

## Volunteer Management Workshop Insights

# Theme: Enhance Service Delivery through Sustained Volunteer Partnerships



Capability &  
Capacity Series

Summary on Reimagining Volunteer Roles for Sustainable Impact and Service Excellence

### About Volunteer Management Workshop Series

The Volunteer Management Workshop Series brings together sector leaders and Volunteer Managers to strengthen sustainable volunteerism through collaborative learning and innovation. Through thematic workshops, participants engage in strategic discussions, share practical insights, and co-create resources that address key sector challenges.

### About the Theme and Learning Report

In today's evolving social service landscape, volunteers play an increasingly pivotal role in complementing social service professionals and enhancing service delivery. Their unique skills and personal touch create meaningful impact for service users, while their sustained involvement strengthens the capacity of Social Service Agencies (SSAs). "Enhance Service Delivery Through Sustained Volunteer Partnerships" explores this critical intersection of volunteerism and service excellence, recognising the need for strategic volunteer partnerships that can effectively support and elevate social services.

**3 Workshops**

**103 Volunteer Managers**

**60 SSAs Engaged**

This Report Covers Workshops' Findings on:

- Practical approaches to measuring and articulating volunteer impact in service delivery
- Frameworks for redesigning and enhancing volunteer roles to match service needs
- Strategies for building and scaling sustainable corporate volunteering partnerships
- Best practices for implementing impact indicators across different service delivery models with reference to the [Volunteer Impact Measurement Kit \(VIMK\)](#)

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# 1. Measuring Volunteers' Impact to Enrich Impact Narratives

## Summary of Workshop

The first workshop in the series, titled "**Measuring Volunteers' Impact to Enrich Impact Narratives**", was an in-person, interactive session held on 24 February 2025. Participants were grouped according to similar service clusters, such as Disability, Residential & Eldercare, Children, Youth & Family, and Mental Health & Community, to engage in discussions about the following:

- Understanding the significance of evaluating and quantifying volunteer contributions to service delivery;
- Identifying key impact metrics for common services within each cluster using the [Volunteer Impact Measurement Kit](#); and
- Discussing and developing best practices for data collection methods to measure volunteer impact.

These discussions sought to equip participants with the knowledge to effectively measure and articulate the impact of their volunteer programmes.

## Importance of Measuring Volunteers' Impact on Service Delivery

Across all participant groups, there were common perspectives on the importance of measuring volunteers' impact on service delivery. These can be summarised as follow:

| Key Theme                                                           | Why is it important                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <b>Demonstrating the Effectiveness and Value of Volunteers</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To articulate contribution of volunteer involvement towards organisation's larger mission and goals.</li><li>• A crucial component (impact of volunteers) to articulate value of service delivery programme to various stakeholders.</li></ul>                                   |
| 2 <b>Justifying Resource Allocation and Investment</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides factual data to demonstrate the Return of Investment (ROI) of organisation's resource allocation towards managing volunteers (e.g. resources required to train and support volunteers).</li></ul>                                                                       |
| 3 <b>Enhancing Volunteer Engagement and Retention</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sharing volunteer's impact on service users help to validate volunteer's contributions; which then help in better recognition and appreciation of volunteers.</li></ul>                                                                                                          |
| 4 <b>Improving Service Delivery and Programme Refinement</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide data that can be used to refine service programmes to improve service delivery.</li><li>• Understanding volunteers' impact helps to tap into volunteers' strengths and interests to add value to service programmes and service users.</li></ul>                         |
| 5 <b>Strengthening Stakeholder Communication and Accountability</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides tangible data to communicate with partners and stakeholders, including funders and donors, on the importance of volunteers to service programmes.</li><li>• Measuring volunteer impact is particularly vital in tracking and communicating impact to funders.</li></ul> |

## Key Indicators Used to Articulate Impact on Service Users

### Common Outcomes across Workshop Participants

The table below reflects several common outcomes identified by workshop participants using the [Volunteer Impact Measurement Kit \(VIMK\)](#) across three service clusters - Disability, Residential & Eldercare, Children, Youth & Family, and Mental Health & Community:

| Key Outcome                                   | Why is it important                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <b>Mental Well-being</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This outcome is highlighted as relevant across all three service clusters.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examples of mental well-being improvements indicators mentioned include measuring the increase in feelings of optimism, emotional resilience, and a sense of purpose.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 2 <b>Social Support/ Social Relationships</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is a common outcome for service users across all service clusters.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For the Disability, Residential &amp; Eldercare cluster, social support is seen as a way to keep residents engaged and combat isolation.</li> <li>In the Children, Youth &amp; Family context, it includes family-centric support and the perceived level of social support.</li> <li>For the Mental Health &amp; Community cluster, it involves service users being supported by skilled volunteers and the formation of social groups for emotional support.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| 3 <b>Personal and Skills Development</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal development and skills development were more explicitly highlighted within the Children, Youth &amp; Family and Mental Health &amp; Community clusters, with the following examples as relevant indicators to their programmes and services:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Development: Dignity and self-esteem, which implies an aspect of personal growth and sense of self-worth.</li> <li>Skills Development: literacy, culinary, and computer skills (technology skills)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                      |

SSAs that are interested in measuring programme impact on service users may refer to the [Sector Evaluation Framework](#) (SEF).

