

CHAPTER 3

VOLUNTEERISM ON THE AXIS OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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Being a phenomenon encountered in many areas such as education, culture, and disasters, volunteerism's area of activity has become more widespread and diversified with each day through its economic, cultural, political, and sociological reflections on society and individuals.. News about different types of volunteerism, from responding to forest fires to being involved in preparing for a film festival, has been reflected in the media and been subjected to much research. However, volunteers' rights and responsibilities cannot easily be said to have been adequately discussed as a concept. Volunteerism is the act of being a part of the society in which one lives as a conscientious and responsible individual and is directly related to the concepts of altruism, benevolence, philanthropy, generosity, humanitarianism, prosocial behavior, and social responsibility. This chapter discusses from a descriptive point of view the issue of volunteering in terms of rights and responsibilities. It addresses the regulations that form the basis of volunteer rights and the principles regarding volunteers' responsibilities. This chapter presents institutions' practices regarding volunteer rights and responsibilities and in this regard discusses the prominent developments in Turkiye and the world.

Introduction: Volunteerism from Various Perspectives

Being an activity carried out to produce social benefit without expecting any financial return, volunteerism is a field of study with economic, social, political, cultural, and psychological reflections. Volunteerism's prominence in many areas raises this issue's legal, ethical, and moral dimensions.

Volunteerism has been a subject in economic research in terms of it being an unpaid workforce (Miranda, 2011), in social issues in the context of social capital discussions (Stukas et al., 2005), in political issues in terms of civil society studies (Eliasoph, 2013), in cultural studies with its dimensions that differ with respect to culture (Dekker & Halman, 2003), and in psychological research in terms of volunteers' motivations (Clary & Snyder, 1999). Volunteerism was analyzed by Akyüz (2017) within the framework of Arendt's active life approach and is a prominent phenomenon in the context of discussions on active citizenship. Volunteerism is not just an action in the context of helping and being benevolent, it is an expression of individuals' inclusion in the community of which they are a member. Volunteerism lies at the intersection of values such as participation, trust, solidarity, reciprocity, governance, and good citizenship that are based on a shared understanding and sense of obligation (UN Volunteers, 2011). In this respect, volunteerism can be considered a behavioral pattern that is a natural consequence of living in a society and a responsibility one must fulfill in the face of the developments that occur in one's surroundings.

These different reflections can be tracked when looked at in terms of headings such as values, understanding, career, preservation, empowerment, and social impact, which Clary et al. (1998) defined as the functions of volunteering. In terms of time frames, while volunteer activities are institutionalized long-term to a certain extent on the one hand, on the other they are maintained over a wide framework through one-time individual activities or daily improvised activities. This rich habitat of discussion with its multipliable examples also requires consideration of the issue of volunteerism within the framework of rights and responsibilities. This is because each mentioned discussion area has an axis of rights and responsibilities as well as a historical context, national and international reflections, principles of practice, and ethical values. For instance, an electrician who volunteers to renovate a village school in the city in which he lives and a university student who participates in studies on immigrants in another country have very different characteristics in terms of the legislation they are subject to and the principles with which they must comply in their activities. Similarly, a volunteer who wants to contribute to forest fire fighting efforts in their district and a volunteer advocating for the rights of the elderly carry out these activities at different levels.

The fact that volunteering activities take place in different forms (e.g., one-time, regular, ad hoc, professionally) and on different legal and political grounds (i.e., nationally, internationally) in very different sectors (e.g., disaster, environment, education, social work, the arts) makes dealing with these activities in a single framework challenging. As a result, listing the rights and responsibilities applicable to every type of volunteerism poses a number of methodological difficulties.

The concept volunteer rights refer to the individual's right to volunteer and the existence of a set of normative frameworks that protect and make oneself responsible while they are volunteering. Similarly, a review that considers volunteerism within the framework of responsibilities indicates that volunteering includes responsibilities as well as rights. In this context, this chapter addresses the right to volunteer, the rights one has, the principles that need to be followed while organizing or participating in volunteer activities, and the main topics of discussion regarding these.

The Normative Framework Regarding Volunteers' Rights and Responsibilities

First of all, a normative framework is needed so that volunteerism can be evaluated within the framework of rights and responsibilities. This normative framework can be sought in legal norms such as international and national legislation and in social, religious, and moral norms such as common observances, customs, and traditions.

