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Youth Volunteerism and Civic Service in Latin America and the Caribbean:

A Potential Strategy for Social and Economic Development

Background Research Paper

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Youth Volunteerism and Civic Service in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Potential Strategy for Social and Economic Development

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Executive Summary

Youth between the ages of 15 and 30 represent almost 30 percent of the population in Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, 2003). Youth are making important contributions to their communities, but there is potential for a greater number to play strategic roles as leaders and participants in development (Rodriguez, 2003; IDB, 2000; UNESCO, 2000). In this background research paper, we explore the potential of youth volunteerism and civic service to address social and economic issues in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

We define social and economic development as endeavors aimed at building capacity and increasing life chances of individuals, families, and communities through an inclusive process. Widespread and diverse social, economic, and environmental challenges face the region, particularly due to inequalities by income and education (ECLAC 2002,2003). With large numbers of youth participating in volunteerism and civic service, they have the potential to significantly impact these conditions, and the youth may directly benefit from their volunteer involvement as well.

We construe the concept of volunteerism along a continuum that is distinguished by such dimensions as level of structure, formality, and time commitment (Tang, McBride, & Sherraden, 2003). At one end of the continuum is mutual aid, an informal care-giving activity among community members. In the middle of the continuum is sporadic or occasional volunteering.

At the other end of the continuum is civic service, a more structured, intensive, and longer-term commitment characterized by defined server roles, goal-directed programming, institutional involvement, and strategic investments. Sherraden (2001b) defines civic service as: "an organized period of substantial engagement and contribution to the local, national or world community, recognized and valued by society, with minimal [or no] monetary compensation to the participant" (p. 2).

Volunteerism may be one strategy among many that can be used to address social and economic goals, and civic service may represent a productive strategy worthy of more attention. The structure of civic service may contribute to a range of effects and facilitate more widespread participation and inclusion of servers, reaching larger numbers.

In this background paper, we explore the history and forms of volunteerism in the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region, and consider the potential effects of volunteerism and civic service on youth, individuals, communities, and society. This is an initial attempt to synthesize existing research on volunteerism and civic service in the LAC region, and we may have left out important studies. We also acknowledge that not every country or every volunteer or civic service program is represented, and that non-Spanish speaking Caribbean countries are underrepresented. We hope that this work may serve as a first step and contribution toward a larger and more extensive research agenda for the region.

Youth Volunteerism and Civic Service Programs

Volunteerism overall has a long and rich history in the Latin American and Caribbean region, from mutual aid in early societies to more contemporary forms of grassroots activism and school- and university-based civic service. There appears to be a renewed sense of "solidarity" in the region, which is being funneled through volunteer-driven youth programs that focus on collective issues and goals. This interest is maximized by organizational structures, particularly nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), that provide opportunities for youth to be engaged within their local communities, and by networks and conferences that connect youth nationally, regionally, and globally. Also notable is the increase in and replication of youth-initiated programs, particularly by university students. Examples include Opción Latinoamerica and Un Techo Para mi País.

We identify contemporary forms of youth volunteerism and civic service in the LAC region, and offer an institutional framework for illustration and as an analytical device. We classify a range of program examples by the implementing institutions, including local and national NGOs, international NGOs, governments, schools and universities, and faith and church-based organizations.

We further examine program goals based on areas of service activity and the potential effects of volunteerism and civic service on the served and the servers. The most common areas of activity may be, respectively: community development, education and skill development, civic engagement, health, basic needs, the environment, human rights and peace, and emergency services. Based on this limited list of programs, we find that certain types of institutions may give greater attention to particular service areas. For example, international NGO programs may give more focus to emergency services in particular, while faith and church programs may stress human rights and peace. Governmental programs and school and university-based programs may rate highest in the promotion of civic engagement. We offer these as hypotheses for future research.

Youth volunteerism and civic service may have a range of positive impacts, but evidence is limited. Most research focuses on the volunteers or servers, while there is much less research on those who are served. We summarize primarily civic service research from within and outside the LAC region. For the servers, some studies and anecdotal evidence suggest that there are positive impacts on education and skill development as well as impacts on self-esteem, cultural understanding, and citizenship development. For the served, we note a range of possible outcomes for different beneficiaries from children inoculated in rural areas, to individuals trained to run their own businesses, to impoverished communities connected through newly built information and communication technology centers. There are also public education awareness campaigns focused on HIV/AIDS, drug prevention, and the environment.

Program Implications

We offer three principles to guide youth volunteer and civic service programs in the LAC region: there should be opportunities to participate; opportunities should be inclusive; and actions should

be effective.   These principles suggest implications for program administration, design, and implementation.

Program administration strategies for expanding youth volunteerism and civic service programs include creating a shared vision and commitment among public, private, nongovernmental, and religiously-affiliated organizations; developing broader inter-organizational partnerships; and building on institutional strengths within communities, such as school and university programs. Program design strategies for maximizing effects and scope include developing models that support youth-initiated programs; utilizing approaches that impact multiple issues, such as youth entrepreneurship, which affects employment as well as education and skill development; and facilitating participation across all youth who would like to participate, e.g., through stipends, educational awards, or health insurance.

Program implementation includes three important elements: scalability, sustainability, and accountability. Scalability may be approached through replicable program models that offer the most opportunities for participation and potentially have the most significant impacts. Sustainability may be enhanced by developing a variety of learning networks and working groups among practitioners, policymakers, and researchers to maximize resources, fine-tune program designs, and identify areas for further research. Accountability may be improved by integrating an evaluation component within program designs that defines measures of success, tracks specific program activities, and identifies intermediate and final outcomes, all of which can help to identify promising practices.

Research Implications

This background research paper is an initial synthesis and examination of the status and potential of youth volunteerism and civic service in the LAC region, which raises more questions than it answers. We have identified three primary areas for future research: scope and institutional forms; inclusive program models; and effects on servers and the served.

Scope and institutional forms. The number and types of youth volunteer and civic service programs in the LAC region are largely unknown, as is the scope of these programs in terms of the numbers of youth engaged.
- What programs exist and what types of institutions sponsor them?
- How do programs differ across countries and regions?
- What are the strengths as well as the challenges faced by programs?
- What program designs have been most successful and in what service areas?
- In what ways do inter-organizational networks and program partnerships impact institutional social capital and program development and implementation?

Inclusive program models. With the history of *asistencialismo* in the LAC region and the current focus on *solidaridad*, there is a call for research on access and inclusion.
- Who is able to serve and who is serving?
- How do the inequalities in the LAC region impact opportunities for youth to volunteer?
- How can low-income, rural, indigenous, disabled, or other disadvantaged youth be included? Is gender a factor of exclusion?

- What types of program designs maximize inclusive participation?

Effects on the server and the served. The applicability of service for development depends on its effects. Results are promising regarding the effects on the server, but it is necessary to know if positive effects accrue beyond the servers to individuals, organizations, communities, and nations.

- What are the short and long-term effects of service on the servers and the beneficiaries?
- What are the unanticipated or potentially negative effects on the server and the served?
- What is the value of volunteerism, or what are the costs and benefits of youth volunteer and civic service programs?

Conclusion

This paper has provided an overview of youth volunteerism and civic service in the LAC region. While systematic evidence is in short supply, we have outlined what is known and utilize program examples throughout. Program implications and a research agenda have been proposed, with a recommendation to focus on civic service as potentially the most viable and inclusive form of volunteerism, with the greatest potential to contribute positively to social and economic change.

If youth volunteerism and civic service is as effective as it appears to be, how can this intervention be maximized? The political answer lies in generating vision and political will among leaders at all levels. The economic answer lies in finding resources to support civic service as a social and economic development strategy. The administrative answer lies in examining program models to determine which designs offer the greatest potential for increasing participation, and expanding those opportunities and incentives. The academic answer lies in generating a greater knowledge base, especially measuring effects.

1. Introduction

To empower young people is to enable them to use their forces in the service of development.

UNESCO, 160th session, 2000

In the Latin American and Caribbean region—where approximately 30 percent of the population are between the ages of 15 and 30 (ECLAC, 2003)—there is increasing interest in the potential of youth to contribute to social and economic development (IDB, 2000; UNESCO, 2000). The United Nations' Millennium Development Goals and the World Programme of Action for Youth[1] outline key issues, priorities, and strategies for engaging youth (United Nations, 1995; World Bank Group, 2003). In the Latin American and Caribbean region (LAC), international organizations have taken strategic steps in partnering with other organizations to address youth issues. For example, the Inter-American Working Group on Youth Development, founded in 1996, is a consortium of organizations that support innovative approaches to youth development and participation through jointly mobilizing resources, highlighting best practices, and collaborating on projects.[2]

Many youth are active participants in their communities, but there is potential for greater numbers to be "strategic actors of development" (Rodriguez, 2003, p. 2). The paradox of youth, however, is that they are often excluded from legitimate social participation (CEPAL & OIJ, 2003). This trend may be reversing—at least through voluntary action. For example, 22 countries in the region, representing over 110,000 young people, participated in the Global Youth Service Day 2003 (Quinto, Lyngdoh, & Davila, 2003), [3] and approximately 5,000 youth and adults participated at the May 2003 "*Mobilizing Social Capital and Volunteer Action in Latin America*" conference in Chile (IDB, 2003).[4] The long and rich tradition of volunteerism and civic service in the LAC region may be a foundation for expanded efforts in the region (Gillette, 1968; Tapia, 2002).

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[1] This program was updated in 2003 (United Nations, 1995; World Bank Group, 2003).

[2] Inter-American Development Bank, 2003. The Inter-American Working Group on Youth Development (IAWGYD) includes the following members: Canadian International Development Agency, Inter-American Development Bank, Inter-American Foundation, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, International Youth Foundation, Organization of American States, Pan American Health Organization, Partners of the Americas, UNESCO, United Nations Youth Unit, United States Agency for International Development, United States Peace Corps, and Youth Service America.

[3] Global Youth Service Day (GYSD), an annual global event, is led by Youth Service America with the Global Youth Action Network, and a consortium of 34 International Organizations and more than 150 National Coordinating Committees to: identify and address the needs of communities through voluntary service; recruit the next generation of volunteers; educate the public about the role of young people as community leaders; and highlight the contributions youth make to their communities year-round (Global Youth Service Day, 2003).

[4] Conference organized by the Inter-American Initiative on Social Capital, Ethics, and Development of the Inter-American Development Bank, the IDB Youth Program, and the Governments of Chile, Norway, France, and Spain.

In this paper, we continue to challenge this paradox by discussing how youth volunteerism and civic service may address a range of social and economic issues in the region (ECLAC, 2002, 2003). We define social and economic development as endeavors aimed at building capacity and increasing life chances of individuals, families, and communities through an inclusive process.

Widespread and diverse social, economic, and environmental challenges face the region, particularly due to inequalities by income and education. For youth, this translates to a lack of jobs. Youth unemployment is typically double the adult rate (Hopenhayn, 2002). Low family income has led some youth to seek employment at an early age, limiting their level of education and forcing some to living on the street (Rizzini & Lusk, 1995). Other regional issues impact youth as well. There is less access in rural areas to information and communication technology, health care, and emergency services (ECLAC, 2003; Vylder, 2002). Impoverished neighborhoods, rural or urban, may not have basic services such as clean water, waste management, or trash removal (Satterthwaite, 2003). Other concerns include substance use, HIV/AIDS, street children and gangs, as well as high deforestation rates and unsustainable agricultural practices (CLADEHLT, 2001; Rizzini & Lusk, 1995; Roberts, 2003; Lopez, 2003). With large numbers of youth participating in volunteerism and civic service, they have the potential to significantly impact these conditions.

Volunteerism and civic service also have the potential for positive outcomes on youth who serve in the programs. Youth is that period of late adolescence to young adulthood which is a time of social formation where the young person begins to focus on self-identity and societal role. At this life stage, individuals begin to develop a moral and social conscience (Lickona, 1983). This stage is also characterized by choices in careers, marriage, and other critical life course decisions (Rice, 2001). As participants in volunteerism and service, youth may be impacted in ways that support this social formation. These impacts may include opportunities to gain knowledge, increase work and social skills, and develop social capital and civic skills (Perry & Thomson, 2003). As such, volunteerism and civic service may positively impact individuals, communities, and society while simultaneously impacting the youth.

Youth Volunteerism and Civic Service

For different cultures, volunteerism has different meanings and takes different forms. Broadly, volunteerism is a form of civic engagement, whereby individuals actively apply themselves in productive activities that benefit others and which may also benefit the volunteers themselves, with minimal or no financial compensation. As a phenomenon, volunteerism can be viewed along a continuum that has several dimensions, including level of structure, formality, and time commitment (Tang, McBride, & Sherraden, 2003).

At one end of the continuum is mutual aid. This represents informal care among community members, which is the backbone of primary group association in families and communities characterized by relatively low levels of structure and formality. An example is a group of villagers in an Andean village who assist their neighbors with construction of livestock enclosures.

