



Benchmarking Report on Volunteer Wellbeing in Organisations Comparable to the Scout Movement

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1. Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of a benchmarking exercise on volunteer wellbeing in six organisations with relevant similarities to the Scout Movement: Caritas Internationalis, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Médecins Sans Frontières, Save the Children International, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, and Young Men's Christian Association. The purpose of the benchmarking was to examine how these organisations define, protect and promote the wellbeing of their volunteers through their policies, strategies and operational practices, and to identify lessons that may inform future work on adults and wellbeing in Scouting.

The analysis indicates that volunteer wellbeing is increasingly recognised across the sector as a matter of organisational responsibility, ethical integrity and long-term sustainability. Although the six organisations do not rely on a single model, several shared patterns can be identified. Volunteer wellbeing is most often embedded in broader frameworks such as safeguarding, codes of conduct, volunteer management systems, organisational culture, leadership development and duty-of-care mechanisms. It is therefore rarely treated as an isolated policy area.

A first major finding is that safeguarding and safe organisational culture form the common foundation of volunteer wellbeing. All six organisations place strong emphasis on protection from abuse, harassment, exploitation and unsafe conduct, supported by codes of behaviour, complaints procedures and reporting systems. A second finding is that the stronger models go beyond protection and include structured support, supervision, learning, recognition and, in some cases, psychosocial care. A third finding is that mental health and psychosocial wellbeing are receiving growing attention but remain unevenly formalised across the sector. A fourth finding is that monitoring and evaluation of volunteer wellbeing remain underdeveloped in most cases, even where strong rhetorical commitments are present. A fifth finding is that volunteers are increasingly being recognised not only as contributors to organisational mission, but also as people whose own experience, voice and wellbeing matter.

Based on the comparative review, ten universal principles of volunteer wellbeing were identified. These principles suggest that a robust organisational approach should include: a safe and dignified environment; explicit duty of care; protection and promotion of mental health; clear roles and regular support; meaningful participation and voice; learning and development; equity and inclusion; monitoring and accountability; ethical culture and safe speaking-up; and recognition, reciprocity and balance.

For the Scout Movement, the benchmarking suggests three principal implications. First, the Movement already has important foundations on which to build, particularly in relation to support, learning, safeguarding and recognition, but these elements remain fragmented. Secondly, future policy development would benefit from moving from implicit care towards a more explicit and coherent framework for adult wellbeing. Thirdly, Adults in Scouting and Safe from Harm should be understood as complementary: Safe from Harm provides the protection floor, while a wellbeing approach would extend this into a broader framework of support, mental health, participation, sustainable volunteering and organisational culture.

Overall, the benchmarking indicates that the Scout Movement is not required to replicate any external model in full. Rather, it has an opportunity to strengthen and connect its existing foundations, drawing on comparable practice to develop a more explicit, coherent and measurable approach to adult wellbeing that is aligned with its educational mission and values.

2. Introduction

This report has been prepared to support the ongoing reflection on how the Scout Movement can strengthen the integration of adult wellbeing within its policy and management frameworks. It brings together the results of a documentary review of six comparator organisations and translates them into lessons that may inform future work on Adults in Scouting.

2.1. Purpose of the benchmarking

The benchmarking was undertaken to examine how other volunteer-based organisations define, protect and promote the wellbeing of their volunteers. Its purpose is to identify relevant approaches, transferable practices and emerging standards that may inform policy thinking within the Scout Movement.

The exercise is not intended to identify a single model to be reproduced. Rather, it seeks to understand how different organisations with strong values-based, educational, humanitarian or civic missions address the conditions under which volunteers can serve safely, sustainably and meaningfully.

2.2. Relevance for the Scout Movement

The wellbeing of volunteers is increasingly relevant to the sustainability, quality and integrity of volunteer-based educational movements. In the Scout Movement, adults play a central role in ensuring safe environments, delivering educational experiences and sustaining organisational life. Their wellbeing therefore has implications not only for volunteer retention, but also for educational quality, leadership culture, safeguarding and institutional credibility.

By examining how comparable organisations address volunteer wellbeing, this report provides grounded insights that may support the Scout Movement in strengthening its own approach. The report is intended to serve as a technical contribution to future policy work on adults, wellbeing and the relationship between Adults in Scouting and Safe from Harm.

3. Scope and Methodological Note

This chapter sets out the scope and methodological basis of the benchmarking. It identifies the organisations reviewed, the analytical dimensions applied and the main limits of the exercise.

3.1. Organisations included

The benchmarking includes six organisations selected because of their relevance as large, values-based, volunteer-reliant movements or networks: Caritas Internationalis, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Médecins Sans Frontières, Save the Children International, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, and Young Men's Christian Association.

These organisations were chosen because they offer a useful range of approaches to safeguarding, volunteer support, leadership development, participation and wellbeing. Although their missions and operational contexts differ, each offers relevant points of comparison for a movement that depends on adult volunteers to deliver an educational mission.

3.2. Analytical dimensions used

Each organisation was reviewed using a common analytical framework. The analysis considered the following dimensions:

- policies and formal frameworks,
- institutional strategies,
- tools and operational processes,
- training and development,
- monitoring, evaluation and indicators,
- recognition, motivation and volunteer voice,
- concrete experiences and good practices.

This common structure made it possible to compare the organisations in a coherent way, while respecting the differences in their governance, terminology and volunteer models.

3.3. Limits of the review

This benchmarking is based on the documentary materials gathered for each organisation. It therefore reflects what is explicitly articulated in available policies, frameworks, strategies and tools. It does not claim to capture the full reality of implementation in every context, nor does it assess organisational culture beyond what is evidenced in the documents reviewed.

The findings should therefore be read as a documentary and comparative analysis of formal organisational approaches, rather than as an evaluation of practical implementation in all settings.

4. Organisation Profiles

The profile of each organization included in the benchmarking is presented below. Each profile follows a common structure to summarise the organisation's overall approach to volunteer wellbeing, its key reference documents, the most relevant practices identified, and its principal strengths and limitations.

4.1. Cáritas Internationalis

Cáritas Internationalis approaches volunteer wellbeing mainly through organisational standards, safeguarding, ethics and youth participation, rather than through a stand-alone global volunteer wellbeing policy. In the Cáritas model, wellbeing is linked to safe environments, dignity, accountability and the organisational health of member bodies.

Its main reference points include the Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy, the Caritas Internationalis Management Standards (CIMS), including the Safeguarding Standard, the Strategic Framework 2024–2030, and supporting ethics and integrity tools. The Youth Report 2023 is also significant because it strengthens the place of young staff and volunteers within Confederation structures.

The most relevant practices include systematic safeguarding implementation, anti-harassment and whistle-blower mechanisms, the Organisational Review Tool with improvement planning, ethics training, and youth participation structures that provide volunteers with recognised channels of voice and representation. Caritas also shows emerging work on mental health and integral human development, although these elements are not yet assembled into a single volunteer wellbeing system.

Its main strength lies in the existence of a confederation-wide organisational standards framework that links governance, safeguarding, HR and accountability. This provides a strong structural base for volunteer wellbeing, even where the language of wellbeing remains indirect.

Its principal limitation is that volunteer wellbeing remains more implicit than explicit. Caritas recognises volunteers as important actors, especially young volunteers, but does not yet articulate a fully developed confederation-wide volunteer wellbeing framework with distinct standards, indicators and psychosocial support expectations.

4.2. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

The IFRC approaches volunteer wellbeing through a combination of duty of care, safety and security, safeguarding, psychosocial support and volunteer participation. Although wellbeing is not always presented as a single policy field, it is deeply embedded in the Federation's volunteer standards and humanitarian systems. Volunteers are treated as central actors who must be protected and supported to serve effectively and sustainably.

The main policy and strategic references include the Volunteering Policy, the National Society Development Policy, the Protection, Gender and Inclusion Policy, the Safeguarding Framework and Self-Assessment Tool, Volunteers, Stay Safe!, the Caring for Volunteers toolkit and training manual, and the Guidelines for Caring for Staff and Volunteers in Crises. Strategy 2030 and the Global Plan reinforce the institutional relevance of these commitments.

The most relevant practices include clear duty-of-care standards, security guidance tailored to volunteers, structured psychosocial support before, during and after crises, safeguarding systems with survivor-centred procedures, and the expectation that volunteer engagement, motivation and wellbeing should be monitored. Volunteers are also expected to have safe feedback channels and meaningful participation in decisions affecting them.

Its main strength is the depth and practicality of its operational volunteer care model, especially in crisis contexts. The IFRC combines safety, psychosocial support and safeguarding in ways that make wellbeing a concrete support system rather than a purely rhetorical aspiration.

Its principal limitation is that wellbeing remains distributed across several policies and tools rather than being brought together in a single, clearly codified volunteer wellbeing framework. The model is strong in practice, but less consolidated as one integrated policy construct.

4.3. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)

MSF frames wellbeing primarily through the idea of being a responsible employer in high-risk contexts, with strong emphasis on duty of care, staff health, mental health, security and associative participation. In MSF, volunteers are not primarily treated as a broad volunteer base, but as part of an associative movement in which staff and volunteers may become members and shape the organisation's direction.

Its key references include MSF as a Responsible Employer, the Behavioural Commitments and Codes of Conduct, staff health and wellbeing policies, mental health and psychosocial support guidelines, and HR frameworks on mobility, diversity and conditions of service. These are reinforced by strategic orientations that connect wellbeing to staff development, culture and risk management.

Relevant practices include pre-departure medical screening and vaccinations, staff health units and staff health leads, structured psychosocial support before, during and after missions, strong security-risk management, and behaviour frameworks with whistle-blowing and sanctions. The associative model also gives staff and volunteers a formal voice through assemblies, motions and governance participation.

Its main strength is a multi-layered duty-of-care and staff-care architecture that treats safety, health, mental health and misconduct with exceptional seriousness. This is one of the strongest examples in the benchmarking of an organisation that recognises that sustained service in demanding environments requires formal systems of care.

Its main limitation, from a volunteer-wellbeing perspective, is that wellbeing is framed primarily for staff and associative members, not for a broad volunteer body comparable to Scouting. It therefore offers strong lessons on care and responsibility, but a less direct parallel on volunteer policy as such.

4.4. Save the Children International

Save the Children's approach is best described as safeguarding-centred and staff-wellbeing-informed. Volunteer wellbeing is most visible through safe volunteering, respectful culture, conduct expectations and supportive volunteer management practices, especially at member level. At global level, the organisation appears more mature in staff wellbeing and safeguarding than in a fully distinct volunteer wellbeing framework.

Its principal references include the Global Child Safeguarding Policy, the Global Code of Conduct, national safeguarding frameworks, the Save the Children UK Volunteer Handbook, the Volunteer Agreement and Code of Conduct used in national contexts such as Norway, the Global Strategy 2025–27, and accountability reports that include people and organisational dimensions.

The most relevant practices include clear role profiles, named volunteer managers, mandatory induction on safeguarding and conduct, accessible complaints and speaking-up procedures, flexible volunteering arrangements with the right to withdraw without guilt, and strong national expectations that volunteering should be safe, enjoyable and fulfilling. Staff-care infrastructure, stress management training and engagement surveys also provide useful transferable lessons.

Its main strength lies in the combination of robust safeguarding and conduct systems with some of the clearest national volunteer management standards in the benchmark. The explicit commitment that volunteers should benefit from the experience offers a particularly relevant normative basis for volunteer wellbeing.

Its principal limitation is that volunteer wellbeing remains stronger in national operational documents than in movement-wide policy. The clearest formal commitments concern staff wellbeing and safeguarding, while volunteer-specific monitoring, psychosocial support and recognition systems remain less visible and less standardised.

