [18] & [19]).

However, in the Philippines, efforts to understand better this sector and to fashion vital policy decisions supportive of its further development have been impeded by dearth of information and lack of statistical research framework. The lack of systematic information and available reliable measure of the economic contribution of volunteer have resulted to the “shadowed statistical relevance” of volunteerism in the Philippines, and for that matter, in most other developing countries. Despite the presence of international guidelines to promote the systematic and statistical methodological approaches to value the contribution of volunteer work, only a relatively small fraction of volunteer economic activity is recognized and counted, hindering efforts to successfully harness volunteerism as a significant economic force for progressive and sustainable national development.

Recognizing the importance of quantifying the economic value of volunteer service, this paper presents the pioneering efforts towards the formulation of a conceptual and statistical framework for the measurement of contribution of volunteer work in the Philippines. From a developing country perspective, it presents lessons learned and experiences that can enrich the international efforts to develop valuation methodologies in quantifying the economic contribution of volunteer work. Given the importance of volunteering in national development, it also presents some institutional framework and practical approaches on capturing information on volunteer work in the statistical system of a developing country, citing the preliminary results of the pilot measurement of the economic contribution, including the recognition of informal volunteering and social capital formation. Lastly, it presents the challenges encountered with proposals for a way forward.

The Philippine Experience

In the Philippines, *boluntarismo* (volunteerism) has evolved from its historical and cultural tradition of sharing. Notions of *Filipino volunteerism* (see [3]) employ various indigenous meanings such as *Bayanihan* (a term referring to mutual assistance and self-help among equals); *Damayán* (a term which means assistance to others in times of grief or crisis. It is closest to the concept of episodic volunteering), *Kawanggawa* (a term associated with the notion of charity, and embodies a relationship between unequals in society. It is the nearest notion of philanthropy), *Pahinungod* (a term taken to mean a higher form of self-sacrifice and rooted to the Roman Catholic faith. It could be the local version of “pure” altruism because of its endemic nature), and *Bahaginan* (a term that implies a more generic connotation of “sharing”. It is a discreet expression of *pakikipagkapwa*⁴ and associated with social cohesion). Whether understood in Aguilung-Dalisay et al. (see [1]) as *tulong* (help), *pakikipagkapwa-tao* (a shared sense of one’s humanity), *pagbabahagi* (sharing) or *paghahandog* (offering), voluntary work is an asset resource that can and should be tapped to address many social and economic development challenges of our time. These can translate into various types of volunteering such as academe-based volunteering, corporate volunteering, government-supported volunteering, nongovernmental organization volunteering and foreign-supported volunteering (see [3]).

⁴ Aguilung-Dalisay, Yacat, and Navarro. 2004. Extending the Self: Volunteering as *Pakikipagkapwa*. Center for Leadership Citizenship and Democracy. National College of Public Administration and Governance, University of the Philippines. pp. 33 – 51.

Notwithstanding the various and varied cultural and traditional dimensions of the purpose and motives, the place and time, size and magnitude of Filipino volunteering, the lack of systematic information, has resulted to little scientific, evidence-based analysis of its manifestations, on how volunteer work is perceived, and its social, economic and environmental impact. Some recent information on Filipino volunteerism is available from several sources namely: (a) Studies by the University of the Philippines National College of Public Administration and Governance like the 1998 Organizational Survey of Non Profit Organizations, the 1999 Survey on Giving and Volunteering (see [4] & [7]) and “Extending the Self: *Volunteering as Pakikipagkapwa*” published in 2004 (see [1]), (b) the Pilot Time Use Survey of the National Statistics Office (see [14]) (c) the NSCB JHU-Non Profit Institution Project - Measuring the Contribution of Non Profit Institutions and Volunteer Work in the Philippine Economy (see [12]) and (d) Administrative Records from agencies like the the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency, Caucus of Development NGO Network, United Nations Volunteers Philippines (UNV), University of the Philippines – *Ugnayan ng Pahinungod*; Jesuit Volunteers Philippines Foundation; Philippine Business for Social Progress; *Gawad Kalinga* Philippines; and League of Corporate Foundations. A summary is provided in Annex A.

