

# **BEYOND PAINTING CLASSROOMS**

**EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING**

**BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS  
FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHANGE**

## **2015 EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING CONFERENCE REPORT**

22 and 23 September 2015  
Johannesburg, South Africa



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## Executive summary

The second Beyond Painting Classrooms conference focused on ***Building Relationships for Socio-economic Change***. Held on 22 and 23 September 2015 in Johannesburg, South Africa, the conference drew 130 participants joined in their commitment to more effectively harness the potential benefits of corporate employee volunteering for business and society. The conference forms part of the FirstRand [Beyond Painting Classrooms](#) initiative which was established by [FirstRand](#) in 2012 with the support of [Charities Aid Foundation Southern Africa \(CAF Southern Africa\)](#). FirstRand sponsored the conference with additional sponsorship from IQ Business and Old Mutual. CAF Southern Africa provided programmatic support. Research on the social and business dimensions of employee volunteering was commissioned by FirstRand and conducted by Tshikululu Social Investments to guide the conference focus and approach.

Employee volunteering is a mainstay of the South African corporate social investment (CSI) landscape and a potential resource for socio-economic change. However, in its current form employee volunteering does not sufficiently speak to the real needs and assets of civil society or the particular skills and resources of business. Achieving greater alignment is critical in the current South African context of widespread poverty, high rates of unemployment, stark inequality and economic uncertainty.

The nature and form of employee volunteering relationships determines the extent to which employee volunteering can support socio-economic change in the country. The conference thus focused on how various relationships inherent to employee volunteering can be strengthened – relationships between business and society (e.g. inter-sectoral), relationships among and with organisations (inter- and intra-organisational) and relationships between individuals (interpersonal).

“The phrase Beyond Painting Classrooms is a challenge to us all to go beyond short-term gains and to pull together as a collective”, emphasised Elizabeth Maepa (Strategic Human Resources, FirstRand Group). Fanie du Toit (Executive Director, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation) reminded participants that South Africa’s success to date is because of “unprecedented cooperation between civil society and business.” This legacy will need to be built on through employee volunteering as South Africa continues its journey towards a non-racial and non-sexist society based on dignity, equality and human rights.

Bobby Godsell (Chairman, Business Leadership South Africa) argued that companies are uniquely positioned to encourage active citizenship through the workplace. Employee volunteering provides an important medium to promote employee engagement in society. But for this to happen, Nozizwe Madlala – Routledge (Executive Director, Inyathelo) stressed that CEOs must engage in forums such as Beyond Painting Classrooms and be ready to leverage corporate skills to help communities build themselves. The Right Reverend Jo Seoka (Chairperson, Bench Marks Foundation) emphasised that business must be ready to listen to communities if it wants to contribute to changing lives.

Three corporate executives explained how corporate leadership can support employee volunteering. Leaders have to get involved “front and centre” in volunteering, stressed Adam Craker (CEO, IQ Business). Phil Tomlinson (CEO and Founder, Different Life Insurance) explained how the growing demand for corporate responsibility from customers influenced the company’s decision to “do business differently.” Ziaad Suleman (COO, IBM Africa) noted that volunteer programmes work best when “aligned to business strategy, supported by top leadership and integrated into the DNA of the business.”

Given the backing of top leadership at Old Mutual, the company has been able to design programmes, like the staff community builder programme, which fosters long-term partnerships between employee volunteers and NGOs, shared Millicent Maroga (Head, Old Mutual Foundation). Elyjoy Ikunyua (Business Development Manager, CAF Southern Africa) emphasised the work that companies and NGOs must do internally to design and implement volunteer programmes that speak



to the business, employee interests and development challenges. Saira Khan (CEO, Stop Hunger Now Southern Africa) shed light on the organisation's dedicated approach to employee volunteer management, which is characterised by regular volunteer communication, volunteer training, recognition and evaluation.

The Cancer Association of South Africa (CANSA) has benefited from its decision to prioritise and refine its volunteer management systems, shared Munnik Marais (Corporate Relations Manager, CANSA). Desmond Zeelie (Managing Director, The Foundation of School Leadership and Management) encouraged NGOs to see employee volunteering as a way to "give impact and clout" to CSI funding, rather than as a CSI funding strategy. Both Marais and Zeelie emphasised that NGOs must recognise their value when deciding whether and how to engage employee volunteers. Georgia Gillette (Vice President Corporate Initiatives, Points of Light) shared principles and tools of effective volunteer management that NGOs can refer to when developing corporate employee volunteer programmes, especially those focused on skill-based volunteering.

While strengthening employee volunteer relationships within organisations is critical, Professor Jonathan Jansen (Vice Chancellor and Rector, University of the Free State) and Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng (Vice-Principal of Research and Innovation) stressed that each conference participant has a personal responsibility to grow a culture of volunteering in their professional as well as personal lives. "We are going to need what a wonderful book calls a moral underground, an army of volunteers," said Jansen. Simple acts of empathy alongside more strategic efforts like the No Student Hungry Campaign started by university secretaries are essential for combatting the prevailing culture of greed.

Young people should be seen as partners in growing a culture of volunteering. Mpho Gama (Allan Gray Orbis Foundation Fellow) and founder of a youth NGO said, "We [Millennials] are not self-centred children – we want to use our privilege to do more in our communities." Koketso Rapoo (Student, St. Peters College) exemplifies this by volunteering through her school's social responsibility programme. Citing her engagement with FirstRand, Amanda Blankfield-Koseff (Founder, Empowervate Trust) shared how employee volunteering programmes can partner with NGOs to support youth active citizenship. Murendeni Mafumo (Fellow, Young African Leadership Initiative) encouraged companies to volunteer with youth organisations and to remember that "change is going to come from local people".

Conference speakers identified skills-based volunteering as a strategic form of employee volunteering that can be strengthened for the benefit of business, employees, NGOs and communities. Skills-based volunteering is 500% more valuable to NGOs than traditional forms of volunteering, noted Georgia Gillette. The Deloitte 2015 Millennial Study, conducted in 29 countries, found that skills-based volunteering, in particular, impacted positively on managerial and leadership skills development. There is also a growing body of evidence to suggest that employee volunteering "delivers real bottom line results to companies" highlighted Gillette. [Billion + Change](#) is a global campaign, started by Points of Light which encourages small, medium and large businesses to unleash corporate skill and expertise for the benefit of civil society.

The FirstRand research recommended integrating mentoring as a prominent feature of employee volunteer programmes. Kgomotso Mokoena (Lecturer, University of Johannesburg and CAF Southern Africa Board Member) spoke about the personal benefits of mentoring through the Student Sponsorship Programme while Fezile Zulu (student) noted that getting the mentor/mentee match right is a critical success factor. Mashilo Mnisi (Chief Executive and Founder, Moshate) described how reciprocal learning and a commitment to engaging characterised the relationship with his mentor. Participants in the Business Arts South Africa's Mentorship Programme -- Michael Rubenstein (Head of Marketing, Centurion Systems) and Gerard Bester (Creative Director, Hillbrow Theatre Project) -- emphasised that mentees have to drive the relationship, rather than the other way around.

Conference participants reflected on how power shapes employee volunteer relationships, particularly with respect to inter-organisational and interpersonal relationships. Recognising that power is too often concentrated around the donor/s, the Ford Foundation has pledged to listen more to the needs of civil society. Nicolette Naylor (Regional Representative, Ford Foundation Southern Africa)



challenged all donors in the room to move from a paternalistic to an empowering approach when working with 'beneficiaries'. Lesley Haynes (CSI Manager, Legalwise) shared how the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) methodology can help shift donors away from a focus on what needs to be fixed to how donors can support community aspirations. Echoing this, Louise van Rhyn (CEO, Partners for Possibility) emphasised that principals paired with corporate executives through the programme don't want to be 'fixed' or 'adopted' by corporate volunteers but engaged with as equals.