4.5. World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)

WAGGGS links volunteer wellbeing closely to safeguarding, safe participation, girl-led governance and adult development. Of all the benchmarked organisations, it offers one of the clearest global articulations of duty of care towards volunteers, especially youth volunteers and vulnerable adult volunteers, while also connecting wellbeing to learning, belonging, accessibility and leadership pathways.

Its key references include the WAGGGS Safeguarding Policy, Compass 2032, the Global Strategy 2024–2029, the Adult Training, Learning and Development Policy and Guidelines, and volunteer-management resources such as volunteerism and succession-planning toolkits. Regional action plans, particularly in Europe, further strengthen the operational model by linking volunteer journey, wellbeing and measurable commitments.

The most relevant practices include risk-assessed recruitment, clear safeguarding responsibilities in terms of reference, regular check-ins that explicitly address safety and wellbeing, buddy systems, designated focal points for vulnerable volunteers, structured feedback on inclusion and wellbeing, and adult training systems that support volunteers throughout their development.

Regional volunteer journey models and volunteer-management toolkits further reinforce continuity, support and recognition.

Its main strength is the existence of a clear global duty-of-care standard for volunteers, embedded in safeguarding and reinforced by adult learning and regional support structures. WAGGS therefore provides one of the most directly relevant models for a youth educational movement seeking to strengthen volunteer wellbeing.

Its main limitation is that, despite strong foundations, the documents do not yet amount to a single fully integrated global volunteer experience and wellbeing framework. Monitoring, mental-health support and volunteer voice are stronger in some regions than at global level, and some elements remain dispersed across different tools.

4.6. Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)

YMCA articulates wellbeing both as community wellbeing and as an internal transformation goal. In the documents reviewed, volunteer wellbeing is most clearly expressed through Vision 2030, which calls for policies and practices that make the wellbeing of staff and volunteers a fundamental priority, and through safeguarding, leadership development and movement-support systems.

The main references are the World YMCA Safeguarding Policy, Vision 2030, the World YMCA Strategic Plan 2025–2028, the Practical Guide for YMCAs, the Vision 2030 Status Report, the Whistle-blower and Privacy Policies, and the Meaningful Work Programming Approach. Together these documents connect wellbeing to internal culture, leadership preparation, safe reporting, implementation support and organisational alignment.

The most relevant practices include safeguarding-centred screening, risk assessment, orientation and reporting systems; the strategic commitment that staff and volunteers should work in a culture where wellbeing is a priority; leadership pathways such as Change Agents, which combine mentoring, peer support and development; governance arrangements that formally recognise voluntary leadership; and a growing movement-support architecture for alignment, coaching and future indicators.

Its main strength is that wellbeing is named not simply as protection from harm but as part of a strategic internal transformation agenda. This gives YMCA a strong basis for linking volunteer wellbeing to organisational culture, youth voice, leadership development and movement renewal.

Its principal limitation is the absence of a fully codified global volunteer wellbeing system. The documents show strong direction and promising architecture, but volunteer-specific psychosocial pathways, recognition systems and standardised wellbeing indicators remain underdeveloped or unevenly visible across the movement.

5. Comparative Analysis of Volunteer Wellbeing Approaches

This section draws together the six organisational profiles to identify the main comparative findings of the benchmarking. It focuses on the patterns that appear across the organisations as a whole and on the most relevant contrasts between them. The comparison shows both convergence and diversity. Several structural elements recur with notable consistency, particularly in relation to safeguarding, codes of conduct, support systems and ethical accountability. At the same time, the organisations differ significantly in how explicitly they define wellbeing, where they locate it institutionally, and how systematically they monitor and operationalise it.

5.1. Shared structural patterns

Across the six organisations, volunteer wellbeing is anchored first in formal frameworks that protect safety, dignity and ethical conduct. Safeguarding, anti-harassment provisions, codes of behaviour and reporting mechanisms are common to all six cases. This suggests that, across the sector, wellbeing is rarely approached without first establishing a firm protection basis.

A second shared pattern is that wellbeing is usually embedded rather than isolated. The organisations do not generally present volunteer wellbeing as a separate policy domain. Instead, it is woven through safeguarding, organisational standards, volunteer management systems, training structures, leadership development and organisational culture.

A third common feature is the importance of clear roles, preparation, support and supervision. The comparative review shows repeated emphasis on role clarity, safer recruitment, induction, ongoing guidance and structured accompaniment. This reinforces the conclusion that volunteer wellbeing depends not only on values, but also on predictable organisational scaffolding.

A fourth shared pattern is the centrality of ethical culture and safe speaking-up mechanisms. Complaints procedures, whistle-blower protections, grievance channels and survivor-centred systems recur across the benchmark and appear essential to both protection and psychological safety.

Finally, the six organisations broadly recognise that volunteers are not merely implementers. They are people who require development, acknowledgement, belonging and, in many cases, a meaningful role in shaping organisational direction. Voice, learning and recognition therefore emerge as common components of volunteer wellbeing.

5.2. Significant differences in approach

Despite these shared foundations, the organisations differ significantly in how they define and organise volunteer wellbeing. The clearest contrast lies between operationally explicit duty-of-care models and broader culture-based or value-based models. IFRC stands out for its highly operationalised approach, with specific tools on safety, psychosocial support and crisis care. MSF

is similarly strong in duty of care, but its architecture is oriented mainly towards staff and associative members in demanding operational contexts rather than towards a broad volunteer base.

WAGGGS offers one of the clearest global volunteer-specific standards, particularly through Safeguarding Standard 3, which explicitly addresses youth volunteers and vulnerable adult volunteers and requires check-ins, buddy systems and tailored support.

By contrast, Caritas and YMCA frame wellbeing more indirectly through organisational wellbeing, community wellbeing, ethics and participation. Their vision is broad and promising, but the volunteer-specific operational standards are less fully codified.

Save the Children occupies a hybrid position. At international level, wellbeing is strongly developed in relation to staff through engagement surveys, accountability systems and organisational health, while volunteer wellbeing is most concretely articulated in national-level tools such as the UK Volunteer Handbook and the Norway Volunteer Agreement.

There are also differences in participation and governance. Caritas, MSF, WAGGGS and YMCA all show stronger structural models of volunteer or youth voice in governance, ranging from youth representatives with voting rights to associative assemblies and leadership pathways that connect to strategic decision-making. IFRC and Save the Children also recognise participation, but often with less visible formalisation at global level.

5.3. Common gaps

The benchmarking identifies several recurring gaps. The first is the absence of a fully articulated global volunteer wellbeing policy that brings together safety, mental health, workload, recognition, participation and support into one integrated framework. In every case, wellbeing is spread across several types of documents rather than fully consolidated into a single volunteer-wellbeing instrument.

The second common gap concerns monitoring and accountability. Although some organisations come closer than others, visible and comparable indicators on volunteer wellbeing remain limited. Commitments to support and care are common, but they are not always accompanied by clear measures of volunteer stress, perceived support, balance, psychological safety or intention to remain.

A third recurring gap is the limited visibility of formal psychosocial services tailored specifically to volunteers. IFRC provides the clearest exception through its Caring for Volunteers model and crisis guidance. MSF offers strong psychosocial support, but primarily for staff. In other organisations, mental health is increasingly acknowledged, yet often without clearly defined support pathways for volunteers in distress or after critical incidents.

A fourth gap concerns recognition systems. Recognition is widely present in narrative and cultural terms but is less often codified as part of a systematic wellbeing framework. Formal links between recognition, volunteer sustainability, balance and wellbeing outcomes remain underdeveloped in most cases.

5.4. Emerging trends

Several important trends emerge from the benchmarking. The first is a movement towards integrated organisational standards that tie affiliation or membership to minimum expectations on safety, ethics and organisational health. This suggests that wellbeing is increasingly being understood not simply as an individual matter, but as an organisational quality that can and should be assessed.

A second trend is the growing emphasis on youth leadership and co-governance. WAGGGS, YMCA, Caritas and MSF all invest in structures that give young volunteers or associative members influence over governance and strategic direction. This indicates a broader recognition that voice is not peripheral to wellbeing; it is one of its conditions.

A third trend is the increasing visibility of mental health and psychosocial wellbeing as a strategic issue. IFRC and MSF address this most clearly through crisis and operational exposure, while WAGGGS and YMCA increasingly integrate mental health into leadership, regional planning and organisational culture. Save the Children and Caritas also show movement in this direction through staff-care modules, mental-health initiatives and broader wellbeing discussions.

Finally, the benchmark shows a gradual shift in how volunteers are understood. Volunteers are increasingly seen not only as contributors to organisational mission, but also as people whose own wellbeing deserves explicit organisational attention. This cultural shift is one of the most significant developments visible across the six organisations.

6. Comparative Table

The comparative table brings together the main findings of the benchmarking in a structured format. It is intended to support direct comparison between organisations in relation to their understanding of wellbeing, the main policy tools they use, their care practices, participation mechanisms, monitoring systems and notable innovations.

Table 1. Benchmarking on Volunteer Wellbeing in Organisations Comparable to the Scout Movement

Organisation	Definition / approach to wellbeing	Main policies related to volunteer wellbeing	Key care practices	Mechanisms for volunteer participation & voice	Tools for monitoring & evaluating wellbeing	Notable innovations
Caritas Internationalis	Wellbeing understood mainly as <i>organisational well-being</i> and safe environments, built through safeguarding, ethics, HR and youth participation frameworks rather than a stand-alone wellbeing policy.	• Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy (2018). • Caritas Internationalis Management Standards – CIMS, incl. Safeguarding Standard (2020). • Ethics & Integrity charters and national codes of conduct.	• Systematic safeguarding implementation (policies, anti-harassment, survivor-centred referrals). • Organisational Review Tool (ORT) with improvement plans and solidarity funding. • Ethics training and anonymous complaints channels at national level. • Growing regional work on mental health and “integral human development”. • Youth engagement structures that include volunteers.	• Youth Committee and Youth Representatives with voting rights on the Representative Council. • Youth Report-based consultations with young staff and volunteers. • Ethics and whistle-blower systems that treat volunteers as key stakeholders.	• CIMS assessments that explicitly measure “organisational well-being”. • Safeguarding performance indicators and incident tracking. • Global Youth Report (surveys of 110 members and 425 young staff/volunteers).	• Confederation-wide management standards (CIMS) tying membership to minimum organisational-wellbeing and safeguarding requirements. • Strong youth governance architecture giving young volunteers a structural voice.
IFRC (Red Cross / Red Crescent)	Wellbeing is woven through safety, security, safeguarding and psychosocial support; volunteers are seen as the backbone of humanitarian action and must be physically and psychologically protected.	• Volunteering Policy (2022). • National Society Development Policy (2022). • PGI Policy and Safeguarding Framework (2024) with self-assessment tool. • “Volunteers, Stay Safe!” security guide. • “Caring for Volunteers” psychosocial toolkit and “Guidelines for	• Duty-of-care standards (insurance, equipment, security training). • Structured psychosocial support before, during and after crises (PFA, peer support, debriefing). • Security management processes targeted at volunteers. • Safeguarding systems with survivor-centred procedures. • Epidemic-specific health and wellbeing guidance.	• Volunteering Policy requires volunteers’ voices to be heard in decisions affecting them. • Safeguarding and whistle-blower mechanisms provide safe feedback routes. • National Societies’ governance often includes volunteer representatives (varies by country).	• Safeguarding self-assessment against 16 standards. • Commitments in Volunteering Policy to monitor engagement, motivation and wellbeing. • Organisational assessments and survey tools including volunteer-management indicators.	• “Caring for Volunteers” toolkit as a comprehensive, crisis-oriented psychosocial care model. • Integration of safety, duty of care and MHPSS into a de facto volunteer-wellbeing system across a global network.