With the increasing recognition by the national government of the role of volunteerism, the creation of the Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA), as the government agency mandated to advocate, promote and coordinate volunteer programs, and recognize the contribution of volunteers to nation building, established the statutory status and policy framework for volunteerism through the enactment of Republic Act No. 9418 “An Act Institutionalizing A Strategy for Rural Development, Strengthening Volunteerism and For Other Purposes”, also called the “Volunteer Act of 2007.”

In line with this, the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB), as the highest policy making body on statistical matters in the country, is laying the groundwork for a system of generating information on volunteerism. In 2008, the NSCB undertook a collaborative project with Johns Hopkins University (JHU) on the measurement of the economic contribution of non-profit institutions and volunteer work in the Philippine economy. Building on these efforts, the NSCB launched the pilot implementation of the 2003 United Nations Handbook on Non Profit Institutions in the System of National Accounts (*hereafter referred as UN NPI Handbook*) and formulated a statistical framework for measuring the contribution of volunteer work via a satellite account on non profit institutions within the context of the Philippine System of National Accounts (PSNA).

The Philippine System of National Accounts follows the System of National Accounts (SNA)⁵ and is the appropriate forum to establish the consistency and coherence of the measure of volunteer work with other macroeconomic measures and to promote its credibility as well as its comparability across countries. The central focus of the SNA framework is the industry as a producing sector and the institutional sectors, which are the consuming sectors. The relationship between the producing industries and consuming sectors can be illustrated in the simple analytical framework of the Input-Output (I-O) which provides answers to how much goods and services is produced by the supplying sector, how much goods and services is used in the process of production and how much of the goods and services produced is used by the consuming sector (see [11]). In an I-O framework, the measurement of the economic contribution of volunteer work will be viewed in terms of its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

However, to be able to measure the distinct contribution of voluntary work, we need to separately estimate the expenditures of volunteers. In situations like this, the SNA provides the flexibility of the satellite accounts that allow analysis of specific sectoral concerns without disturbing its central framework. Satellite accounts provide information for a particular concern not provided in the central conceptual framework. Satellite accounts use complementary or alternative concepts, classifications and accounting frameworks while maintaining consistency with the central framework (see [13], [23] & [24]).

In the Philippines, the volunteers constitute a significant input to many if not most non-profit organizations. Although people volunteer for other organizations, such as government agencies and even businesses, most voluntary work takes place in non-profit organizations / institutions. Following the

⁵ The SNA provides a comprehensive accounting framework within which economic data can be compiled and presented for purposes of economic analysis, policymaking, and planning a development agenda. It is based on internationally agreed standards and recommendations on how to compile measures of economic activities in accordance with strict accounting conventions based on economic principles (see [24] & [27]).

Input-Output Framework in the SNA, for the NPIs, the value of volunteer input may presumably be reflected in the value of NPI output. However many of these NPI typically produce non-market output of services, which the existing SNA system does not generally capture. Because volunteer labour is so critical to the output of the NPIs that employ it and to their ability to produce the level and quality of services that they provide, it is important to capture volunteer labour in the NPI satellite account. The inclusion of volunteer labour input thru a satellite account of the SNA permits more accurate comparisons of input structure and cost structure in the SNA [see [22]].

On operationalizing volunteer work in the SNA framework, the NSCB has proposed to define **volunteerism** as an “act that denotes a service or work activity to promote a cause or help someone; performed by an individual or an organization/entity/enterprise, wherein monetary reward is not the principal motivating factor; undertaken as non-compulsory and non-obligatory; and for the benefit of persons outside the volunteer’s household.”