Too often corporate employee volunteering is biased towards the perspective of the business and employee. Ensuring that programmes align to business imperatives, employee interest as well as civil society assets and broader socio-economic factors can help shift power relations, noted Colleen du Toit. Skills-based volunteering is one area that promises mutual benefit. Shanda Paine (CSI Manager, Tsogo Sun) encouraged NGOs to communicate their needs so that skills-based volunteer opportunities can be integrated into the company's emergent programme. Nonhlanhla Tshabalala (Portfolio Manager, Volunteerism, Nedbank) acknowledged that employee volunteering is often a journey that starts with traditional volunteering and evolves into more strategic and skills-based volunteering. Robyn Wild (Food & Trees for Africa) shared insights into how the organisation designs volunteering activities that are relevant to companies as well as beneficiaries.

Reginal Botha (Manager, Westbury Youth Centre) shared a symbiotic relationship between Investec and the centre. This is because the engagement has been well managed, relevant to the community and inspiring to volunteers. Marlene Ogawa (Programme Manager, Synergos South Africa) shared tips for multi-stakeholder partnership development. For example, she highlighted the knowledge that is in communities and suggested that letting go of one's beliefs helps partnership development. At Northwest University community engagement is approached through the lens of partnership with communities, explained Bibi Bouwmann (Director, Community Engagement, Northwest University). While the programme has faced challenges such as funding and student turnover, regular evaluation and continuous learning are important strategies recognised for enhancing programme impact.

Barbara Klugman (Independent Consultant) highlighted the importance of defining a theory of change (ToC) in relation to employee volunteering. Without this, 'you are never going to be able to access your progress' she stressed. Cathy Duff reinforced the importance of strategic planning and advised that the development of logic models to improve the evaluation of employee volunteer contributions to social and business outcomes. Sydney Hadebe (Corporate Citizenship and Corporate Affairs Manager, IBM South Africa) shared the company's On Demand Community online portal which supports monitoring as well as evaluation of employee volunteering outputs and to some extent outcomes.

Inspiring individuals to volunteer is an essential first step in building interpersonal employee volunteering relationships. Dianne Mc Alpine (Offline Mobilisation Campaigner, Greenpeace Africa) explained that "the most important aspect of Greenpeace is looking after our volunteers." This orientation undoubtedly underpins the organisation's international reputation for effective volunteer mobilisation. Amalgamated Beverage Industries (ABI) has used Soul Ambassadors to foster greater engagement in the company's employee volunteering programme, shared Gaopaleloe Mothoagae (Sustainability Manager, ABI). In 2015, programme participation was 61%, up from previous years.

An innovative learning network of over 300 volunteer councils at General Electric (GE) supports good practice in volunteer mobilisation as well as a healthy competition across offices, noted Thulisile Phiri (Communications Manager: Southern Africa, GE Corporate Africa). NGOs like Africa Teen Geeks have successfully partnered with major companies such as Google and Microsoft to mobilise volunteers. However, the supply of volunteers falls short of demand, noted Lindiwe Mashinini (Founder, Africa Teen Geeks). Infinite Family South Africa is using technology to mobilise local as well as international volunteers, highlighted Thabang Masingi (Director, Infinite Family South Africa). More training is, however, required to enhance the quality of the mentor and mentee relationship.

FirstRand and Sasol have embraced technology to mobilise volunteers. The FirstRand online employee volunteering portal enables volunteers from across the group's five franchises to get involved in volunteering and to showcase their engagement. "We built the platform so that every



franchise and active volunteer can shine. The platform has also resulted in more effective management and governance of the programme.” said Desiree Storey (Manager, FirstRand Volunteers Programme). Pamilla Mudhary (Group Community Relations Manager, Sasol) explained the Sasol for Good platform, which seeks to build social cohesion, employee retention as well as good governance. The system draws on forgood’s online technology which connects individuals, groups and companies who want to make a difference to causes that need their help, explained Katherine Robertson (Commercial Manager, forgood).

Key findings and recommendations from the FirstRand research were shared at the close of the conference by Jolene Shaw (Senior Consultant, Tshikululu Social Investments). Overall participants provided positive feedback through the Social Collective. The convenors and sponsors of the conference are appreciative of the delegates’ participation in the conference and their commitment to volunteering.

## 1 Introduction

*“The phrase Beyond Painting Classrooms is a challenge to us all to go beyond short-term gains and to pull together as a collective...Our hope is that through this conference, we can create relationships that add value to our initiatives.”*

Elizabeth Maepa, (former) Strategic Human Resources, FirstRand Group

The [Beyond Painting Classrooms](#) initiative was started by [FirstRand](#) in 2012 with the support of [CAF Southern Africa](#)<sup>1</sup>. The overall aim of the initiative is to build a developmental employee volunteering practice that benefits both business and society. In particular the initiative seeks to promote reciprocal and long-term partnerships between business and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) aligned with the real needs and assets of civil society and the unique expertise and skills present in business.

The 2015 Beyond Painting Classrooms Conference -- Building Relationships for Socio-economic Change -- is the second conference to be convened in support of the initiative. The conference theme was based on participant feedback from five Beyond Painting Classrooms events between 2013 and 2015. Additionally, FirstRand commissioned research, conducted by Tshikululu Social Investments in early 2015, on the social and business dimensions of employee volunteering to guide the conference focus. <http://www.firststrand.co.za/csi/volunteers/Pages/reports-and-articles.aspx>

While employee volunteering is a mainstay of the South African Corporate Social Investment (CSI) landscape, there is great scope to improve the contribution of employees to business and development outcomes. There is a convincing and growing body of evidence that demonstrates the value employee volunteering can hold for all employee volunteering stakeholders for all stakeholders involved, including business, corporate employees, NGOs, communities and individuals.

Research by the Corporate Executive Board Company headquartered in the United States found that on average, every employee who participates in corporate community engagement activities adds USD2 400 of value to the company as a result of decreased staff turnover and increased employee engagement. (Points of Light 2014) While many studies have touted the professional development and well-being benefits of volunteering, a recent study recommends that employers as well as doctors promote volunteering to improve health among staff and patients.<sup>2</sup>

Numerous South African organisations have demonstrated the positive impact of skills-based volunteering on development outcomes, while sector-wide research finds that “the value of skilled volunteer support for general operations, technology and professional services can be 500% greater than the value of other forms of volunteering.” (Gillette 2015) Research on volunteering more generally suggests that volunteering can help to break down stereotypes and societal divides along racial, gender and socio-economic, religious and cultural lines. (CIVICUS, IAVE and UNV 2011/Lough and Mati 2012).

<sup>1</sup> Volunteer and Service Enquiry Southern Africa (VOSESA) also supported the founding of the initiative but closed its doors in 2013.

<sup>2</sup> See [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/bosses-doctors-should-push-volunteering-experts-say\\_us\\_568c34f8e4b0c8beacf48a9b?cps=gravity\\_2659\\_-539320812302934052&kvcommref=mostpopular](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/bosses-doctors-should-push-volunteering-experts-say_us_568c34f8e4b0c8beacf48a9b?cps=gravity_2659_-539320812302934052&kvcommref=mostpopular) and <http://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2016/jan/18/is-it-time-to-prescribe-volunteering>



Yet the above-mentioned benefits of employee volunteering are largely shaped by the relationships which underpin employee volunteering practice. Indeed the nature and form of employee volunteering relationships determines the extent to which employee volunteering promotes development as well as its ability to support socio-economic change.

The 2015 conference thus sought to explore the complex web of relationships that underpin corporate employee volunteering. Specifically the conference focused on relationships between business and society (inter-sectoral), relationships between business and NGOs (inter-organisational), relationships within organisations (intra-organisational) and relationships between individuals (interpersonal).