The reflections of volunteer service in the religious field can be examined through behaviors such as collaboration, cooperation, and charity, which exist in almost every religious doctrine. For example, from the point of view of the religion of Islam, the saying "The best humans are those who are beneficial to others" can clearly be an important starting point for encouraging Muslims toward volunteer activities. In this respect, volunteer service can be said to be a requirement in Muslims' religious beliefs.

The historical reflections of volunteer work can also be traced through charitable foundations. Foundations (*waqfs*) established for various purposes for people in need, travelers, or animals are institutionalized examples of volunteer service. At the basis of the waqf tradition "Lies values such as a sense of personal and conscientious responsibility toward humanity, goodness, compassion, and assistance/cooperation and the free will of one who has acquired these values as a principle for themselves" (Yediyıldız, 2022). This historical accumulation is loaded upon the shoulders of the heirs of those who have served the foundation as a responsibility to continue their voluntary service.

From the perspective of modern times, volunteerism can be considered a basic human right. Volunteerism is a reflection of individuals' freedom of speech and freedom of association and is protected under the constitution. According to Doğan and Yenisey (2017), as much as volunteerism is considered within the scope of the freedom to assemble and speak in the public sphere, it is also an area affiliated with negative rights with which the state and public authorities must not interfere (or their interference must be kept to a minimum with the aim of preventing other violations of rights). Volunteer service is an act of citizenship, and with the new millennium, in particular, various states have enacted laws and developed policies to encourage and support volunteerism.

The appearance of volunteer labor in labor law and social security law is another issue able to be emphasized in terms of volunteer rights because volunteer labor is a type of labor with counterparts in many sectors, as will be discussed in detail below.

Volunteerism, being characterized as activities carried out without the expectation of financial return, to increase the quality of life of individuals outside of one's immediate environment, and to achieve a goal that is generally considered beneficial to society, shows the act of volunteering to be a reflection of a sense of social sensitivity and responsibility. Said another way, volunteerism is the act of an individual who feels responsible for the developments around them. In this respect, volunteer activities have social, religious, and moral reflections.

Volunteering is also a means of social participation. A one's action that produces benefits for the society of which he is a member is also important to reinforce his membership in that society. Volunteering is seen as a way leading to harmony and interaction, especially in multicultural societies. Supranational institutions, such as the European Union or World Bank, consider volunteering one of the most important tools in terms of sharing common values (Afşar, 2019).

While volunteering is a reflection of a sense of responsibility, there is a framework of responsibilities that must be followed while performing voluntary action. This framework may also be addressed in terms of the ethics of volunteering. Accordingly, voluntary action does not self-evidently qualify as ethical. Volunteer behavior can only be qualified as ethical if it has certain characteristics. These principles require volunteers to behave toward themselves and those with whom they are carrying out their volunteer activity within the framework of certain principles and codes of conduct.

Despite being a conceptualization from a different subject and context, the phrase "doing bad by doing good" (Coyne, 2020) which was used for some international aid works may be

thought of as indicating volunteer activities that lack ethical principles. Ethical volunteering involves volunteers treating both themselves and those with whom they conduct volunteer activities within the framework of certain principles and codes of conduct.

To summarize in broad strokes, the normative basis of volunteer work in terms of rights and responsibilities can be said to consist of human rights, labor laws, social security laws, technical legislation regarding the area where volunteer activities will be carried out, social norms such as common observances, customs, traditions, religious principles, moral doctrines, application principles, codes of conduct regarding the area where volunteering activities will be carried out, and other ethical principles within this framework.

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The Principles of Volunteering

- Volunteering benefits society and the volunteer.
- Volunteer work is free.
- Volunteering is always a matter of choice.
- Volunteering is a tool for individuals or groups to address human, environmental, and social needs.
- Volunteering is an activity that only takes place in the non-profit sector.
- Volunteering is not a substitute for paid work.
- Volunteering requires respect for others' rights, dignity, and culture.
- Volunteering promotes human rights and equality.

Source: <https://gonullu.siviltoplum.gov.tr/gonulluluk-ilkeleri>

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Volunteer Rights

Volunteer rights can be classified as: (1) the rights volunteers have toward the recipients of the volunteer activity, (2) the rights volunteers have toward their organization, and (3) the rights volunteers have in the eyes of the state in the country where they are conducting the volunteer activity. At the same time, these rights make volunteer activities possible and ensure they are conducted properly.