The SEF provides a list of standardised outcome metrics for programme with similar objectives, this provides a common language for SSAs, funders, and the Government to articulate programme impact on service users.



## Unique Points Highlighted by Participants in the Disability, Residential & Eldercare Cluster



A common characteristic among service users in the Disability, Residential & Eldercare cluster is that they are commonly location-bound and may have varying severities of medical conditions. Restricted mobility may mean that service users have limited cognitive or physical simulations. In addition, having medical conditions means some may not be able to communicate clearly, which poses a challenge to gathering feedback.

With these contextual factors in play, The Disability, Residential & Eldercare cluster highlighted several unique outcomes for their service users, and considerations to measure such indicators:

|                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1 Physical Well-being</b>                          | <p>Emphasised physical health as an important area of impact. Example of measuring physical well-being for the elderly includes using tools like <b>World Health Organisation Integrated Care for Older People Approach (WHO's ICOPE)</b>.</p> <p>Additional need to consider residents of nursing homes who cannot communicate and to measure the level of service on individual physical comfort and care as a relevant proxy indicator.</p>                                                              |
| <b>2 Dignity</b>                                      | <p>This indicator is of relevance for vulnerable demographics within this service cluster, such as the homeless. There was general agreement that it is difficult to accurately quantify or qualify "dignity" as it is multi-faceted.</p> <p>Some SSAs have attempted to capture dignity through self-esteem programmes, and a possible method of measuring "dignity" may be through <b>scenarios</b> rather than Likert scales, such as: "Do you feel good about being able to earn your own income?".</p> |
| <b>3 Reduced Isolation/ Prevention of Dying Alone</b> | <p>Within the context of measuring impact of social relationships, the importance of preventing isolation and combating depression risk for disabled and elderly individuals was highlighted.</p> <p>Specifically for the elderly, preventing them from "dying alone" was further highlighted as a possible key indicator. This frames social relationships with a unique focus on combating negative outcomes prevalent among the elderly.</p>                                                             |
| <b>4 Engagement</b>                                   | <p>Keeping residents engaged was identified as a common goal for residential homes. The level of engagement in activities and daily life is a relevant impact indicator unique to the residential care homes' context, further highlighting that volunteers can help to enhance engagement of seniors as an example of impact of volunteers to seniors in nursing homes.</p>                                                                                                                                |
| <b>5 Observed Behaviours and Functioning</b>          | <p>Given that some service users in this cluster may have conditions like dementia or intellectual disabilities, the ability to provide feedback directly is limited. This necessitates a greater reliance on observations by staff and volunteers and feedback from support networks like caregivers to understand the impact on service users. Observing a senior learning a new skill (like using a mouse) was given as an example of validating reported outcomes.</p>                                  |



## Unique Points Highlighted by Participants in the Children, Youth & Family Cluster



In the Children, Youth & Family cluster, interventions and services often will have a secondary impact on the service user's network, such as their families or school environments, due to the young age of service users. Changes arising from programmes catered for children and youth can affect multiple people within their immediate circle, due to the interconnectedness of social relations. Interventions in this service cluster typically focus on skills development and youth enrichment to increase the social and well-being of youth. With such contextual information, the table below highlights the unique outcomes for service users within this cluster:

|   |                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <b>Secondary Impact on Network</b>                       | This cluster specifically considered the impact upon the network of the service user, such as their family or schools. They recognised that changes arising from programmes for children and youth can affect multiple people within their immediate circle. This ripple effect and indirect impact on supporters of service users are a unique consideration for this service cluster. |
|   |                                                          | <b>a) Parenting Skills Indicators</b><br><br>The development and improvement of parenting skills were specifically identified as relevant indicators within this cluster. This includes observing quality time spent with children, ways of communication with family, willingness to engage in activities together, and integration within the family.                                 |
|   |                                                          | <b>b) Active Ageing</b><br><br>In programmes that include older individuals (e.g., grandparents in family-centric programmes), active ageing was highlighted as a desired outcome and thus an indicator of impact.                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2 | <b>Focus on Social and Emotional Well-being of Youth</b> | For youth programmes, the emphasis is strongly on social and emotional well-being as key areas of impact.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 3 | <b>Skills Development Specific to Age Groups</b>         | Skills development for the Children, Youth & Family cluster focused on skills relevant to children and youth, such as literacy, culinary, and computer skills. They also looked at the progression of youth within programmes in terms of confidence and emotional well-being.                                                                                                          |
| 4 | <b>Pre- vs. Post- Measurement of Specific Outcomes</b>   | There was a desire within this cluster to move towards pre- vs. post-measurement to understand the specific delta of change in service users after volunteer interventions. This focus on measuring change over time for specific outcomes is particularly emphasised for this service cluster.                                                                                         |
| 5 | <b>Service Users Turned Volunteers</b>                   | A key unique indicator for this cluster is the conversion of service users into volunteers. This indicates a positive long-term impact where individuals who have benefited from the services are motivated and able to contribute back to the community.                                                                                                                               |