With the triple challenge of inequality, unemployment and poverty in South Africa, the need to closely examine employee volunteering as a key form of active citizenship and resource for socio-economic change should not be underestimated. The late Chief Justice Pius Langa reminds us that socio-economic change is a long-term project that requires active citizenship by all members of society: “

*Transformation is a permanent ideal, a way of looking at the world that creates a space in which dialogue and contestation are truly possible, in which new ways of being are constantly explored and created, accepted and rejected and in which change is unpredictable but the idea of change is constant.” (De Voss 2011)*

The 130 participants at FirstRand’s 2015 Beyond Painting Classrooms Employee Volunteering Conference were joined in their belief that employee volunteering relationships – at both the macro and micro levels - can be strengthened for the benefit of the country’s development. The two day conference, held at the Wanderers Club in Johannesburg, South Africa on 22 and 23 September 2015, was sponsored by FirstRand with additional sponsorship from IQ Business<sup>3</sup> and Old Mutual<sup>4</sup>. CAF Southern Africa provided programmatic support.

The 2015 conference aimed to:

- establish the importance of building employee volunteering relationships for socio-economic change;
- share strategies and good practice examples of how to build mutually beneficial and effective relationships for employee volunteering;
- facilitate networking and relationship building among employee volunteering stakeholders; and
- promote learning and reflection on how employee volunteering relationships can be strengthened to support socio-economic change.

Participants from business, civil society, educational institutions and youth organisations participated in a total of twenty one sessions designed to interrogate how different employee volunteering relationships -- from inter-sectoral to interpersonal relationships -- impact on the health and effectiveness of employee volunteering practice

Throughout, attendees also participated in a series of reflection exercises led by FirstRand, CAF Southern Africa and Synergos South Africa, which sought to recognise and cultivate the change-maker power within each participant to individuals to strengthen employee volunteering. An exciting volunteer management and M&E cloud-based solution called the Social Collective gave participants a mobi-friendly tool to manage participation in sessions and to share conference feedback in real time.

This report consolidates knowledge shared among participants for strengthening employee volunteering relationships and is written according to the conference programme (see Appendix 1 for conference programme). The report first summarises perspectives on the role of employee volunteering in socio-economic change, followed by insights into how relationships within the workplace can be strengthened in support of effective employee volunteering. Next the contribution of individuals and youth in particular in fostering a culture of volunteering is explored. Attention is then given to the value of skills-based volunteering and how to enable employee volunteering relationships between organisations and individuals rooted in reciprocity. Lastly, volunteer mobilisation strategies are considered in relation to building interpersonal relationships before some concluding remarks.

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<sup>3</sup> Employee volunteering is deeply rooted at IQ Business. From graduate training to first line management development through to running the IQ Foundation, IQ Business actively drives ownership by its people in the leadership of these activities.

<sup>4</sup> Old Mutual has one of the most comprehensive staff volunteerism programmes in the country with almost 30-35% of employees engaged in the programme.



## 2 Perspectives on building employee volunteering relationships for change

Twenty one years into democracy, South Africa is at a critical juncture. Inequality is at an all-time high, the education system is in crisis, unemployment affects a majority of youth, and there is unrest in universities, conflict in labour and, at times, a disregard for democratic institutions. Undoubtedly, there was a shared sense among participants that the transformation and reconciliation South Africans envisioned for the post-apartheid era remains an aspiration.

"People look for monetary benefits rather than how they can add value to other people's lives."

Right Reverend Jo Seoka  
(Chairperson, Bench Marks Foundation)

Amidst the bad news narrative, Fanie du Toit (Executive Director, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation) reminded participants of South Africa's enormous potential and how far we have come especially when compared to post-conflict countries around the world. "We got here because of unprecedented cooperation between civil society and business." But if the ship we are on starts to sink, it will do so with a "momentum that we'll struggle to change", du Toit warned.

***What role then can corporate employee volunteering play in keeping South Africa's ship on course? As a form of active citizenship and a mechanism for business and civil society cooperation, how can corporate employee volunteering relationships be strengthened for the benefit of the country?***

In 2013, the [Citizens Charter](#) was launched by Bobby Godsell and James Motlatsi. The charter is founded on the belief that "a good society is based on active citizens".

In his opening keynote address, Bobby Godsell (Chairman, Business Leadership South Africa) argued that business is not separate from society, but rather situated within society. As one of the primary employers of citizens, companies "provide the most important source of social reality for its employees". Given that citizens are ultimately the "architects of the future", he maintained that companies are uniquely positioned to shape and encourage active citizenship through "company life."

One way to involve employees in company life is to engage them through corporate employee volunteer programmes. These programmes should be guided by the concerns and resources of the employees themselves, Godsell advised. Companies can, for example, play a catalytic role in linking parents together through the workplace to address infrastructure and teaching challenges at schools and to help young people transition into economic activity. (Godsell 2015) The social and ethics committee, required by the Companies Act No 71 of 2008, can be leveraged to hold companies accountable to their social role, noted Godsell.

Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge (Executive Director, Inyathelo) highlighted that CEOs must play a leadership role and engage in events such as the 2015 Beyond Painting Classrooms conference if corporate employee volunteering relationships are to be strengthened. She challenged political and business leaders to 'wake up' to the centrality of civil society in South Africa's development and called on the corporate sector to support civil society organisations by sharing skills. She emphasised that skills-based volunteering can help communities regain their dignity if done in an empowering manner. Communities need to be able to say "I built it myself", she explained.

Reverend Seoka echoed the call for business to share its skills with individuals and communities in need. However, he cautioned that businesses have to be ready to listen to what people really need if they want to get involved in employee volunteering with a view towards changing lives. He also characterised efforts to build employee volunteering relationships as a moral issue. It should not be about feeling good, he reflected. Instead employee volunteering should be a space which enables individuals to interrogate ethical questions about the nature and state of South African society today.



### 3 Building organisational relationships to strengthen practice

While the challenges with corporate/ NGO relationships are widely acknowledged, many practitioners also grapple with building relationships among key stakeholders in the workplace. Experience demonstrates that securing buy-in, support and participation from colleagues is an essential first ingredient for designing and implementing effective employee volunteering programmes.

*“Executive involvement has proven to be an effective means of expressing the importance of an EVP. Often employees on a lower level will buy in to volunteering if it is evident that it is important to senior executives and CEOs.”*

FirstRand 2015, pg. 20

Ziaad Suleman (COO, IBM Africa and CAF Southern Africa board member) noted that employee volunteering programmes work best when “aligned to business strategy, supported by top leadership and integrated into the DNA of the business.” Yet many individuals are working in companies where employee volunteering is considered a nice to have and leadership at the top and middle management levels are unsupportive. Thankfully there are forward thinking South African corporate leaders that view giving and employee volunteering as making business and social sense.

“Doing good is good for business” said Adam Craker (CEO, IQ Business). IQ Business has adapted the Salesforce’s integrated ‘Triple 1’ philanthropic approach, which means the company gives 1% of its profits, 1% of its time and 1% of its services to philanthropy. The company aims to promote economic growth that yields benefit for the company, the organisations it supports and the South African economy more broadly. Recently, Craker participated in the Girls and Boys Town CEO SleepOut. Not only did his participation inspire IQ staff to organise a sympathy sleep out at the office raising R150 000 but the company’s *pro bono* SROI (social return on investment) in support of the CEO SleepOut helped the company to secure new SROI clients.

*“Given their status within the company and by association in the broader public arena, CEOs are best able to convey how success for the company is integrally linked to the wellbeing of society.”*

Margaret Coady, CEO, Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy (CECP)

At Different Life Insurance, the idea from the outset was “to do business differently”, reported Phil Tomlinson (CEO and co-founder). There is a growing trend towards corporate responsibility in the business sector, but also a growing demand from customers for business to be responsible players. Philanthropy has therefore been built into the company’s business model, he explained. When a person buys an insurance policy, the first premium of every year goes to one of the causes supported by Different.org – the company’s online crowdfunding platform. The platform serves as a catalyst for the giving of money and time among customers and individual supporters of the organisation.