The first issue to be addressed in this context is the right to be volunteer. As mentioned above, volunteering is assessable as a basic human right because it is a reflection of individuals' freedoms of speech and association. Published by the International Volunteer Work Association (IAVE) in 1990, the Universal Declaration on Volunteering recommends governments facilitate the following areas: securing people's right to be volunteer, removing barriers to volunteering, keeping in touch with volunteers, and allocating resources to non-governmental organizations for volunteer management (IAVE, 2021).

According to Kearney (2001), governments may regulate and facilitate volunteering by:

- Supporting the values and principles of volunteering while respecting the independence of volunteers' actions,
- Creating a political, legal, and financial environment that encourages volunteerism and recognizes its economic, social, cultural, and economic implications (this also includes identifying and removing barriers to participation in voluntary action),
- Funding and developing new approaches to volunteering, and conducting research to support and maintain the volunteering infrastructure at the local, regional and national levels,
- Encouraging partnerships with other industries and media to foster volunteering.

These mentioned rights are the framework principles regulating the environment for voluntary action before it starts. The rights that need emphasis during individuals' participation in volunteer activities can be discussed in the context of volunteer labor, job security, and social rights.

Another concept related to the right to volunteer is volunteer labor. The International Labor Organization (ILO) has also published a guide on measuring labor, which is a component of protecting volunteer rights. Accordingly, volunteer labor can be measured from two perspectives: opportunity cost and replacement cost. The opportunity cost approach is based on taking the amount a person would earn if they'd done another paid job during the time they'd spent on the volunteer activity, while the replacement cost approach is based on how much it would cost if the volunteer's work had been done for a fee (ILO, 2011).

Volunteer labor may also be considered within the scope of a gift economy (Abraham & Millar, 2011; UN Volunteers, 2013). A gift economy is where the exchange is carried out not through money but as a gift (Mauss, 2002) and is an arrangement in which people's economic and social actions are conducted based on reciprocity. Kelty (2008) discussed this concept in his research on free software, evaluating the factors that encourage many volunteers to work on software using the concept of a gift economy.

Another area bearing the traces of volunteer rights is labor law, due to intersections being seen between volunteer labor and the employment contract from the point of view of employment, wage, and dependency, which are the basic elements of the employment contract. However, actions such as volunteering that are not aimed at generating income are handled in the Turkish legal system outside of labor law (Yenisey, 2021).

Another area involving rights required for conducting volunteer activities is the right to travel. Visa and travel regulations are an important barrier, especially in international volunteering activities, and affect these activities (Lough et al., 2016). Therefore, designing travel systems that, rather than hindering volunteer activity, make it possible can also be stated as a right.

The above-mentioned rights are discussions about volunteer rights in the eyes of the state. Another important aspect of volunteering activities is the relationship between the volunteer and the organization arranging the volunteer activity. As the main actor determining the framework for the activity to be carried out, volunteers have a number of rights in the eyes of the relevant non-governmental organization or public institution. These rights can be grouped as the volunteer's rights to learn about their role in the activity or the project in general, to negotiate their role, to feel safe, to feel valued, and to leave. Volunteer candidates have the right to be informed about the conditions of the activity they will be a part of, the characteristics that are required, and the activity's suitability to their interests and skills. Even if a volunteer does not request this right, the relevant institution should convey it to the volunteer: Voluntary service should be conducted on topics agreed upon as being in harmony with the volunteer's interests and skills. Other points needing consideration are having this communication be bilateral and the volunteer's right to negotiate the task assigned to them. As a natural part of this whole process (in the framework of certain responsibilities), volunteers have the right to leave the work in which they are volunteering.

In terms of condensing these discussions, volunteers' basic rights can be summarized as follows (European Youth Forum, 2012):

- The essence of volunteer rights is the right to participate in volunteer activities. As such, individuals cannot be prevented by law from participating in properly conducted volunteer activities. Volunteers have the right to the full protection of their fundamental rights while performing their volunteer activities. These rights can be summarized as freedom of thought and expression, prohibition of ill-treatment, and not being discriminated against for reasons such as age, gender, race, color, language, disability, religion, political or other views, or national origin.
- Volunteers have the right to a coherent job description that allows them to clearly understand and implement the aims and objectives of the volunteer activity. As a natural consequence of this, volunteers should be informed of their rights and responsibilities within the activities they will fulfill. Volunteers have the right to

refuse assignments that are contrary to their beliefs and/or convictions. According to Erdoğan et al.'s (2020) research on volunteerism in Türkiye, 75.5% of volunteers here receive orientation/introductory training about their volunteer work.

