

IVCO
THESSALONIKI 2021

actionaid



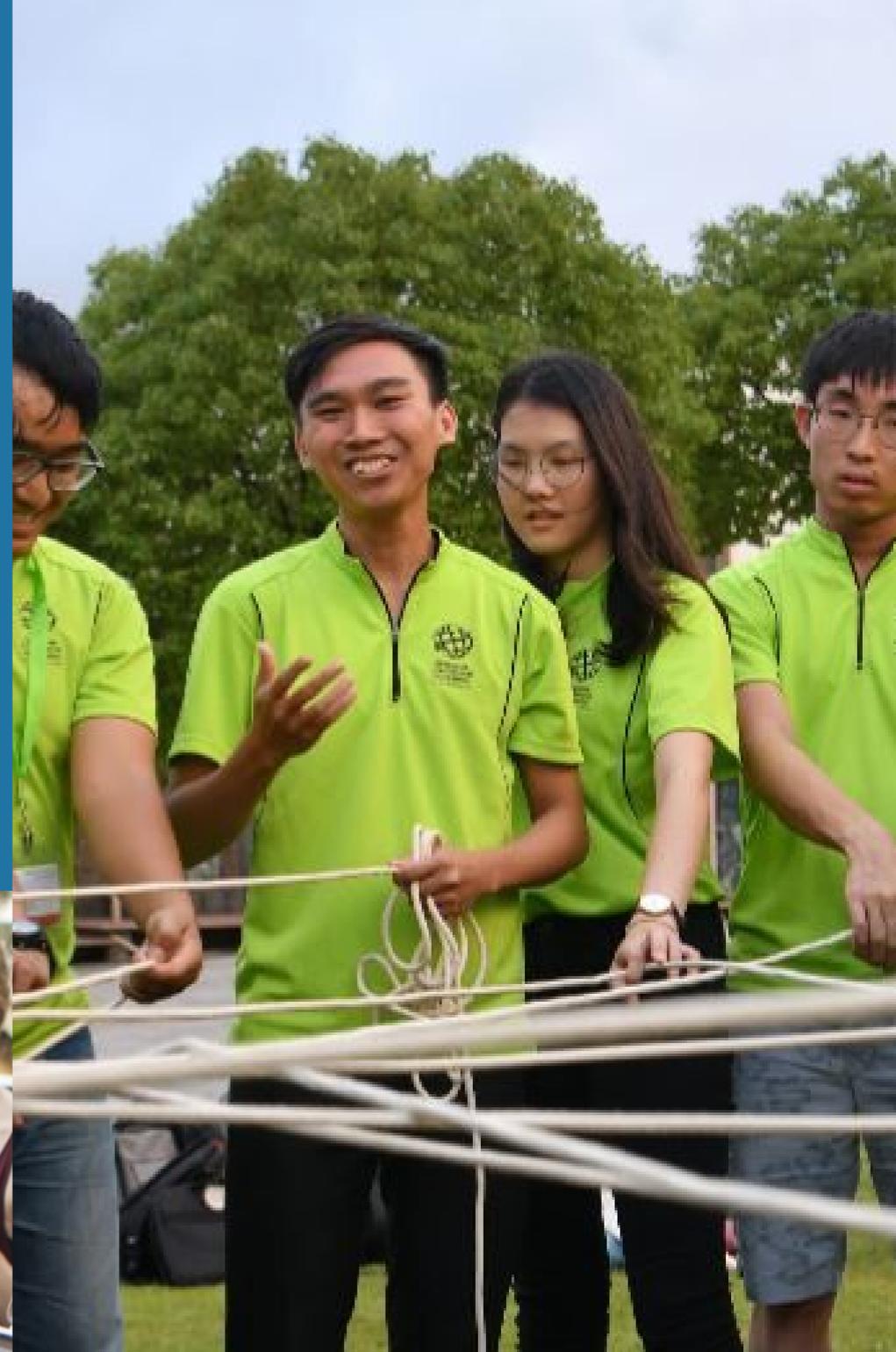
Conference Insights





Inclusive Volunteering for Global Equality

Decolonisation
Digitalisation
Directionality

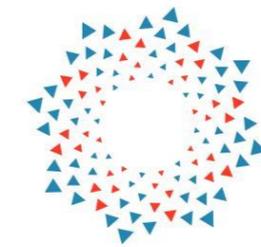
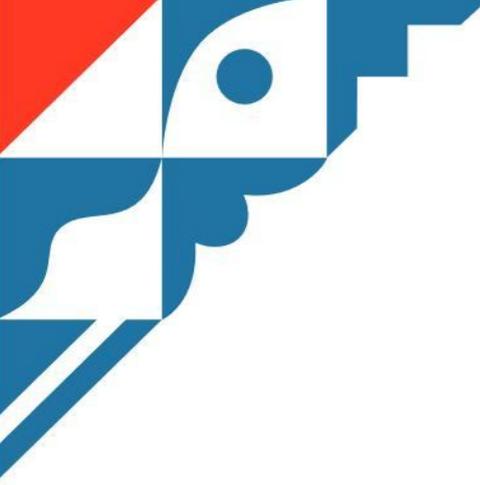




Welcome to IVCO 2021, the world's biggest annual conference for **volunteering for development**. Over 70 speakers from 33 countries will inspire us to explore 3 burning issues: **decolonisation, digitalisation and directionality**. Through decolonisation we intend **to challenge the colonial legacies and power dynamics**, which undermine the principles of global equality.