All three executives agreed that employee volunteering must be cast as essential to the company’s bottom line (e.g. retention and recruitment, brand value, new business leads, economic growth). Having support from an influential leader in the business, like the COO, can go a long way, emphasised Suleman. Without question, corporate leaders have to get involved “front and centre” in volunteering activities, stressed Craker.

The employee volunteering programme at Old Mutual is supported by top leadership, including the CEO and the Foundation’s board of trustees, shared Millicent Maroga (Head, Old Mutual Foundation). Having internal buy-in for employee volunteering has undoubtedly helped to embed a programmatic approach to employee volunteering within the company, which emphasises long-term volunteer engagement. The design of the Staff Community Builder programme, in particular, fosters partnerships between individual employees and NGOs. Old Mutual funds organisations chosen by staff on the condition that staff volunteer with the organisation for a minimum of three years. The company’s Staff Volunteerism Awards programme plays a critical role in building and sustaining staff engagement in the programme.

Echoing Maroga, Elyjoy Ikunyua (Business Development Manager, CAF Southern Africa) stressed the importance of taking a programmatic approach to employee volunteering which aligns to company values, plays to corporate strengths and provides clear parameters for staff engagement. Beyond this, consistent, targeted and relevant marketing and communications are critical success factors of employee volunteering programmes. But “don’t forget the power of peer influence” in growing and



sustaining a programme, she said. Other aspects that need to be effectively designed and managed internally include monitoring and evaluation and recognition and reward. NGOs must also work internally on employee volunteering programme structure, communications, project management and monitoring and evaluation. As a starting point, organisations should understand their needs, and engage in a scoping exercise on how to most effectively engage corporate employee volunteers.

*"It is not only important for NGOs to know and understand their corporate donors and their needs, but corporates should also do a better job listening and understanding their NGOs."*

Desiree Storey (Manager, FirstRand Volunteers Programme)

Stop Hunger Now Southern Africa is taking a sophisticated approach to corporate employee engagement and volunteer management. Saira Khan (CEO) explained that the organisation educates its volunteers so that they know they are "dealing with people, not projects". Part of this is being able to articulate the contribution of each volunteer to the broader effort of the organisation to provide nutritious meals and ultimately eradicate hunger. Volunteers are communicated with on a regular basis, trained, acknowledged and volunteer engagement is carefully managed, monitored and evaluated so that value is created for the donors, volunteers as well as the organisation and its beneficiaries.

Munnik Marais (Corporate Relations Manager, CANSA) credited the organisation's ability to raise R15 million in the last ten years to its 16 000 volunteers and focus on volunteer management. "Connect with people's HEART concerns and they'll go anywhere with you, without asking for details. Don't connect, and you'll never be able to show them enough details to get them to follow," he continued. Detailed planning for the organisation's fundraising events and campaigns (e.g. Relay for Life, Cuppa for CANSA, Movember and Shavathon) are held at least a year in advance. When drawing in companies and their volunteers, he stressed "NGOs must stand up for their rights as the work they are doing is extremely valuable to South Africa."

While Stop Hunger Now Southern Africa and CANSA are defining the terms of engagement with corporate employee volunteers, the FirstRand research found "While some NPOs have become skilled and confident enough to redirect a corporate to what they really require, by far the majority interviewed are still too anxious not to accept whatever is offered, in case they put that corporate off from ever approaching them again." (First Rand 2014: pg. 14)

Desmond Zeelie (Managing Director, The Foundation of School Leadership and Management - FSLM) stressed that NGOs must establish their own identity with companies. Just because a company funds you, doesn't mean that they own you, underscored Zeelie. Only when organisations engage with companies in a way that respects NGO's knowledge of development and the context in which volunteering plays out, will corporate employee volunteering become mutually beneficial for all parties involved. Zeelie further advised that corporate employee volunteering should be seen as a way to "give impact and clout" to CSI funding, as opposed to a CSI funding strategy. FSLM has, for example, enhanced the impact and satisfaction of employee volunteers from its corporate funder AVI by moving beyond painting classrooms to skills-based volunteering such as finance and human resources support.



Georgia Gillette (Vice President, Corporate Initiatives, Points of Light) talked about the importance of volunteer management with a particular focus on skills-based volunteering. Points of Light defines skills-based volunteering as "a strategic type of volunteerism that incorporates a whole range of skills that strengthen the operations and services of non-profit organisations." Echoing the other speakers, Gillette emphasised the centrality of internal planning as the first step in any successful approach to employee volunteering. The [Taproot Foundation](#) in the United States has developed an online tool which helps organisations to think through their needs and whether organisations are ready to engage corporate employee volunteers. The Foundation has also scoped over 100 common skills-based volunteering projects related to marketing, fundraising, strategic planning and HR among others. Finally, Gillette offered up five volunteer management principles which if followed, will strengthen an organisation's approach to volunteer management and skills-based volunteering in particular:



- know and define your needs;
- get the right resources for the right job;
- be realistic about *pro bono* deadlines;
- act like a paying client; and.
- remember that learning goes both ways.

## 4 Employee volunteering, transformation and South African youth

*"We are going to need what a wonderful book calls a moral underground, an army of volunteers."*

Professor Jonathan Jansen

If South Africa is to achieve societal transformation according to the values and intentions of the Constitution, personal transformation will be necessary. Despite the country's long tradition of Ubuntu, Professor Jonathan Jansen (Vice Chancellor and Rector, University of Free State) argued during his keynote address that altruistic behaviour, including volunteering is today 'counter cultural'. Both Jansen and Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng (Vice-Principal of Research & Innovation, UNISA) suggested that the prevailing culture is one of greed and misguided values. Yet there are inspiring

examples of individuals who are defying the cultural norm of personal gain through acts that prioritise solidarity, empathy and justice.

Phakeng highlighted that sometimes we are motivated to give by ethics while other times it emerges from self-interest: "Deep down we cannot be comfortable with what we have if others have not. You want to live in a safe and stable country." Jansen emphasised that our ability to empathise with others also underpins giving. To exemplify this, he told a story of a constable in Kraaifontein who shares his lunch every day with a homeless woman because he was once in her shoes.

Both Phakeng and Jansen highlighted the need for conference participants to contribute to building a responsible and value-based society through employee volunteering. This includes living the values espoused through employee volunteering in our professional and personal lives. While it is important for our leaders to be role models, the 'counter cultural' behaviour of volunteering can also be driven from below. The No Student Hungry Programme is an example of a bottom-up initiative led by secretaries at the University of the Free State who brought the need to support hungry students to the attention of school leadership.

Volunteer energy is especially needed to support South Africa's failing education system, stressed Jansen. In particular, multi-stakeholder partnerships between companies, schools and NGOs are needed. "Until we have a functioning government, we are left with making sure our country changes by giving and volunteering" he said in closing.

Young people in particular should be seen as partners in building a culture of volunteering. After receiving corporate support to study, Mpho Gama (Allan Gray Orbis Foundation Fellow) was motivated to give back. He proceeded to get involved in volunteering through the community engagement programme at University of the Witwatersrand. Gama has since founded a youth organisation called Jabulani Khakibos Kids, which mentors young people in Berea. "We [Millennials] are not self-centred children – we want to use our privilege to do more in our communities."

"African Millennials stand out as wanting to work for the betterment of society (important to 36% in Africa versus 22% globally)."

(IT-Online 2015)

Koketso Rapoo, a student at St Peters College, is living the spirit of volunteering through her school's social responsibility programme. In 2014, Rapoo was elected chairwoman of HOPE, the school's community project. She, along with other Grade 11 students, volunteered to raise funds for the project and participated in building classrooms for the Kliptown Youth Programme in Soweto and the Mompoti Early Childhood and Development Centre in Diepsloot. CAF Southern Africa supported the school on this project. Rapoo encouraged companies to build longer term partnerships with school community projects and to leverage employee volunteers alongside CSI funds.