- Volunteers have the right to have health insurance and social protection during the volunteer activity. Compensation for losses incurred during the volunteer activity and reimbursement of expenses are other topics that should be mentioned under this heading. According to the data from Erdoğan et al.'s, (2020) research in terms of illnesses that occur while volunteering, 19.8% of volunteers stated psychological disorders to have occurred, 4.1% to have experienced occupational illnesses, and 3.9% to have had work accidents. These figures show the right to social security concerns a group whose size cannot be underestimated.
- Every volunteer has the right to volunteer outside the country of residence or birth. Therefore, if necessary, a free visa should be available through an open, accessible, and transparent procedure that supports volunteer mobility. Volunteers should not just be seen as human resources but should also be able to participate in the decision-making processes of the activities in which they are involved. Volunteers' feedback on these activities is an important issue for both volunteers' belonging as well as the development of the activity. Volunteers also have the right to receive training in the fields the volunteer work requires and to be recognized by other institutions for the skills they have gained during this time.

Volunteer Responsibilities

Focusing on responsibilities is also necessary while dealing with volunteer work on the basis of rights because rights impose certain responsibilities on other parties. The first question to be asked at this point is whether volunteering is a duty or a kindness. In addition to volunteerism being a concept one realizes through one's own will, in some cases, volunteerism can be said to manifest itself conceptually as a responsibility. For example, being a volunteer for people who have the opportunity to help others in situations such as disasters or humanitarian crises is seen to occur beyond a choice: It is an obligation one must fulfill as a member of society.

As Erdoğan et al. (2020) emphasized, being a *volunteer* does not involve being *indiscriminate*. Although volunteers are not professional employees, they should be able to fulfill their duty professionally (Şentürk et al., 2016). This professionalism can be addressed within the framework of the codes of conduct, ethical codes, technical competencies, and

legal obligations the relevant task requires. In parallel with volunteer rights, volunteer responsibilities may also be classified as responsibilities to the beneficiary, the institution, and the state (laws).

Martinez (2003) divided the responsibilities institutions that work with volunteers have in three, defining them as: the responsibilities toward third parties in the activities carried out, the responsibilities the organization has toward volunteers, and the responsibilities the institution has due to volunteers' actions. Similarly, Orloff (2011) discussed the responsibilities of institutions that work with volunteers in disaster areas under two main frameworks: institutions' being held responsible by volunteers or their family in the event of an accident or injury, and beneficiaries holding the institution responsible for actions volunteers have taken.

These responsibilities can be made more concrete with the following questions. What responsibilities do institutions have regarding the beneficiary when a non-governmental organization operating in the field of social services performs a behavior not in compliance with professional ethics, what responsibilities do institutions have regarding volunteers when volunteers experience an accident in a work carried out by a non-governmental organization, and what responsibilities do civil society volunteers have when they act unethically toward the beneficiary?

As previously mentioned, volunteerism is a reflection of a sense of responsibility, and a framework of responsibilities exists that must be followed while performing volunteer activities. This framework can also be considered in terms of the ethics of volunteering. Accordingly, volunteer actions are not *self-evidently* ethical; these acts can only be qualified as ethical if they possess certain characteristics. These principles include volunteers behaving *ethically* toward themselves and the people with whom they volunteer. As Bauer's (2017) study examining health volunteers in terms of ethics emphasized, the basic principle of "do no harm" should be acted upon.

Volunteer activities for vulnerable groups play a key role in this ethical framework. Carrying out activities with vulnerable groups using professionals or volunteers who lack sufficient equipment, training, and experience will result in *harm* rather than *benefit*, both to the third parties as well as the volunteer themselves.

All these impart on volunteers the responsibility to fulfill their obligations and comply with the principles of the institution and the basic rules of the sector in which they operate. To summarize these discussions, volunteers' main responsibilities are:

- Volunteers must conduct their activities in accordance with the rule of law throughout their volunteer activities, particularly with regard to basic human rights. Showing special sensitivity is an obligation, especially in terms of not discriminating among the recipients and not exploiting the volunteer-beneficiary relationship. Volunteers must act meticulously about protecting recipients' personal data as well as the relevant institution's corporate data. One point that needs to be especially emphasized in this regard is that photos of recipients of volunteer services who are contacted during the volunteer activity are not to be taken without their consent nor shared in the course of their communications. Taking photos of children and victims' families in humanitarian crisis areas without following this rule and then sharing them on the volunteer's social media account in particular can be said to not comply with volunteer ethics.
- Volunteers have the responsibility to respect the mission, goals, and values of the institutions organizing the activity. Volunteers are to fulfill their agreed-upon tasks and attend the training required for this task. Each volunteer is to cooperate with the other volunteers within the organization, communicate with the beneficiaries, and contribute to the organization's sustainability by fulfilling their commitments.