Moving along the continuum toward more structured and formal activities are volunteer activities. This form of volunteering might be a one-time activity, such as working for a day

handing out emergency care packages, or it might be periodic service, such as literacy tutoring once a week.   Further along the continuum, more structured forms of service include participating in a community service project within a school setting (service-learning).   This form of service adds a dimension of preparation and reflection.

At the other end of the continuum is civic service, which typically requires a long-term, intensive time commitment on the part of the "server."   Sherraden (2001b) defines civic service as: "an organized period of substantial engagement and contribution to the local, national, or world community, recognized and valued by society, with minimal monetary compensation to the participant" (p. 2).   Unlike other expressions of volunteerism, civic service may or may not be voluntary.   An example of voluntary civic service is Servicio País, a program in Chile that offers university students and recently graduated students the opportunity to serve in poverty-stricken communities for periods of a few months to a year.   An example of mandatory service is Servicio Social in Mexico, involving participation over six to 12 months as a requirement for university graduation.[5]

The Purpose and Content of the Research Background Paper

This background paper is concerned with organized youth volunteerism and civic service, focusing on programs as interventions with defined goals and objectives.   This is an initial attempt to synthesize existing research on volunteerism and service in the LAC region. We recognize that we may have left out important studies, and that not every country or every volunteer or civic service program is represented in this paper.   We also acknowledge that the non-Spanish speaking Caribbean countries are underrepresented.   We hope that this work may serve as a first step toward a larger and more extensive research agenda for the region.

The purpose of this paper is to review the potential role of youth volunteerism and civic service in social and economic development in the LAC region.   A focus is placed on youth as both "strategic actors" and beneficiaries.   The paper will:

- Address aspects of the history, context, and forms of volunteerism and civic service in the LAC region.[6]

- Identify areas of service addressed through volunteer and civic service programs.   We divide the discussion between effects on the served and the server, utilizing with examples from the LAC region.   In a field that is just beginning to receive systematic research attention, we illustrate with examples that highlight potentially fruitful areas for further investigation.

- Discuss potential contributions to social and economic development, implications for programming, and recommendations for further research.

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[5] In the process of translating "civic service" to Spanish, we had difficulty finding a comparable Spanish word or phrase to connote the same meaning. This process has led us to more fully understand the need to articulate definitions and measures that might be used across cultural borders. See also Tapia (2003).

[6] We make generalizations with caution, and give country-specific information where possible, recognizing that there may be significant differences among countries in the region.

2. The History and Forms of Youth Volunteerism and Civic Service in the Latin American and Caribbean Region

Mutual Aid, Volunteering, and Civic Service in Historical Perspective

Well before the modern concept of volunteer service was introduced, the indigenous peoples of the Pre-Columbian Americas had words to describe communal work for the benefit of the tribe. In Bolivia, the indigenous people referred to this activity as *yanapacu;* in Peru the word used was *ayni*; and in Ecuador the institution of self-help known as *mingas* has survived to this day. It is not uncommon for a village to unite to dig a well or repair a roof for a villager, knowing that anyone at any given moment can be either a receiver or provider of assistance (Gillette, 1968). Some of the indigenous groups in Mexico and Guatemala make use of the word *tékio* to denote a similar practice (Dulany, 2002). The spirit of solidarity expressed through mutual aid in service to one's kin or clan pre-dates modern conceptions of volunteerism and civic service (Menon, McBride, & Sherraden, 2003).

During the Spanish colonial period, volunteerism, charity and philanthropy became closely entwined with and legitimized by the Catholic Church. The missionary traditions of the Franciscan, Dominican, Augustinian, and Jesuit orders had a great influence on the development of organized voluntary action and civil society in Latin America (Thompson & Landim, 1998). The church facilitated the creation of brotherhoods, sisterhoods and fraternities. These orders and the Catholic Church, in general, organized the first expression of formal institutions focused on volunteerism (Thompson & Landim, 1998).

The years following the end of colonial rule in the 1800s were marked by an effort from the new republics to undertake charity work that previously had been provided by the Catholic Church. But inadequately organized and financially impoverished governments were unable to meet such a great challenge. Therefore, the Catholic Church and the social elites continued to play an important role in the provision of charity work (Thompson & Landim, 1998). During the 19th century and early 20th century, trade unions, professional associations, and mutual aid societies were developed to provide medical care and assist the unemployed and the disabled (Bettoni & Cruz, 2002; Landim, 1998; Sanborn, 2002).

After the Mexican revolution of the 1910s, modern governments emerged. In the mid 1930s, the Mexican government initiated a program that came to be known as "Servicio Social." The program appealed to the solidarity and patriotism of medical students and required them to spend six months providing health care for people in remote rural communities. Servicio Social is perhaps one of the earliest forms of a national, institutionally-grounded youth civic service program. Servicio Social became federal law and mandatory for all university students in 1945. Other Latin American countries also began to implement similar programs, mostly for medical students (Sherraden & Eberly, 1990). According to Gillette (1968), the first youth volunteer work camps in Latin America appeared in the 1940s in Mexico, a trend that gradually spread south to Central and South America. By the mid 1900s the political regimes that prevailed in many Latin American countries were characterized by strong authoritarian states, weak economies, and internal conflicts that limited civic and political activities (Thompson & Landim, 1998).

Some authors suggest that, in the period leading up to and through the 1960s, reactions to this restrictive political environment introduced a new form of volunteerism. This new form was often termed "militant" volunteerism or "transforming" volunteerism (Bettoni & Cruz, 2002; Jaramillo, 1993). It rejected traditional voluntary action and its associations with elitism and charity and *asistencialismo*. This new form of volunteerism was supposedly more committed to solidarity and development (Bettoni & Cruz, 2002). It is possible that this shift in approach reflected the new social and political environment of the time, the influence of socialist ideologies and liberation theology, and the growing number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). However, at around the same time during the 1960s and well into the 80s, under authoritarian governments, most Latin American societies experienced restrictions on organized civic participation and the ability of people to volunteer. Such movements were viewed as facilitating insurgency. A military coup in Brazil in 1964, for instance, outlawed participation in political, social or cultural organizations, under penalty of incarceration or exile (Sampaio, Vargas & Mattoso, 2001).

Under the influence of Catholic movements and with the advent of liberation theology came the so-called *voluntariado social* or social volunteerism movement in the LAC region. This form of voluntary action is a reaction to traditional church-sponsored volunteerism and increased criticism that church-based volunteerism promoted *asistencialismo* as a hobby of the wealthy, focusing on isolated problems and not underlying causes. *Voluntariado social* demands sincerity and commitment of the volunteer and his or her immersion in the lives of those that are served. It also calls for the use of new forms of social intervention (Jaramillo, 1993).

A new social and political climate emerged as the Cold War neared its end. Governments removed restrictions on civic and political action, and many Latin American countries began a transition from military dictatorships to democratic governments (Berger, 2003). The grounding of open-market economies paired with the increasing trend towards globalization spurred an influx of national and international organizations attempting to promote stronger societies through increased social responsibility and civic participation (Toro & Moret, 2000). Likewise, acute social, economic, and environmental challenges have created an urgent need to get societies involved in environmental protection and preservation (Korten, 1990).

Contemporary forms of volunteerism and service must take into account the growth of civil society that has accompanied democratization. While a contested concept, civil society can be defined as the sphere of society that exists between the public or governmental sector and the market economy or private, corporate sector. It includes citizen relations, associations, and NGOs developed to address social, cultural, political, and economic issues.

In recent decades, the formation of NGOs has experienced a surge. It is estimated that over one million civil society organizations and associations are active in Latin America and the Caribbean (Schearer, 1997; Quesada, 2002). About one-third of these organizations operate informally (Schearer, 1997). The majority is involved in the delivery of development assistance or social and humanitarian services. In more recent years, international NGOs in the region have directed their efforts to promoting citizen participation as the basis for development. The strengths attributed to NGOs include their versatility, ability to focus on specific issues, mobilize resources, and to form partnerships with each other, international organizations, and

governmental entities (Fischer, 1997; Landim, 1987; Quesada, 2002; Salamon et al., 1999; Toro & Moret, 2000).

Civil society is a vehicle for voluntary citizen action in almost every country in the LAC region (Schearer, 1997).   Salamon and Solokowski (2001) report in a comparative study of volunteerism that in four of the Latin American countries studied, voluntary contribution of time accounted for over 30 percent of the income of third-sector organizations and in Mexico and Argentina, it was as high as 69 and 73 percent, respectively.

Youth Volunteerism and Civic Service Programs in the LAC Region[7]

Latin American and Caribbean nations share many features (Landim, 1987), but Espinoza (1977) warns about generalizing the role of volunteerism and civic service across all countries. He contends that the role of volunteerism and its status cannot be the same in every country because the levels of development and the status of democracy vary greatly across countries. Describing volunteerism and civic service in this part of the world is not an easy task. Nonetheless, some trends and patterns can be identified that characterize developments in this region.

Volunteer and civic service programs are often implemented by distinct institutions within society. These include governments, schools and universities, churches, and NGOs. Most programs—by virtue of their connection to the voluntary sector—may be implemented by NGOs, which can be international, national, or local in scope (McBride, Benitez, & Sherraden, 2003). We use this institutional perspective to categorize contemporary forms of volunteerism and civic service. This categorization, however, limits understanding of the dynamic nature of inter-organizational networks and public-private partnerships, which may be at the heart of most program implementation (McBride, Benitez, & Danso, 2003). We offer this institutional perspective as a potentially illustrative analytical device, and encourage research into the nature and impacts of program networks and partnerships.

Appendix A presents a list of organizations and initiatives which correspond to the programs we discuss below.[8]   The list was derived from reports, expert knowledge, and extensive searches of websites. The searches were not systematic, and information may be incomplete. Programs listed in this table are those that explicitly recruit youth as volunteers in the region. It is important to note that we only include international or multi-national service programs if they have a local organizational presence and utilize local volunteers, e.g., Habitat for Humanity International.[9] This is a diverse listing, intended to demonstrate a range of institutional types and

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[7] We acknowledge that not every type of volunteerism is represented. Corporate volunteerism and participation in political parties are not included because they are not expressly focused on youth, though these are growing areas of volunteer activity. There are also a myriad of ways that people help each other on a daily basis through local grassroots volunteerism and, despite their lack of structure and institutional support, may be the most prevalent form of volunteerism in the region.

[8] This is an abbreviated list based on 570 volunteer programs identified by consultants in the LAC region.

[9] We distinguish between programs that host local volunteers from those that host only foreign volunteers (e.g., Peace Corps, and Amigos de las Americas). While this paper focuses on the former, it is important to acknowledge that these other programs have also encouraged local volunteerism and community involvement.

programs in the region. It is not intended to be a comprehensive listing of volunteer and civic service programs in the LAC region.

We also recognize that this categorization does not capture the landscape of resources that create the infrastructure and build capacity for volunteerism and civic service in the region. National and local governments, international organizations, and other international, national, and local NGOs, schools, universities, religious-affiliated organizations, and local groups are involved through various configurations and roles in the support of volunteerism and civic service. These organizations provide financial resources, technical assistance, advocacy, training, network development, Internet access, and other resources. Examples of organizations that serve in this capacity include international organizations such as the United Nations and Inter-American Development Bank, and national NGOs such as Centro Latinoamericano de Aprendizaje y Servicio Solidario (CLAYSS) and Fundación Sustentabilidad-Educación-Solidaridad (SES) in Argentina, and Alianza ONG in the Dominican Republic.

Local and National NGO Programs

Volunteerism and civic service may be implemented by NGOs that are focused on specific local or national needs. Local youth groups and grassroots volunteer activities may contribute to the formation of organized local or national NGO programs. Local-level volunteerism may indeed be the most prevalent form of volunteerism in the LAC region as well as worldwide. An example of a local NGO is Trinidad and Tobago's Service Volunteered for All (Servol). This program, located in Laventille, operates on the belief that communities know what is in their best interest, rejecting models that perpetuate *asistencialismo*. An example of a national NGO program is Instituto Juventud para el Desarrollo Sostenible (INJUDESO) in Costa Rica, which focuses on increasing youth participation through social and environmental projects.

Particularly notable in the region are local programs that have been started by youth and in most cases by students.[10] This model highlights the increasing initiative taken by youth in responding to social issues. Perhaps the most known example is Opción Colombia. The range of activities and projects of Opción Colombia is extensive; particularly innovative is their commitment to narrowing the digital and technological gap between urban and rural communities. Students are deployed to rural communities bringing recycled computers, knowledge, and willingness to transfer that knowledge to rural schools. Opción Colombia is an example of a national NGO that has expanded regionally. Opción Latinoamérica was created by the Corporación Opción Colombia in 1995, and its network now includes Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Venezuela, and the United States of America (Martínez, 2002; Saen, 2003; Tapia, 2003).