## Unique Points Highlighted by Participants in the Mental Health & Community Cluster



Services and interventions in the Mental Health & Community cluster cater to vulnerable individuals often in sensitive situations. In some cases, traumatic situations in which they have experienced would hinder service users from being receptive to services. Trust is a key factor for service users of this cluster, which is challenging to attain with vulnerable individuals. In this context, person-centric or psychological support is a key common service delivery to help offer a safe environment for service users to trust the support provided. The unique outcomes in the table below therefore seek to show indication of improved trust and behaviour among service users:

| Quantifiable Outcomes                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <b>Quality of Life</b>                                                                                  | Specifically, <b>'sleep'</b> for service users could potentially be measured (e.g. hours of sleep) to assess the improvement on quality of life among vulnerable service users with mental health issues.                                                                             |
| 2 <b>Frequency of Behavioural Lapses After Programme</b>                                                  | For organisations that focus on dementia care, measuring the number of behavioral lapses (active tantrums) can be a relevant indicator to measure the success of service delivery on dementia patients.                                                                               |
| 3 <b>Pick-up and Call De-escalation Rate</b>                                                              | Measured by the number of calls and the rate at which volunteers helped to de-escalate them, this indicator may help to easily quantify the efficiency of volunteers to service delivery.                                                                                             |
| Qualitative Outcomes                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 1 <b>Comfort Level of service users/ volunteers</b><br><i>(To open up, speak in front of an audience)</i> | Within the mental health cluster, it is crucial for organisations to measure the level of comfort of service users, as this relates to a feeling or state of ease. This indicator would lead to the relevancy of increased potential for the vulnerable to share on sensitive topics. |
| 2 <b>Trust of Organisation</b> <i>(Ability to depend on the legal counsel/ intervention offered)</i>      | Indicates a level of confidence and trust in the services delivered.                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 3 <b>Empowerment</b> <i>(To encourage more advocating/ engagement)</i>                                    | Reflects a sense of agency and willingness of service users to participate in activities and share.                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 4 <b>Observed Emotions</b>                                                                                | A qualitative assessment of service users' feelings, pre and post service interventions.                                                                                                                                                                                              |



## 2. Redesigning Volunteer Roles to Support Service Delivery

### Summary of Workshop

Workshop 2, held in-person on 27 February 2025, focused on “**Redesigning Volunteer Roles to Support Service Delivery**” while aligning with the evolving needs and mission of SSAs. The workshop aimed to help participants co-create a resource describing successful volunteer contributions and identify relevant volunteer outcomes to measure the effect of these roles. A key focus was on understanding how success looks like when volunteers are fully contributing to social service delivery within their respective service clusters. Ultimately, the workshop aimed to provide SSAs with insights to tap on redesigned volunteer roles to better support service delivery models.

### Common Service Delivery Models Mentioned

| Cluster                                                                                                                             | Service Delivery Models Commonly Supported by Volunteers Highlighted<br><i>* The service delivery models identified here are non-exhaustive.</i>                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Disability, Residential &amp; Eldercare</b><br> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Befriending</li> <li>• Day care services</li> <li>• Residential care services</li> </ul>                                                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability support</li> <li>• Caregiver support</li> <li>• Medical escort services</li> </ul>                                                                                                           |
| <b>Children, Youth &amp; Family</b><br>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family service centres               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Trans-national family services</li> <li>◦ Parenting support</li> <li>◦ Legal services</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and Youth services               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Tuition programmes</li> <li>◦ Mentoring programmes</li> <li>◦ Employment &amp; Career support</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <b>Mental Health &amp; Community</b><br>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer Support</li> <li>• Therapy services</li> <li>• Emotional &amp; mental health support</li> </ul>                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro bono legal services</li> <li>• Outreach programmes</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                       |

### Common Volunteer Roles in the Sector

Across all 3 service clusters in the workshop, there is a diverse range of recurring volunteer roles that extend beyond the five replicable roles highlighted in the [NCSS Volunteer Role Redesign Brochure](#). From the **common service delivery models** identified in the table above, the following volunteer roles identified reflected common volunteer roles that are crucial to quality service delivery.

| Role                       | 1 Befriender/<br>Mentor/ Peer<br>Supporter                    | 2 Activity/<br>Programme<br>Facilitator                                             | 3 Outreach<br>Volunteer                                                                                 | 4 Skills-based<br>Volunteer                                                                                           | 5 Programme<br>Designer                                                                              |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Responsibilities</b>    | Provide social and emotional support to service users.        | Organise and lead various programmes, events and engage with service users.         | Connect with the community and engaging potential service users                                         | Contribute their professional or personal skills to support organisational needs                                      | Support in designing, planning and organising programmes/ events tailored for specific service users |
| <b>Possible Activities</b> | Home visits, centre-based interactions, and community outings | Bingo, culinary programmes, skills-building workshops, and therapy-based activities | Reaching out to isolated individuals, conducting surveys (e.g. door-knocking), and promoting programmes | Training facilitators, IT support, Workshop Speakers with specialised knowledge (e.g. financial literacy, TCM, legal) | Support organisation staff in planning end-to-end requirements to execute programme                  |
| <b>Skills Required</b>     | Interpersonal skills and empathy                              | Varied skills, dependent on topic or interests                                      | Good communication skills                                                                               | Relevant skills-qualifications and experience                                                                         | Good knowledge of Organisation Vision, Mission; Project Management skills                            |