Volunteering Policies and Legislation in the World

Volunteer management and policies are important items on the public policy agenda of the world and Türkiye. Legislative studies on volunteerism around the world with their different administrative structures and political cultures have shown this issue to have gained global importance for lawmakers. For example, legislation promoting volunteerism is seen to exist in Poland, Hungary, Lithuania, Macedonia, Croatia, the Philippines, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and Bolivia (UN Volunteers, 2009).

When looked at in terms of geographies near Türkiye, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro have passed legal regulations encouraging volunteerism. Işıldak (2021) examined Macedonia's law on volunteerism, according to which the law involves: a definition of volunteerism, volunteering methods, the rights and obligations of volunteers and of the organizers of the volunteering activities, the elements and content of volunteer agreements, obligations on keeping volunteer records, obligations on issuing volunteer booklets, and the identification of misdemeanor provisions for organizers, volunteers, and responsible persons in case of non-compliance with the legislative provisions. Croatia enacted a volunteering law in 2007 that provided the establishment of the National Agency for the Development of Volunteering and paved the way for improving volunteers' social positions as well as for creating policies regulating in-house volunteer management.

Some countries have legal regulations that can be gathered under the umbrella of the *Good Samaritan Law*, which regulates volunteers' responsibility for their actions in favor of volunteers. For example, a volunteer assisting a disaster victim in Canada cannot be sued for possible mistakes in this action (Revenue Services of British Columbia, 1996). As seen in the example of the USA, the Volunteer Protection Act adopted in 1997 also holds that no volunteer can be held responsible for their negligence or mistakes during a volunteer activity in order to encourage volunteering (United States of America, 1997).



The Examples of Ethical Violations Experienced in Volunteer Work

- Photographing the beneficiary's own family or living space without their consent and posting it on social media,
- Using the personal information of those contacted in the volunteer service for other purposes,
- Ending volunteer service before the agreed-upon time,
- Religion-, language-, ethnicity- or other-based discrimination.



Volunteer Policies and Legislation in Turkiye

Although regulations on volunteering presently take place in the texts of various policies in Turkiye, no regulations are found outlining the subject of volunteerism. This situation leads to ambiguities in how volunteer rights are registered and their responsibilities determined. This deficiency has been expressed both in the reports of non-governmental organizations and mentioned as a target in the texts of senior policies (Third Sector Foundation of Turkiye, 2015). Comprehensive targets regarding volunteerism in Turkish public administration are currently expressed in the 11th Development Plan as follows:

607.2. Children, families, and teachers are to be made aware of volunteer activities, and children are to be directed to these activities.

620.4. Youths are to be made aware of and directed to volunteer activities within their scope, and youths' participation in volunteer activities is to be encouraged.

658.2. Volunteer activities and projects that will increase intergenerational solidarity are to be supported.

776.1. An inclusive outline arrangement that strengthens the field of civil society and volunteerism is to be made.

779.3. Practices are to be initiated in schools to introduce children to civil society activities from an early age and to create awareness of volunteering.

Regulations containing provisions on volunteering can also be listed as follows:

- The Environmental Law
- The Animal Protection Law
- The Law on Associations
- The Basic Law of National Education
- Guidelines containing provisions on volunteering in various fields
- Guidelines on Voluntary Participation in Special Provincial Administration and Municipal Services
- Volunteer Firefighters
- Guidelines for Kahramanmaraş Municipality Voluntary Participation
- Municipal Fire Brigade Guidelines
- Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Fire Brigade Department Voluntary Firefighting Guidelines
- Honorary Traffic Inspectorate Duty and Work Guidelines
- Guidelines on Volunteers Tasked to Combat Forest Fires
- Guidelines on the Establishment, Duties, Working Procedures, and Principles of Civil Defense Search and Rescue Units and Teams
- Principles Regarding Conducting Activities Related to Technical Assistance Done in Developing Countries Pursuant to Decree No. 90/755

Volunteering regulations being touched upon in various fields indicate that the issue of volunteering is on lawmakers' agenda. However, a particular need exists for a legal framework that will protect volunteers' labor and rights and encourage volunteering.