Quantifying the contribution of volunteerism, like that of unpaid housework (see [25] & [27]), is not going to be easy under the present capacity and capability of most national statistical systems, including the Philippine Statistical System (PSS). In the Philippines, based on the findings of the NSCB-JHU project, volunteer organizations and regulatory bodies have no or very incomplete records. There is also no nationwide survey that collects information on volunteer work. The data requirements for an accurate measurement are not generally available, like in most developing countries.

Current approaches in measuring volunteer work need information on three key variables: (a) Number of volunteers; (b) Number of hours volunteers render during a specific period; and (c) Wage at which to value those hours. For valuation, there are basically two approaches, the input method and the output method. During the 11th National Convention on Statistics⁶, historically, the NSCB has been able to provide insights on measuring the economic contribution of volunteer work using primarily the pilot Time Use Survey and illustrated the feasibility/viability of the valuation methodologies suggested in the UN NPI Handbook. A summary of these valuation approaches from the UN NPI Handbook is provided in Annex B.

Preliminary Results of the Pilot Implementation on Measuring the Economic Contribution of Volunteer Work

The preliminary results in the paper are admittedly heroic in approach but it highly illustrates the methodology and provides some insights on the contribution of volunteer work in the Philippines. As stressed in the preceding discussions, it aims to exemplify the feasibility/viability of the recommended valuation methodologies suggested in the UN NPI Handbook in capturing the value of volunteer work. Further, the study found significantly the huge possibility for developing countries to engage in quantifying the contribution of volunteer work, thus establishing its statistical relevance in the economic map and social capital formation.

For this purpose, Time-Use Surveys (TUS) are useful, if not necessary. A TUS collects information on how we spend our day doing various activities, such as paid work, childcare, volunteering, shopping, socializing, etc. In 2000, the National Statistics Office (NSO) conducted a pilot TUS which allowed a quantification, inchoate though it may be, of the economic contribution of volunteer work (see [26]). In addition to the TUS, the Philippine Labor Force Survey (LFS), the Census of Philippine Business and Industry (CPBI) and the Annual Survey of Philippine Business and Industry (ASPBI) conducted by the NSO were used to determine the wage rate particularly for those engaged in other Services such as community services and social work [see [15] & [28)]. The TUS produced “estimates” of the proportion of individuals 10 years old or over who do volunteer work on weekdays, Saturdays and Sundays, disaggregated by sex and urbanity. These parameters were used to estimate the total number of volunteer hours in 2000. Subject to the limitations of the Time Use Survey and a methodology with heroic assumptions, the following provide insights on the contribution of volunteer work in the Philippines:

Contribution of Volunteer Work to GDP

In 2009, the total value of volunteer work reached Php 44.5 billion, accounting for 0.6 percent of the total GDP. From Php 20.1 billion in 2000 the contribution of volunteer work showed a fairly steady

⁶ 11th National Convention on Statistics held at EDSA Shangrila Plaza, Mandaluyong City, Philippines last 4-5 October 2010.

share of 0.6 percent from 2000-2009. On the average, the value of volunteer work at current prices increased annually by 10.2 percent during the 9-year period from 2000-2009. At constant prices, it increased by 6.4 percent on an annual basis⁷.

Volunteer Rate

In the pilot survey in urban areas, findings showed that women do not do volunteer work at all! Volunteer rate of men is about 1.1 percent during weekdays and Saturdays. They do not do volunteer work during Sundays. In rural areas, the volunteer rate of women was about 0.37 percent during weekdays, 0.74 percent during Saturdays and a higher rate of 2.2 percent during Sundays, while the volunteer rate of men is about 2.2 percent during weekdays, 1.73 percent during Saturdays, and 3.0 percent during Sundays.

Number of Hours Volunteered

In 2000, the estimated total hours the volunteers rendered reached 312.3 million hours. Volunteers from the urban areas accounted for 69.0 percent of the total hours while 31.0 percent came from the rural areas.

Value of Volunteer Work in Urban and Rural

The value of volunteer work in urban areas amounted to Php 6.1 billion in 2000 compared to Php 2.8 billion in rural areas⁸.

