

## **UNIVERSAL CHARTER OF INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE**

We, the following, ALLIANCE (Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organizations) CCIVS (Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service) EAVS (Eastern Africa Voluntary Service Development Network) ICYE (International Cultural Youth Exchange) NVDA (Network for Voluntary Development in Asia) SCI (Service Civil International)

present our fundamental principles and ideals through this Universal Charter of International Voluntary Service (IVS).

### **PREAMBLE**

The people of the world today are faced by basic challenges: warfare and conflict, the struggle for social, cultural and economic justice and the preservation of the global ecosystem. The IVS movement is committed to overcoming these challenges. Our work is based on the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Sustainable Development Goals.

IVS by people with different skills and high ideals is a practical demonstration of the commitment, solidarity and cooperation which our world so urgently needs. It is our aim to promote these ideals both locally and globally.

### **PRINCIPLES**

Volunteers are people who offer to devote their knowledge, time and energy, within the framework of a collective social effort, working actively for the general interest of the community without replacing paid labour. IVS brings mutual benefit to volunteers and to the wider community. Volunteers have the opportunity to learn from experiences and to develop through new friendships and intercultural learning. Volunteers must not be exploited for private interests. Volunteers cannot expect any compensation other than personal growth, gaining knowledge, skills and sense of value for both themselves and the local community.

IVS is a vehicle for non-formal and informal education and seeks to encourage the belief of the volunteers and their hosts in their personal potential as tools of positive change. IVS demonstrates a concern for the problems of local communities, raises awareness among the stakeholders involved, and shows how problems may be overcome through co-operative effort.

Volunteers should co-operate with the local community as fully as possible in useful work and exchange knowledge, skills and experience with the members of the local community. Thus, international voluntary service supports local objectives and

actions, provides practical training and education, develops social responsibility, self-awareness and self reliance, as the basis for sustainable socio-economic progress.

IVS encourages a spirit of reciprocal international co-operation, and emphasises the need to reconstruct global society to achieve material and social equality between countries and between people. IVS encourages global citizenship and promotes peace, justice and sustainability.

## **COMMITMENT**

Volunteers, IVS organisations, hosting communities and all other stakeholders should work within the spirit of this Charter. We, who co-sign it, commit ourselves to subscribe to the principles above and we appeal to national and international bodies as well as states and local governments, to provide the voluntary organisations with the necessary means to develop international voluntary service.

This Charter can be amended over time. However, IVS at the local and global level is a tide of practical idealism, which will only be effective if it retains its basic principles.

27th General Conference of CCIVS, 8-13 November 1998, Rabat - Morocco

Revised in the Meeting of Global Task Force "What is Our IVS?", 29 September-03 October, 2017, Kawasaki - Japan

Adopted by the 35th General Assembly of the Alliance - 1-3 November 2017, Athens - Greece