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*Image 1. Be Volunteer and Save The Nature.
Physician, engineer, and architect volunteer firefighters.*

Volunteerism being a field that includes many different subjects and ways of doing business makes enacting an independent law on this subject a challenge. In addition, importance is held in having an outline for volunteer legislation include the following:

- General principles on the subject of volunteerism
- Volunteers' areas of responsibility
- The responsibilities of institutions that work with volunteers
- Provisions that will protect volunteers
- Provisions on recognizing volunteer labor and contributions

Volunteerism and Labor Laws

One of the most important issues regarding volunteer rights is how to protect volunteer labor. This is because the way to secure volunteers' rights in the activities they conduct is to protect them in regard to the work they do. However, this situation both creates gaps in terms of legislation as well as places financial burdens on institutions.

Currently, if a person works voluntarily in a project of a non-governmental organization in Türkiye, the provisions of the Social Insurance and General Health Insurance Law No. 5510 and Labor Law No. 4857 come to the fore regarding this work. The provisions in Law No. 5510 stipulate that volunteers are to be insured and reported to the Social Security Institution, and their premiums paid regarding this volunteer work. This is because social insurance in Türkiye is based on the work carried out to generate income.

Doğan and Yenisey (2017) examined the issue from a legal perspective and evaluated the issue by asking if volunteer activity is considered work within the scope of labor laws as follows:

In today's societies, working for a fee has practically become a rule, and the payment of a material return by the beneficiary of the goods or services that appear as a result of the work has been defined as a legal debt. The work carried out without expecting a material return has turned into an exception. Accordingly, the mention of volunteer work has transformed this relationship into a direct business relationship. However, the working also covers situations that are broader than the production of goods or services for the purpose of generating income where the underlying relations are not suitable to be measured economically but still require a certain amount of competence and time... From this point of view, the mention of volunteer work does not directly transform this relationship into a business relationship. (Translated from the original Turkish)

The off-the-books employment market aspect of this topic should also be taken into account alongside the volunteer rights. This is because regulating the relationship of volunteer work in a way that facilitates volunteering will make distinguishing between volunteer and off-the-book workers a challenge, for just as a person who appears to be a volunteer may be one in an actual sense, they may in fact be an employee working with an employment contract.

The fact that volunteering alone is not a basis for a social insurance relationship does not justify leaving volunteers unprotected against the risks involved in volunteer activities. As is common in international practices on this subject, volunteers are required to be covered by occupational accident and occupational illness insurance, at least against the risks that may be encountered while conducting the volunteer activity.

In this respect, another aspect of volunteer rights is volunteers' position in social security laws. When looked at from this point of view, having volunteers' work conditions comply with health and safety standards, life and body integrity is protected against health and safety risks, and possible accident risks be minimized should be essential.

One of the most important issues that comes to the agenda in this regard is the risks of accidents and illnesses that occur during volunteer activities. Türkiye currently has no legal regulations providing assurances to volunteers in this regard, and the institution that organizes the volunteer activity can be said to have the obligation of protecting the volunteer against the risks of accident and illness that they may encounter during their activities. However, no established precedent exists in this regard, and non-governmental organizations even attempt to register volunteers as having waived their social security rights. For example, the Turkish Green Crescent Society places the responsibility on volunteers with the statement, "The Volunteer Relationship does not impose any obligation on the Green Crescent in terms of the Labor Law, Social Security Legislation, or Occupational Health and Safety Law; I bear all responsibility for any accident that may occur" (Turkish Green Crescent Society, 2021). Undoubtedly, this situation can lead to volunteers becoming victims.

Depremzedelere yardıma koşarken kaza geçiren gönüllü doktor, yılın hekimi oldu

06.02.2012 15:38 | Son Güncelleme: 06.02.2012 15:38

Gaziantep'ten, deprem felaketi yaşayan Van'a gönüllü doktor olarak giden ve oradaki çalışmalarını esnasında ambulansla geçirdiği...

Image 2. The volunteer physician who died during assisting the earthquake victims was selected as physician of the year.