Gerasimos Kouvaras | ActionAid Hellas Country Director



IVCO
THESSALONIKI 2021

17

Sessions

18-20 October 2021 -
full online event

72

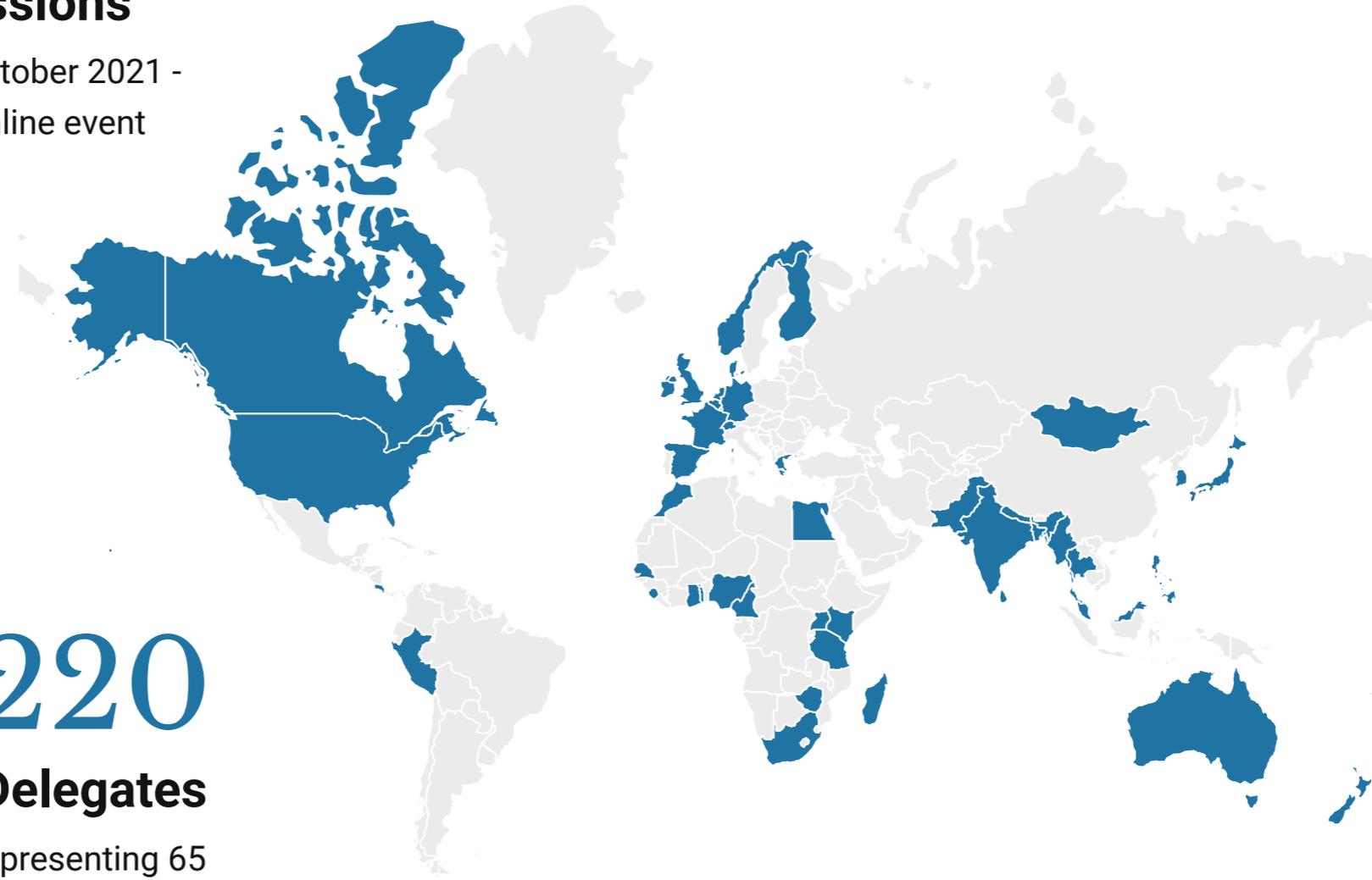
Speakers

from 43 organisations in
33 countries

220

Delegates

representing 65
organisations



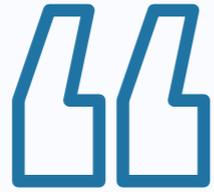
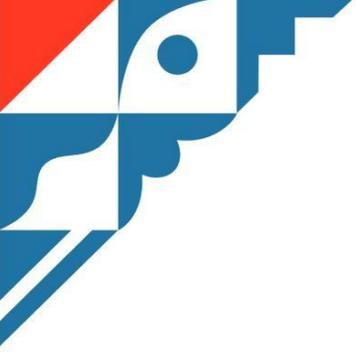
49

Countries

represented
at IVCO 2021



Decolonisation



Decolonisation is the process of **undoing and giving up social and economic power** and restoring what has been taken away in the past. **Decolonisation is not a metaphor for diversity and inclusion, nor is it a replacement for social justice efforts.** To be decolonial in our efforts is an aspiration to restore, renew, elevate, rediscover, acknowledge, and validate the multiplicity of lives, lived experiences, culture, and knowledge **of indigenous peoples, people of colour, and colonised people, as well as to de-center hetero- and cis-normativity, gender hierarchies and racial privilege.**



Aarathi Krishnan | Strategic Foresight Advisor, UNDP



How to decolonize V4D?

- **Reflect power** on all levels, **shift power** and decision-making to the Global South and the local level
- **Mainstream decoloniality** as a cross-cutting issue
- Include decoloniality into quality standards and logic models
- Question the concept of "**development**"
- **Solidarity, reciprocity or global justice** as alternatives?



International Solidarity becomes embedded in every international volunteering program. Volunteers are not only there to solve problems, but also **to come together and to create a shared understanding.**



Ashraf Patel | Co-founder of Pravah and ComMutiny / The Youth Collective