Concluding Remarks and Way Forward

In quantifying the economic value of volunteer work, the Input-Output framework may be more conceptually appealing but most, if not all of the existing national statistical systems in the developing countries do not have the capacity nor the capability to provide the data support. In the Philippines, this lack of data support is the biggest stumbling block to measuring the contribution of volunteer work. Because this is in many respect a pioneering study, it has correspondingly many limitations. Certainly, there are outstanding questions like whether direct helping (informal volunteering) is considered as volunteer work. There are also many reported intangible benefits of volunteer work to both beneficiaries and the volunteers themselves like social cohesion, solidarity, political legitimacy, love and affection, acquiring a greater sense of responsibility to society, important employment training and a pathway into the labor force; a sense of personal satisfaction, fulfillment, well-being, and belongingness to persons who volunteer, which are obscured by the wage approach and for which no economic estimations have been made.

The pioneering study on measuring the economic contribution of volunteer work calls attention to the need to institutionalize a conceptual framework on capturing information on volunteerism in the Philippines. To the best of our knowledge, the exploratory framework is the first attempt in the Philippines to establish (a) information on volunteers (i.e. the *individuals* involved in volunteer work as producers of goods and services, relation to labor force, the social and psychological dimensions), and (b) information on volunteering (i.e. various *voluntary work* in relation to work done, relation to beneficiaries, and trends in volunteering). The central assumption of this framework is that the statistical information on volunteerism could provide good comparative data for developing countries.

With poverty as the over-arching root of societal issues and problems in most developing countries including the Philippines, volunteer work as a potent renewable resource is a critical element to social capital formation and nation building. According to studies cited by Mayer (see [10]), modest gains in social capital and increased levels of voluntary participation can translate into large social and economic gains; and raising social capital can be a more effective development strategy than direct policy interventions towards lower levels of violent crime, lower mortality levels, and better educational outcomes. Certainly, recognizing the contribution of volunteer service will give economic and social credit to the millions and millions of hours rendered by Filipino volunteers. When statistical data on volunteerism are generated and disseminated, the volunteer infrastructures and networks cannot but

⁷ Benchmark estimates of the contribution of volunteer work were derived for the year 2000. From 2001 to 2009, the contributions were derived by extrapolating the benchmark estimate using the growth rate of GVA for Other Services under Private Services.

⁸ For the wage rate, the paper uses the 1999 CPBI and the 2000 ASPBI. The average compensation of voluntary work is derived from the social work activities under the PSIC 4 digit code of Health and Social Work and is equal to the total compensation divided by total employment. This amounted to P28.45 per hour

flourish. This will provide citizens varied areas of opportunities for civic engagement, high levels of voluntary participation, and innovative research agenda for comparative studies. Developing volunteerism is certainly an option to create global change and to reduce poverty in the Philippines and in other developing countries.

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Annex A: Available Information on Volunteerism in the Philippines

Data Type	Publication/Data	Source
Surveys	1998 Survey to Non Profit Institutions as part of Philippine Non Profit Sector Project	University of the Philippines College of Public Administration and Governance (UP NCPAG)
	1999 and 2000 Survey on Giving and Volunteering as part of Philippine Non Profit Sector Project	University of the Philippines College of Public Administration and Governance (UP NCPAG)
	2000 Pilot Time Use Survey	National Statistics Office (NSO)
	2007 Membership Data Base Survey Project	Caucus of Development-NGO Networks (CODE-NGO)
Administrative data	1961-2010 Information on Summary of Volunteer Deployment (Local and International)	Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA)
	1975-2009 Data on Number of Filipino Volunteers Deployed – International	United Nations Volunteers Philippines
	1995-2009 Data on Number of National United Nations Volunteers	United Nations Volunteers Philippines
	1980-2009 Data on Number of Local Volunteers	Jesuit Volunteers Philippines Foundation, Inc, (JVPFI)
	2001-2003 Number of Volunteers	University of the Philippines (UP) <i>Ugnayan ng Pahinungod</i>