Institutions' Volunteer Policies and Volunteer Agreements

General discussions on volunteer rights and responsibilities have been covered throughout this chapter. Another area where the reflections of this subject can be seen is in institutions' volunteer policies. Volunteer policies are written documents declaring institutions' approaches toward volunteers. Volunteer agreements can also be defined as a memorandum of understanding or covenant in which the relationship between the volunteer and the institution is recorded in writing. Volunteer rights and responsibilities in this way can be traced through these documents.

While institutions declare their approach to volunteering or their philosophy on volunteerism through policy documents, they determine the framework of which principles voluntary individuals will be volunteers through the volunteer agreement. For example, the Turkish Red Crescent's volunteer policy encapsulates mentioning the topics of not discriminating among volunteers, directing volunteers to tasks according to their knowledge and skills, providing training to volunteers, recruiting volunteers, and protecting personal data while determining the outlined principles with which the organization will comply in their volunteer works (Turkish Red Crescent, 2021). The Turkish Green Crescent's volunteer agreement also includes provisions on how volunteers are to behave in accordance with the principles of the institution, participate in volunteer trainings, work in accordance with the spirit of the team, and the ethical principles volunteers are to apply during volunteer activities (Turkish Green Crescent Society, 2021).

Turkish Red Crescent Society Volunteering Policy

The Turkish Red Crescent Society,

- Provides the information needed for volunteers to work in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the International Red Cross-Red Crescent Movement and the Code of Ethics and Conduct of the Turkish Red Crescent Society,
- Gives importance and prioritizes the realization of the activities carried out through volunteers,
- Does not discriminate against volunteers irrespective of language, religion, race, ethnicity, political opinion, and gender; Ensures equal opportunity,
- Works with its volunteers in an environment of harmony and trust,
- Works with relevant institutions and organizations to provide the appropriate environment for volunteer activities at the national and international level; Encourages volunteering,
- Conducts social awareness works on the importance of volunteer service,
- Assigns projects and activities suitable for each volunteer's interests, skills, and field of work,
- Supports, provides trainings, and ensures the sustainability of voluntary service by organizing the necessary programs in order to encourage volunteers to participate in their volunteer duties, perform their duties and responsibilities better and develop their skills,
- Conducts the works needed for promoting volunteering in society by planning volunteer acquisition activities,
- Monitors the compliance, motivation, and performance processes of our volunteers,
- Ensures that the necessary care is taken to meet the requirements of our volunteers with special needs,
- Ensures the protection of volunteers' personal information within the scope of the Personal Data Protection Law (KVKK) and the Personal Data Protection Policy of the Turkish Red Crescent Society.

In addition, the principles that also guide volunteer work may be registered through policy documents such as volunteer work guidelines. For example, the Turkish Education Foundation's (TEV, 2021) volunteer work guidelines consist of the following sections:

Behaviors, rules, and responsibilities that volunteers must comply with, general rules to be applied in volunteer work, conditions of volunteering, areas where volunteers can serve, the candidate evaluation process, the volunteer information process, volunteer discipline practices, and volunteer activity assessments.

Rights and Responsibilities in International Volunteering

Developments in means of communication and transportation have transformed volunteering beyond being a local activity into an international field. When looking at the number of participants in international volunteer work in the 21st century, great expansion is seen to have appeared (Sherraden et al., 2008). This dynamism, also referenced with descriptions such as volunteer tourism (*voluntourism*) and development volunteerism, is usually promoted by non-governmental organizations and private organizations.

Examples, such as the European Solidarity Corps, which is based on the principle of having young people between the ages of 17-30 volunteer in social projects for 2-12 months in a European Union country and provides intra-European volunteer mobility, as well as volunteer movements from developed countries in developing countries organized by non-governmental organizations, or international volunteer movements where individuals get involved through their own opportunities can be given in these works.

International volunteering is an important dimension of volunteer work and requires special attention in terms of volunteer rights and responsibilities. These activities, particularly those directly conducted by developed countries in developing countries, lead to ethical debates (McGloin & Georgeou, 2016). Although people carrying out volunteer activities in other countries is an important and valuable effort, it can become the stage for unethical actions. In this context, international volunteer activities have been criticized for reasons such as their impact on local capacity, economic costs such as transportation and accommodation, the hierarchy established between volunteers and local people, and local needs not being sufficiently taken into account (Devereux, 2008). This topic has also been the subject of post-colonial studies in that it involves a mindset that acts with the “white man’s burden” approach by deeming itself responsible for civilizing the world (Bandyopadhyay, 2019; Bauer, 2017). For this reason, designing international volunteer activities beyond being an activity of personal satisfaction or perceived as a “civilization mission” but as a mutual learning exercise and a transfer of knowledge and experience by taking into account the necessary ethical principles is important.