How to decolonize V4D?

- Reflect and **volunteer training and preparation**
- **Localise programs** and put local communities at the center
- Shift focus to **change in the Global North**
- Acknowledge **different forms of volunteerism** (community volunteers, migrant volunteers or informal networks)
- **Diversify programs and organizational structures**



We know that volunteerism can be a powerful vehicle for change. It can break down barriers and connect communities, but **to truly foster an inclusive environment for volunteers, we must first understand what diversity and inclusion mean** in the context of decolonisation. **Diversity without decolonisation is not enough to bring equality and fairness.**



Melanie Gow | CEO, Australian Volunteers International (AVI)



Digitalisation



We learned that **we needed virtual service**. Now that we have made the bold step to try something new, we are inspired to reflect further on how we can provide different opportunities for service and support our partners in more ways, and **to adapt to a changing world**.

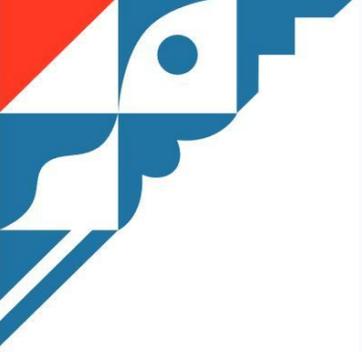


Vanessa Dickey | Project Expert and Virtual Service Pilot, Peace Corps



Digitalisation and Inclusiveness

- Technology promotes diversity and inclusion in V4D
- Online volunteering offers a solution to some barriers and to include people who would not have volunteered previously
- Digital tools can improve volunteer matching, training and support in various ways
- COVID-19 has accelerated digitisation in the sector



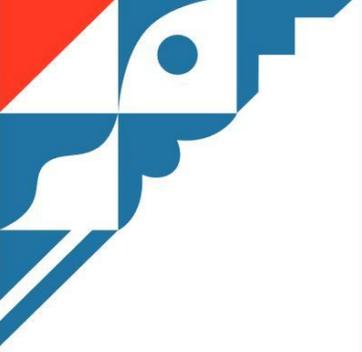
COVID-19 has presented us with the reason and opportunity to build things better and **more inclusive for our local communities and volunteers alike.**