Caring for Staff and Volunteers in Crises".						
Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)	Wellbeing framed through the lens of being a responsible employer in high-risk contexts: decent work, staff health, mental health, security and associative participation; volunteers are mainly associative members rather than classical volunteers.	• “MSF as a Responsible Employer” HR framework. • Behavioural Commitments and Codes of Conduct. • Staff health and wellbeing policies (“Your health and well-being”; Staff Health Lead role). • Mental health and psychosocial support guidelines (MHPSS interventions).	• Pre-departure medical screening and vaccinations. • Staff Health Units / Leads offering occupational and mental-health support, including medevac. • Structured mental-health support: briefings, in-mission support, post-mission debriefing and counselling. • Strong security-risk management with clear protocols. • Whistle-blowing systems and behaviour committees addressing abuse and harassment.	• Associative structure where staff and volunteers become members, attend General Assemblies, vote on motions and influence leadership. • Strategic consultations that involve staff broadly.	• People Analytics initiative using HR data (turnover, retention, engagement). • Ongoing risk analysis and incident-reporting systems via staff-health and security structures.	• Multi-layered staff-care architecture aligned with explicit duty-of-care language. • Associative democracy giving humanitarian workers a political voice and sense of co-ownership.
Save the Children International	Wellbeing is institutionally recognised but primarily framed around <i>staff</i> ; for volunteers, wellbeing is approached via safeguarding, respectful culture and a positive volunteering experience at national-member level.	• Global Child Safeguarding Policy. • Global and national Codes of Conduct. • National Safeguarding Frameworks (e.g. SCUK). • Volunteer Agreements and Volunteer Handbook (e.g. UK). • Respect / Workplace Behaviours and Whistle-blowing Policies.	• Clear role profiles and a named volunteer manager for each volunteer. • Mandatory induction on safeguarding, conduct, health & safety and inclusion. • Flexible volunteering with explicit “right to withdraw” and adjust commitment. • Safe complaints procedures and speaking-up channels. • Duty-of-care mechanisms (travel health, medevac) for deployed personnel.	• Volunteer feedback and complaint processes at national level. • Some youth participation in national advisory roles; less visible at global level. • Staff engagement surveys emphasise listening and fairness, setting a cultural expectation that can extend to volunteers.	• Global Staff Engagement Survey with dedicated wellbeing domain. • “Health of the Movement” accountability standards including staff wellbeing. • Various national culture and feedback initiatives.	• Volunteer Handbook that explicitly states volunteers <i>should benefit</i> and that volunteering must be “enjoyable and fulfilling”. • FIELD “Staff Care and Wellbeing” learning module, potentially adaptable for volunteer leaders.
WAGGGS	Wellbeing is closely tied to safeguarding, safe spaces and girl-led	• Safeguarding Policy v1.5 (Standard 3: Working with	• Risk-assessed recruitment, MO endorsement and clear	• Girl- and young-women-led governance as a core principle.	• Safeguarding standards that define what it means for volunteers to <i>feel safe and supported</i>.	• Safeguarding Standard 3 as a detailed, global

	leadership; particular duty of care is recognised towards youth and vulnerable adult volunteers.	Volunteers) plus youth-friendly version. • Compass 2032 long-term vision. • Global Strategy 2024–2029. • Adult Training, Learning and Development Policy and Guidelines. • Regional action plans (e.g. Europe Triennial Action Plan).	safeguarding responsibilities in ToR. • Regular check-ins with volunteers that explicitly discuss safety and wellbeing. • Buddy/peer systems and designated focal points for youth and vulnerable adult volunteers. • Structured feedback and learning sessions on diversity, inclusion, safety and wellbeing. • Regional “volunteer journey” processes with wellbeing at the centre (Europe).	• Volunteer Pool and regional structures that bring volunteers into working groups and decision spaces. • Europe Region KPIs requiring that 100% of volunteers feel supported and that their voices are heard.	• Adult training frameworks with built-in monitoring. • Regional KPIs on volunteer support, motivation and training quality.	duty-of-care standard for volunteers. • Europe Region mental-health working group and wellbeing-centred volunteer journey. • Global Volunteer Pool enabling flexible, developmental engagement.
YMCA (World Alliance)	Wellbeing is articulated both as community wellbeing and as an internal transformation goal: policies and culture should prioritise mental health and the wellbeing of staff and volunteers under Vision 2030.	• World YMCA Safeguarding Policy & Procedure (2024). • Whistle-blower and Privacy Policies. • Vision 2030 framework (Community Wellbeing pillar). • World YMCA Strategic Plan 2025–2028. • Emergency Support Fund (Secours Spéciaux) for staff/retirees.	• Safeguarding-centred duty of care (screening, codes of conduct, risk assessments, event standards). • Incident-reporting and accident-review systems. • Change Agents leadership programme with mentoring and peer-support networks. • National YMCAs’ mental-health committees and wellbeing initiatives. • Emergency financial assistance for staff (and historically volunteers).	• World Council and global events that foreground youth/volunteer voices. • Change Agents prepared as future leaders and advocates in governance spaces. • Local and national volunteer councils and feedback mechanisms (vary by YMCA).	• Safeguarding monitoring (annual checks, four-year reviews). • Vision 2030 impact framework encouraging indicators on internal wellbeing. • National-level mental-health literacy programmes tracking participation and outcomes.	• Vision 2030’s explicit internal goal to “prioritise staff and volunteers’ wellbeing”. • Change Agents as a global, wellbeing-supportive leadership pathway. • Movement-wide framing of mental health as part of Community Wellbeing and internal culture change.

7. Universal Principles of Volunteer Wellbeing

The analysis performed allows translates the comparative findings into a coherent set of universal principles that can serve as a normative reference for organisations working with volunteers. The purpose is not to reproduce the model of any single organisation, but to identify the common foundations that appear to underpin the strongest approaches across the six cases reviewed. In this sense, the principles are both analytical and practical: they summarise what the benchmarking has shown, while also offering a framework that can guide future organisational reflection and policy development.

Taken together, the principles suggest that volunteer wellbeing cannot be reduced to a single domain such as safeguarding, mental health or recognition. Rather, it depends on a combination of conditions: safety, support, voice, development, fairness, ethical culture and sustainable engagement.

7.1. Presentation of the 10 principles

1. Safe, dignified and respectful environment. The organisation guarantees that every volunteer serves in an environment free from abuse, harassment, exploitation and degrading treatment, and acts swiftly when this standard is breached.

2. Explicit duty of care for health, safety and security. The organisation guarantees a clearly defined duty of care for volunteers, including systematic risk assessment, health and safety measures, insurance and security procedures appropriate to the context.

3. Protection and promotion of mental health and psychosocial wellbeing. The organisation guarantees access to mental-health and psychosocial support for volunteers, and actively works to prevent harmful levels of stress, burnout and secondary trauma.

4. Clear roles, preparation, support and supervision. The organisation guarantees that every volunteer has a clear role description, appropriate screening, induction, ongoing supervision and regular check-ins that include wellbeing.

5. Meaningful participation and voice in governance. The organisation guarantees meaningful opportunities for volunteers, especially young volunteers, to influence decisions and governance at appropriate levels.

6. Learning, development and leadership growth. The organisation guarantees access to structured learning and leadership development pathways for volunteers, aligned with the organisation's values and mission.

7. Equity, inclusion and special protection of vulnerable volunteers. The organisation guarantees that volunteer opportunities are equitable and inclusive, and that additional protection and support are provided to volunteers who are young, marginalised or otherwise vulnerable.

8. Monitoring and accountability for volunteer wellbeing. The organisation guarantees regular monitoring of volunteer wellbeing and experience, and uses the findings to improve policies, practices and culture.

9. Ethical culture and safe speaking-up mechanisms. The organisation guarantees a culture where volunteers can raise concerns, question decisions and report wrongdoing without fear of retaliation, and where ethical reflection is part of everyday practice.

10. Recognition, reciprocity and balance. The organisation guarantees that volunteers are recognised as partners, that their contribution is visibly valued, and that volunteering remains compatible with a healthy balance of personal, family and work life.

Taken together, these ten principles provide a practical framework for understanding volunteer wellbeing in organisational terms. They show that wellbeing is not the product of a single intervention, but of an ecosystem of expectations, relationships, protections and opportunities.

7.2. Principles most relevant for educational volunteer movements

While all ten principles are relevant across volunteer settings, some are particularly significant for educational volunteer movements such as the Scout Movement. This is because such movements depend on long-term relationships, moral example, adult formation and sustained commitment in work with children and young people.

In this context, a safe, dignified and respectful environment is indispensable. Adults cannot be expected to create safe spaces for young people if they themselves are exposed to unsafe or exploitative cultures. Explicit duty of care is likewise essential, even in contexts that are less operationally risky than humanitarian response. Educational movements also require clear roles, support and supervision, since adults are not simply task-holders but educators and role models.

Mental health and psychosocial wellbeing are also particularly important. Educational volunteering often involves sustained emotional labour, relational complexity and moral responsibility. For this reason, support for adult wellbeing must extend beyond physical safety into reflective, relational and emotional dimensions.

Meaningful participation and voice, learning and leadership development, and recognition linked to sustainable balance are likewise central. Educational volunteer movements claim to form active citizens and leaders; this requires an internal culture in which adults themselves experience growth, responsibility, fairness and belonging.

Finally, equity, inclusion, ethical culture and safe speaking-up are indispensable because they shape the moral climate in which adults serve. Monitoring and accountability are also highly important, particularly at national and global level, because without some form of evidence and review the other principles risk remaining rhetorical rather than transformative.

8. Key Insights for the Scout Movement

To be able to use the identified elements, it is necessary connects the comparative benchmarking directly to the Scout Movement. It identifies which of the practices visible in the six benchmarked organisations are already present, wholly or partially, in the current Scout Movement framework, which remain weakly developed or absent, and what strategic implications emerge for future policy work. The aim is not to suggest replication of another organisation's model, but to determine where external practice confirms, challenges or strengthens the current direction of work on adults and wellbeing.

The benchmarking suggests that the Scout Movement is not starting from nothing. Several important foundations are already visible in its existing approach to adults and in related Safe from Harm materials. However, these foundations remain fragmented, and the Movement has not yet articulated an explicit, coherent and measurable framework for adult volunteer wellbeing.

8.1. Practices already aligned with the Scout context

The benchmarking confirms that several of the principles and practices identified externally are already present, at least in part, within the current Scout context. Most notably, the Scout Movement already demonstrates important alignment with the principles of a safe, dignified and respectful environment, clear roles and support, learning and leadership development, ethical culture, and recognition.

The first area of clear alignment is the Movement's emphasis on safe and respectful environments. The benchmark shows that all six comparator organisations ground wellbeing first in safeguarding, conduct and protection from harm. This is consistent with the Scout Movement's own strong emphasis on Safe from Harm, codes of conduct and safe organisational culture.

A second area of alignment is the Movement's existing attention to clear roles, support and accompaniment through the Adults in Scouting approach. The universal principles derived from the benchmark emphasise role clarity, preparation, supervision and regular support. This closely resonates with the Scout Movement's current logic of role definition, adult training, support structures and appraisal.

A third point of alignment lies in learning, development and leadership growth. Across the benchmark, organisations treat training and development as essential to wellbeing, not only to performance. This is highly compatible with the educational nature of the Scout Movement, in which adult development, reflection, formation and leadership growth are already deeply embedded.