Other programs initiated by students that have evolved into organizations with a local or national scope include Un Techo Para mi País in Chile. This program was founded in 1997 by a group of university students with a vision that a just world is possible. The program, now run as an NGO, is focused primarily on housing development and targeted to poor and marginalized communities throughout the country. Fundación Tierra Nueva in Paraguay, is focused on healthcare and

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[10] Youth-driven volunteerism may or may not occur through NGOs.

community development, and Voluntarios Construyendo El Salvador (VOCES) in El Salvador, focuses on housing development.

International NGO Programs

Beginning in the 1940s and 1950s, voluntary action in Latin America was marked by increased internationalization of volunteers and volunteer organizations and the increased participation of international Protestant volunteer organizations like the Quaker American Friends Service Committee and the World Council of Churches (Gillette, 1968). In McBride, Benítez, & Sherraden (2003), 18 of 20 identified long-term volunteerism or civic service programs in the LAC region were international service. Some international programs recruit both foreign volunteers and local volunteers in the countries where they operate. International service programs may have offices in host countries where foreign and local personnel often run the programs. In this paper, we define an international NGO program as being international in scope, having a local organizational presence in the LAC region, and hosting local and foreign volunteers. An example of this type of program is the International Red Cross Red Crescent Federation.

Government Programs

Governments in Latin America support youth volunteer and civic service programs through policy sanction, financial contributions, or through direct program management. In Mexico, the government has a policy that mandates service as a requirement for university graduation. In Brazil, government agencies provide some financial support to such programs as the Civil Service Project. A third level of involvement, which is the focus of this organizational classification, is government agencies that run youth volunteer programs. Program examples include Ser Solidario, a project of the Colombia Joven program of the Colombian national government, and the Voluntad para Trabajar through Chile's Instituto Nacional de la Juventud (INJUV). Other government entities that have volunteer programs are Instituto Nacional de la Juventud in Uruguay, and Dirección Nacional de la Juventud (DINAJU) in Argentina. The goals of these programs are to promote youth civic participation through activities that assist needy families and communities.

School and University Programs

School and university programs are perhaps the most prevalent, structured form of service in Latin America. School programs can take many forms, varying in formality, scope, and time commitment. They can range from semester-long, university-based projects to primary or secondary service-learning projects that occur over a weekend. Service-learning in many Latin American countries, particularly Argentina, is student organized, school-based projects that are designed to address specific community needs, which may enhance the learning process (Tapia, 2003).

School and university programs occur in both public and private institutions. Many Central and South American countries have government-sanctioned civic service programs at either schools or universities or both. Government partnerships with universities and private corporations have

provided the impetus for taking volunteerism to scale, offering more extensive variety and numbers of service opportunities through the collaboration.

As previously noted, Servicio Social is perhaps the oldest form of university-based civic service. Both public and private educational institutions participate, which includes technical schools as well as universities (Niebla, 2001).   Implementation varies across universities with each university having some autonomy regarding how and when a student performs the Servicio Social. Activities range from office and managerial work to more structured and specialized forms of work such as *pasantias* or internships in medicine, social work or architecture. The assignments vary in duration and can be either full or part-time, over a period ranging from six months to a year.

Within Servicio Social, there is also a scholarship-based program, directly administered by the government's Ministry of Social Development (SEDESOL), which sends multi-disciplinary "brigades" of students to work on community development projects in poor rural areas. Scholarships are offered as incentives to increase participation in underserved areas. SEDESOL provided 242,055 scholarships between 1995 and 2000 (Niebla, 2001).

The Dominican Republic and Costa Rica have similar mandatory programs for students (Tapia, 2003).   In the Dominican Republic, the university "servicio social" is required of medical students. At the high school level, there is a graduation requirement to perform 60 hours of service. In Costa Rica, a popular program implemented by the University of Costa Rica is known as the Trabajo Comunitario Universitario (TCU). The program seeks to promote community and social development as a form of retribution to society for the high cost of university education. Each year the University of Costa Rica finances over 100 projects in which more than 2,000 students participate. The participants must complete 300 hours of work in a period of up to one year (Perold, 2000). Bolivia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Peru and Venezuela also have compulsory social service for medical students at either pre or post-graduate levels (Garrido, 1998).

Voluntary models of civic service are also present within universities in the region. For example, Universidade Solidaria in Brazil is a student volunteer program initiated by students, faculty, and other community actors. Universidade Solidaria has partnerships with local municipalities and universities. As of 1999, service activities focused primarily on work with local leaders in the areas of education, community development, health, and the environment (Sampaio, Vargas, and Mattoso, 2001).

The Youth Leadership for the Common Good program at NUR University in Bolivia is an example of a youth-driven program within a university. University students supervise neighborhood development projects that are coordinated by high school youth in impoverished communities. The program is designed to give opportunities for the local youth to assume leadership roles in their schools and communities, and to receive scholarships or financial assistance to attend university (Roca Parada, 2004).

Catholic universities across Latin America have traditionally promoted service programs as well. The character of these programs is usually voluntary and regulated by the institutions and not the government. An example of this kind of program is the Voluntariado de la Universidad Católica

de Cordoba (VUCC) in Argentina. Initiated in 2000, the program is the university's response to pressing community problems. It capitalizes on the talent and knowledge of the student body to promote social change.

While university programs are likely the most prevalent institutionalized forms of service, it is important to remember that a minority of youth have access to higher education. In Brazil, for example, this represents only about six percent of the population of 18 to 24 year olds (Sampaio, Vargas, and Mattoso, 2001).

We know less about elementary and middle school volunteer and civic service programming. In some countries, such volunteer activity is regulated by a ministry of education or a related government office. It may be an extra-curricular activity or an academic requirement. In Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Venezuela, and Panama, students must complete a required number of hours of community service in order to graduate from secondary school (Franco, 2001; Tapia, 2003). Other South American nations have also begun to introduce youth volunteerism and civic service in their national education policies for primary and secondary school, as is the case in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay (Tapia, 2003).

Faith and Church Programs[11]

Faith and church programs are organized by religious-affiliated organizations as an opportunity for people to express their faith through service to others. This may include community and economic development work as well as work for the environment, but excludes activities that are intended for evangelization or indoctrination into a religion.

As an example of the potential prevalence of faith and church volunteerism, a survey on volunteerism in the metropolitan area of Lima, Peru, showed that young people were most likely to volunteer through churches, and that church or church affiliated-organizations were second only to neighborhood organizations in facilitating volunteer activity (Portocarrero, Loveday, & Millán, 2001). Forty-seven percent of the young people in the survey indicated that volunteer work is part of their religious beliefs (Portocarrero, Loveday, & Millán, 2001).

Religious-affiliated organizations offering volunteer and civic service programs are diverse in administration and location. Programs are based locally as well as in other countries. For example, the Jesuit Volunteer Corps originally emanated from the Catholic Church of Rome and offers long-term assignments administered by local Jesuit communities in Belize, Chile, Haiti, Nicaragua and Peru. A prominent religious foundation is the Hogar de Cristo in Chile. This charity organization is the brainchild of Father Alberto Hurtado. Founded in 1944, this organization welcomes volunteers from all walks of life, including secondary school and university students along with professionals and international volunteers.

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[11] We use "faith" and "church" terminology because "church" may connote connection to a particular denomination or form of worship and faith includes other possible religions. Also note that religious-based institutions are considered separate from local, national, or international NGOs because of their distinct and historical role in development and volunteerism in the region, even though the organizational base for the faith and church-sponsored programs may categorically be an NGO.

3. Program Goals and Effects of Youth Volunteerism and Civic Service

In this section of the paper, we examine program goals based on areas of service activity and the potential effects of youth volunteerism and civic service on the served and the servers. We begin each section by identifying important issues facing youth in the LAC region, and then provide program examples that aim to address those concerns. The issues are classified by program service areas, and correspond generally to those identified in the United Nations World Youth Report (2003). These social and economic development issues include education and skill development; community development; basic needs; health; environment; emergency services; human rights and peace; and civic engagement.

Around the world, systematic information and research about program activities, goals, and effects is limited for volunteerism and civic service. Program and policy developments are ahead of the knowledge base. In most cases, we cannot talk definitively of effects, only goals and programs' intentions. Where possible, we utilize service research from the LAC region as well as from other countries to demonstrate the potential for volunteerism and civic service.

To contextualize youth volunteerism and civic service as a social and economic development strategy in the region, we utilize programmatic examples from Appendix A. As discussed previously, this list of programs is only intended to illustrate program diversity. Moreover, many programs have activities that span multiple service areas; examples are not intended to suggest that a program is focused only on the given area of service being discussed. We encourage rigorous research that will identify the scope and nature of volunteerism and civic service by experts in the region. We offer this synthesis to inform a larger research agenda on youth volunteerism and civic service in the LAC region.

Program Goals and Effects on the Served

Across the available research on volunteerism and civic service, studies of effect have concentrated on the server. This may be because individual level impacts are easier to define and measure than impacts on groups of people or communities (McBride, Lombe, Tang, Sherraden, & Benítez, 2003). Defining the targets and levels of impact beyond the individual server is an important consideration for research. The "served" may include groups of individuals, institutions, a community, or a nation (Perry and Thomson, 2003). Across a range of programs, targeted populations may include children, young women, those with disabilities, older adults, rural areas, indigenous youth, and the extremely poor. In the following discussion, any of these groups may be targeted for positive effects by volunteer and civic service programs.

Education and Skills Development[12]

Education. While primary and secondary education attendance and completion rates have increased in recent years (Wolff & Castro, 2003), there are additional challenges including

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[12] The potential for youth volunteerism and civic service to address education and skill development is supported by a Peruvian study, which found that youth volunteer work tends to be more focused on "teaching, capacity building, skill building, and training" (Portocarrero, Loveday, and Millán , 2001, p. 13).

reducing inequalities in the educational system, increasing retention in school, and creating a stronger link between education and the needs of the employment sector (Portillo, 1999). The Social Panorama Report of 2001-2002 and the United Nations World Youth Report 2003 note that education should become more relevant to the current economy and employment opportunities (Chisholm, 2003; ECLAC, 2002). In the last two decades, vocational and formal schools have been given more attention; however, there "remains a need for apprenticeship and work experience opportunities in combination with knowledge and skill delivery" (La Belle, 2000, p. 30).

Basic education that promotes literacy and societal participation underlies a variety of social and economic issues. Education on specific life skills, public health, and environmental issues is also important. Volunteer and civic service programs are designed to address these educational needs. For example, Group for Life Incentive (GIV) provides community education on HIV/AIDS. Other programs focus on literacy and leadership training such as those offered by Asociación Cristiana de Jóvenes (ACJ) and Corporación Colombiana de Voluntariado.

Examples of youth-driven programs that aim to increase literacy include Adopta un Herman@ in Chile and Voluntades in Peru. Adopta un Herman@ pairs university students as tutors with at-risk school children. Voluntades was begun by a group of young people concerned about the critical situation of Peru's economy. Volunteers contribute by tutoring school children as well as providing other areas of service. The program has deployed over 1,400 volunteers throughout the country since it began in 1997.

A slightly different model aiming to increase educational attainment among youth is Servicio Social's scholarship-based community service program at the University of Veracruz. Local youth are encouraged to attend university through financial incentives that are given to them for participating in community development projects with university students (Sherraden, 2000). Information from a visit of one mountain community in the area of Veracruz revealed that four of the local youth were attending university as a direct result of their volunteer experience with the community project (Sherraden, 2000).

Job skill development and entrepreneurship. Youth unemployment is high in the LAC region, typically double the adult rate (Hopenhayn, 2002). Some Caribbean islands report the highest youth unemployment rates in the region, with one source citing youth unemployment at 47 percent (Hopenhayn, 2002; National Youth Forum, 2003; World Bank, 2003). For growing numbers of young people in Latin America the only possibility of finding a job is in the informal economy, where they earn low wages and are often subjected to poor working conditions. In the last decade, seven of ten new jobs were created in the informal sector (Hopenhayn, 2002).

Entrepreneurship is a growing area of interest in the LAC region and perhaps an opportunity for expansion of service activity. In a 1999, 18 people were trained on beekeeping as a viable income-producing activity by volunteers with the Brazilian Universidade Solidaria; this led to the first Association of Beekeepers of Matóes (Sampaio, Vargas, and Mattoso, 2001). Other programs include the Asociación Jóvenes del Perú Volunteer Program, which focuses on developing job skills and economic entrepreneurship. The Guyana Information Youth Project integrates skill-building with access to information technology. They operate a learning resource center that provides information on small business development and training on data processing.

Skill development related to information and communication technology. Increasingly, the degree to which individuals, communities, and nations have access to and can use technology— such as the telephone, computers, and the Internet—impacts their participation in a regional and world economy. The "digital divide" relates to unequal access to technologies as well as the ability to use that technology. For example, 96 percent of all e-commerce[13] sites around the world are in English, and 78 percent of all websites are in English (Wolff & Castro, 2003).

In the LAC region, only five percent of households own computers (Wolff & Castro, 2003). The number of Internet users across the region, whether accessing through homes, schools, libraries, businesses, or other means is estimated at 33 million (Suoronta, 2003; Norris et al, 2001). This is approximately six percent of the population.