## Common Volunteer Roles Shared by Participants in the Disability, Residential & Eldercare Cluster

In addition to Befrienders and Activity Facilitators, the Disability, Residential, & Eldercare cluster highlighted several other key volunteer roles. These volunteer roles are crucial to services offered in this cluster – where daily-assisted living, caregiving and end-of-life care skills are required:

### Eldersitter

This role is specifically designed to provide emotional and cognitive support to individuals, particularly those with dementia, through one-on-one matching and weekly visits. This role is distinct from a Befriender due to its intentional, objective-driven approach with a training curriculum and tracking of outcomes.

### Medical Supervision Volunteer

This role involves ensuring senior service users, potentially elderly individuals living alone, are taking their medications as prescribed. It can be separate from befriending, potentially making it more accessible for volunteers with shorter-term commitments.

### Therapy-based / Rehabilitation Programme Volunteer

This encompasses volunteers who support specific therapies such as music therapy for dementia clients or bedside exercises for senior residents in institutions. Volunteers with vocal training skills may also assist clients to delay the loss of communication abilities.

### Housekeeping for Elderly Volunteer

These volunteers assist reclusive elderly individuals, who may be living alone, with cleaning and motivating them to live more actively.

- Key Outcomes Identified: Social support

### Meal Delivery / Volunteer Grab Delivery

These volunteers assist in delivering meals to service users or help them purchase and deliver groceries, particularly beneficial for low-mobility individuals.

Volunteers are an important asset to SSAs in service delivery. Beyond tracking outcomes of services and programmes on service users, it is also crucial to measure the impact of volunteering on volunteers.

Below are 3 key outcomes in the [VIMK](#) by the service cluster participants, that would be useful in assessing impact on volunteers for the roles mentioned above.

|                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1 Mental Well-being</b>    | This indicator assesses the improvement in volunteers' overall mental state due to their volunteering experience. Volunteers with good mental well-being are more likely to feel fulfilled and satisfied. This can be measured through surveys asking volunteers to rate their agreement with statements about their mental well-being on a scale.                                                                            |
| <b>2 Social Relationships</b> | This indicator focuses on how volunteering has changed or improved the social connections and support networks of volunteers. Social support is a significant motivator, particularly for senior volunteers, and indicates the gains they obtain through volunteering. It can be assessed through qualitative questions about changes in social support or by observing interactions with service users to gauge camaraderie. |
| <b>3 Skills Development</b>   | This indicator looks at the skills related to the volunteering role that volunteers have acquired or improved. For example, a paracounsellor volunteer might learn facilitation skills. These skills can also be applied to the volunteers' own lives.                                                                                                                                                                        |

## Common Volunteer Roles Shared by Participants in the Children, Youth & Family Cluster



The Children, Youth, & Family cluster brings attention to value-added responsibilities to existing common volunteer roles, as a way to enhance volunteers' role and contributions back to the organisations:

### Mentor (Youth/Parenting/Peer)

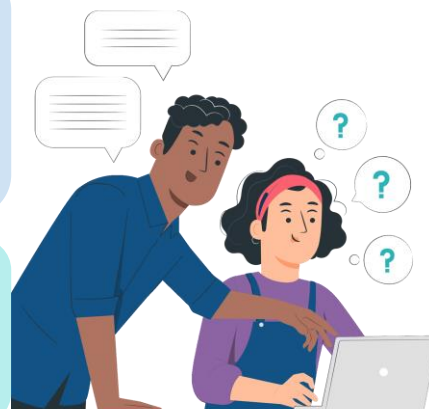
This role involves befriending, coaching, and acting as a role model for youths or parents. Peer mentors, who are ex-service users, can befriend and mentor other ex-offenders. Youth mentoring programmes are common. Parenting mentors can provide guidance and support to parents.

### Programme Lead and Support Volunteer

More experienced youth volunteers can take on leadership roles to plan volunteering services and support other programmes, including those for seniors and children. They may coach newer volunteers and oversee programme execution.

### Corporate Function Volunteer (VM Support/Logistics)

Volunteers, often from corporate backgrounds, can assist with volunteer management system tasks like data entry and extraction or provide logistics support such as procuring supplies.