The Movement also appears broadly aligned with the principle of ethical culture and safe speaking-up mechanisms. Complaints, appeals, grievance procedures and Safe from Harm processes provide relevant structural foundations. Recognition is also not absent from the Scout context; appreciation of service and commitment already provides some basis for this dimension, even if the link to sustainable balance is not yet fully explicit.

8.2. Practices not yet sufficiently developed

The benchmarking also highlights several practices that remain weakly developed or insufficiently visible in the current Scout approach. The most important of these is the absence of an explicit adult volunteer wellbeing framework. The current Scout model still appears to rely more on indirect or distributed references than on a clear, named and coherent wellbeing commitment.

A second underdeveloped area is the formalisation of mental health and psychosocial support for adults. The benchmark offers strong examples from IFRC, MSF, WAGGGS and YMCA. By contrast, the Scout Movement appears less developed in providing clearly structured psychosocial pathways for adults before, during and after demanding situations.

A third underdeveloped area concerns workload, role limits and balance. One of the clearest messages from the benchmark is that recognition alone is not enough; volunteering must remain compatible with a healthy balance of personal, family and working life. This type of language and operational expectation appears less developed in the Scout context, where adult commitment can sometimes be shaped by strong moral obligation without equally strong norms around boundaries and sustainable engagement.

The benchmarking also suggests that the Scout Movement has room to strengthen equity, inclusion and special protection for vulnerable adult volunteers. This dimension appears with clarity in several comparator organisations and is highly relevant to a movement that is both educational and values based.

Finally, one of the most visible gaps concerns monitoring and accountability for adult wellbeing. The Scout Movement still appears to lack a clear and consistent way of gathering evidence on how adults experience their roles, their support, their balance or their intention to remain.

8.3. Strategic implications for the future policy work

The benchmarking points to several strategic implications for future work on adults and wellbeing in the Scout Movement. The first is that future policy development should make adult wellbeing explicit. The comparator organisations demonstrate that wellbeing is strongest where it is named clearly, linked to responsibilities, and translated into visible expectations and tools.

The second implication is that future work should treat Adults in Scouting and Safe from Harm as complementary and mutually reinforcing. Safe from Harm provides the necessary basis for preventing abuse, violence and unsafe practice; a wellbeing approach would build on that foundation and extend it into mental health, support, workload, inclusion, participation and sustainable service.

A third implication is the importance of integrating wellbeing throughout the adult life cycle. The benchmarked organisations show that volunteer wellbeing is most effective where it is reflected in recruitment, induction, support, development, feedback, recognition and transition. For the Scout Movement, this means that future policy work should not only define wellbeing in principle but should also translate it into expectations and practices at each stage of adult engagement.

A fourth implication concerns monitoring and evidence. The benchmark strongly suggests that a future Scout approach will require at least a minimal set of indicators or review tools to understand how adults experience their roles and whether support systems are functioning. This does not require a heavy system from the outset, but it does require a shift from assumption to organisational learning.

Finally, the benchmarking indicates that the Scout Movement has an opportunity not merely to borrow practices from others, but to shape an approach that is especially suited to an educational volunteer movement. It can build on its own foundations while drawing on the strongest elements identified in the benchmark to create a clearer and more coherent framework for adult wellbeing.

Taking as a reference the concepts developed by WOSM on volunteer well-being, as well as the good practices identified in the analysis presented in this document, the following definition is presented:

Adult wellbeing in Scouting refers to the positive state in which adults feel safe, respected, supported and valued, and are able to function effectively in their roles, relate positively with others, and evaluate their contribution to Scouting as meaningful, balanced and sustainable. It includes their dignity, mental and physical health, motivation, sense of belonging, personal development, and ability to contribute with purpose.

In Scouting, adult wellbeing is both an individual experience and an organizational responsibility. It is shaped by the conditions created by the Movement, including safe and inclusive environments, clear role expectations, appropriate training, regular support, meaningful participation, recognition, reasonable workload, protection from harm, and a culture where adults are listened to, trusted and cared for.

9. Conclusions

This benchmarking shows that organisations comparable to the Scout Movement are increasingly treating volunteer wellbeing as a matter of organisational responsibility, ethical integrity and long-term sustainability. Across the six cases reviewed, wellbeing is not usually framed as an isolated policy field; rather, it is embedded in safeguarding, codes of conduct, support systems, leadership development, organisational culture and participation structures. The strongest approaches are those that combine protection with accompaniment, development, voice and sustainable forms of service.

A central conclusion of the benchmarking is that the sector already offers a sufficiently clear normative direction. The ten universal principles identified through the review provide a coherent framework for understanding volunteer wellbeing not as a single intervention, but as an ecosystem of protections, relationships and organisational commitments. At the same time, the benchmarking shows that no single organisation offers a fully complete model. Important gaps remain across the sector, particularly in relation to integrated wellbeing frameworks, consistent measurement and formal psychosocial pathways tailored to volunteers.

For the Scout Movement, the main implication is not that it must construct a new approach from the ground up, but that it should strengthen, connect and clarify what already exists. The benchmarking confirms that Scouting already shares several of the strongest structural features found in the comparator organisations, particularly in relation to safe environments, support, learning, ethical accountability and recognition. However, adult wellbeing remains more implicit than explicit in the current framework.

The review therefore points towards a clear policy direction. The Scout Movement has an opportunity to move from a model in which adult wellbeing is assumed to flow indirectly from good management and Safe from Harm towards a model in which wellbeing is treated as an explicit, coherent and measurable organisational commitment. Such a shift would not replace existing frameworks; it would build on them. Safe from Harm would continue to provide the essential protection floor, while a stronger wellbeing approach would extend this into mental health, support, sustainable volunteering, participation and organisational culture.

10. Annexes

The annexes contain the detailed technical materials that underpin the analysis presented in the main body of the report. They are included to ensure transparency, traceability and ease of reference for the working team as the policy development process continues.

10.1. Full analysis: Caritas Internationalis

1. Policies and formal frameworks

1.1 Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy

- Global policy adopted by the Confederation, applied to all Caritas staff and “associates” (a category that normally includes volunteers).
- Affirms the right of children and vulnerable adults to protection and recognises the risk of abuse arising from power imbalances.
- Commits Caritas to create an environment that upholds core values and prevents abuse or exploitation, requiring high standards of conduct and mandatory reporting of concerns.
- Serves as the reference for national Caritas safeguarding policies (Africa, Europe, national Caritas organisations) which must align with it.

1.2 Caritas Internationalis Management Standards

- Confederation-wide standards used to assess and strengthen governance, HR, programme quality, accountability and ethics in all member organisations.
- The reference guide describes CIMS as a tool to analyse risks and to assess the “organisational well-being” of each Caritas structure, forming the basis for tailored improvement plans.
- Compliance with CIMS is a condition of CI membership.

1.3 CIMS Safeguarding Standard

- Adds a fifth standard to CIMS focusing on safeguarding and anti-harassment.
- Requires every member organisation to have:
- A safeguarding policy consistent with the CI Safeguarding Policy and an anti-harassment policy.
- Codes of ethics and conduct for staff and associates.
- Formal complaints and whistle-blower procedures that protect complainants from retaliation.
- HR systems that are fair, transparent, non-discriminatory and that support staff dignity, equity and retention.
- Risk-management mechanisms and survivor-centred referral pathways.

1.4 Regional and national safeguarding tools

- Safeguarding Guide – Caritas Africa. Practical guide to help member organisations identify safeguarding risks, design policies and processes, and ensure staff, volunteers and focal points are equipped to recognise, prevent, report and respond to abuse.
- National codes of conduct and safeguarding policies (e.g. Caritas Athens, Caritas Alba Iulia). Volunteers, staff and partners must read, sign and observe the safeguarding policy

and code of conduct; induction covers complaints procedures and standards of behaviour.

- Ethics & Integrity – Caritas International Belgium. A charter of ethics applies equally to volunteers, partners and staff, training modules and a multi-level warning system support reporting of abuse, fraud and corruption.

1.5 Strategic Frameworks

- The Strategic Framework 2024–2030, approved at the 2023 General Assembly, is described as a reference tool to coordinate the Confederation and includes Strategic Objective 4.6: to encourage and empower young people to participate fully in the mission and development of Caritas, and support members to give them meaningful space.

Policy gap: there is no explicit, Confederation-wide Volunteer Wellbeing Policy. The wellbeing of staff and volunteers is mainly embedded indirectly in safeguarding, ethics, HR and organisational-development frameworks.

2. Institutional strategies

2.1 Strategic Framework 2024–2030

- Approved in 2023, designed as a common reference for 162 member organisations.
- Strategic Objective 4.6 commits Caritas to encourage and empower young people to participate fully in mission and organisational development, and to help members create effective, meaningful youth engagement.
- Youth engagement and empowerment are treated as a cross-cutting strategy that strengthens all strategic orientations – identity, emergency response, integral human development and Confederation effectiveness.

2.2 Caritas Youth Strategy and governance structures

- The Caritas Youth Committee (CYC), created in 2021, leads the global youth strategy and action plan.
- Two Youth Representatives sit on the Representative Council with full voting rights, bringing the perspectives of young staff and volunteers into high-level decisions.
- The youth strategy has two pillars: (1) support to member organisations to make space for young people; (2) initiatives that promote and empower young staff and volunteers to participate fully and effectively.

2.3 Regional strategic frameworks

- Caritas Africa Strategic Framework 2024–2030 and other regional plans stress institutional development, safeguarding, and community-led approaches, building on CIMS.
- Caritas Europa's strategic framework similarly emphasises coordinated action, capacity-building and advocacy; though not limited to volunteers, these strategies rely heavily on volunteer engagement.

Strategic gaps: volunteers are recognised as essential – especially young volunteers – and there is a clear commitment to participation, leadership and safe, accountable organisations. However, volunteer wellbeing as such is not named as a distinct strategic goal.

3. Tools and concrete processes

3.1 Safeguarding implementation and safe environments

- Every member organisation must have:
- A safeguarding policy consistent with CI's policy, plus anti-harassment provisions.
- Codes of ethics and conduct covering staff, volunteers and partners.
- Complaints handling and whistle-blower systems accessible to all stakeholders, including volunteers and community members.
- Risk-management mechanisms to identify and mitigate safeguarding and other organisational risks.
- Regional tools (e.g. Caritas Africa guide) translate these into step-by-step processes: risk assessment, mapping of safeguarding officers and focal points, mechanisms to recognise, prevent, report and respond to abuse.

3.2 Organisational Review and Management Standards process (CIMS)

- The Organisational Review Tool (ORT) enables each member organisation to conduct a structured self-assessment, including risk analysis, followed by external assessment and an improvement plan.
- CIMS explicitly aim to safeguard professional competence and adherence to ethical codes, thus creating organisational conditions that protect both beneficiaries and workers (paid staff and volunteers).
- The reference guide notes that CIMS assess the "organisational well-being" of Caritas structures and underpin capacity-strengthening support and solidarity funds for fragile members.

3.3 Ethics, integrity and complaint systems at member level

- National Caritas organisations operationalise CI frameworks through:
- Ethics charters and codes of conduct that apply equally to volunteers, staff and partners.
- Mandatory induction sessions where new volunteers sign the safeguarding policy and learn how to use complaints mechanisms.
- Warning systems and anonymous or confidential reporting channels for breaches of integrity, including abuse, corruption or fraud.
- These mechanisms help protect volunteers from abusive behaviour by staff, other volunteers or partners, and reinforce a culture where speaking up is encouraged.