Lynette Teo | Manager, Volunteer Cooperation & Programmes Division, Singapore International Foundation



Digitalisation and Inclusiveness

- Digitalisation can also **exacerbate inequality**
- V4D sector has to evaluate the consequences of the digital divide and **develop measures** like financing infrastructure
- Crucial question for the future: How can online volunteering **still build authentic relationships and promote transcultural exchange?**



Online volunteering is seen to facilitate access for homebound volunteers, **but can also reproduce and exacerbate inequality in the context of the digital divide.**

Helene Parold | Director, Helene Perold & Associates, South Africa



Directionality



The new development paradigms require from us to act on **community volunteering** so that it contributes **to sustainable development in our villages and rural communities.**

GBEMOU Kudzo Nyameko | Programme Manager, Association JSA, Togo



Directionality and New Models

- V4D programmes are no longer restricted to traditional donor countries
- The future of volunteering is multi-polar and multi-directional with shared goals but diverse approaches
- **Blended volunteering approaches:** Interplay between international and national and community volunteers.



Community and national volunteers are crucial to delivery. We need to put them at the front, rather than at the back of our thinking. We should **think carefully about how international volunteers are deployed**, and to do what.



Dr. Philip Goodwin | Chief Executive, VSO



Directionality and Decolonisation

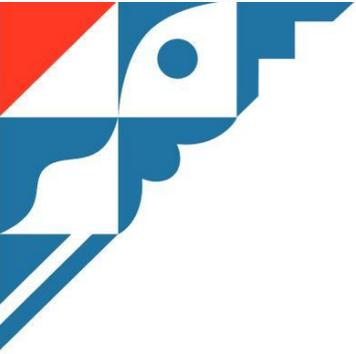
- New modalities and approaches can **challenge and oppose post-colonial power imbalances**
- But still very few agencies facilitate **South to North volunteering - Why?**
- For the future the sector should pay attention to the **complexities of community volunteering**



I When I speak of **hierarchies of knowledge**, I am referring to the way that certain definitions and concepts of volunteering *and* development are valued over others. **Efforts to decolonise should involve interrogating who has the power to name and to define** as to what counts as volunteering and what counts as development