Below are some of the key outcomes identified by the service cluster participants, that would be useful in assessing impact on volunteers for the roles mentioned above:

|                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <b>Personal Development</b><br>(self-confidence)                                     | This indicator assesses the increase in volunteers' self-assurance as a result of their role. Improvement in communication and leadership skills can contribute to this.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 2 <b>Social Relationship</b> (social support, diverse social experiences)              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Social Support:</b> This measures the feeling of support from the community, staff, and other volunteers experienced by volunteers, especially Volunteer Leaders.</li> <li>• <b>Diverse social experiences:</b> This looks at the expansion of volunteers' interpersonal networks through their interactions, particularly relevant for Volunteer Leaders and those in Volunteer Welfare Management who plan activities to engage volunteers.</li> </ul> |
| 3 <b>Community Involvement</b><br>(involvement in making changes)                      | This measures the extent to which volunteers feel they are contributing to positive change in their community. This is more important for volunteer leaders, as they are expected to take more initiative and will experience the impact more directly.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 4 <b>Skills Development</b> (skills related to volunteering role, general life skills) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Skills related to volunteering role:</b> This focuses on the acquisition of specific skills relevant to the implementation of volunteer's tasks</li> <li>• <b>General life skills:</b> This assesses the improvement in broader skills, like time management, planning, and communications</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                    |

## Common Volunteer Roles Shared by Participants in the Mental Health & Community Cluster



The Mental Health & Community cluster highlighted roles that address support, skills-based contributions, and outreach:

### Caregiver/Peer Support Group Volunteer

Volunteers with lived experience or relevant skills can assist in facilitating support groups for caregivers or individuals facing mental health challenges. Ability to speak multiple languages is often a valuable skill for this role.

### Workshop Speaker

Qualified volunteers, such as TCM practitioners, can lead workshops on topic of TCM, finance experts can lead workshops on topic of financial literacy or other relevant skills, providing practice-based learning and potentially sustained pro-bono services after the workshop. Bilingualism is often a valuable skill for this role.

### Skills-Based Volunteer (Data Analysis, Backend Support, Event Planning, Legal)

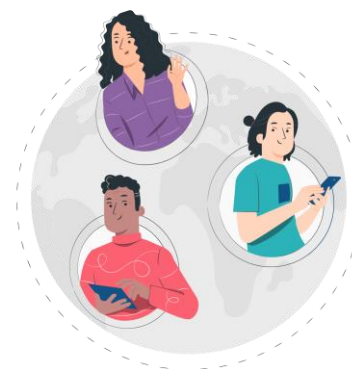
Volunteers with specific skills, such as IT or data analysis, can support backend work for outreach events, including data management, service user demographic checks, and impact assessment. They can also assist with event planning and outreach efforts.

### Hotline Manning Volunteer

These volunteers provide support and information to individuals reaching out through hotlines. This requires good communication skills and familiarity with the mental health space.

### Fundraising Volunteer

Volunteers support the planning and execution of fundraising programmes and act as advocates for the organisation to the public. Experience in events and programme management is beneficial



Below are some of the key outcomes identified by the service cluster participants, that would be useful in assessing impact on volunteers for the roles mentioned above:

|                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <b>Mental Well-being</b>                       | Monitoring the mental well-being of volunteers is crucial in this cluster due to the potentially sensitive nature of the work. The sources indicate that volunteering often leads to an improvement in mental well-being, as volunteers report feeling better after engaging in meaningful activities. However, it is also acknowledged that volunteers might experience being overwhelmed, so monitoring this aspect is important for their support. |
| 2 <b>Empathy</b>                                 | Empathy is highlighted as a crucial indicator in this cluster. An increase in a volunteer's ability to understand and share the feelings of service users can significantly impact the quality of their interactions and the overall environment.                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 3 <b>Meaningful Involvement in the Community</b> | Volunteers are more likely to remain committed if they perceive their contributions as significant and impactful. This sense of purpose is vital in the often demanding work within mental health and community services.                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 4 <b>Social Relationship</b>                     | Building positive social connections with service users, other volunteers, and staff can provide crucial support and a sense of belonging. This is particularly relevant in mitigating potential emotional strain in mental health and community volunteering and can contribute to volunteer retention.                                                                                                                                              |

Table continued next page

|                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>5 Skills Development</b><br><i>(communication skills, job-specific skills)</i>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Communication skills:</b> The development of communication skills, is a significant indicator because volunteers who feel they are gaining or utilising valuable skills are more likely to remain engaged and find their experience rewarding. In the context of Mental Health &amp; Community, effective communication is often central to the volunteer role, whether it is offering support, conducting outreach, or facilitating workshops.</li> <li>• <b>Job-specific skills:</b> Similar to communication skills, when volunteers feel they are learning and improving in areas directly related to their role, it enhances their sense of competence and encourages further engagement.</li> </ul> |
| <b>6 Self-confidence</b>                                                                   | <p>As volunteers develop skills and experience positive engagements, their self-confidence is expected to increase. This is particularly important in this cluster, where volunteers might be taking on challenging roles requiring interpersonal skills and emotional resilience. Sources suggest that an increase in skills can lead to a rise in self-confidence.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>7 Community Involvement</b> <i>(belief in making a difference, awareness of issues)</i> | <p>This indicator focuses on the volunteer's perception of their ability to effect change and their understanding of the issues the agency addresses. A positive shift in these areas suggests a deeper connection to the cause and a greater likelihood of continued involvement.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |



# 3. Building Successful Volunteer Partnerships for Service Delivery

## Summary of Workshop

Workshop 3, held in-person on 5 March 2025, focused on “**Building Successful Volunteerism Partnerships for Service Delivery**”. The workshop focused on:

- Helping participants to examine the enablers and challenges to build successful volunteerism partnerships;
- Engaged participants in co-creating practice guides to enhance current partnership practices between organisations, volunteers, and communities to address specific service delivery needs; and
- Highlighting relevant impact indicators from NCSS Sustainable Philanthropy Framework according to their respective service cluster.