3.4 Volunteer mobilisation and roles

- Confederation-level communications underline that, in crises, Caritas organisations rely on large numbers of volunteers for emergency response and long-term development activities, signalling their central operational role.

Process gaps: confederation documents describe structures and systems (safeguarding, ethics, management) more clearly than day-to-day psychosocial support processes for volunteers (e.g. debriefing, supervision, rest, counselling). Detailed volunteer-management manuals are largely developed at national level and are not centrally published.

4. Training and development

4.1 Safeguarding and ethics training

- CIMS require organisations to ensure staff know the organisation's vision, mandate, policies and procedures and adhere to them; HR systems must include appropriate training.
- The Caritas Africa safeguarding guide stresses equipping safeguarding officers, focal points and all staff with knowledge on risk, prevention, reporting and response.
- National Caritas bodies (e.g. Caritas Belgium, Caritas Athens) offer training and exchange modules on their ethics charters and codes of conduct, including for volunteers.

4.2 CIMS training for coordinators and assessors

- Caritas organises inter-regional CIMS assessors' training and training of trainers for CIMS coordinators, building capacity in organisational assessment, risk analysis and improvement planning.
- While focused on managers and staff rather than volunteers, these trainings strengthen the organisational backbone that indirectly shapes the working conditions and support available to volunteers.

4.3 Youth engagement and leadership development

- The Youth Committee's strategy emphasises equipping young staff and volunteers to contribute high-quality work and to occupy leadership and decision-making roles.
- The Youth Report recommends that member organisations develop youth engagement policies or toolkits, co-created with young people, and offers guidance on how to do this.

4.4 Mental-health and wellbeing reflection and campaigns (national/regional)

- Caritas organisations in different regions are increasingly addressing mental wellness and integral human development, often in partnership with Church and health actors.
- Examples include Caritas Singapore's reflections on mental wellness and self-care, framed as part of integral human development, and Caritas initiatives encouraging people to "be a hero" for mental health and practise self-care.
- Caritas Europa's mental health campaign, "Let's talk about it: Mental health is everyone's story", normalises discussion of mental health among volunteers and communities.

Training gap: there is no evidence of a standardised, Confederation-wide curriculum explicitly focused on volunteer wellbeing, burnout prevention and self-care; these themes appear mainly in safeguarding, ethics and some regional mental-health initiatives.

5. Monitoring, evaluation and indicators

5.1 CIMS as a wellbeing-oriented organisational assessment tool

- CIMS assessments evaluate governance, HR, programme management, safeguarding and community engagement, identifying strengths and weaknesses and accompanying them with risk analyses.
- The reference guide explicitly states that CIMS are used to assess the "organisational well-being" of each member organisation and to build MEAL systems, including templates for monitoring and evaluation.

5.2 Safeguarding performance indicators

- The Safeguarding Standard requires organisations to show evidence that safeguarding allegations have been investigated, and that corrective actions and survivor referrals have been taken.
- Regional tools (e.g. Caritas Africa guide) promote tracking of safeguarding incidents and risk-mitigation measures.

5.3 Youth engagement data – Caritas Youth Report 2023

- Two global surveys (110 member organisations; 425 young staff and volunteers) provide baseline data on youth engagement and participation across the Confederation.
- The report notes that many organisations do not collect age data on staff and volunteers, making it difficult to track youth engagement; it encourages systematic data collection and monitoring.

Monitoring gap: there is no publicly documented, Confederation-wide set of indicators on the wellbeing of volunteers (burnout, stress, satisfaction, retention reasons), nor a regular global report on these aspects.

6. Recognition, motivation and volunteer voice

6.1 Volunteerism in Caritas' identity

- Caritas communications describe the Confederation as a diverse body including small groups of volunteers as well as professional agencies and highlight volunteers as crucial in emergencies and long-term programmes.

6.2 Youth participation in governance

- The creation of Youth Representative seats in the Representative Council (2019) and of the Youth Committee (2021) gives young staff and volunteers direct voice in global decision-making, including the Strategic Framework 2024–2030.
- The Youth Report emphasises that genuine youth empowerment requires both space for youth initiatives and active support from senior leaders, so that “people of all ages can thrive and contribute together”.

6.3 Ethical culture and integrity as recognition

- Charters of ethics and codes of conduct recognise volunteers as bearers of the Caritas mission and expect them to embody its values; training and ethics discussions also affirm their importance.
- Whistle-blower and complaints systems, required by CIMS, signal that volunteers' experiences and concerns matter and will be taken seriously.

Recognition gap: confederation-level documents say little about systematic recognition of volunteers (e.g. awards, rest and recuperation policies, wellbeing-linked incentives); such initiatives appear mainly in national Caritas organisations and are unevenly documented.

7. Experiences and concrete good practices

7.1 CIMS: a structured path to organisational “well-being”

- By linking assessments, risk analysis, improvement plans and solidarity funding, CIMS create a confederation-wide mechanism to strengthen organisations’ governance, HR and safeguarding – the conditions under which volunteers work.
- Evaluations in different regions (Africa, Europe) show CIMS being used as the basis for institutional-development programmes and support funds.

7.2 Safeguarding capacity-building in Caritas Africa

- The regional guide distils experiences and challenges from multiple Caritas organisations, providing practical steps for prevention, reporting and response, and promoting active safeguarding officers and focal points.
- It explicitly frames safeguarding as creating a safe environment for all people – including the staff and volunteers who implement programmes.

7.3 Youth engagement architecture

- Over the last decade, Caritas has built a strong architecture for youth staff and volunteers: youth delegations to General Assemblies, Youth Representatives on the Representative Council, the Youth Committee and a global Youth Report 2023.
- This combination of data, structures and strategy is a notable good practice in giving young volunteers voice, leadership opportunities and recognition, which are crucial to psychological wellbeing and motivation.

7.4 Emerging mental-health and wellbeing initiatives

- Caritas Singapore, Caritas Europa and other members are increasingly engaging with mental health as part of integral human development, emphasising mental wellness for everyone, reducing stigma, encouraging self-care and community care.
- Although these initiatives primarily target communities and beneficiaries, volunteers often participate as both facilitators and beneficiaries, helping to normalise conversations about mental health inside Caritas.

7.5 System-level opportunities from a volunteer-wellbeing perspective

- Make the implicit concern for dignity, safety and participation more explicit by developing a confederation-wide Volunteer Experience and Wellbeing framework, building on safeguarding, ethics, youth strategy and integral human development.
- Use CIMS and the Youth Report model to integrate volunteer wellbeing indicators (burnout, satisfaction, perceived support) into regular organisational assessments.
- Collect and share case studies on psychosocial support for volunteers (debriefing, accompaniment, mental-health referrals, spiritual care), turning scattered national practices into shared confederation standards.

Main resources

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10.2. Full analysis: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

1. Policies and formal frameworks

1.1 Volunteering, institutional development and inclusion

- **Volunteering Policy.** This policy sets the common commitment to volunteering across the IFRC network and explicitly links the re-imagining of volunteering to a healthy and sustainable increase in volunteers' engagement, motivation and retention, including ensuring their safety, security and wellbeing. It requires National Societies to promote inclusive, safe and secure engagement; create learning opportunities; measure and recognise contributions; involve volunteers in programme development and governance; and ensure fair volunteering engagements, including mutually agreed time commitments that do not negatively affect wellbeing.
- **National Society Development (NSD) Policy.** The NSD Policy frames strong, accountable and sustainable National Societies as the basis for community resilience and local action. It states that volunteering is fundamental to a National Society and that voluntary action must be supported by leadership that creates enabling conditions for inclusive, safe, secure and innovative volunteer engagement. In this way, institutional development and volunteer wellbeing are linked through branch strength, leadership, local relevance and safe participation.
- **Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) Policy.** This policy embeds dignity, safety and inclusion as cross-cutting commitments of the IFRC network. It recognises that discrimination is intersectional and has compounded effects on people's lives, wellbeing and safety. It stresses that institutions themselves must be safe and inclusive, and it explicitly reinforces the IFRC's responsibility to ensure the protection of all volunteers in all situations.

1.2 Safeguarding, conduct and duty of care

- **IFRC Safeguarding Framework and Self-Assessment Tool.** The framework sets out a long-term safeguarding goal: to create and maintain an environment where all staff, volunteers and community members feel safe and respected, without fear of harassment, exploitation or abuse. It organises safeguarding through 16 standards across four pillars—leadership and organisational culture; recognition and prevention; reporting; and response and support to victims/survivors—and provides a whole-of-National-Society self-assessment process to identify gaps, calculate risk and build action plans.
- **Safeguarding-related organisational policies and standards referenced in the Framework.** Within the framework, safeguarding is described as an umbrella covering prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse, child safeguarding, a workplace free from sexual harassment and discrimination, and whistleblower protection. The standards require structured vetting and reference checks, mandatory safeguarding briefings for staff and volunteers during onboarding, safe and confidential reporting channels, survivor-centred referral systems, and disciplinary procedures that are timely, appropriate and proportionate.

1.3 Safety, security, health and psychosocial wellbeing

- **Volunteers, Stay Safe! A Security Guide for Volunteers.** This guide defines volunteer safety as a prevention issue and states that National Societies should provide volunteers with training, supervision, regular evaluation and recognition, insurance protection, equipment and psychosocial support. It gives practical guidance on security scenarios,

personal health, managing stress and local branch security planning, and it includes a volunteer self-assessment tool covering insecurity, stress, family impact, insurance, security plans and incident reporting.

- **Caring for Volunteers: A Psychosocial Support Toolkit.** The toolkit is a practical system for supporting volunteers before, during and after emergencies. It frames volunteer wellbeing through resilience, risk and responsibility, and provides tools on recruitment and selection, orientation, briefing and training, contingency planning, self-care reminders, team meetings, monitoring individual and team stress, supervision, peer support and referral, appreciation of volunteers, survey tools and indicators for monitoring and evaluation.
- **Caring for Volunteers: Training Manual.** The training manual was developed to strengthen National Societies' capacity to respond to volunteers' psychosocial needs. It includes structured sessions on understanding psychosocial support, risks and protective factors, self-care, peer support, psychological first aid for volunteers, setting up psychosocial support systems, monitoring and evaluation, communication and action planning. It is designed both for direct training and for training of trainers.
- **Guidelines for Caring for Staff and Volunteers in Crises.** These guidelines state that providing psychosocial support to staff and volunteers is an essential way of honouring the obligation to care for their wellbeing. They identify personal, interpersonal, working condition and organisational risks to wellbeing, and emphasise the role of managers and team leaders in creating supportive environments, encouraging peer support and holding individual or group support meetings after crises.
- **Mental Health and Psychosocial Considerations: Key actions for National Societies on Caring for Volunteers in COVID-19.** This brief guidance note makes explicit that National Societies have a duty and obligation to care for the wellbeing of volunteers during COVID-19. It sets out minimum requirements such as training on psychological first aid, information on stress reactions and coping, access to protective equipment, breaks and decent working hours, managerial support and a dedicated budget. It also provides a phased approach before, during and after response, including the right for volunteers to decline tasks they do not feel able to carry out.

Across the attached IFRC materials, volunteer wellbeing is addressed through a dense combination of volunteering policy, National Society development, protection and inclusion, safeguarding, security guidance and psychosocial support resources. The term "wellbeing" is sometimes explicit and sometimes embedded in safety, dignity and support language, but the overall architecture is substantial and consistent.