Concerns regarding the "digital divide" are generally addressed through education. For example, a volunteer of Opción Colombia worked with the government program "Computers to Educate" to help set up computers and educate teachers, parents, and students about the technology. As of 2002, the project was attracting the largest number of Opción volunteers (Martínez, 2002).

Another initiative focused on bridging the "digital divide" is the Committee for the Democratization of Information Technology (CDI). Founded in Brazil in 1995, CDI is focused on increasing access to information technology in marginalized communities. Volunteers assist in establishing computer resource centers, training, and providing technical assistance (CDI, 2003). In a focus group with youth service program representatives, this initiative was highlighted as a valuable and substantial contributor to expanding access to information and communication technologies throughout the region (IDB & GSI, Chile, 2003). CDI is an example of a national NGO that has expanded regionally.

Growth and reliance on information and communications technology has also opened up the potential for "virtual" on-line volunteering. The OnLine Volunteering Service, managed by the United Nations Volunteers, is a global initiative that invites volunteers from any country to contribute their time and skills in such areas as web site design and development, language translation, mentoring, research and other activities that can be conducted online (UNV, 2004). The extent to which youth in the region participate in this program or other online volunteering scheme is not known.

Community Development

Community development is a broad category that overlaps with goals such as increasing economic development and civic engagement. For the purposes of this paper, we define community development as local level activities that link resources, promote quality of life, and foster a sense of togetherness among citizens. Seligson's (1999) research asserts that community development organizations in Central America increase democratic participation because they address critical social and economic issues working with government officials and other community leaders. Community development is particularly relevant to the LAC region where the citizens in emerging democracies are learning to exercise their rights for civic action. There

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[13] E-commerce is a burgeoning area of entrepreneurial employment.

are many program examples in the LAC region that focus on community organizing, mobilizing, and advocacy.

One example is the Civil Service Project of Brazil. This is a collaborative program between universities and government, which operates through the Ministry of Justice. Youth serve from nine to 12 months, assisting impoverished communities and cultivating their own sense of citizenship and respect for human rights (Sampaio, Vargas, and Mattoso, 2001). Results indicate that local community organizations had increased their knowledge and skills, and that the development was sustainable as the organizations were able to continue the work initiated by the youth volunteers. Positive changes were also evidenced among community members in their behaviors and attitudes toward drug use, sexuality, violence, education, family, and work (Sampaio, Vargas, and Mattoso, 2001).

Argentina's focus on service-learning in the primary and secondary school curriculum has yielded important contributions to community development. Tapia (2003) notes that service-learning may benefit the students, but it is also strongly focused on the "service" side of service-learning. Fifty percent of the youth were low-income students whose service addressed their own community's concerns (Tapia, 2003).

Other examples of LAC programs focused on community development are those administered by religious-affiliated organizations with a history of active collaboration with local parishioners and community members. For example, the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, a Catholic-affiliated organization established in the 1950s, has members living in poor communities in several countries. Members work with community residents, engaging in community organizing around critical issues, as well as teaching and providing for daily needs. Another example is Hogar de Cristo, which has programs throughout Chile facilitating housing assistance and agricultural cooperatives.   In 2001, Hogar de Cristo mobilized 112,000 volunteers in support of approximately 850 projects (Erlick, 2002).

Habitat for Humanity International, a prominent religious-affiliated and international NGO, provides housing assistance in communities throughout the LAC region and around the world. In 2000, more houses had been built in the LAC region than in any other region of the world (Banks, 2001), and in 2003, Habitat volunteers had assisted in building 50,000 homes throughout the LAC region (Fernandez, 2003).

Basic Needs

Basic needs include food, shelter, crisis counseling, medical care, and other daily subsistence and care provisions. These needs are addressed by a variety of institutions and programs. Hermanos del Anciano volunteers serve the elderly in Acapulco, Mexico by providing food, house repairs, and companionship. At the Goodwill Festival of 2001, CENAVOL in Peru reported providing over 3,000 counseling sessions on family planning, health and legal issues. GAPA volunteers in Bahia, Brazil make home and hospital visits to those with HIV/AIDS and their relatives, and the work of the Brigada de Voluntarios Bolivarianos del Perú (BVBP) include visiting those in hospitals and nursing homes. Activities in this area of service may overlap with other service areas such as community development and health suggesting that this might be one of the most common forms of volunteering.

Health

Substance use. Alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, and inhalants are the most common substances used by youth. Reports of current alcohol consumption in Central and South America range from about 38 percent of youth aged 15-19 years in the Dominican Republic to about 44 percent of urban secondary school students in Sao Paulo, Brazil (Roberts, 2003). Inhalants are inexpensive and easily accessible. As such, they tend to be popular among vulnerable young children. For example, in Sao Paulo, Brazil, approximately 24 percent of low-income youth between nine and 18-years old had tried inhalants (Roberts, 2003).

In Mexico, Centros de Integración Juvenil is an organization focused on drug prevention and treatment, working throughout the country with approximately 1000 volunteers (Niebla, 2001). As of 1998, they reported having had attended to or contact with over 2 million people (Niebla citing Magazine CIJ, 4(15), 1999). Another example is the Rehabilitation Center at Hogar Crea Dominicano in the Dominican Republic, which has incorporated volunteer service into the rehabilitation process. As part of re-entry into society, residents engage in community service, educating on drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, and general literacy.

HIV/AIDS. In the mid-1980s, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) was recognized as a global crisis. In the LAC region in 2001, about 560,000 youth aged 15-24 had HIV/AIDS (UNICEF, 2002). Within the region, HIV prevalence differs widely. The Caribbean is the most affected region after sub-Saharan Africa. Transmission via drug use is a growing phenomenon, particularly Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay (Lopez, 2003).

The Volunteer Youth Corps (VYC) in Guyana has contributed to community education and awareness regarding HIV/AIDS. VYC led a comprehensive educational program to educate about HIV/AIDS, involving youth representatives of political parties, religious organizations, the private sector, and educational groups. Another example is the Red Cross Red Crescent Youth of the Caribbean that implemented prevention programs based on peer-education.

Wellness. Volunteer projects focused on health range from vaccinations to community education. A 1996 project of the Universidade Solidaria Program in Brazil inoculated all children within a community in one day (Sampaio, Vargas, and Mattoso, 2001). In a dual educational program focused on the server and the served, volunteer nursing students and local citizens learned about the use of local flora in treating certain illnesses (Sampaio, Vargas, and Mattoso, 2001). A project of the GYSD 2001 facilitated by CEBOFIL in Bolivia targeted a children's hospital, building a children's playground that also serves as a classroom for young volunteers conducting educational activities. Volunteers of Actividades Comunes a Capacidades Diferentes (ACCADI), in Buenos Aires, Argentina, support children with special needs, assisting with rehabilitation efforts, and engaging with them in social, cultural, educational, and sports activities.

Environment

In the LAC region, environmental concern is focused on ozone layer depletion in the Southern nations and the effects of global warming which may contribute to more frequent natural disasters (CLADEHLT, 2001). Deforestation is another major concern. Latin America

accounted for 20 percent of the world's forested areas in 1958, dropping to 15 percent in 2000. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization ranks Brazil as having the highest deforestation rate in the world with four other Latin American countries in the top six (CLADEHLT, 2001).

Many organizations recruit both international and local volunteers to work on environmental issues. Examples include Iracambi programs in Brazil, Vida in Costa Rica, and Jatun Sacha in Ecuador. The Youth Institute for Sustainable Development (INJUDESO) in Costa Rica recruits local youth for environmental projects. Guardaparques Universitarios, a student-run organization in Venezuela, promotes and organizes environmental education campaigns.

Emergency Services

In general, emergency services such as disaster relief tend to be sponsored by multi-national or international NGOs, and are not necessarily marketed as youth service programs although youth do participate in such activities. The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and the Disaster Relief and Conservation Project between Honduras and Nicaragua are examples.

For the past 50 years, AFSC has provided assistance with reconstruction to El Salvador following emergencies such as war and natural disasters. Recently, the organization has provided assistance to earthquake survivors, particularly those in outlying rural areas. The Disaster Relief and Conservation Project, involving the Asociación de Organizaciones no Gubernametales (ASONOG) in Honduras and the Consejo Nacional de la Juventud (CNJ) in Nicaragua, engages in both disaster relief and conservation projects with a focus on promoting youth participation. The group was formed as part of the disaster relief efforts following Hurricane Mitch in 1998.

Human Rights and Peace

Over time, volunteerism and civic service directed at human rights and peace has been a focus of faith and church programs though these activities and goals are not limited to them. Red Cross Red Crescent, founded in 1919, is one of the oldest organizations involved in this area of service. Witness for Peace, as indicated by its name, is an example of volunteer efforts in Nicaragua to promote peace and social justice in the country. AFSC is another example of an organization whose origination was based on opposition to war. AFSC volunteers have been addressing issues of peace and human rights in the LAC region since the 1940s.

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Program Goals and Effects on the Server

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There are more research findings upon which to make the connection between social and economic issues that affect youth and impact the server. As noted previously, effects on the server have been more widely studied, and in a recent review of civic service research specifically, the emphasis was on potential changes in servers' attitudes toward self and others (McBride, Lombe, Tang, Sherraden, & Benítez, 2003). Behavioral or long-term change was rarely studied. Tentative effects of volunteerism and civic service may be attributed to education and skill development, personal development, social and cultural development, and civic engagement. These findings are confirmed by more comprehensive review of U.S.-based

volunteerism and civic service research (Perry & Thomson, 2003). We organize the following discussion of issues around these areas of possible effect on the server and illustrate with program examples.

Education and Skills Development

Education and job skills development. The service experience may expose servers to opportunities that increase skills or allow them to practice the skills they already possess in settings different from their own. In a study on volunteerism in the metropolitan area of Lima, Peru, Portocarrero, Loveday, and Millán (2001) found that the highest motivating factor for youth to volunteer was to learn and gain experience. By expanding their skills and experience in areas related to potential employment, they can explore career opportunities and choices (Aguirre International, 1999b; Cohen, 1997; Griffiths, 1998; Jastrzab et al., 1996; Sherraden et al., 1990; Starr, 1994). Some civic service programs invest directly in human capital acquisition through awards that help pay for education (Neumann et al., 1995; Wang et al., 1995). Studies also suggest that volunteering increases occupational achievement (Wilson and Musick, 1999). For example, a study involving U.S. youth showed that 10 months after program completion, servers had higher employment and education achievements compared to those that were not selected into the program (Jastrzrab, 1996).

One example of a program designed to increase job skills and work experience is Servicio País in Chile. This program, targeted for those under age 35, was developed to assist in the transition from the university to the job market, helping young professionals gain experience while also providing important services to under-served communities. Servers receive additional training before they go on assignment. Research from this program shows that servers highly value this program because it offers an opportunity to practice their skills, help people, and be appreciated for their expertise (Espinoza, 2000; Palacios, 1997).

Service-learning at the primary, secondary, and university level provides both an experiential approach to learning and a way of addressing community issues (Tapia, 2003). In Argentina, service-learning in primary and secondary school curricula has become more widespread, totaling approximately 13 percent of all schools (Tapia, 2003). Recognizing that other factors contribute to the effects, initial research suggests that service-learning may reduce grade repetition and drop-out rates (Tapia, 2003).

At higher levels of learning, university-based civic service teaches students to identify and address social issues through direct experience. For example, Trabajo Comunitario Universitario in Costa Rica is nationally mandated and teaches students to address community problems through multi-disciplinary approaches. The Universidad Católica de Santa María in Peru is a local, private university that gives students opportunities to practice their skills through assistance to resource-poor individuals in the areas of health, education, and law.

Personal skills development. Volunteerism and civic service may have multiple psychological effects for the servers. Perry and Thomson (2003) distinguish types of skill development ranging from professional skills as discussed above to more generalized skills including: "communication, interpersonal relations, analytical problem solving, understanding organizational systems, and technology" (p. 56). For certain programs, such as AmeriCorps in

the U.S., these generalized skills showed the most significant positive change. However, these results may be culturally biased and further research should be conducted to determine specific effects.

Civic service, specifically, has been associated with positive changes in maturity, self-esteem, personal autonomy, and general satisfaction with serving (Perry and Thomson, 2003; Starr, 1994). Positive impact on self-esteem is based on the belief that helping others validates oneself (Wilson and Musick, 1999). In the youth's process of social formation, such validation may lead to greater self-confidence and recognition of one's contribution to society.

Such effects are illustrated by volunteers of Universidade Solidaria Program of Brazil and the North American Community Service Project (NACS) in Mexico. NACS is a cross-national program between Mexico, Canada, and the U.S. A Brazilian student comments: "something deep inside of me has changed…." (Sampaio, Vargas, and Mattoso, 2001). A NACS volunteer, reflecting on educational activities with young children in a community states: "The children all participated and worked very hard to show us what an amazing impact we had on them and how they have changed each one of us!" (Sherraden and Benítez, 2003, p. 25).