Ultimately, the workshop aimed to enhance the sector’s awareness of the benefits of volunteer partners in service delivery, identify key enablers and challenges of effective volunteer partnerships, and identify relevant indicators that can be used to measure the impact of these partnerships on service delivery.

## Common Enablers & Challenges Across Clusters

Across all service clusters, participants identified several common key enablers and challenges crucial for effective volunteer partnerships. These factors highlight the shared experiences and perspectives across the service clusters in fostering meaningful volunteer engagement. These common enablers and challenges underscore the fundamental aspects that SSAs need to consider when establishing and maintaining successful volunteer partnerships to enhance their service delivery.

The following tables summarised the common enablers and challenges:

| Common Enablers                                                 | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <b>Understanding the needs of the community and programme</b> | SSAs that take the time to understand the specific needs of their service users and the requirements of their programmes are better positioned to create meaningful volunteer partnerships. This understanding helps in aligning potential volunteers with suitable roles and ensuring that their contributions are valuable. For instance, understanding the needs of seniors or individuals with disabilities allows for the development of appropriate volunteer activities. Similarly, knowing the operational needs of programmes, such as the timing of activities or the required skills, help in finding corporate partners whose objectives and resources can effectively support these needs.                                                          |
| 2 <b>Effective communication and regular engagement</b>         | Maintaining open lines of communication with volunteers and partners is crucial for successful partnerships across the clusters. Regular communication helps in keeping volunteers informed, engaged, and appreciated, which can contribute to their retention and continued involvement. Sharing context about service users and programme constraints enables partners to understand the environment and plan suitable activities. Proactive outreach and consistent updates on volunteer opportunities also support partner retention and encourage sustained commitment. This ensures that both the SSA and the partner are on the same page and that any potential issues can be addressed promptly, fostering a stronger and more sustainable partnership. |
| 3 <b>Alignment of expectations and objectives</b>               | Ensuring that the goals and expectations of both the SSA and the volunteer partners are aligned is a recurring enabler. When SSAs take the initiative to understand the objectives and desired outcomes of their volunteer partners, they can tailor opportunities to meet those needs while still addressing the needs of their service users. This involves discussing expectations regarding activities, volunteer roles, and the level of commitment. By aligning these expectations from the outset, potential mismatches can be avoided, leading to more satisfying and impactful volunteering experiences for the partners and better outcomes for the service users.                                                                                     |

| Common Challenges                                                             | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <b>Lack of sustained commitment and retention of volunteers/partners</b>    | Difficulty in securing long-term commitment from volunteers, especially corporate partners, is a significant challenge across all service clusters. Many corporate volunteering initiatives tend to be ad-hoc or "touch-and-go" in nature, making it challenging for SSAs to build consistent and meaningful engagement with volunteers and service users. Similarly, individual volunteers might participate in one-off events but not commit to regular volunteering. This lack of sustained commitment hinders the development of deeper relationships with both the SSA and the service users and can limit the overall impact of volunteer programmes on service delivery.                         |
| 2 <b>Mismatch between partner capabilities and programme needs</b>            | Depending on the service delivery programmes, volunteers may require specific skill sets, such as mentoring skills, food service experience or digital skills. Challenge arises when the interests and skills of potential volunteers do not align with the actual needs of the SSA and its service users. This mismatch requires effort from the SSA to educate partners about their needs and potentially negotiate activities that are mutually beneficial and impactful. Balancing the desires of the partners with the actual needs of the programme often require careful communication and sometimes creative solutions to ensure that the volunteering experience is valuable for all involved. |
| 3 <b>Challenges in the onboarding, training, and management of volunteers</b> | Ensuring that volunteers are adequately prepared for their roles, especially when working with vulnerable populations, poses a challenge. SSAs may also lack the manpower or resources to provide extensive individual onboarding and ongoing support for a large number of volunteers. Efficient methods for training and briefing, such as videos and guidebooks, can help address this, but ensuring that volunteers internalise the information and feel confident in their roles remains a challenge. Managing large groups of corporate volunteers and ensuring they are meaningfully engaged also presents logistical and management hurdles.                                                    |

### Common Impact Indicators and Challenges to Data Collection

Across all service clusters, participants identified several common key impact indicators and challenges to collecting data to assess success of volunteer partnerships. These factors highlight the shared experiences and perspectives across the service clusters in articulating the impact of successful volunteer partnerships to enhance service delivery.