	2000 Directory of Local Volunteer Organizations (Volume 1)	Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency (PNVSCA) and National Economic Development Authority (NEDA)
	Data on Names of Companies with Number of Volunteers	Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP)
	Data on Names of Companies with Number of Volunteers	League of Corporate Foundations (LCF)
Ad Hoc Studies	2007 Study Measuring Progress of Philippine Society: Gross National Product or Gross National Happiness	Virola, Romulo A, and Encarnacion, Jessamyn O. Paper presented during the 10 th National Convention on Statistics, 1-2 October 2007.
	NPI Project titled the Measurement of the Economic Contribution of Non Profit Institutions in the Philippine Economy	National Statistical Coordination Board in partnership with Johns Hopkins University Center for Civil Society Studies.
	Factors for Entry into Formal Volunteering Factors for Staying in Volunteer Work	University of the Philippines College of Public Administration and Governance (UP NCPAG) in Aguilung-Dalisay, Grace H., Yacat, Jay A., Atoy, Navarro, M., <i>Extending the Self: Volunteering as Pakikipagkapwa</i> . Published in 2004
	Volunteerism in the Philippines: Dead or Alive? On Measuring the Economic Contribution of Volunteer Work	Virola, Ilarina, Reyes & Buenaventura. Paper presented during the 11 th National Convention on Statistics. 4-5 October 2010.
	Giving and Volunteering Information from Six Areas in the Philippines	University of the Philippines College of Public Administration and Governance (UP NCPAG) in Fernan, (Ed), <i>Beyond the Household: Giving in Six Areas in the Philippines</i> published in 2004.

Annex B: Current Approaches To Measuring Volunteer Work

For valuation on volunteer work there are basically two approaches: output-based and input-based. Both approaches imply the existence of comparable goods and services available on the market. Whereas output-based methods value the result of production process, income-based methods refer (mainly) to the labor force spent for the volunteer activities. The *UN NPI Handbook* proposes three methods by which volunteer services can be valued under the input-based approach. Each method involves assigning a wage rate to the total number of hours worked by volunteers.

Output Based Valuation

Output based methods measure the result (the output) of the production process, the goods and services produced by the private household or the nonprofit organizations and values them with the market price of equivalent market products. Therefore goods and services produced have to be recorded in detail. Crucial to the valuation is the definition of output in a manner consistent with the SNA in order to assure comparability across countries.

Input Based Valuations

Input-based methods determine the value of the labor factor by imputing a notional wage to the working time invested in voluntary work. There are three different ways:

Opportunity Cost

The opportunity cost refers to the wage unpaid workers would earn in the market if they decided to give up the voluntary work and take up a job at a wage rate associated with usual occupation of the volunteer. The *UN NPI Handbook* recognizes that while theoretically desirable for some analytical purposes, this

valuation approach is not often used, as it assumes that paid work is foregone in order to undertake voluntary work.

Replacement Cost

The replacement cost or market cost refers to the cost that would arise if the work done voluntarily were to be brought on the labor market. This method implies that volunteers could be replaced by wage earners and uses the cost of replacing the volunteer with paid labour. The applicable wage rate is related to the particular activity being undertaken by the volunteer. This method is preferred over the opportunity cost approach (UNSD 2003 NPI Handbook para 5.33 page 70).

Fallback Option / Wage Rate

The *UN NPI Handbook* recognizes that both the opportunity and replacement cost methods require more information on the activities in which volunteers engage than is likely to be available in most countries. In situations where detailed data are not available, the *UN NPI Handbook* recommends a fallback option which values each hour of volunteer time at the average gross wage for the community, welfare, and social service occupation category since the work of volunteers is most likely to resemble this occupation category. The associated wage rate is conservative and is typically towards the low end of the income scale but not at the very bottom.

Source: 2003 UN Handbook on Non Profit Institutions in the System of National Accounts. United Nations Statistics Division, New York.

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