*"It doesn't matter what age you are -- you can make a change."*

Amanda Blankfield-Koseff (Founder Empowervate Trust)

In addition to schools, corporate employee volunteering programmes can partner with NGOs that promote youth civic engagement. Empowervate Trust runs the Youth Citizens Action Programme (YCAP), which aims to empower Grade 10 learners to find solutions to problems in their schools and communities. FirstRand supported Empowervate to run YCAP in an underprivileged school, which resulted in the building of a sick room. Instead of FirstRand employees 'doing for' the student, the students themselves identified the need for a sick room and decided to build a sick room. FirstRand volunteers raised the funds to support the project and then assisted the learners to present on their initiative at the YCAP National Competition. The students went on to win the prize for the best Gauteng North school presentation. Amanda

Blankfield-Koseff (Founder, Empowervate Trust) said the engagement with FirstRand resulted in mutual benefit which she hoped would be emulated by other companies.

As a Young African Leadership Initiative (YALI) participant and social entrepreneur, Murendeni Mafumo exemplifies how the Millennial generation are passionate about giving back. While his company, In GreenSolns, provides safe drinking water, his NGO gentleGiant supports young people to study maths, science and technology. He noted that "change is going to come from local people" and encouraged companies to cooperate more closely with local organisations, including youth-led organisations that have the empathy and contextual understanding required to make changes in communities.

*"Most solutions don't have to be top down, but they have to be bottom up ... [It is essential to build solutions together with the people you want to serve"*

Amit Saraogi (Co-founder and CEO of Oorja: Empowering Rural Communities)

The first day of the conference closed with a performance by Mzansi Youth Choir and an exhibition of young and talented artists from the Artists Proof Studios – two social endeavours that demonstrate the positive results resulting from investment in youthful passion and talent.

## 5 Employee volunteering, skills and the creation of mutual benefit

Skills-based volunteering is often heralded as the gold standard of employee volunteering. As Georgia Gillette (Vice President for Corporate Initiatives, Points of Light) shared during her keynote address, the evidence shows that skills-based volunteering is good for communities, good for employees and good for business. This aligns with the imperative of the Beyond Painting Classrooms initiative, which seeks to promote a shared value approach to employee volunteering.

*"People want to be part of a bigger purpose and painting classrooms doesn't always amount to a sense of achievement."*

Reginald Botha (Manager, Westbury Youth Centre)

Skills-based volunteering involves the sharing of skills, knowledge and talents of volunteers and is often defined as a strategy for building the impact and capacity of civil society organisations. *Pro bono* service constitutes a form of skills-based volunteering, but relies specifically on core professional skills and expertise of volunteers. The below table provides a useful comparison of traditional volunteering or 'hands on volunteering (e.g. painting) with skills-based volunteering (e.g. mentoring) and *pro bono* service (e.g. human resource consulting).

Nonprofit Needs	MAKING BUDGET	"EXTRA HANDS" TO DELIVER SERVICES/PROGRAMS	INFRASTRUCTURE AND LEADERSHIP		
Types of Support	FINANCIAL SUPPORT	HANDS-ON VOLUNTEERING	SKILLS-BASED VOLUNTEERING		
			GENERAL SKILLS	BOARD SERVICE	PRO BONO PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE
Examples of Common Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Cash grants</li> <li>▶ Dollars for Doers</li> <li>▶ Matching gifts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Playground clean-up</li> <li>▶ Soup kitchen</li> <li>▶ Planting a garden</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Tutoring</li> <li>▶ Literacy programs</li> <li>▶ Career mentoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Board placement</li> <li>▶ Board member training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ IT assistance</li> <li>▶ Marketing collateral design</li> <li>▶ HR consulting</li> <li>▶ Legal counsel</li> </ul>



The FirstRand employee volunteering research found that “Mentoring and other skills-based [volunteering] programmes have been identified as activities that would be of great value to beneficiaries.” (2015) Indeed, in South Africa, there is a growing appetite for skills-based volunteering, as evidenced by the most recent Trialogue report which found an increase in *pro bono* service from less than 1% in 2013-2014 to 8% in the 2014-2015 fiscal year. (2015)

Although NGOs stand to benefit from employee volunteering and skills-based volunteering in particular, it also provides fertile ground for employees to learn and grow, stressed Gillette. There is compelling evidence from various studies that employee volunteering supports employees in developing interpersonal skills, strengthening work relations, reducing stress and increasing morale. (Gillette 2015) For example, the FirstRand research found that “As employees work together..., they also improve interpersonal staff relations, break down workplace silos, gain leadership experience and improve skills development.” (FirstRand 2015) The Deloitte 2015 Millennial Study, which involved young people from 29 countries, found that skills-based volunteering and *pro bono* service in particular impacted positively on managerial and leadership skills.

Skills-based volunteering also “delivers real bottom-line results to companies,” emphasised Gillette. These are generally related to talent attraction, job satisfaction and retention, as well as employee performance. Research from the Harvard Business School found that companies with more community engagement practices significantly outperform their counterparts over the long term, both in terms of stock market and accounting performance. (Points of Light 2014)

Grasping the benefits of skills-based volunteering early on, Points of Light along with members of its corporate council initiated the “[A Billion + Change](#)” campaign in 2008, with the aim of inspiring



companies to “unleash the talent and expertise of their people in skills based and *pro bono* service.” To date 3 000 companies have engaged in the campaign ranging from Fortune 500 companies to small businesses. Exciting corporate skills-based volunteering examples were shared including, Goldman Sachs inclusion of skills-based volunteering challenges in its recruitment process, the GSK Pulse Programme, HP Inc’s advising programme using MicroMentor and Intel’s Education Corps.

## 5.1 Spotlight on mentoring as a needed form of skills-based volunteering

Given the urgent need to strengthen South Africa’s education system, address youth unemployment and support NGO organisational development, mentoring should be integrated as a key feature of employee volunteering programmes across the country. (FirstRand 2015)

Kgomotso Mokoena (Lecturer, University of Johannesburg and CAF Southern Africa board member) highlighted the personal benefits of volunteering with the Student Sponsorship Programme’s mentorship programme. Mentoring “forces you to take time to reflect on your life and this grows you,” she said. Fezile Zulu (university student) credited the mentoring relationships with helping her to come out of her shell and relate to people from different backgrounds. Both Mokoena and Zulu emphasised getting the mentor and mentee match right as a critical success factor.

*“I would like to encourage young professionals that in as much as you don’t think you have anything to offer, try mentoring and you will realise how much you have to offer the world.”*

Kgomotso Mokoena

Mashilo Mnisi (Chief Executive and Founder, Moshate – Male Voices) participated in an NGO training programme sponsored by the City of Johannesburg and implemented by the University of Johannesburg’s Centre for Social Entrepreneurship and Social Economy. Following this, he took the initiative and asked his trainer, Precious Mvulane (Founder and Managing Director, GAD), to mentor



him. As a result of Mvulane's mentorship, Mnisi was able to access funding and improve his organisation's strategic planning and financial operations. Mnisi reciprocated by helping Mvulane to edit her book, "The Essential Financial Handbook for Business Owners" and secured Mvulane a SABC television interview. Mnisi described his relationship with Mvulane as "mutually beneficial" and identified their openness to learning and commitment to engaging as hallmarks of its success.

*"We meet face to face which is crucial in a mentee/mentor relationship."*

Michael Rubenstein

Michael Rubenstein (Head of Marketing, Centurion Systems) and Gerard Bester (Creative Director, Hillbrow Theatre Project) participated in the Business Arts South Africa (BASA) mentorship programme, which typically runs for one year with mentors and mentees meeting at least two hours per month. Bester emphasised that mentees have to do their part to drive the relationship and that establishing a common vision of the work is critical to generating value from the relationship. Rubenstein echoed Bester in saying that the mentee owns the relationships and is the person who holds the key to unlocking the problem. He went on to share that the relationship does not always work – he, for example, took on too much responsibility with a previous mentee. It is thus important to set boundaries and to remember that while mentors can help, they are not capable of "doing everything".