Dr. Chris Millora | Research Associate, University of East Anglia



Check out the revised Global Volunteering Standard

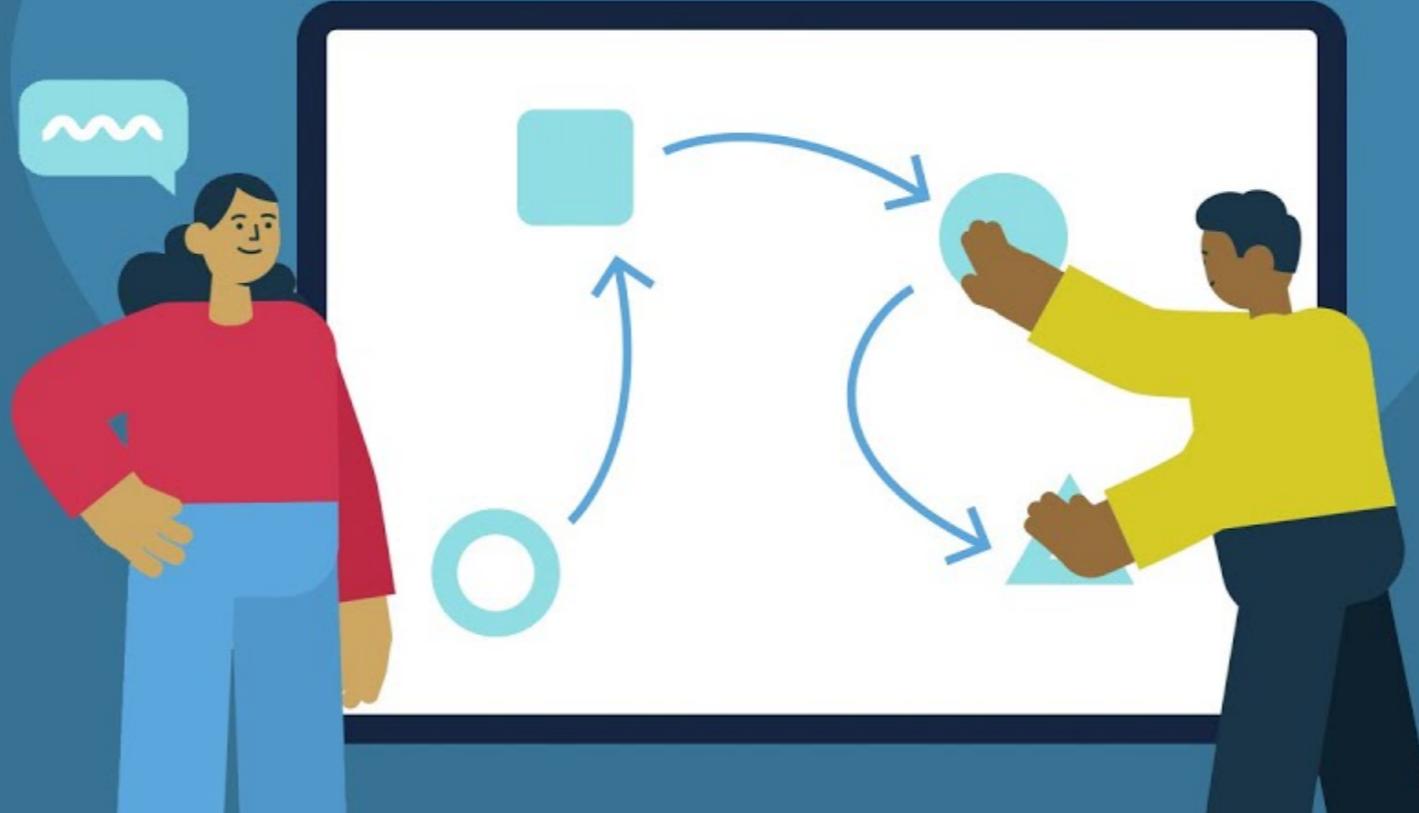
The Global Volunteering Standard, launched at IVCO 2019 has been piloted and reviewed. Also, Forum built an online platform with a self-assessment tool and a resource library. Any organisation in the world can sign up for free.

[To the Platform >](#)

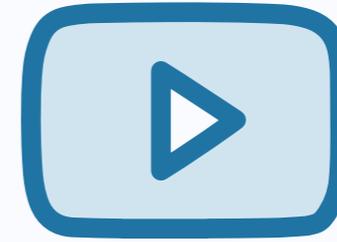
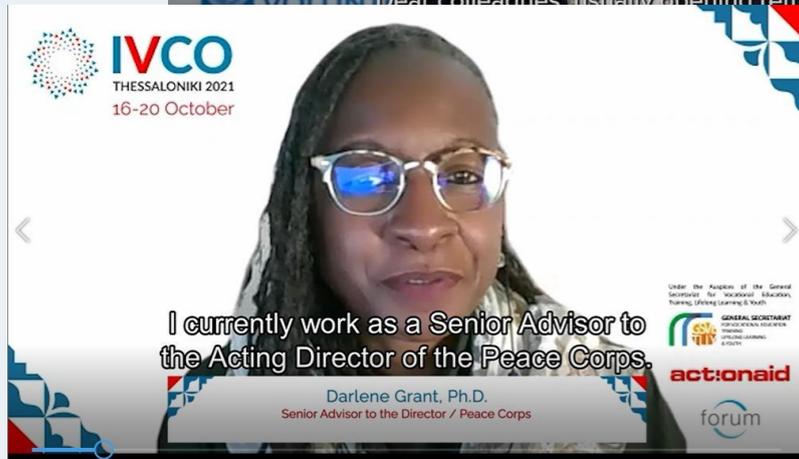
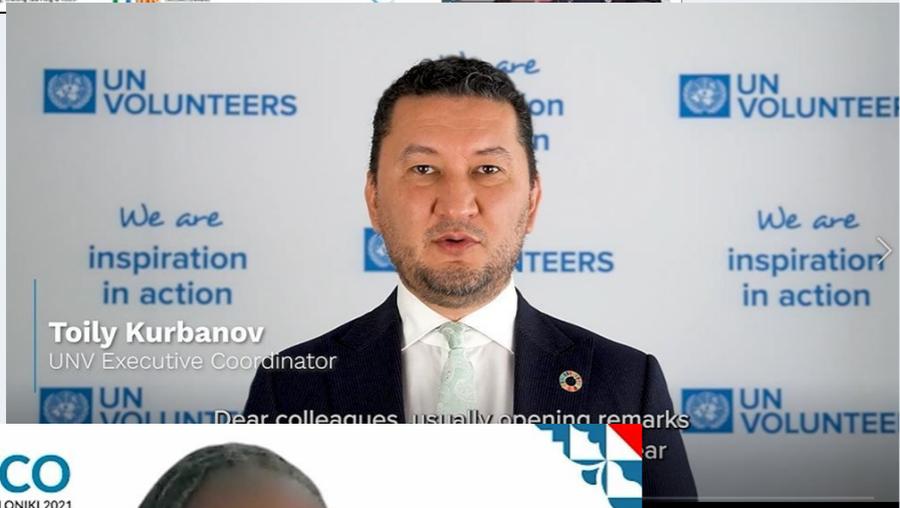