Social Skills Development

Cultural integration. Volunteerism and civic service may improve social skills, including the ability to interact positively with others (Cohen, 1997; Egan, 1994; Griffiths, 1998; Jastrzab et al., 1996). They may also play a potentially significant role in linking individuals of different socio-economic or ethnic backgrounds.   Civic service, in particular, is associated with development of positive attitudes toward different ethnic groups and promoting cultural sensitivity (Cohen, 1997; Frees et al., 1995; Jastrzab et al., 1996; Kornblum, 1981; Macro International, 2000; Newton, 1992; Omo-Abu, 1997; Purvis, 1993; Starr, 1994). For example, a study of national service in an ethnically diverse society such as Israel, revealed that individuals serving in groups of diverse backgrounds were much more aware of their change in attitude toward the "other" (Fleischer & Gal, 2003). Results from the NACS program showed that a key strength of the program was its emphasis on "creating a sense of responsibility for and connection with the North American continent as a whole" and the opportunity to "develop friendships in other countries" (Sherraden and Benítez, 2003; p. 38).

These effects are important to consider for the promotion of human rights, peace, and tolerance. There are many cultural differences within and across nations in the LAC region. For example there are stark differences between rural and urban areas, and there are many programs that send urban youth to rural areas. For example, one volunteer of Opción Colombia, working in a dangerous region where rebel forces had attacked, reported: "I learned to love Colombia more because I got to know it better, in its good and its bad side." Such effects may contribute to an increased sense of integration (Omo-Abu, 1997; Sikah, 2000).

Social conduct. Volunteerism and civic service is also associated with improved discipline among youths and reductions in risk-taking behaviors (Jastrzab et al., 1996; Kalu, 1987). One study suggests that volunteerism may reduce delinquency and risky behavior such as skipping school and using drugs (Wilson and Musick, 1999), which, one could extrapolate, may curb delinquent gang behavior. However, effects may be mediated by the server's own perception of

the value of the service activity to him/herself such as being enjoyable, voluntary, challenging, or skill-building (Wilson and Musick, 1999). These mediators may be important considerations for designing programs and determining service activities, especially for programs that target at-risk youth.

Civic Engagement

Volunteer and civic service programs may help participants acquire civic knowledge and civic values (Cohen, 1997; Jastrzab et al., 2001). Following the service experience, several studies on service in the U.S. reveal changes in the servers' expressed civic attitudes and civic engagement (Aguirre International, 1999b; Griffiths, 1998; Hajdo, 1999). One study even suggests that servers may be more likely to vote as a result of their civic service experience (Jastrzab, 1996). An evaluation of the Universidade Solidaria Program in Brazil attributed the program with citizenship training for the university students (Sampaio, Vargas, and Mattoso, 2001). Early results from primary and secondary school service-learning programs in Argentina also suggest that they may also have an important impact on citizenship education (Tapia, 2003). Many of the programs, especially government, school, and university programs, include goals to increase civic engagement.

It is also suggested that the service experience may reinforce servers' commitment to serve again later in life (Aguirre International, 1999b; Cohen, 1997; Egan, 1994; Griffiths, 1998), and as noted by McCabe (2001), service might help create a "pipeline" leading toward careers that are focused on social issues.

In addition to hands-on volunteer service programs, it is important to mention the growth of youth networks, alliances, and structured opportunities, such as conferences, that are focused on organizing and cultivating civic engagement among youth. These groups offer an opportunity for youth to have a voice in the regional and international youth development and policymaking agenda.

There are many examples of voluntary youth involvement in regional and worldwide civic networks. At the national level is Pro-Action in Brazil (Sampaio, Vargas, and Mattoso, 2001). At the regional level are: IDB Youth Network, Foro Latinoamericano de Juventud (FLAJ), Red Latinoaméricana de Juventudes Rurales (RELAJUR), Opción Latinoamérica, Caucus de Jóvenes de las Américas contra la Discriminación, Comunidad Latinoamericana de Juventudes (CLAJ), Red Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Jóvenes por el Medio Ambiente, International Association of Volunteer Effort (IAVE), Youth Latinoamericana, and la Vida y la Paz. At the global level are: Global Youth Action Network (GYAN), Youth Employment Summit (YES), Global Youth Service Day (GYSD), and International Youth Parliament (IYP).

Summary

When the institutionally-based program information in Appendix A is further categorized by the given program activity and goal areas discussed above, then several relationships are worth noting as shown in Appendix B. We recognize that this list of programs is not comprehensive. Moreover, the institutionally-based categorization may not be reflective of programmatic reality. But very cautious, general observations may be offered. These observations represent testable

hypotheses that can inform a rigorous analysis of the scope and nature of youth volunteerism and civic service in the LAC region.

For the LAC region, the most common areas of activity and goals across all types of institutions may be, respectively: community development, education and skill development, civic engagement, and health. Different institutional types may emphasize different areas of activity and goals. For example, relative to other programs, local NGO programs may give more emphasis to specific populations. National NGOs and government programs may have more general orientations, and thus, may be more equally distributed across the service areas. International NGO programs may give more focus to emergency services in particular, while faith and church programs may stress human rights and peace. Governmental programs and school and university-based programs may rate highest in the promotion of civic engagement.

What do these general assessments suggest for targeted program and policy development? Institutional-based programming may be the most efficient and sustainable course for development so that programs and policies can be built around what the given institutions do best and are most natural for their missions and resources.

4. Youth Volunteerism and Civic Service as a Development Strategy

Youth volunteerism and civic service can be a social and economic development strategy (Kliksberg, 2003; Sherraden, Sherraden, and Eberly, 1990; UNESCO, 2000; Wilson & Musick, 1999). A study of the "International Year of the Volunteer" conducted by the Institute for Volunteering Research (IVR, 2002) found that in Brazil, for example, "volunteering has been warmly embraced as one of the ways" to "improve socio-economic aspects of their lives" (p. 50). The report outlines the need to improve the quality of volunteering, create "a programme of involvement" and provide "structured opportunities" (p. 49).

We also suggest a structural approach, with greater attention to organized youth civic service. Though we acknowledge the value of other forms of volunteerism, civic service is distinguished by its structure, commitment, and goal-directed programming. These factors increase potential for full and inclusive participation and achievement of social and economic development objectives.

Program Trends

As noted above, mutual aid is culturally-grounded and prevalent, with deep roots in early civilizations. Building on these very positive cultural foundations, the emergence of democracy in the LAC region has led to increased participation by youth groups, cooperatives, grassroots agencies, and other organizations. This is reflected, in part, by the growing number of youth networks, NGOs, and volunteer and civic service programs.

There is a renewed emphasis on youth voluntary participation, based on a sense of "solidarity" and concern for human rights, distinct from a paternalistic religious or state obligation. The growth in youth-initiated and especially student-driven programs reflect this new perspective. Models of success include Opción Latinoamérica and Un Techo Para mi País. Youth volunteerism and civic service has characteristics of an emerging social movement in the LAC region.

What types of program models are emerging? While informal and grassroots volunteerism continue to be prevalent, institutional forms of volunteerism, such as civic service, are growing through government support in the education sector. This growth is occurring at the university level, and emerging in primary and secondary schools as service-learning. A review of the history, research, and program examples suggests that education is one of the strongest sectors of formal civic service in the LAC region. Activities address a wide range of local, national, and regional concerns, cutting across disciplines, and affecting both the servers and those who are served.

What areas of service are being addressed? Based on limited descriptions of service programs around the world, the dominant areas of service across all types of youth volunteerism and civic service programs may be community development, education, and skill development, with a growing focus on civic engagement. A previous study identified the areas of commonweal (citizenship and civic engagement), productivity (social and economic development), personal development, state interests, and peace (Sherraden, Sherraden and Eberly, 1990).

As different types of institutions have begun to participate in volunteer and civic service programs, areas of service have expanded. Traditional faith and church programs have had a stronger focus on human services, education, and community development, while NGOs and public sector organizations may have a broader agenda, including more contemporary issues such as the environment and citizen participation. All have been responsive to health concerns such as HIV/AIDS. Larger sponsoring organizations, whether school or university-based, religious-affiliated, or NGO, tend to address a variety of service areas.

Contributions toward Social and Economic Development

Volunteerism and civic service are expressions of the human tendency to help one another. From informal youth groups and local grassroots organizations, to larger more structured NGOs, activities and programs have been organized to address known social and economic concerns. As noted by ECLAC (2002,2003), reducing inequalities is an especially important goal for the LAC region. Youth volunteerism and civic service programs offer the potential to make a positive impact on social and economic development goals by mutually benefiting the server and the served. Sherraden (2001a) describes the potential for service experiences to be "strong policy," producing multiple outcomes for multiple stakeholders. Rather than focusing on a single action with a single outcome, a strong intervention is one that produces multiple positive effects.

Who serves?   Volunteer action offers the server opportunities for practical experience to increase education and skill development. Programs such as university-based service may offer more targeted and specialized skill development. In a study reviewing 10 years of operations, Corporación Opción Colombia (2001) reports that Opción volunteers participated more in civil society organizations, showed a greater degree of trust toward institutions and had a higher degree of education than the average Colombian. As one youth representative noted, performing service becomes a "life university" where the volunteer learns how to identify problems, work on a team to solve issues, and teach communities how to work together (Roca Parada, 2004).

Based on program examples and emerging trends, it appears that students of primary and secondary schools and universities are more likely to initiate or be involved in volunteer and civic service programs. This is consistent with Portocarrero's (2004) finding in Peru that volunteering is associated with higher levels of education and income.[14]   Other studies by Portocarrero (2001) indicate that youth are likely to volunteer through religious-affiliated organizations. It is possible that there are distinctions between participation of students and non-students. A more thorough and systematic study of participation should be conducted to assess who is participating in all types of volunteer schemes and how much they volunteer.

Who is being served?   Benefits to recipients of service are many and varied. Benefits may include children being inoculated in a rural community, or groups being trained to run their own businesses. Some service projects are setting up information centers that bring communication technologies to rural and marginalized areas. Young children are doing community projects

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[14] This finding is not limited to the region. Studies in the United States and Europe also reveal those with higher education and income are more likely to participate in volunteer and civic service programs.

within the school setting. Service is occurring in many different settings, with many different populations.

What is the impact of service? Service contributions are probably extensive, though there is only limited research evidence that service projects have positive impacts on individuals and communities. The extent to which service may improve social and economic indicators is unknown. It is likely that some groups and organizations are more effective than others in addressing certain issues, but we do not know which ones. Verifiable effects are from groups that have been able to track and report results of their actions. These are often the larger and more structured organizations. Smaller service projects and organizations typically cannot afford research. As service develops in the LAC region, greater investments in research to document effects will be very important.

Program Implications

How can youth volunteer and civic service programs be most effective in addressing social and economic development goals? In brief, there should be participation. It should be inclusive. Actions should be effective. We use these three principles to guide our discussion of program administration, design, and implementation.

Program Administration

Structure and partnerships. By definition, structure is associated with a formal approach to programming. While the LAC region may currently observe more informal mechanisms of volunteerism, the goals of full citizen participation and strong outcomes may require structural changes through organizational and policy development.

Development of capacity and infrastructure may be most effectively achieved through organizational partnerships. Partnerships build social capital, connecting resource-rich institutions such as universities to impoverished areas such as rural communities. Partnerships can provide opportunities to dispel prejudice and offer potential for a more socially and economically integrated society.

A variety of organizational linkages exist in volunteer and civic service programs in the LAC region—among public, NGO, and private sectors—all of which are stakeholders in the process. These partnerships hold potential for building long-term connections and systems of sustainability. For example, vocational schools and trade unions can mutually benefit by developing joint service projects or developing apprentice-like service opportunities that benefit both the server who needs experience, and the union that needs experienced and well-trained labor. Such structures could eventually become a "normalized" pathway in the education-to-work transition.

Suggested models for developing civic service programming include partnerships between government and school and university programs. With research showing that earlier voluntary participation creates the likelihood of repeated involvement, including a service-learning curriculum at the primary level may be an effective long-term strategy for increasing youth participation (Wilson & Musick, 1999).

A major advantage of both school and university programs is their ability to manage large numbers of servers, though it is not always clear how well this occurs. A disadvantage of these programs is their lack of inclusion, with university students representing only a small segment of the LAC youth population.

Vision and commitment. A national strategy for youth volunteerism and civic service requires leadership and vision. The United Nations has provided such direction on an international level, and some governments have included youth volunteerism and civic service in their national agendas, though this is not the case for every country in the LAC region. It may be important to promote the vision of service at the national level. For the LAC region, public and corporate leadership might explore the potential for partnerships, both within and across national boundaries, to develop a strategic plan for volunteerism and civic service. It will be important to link planning explicitly to national social and economic development goals if service is to contribute to these larger agendas.

Leadership from NGOs, religious-affiliated organizations, and other local groups can help in establishing a strategic vision. These organizations represent a large portion of the volunteer activity in the region and their experiences can give concrete direction to program design and goals.