| <b>Key Impact Indicator</b><br><i>Useful in assessing impact on partners, relevant to the cluster</i>                              | <b>Details</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 <b>Increase in sustained volunteering commitments or practices</b>                                                               | This indicator reflects the success of the partnership in fostering a lasting relationship and a consistent source of volunteer support.                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 2 <b>Number/Percentage of partner's volunteers who reported increase in willingness to volunteer in personal capacity</b>          | This indicates that the volunteering experience has a positive impact on the individual volunteers, inspiring them to engage in further volunteering beyond the organised partnership.                                                                                                                                                         |
| 3 <b>Number/Percentage of partner's volunteers who reported increase in sense of connection to members of their organisation</b>   | This suggests that volunteer partnerships can also have a positive internal impact within the partner organisation by fostering team bonding and a sense of shared purpose.                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 4 <b>Change in donation to social cause/issue</b>                                                                                  | Often, corporate partners who volunteer may also become donors, contributing to the financial sustainability of the SSA.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 5 <b>Number/Percentage of schools and IHLs who reported improvement in the learning and development outcomes of their students</b> | Volunteering experiences can provide students with a deeper understanding of mental health issues and social isolation, as well as enhance their personal learning and development, such as improved understanding of each other. Students may also gain a stronger sense of purpose by contributing to long-term solutions for service users. |

Table continued next page

### Common Challenges in Collecting Data to Assess Success of Volunteer Partnerships

|   |                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | <b>Low response rate</b>                                                                      | Low response rates, especially among corporate volunteers, is a significant challenge in collecting data. This makes it difficult to gather comprehensive feedback and measure the impact of the partnerships effectively.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 2 | <b>Time constraints and the transient/ ad-hoc nature of corporate volunteers</b>              | <p>Corporate volunteers often have limited time and may rush to leave immediately after a volunteering session.</p> <p>This "touch-and-go" nature of volunteering makes it challenging to administer surveys or conduct debriefs to collect necessary feedback data. This also makes it difficult to analyse data over time.</p>                                                                                                                                                          |
| 3 | <b>Data sensitivity: Varied readiness / willingness of partners to share and collect data</b> | <p>Some corporate partners have different levels of readiness and willingness to share data about their volunteering initiatives. Some may lack robust systems or policies for data sharing, may not prioritise it, or may not see the organisational need for it, especially if they do not have long-term volunteering plans.</p> <p>Hence, SSAs encounter difficulties in obtaining feedback as partners may not be willing to collaborate or share certain information with them.</p> |
| 4 | <b>Lack of existing data collection process and resources</b>                                 | Some SSAs may not have established processes for collecting data from partners, such as post-programme surveys, due to limited access to volunteers after the event or a lack of resources within the volunteer management team.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

### Key Enablers & Challenges Shared by Participants in the Disability, Residential & Eldercare Cluster

The following table highlight some key enablers and challenges of building successful volunteer partnerships among workshop participants in the Disability, Residential & Eldercare cluster.

|                      |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Key Enabler</b>   | <b>Ensuring Suitable Volunteer to Service User Ratio for Meaningful Engagement</b> | <p>Specific to this service cluster, it is emphasised that there is a need to ensure an appropriate ratio of volunteers to service users to facilitate beneficial outcomes for everyone involved - volunteers and service users, who require dedicated attention.</p> <p>This suggests that effective management of volunteer numbers and the provision of meaningful tasks are crucial for a positive volunteering experience and to ensure that volunteers feel they are making a valuable contribution.</p> |
| <b>Key Challenge</b> | <b>Managing Partners' Expectations of Service Users</b>                            | <p>Not all service users may be interactive due to their health conditions. This requires careful expectation management by SSAs of their partners and volunteers.</p> <p>Educating partners about the realities of working with the specific service user group and the SSA's programme requirements is crucial, but can be a challenge when partners are only considering the achievement of their social giving objectives.</p>                                                                             |

### Key Enablers & Challenges Shared by Participants in the Children, Youth & Family Cluster



The following table highlight some key enablers and challenges of building successful volunteer partnerships among workshop participants in the Children, Youth & Family cluster.

|                      |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Key Enabler</b>   | <b>Matching Corporate to Student Volunteers</b>                                    | <p>As a large pool of volunteers within this service cluster may be youths or students, pairing of corporate volunteer with a regular student volunteer can create mutually beneficial experiences.</p> <p>Corporate volunteers can offer mentorship and real-world insights to students, while students can bring energy and fresh perspectives. This intergenerational collaboration can enhance the overall impact of the volunteer programmes and foster stronger connections.</p>                                                          |
| <b>Key Challenge</b> | <b>Difficulty in Matching Volunteer Pool to Service Users' Needs and Schedules</b> | <p>Programme and service interventions within this service cluster are often on weekdays evenings or weekends, which are not ideal for corporate partners, who prefer weekdays office hours. Other difficulties reported are: one-time volunteering opportunity when programme requires a minimum commitment to build rapport with vulnerable service users and extended commitment durations.</p> <p>These mismatches can lead to inefficient use of volunteer time and a less impactful experience for both volunteers and service users.</p> |

### Key Enablers & Challenges Shared by Participants in the Mental Health & Community Cluster



The following table highlight some key enablers and challenges of building successful volunteer partnerships among workshop participants in the Mental Health & Community cluster.

