

Side event

at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) 2025

**"A sustainable and inclusive solution for the 2030 Agenda:
the contribution of international volunteering to the SDGs"**

**In person at the United Nations HQ in New York, July 22nd, CR2, 13:15-14:30
(New York time, [WebTV](#))**

Proposed Side-events should be closely related to the work of the HLPF and should have as a main focus the theme for the 2025 session, "Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and its SDGs for leaving no one behind".

I. Presentation:

The side event proposed on the sidelines of the 2025 edition of the HLPF will illustrate the essential role of the partnership approach in the implementation of the SDGs and the structuring interactions that link them.

The United Nations General Assembly has designated 2026 as the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development, recognizing volunteerism as *"a powerful cross-sectoral tool"* for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

In this context, and a few weeks after the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) in Nice, France proposes to highlight international volunteering as a sustainable and inclusive solution for achieving the SDGs at all levels (local, national, global). Particular emphasis will be placed on its contribution to environmental issues, and in particular to the protection of the Ocean (SDG14).

Indeed, throughout the world, international volunteers are mobilized by various structures, and especially local authorities and non-governmental organizations, on missions related to these crucial challenges. They work on environmental education, the preservation of marine biodiversity, the fight against plastic and chemical pollution, access to water and sanitation, etc. **International volunteering is proving to be an innovative lever and a vector of partnerships in the face of environmental issues.** In addition, it is a particularly suitable instrument for strengthening the capacity of civil society actors, and in particular young people, to act in favour of international solidarity.

The results of a study carried out by *France Volontaires*, an operator of the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, in partnership with the Ministry of Ecological Transition, highlight the contribution of volunteering in building a sustainable and resilient future. Concrete programmes such as **"Volunteers for the Great Green Wall"** (which has mobilised more than 100 volunteers in the fight against desertification in Mauritania, Senegal, Chad, Djibouti and France) will illustrate this commitment to environmental preservation and sustainable development.

Volunteering concerns all the SDGs under review at the HLPF 2025:

- SDG3: In 2023, 10% of International Solidarity Volunteers (*Volontariat de Solidarité Internationale*- VSIs) were mobilized in the field of health. Prevention actions have been carried out during the pandemic;
- SDG5: Many initiatives, such as "Surfkids shredding Senegal", contribute to the development and empowerment of girls and women around the world;
- SDG8: about 8% of VSIs intervene in the productive sector, and thus enable the creation of decent, inclusive and sustainable jobs;
- SDG14: Many missions, many of which involve volunteer scientists, aim to identify and protect underwater life, such as the project carried out with the Mohéli National Park in the Comoros for sustainable fishing;
- SDG17: Volunteering embodies the partnership-driven and inclusive vision of sustainable development promoted by the 2030 Agenda, acting as close as possible to communities and creating links and dynamics of multi-stakeholder North-South but also South-South cooperation and strengthening citizen mobility.

II. Run-of-show (60min):

The side event will be structured around the following interventions:

- **3 min: Welcome words by the deputy permanent representative of France** to present the International Volunteering for Exchange and Solidarity (V.I.E.S) as a tool of France's solidarity and sustainable investment policy, in connection with the international deadlines of the year and the theme of the HLPF;
- **5 min: Intervention by Mr. Rajib Sen, Programme Director for SDGs at the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), Government of India**
- **8 min: Presentation of the study "The contribution of international exchange and solidarity volunteering to environmental issues" by Ms. Clarisse Bourjon, Head of Recognition and Valorisation Department, in charge of Institutional Relations, France Volontaires;**
- **5 min: Intervention by Attorney Ms. Reverie Pure Sapaen, Director of the Governance Staff, Department of Economy, Planning and Development, Government of the Philippines;**
- **10 min: Testimonies of volunteers**, including a young French volunteer from the "Volunteers for the Great Green Wall" program in person and screening of a video about the programme;
- **3 min: Video testimony of a sending or receiving structure;**
- **3 min: Intervention from the floor by a member of Forum's Climate Action group¹;**
- **3 min: Intervention from the floor by Life Project for Youth;**
- **3 min: Conclusion by UN-Volunteers on the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development in 2026 (TBC);**
- **17 min: Q&A with the public.**

The side event will be inclusive and geographically open, with participants from different backgrounds. Speakers will be from governments, as well as civil society, local authorities, the private sector and research. Interpretation from French to English will be provided.

¹ International Network of Voluntary Development Organizations: <https://forum-ids.org/about/>

About France Volontaires

France Volontaires is an agency of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs for international volunteering for exchange and solidarity, it brings together the State, local authorities and associations around a mission of general interest: the development and promotion of international volunteering for exchange and solidarity. The platform relies on a presence in France (mainland and overseas territories) and a network of *Espaces Volontariats* in Africa, Asia, Latin America/Caribbean, the Middle East and Oceania.