For youth volunteerism and civic service to be a productive development strategy, commitment at both an individual and organizational level is required. Institutional support from government is needed for financial resources and a policy framework. Religious-affiliated organizations, NGOs and private corporations can play significant roles. Participation at the organizational level is necessary for establishing mutually-beneficial partnerships to promote participation. One example of the potential for such partnership is Sirve Quisqueya, a committee led by the NGO Alianza to coordinate Global Youth Service Day 2003 in the Dominican Republic. Members of the alliance include local and national governments, international and national NGOs, religious-affiliated organizations, and university students with modest contributions from private corporations, international governmental bodies, and foreign government civic service programs such as the Peace Corps. While the alliance began as a means to organize a national/global educational service event, it resulted in an ongoing structure that allowed many of the major youth service-related programs to coordinate resources, ideas, advocacy, and learning.

At the individual level, the spirit of *solidaridad* appears to be a strong and vibrant motivator for growing citizen participation. There are many examples of youth leading projects and creating organizations to address a variety of social issues. Youth civic engagement can be a key factor in developing this strategy.

Program Design

An essential element of program design is involvement of all stakeholders. Including a range of stakeholders ensures diverse perspectives on the benefits that can be achieved by programs. Obvious but sometimes overlooked, stakeholders in youth volunteerism and civic service are the youth themselves. As noted by Rodriguez (2003), youth should be involved throughout the process of program design and development. The transnational NACS program is an example of

such a design. Advisory board members, funders, researchers, community members, and youth servers participated in development of the program (Sherraden and Benítez, 2003).

Goals of service. Goal-directed programming is a critical feature for youth volunteerism and civic service, if it is to be a viable intervention. Goals should be clearly articulated, focused concretely on what is to be achieved, and integrally connected to the larger national social and economic agenda. Program components should be specifically targeted to achieve goals. Activities designed to meet the goals should be meaningful to the server, which may require education and information about the larger purposes of each service activity.

University-based volunteer and civic service programs appear to be good designs for providing a bridge from education to work and for multi-disciplinary approaches to problem-solving, such as projects devoted to community development. The model of connecting education to service and to work might also be applied to the non-formal education sector, in collaboration with unions and employers.

One area of service that merits additional focus is youth entrepreneurship. Existing programs include various strategies for obtaining education and job skills, but cannot assure employment. Programs might consider expanding some of their education and skill development services to focus on how individuals can directly apply their skills to start their own businesses.

Yet to be explored are potential synergies that might exist across countries in development of transnational programs. These types of programs offer opportunities for cultural exchange, sharing social and economic strategies, or developing mutually beneficial partnerships that respond to regional issues and globalization. As one example, the NACS project provided the opportunity for Mexican, Canadian, and U.S. youth to work together, learning from each other, and from the people in the communities in which they served.

Eligibility and access. Who can participate? Unless participation is mandatory for all, there are many factors that limit opportunity to participate in voluntary action. A disadvantage of some NGO-sponsored programs is that they may be less inclusive with respect to the server, depending on how the program is implemented.   Inclusive models of service should be sensitive to the servers' needs for performing the role, including accommodation for physical or developmental disabilities and costs associated with choosing voluntary over paid work.

An important program design consideration is the mandatory versus voluntary nature of civic service. For school and university programs, the mandatory nature of the programs theoretically ensures that all students who attend will be accommodated (although in practice, it is unknown if this always occurs). A voluntary scheme, while more in line with the spirit of the action, has the potential to prohibit participation. The resource-privileged are more likely able to "afford" to participate in service. A primary disadvantage of performing service outside of one's local area is the cost of transportation and accommodation. A critique of international service programs is that they may be geared toward the elite who can afford to pay expenses (McBride, Benítez, and Sherraden, 2003).

Financial incentives and government policies for increasing participation should be more fully explored. Some countries, such as Brazil, and recently Argentina, have passed laws that provide

social security and other insurance for volunteers (Toro and Moret, 2000). Servicio Social in Mexico provides scholarships for some students and local youth to participate in community service projects. The issue of stipended service is controversial but may be an important variable for those who could not otherwise leave the workforce.

Program Implementation

Scalability. How can programs expand participation and reach more beneficiaries? Both government-sponsored and NGO-sponsored programs offer models for large-scale youth civic service. The most successful to date are those that have partnerships with other community-based organizations. These partnerships allow the program to address a broad array of social and economic concerns by connecting with particular organizations that specialize in those issues.

Program models that offer the potential for scalability include those that are replicable, offer greater opportunities for participation and have potentially significant impact. Examples of programs that meet some or all of these criteria include Opción Latinoamérica, Un Techo Para mi País and CDI. School and university programs also offer potential scalability. School-based programs are likely to support more full and inclusive participation while university programs are likely to offer more intensive and substantial periods of service that maximize benefits to both server and served.

Sustainability. Regardless of growth in size and number of participants, there is value in exploring ways to maximize current resources and fine-tune program designs for long-term regional sustainability. One way to facilitate this process is by developing learning networks and targeted working groups among practitioners, researchers, policymakers, and other stakeholders in the region to share knowledge and resources. Some of this communication already occurs formally through conferences and established networks, but often through more informal means. A learning network specifically focused on youth volunteer and civic service programming and consisting of virtual and in-person gatherings, as well as other networking mechanisms, might be useful in helping to further the program, policy, and research agenda for the field.

Accountability. In order for programs to be successful, they must produce positive outcomes. Yet a major challenge in this study has been to find measured effects of volunteer and civic service programs. One recommendation is to include an evaluative component when setting program goals. An evaluation defines measures of success, tracks specific program activities, and establishes intermediate and final outcomes in order to assess how well program goals are being addressed. Such information can help assess which program characteristics and models are most effective as well as what may be good service practices.

Limitations and Challenges

Youth volunteerism and civic service is not a panacea for issues facing the LAC region. Youth volunteerism and civic service cannot and should not be applied in all circumstances. This strategy is one of many that can make a contribution to social and economic development and long-term sustainability. Thoughtful judgments must be made regarding where volunteerism and civic service can have the most positive impacts.

One of the primary challenges, as this paper suggests, is to build a body of knowledge that can inform how civic service can best be utilized. A much stronger research agenda can help lay the groundwork for successful expansion of service in the LAC region.

Youth volunteerism and civic service are certainly not substitutes for labor market jobs. Every effort should be made to prevent this from occurring. Youth volunteerism and civic service should be applied where needs are unmet and markets are not responding to those needs. Service operates on mutuality.   The servers receive compensation primarily through experience, satisfaction, and skill development rather than financial reward.

Informal volunteering may be more prevalent than formal service. Volunteering occurs more spontaneously, while structured forms of civic service require staffing, training, and administration to implement on a large scale. Staffing and other aspects of service organization are expensive. In many situations, costs may be prohibitive. For example, training for service-learning methodology and identifying service-learning projects may require more time, personnel, and financial resources than are available. To compound the challenges, youth volunteerism and civic service may not be viewed as a viable strategy by organizations that provide financial resources. Lack of research and information on program effects may hinder understanding and program expansion.

From an implementation standpoint, there may be limited mechanisms for connecting youth to meaningful volunteer placements. Good service placements do not occur automatically. They have to be identified, developed, and sustained. It may also be that demand (desire to serve) exceeds supply (number of meaningful opportunities to serve).

Inter-organizational partnerships are potentially effective structures for assuring stability and sustainability. But partnerships are not easily achieved. Dialogue is necessary. Multiple stakeholders may slow the process of establishing clear goals and shared objectives.

International organizations and foreign governments have been long-standing contributors to the development of the region. However, in some countries there is ambivalence about their participation and assistance. To the extent that trust can be built, these organizations can be important partners in ongoing development of the region.

Research Implications

This paper raises more questions than it answers. This initial assessment is a first step in understanding the status and potential of youth volunteerism and civic service in the LAC region. We have identified three primary areas for future research: scope and institutional forms; inclusive program models; and effects on served and server.

Scope and Institutional Forms

What programs exist in the LAC region? What types of organizations sponsor them? How do these programs differ across regions and countries? To take one example, how do programs in the Spanish-speaking countries of the Caribbean differ from the English- and French- speaking Caribbean islands?

The number and types of youth volunteer and civic service programs in the LAC region are largely unknown, as is the scope of these programs in terms of the numbers of youth mobilized as servers. It may be that service-learning or school and university-based service is not the most prevalent form of civic service, or that international service—either based in the LAC region or implemented through partnerships with countries in the Global North—is more widespread than originally thought. Corporate volunteerism, not discussed in this report, may be an avenue for youth service. Given the historic role of religious organizations, what is the current scope and impact of their youth programs? Future research on service should be grounded in a systematic assessment of the scope and institutional forms of service in the LAC region. This can lay the groundwork for policies and programs that are more informed and better targeted.

Other areas to explore are implementation issues. What are the strengths and challenges faced by programs? What are the obstacles in program design and implementation, from the national to the local level? What policies support or hinder implementation? What program designs have been most successful and in what service areas?

Regarding large-scale service programs, can civic service be delivered through a single institution, or is it better to work with a network of partners? Who are the likely partners? What is the nature of institutional relationships? What types of service are best suited for each model? In what ways does the increase in inter-organizational networks and program partnerships impact institutional social capital and civic service?

A broad range of research is needed. As indicated above, a thorough policy and program assessment is needed. In addition, a program level study could assess variation in time commitment, structure, areas of service, and goals, and how these are related to outcomes. Longitudinal study of volunteers and servers could assess the effects of service on career goals and adult productivity. It seems likely, for example, that service may affect career choices that make long-term contributions to social and economic development.

Inclusive Program Models

With the history of *asistencialismo* in the LAC region and the current focus on *solidaridad*, attention is warranted regarding the design of programs. Who is able to serve, and who is serving? If only privileged university students are able to serve and they increase their job and social skills through the service experience, then this represents inequality and exclusion. Portocarrero's (2004) finding that volunteer participation in Peru occurs more among those with higher income and higher education is a signal that the inequalities of the region might be reflected in opportunities to volunteer (to be sure, inequalities in participation also occur in the United States and European countries, but this does not make them acceptable).

How can low-income, rural, indigenous, disabled, or other disadvantaged youth be included? Do gender inequalities impact opportunities for young women to volunteer? The answers likely rest with particular program designs that expand access through incentives and facilitation. It is important to identify such program models and learn how they are able to include a broad spectrum of youth. These lessons can serve as "best practices" for the field.

Effects on the Servers and the Served

This paper suggests civic service as a social and economic development met strategy. The applicability of service for development depends on its effects. Results are promising regarding the effects on the server, but it is necessary to know if positive effects accrue beyond the servers to individuals, organizations, communities, and nations being served by the given program. If positive effects for the served do not occur, civic service may be little more than exploitation of local communities. Attention to unanticipated or potentially negative effects on both the server and the served is an important area of study.

What is the value of volunteerism? A critical area of study related to effects is the costs associated with volunteer and civic service programs. While these programs, by definition, do not include wages for the servers, there are other costs such as the training and mentoring of the servers, and administrative costs associated with recruiting and finding placements. The challenges of cost/benefit studies, however, are finding ways to measure intangible benefits (such as self-esteem and social values) in addition to the outcomes that can be measured through standard social and economic indicators.

Volunteerism and civic service discussions have more frequently been connected to the concept of citizenship. An important area for study is the effect of service on citizenship in the region. Related to the issue is the question of measurement. How do we measure such effects? How do we measure value-laden outcomes? Standards for measurement should be assessed and better instruments developed.

One of the most valuable but costly research designs is a longitudinal design which follows participants over time. Although there is a long history of volunteerism in the LAC region, relatively recent democratization may provide a unique opportunity to establish a baseline upon which a long-term study of the evolution of volunteer and civic service can be built. This information would provide an on-going resource for informing and refining program implementation and policies.

Conclusion

To what degree can social and economic development objectives be met through youth volunteerism and civic service? Is youth service as "strong policy" enough to reverse the circumstances of many LAC youth from social and economic exclusion to inclusion and productivity?

If youth volunteerism and civic service is as effective as it appears to be, how can this intervention be maximized? The political answer lies in generating vision and political will among leaders at all levels. The economic answer lies in finding resources to support civic service as a social and economic development strategy. The administrative answer lies in examining program models to determine which designs offer the greatest potential for increasing participation, and expanding those opportunities and incentives. The academic answer lies in generating a greater knowledge base, especially measuring effects.

This paper has provided an overview of youth volunteerism and civic service in the LAC region. While systematic evidence is in short supply, we have outlined what is known. Program implications and a research agenda have been proposed, with a recommendation to focus on civic service as potentially the most viable and inclusive form of volunteerism, with the greatest potential to contribute positively to social and economic change.