|                      |                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Key Enabler</b>   | <b>Educating corporates on how CSR works</b>                                               | <p>Many corporate partners may not fully understand the needs of the mental health community, and how their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives can create meaningful impact.</p> <p>SSAs play a vital role in educating them about the specific needs of their service users and find mutually beneficial arrangements for collaboration. This includes explaining the long-term benefits of sustained partnerships beyond one-off events.</p> |
| <b>Key Challenge</b> | <b>Challenges in conducting extensive onboarding and training for corporate volunteers</b> | <p>The sensitive nature of working with individuals with mental health issues can make corporate volunteers more hesitant to interact, leading to a perceived need for extensive training.</p> <p>Furthermore, CSR personnel might not always be sufficiently equipped to provide the necessary pre-volunteering information to their staff, and there is an assumption that corporates are familiar with SSA-specific terminology.</p>                       |



## 4. Conclusion: Journey Map to Enhance Service Delivery through Sustained Volunteer Partnerships

### Journey Map



- **Align volunteer involvement with overarching organisational objectives.** This is done through having a clear knowledge and demonstration of the effectiveness of deploying volunteers towards organisational larger mission and goals.
- **Identify key impact areas to be measured.** Through measuring the impact of volunteers on service delivery, organisations can better understand how volunteer efforts contribute to the organisation's success.



- **Identify key volunteer roles** that are crucial in the organisation, or service; and new roles that should be included to increase effectiveness of service delivery.
- Key roles can be identified through:
  - **Understanding the needs of service users and interventions (programmes),** to help define appropriate roles that contribute to successful service delivery.
  - **Clearly defining the role descriptions and required skills** for each key volunteer role identified. This supports effective recruitment and matching of volunteers to suitable roles.



- Enhance volunteer engagement and retention through **regularly engaging existing volunteers**, and form new partnerships with new volunteers and partners (Corporate partners).
- **Communicate effectively and engage regularly** with volunteers to build and maintain relationships.
- **Clearly articulate volunteering opportunities and responsibilities** to Corporate Partners to increase better matching of Corporate Volunteers with appropriate interests and capacities to the SSA's programme needs.

## 5. Quotes by Participants

*"The **Volunteer Impact Measurement Kit (VIMK)** and the indicators introduced can help to sharpen our existing measuring tools and impact metrics. My biggest takeaway from the workshop was to sharpen data collection through duration of surveys, human-centric design, and training staff to conduct quality surveys."*

*"I found the group sharing and hearing others' experiences from other organisations to be the most useful part of the workshop. My biggest takeaway is to use the **NCSS Volunteer Role Redesign (VRR) Guide**. It looks very usable and customisable to different organisations' context and I'm excited to use it in my organisation!"*

*"Coming together to brainstorm and find out how other SSAs work reinforced the importance of measuring the impact of the work we and volunteers do. It ensures that we avoid complacency and to always give the best in the services that we provide. And while the workshop and group sharings were long, the insights were valuable."*



## 6. References

The workshops' content and this learning resource was developed with reference to NCSS' publication materials.

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19. Volunteer Role Redesign (VRR) guide, <https://go.gov.sg/ncssvrr>

# 7. Acknowledgements

We thank the following organisations for their contribution to the development of the Learning Resource:

|                                                            |                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 4S                                                         | Marymount Centre                            |
| A Life Limited                                             | Yayasan MENDAKI                             |
| Allkin Singapore Limited                                   | Metta Welfare Association                   |
| All Saints Home                                            | Morning Star Community Services             |
| Ascending Hope Community Services                          | Metropolitan YMCA                           |
| Babes Pregnancy Crisis Support Ltd                         | New Hope Community Services                 |
| Beyond Social Services                                     | Yong-en Care Centre                         |
| Bishan Home for the Intellectually Disabled                | Life Community Services Society             |
| Brahm Centre Ltd                                           | Persatuan Pemuda Islam Singapura (PPIS)     |
| Breast Cancer Foundation                                   | Presbyterian Community Services             |
| Brighton Connection                                        | Prison Fellowship Singapore                 |
| Care Corner                                                | Pro Bono SG                                 |
| Caregivers Alliance Limited                                | Rainbow Centre, Singapore                   |
| Child at Street 11 Ltd                                     | REACH Community Services Ltd                |
| Club HEAL                                                  | SAGE Counselling Centre                     |
| Dementia Singapore                                         | Samaritans of Singapore                     |
| EQUAL-ARK Singapore Ltd                                    | SG Cares Volunteer Centre (multi-location)  |
| Fei Yue Community Services                                 | Singapore Cancer Society                    |
| Foundation of Rotary Clubs Singapore Family Service Centre | Singapore Hospice Council                   |
| Good News Community Services                               | Singapore International Foundation          |
| HCA Hospice Care                                           | Singapore Red Cross Society                 |
| HCSA Community Services                                    | Society for WINGS                           |
| Kampong Kapor Community Services                           | Serving People with Disabilities (SPD)      |
| Ling Kwang Home for Senior Citizens                        | St Luke's ElderCare Ltd                     |
| Loving Heart Multi-Service Centre                          | The Salvation Army (Children & Youth Group) |
| Make-A-Wish Singapore                                      | THK Home for the Disabled (multi-location)  |
| Man Fut Tong Nursing Home                                  | TOUCH Community Services                    |
|                                                            | WE CARE Community Services                  |

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