## 5.2. Locating power within employee volunteering and knowledge

Too often power is concentrated with the donor, which leaves other stakeholders in the employee volunteering relationship lacking power. If employee volunteering relationships are to be strengthened in support of socio-economic change, power will have to be reallocated more equally across the various players involved in employee volunteering.

Nicolette Naylor (Regional Representative, Ford Foundation Southern Africa) shared that the Ford Foundation has committed to listening actively to the needs of civil society organisations rather than imposing its own mission. With this approach, the Foundation hopes to work more collaboratively to build resilient and innovative social change organisations. Naylor offered four key lessons for donors seeking to work in a more equitable, respectful and effective manner:

- **Shut up and listen.** This involves moving from a paternalistic to an empowering approach when working with beneficiaries and recognising that so called beneficiaries have knowledge and solutions. (Click [HERE](#) to view the TED Talk by Ernesto Sirotti)
- **Question your motivation for volunteering.** Would you still volunteer if no one else knew?
- **Think before you act and be clear on the goals.** If this step is forgotten, and business imperatives are driving volunteering then we are in danger of causing unintended harm.
- **Real change takes time.** If we're committed to change, we have to be in it for the long haul.

Lesley Haynes (CSI Manager, Legalwise) asked participants, "What if instead of trying to 'fix' perceived 'broken communities, [donors] actively support community aspirations?" To do this, we have to embrace our role as "Gappers" – individuals who work in institutions but whose hearts are in communities she continued. Asset based community development (ABCD) is a methodology which can enable practitioners to more effectively support communities. It requires individuals to focus on "what communities do have" instead of "what communities don't have". Further to this, it compels institutions to ask what they can do, in addition to what communities are already doing, instead of bringing in outside experts to fix community problems.

The Symphonia Partners for Possibility programme is an ABCD initiative dedicated to the principles of co-learning, co-action and reciprocity. The programme taps into the assets of business leaders as well as school principals and communities to promote social change in under performing schools. Ultimately, the programme aims to develop both the business leader and the principal, whilst creating mutual benefit and broad-based social change through the process. Louise van Rhyen, (CEO, Partners for Possibility) shared advice from principals who have participated in their leadership programme:



- We don't want to be "fixed".
- Don't adopt us.
- Ask us what we need (don't assume) – 'Every year on Mandela day....'
- Don't dump your old stuff on us.
- **Reciprocal** partnerships are essential.

Group reflections on the role of power in employee volunteering elicited additional insights into strategies for equalising power. Participants highlighted the need for NGOs to need to make their needs as well as their values clear so as to encourage greater alignment between employee volunteering and NGO work. Another takeaway from the discussions was that corporate representatives need to listen more to of NGO partners and should work more collaboratively with them and communities during the design phase of employee volunteering programmes. Participants also reflected on the time commitment involved in building relationships between corporate, NGO and community representatives. Some groups discussed the interconnection between race and power, and acknowledged the importance of being aware of perceptions of privilege and stereotypes of 'self' and 'other' when engaging in employee volunteering.

## 6 Building inter-organisational relationships to strengthen practice

CAF Southern Africa advises companies to align employee volunteering programmes with business imperatives, CSI strategy and their employees' diverse interests and capabilities stressed Colleen du Toit (CEO CAF Southern Africa). At the same time, CAF Southern Africa insists that programmes must be grounded in the real needs and assets of NGOs and the communities served as well as and broader socio-economic and contextual factors.

*"Whilst corporates claim that their EVPs primarily benefit the NPO they have selected, evidence in this research suggests that when questioned more closely, they admit that there is great benefit to their staff but, in many cases, they are not sure of the benefit to the NPO."*

(FirstRand 2015)

The reality, however, is that many companies design employee volunteering programmes simply to maximise benefit for the companies and its employees. Shanda Paine (CSI Manager, Tsogo Sun) shared that she was able to secure management's support for employee volunteering by emphasising its role in employee skills development as well as BBBEE compliance. Tsogo Sun conducted a pilot study among staff to gauge staff interest in volunteering and to better understand how they would like to get involved. As Tsogo Sun continues to develop its nascent programme, Paine encouraged civil society organisations to clearly communicate their needs to companies so companies can respond to these need through employee volunteering activities, such as skills-based volunteering.

Nedbank's staff volunteerism programme is aligned to its business values and is strongly positioned to employee development and leadership, noted Nonhlanhla Tshabalala (Portfolio Manager: Volunteerism, Nedbank). The programme provides a range of volunteering opportunities from once off to longer-term engagements, which encompass traditional forms of volunteering as well as skills-based volunteering. Through its programme, Nedbank seeks to cultivate awareness about socio-economic development challenges among employees of development challenges and support volunteer champions to share their skills and company expertise effectively. Tshabalala acknowledged that often employee volunteering is a journey that may initially start with a food garden but then evolves into something more strategic.

Food & Trees for Africa (FTFA) has a great deal of experience in courting and securing corporate employee volunteer engagement in its activities. Robyn Wild (Food & Trees for Africa) stressed that while the organisation customises volunteering activities to corporate interests, it also designs and manages these engagements to ensure benefit for the schools they partner with. For example, while a company may request a food garden at a particular school, FTFA will only move forward with the



activity following a needs assessment with the school, which confirms that the project is wanted and viable.

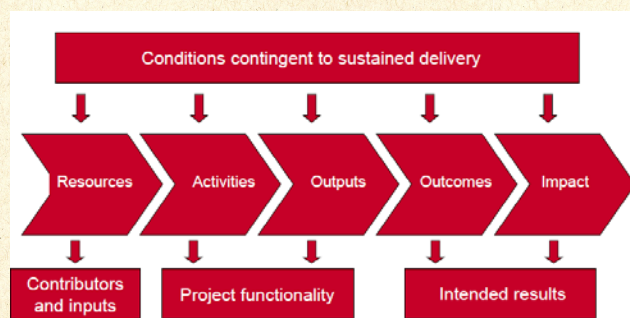
Generating mutual benefit through employee volunteering requires strong management of volunteering activities that are relevant to communities and inspiring to employee volunteers, noted Reginald Botha (Manager, Westbury Youth Centre). Investec staff have volunteered a total of 1 500 hours to transform the floor of the Westbury Secondary School hostel at the youth centre. Botha describes the Centre's relationship with Investec as "100% symbiotic." He went on to emphasise that "communities do not need messiahs; they need to be mobilised by local people."

Marlene Ogawa (Programme Manager, Synergos South Africa) shared insights on how to build multi-stakeholder partnerships in support of systemic change. She started off by saying that not all problems require partnership. However, where collaboration is required to promote change, she encouraged stakeholders to remember that communities understand their needs better than outsiders. Research should inform collaboration, while 'bridgers' are needed to work across sectors guided by common vision. Ogawa also highlighted that letting go of one's beliefs is often critical for partnership development. Indeed changing yourself must happen alongside broader societal change.

At Northwest University, community engagement is seen as a process to ensure long-term sustainability, stressed Beatrix Bouwman (Director, Community Engagement, Northwest University). The programme's primary lens is one of "partnership with" communities - rather than "doing FOR or doing TO the community", Bouwman continued. The programme, in existence since 1971, has primarily focused on the communities of Ikageng and Promosa. To date, the programme has facilitated disbursement of R1 - R1.5 million per annum to the communities, while 3 000 volunteers (mainly students) have participated in 84 projects. Some of the key challenges faced in achieving the programme's goals include funding, inadequate support staff and student turnover. Continuous learning and a commitment to programme evaluation have been adopted as strategies to further strengthen the programme.