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Appendix A

Youth Volunteerism and Civic Service in Latin America and the Caribbean
Program Descriptions

Institution Type	Organization/ Program Name	Country	Description
Local NGO Programs			
	Actividades Comunes a Capacidades Diferentes (ACCADI)	Argentina	Established in the year 2000, ACCADI is an acronym for common activities for different capacities. The aim of this organization is to provide opportunities for disabled children and youth to participate in social, cultural and sporting activities. The volunteer corps of the organization welcomes people of all ages, including those with disabilities, who have related or no experience in working with children with special needs. Volunteers engage in educational activities and also take part in the rehabilitation process.
	Chicos de La Calle	Ecuador	The Fundación Proyecto Salesiano started in 1977 with a shelter for street children. Since then, the foundation has added numerous rehabilitation and education centers and implemented many projects to benefit the children including Chicos de la Calle. This program relies on volunteers, primarily serving as teachers, to work on various community initiatives.
	Children Promoting Health	Venezuela	This is a program initiative from the Caracas for the Children Foundation in Venezuela. This innovative program engages school children ages 8 to 13 in public health campaigns aimed to promote healthy living through hygiene and prevention. The children participate in educational workshops and are expected to become agents of information in their homes and neighborhoods.
	Corazones Abiertos	Paraguay	Corazones abiertos is a youth-driven organization that originated from a project that combined the work of various religious youth movements in Asunción. Established in 1997, Corazones Abiertos aims to promote social change through the work of youth volunteers. Corazones Abiertos offers many volunteer activities aimed at helping the less privileged groups of society guided by the principle of solidarity.
	Fundación Brazil	Brazil	Founded in the year 2000 by two Brazilian expatriates in New York, the organization operates formally in Rio de Janeiro. Its purpose is to channel resources and talent to improve the social conditions in Brazil. Brazil Foundation relies primarily on volunteer effort and talent. Volunteers work on projects throughout Brazil lending their skills and time or fundraising in New York City and Rio de Janeiro.
	GAPA Bahia	Brazil	GAPA supports victims of HIV/AIDS in Bahia Brazil. The organization was founded in 1988 by a group of socially conscious volunteers that considered AIDS a threat to society as a whole, not just a particular group. Volunteer activities vary including education, counseling, workshop preparation, hospital visitations, and work with children with AIDS. GAPA includes volunteers of all ages.

Institution Type	Organization/ Program Name	Country	Description
Local NGO Programs			
	Iracambi Volunteer Program	Brazil	Founded in the late 1980s, this organization aims at establishing a sustainable balance between farming and conservation of the rainforest. Volunteer assignments are 3 to 6 months. Volunteers are both local and foreign citizens. Some are young professionals or students. Areas of volunteer work include: environmental education, forestry, computer related work, and fund-raising.
	Los Hermanos del Anciano	Mexico	Established in 1982, this organization aims to improve the quality of life of older adults living alone and in impoverished conditions. Volunteers in this organization participate by visiting with older people living alone, helping them with house chores they are unable to perform, preparing meals, taking them to the doctor, or by providing a few hours of companionship. The organization welcomes volunteers of all ages. Training and orientation are provided by the organization on a continuous basis.
	Service Volunteered for All (SERVOL)	Trinidad & Tobago	SERVOL is a non-governmental organization established in the 1970s in the Laventille community of Trinidad & Tobago. The program seeks to empower the poor and marginalized to work for their own benefit, and eradicate poverty focusing on attainable goals. The organization bases its projects on the belief that communities should determine what is best for them.

Institution Type	Organization/ Program Name	Country	Description
National NGO Programs			
	Adopta un Herman@	Chile	In 1999 the National Foundation for Poverty Eradication of Chile started this program which is modeled after a similar program that has been implemented in Israel since 1974. The program pairs university students with elementary school children considered to be at risk. The university students act as tutors and are expected to commit to this role for at least eight months, during which they meet with their little brother or sister twice a week.
	Asociación Jóvenes del Perú	Peru	This organization engages young people ages 16 to 29 in youth related issues. Volunteer projects are in the areas of education, job skill development, economic development entrepreneurship, diversity and human rights. Some of the populations served include battered women, gang members, children and adolescents at risk, children and youth with special needs.
	Brigada de Voluntarios Bolivarianos del Perú (BVBP)	Peru	BVBP is a national youth program created in 1982. The program is grounded on Bolivar's ideals of unity and social justice. The variety of program activities include: education and leadership training, hospital and nursing home visitations, and environmental projects.
	Centro Boliviano de Filantropía (CEBOFIL)	Bolivia	CEBOFIL is a private non-profit social development organization founded in 1997. Through one of its programs "Youth United for their Barrio," CEBOFIL aims to strengthen the development of young people through skill learning and community involvement.
	Centro de Integración Juvenil	Mexico	Centro de Integración Juvenil is a non-profit organization specializing in treatment, rehabilitation and study of substance and drug addiction. CIJ offers volunteer opportunities for people of all ages. Volunteer activities focus primarily on health education and promotion.
	Centro Nacional de Voluntariado (CENAVOL)	Peru	CENAVOL is a private non-profit supported by donations that aims to improve the quality of life of the less privileged in Peru through the work of volunteers. CENAVOL welcomes volunteers 23 years and older. Volunteer assignments usually require a weekly commitment of at least 10 hours for 3 months.
	Chol-Chol Foundation	Chile	Founded in 1974, Chol-Chol Foundation takes its name from the Manpuche Indians expression meaning Many Trees. As a private non-profit, Chol-Chol foundation seeks to integrate the marginalized indigenous communities from rural Chile. The foundation recognizes the value of volunteer work as a tool to enrich and improve the quality of life and as a way to extend the values of solidarity, peace and equality. Chol-Chol accepts volunteers of all ages who demonstrate a genuine commitment for the organization's mission. It offers various volunteers opportunities ranging from summer programs for secondary school students to longer-term assignments for college students and professionals.

Institution Type	Organization/ Program Name	Country	Description
National NGO Programs			
	Committee for the Democratization of Information Technology (CDI)	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Uruguay	CDI started in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1995. The main purpose of CDI is the creation of information technology resource centers for underprivileged youth. Volunteers may be involved in establishing the centers, repairing computers, serving as instructors, and participating in fund-raising activities. CDI Americas is an initiative that has expanded the model to other parts of the LAC region.
	Corporación Colombiana de Voluntariado	Colombia	Since 1975, this organization has promoted and supported the development of volunteerism in Colombia. CCV also implements volunteer projects in social and community development. CCV works with volunteers of all ages. Approximately 12% are under the age of 30. The areas of work include healthcare, daycare, economic development, community organizing, and education.
	Disaster Relief and Conservation Project/ASONOG and CJN	Honduras and Nicaragua	Asociación de Organizaciones no Gubernametales (ASONOG) in Honduras and the Consejo Nacional de la Juventud (CJN) in Nicaragua collaborate on disaster relief and conservation projects designed to promote youth participation. The group was part of disaster relief efforts aimed at facilitating the recovery of areas and populations affected by Hurricane Mitch in 1998.
	Fundación Tierra Nueva	Paraguay	Fundación Tierra Nueva is a university student-chartered, non-profit organization, focusing on improving the quality of life in rural Paraguay. The foundation welcomes young professionals, students and the general public to assist in its volunteer campaigns. Areas of work include healthcare, community development, economic and sustainable development.
	Gincana da Cidadania	Brazil	Gincana da Cidadania is a project coordinated by the non-profit Aracati. The program targets young adults and its main goal is to promote social participation. Areas of activity of this program include environment, community development, peace and health.
	Group for Life Incentive GIV	Brazil	The purpose of GIV is to improve the quality of life of people infected with HIV/AIDS in Sao Paulo. Volunteers carry out a variety of tasks that include education, healthcare, counseling and other community outreach activities. Volunteers are also trained to work in and develop partnerships with government agencies and other NGOs.
	Hogar Crea Dominicano	Republica Domini- cana	Hogar Crea Dominicano is a treatment facility for the victims of drug and substance abuse. As part of the residential treatment program, the Hogar organizes multiple volunteer service activities in the community. Some of the volunteer activities include health education, drug and substance abuse awareness, environmental work, and literacy campaigns. Volunteers are typically 20 to 35 years of age.

Institution Type	Organization/ Program Name	Country	Description
National NGO Programs			
	Jatun Sacha	Ecuador	Jatun Sacha was established in Ecuador in 1989. It is now the largest non-profit environmental foundation in the country. Through its volunteer program the foundation places Ecuadorian and foreign volunteers in a variety of environmental conservation projects. Although the program welcomes volunteers of all ages, the majority of the volunteers are young professionals and students. Assignments range from one to six months.
	Opción Colombia	Colombia	Founded in 1991, Opción Colombia is a university student initiative that seeks to connect universities with the issues affecting communities. The program engages students and faculty from Colombian Universities in various projects aimed at promoting social and economic development and civic engagement.
	Opción Latinoamérica	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Venezuela, United States	Opción Latinoamérica, created in 1995 by Corporación Opción, is an international network of youth volunteer programs that promotes youth participation in the implementation of social projects aiming at solving social and economic problems in the region. The organization facilitates the creation of youth volunteer networks and also promotes partnerships between youth organizations, government, and other civil society actors.
	Programa de Voluntariado, Instituto Juventud para el Desarrollo Sostenible (INJUDESO)	Costa Rica	Founded in 1993, INJUDESO is a non-profit organization charged with promoting youth participation and development. Through its program, Socio-Environmental Volunteerism, the organization involves young people 14 and older to work in social and environmental projects.
	Servicio País	Chile	Servicio País was launched in 1995 by the Foundation for Poverty Eradication in Chile. The program seeks to alleviate poverty in rural and or marginalized areas in Chile, through the work of young professionals under the age of 35. The three major areas of work of the program are the environment, social and citizen development, and economic development. Volunteer assignment usually last 13 months.
	Servicio Voluntario Alternativo	Paraguay	This is a program supported by the non-profit organization Sumando. It is targeted for youth ages 16 to 26. The program, still in its pilot phase, has been conceived to become a civil alternative to military service. The program currently has 1400 volunteers. The volunteer activities focus on work at hospitals, nursing homes and work with children and youth at risk.

Institution Type	Organization/ Program Name	Country	Description
National NGO Programs			
	Un Techo Para mi País	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay	Started in 1997 as Un Techo Para Chile by a group of university students, this youth-driven organizations focuses primarily on housing development. The organization is founded on the premise that a just world is possible. Due to its overwhelming success, young people from all over Latin America traveled to Chile to learn the experience and replicate it in their countries resulting in Un Techo para mi País. Volunteer assignments vary in duration and scope but usually target poor and marginalized communities throughout the country.
	Vida	Costa Rica	Starting in 1988 as a private non-profit, Vida seeks to engage local and international volunteers in environmental protection, education and research. Volunteer activities range from counting sea turtles to preparing educational presentations for elementary school children, to removing trash from beaches, rivers and roads. Vida welcomes volunteers of all ages and requires a commitment of at least two weeks.
	Voluntades, Jóvenes Construyendo Perú	Peru	This youth-driven organization started in 1997 with a group of young people concerned about the critical situation of Peru's economy. The program has since deployed over 1,400 volunteers throughout the country. Volunteers range in age from 16 to 30. Volunteer activities focus primarily on tutoring school children and helping people in vulnerable situations such as older adults living in nursing homes. The main objectives of the organization are promoting social responsibility, self-reliance among the poor, and leadership.
	Voluntarios Construyendo El Salvador (VOCES)	El Salvador	VOCES is a student run non-profit organization that seeks to raise awareness about the issues affecting the less privileged and marginalized groups in El Salvadoran society. Its emphasis is on housing poverty. VOCES organizes work camps in poor communities, and volunteers assist local residents with house-building projects.
	Voluntarios Internacionales México (VIMEX)	Mexico	VIMEX originated in response to the devastating earthquake of 1985. Volunteers helped remove debris and build temporary housing for the people affected by this natural disaster. Since then, VIMEX has engaged Mexican and foreign youth volunteers in work camps in Mexico and other parts of the world. Work camps usually last 2 to 4 weeks and require about 30 hours of work per week.
	Volunteer Youth Corp (VYC)	Guyana	VYC was initiated in December of 1996. The primary focus of the program is on healthcare and social development. VYC offers Guyana's youth aged 18-29 the opportunity to serve their country, capitalizing on youth potential to develop and apply their skills and talents.

Institution Type	Organization/ Program Name	Country	Description
International NGO Programs			
	Best Buddies International	Colombia, Cuba, Mexico	Best Buddies International is a non-profit organization based in the United States whose aim is to improve the lives of people with mental disabilities by developing their social skills. Best Buddies volunteers are paired with people with intellectual disabilities for one-on-one friendships and integrated employment.
	Programa de Acción Social Gente Nueva	Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Venezuela	Through the Social Action Program, Gente Nueva seeks to promote positive human values and youth participation. The program carries out various social service projects aimed at providing relief to people in need. The organization played an important role during the rescue efforts of 1985's earthquake in Mexico City.
	North American Community Service (NACS)	Canada, Mexico and the United States	NACS is a transnational program, still in a pilot phase. Participants from Canada, Mexico and the United States spend two months in each country working in a community development project and in educational activities aimed at raising awareness about the North American community. The program is implemented jointly by Universidad Veracruzana, Canada World Youth, and the United States Student Conservation Association. Volunteers are typically between the ages of 18 to 25.
	Promoción y Desarrollo (PROYDE)	LAC region	The La Salle Brotherhood founded PROYDE in 1998. It aims to fight poverty by promoting education and community development. Volunteer opportunities are available for local and international volunteers over the age of 17. Assignments vary in duration from a few months to two years.
	Youth Volunteers, International Red Cross Red Crescent Federation	LAC Region	The youth movement of the Red Cross Red Crescent is committed to promoting youth participation in volunteer activities. Currently youth programs through the organization focus on HIV and AIDS education, human rights, emergency preparedness and emergency relief.