Global Volunteering Standard



Introduction to the Global Volunteering Standard



Check out all session recordings of IVCO 2021

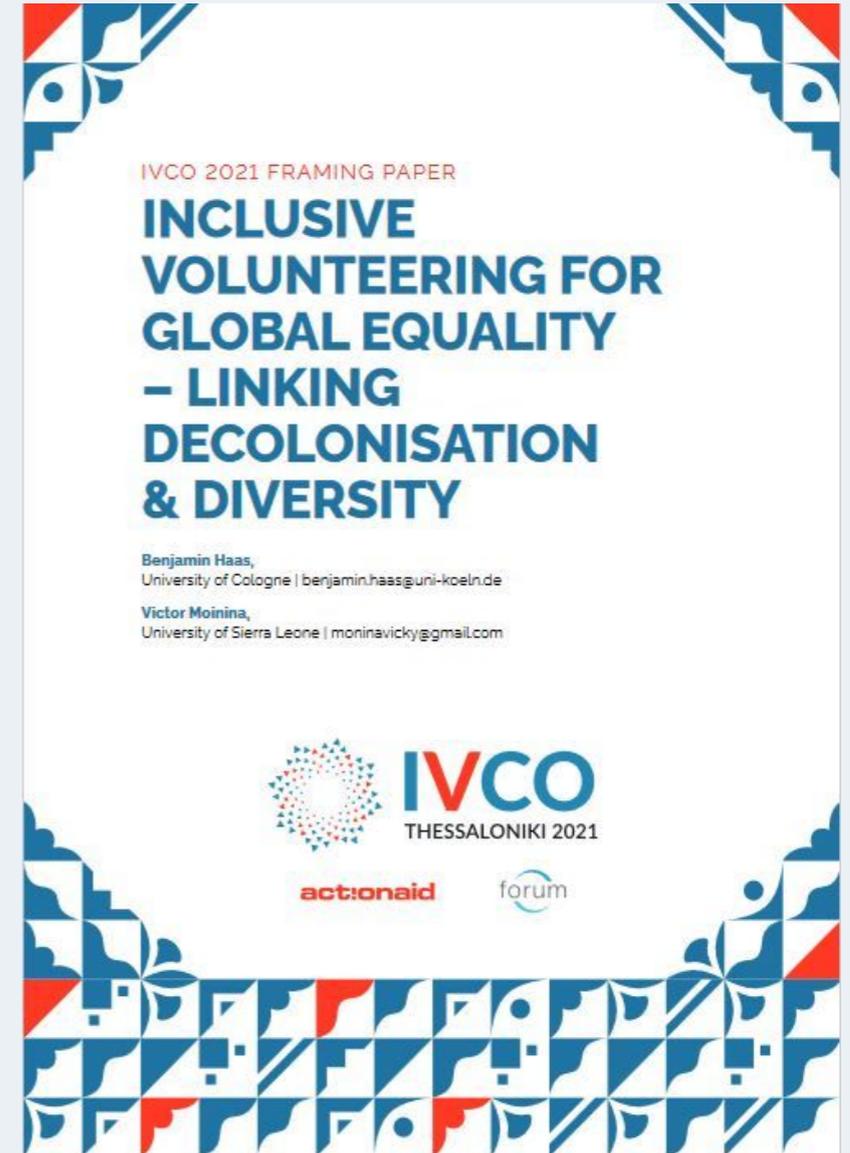
To the recordings >



Check out the IVCO 2021 Research Papers and Think Pieces

The conference was supplemented by an introductory paper, a main conference framing paper and 11 think pieces on questions regarding the conference themes.

[To the Research Center >](#)





forum

See you at
IVCO 2022

www.forum-ids.org