Continuous monitoring and intermittent evaluation are critical mechanisms for improving programmes as well as inter-organisational relationships. Barbara Klugman (independent consultant) stressed that organisations have to know what they hope to achieve and how they plan to get there. Otherwise, "you are never going to be able to assess your progress," said Klugman. Employee volunteering programmes should ideally be underpinned by a theory of change, which lays out the logic of moving from a problem, to a series of outcomes and the achievement of the end goal.

Echoing this, Cathy Duff (Director, Trialogue) emphasised the importance of developing a logic model as a basis for shared accountability and understanding between partners.



(Duff 2015)

Annual research by Trialogue finds that a high percentage of companies and NGOs claim to measure programme impact and outcomes, Duff noted that these figures likely represent an over estimation of measurement by both companies and NGOs. Even when measurement happens, it often does not account for all participants. For example, the focus tends to be on organisations instead of individuals. Klugman offered that there is also confusion between the term 'impact' which refers to change at the population level or major structural change (e.g. new legislation) and 'outcomes' which can be



defined as “change in the behavior, relationships, actions, activities, policies, or practices of an individual, group, community, organisation, or institution.” (Klugman 2015).

Sydney Hadebe (Corporate Citizenship and Corporate Affairs Manager, IBM South Africa) explained how IBM’s On Demand Community online portal supports the marketing, management and measurement of employee volunteering of the company. The portal seeks to help direct IBM technological skills and expertise to areas such as job creation, education and healthcare. Both quantitative and qualitative information is collected through the system on areas such as grant disbursements, volunteer hours, the number of community organisations engaged in skills-based volunteering, volunteer stories as well as reports/feedback from ‘beneficiaries. Volunteers have to share their activity plans on the platform which are then reviewed for alignment with CSI objectives as well as for quality of engagement.

To strengthen measurement of employee volunteering, Duff emphasised the “need for M&E fit for purpose” and the importance of building NPO capacity for M&E.

## 7 Building inter-personal relationships to strengthen practice

Effective volunteer mobilisation is in many ways the first to building interpersonal relationships with volunteers as well as between volunteers and beneficiaries.

Greenpeace is internationally renowned for inspiring individuals to share their skills, money and passion to support the organisation’s environmental aspirations. Dianne Mc Alpine (Offline Mobilisation Campaigner, Greenpeace Africa) explained that volunteers are at the centre of organisation’s work: “The most important of aspect of Greenpeace is looking after our volunteers because most of our work and success is because of our volunteers”. Their approach is influenced by theory such as the Engagement Pyramid (below), underpinned by strategic planning, and facilitated by a range of tools and pathways that enable offline and online volunteer engagement.



Adapted from Gideon Rosenblatt’s Engagement Pyramid: Six Levels of Connecting People and Social Change (Mc Alpine 2015)

Amalgamated Beverage Industries (ABI) uses a programme called Soul Ambassadors to drive participation and top level support of employee volunteering. While the company struggled in the past with low participation rates, low leadership support and minimal consideration on the CSI agenda, employee volunteer participation was 61% at 2015. Soul Ambassadors, as explained by Gaopaleloe Mothoagae (Sustainability Manager, ABI) is a big responsibility and leadership role within the company. There are currently 391 ambassadors who give at least 6-7 days of their time to identify and implement volunteering projects with other staff. In return they are supported, branded, acknowledged and have top leadership support, said Mothoagae.



Employee volunteering, which is largely skills-based at General Electric (GE) Corporate Africa, is facilitated by a learning network of over 300 Volunteer Councils across the world who meet on a quarterly basis. With its culture of competitiveness, the councils provide not only a space for sharing good practice but also an incentive to do better -- "If my colleagues in Nigeria and Kenya can do it, why can't we do it," noted Thulisile Phiri (Communications Manager: Southern Africa, GE Corporate Africa). The learning network, support from management, company guidelines and training for volunteers underpin volunteer mobilisation at GE.

Africa Teen Geeks, an NGO which teaches school kids computer programming, has partnered with companies like Google and Microsoft to mobilise volunteers. Like many organisations, it relies heavily on volunteer engagement and specifically software developers. While the organisation has had some success in mobilising local volunteers around Mandela Day, "there is a need for volunteers to work with kids and teachers on a daily basis", emphasised Lindiwe Mashinini (Founder, Africa Teen Geeks). Currently, however, the supply of volunteers does not match the need, explained Mashinini.

Infinite Family South Africa is harnessing technology to facilitate volunteer mobilisation, shared Thabang Masingi (Director, Infinite Family South Africa) The organisation has partnered with Glencore, as well as local companies such as Dial-A-Nerd to build Launchpads -- video mentoring labs -- that connects international as well as local volunteers with South African students. Operating since 2006, the organisation has evidence that video-mentored students perform better in school: 86% of mentored teens achieved the top two results on their matric exams, compared to 55% of non-mentored teens in 2013 and 2014. Infinite Family trains local NGOs and schools to run these Launchpads and provides mentoring support. There is, however, a need to develop more formalised training so that the mentor/mentee relationship can be more effectively managed.

In March 2015, FirstRand launched a new employee volunteering online portal aimed at supporting volunteer mobilisation as well as stronger governance, and measurement and reporting on employee volunteering efforts across the group, shared Desiree Storey (Manager, FirstRand Volunteers Programme) The site gives employees the opportunity to access information on how to get involved, view a calendar of all FirstRand Volunteer Programme initiatives across the group franchises (FNB, RMB, WesBank, Ashburton Investments and FCC), access information on NPOs supported through the programme and view a step-by-step guide through the programme policies and procedures. Each of the five FirstRand franchises have their own pages -- "We built the platform so that every franchise and active volunteer can shine" explained Storey. The platform also digitises the programme's matched funding application process, which has been developed to offer employees a simpler, faster and more efficient solution. Employees are trained on the portal and all volunteer drives and initiatives are communicated to the group via this portal, but as with all new technologies, promoting registration and regular usage of the portal takes time and effective communication.

Like FirstRand, Sasol has made a strategic decision to digitise its approach to employee volunteering. As a multinational company, "Sasol realised that we cannot do business anywhere unless we engage with the citizens there -- this was the genesis of the Sasol for Good platform," explained Pamilla Mudhray (Group Community Relations Manager, Sasol). Given the fragmented and unequal nature of the country, "there is a need to link into the collective purpose of community's and to proactively build relationships between people," continued Mudhray. The hope is that the Sasol for Good platform will help support a shift towards cohesion (see diagram below) whilst also supporting other strategic priorities such as social change mobilisation, employee retention as well good governance.



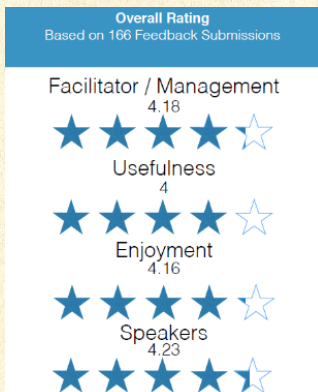


(Mudhray and Robertson 2015)

As explained by Katherine Robertson (Commerical Manager, forgood), forgood is an online technology that connects individuals, groups and companies who want to make a difference – to the causes that need their help. In this way, the forgood technology plays a volunteer mobilisation role, by making giving easier. This is important given that research by Charities Aid Foundation finds that giving in South Africa is accelerating, with South Africa being the 5<sup>th</sup> highest climber on the CAF World Giving Index. Since January 2015, the public platform has facilitated 914 connections made between people and causes.

## 8 Conclusion

In closing, Jolene Shaw (Consultant, Tshikululu Social Investments) shared the key findings and recommendation from FirstRand’s research on the social and business dimensions of employee volunteering. Participants were reminded about the centrality of corporate leadership support for designing and implementing effective employee volunteering programmes. The particular value of skills-based volunteering and mentoring especially was highlighted as a key area for growth. Partnership development between business and NGOs was also noted as critical for developing programmes that demonstrate alignment across business and CSI strategy, employee interest, NGO needs and assets as well as broader socio-economic considerations. Development methodologies such as asset-based community development provide useful insight into how company and NGO representatives can approach partnership development differently. Finally, the conference found innovative approaches to volunteer mobilisation that can help to grow the number of volunteers as well as strengthen the quality of interpersonal relationships between volunteers and other stakeholders.