Institution Type	Organization/ Program Name	Country	Description
Government Programs			
	Civil Service Project	Brazil	Civil Service Project is a direct response to the call for greater youth involvement, social responsibility and solidarity. The program was proposed in 1996 by the government and first piloted in 1997. The explicit objectives are to promote community work among the youth, provide opportunities for skill development, and promote and safeguard human rights. The program is targeted for youth 18 years and older.
	Ser Solidario/Colombia Joven	Colombia	Ser Solidario/Colombia Joven is a government initiative charged with fostering youth participation in society. Ser Solidario is national in scope and focuses on assisting the less privileged through the work of young volunteers.
	United Nations Volunteers	LAC region	Administered by the United Nations Development Program, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) program is the UN organization that supports human development globally by promoting volunteerism and by mobilizing volunteers. It operates amidst growing recognition that volunteerism makes important contributions, economically and socially, toward more cohesive societies by building trust and reciprocity among citizens. The program deploys about 5,000 UN Volunteers from more than 150 different nationalities actively supporting the programs of the United Nations itself and almost all UN funds, programs and specialized agencies in such fields as health, education, the environment, peace and human rights. Note: The UNV program has been classified as a government program because it is affiliated with the United Nations, members of which represent government bodies.
	Voluntad de Trabajar, Instituto Nacional de la Juventud (INJUV)	Chile	INJUV is a government entity that hosts several programs to promote youth participation. The institute seeks to develop the young citizens of Chile as agents of progress. Volunteer programs are typically focused on social services for the poor and marginalized.
	Volunteer Programs, Dirección Nacional de Juventud (DINAJU)	Argentina	DINAJU is a government agency that seeks to make youth active participants in the development of their communities and society as a whole. It has a particular interest in at-risk youth and those living in poverty. DINAJU has several youth volunteer programs aimed at cultivating community leaders and developing skills.
	Volunteer Program, Instituto Nacional de la Juventud (INJU)	Uruguay	As part of its mission, INJU promotes youth associations and youth volunteerism as a way of developing social values. INJU has youth volunteer programs in numerous areas ranging from family services to disaster relief.

Institution Type	Organization/ Program Name	Country	Description
School and University Programs			
	Colegios por Medellín	Colombia	Organized in 1997 as a non-profit by a group of parents and secondary school students, this initiative promotes the participation of students from the secondary schools of Medellín in social development projects. The program is particularly interested in developing the leadership potential of the participants. Volunteer activities vary and include leadership training, visits to hospitals and other public institutions, and activities for children of poor communities.
	CEMPOS, Universidad Católica de Santa María	Peru	CEMPOS is a community outreach program that gives students the opportunity to enhance their academic experience, putting in practice their knowledge at the same time helping people with scarce economic resources. Activities include healthcare provision, education, and legal counseling.
	Fútbol y Barrios, Universidad Católica del Perú	Peru	Launched in the year 2000 by a group of students and faculty from the UCP, Futbol y Barrios seeks to "channel" the energy of soccer fans in a more constructive manner. The program provides skill and leadership training to fan leaders, so that they become agents of development in their neighborhoods and communities.
	Guardaparques Universitarios (University Park Rangers)	Venezuela	Founded in 1996 by a group of veterinary students, this program focuses on the environment. Currently the organization promotes environmental education throughout Venezuela.
	Escuela Solidaria, Service-learning	Argentina	Although this form of service can trace its origins to the 1980s, the Argentinean Government did not formally recognize it until the late 90s. Today the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology through its program Solidarity Education, promotes service-learning initiatives and projects throughout the country. Elementary and secondary school service learning projects are varied but usually focus on community needs and problems.
	Perú Promesa	Peru	Perú Promesa is a service-learning program implemented by four universities in Peru. It is coordinated by the Centro de Investigación de la Universidad del Pacífico.
	Programa de Voluntariado Social, Universidad Tecnológica Nacional	Argentina	Programa de Voluntariado Social of the Universidad Tecnológica Nacional aims to promote participation and the values of solidarity in the student volunteers.

Institution Type	Organization/ Program Name	Country	Description
School and University Programs			
	Programa Voluntario Universitario, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba	Argentina	This is a university-sponsored service-learning program carried out in poor communities by students.
	Servicio Social	Mexico	Initially proposed in the 1930s and enacted as a national decree in 1947, Servicio Social seeks to promote the values of social responsibility in young professionals. Servicio Social is a requirement of all students prior to graduation. There are variations of the program from university to university but it is essentially one program ranging in duration from 6 months to a year.
	Servicio Social para Estudiantes de Escuelas Secundarias	Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama and Venezuela	Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama and Venezuela have incorporated a service requirement into their secondary school curricula. The intensity and duration varies from country to country but the main goal of the program is to increase the students' sense of social responsibility while helping those in need. Projects are varied and can range from vaccination and health campaigns to reforestation projects.
	Trabajo Comunitario Universitario (TCU)	Costa Rica	TCU became national mandate in 1974. It uses a multidisciplinary approach to address community problems. Student and faculty combine knowledge and talent to carry out special projects. Among other objectives the program seeks to raise awareness and develop a sense of social responsibility.
	UCAB Volunteers, Universidad Católica Andrés Bello	Venezuela	UCAB volunteers are supported and advised by the different departments and schools in the university. The program seeks to foster the values of solidarity and social responsibility in the student volunteers. Projects are developed by students and faculty to address community problems and needs.
	UNIRSE, Universidad NUR	Bolivia	This program started in 1991 as a student organization. It is grounded on the values of community and solidarity fostered by NUR university. The main objectives of the program are to promote community work and alleviate social problems through volunteerism. Projects include adult literacy programs, education, environment and youth leadership.

Institution Type	Organization/ Program Name	Country	Description
School and University Programs			
	Universidade Solidaria	Brazil	Universidade Solidaria started in 1996 as a pilot project in various universities in Brazil. The program's trade mark has been the development of partnerships between universities, municipalities and NGOs. The program engages students and faculty as volunteers in the poverty-stricken areas of Brazil. The program's focus is primarily on health, education, community organizing and citizenship. Assignments last an average of four weeks.
	Universidad Belgrano/ Mandatory service for law students	Argentina	This university-sponsored service-learning program requires students of law to provide legal counseling to people of limited economic resources.
	Voluntariado de la Universidad Católica de Córdoba (VUCC)	Argentina	VUCC was started in the year 2000 and encompasses a network of volunteer activities and initiatives. The program's main objectives are the use of its technical and human resources to tackle specific community needs, promote social change through volunteer involvement, empower the vulnerable groups in Argentina, and develop sustainable alternatives in the community.
	Volunteer Program, Potificía Universidad Católica del Perú	Peru	The Department of Social Outreach and Extension promotes student volunteerism within the university and in the community. Areas of work include geriatrics, adult literacy programs, and children with special needs.
	Volunteer Program, Universidad de Costa Rica	Costa Rica	Launched in 1997, the main objectives of this program are to: facilitate the link between students and society; channel time and creativity in a constructive manner in social, environmental and development projects; and facilitate interaction with other Central American students to gain a broader cultural perspective.
	Volunteer Program, Universidad Anahuac	Mexico	This program aims to produce professionals that have a true understanding of national problems. It promotes experiential learning through direct student involvement. The areas of activity include basic needs, health and education.
	Volunteer Program, Universidad San Carlos	Guatemala	The purpose of this volunteer program is to create a link between university students and the community. Intensity and duration of the volunteer assignments vary. The areas of activity include the environment, education, and health campaigns.

Institution Type	Organization/ Program Name	Country	Description
Faith and Church Programs			
	American Friends Service Committee	LAC region	AFSC started in 1917 as an alternative for young Quakers and others objecting to the war to serve those in need. The AFSC has had a presence in Latin America since the 1940s. The work of the organization in the area focuses on advocacy, human rights, political participation, community development, healthcare and peace.
	American Jewish World Service	LAC region	Founded in 1985, AJWS' mission is to alleviate poverty, hunger and disease for people around the world regardless of their ethnicity, race, national origin, or religion. Through the Jewish Volunteer Corps program, AJWS works with grassroots organizations and NGOs in education, community development and advocacy. There are several volunteer opportunities through Central and South America. Assignments range in duration from one month to a year.
	Caritas	LAC region	Caritas was founded in Germany in 1897. Since then it has expanded to over 200 countries around the world. Caritas International is a confederation of 162 Catholic charities, development, and social service organizations. Caritas focuses on emergency disaster relief, peace and human rights, environmental protection, and integral development. Caritas works at the grassroots level and volunteers are fundamental to its mission. Local Caritas offices recruit, train and mobilize volunteers in each country.
	Covenant House (Casa Alianza)	Guatamala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua	Covenant House is a private non-profit organization founded by the Catholic Church, and based in the United States. The Covenant House operates in a few Latin American countrires under the name Casa Alianza. Volunteer assignments vary but involve work with street children in health, education, and advocacy.
	Habitat for Humanity	LAC region	Habitat for Humanity is a religious non-profit organization founded in 1976 that aims to alleviate homelessness and housing poverty in the world. Habitat for Humanity International offers various volunteer opportunities for local as well as international volunteers of various ages. Assignments are short term, two to three weeks long.
	Hogar de Cristo	Chile	Conceived by Father Alberto Hurtado in 1944, Hogar de Cristo's purpose is to assist the poor and destitute with special attention to the frail, and infirm, children and the elderly. Hogar de Cristo offers an array of social services including homeless and women's shelters, healthcare clinics, and drug rehabilitation for youth. Hogar de Cristo accepts persons of all ages, and both local and international volunteers.
	Jesuit Volunteer Corps	Belize, Chile, Haiti, Nicaragua and Peru	Founded in 1956, JVC seeks to alleviate poverty around the world with the help of volunteers. The JVC mission is based on the principles of community, social justice, simple life and spirituality. JVC volunteers work primarily as teachers and community organizers.

Institution Type	Organization/ Program Name	Country	Description
Faith and Church Programs			
	Solidaridad en Marcha	Peru	Solidaridad en Marcha is an organization that originated from the Christian Life Movement in 1989. It is guided by the social teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. It seeks to improve and dignify the life of the poor and marginalized in Peru.
	Transparencia	Peru	Transparencia is a volunteer movement founded in 1994 by religious leaders and Peruvian intellectuals to promote fraud-free elections. Transparencia volunteers help communities and local associations organize and monitor their own electoral processes, promote citizen political participation, and educate secondary school students on civic participation. In the year 2000 Transparencia mobilized 20,000 volunteers, sixty percent were between the ages of 18 and 30 and about 43 percent were high school and university students (Bernbaum, 2002).
	Witness for Peace	Colombia, Cuba, Guatemala, Haiti, Mexico and Nicaragua	Witness for Peace was established in 1983 by clergymen and private citizens as a response to the Reagan administration's policies toward Nicaragua. Witness for Peace volunteers work in advocacy, education, and community mobilizing. WFP promotes peace, social justice and respect for the people of Latin America.
	YMCA, (Asociación Cristiana de Jóvenes (ACJ))	LAC region	Through its World Service organization, the YMCA, ACJ in Latin America, provides a wide array of volunteer opportunities in education, leadership training, and work with children and youth. The ACJ operates thoroughout the Latin American and Caribbean region.

Youth Volunteerism and Civic Service Programs in Latin America and the Caribbean
Areas of Service by Institution Type:
A Preliminary Analysis

Institution Type	N	AREAS OF SERVICE															
		Education/ Skills Development		Community Development		Basic Needs		Health		Environment		Emergency Services		Human Rights/ Peace		Civic Engagement	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Local NGO Programs	9	7	78	6	67	4	44	4	44	1	11	0	0	1	11	1	11
National NGO Programs	25	17	68	24	96	8	32	9	36	8	32	2	8	3	12	11	44
International NGO Programs	5	4	80	5	100	3	60	2	40	1	20	2	40	1	20	2	40
Government Programs	6	4	67	6	100	3	50	2	33	2	33	2	33	1	17	6	100
School and University Programs	20	20	100	18	90	3	15	10	50	9	45	1	5	1	5	12	60
Faith and Church Programs	11	7	64	10	91	7	64	6	55	1	9	2	18	7	64	3	27
Total	76	59	78	69	91	28	37	33	43	22	29	9	12	14	18	35	46

NOTE: Percentages for each area are calculated within institution type. Total percentages are calculated across all institution types.