Corporate Volunteering

Corporate volunteering, which is defined as the volunteer work paid employees do during working hours with the encouragement of their companies in professional business life, is one of the recent prominent trends in the field of volunteering (Soysal, 2019). The place this activity has in the private sector is even more understandable, given that more than 90% of the companies in the “Fortune 500” list conduct employee volunteering and donation programs (Leigh et al, 2011).

Examples of Corporate Volunteering Practices

Bilim İlaç	Bilim İlaç Social Team
Borusan Holding	The Ocean Volunteer Borusan Platform
Citibank	Citi Volunteer Program
Boyner Grubu	Boyner Group Volunteers
IBM	Corporate Service Corps
Garanti Bankası	Volunteer Clovers
Target	Good Neighbor Volunteer Program
Allstate Insurance	Helping Hands
Tucson Electric	Community Action Team (CAT)
Walt Disney Co	VoluntEARS

Source: <https://osgd.org/test/pdf/OSGD-Kurumsal-Gonulluluk-Rehberi.pdf>

Making sure that employers facilitate employees who want to volunteer can be emphasized as an employee right in this process. Corporate volunteering practices increase productivity, positive social perceptions, and employee dependency for institutions, and produces benefits such as talent development, increased satisfaction, and corporate belonging for employees (Özel Sektör Gönüllüleri Derneği [ÖSGD], 2013). In this context, employees requesting corporate managers to develop corporate volunteering practices can also be considered an employee right.

Summary and Evaluation

As an important agenda item of political and social debate at the national and international level, volunteer work is a field that can be applied in different ways (i.e., individually, institutionally, and independently) and in many different sectors such as disaster, education, environment and culture and includes one-time as well as on-going activities.

The positive results all these activities produce require these works being carried out within the framework of specific rights and responsibilities. This framework, which is also definable as rights-based ethical volunteering, is based on legislation that regulates volunteers' field of activity, their relationship with the institution of which they are a part, and their relationship with the recipients (those benefitting from the volunteer activity).

The framework of rights which begins with the right to volunteer can be classified under headings such as being protected, not being discriminated against, obtaining information, receiving training, protecting labor, and participating in decision processes. The issue of protecting volunteers' labor and establishing social security rights attracts particular attention on this point.

Volunteers' responsibilities are also assessable over the principles of complying with the legal and ethical principles required by the sector in which they operate, of not discriminating among the recipients, and of doing no harm. The rights and responsibilities mentioned can be placed on record through texts such as volunteer policies and volunteer agreements. Many non-governmental organizations and public institutions working with volunteers are seen to mutually place on record their relationship with volunteers and the rights and responsibilities covered by this relationship through names such as volunteer policies and volunteer agreements. However, the increasing importance of the issue of volunteering has revealed the need for policy makers to address and regulate it.

Implementing a legislative outline that protects volunteer rights and responsibilities and encourages volunteering is important. This legal framework should have a character that defines and facilitates volunteerism and makes its regulation possible in accordance with different sectors.

Basic Reading Recommendations

Green Crescent Volunteer Agreement. (available online)

The Educational Volunteers Foundation of Turkiye Volunteer Agreement. (available online)

American Red Cross Volunteer Handbook.

Advanced-Level Reading Recommendations

FEMA, (2013). Citizen Corps Volunteer Liability Guide: An Overview of Legal Issues and Approaches to Address Liability for Emergency Volunteers.

Fusco-Karmann, C., Tamburini, M., Suprani, A., & Santosuosso, A. (1998). The code of conduct of the volunteer. *Supportive care in cancer*, 6(2), 120-124.

UN Volunteers (2011). *Drafting and Implementing Volunteerism Laws and Policies A Guidance Note*.

Activity Recommendations

Compare the texts of the volunteer policies and volunteer agreements from 3 institutions you have chosen.

Evaluate the differences among institutions in terms of volunteer rights and volunteer responsibilities.

Examine the volunteer laws in 3 countries of your choice. Discuss what kind of differences exist among countries in terms of promoting volunteerism, volunteer rights, and volunteer responsibilities.

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