2. Institutional strategies

2.1 Strategy 2030 – Local Action, Global Reach

- Strategy 2030 presents volunteering as one of the seven key transformations required for the future of the IFRC network. It identifies "growing gaps in health and well-being" as one of the five major global challenges, and its second strategic goal is that people lead safe, healthy and dignified lives and have opportunities to thrive. Within that goal, the strategy commits the IFRC to encourage well-being at all levels, including positive social, mental and physical health and livelihoods. Volunteerism is therefore not treated as a marginal operational resource, but as part of the Movement's long-term platform for change.

2.2 Plans and action on safeguarding and health

- The more recent institutional documents deepen this strategic direction. The National Society Development Policy states that National Societies must invest in volunteering as something fundamental to their identity and mission, and that this requires inclusive, safe and secure engagement. The Global Plan 2025 places “Health and wellbeing” among the five strategic priorities of the network and highlights the enduring role of 16 million volunteers. It also describes enabling functions such as human resources management, security management, ethical practices, safeguarding and PGI, all of which support a respectful and dynamic working environment and a stronger, safer volunteer base.
- The Safeguarding Framework operationalises this strategic direction further by translating protection, speak-up culture, prevention, reporting and survivor-centred response into measurable standards for National Societies. Taken together, these documents show that the IFRC does not have a stand-alone “Volunteer Wellbeing Strategy”, but that wellbeing runs through Strategy 2030, NSD, safeguarding, health and ethical practice.

Gaps. The strategic documents show that volunteer wellbeing is not a separate pillar, but a strategic thread running through volunteerism, health and wellbeing, National Society development, safeguarding and ethical practice.

3. Concrete tools and organisational processes

3.1 Volunteer management with a care lens

- The Volunteering Policy requires National Societies to create enabling conditions for safe and secure volunteering, learning, recognition and meaningful participation. It also states that volunteering time commitments should be mutually agreed so that they do not negatively affect wellbeing. The policy further requires volunteers to be involved in programme development and, where appropriate, governance, which makes volunteer wellbeing partly a question of voice, fairness and organisational design.
- Volunteers, Stay Safe! translates these principles into practical operating procedures: volunteers should know the local risk context, understand standard operating procedures, complete self-assessment of security and wellbeing, know whom to contact for security issues, and have access to accident insurance, equipment, psychological advice and clear supervision. The toolkit adds concrete process tools for recruitment and selection, orientation, briefing and training, contingency planning, team meetings, supervision and appreciation.

3.2 Safeguarding and organisational culture

- The Safeguarding Framework describes a detailed organisational process model. National Societies are expected to have senior leadership role-modelling, current safeguarding action plans, explicit roles and responsibilities, adequate resourcing, structured candidate vetting, mandatory training, programmatic risk assessments, partner due diligence, safe reporting channels, whistleblower protection, referral mechanisms, investigation procedures, disciplinary processes and learning systems. In practice, this means that volunteer wellbeing is protected not only through supportive culture but also through formal systems, accountability and risk management.

3.3 Mental health and psychosocial support

- The psychosocial support documents provide the clearest operational model for volunteer wellbeing. The toolkit sets out support strategies before, during and after

emergencies, and includes peer support, referral options, self-care reminders, stress-monitoring tools and sample surveys. The training manual provides a ready-to-use curriculum to build these systems locally. The 2019 Guidelines explain how to run support meetings and how managers can create supportive teams that reduce isolation and encourage help-seeking. The COVID-19 guidance note adds practical measures such as daily briefings and debriefings, buddy systems, rest and leisure time, referral of volunteers showing signs of stress, and post-response lessons learned and reintegration support.

The IFRC's care for volunteers is operationalised through volunteer-management standards, security routines, safeguarding systems and psychosocial support procedures. These tools are practical and detailed, although spread across several complementary documents rather than expressed as one single "wellbeing manual".

4. Training and development

4.1 Security, safety and duty of care

- Volunteers, Stay Safe! is designed as a basic document for all volunteers and for National Society leaders, managers and governance members. It states that it should form part of volunteers' basic induction and of the induction pack for paid staff, so that both groups understand the role, activities and safety needs of volunteers. The COVID-19 guidance note complements this by requiring volunteers to be informed about stress reactions, safety measures, task limits, work schedules, breaks and the support systems available to them.

4.2 Psychosocial support and self-care

- The Training Manual provides a structured two-day basic training and a three-day training-of-trainers package focused on psychosocial support for volunteers. Participants are expected to develop skills in self-care, peer support, psychological first aid, planning, implementation, review, communication, monitoring and evaluation. The Toolkit reinforces this with practical worksheets on burnout, resilience, self-care, peer support, team reflection, stress monitoring and indicators, making psychosocial support a trainable competence rather than a vague aspiration.

4.3 Safeguarding and PGI learning

- The Safeguarding Framework requires the workforce to be trained on expected standards of behaviour and mandates that all staff complete safeguarding training, including how to receive or refer sensitive complaints. During onboarding, both staff and volunteers must receive briefings on safeguarding systems, policy obligations and personal responsibilities. The PGI Policy complements this by insisting that the IFRC's institutions themselves must be safe and inclusive, which implies a strong learning agenda on discrimination, exclusion and protection.

Documents show a comparatively strong training offer on security, safeguarding and psychosocial support. The most developed part of the learning architecture is practical training for managers and volunteer coordinators on how to set up care systems, support peers, recognise stress and evaluate support mechanisms.

5. Monitoring, evaluation and indicators

5.1 Commitments to monitoring

- The Volunteering Policy states that key outcome indicators are included as an annex to enable monitoring and evaluation of progress in policy implementation at branch, national and global level. It also requires measurement and recognition of volunteering contributions through a simple tracking system. The Safeguarding Framework adds a structured self-assessment process designed to identify gaps, calculate risk scores and formulate evidence-based action plans.

5.2 Tools and systems

- Several attached tools show how monitoring can be done in practice. The psychosocial support toolkit includes strategies for collecting monitoring and evaluation information, set-up questions, a sample volunteer psychosocial support survey, indicator development guidance and separate tips for large-scale and small-scale emergencies. The Training Manual includes a dedicated session on monitoring and evaluation of volunteer support and an evaluation questionnaire. The older Framework for National Society Self-Assessment also shows a longstanding IFRC institutional practice of participatory review, where governance, leadership, staff and volunteers contribute to a self-assessment that leads to a plan of action and subsequent follow-up.

The IFRC materials clearly value monitoring, self-assessment and evidence-based planning. However, the monitoring architecture remains spread across volunteering, safeguarding, psychosocial support and institutional assessment tools, rather than consolidated into one shared wellbeing dashboard.

Gaps. Documents do not present one unified, network-wide measurement framework for volunteer wellbeing that is consistently reported across all National Societies. Monitoring appears stronger in safeguarding, organisational assessment and programme support than in a standardised set of volunteer wellbeing indicators such as work-life balance, burnout or psychological safety.

6. Recognition, motivation and volunteer voice

6.1 Recognition and motivation as structural commitments

- Recognition is a core operational principle of the Volunteering Policy. National Societies are required to measure and recognise volunteering contributions, create learning opportunities, and ensure fair volunteering engagements. The same policy emphasises that volunteers should participate in programme development and in the development of the National Society more broadly, including through boards, governance committees or membership, as appropriate. In this view, motivation is sustained not only by praise but by real participation, learning and fairness.

6.2 Visibility and celebration

- Volunteers, Stay Safe! describes a welcoming and socially inclusive environment as one in which volunteers receive training, supervision, regular evaluation and recognition. The COVID-19 guidance note adds concrete post-response practices such as thank-you events, letters of appreciation, certificates or incentives, and keeping volunteers engaged and affiliated by informing them about ongoing National Society activities. Recognition is therefore treated as part of wellbeing, retention and continued commitment.

6.3 Participation and safe feedback

- Volunteer voice is strongly present in the attached documents. The Volunteering Policy calls for volunteer participation in decision-making, programme design, development and evaluation. The Safeguarding Framework requires safe, confidential and accessible reporting channels for staff, volunteers, affected communities and broader stakeholders, together with whistleblower protection and safe awareness raising on reporting options. This creates an institutional basis for speaking up without fear of retaliation.

Recognition in the IFRC materials is broader than ceremonial appreciation. It includes participation, fairness, learning, gratitude, safe feedback and a working environment in which volunteers feel that the organisation genuinely cares for them.

7. Experiences and good practices

7.1 Psychosocial care for volunteers

- The strongest package of good practice in the attached materials is the combination of the Toolkit, the Training Manual and the 2019 Guidelines. Together they provide an implementable model that begins with preparation, moves through peer support, self-care and psychological first aid during operations, and continues with support meetings, referral and evaluation afterwards. The COVID-19 guidance note shows how this model can be adapted rapidly to a specific global emergency while keeping volunteer wellbeing central from planning through to post-response recognition and reintegration.

7.2 Safety and duty of care

- Volunteers, Stay Safe! is another major good practice because it translates abstract commitments into practical expectations from the volunteer perspective: psychological advice, equipment, coaching, transport, accommodation when required, accident insurance, administrative and legal support, clear plans, regular information, and safer access to people in need. The Volunteering Policy reinforces this by stating that volunteering time commitments must be fair and should not negatively affect wellbeing.

7.3 Emerging innovations

- The more recent documents push the IFRC further towards treating volunteer wellbeing as a governance and institutional issue. The Safeguarding Framework introduces measurable organisational standards and action planning; the PGI Policy connects wellbeing to intersectional discrimination, exclusion and institutional culture; the Global Plan 2025 links health and wellbeing, ethical practices and workforce development at system level. These documents suggest an increasingly integrated understanding of wellbeing, even if it is still spread across different policy instruments.

The IFRC is as a strong example of a volunteer wellbeing model built around three main pillars: volunteerism as a strategic transformation, duty of care and security, and psychosocial support embedded in organisational systems. Its main strength lies in the depth of its practical tools and the seriousness with which risk, support and recognition are treated.

8. Overall diagnosis

The IFRC documents show a mature and multi-layered approach to volunteer wellbeing. Wellbeing is not always presented as a single standalone policy field, but it is clearly embedded in volunteering policy, National Society development, protection and inclusion, safeguarding, security guidance, psychosocial support systems, monitoring tools and strategic planning. The IFRC can therefore be read as a model in which duty of care, safeguarding and psychosocial support form the backbone of volunteer wellbeing, while recognition, participation and fair engagement strengthen volunteer motivation and retention.

Main resources

Internacional Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2012). Volunteers, stay safe! A security guide for volunteers [PDF]. <https://volunteeringredcross.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Volunteers-Stay-Safe-EN.pdf>

Snider, L. (2012). Caring for volunteers: a psychosocial support toolkit. IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support. <https://volunteeringredcross.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/caringforvolunteers.pdf>

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2022). Volunteering policy. https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/20220822_IFRC-Volunteering-Policy-EN.pdf

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2022). National Society development policy. https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/202201003_IFRC-NSD-Policy-EN.pdf

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2022). Protection, Gender and Inclusion. <https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/IFRC-PGI-Policy-EN.pdf>

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2024). Safeguarding Framework and Self-Assessment Tool - Pilot Version 2024
https://pgi.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/media/document/2024-01/ifrc-en-safeguarding-self-assessment-final-lo-res-122023_1.pdf

Internacional Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Safeguarding Hub.
<https://pgi.ifrc.org/safeguarding>

Internacional Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2012) Caring for Volunteers: Training Manual. <https://mhpsshub.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Caring-for-volunteers-a-training-manual.pdf>

Internacional Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2019). Guidelines for Caring for Staff and Volunteers in Crises. <https://mhpsshub.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Guidelines-for-supporting-volunteers-2.pdf>

Internacional Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. IFRC brief guidance note on caring for volunteers in COVID-19. <https://mhpsshub.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/IFRC-Brief-guidance-note-on-caring-for-volunteers-in-COVID-19.pdf>

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. (2018). Strategy 2030. A Platform for Change. <https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/S2030-EN.pdf>

Internacional Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Global Plan 2025.
https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/IFRC_GlobalPlan_2025.pdf

10.3. Full analysis: Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)

1. Policies and formal frameworks

1.1 MSF as a Responsible Employer

- Intersectional framework that defines what it means for MSF to be a responsible employer, guiding all HR policies.
- States that “people are unquestionably MSF’s key asset” and that MSF will go beyond legal requirements to ensure decent work, fair contracts, safe conditions and access to support.
- Duty of care is explicit: MSF must minimise security and health risks, provide appropriate policies and mean to reduce risk, and guarantee care in case of incident.