Data from the Social Collective and a post-conference survey showed that overall participants enjoyed the conference and found the topics covered relevant to their work. . As always, feedback from Beyond Painting Classrooms participants – positive and negative -- will be incorporated into the strategic and operational planning of the initiative.

The convenors of the 2015 Beyond Painting Classrooms conference are grateful to all participants for making the conference such an enriching learning environment. We look forward to future engagements in support of the initiative’s mission and to continuing to grow with you a more developmental approach to employee volunteering rooted in shared value.



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## Appendix 1: Conference Programme



# PROGRAMME

Tuesday, 22 September			
Time	Session	Speakers	Location
07:00 – 08:30	Registration and refreshments		Foyer
08:30 – 09:00	Welcome and setting the scene	Elizabeth Maepa (Group HR Executive, FirstRand) Yvette Nowell (Head, RMB Fund, RMB)	Ballroom
09:00 – 09:40	Keynote: Employee volunteering and active citizenship	Bobby Godsell (Chairman, Business Leadership South Africa)	Ballroom
09:40 – 10:40	Plenary: Building employee volunteering relationships for socio-economic change?	Facilitator: Pearl Mphuthi (Group CSI manager, FNB) Right Reverend Dr Jo Seoka (Chairperson, Benchmarks Foundation) Dr Fanie du Toit (Executive Director, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation) Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge (Executive Director, Inyathelo)	
10:40 – 11:00	Opening reflection exercise	Marlene Ogawa (Programme Manager, Synergos South Africa)	Ballroom
11:00 – 11:30	Tea/coffee and networking		Ballroom
11:30 – 12:45	<b>Workshops on building organisational relationships</b>		Foyer
	Leadership and the business alignment of employee volunteering	Facilitator: Ziaad Suleman (COO, IBM Africa) Adam Craker (CEO, IQ Business) Phil Tomlinson (CEO, Different Life)	Ballroom
	Attracting the right corporate employee volunteers	Facilitator: Desiree Storey (Manager, FirstRand Volunteers Programme) Millicent Maroga (Head, Old Mutual Foundation) Elyjoy Ikunyua (Business Development Manager, CAFSA) Saira Khan (CEO, Stop Hunger Now Southern Africa)	Boundary



## Tuesday, 22 September

Time	Session	Speakers	Location
	NGO readiness for corporate employee volunteering	Facilitator: Karena Cronin (Business Development Manager, CAFSA)  Desmond Zeelie (Managing Director, The Foundation of School Leadership and Management)  Georgia Gillette (Vice President for Corporate Initiatives, Points of Light)  Munnik Marais (Corporate Relations Manager, CANSAs)	Champions
12:45 – 14:00	Buffet lunch and networking		
14:00 – 15:00	Keynote: The role of employee volunteering in national and personal transformation	Moderator: Professor Mamokgethi Phakeng (Vice Principal Research and Innovation, Unisa)  Professor Jonathan Jansen (Vice Chancellor and Rector, University of Free State)	Foyer
15:00 – 16:00	Plenary: Millennials' perspectives on employee volunteering	Facilitator: Helene Perold (Independent Consultant)  Amanda Blankfield-Koseff (Founder and CEO, Empower Vote Trust/Youth Citizens Action Programme)  Murendeni Mafumo (Participant, Young African Leadership Initiative Network)  Koketso Rapoo (Student, St Peters College)  Mpho Gama (Allan Gray Orbis Foundation candidate fellow)  Imran Khan (Founder, Attitudin)	Ballroom
16:00 – 18:00	Networking and celebration	Mzansi Youth Choir and youth artists exhibition	Ballroom and foyer



# PROGRAMME

Wednesday, 23 September			
Time	Session	Speakers	Location
07:30 – 08:15	Refreshments		Foyer
08:15 – 08:30	Welcome and check/in	Yvette Nowell (Head, RMB Fund, RMB)	Ballroom
08:30 – 09:15	Skills-based and pro bono service: Good for companies, good for communities	Georgia Gillette (Vice President for Corporate Initiatives, Points of Light)	Ballroom
09:15 – 10:30	Moving beyond the donor/beneficiary relationship	Facilitator, Halima Mahomed (Independent Philanthropy Consultant)  Nicolette Naylor (Regional Representative, Ford Foundation, Southern Africa)  Lesley Haynes (CSI Manager, LegalWise)  Louise van Rhyn (Board Member, Partners for Possibility, Symphonia)	
10:30 – 11:15	Mentoring and transformation	Facilitator (Karena Cronin, Business Development Manager, CAFSA)  <b>Student Scholarship Programme</b> Kgomotso Mokoena (Lecturer, University of Johannesburg) and Fezile Zulu (Student)  <b>UJ Incubation Hub</b> Precious Mvulane (Founder and Managing Director, GAD Consulting Services Inc.) and Mashilo Mnisi (Chief Executive and Founder, Moshate – Male Voice)  <b>Business Arts South Africa</b> Michael Rubenstein (Head, Marketing, Centurion Systems) and Gerard Bester (Creative Director, Hillbrow Theatre Project)	Ballroom
11:15 – 11:30	Tea/coffee and networking		Foyer



## Wednesday, 23 September

Time	Session	Speakers	Location
11:30 – 12:45	<b>Workshops on building organisational relationships</b>		
	Employee volunteering programme design	Facilitator: Colleen du Toit (CEO, CAFSA) Shanda Paine (Group CSI Manager, Tsogo Sun) Chris Wild (CEO, Food & Trees for Africa) Nonhlanhla Tshabalala (Portfolio Manager: Volunteerism, Nedbank)	Ballroom
	Insights into community development	Facilitator: Louise Denysschen (Business Development Manager, CAFSA) Mrs Beatrix Bouwman (Director, Community Engagement, Northwest University) Reginald Botha (Westbury Youth Centre Mashup) Marlene Ogawa (Programme Manager, Synergos South Africa)	Boundary
	Employee volunteering and M&E	Facilitator: Barbara Klugmen (Independent Consultant) Sydney Hadebe (Corporate Citizenship and Corporate Affairs Manager, IBM) Cathy Duff (Director, Trialogue)	Champions
12:45 – 13:15	Buffet lunch and networking		
13:15 – 14:30	<b>Workshops on building interpersonal relationships</b>		Centenary
	Innovation and skills-based volunteering	Facilitator: Georgia Gillette (Vice President for Corporate Initiatives, Points of Light) Thabang Masingi (Director, Infinite Family South Africa) Thulisile Phiri (Communications Manager – Southern Africa, GE Corporate Africa) Lindiwe Mashinini (Founder, Africa Teen Geeks)	Ballroom



# PROGRAMME

Wednesday, 23 September			
Time	Session	Speakers	Location
	Mobilising volunteers	Facilitator: Elyjoy Ikunya (Business Development Manager, CAFSA)  Michael Obrien-Onyeka (Executive Director, Greenpeace, Africa)  Ms Gaopaleloe Mothoagae (Sustainability Manager, Amalgamated Beverage Industries – ABI)	Boundary
	Technology as an enabler of employee volunteering	Facilitator: TBC  Desiree Storey (Manager, FirstRand Volunteers Programme)  Pamilla Mudhray (Group Community Relations Manager, Sasol)  Katherine Robertson (Commercial Manager, Forgood)	Champions
14:30 – 15:00	Looking at the research: Priorities moving forward	Jolene Shaw (Associate Consultant, Tshikululu Social Investments)	Ballroom
15:00 – 15:30	Closing reflection and keynote	Yvette Nowell (Head, RMB Fund, RMB)  Mark Heywood (Executive Director, SECTION27)	Foyer