1.2 Behavioural Commitments and Codes of Conduct

- MSF Behavioural Commitments (global, updated 2018+) define expected behaviour for all staff and partners: non-discrimination, respect, zero tolerance for abuse, sexual exploitation, harassment or violence.
- They link behaviour to MSF’s identity as a responsible employer and association and explicitly require staff to encourage and promote the safety, health and wellbeing of themselves and others in the workplace.
- Operational centres translate these into Codes of Conduct / Frameworks for Responsible Behaviour with procedures, sanctions and whistle-blowing mechanisms.

1.3 Staff health and wellbeing policies

- Working with MSF in the Field – Your health and well-being
 - Sets out MSF’s *duty of care* towards field workers: pre-departure medical check-ups, compulsory vaccinations, health briefings, 24/7 staff-health support, and coverage of medical evacuation or repatriation when needed.
 - Emphasises confidentiality and the availability of staff-health professionals dedicated to field workers’ wellbeing.
- Staff Health Lead role descriptions confirm an institutional staff health policy: the role oversees health and wellbeing, occupational and mental health, and resilience strategies for all staff in a country programme.

1.4 Mental health and psychosocial support policy framework

- Psychosocial and Mental Health Interventions in Areas of Mass Violence – MSF Guidelines.
 - Contains a full chapter on HR management and staff support, recognising that MHPSS work poses risks not only to patients but also to staff.
 - Recommends supervision, team support, preventive briefings/debriefings and clear referral systems for staff needing specialised help.
- Public pages on mental health underline that MSF integrates mental health care into emergency operations and that support extends to its own teams through group and individual sessions when required.

1.5 HR policy frameworks: mobility, diversity, pay

- HR Principle on Staff Mobility & Team Diversity defines all employees as a “global HR capacity” and promotes diverse, mixed teams, equitable opportunities and fair, transparent mobility.

- The Common Frame sets minimum and maximum standards for remuneration and benefits of locally hired staff across all missions, tied to the “responsible employer” vision.

1.6 Associative and volunteer ethos

- MSF’s values stress *volunteerism* and the “associative character” of the organisation, stating that MSF “endeavours to constantly integrate new volunteers to maintain spontaneity and a spirit of innovation”.
- The associative movement engages staff and volunteers as members who shape MSF’s direction through General Assemblies and governance structures.

Policy gap: there is no single, public “Volunteer Wellbeing Policy”; wellbeing is mainly embedded in responsible employer, behaviour, security, staff-health and mental health frameworks.

2. Institutional strategies

2.1 Responsible employer as strategic HR vision

- *MSF as a Responsible Employer* is explicitly described as a strategic framework for all HR policy, aiming at coherence across MSF while allowing each section to adapt. It defines four pillars (values, decent work, staff development, risk management) that directly affect wellbeing.
- Intersectional initiatives such as the Common Frame and the International Remuneration Project translate this into aligned contracts, benefits and equity between internationally mobile and locally hired staff.

2.2 Operational strategic plans

- Operational centres (e.g. OCB, OCA) publish Strategic Orientations 2020–2023, which include commitments to:
 - Provide *solid induction paths* and reinforce staff sense of belonging.
 - Be a “learning organisation” with equitable and inclusive access to development opportunities for all staff.
- These documents recognise that MSF’s high-risk, conflict-heavy footprint must be balanced with staff safety and support – risk-taking is affirmed, but with commensurate investment in training and security.

2.3 Section-level strategies: culture, safety and inclusion

- Strategic plans from sections such as MSF Canada (2020–2024) state goals of promoting equity, diversity, inclusion and responsible behaviour for all MSF staff, and of building a movement “fit for a dynamic future” with staff and association members at its heart.
- Emerging roles like Head of Culture and Change (OCA) formalise a strategic focus on organisational culture, psychological safety and the “human factor” across thousands of staff.

Gaps: wellbeing is not framed as a separate pillar, but as a precondition for MSF to remain a risk-taking, effective medical humanitarian organisation.

3. Tools and concrete processes

3.1 Staff-health and duty-of-care processes

- Pre-departure health screening and vaccination: all field workers undergo medical checks and immunisation; MSF covers costs and ensures fitness to work in specific contexts.
- In-mission support: dedicated Staff Health Units / Staff Health Leads oversee occupational health, general health, mental health and emergency medical support for all categories of staff.
- Medical evacuation and repatriation: clear procedures and coverage where local health care is inadequate.

3.2 Mental health and psychosocial support for staff

- Mental Health Support Services for MSF Field Workers outlines a structured staff-care system:
 - Pre-departure briefings on psychological risks.
 - Support during assignment via psychosocial focal points and peer support.
 - Post-mission debriefings and access to professional counselling for those returning from stressful missions.
- A 2023 article, *From traumatic stress to stress at work*, describes how MSF's staff mental-health care has evolved from crisis-trauma focus to ongoing psychosocial risk management (workload, organisational stressors) under both legal and ethical duty-of-care obligations.

3.3 Security risk management

- Documents like "Your health and well-being" and "What to expect" detail security rules (curfews, compound confinement, movement restrictions) and emphasise the need for staff to follow security protocols as part of collective safety.
- The responsible-employer framework states that MSF must draw up security policies, provide means to implement them, and recognise that risk cannot be eliminated but must be managed transparently.

3.4 Misconduct, safeguarding and safe reporting

- Section-level Whistle-blowing & Behaviour Policies establish behaviour committees, confidential channels and clear responsibilities for prevention and response to abuse, harassment and exploitation.
- These policies explicitly include both physical and psychological abuse, recognising that a safe working environment is central to staff wellbeing.

3.5 HR management processes

- HR Coordinators are mandated to align mission objectives with HR vision, oversee staff development beyond a single mission, manage conflict and internal communication, and maintain fair rewarding policies – all part of a systemic care approach.

Process gap: few public documents describe, in detail, structured peer-support groups, rest cycles, or burnout-prevention routines – although these clearly exist in practice.

4. Training and development

4.1 Duty-of-care and risk-analysis training

- The “Introduction to Duty of Care” e-learning course provides a conceptual framework on risks MSF staff are exposed to and clarifies organisational and managerial responsibilities. Target audience: anyone involved in staff-related risk analysis.

4.2 Mental-health and MHPSS learning

- MSF maintains Mental Health Referent positions and training tracks; these roles provide technical support to projects and help design staff-care components in MHPSS programming.
- The field mental-health guidelines include sections on supervision, staff support and self-care, and are used for training mental-health teams and managers.

4.3 Learning and development strategy

- A Learning and Development Strategy 2020–2023 aims to prioritise new learning solutions, create evaluation tools and measure training impact, aligning development opportunities with operational priorities.
- Strategic orientations emphasise equitable access to relevant, innovative training for all staff, reinforcing competence, confidence and belonging – key protective factors for wellbeing.

Gap: there is no public, organisation-wide curriculum titled “staff/volunteer wellbeing” covering burnout, resilience and self-care in a comprehensive way, although elements are scattered across security, MHPSS and HR training.

5. Monitoring, evaluation and indicators

5.1 People analytics and HR data

- MSF’s People Analytics initiative leverages data science to support HR decision-making: understanding what makes teams effective, improving internal talent development and linking people metrics to mission outcomes.
- While not described in detail, this suggests increasing use of HR data (turnover, retention, engagement) which are key to monitoring wellbeing.

5.2 Staff-health and risk monitoring

- Staff Health Leads are responsible for designing strategies that prioritise staff safety, wellbeing and resilience and for overseeing the implementation of staff-health policies – implicitly including monitoring of occupational and mental-health risks at country level.
- Responsible-employer and duty-of-care documents emphasise risk analysis, incident reporting and learning as ongoing processes.

5.3 Sector-level reflection on psychosocial risk

- External analyses, often with MSF participation, highlight the shift from focusing solely on traumatic exposure to addressing organisational stressors and psychosocial risks at work, under legal obligations to protect mental as well as physical health.

Gap: there is no public, global dashboard of staff/volunteer wellbeing indicators (burnout levels, satisfaction, work-life balance), nor standardised reporting on these across all sections.

6. Recognition, motivation and voice

6.1 Associative participation

- MSF is explicitly described as an associative movement engaging staff and volunteers in shaping the organisation's future. Members join associations, attend General Assemblies, question boards, vote on motions and "raise issues from the field to the leadership".
- This gives humanitarian workers a political voice inside the organisation – a distinctive form of recognition and ownership, deeply linked to morale and meaning.

6.2 Cultural recognition and inclusion

- MSF's values link volunteerism with openness, self-critique and innovation, and stress that the organisation constantly integrates new volunteers to maintain dynamism.
- Strategic processes in sections like MSF UK/IE and MSF Canada have deliberately engaged staff across the organisation to define strategic directions, signalling recognition of their expertise and lived experience.

6.3 Responsible-behaviour commitments

- Codes of conduct and behavioural commitments do not only prevent abuse; they promise a work environment free of harassment, exploitation and discrimination, and frame this as a leadership commitment.

Gap: beyond the associative structures, there is limited public detail on systematic, organisation-wide recognition mechanisms (e.g. formal volunteer awards, rest and recuperation policies explicitly linked to wellbeing).

7. Experiences and good practices

7.1 Structured staff mental-health support

- MSF has progressively built a multi-layered staff-care system: pre-departure preparation, in-mission psychosocial support, and post-mission debriefing and counselling.
- The shift described in 2023 towards tackling everyday work stress and organisational psychosocial risks – not only extreme traumatic events – is a mature evolution in humanitarian staff-care practice.

7.2 Duty-of-care and staff-health architecture

- The combination of a responsible-employer framework, explicit duty-of-care language, staff-health policies, dedicated Staff Health Units/Leads, and guaranteed medical evacuation/repatriation constitutes a robust model of health protection in high-risk environments.

7.3 Behaviour and safeguarding systems

- MSF's behavioural commitments, codes of conduct and behaviour committees provide a clear, enforceable framework against abuse, harassment and exploitation, backed by whistle-blowing channels accessible to all.
- This is a strong expression of psychological and relational safety, central to wellbeing in hierarchical, high-pressure settings.

7.4 Associative democracy and staff voice

- The associative model – staff and volunteers as members with voting rights, motions and direct access to boards – is a distinctive best practice for sustaining motivation and meaning people are not only workers but co-owners of the movement.

Main resources

- MSF association and values documents. (Web page) <https://www.msf.ch/en/node/13/our-values>
- Médecins Sans Frontières. (2020). *MSF as a responsible employer* <https://www.msf.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/MSF%20as%20a%20Responsible%20Employer%20-%20final%20Feb09.pdf>
- Médecins Sans Frontières. (2018). *MSF behavioural commitments*. [https://www.msf.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/MSF Behavioural Commitments EN.pdf](https://www.msf.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/MSF_Behavioural_Commitments_EN.pdf) <https://www.msf.org/msf-behavioural-commitments>
- Working with MSF in the Field – Your health and well-being; Staff Health Lead role descriptions. <https://www.msf.ch/en/media/6184>
- Médecins Sans Frontières. (2011). Psychosocial and Mental Health Interventions in Areas of Mass Violence. A Community-Based Approach. Guideline Document. https://www.msf.org/sites/default/files/msf_mentalhealthguidelines.pdf
- Médecins Sans Frontières. (2018). HR Principle on Staff Mobility & Team Diversity; Common Frame HR Policy Framework. https://www.msf.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/201803_HR%20Principle%20on%20Mobility%20%20Diversity.pdf
- Médecins Sans Frontières. Strategic Orientations 2020-2023. https://msf.dk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ocb_strategic-orientations_en_Id.pdf?srsId=AfmBOopc3M_xxnIdO8LdpiTNUrce6GWko_XohbCzfq_Kjb100VqcHMSr&utm
- People Analytics initiative. <https://msf-transformation.org/news/people-analytics/>
- Articles and analyses on staff mental-health care and duty of care. <https://www.alternatives-humanitaires.org/en/2023/07/17/from-traumatic-stress-to-stress-at-work-providing-psychological-care-for-medecins-sans-frontieres-staff/>
- Framework for Responsible Behaviour. (2015). <https://www.aerzte-ohne-grenzen.de/sites/default/files/aerzte-ohne-grenzen-framework-for-responsible-behaviour.pdf>
- Mental Health – MSF medical activities (Web page). <https://www.msf.org/mental-health>
- Médecins Sans Frontières. (2023). The Common Frame. https://www.msf.org/sites/default/files/2023-04/Common_Frame_2021_Explainer_ENG_April2023.pdf
- MSF Canada Strategic Plan 2020-24. https://www.doctorswithoutborders.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/MSF_Canada_Strategic_Plan_2020-2024_EN.pdf
- Médecins Sans Frontières. (2025). Head of Culture and Change. <https://msf.or.ke/sites/default/files/2025-09/MSF%20OCA%20-%20Head%20of%20Culture%20and%20Change%20%28updated%20version%29.pdf>
- What to expect (Web page). <https://www.msf.ch/en/work-with-us/what-expect>
- HR Coordinator. (Web page). <https://www.msf.org/hr-coordinator>
- Médecins Sans Frontières. MSF – As An Association. <https://www.aerzte-ohne-grenzen.at/sites/default/files/2021-12/MSF%20as%20an%20Association.pdf>

10.4. Full analysis: Save the Children International

1. Policies and formal frameworks

1.1 Child Safeguarding Policy

- Applies to staff, members of SCI and Save the Children members, volunteers, board members, staff and representatives of partner agencies, and other individuals with a formal or contractual relationship involving contact with children.
- Content: This is the clearest movement-level policy in the attached documents. It makes child safe recruitment, risk assessment, mandatory awareness and response systems, and appropriate behaviour towards children non-negotiable. It explicitly applies both in professional and personal life and includes volunteers within the scope of “representatives”. The policy frames duty of care primarily through child safety, but it also requires openness, accountability, confidentiality and timely response.

1.2 Code of Conduct and Statement of Expected Standards

- Applies to everyone who represents Save the Children UK, including colleagues, trustees, volunteers, secondees, consultants, freelancers, partners and suppliers.
- Content: This document sets behavioural expectations that directly affect volunteer wellbeing: dignity and respect, zero tolerance of discrimination, bullying and harassment, obligation to raise concerns, compliance with health and safety and data protection policies, and access to clear reporting routes. It also makes explicit that concerns can be raised through safeguarding, grievance, integrity line and whistleblowing channels.

1.3 Volunteer Agreement and Code of Conduct

- Applies to volunteers and elected representatives.
- Content: This is one of the strongest attached volunteer-specific instruments. It combines recruitment conversation, police certificate requirements, mandatory training, safe organisation commitments, incident reporting, insurance, access to psychological guidance, confidentiality, neutrality, travel conduct and consequences for breach. It gives a more operational picture of volunteer duty of care than the global SCI materials.

1.4 Volunteer Handbook

- Applies to fundraising, shop, campaigning, community and youth advisory volunteers.
- Content: The handbook explicitly states that volunteers should benefit from the experience and that Save the Children wants volunteering to be enjoyable and fulfilling. It guarantees a safe and welcoming environment, a named volunteer manager, clear role descriptions, induction, ongoing training, sensitive handling of complaints, and the right to step back without being made to feel guilty. This is the clearest attached document linking volunteer management with volunteer wellbeing.

1.5 Accountability and safeguarding frameworks

- Content: The attached accountability reports do not function as policies in the strict sense, but they are important normative reference points. They show that Save the Children treats safeguarding of children and adults, staff safety and security, and staff wellbeing as areas of organisational accountability. They also show a move towards common standards through the Mutual Accountability Protocol and Health of the Movement standards.

Gaps. There is still no attached movement-wide policy dedicated specifically to volunteer wellbeing that covers workload, mental health, recognition, support pathways and retention in a single integrated framework. Most explicit global commitments in the materials concern staff wellbeing and safeguarding. Volunteer-specific protections are clearer in national materials, especially the UK handbook and the Norway volunteer agreement.

2. Institutional strategies

2.1 Global Strategy 2025–27

- The current global strategy is centred on children’s rights and on responding to conflict, the climate crisis, and inequality and gender injustice. Volunteers are not explicitly foregrounded as a strategic category, but the strategy includes an organisational enabler to “be an inclusive and efficient organisation”, and it emphasises building partnerships, shifting power and strengthening systems. Wellbeing is present indirectly through the strategy’s concern for safe, inclusive and protective environments.

2.2 Global Accountability Report 2022. Mutual Accountability Protocol and Health of the Movement.

- The strongest strategic treatment of wellbeing in the attached documents appears here. The Mutual Accountability Protocol and the Health of the Movement standards require all Save the Children entities to adhere to core standards. Under “People and Organisation”, entities are expected to commit to the wellbeing and development of staff and to attract and retain diverse, inclusive talent. Under “Safeguarding”, they are expected to adopt a zero-tolerance approach to harassment, abuse, neglect and violence against both children and adults, and to foster open reporting.

2.3 Global Accountability Report 2019: staff health and wellbeing as a core accountability theme.

- The 2019 report goes further in explaining the organisation’s understanding of wellbeing. It states that employee health and wellbeing is a key area of accountability and defines wellbeing as involving emotional, physical, spiritual and economic factors. It also frames wellbeing as a balance between organisational support and what staff can do themselves, and links wellbeing to flexible working, diversity and inclusion, anti-harassment work and leadership behaviour. Although written about employees, it shapes the wider organisational culture within which volunteers operate.

2.3 Movement-level accountability to “our people”

- The 2022 report’s section “Accountability to our people” reinforces that wellbeing, safety and security are treated as organisational responsibilities. SCI’s Share Your View survey is used to gather staff views on belonging, satisfaction, motivation and inclusion, and collective action plans are agreed in response. This is a strategic signal that people experience is being taken seriously, even if volunteers are not yet systematically included in the same way.

Gaps. At the global strategic level in the attached materials, volunteers are still not treated as a distinct constituency with their own wellbeing strategy. The strategy documents frame wellbeing much more clearly for staff than for volunteers.

3. Tools and concrete processes

3.1. Volunteer management tools

- From the Volunteer Handbook and Volunteer Agreement:
 - Role profiles and clarity of expectations
 - The UK handbook states that every volunteering opportunity has a role profile setting out activities and expectations. This is presented to ensure the role is beneficial and well understood. The Norway agreement also makes the expected time perspective explicit, including a 6–12 month commitment for some direct activities with children.
- Named support contact and structured accompaniment
 - The UK handbook guarantees every volunteer a named volunteer manager as first point of contact for support, guidance and formal issues. In Norway, volunteers are linked to a regional office contact, and the first conversation is used both to assess suitability and to ensure the person understands the activity and what it requires.
- Induction and mandatory training
 - Both national documents make induction central. The UK handbook states that the volunteer manager should ensure a full induction and any ongoing training needed for the role. The Norway agreement requires “Welcome to Save the Children” e-learning for all volunteers, safeguarding e-learning for volunteers working with children, and first aid within the first year.
- Safe organisation and incident reporting
 - The Norway agreement explicitly states that volunteers should always be able to feel safe, and that adverse incidents or concerns about children must be reported quickly through a non-conformity form, the regional office, or the designated alert address. The UK handbook similarly requires prompt reporting of safeguarding concerns and unsafe situations and highlights clear reporting routes.
- Flexibility and right to withdraw
 - The UK handbook is especially strong here. It recognises that volunteers may wish to change role or reduce commitment and states clearly that they have the right to change their mind about a voluntary activity without being made to feel guilty. This is one of the strongest wellbeing-oriented volunteer management provisions in the attached materials.
- Insurance, psychological guidance and practical safety measures
 - The Norway agreement states that volunteers are covered by accident insurance during activities and that, if challenging situations arise, Save the Children has agreements with psychologists who can support and guide volunteers. This is one of the clearest attached examples of practical and psychosocial support for volunteers.

3.2. Safeguarding and risk-management processes

- Safe recruitment, screening and training
 - The SCI Child Safeguarding Policy requires strict child safe recruitment practices and makes safeguarding obligations universal across contexts. The Norway agreement operationalises this through police certificates and role-specific checks before people begin activities with children.
- Reporting, response and accountability systems
 - The 2022 Accountability Report describes safeguarding as supported by a global team of over 140 safeguarding professionals and a pool of trained investigators. It highlights accessible reporting, survivor-centred response, investigation, disciplinary action where appropriate, and support for those harmed. It also notes that reporting volumes are treated as a positive sign of awareness and trust in systems.

- Prevention tools and safer partnerships
 - The 2022 report describes the Core Operational Safeguarding Activities framework, which embeds 13 safeguarding initiatives across the organisation, and the Safer Partnership approach, through which partners assess their safeguarding capacity and develop action plans. This shows a more systematic prevention architecture than appeared in the earlier draft.
- Volunteer-specific risk controls
 - The UK handbook includes practical controls such as expectations around lone volunteering, emergency procedures, not continuing when feeling unsafe, and asking for help if physically unable to undertake a task safely. These are modest but concrete volunteer-facing risk management tools.

3.3. Duty of care in humanitarian operations and high-pressure settings

- Staff-focused duty of care is well documented
 - The materials show stronger evidence for staff than for volunteers in humanitarian or high-pressure settings. The 2019 Accountability Report describes how SCI responded to COVID-19 by requiring every country office and member to create a wellbeing plan, establishing staff health focal points, training mental health champions, promoting employee assistance programmes, extending insurance cover, providing PPE, supporting home working, and maintaining wellbeing in leadership messaging.
- Stress management and peer support tools
 - The one-day training programme “Stress Management for Staff” provides a practical wellbeing toolset that includes recognising signs and symptoms of stress, understanding cumulative stress, burnout and traumatic stress, and exploring ways of reducing stress and providing peer support. This is clearly staff-oriented, but it demonstrates concrete internal resources that could be adapted for volunteer leaders.
- Volunteer-specific gaps in humanitarian duty of care
 - By contrast, the materials provide little direct evidence of a global, standardised duty-of-care framework for volunteers in humanitarian settings. Where volunteer support is visible, it is mainly in national-level guidance such as psychological support and accident insurance in Norway or support and supervision in the UK.

Gaps. Documents do not provide a movement-wide volunteer management manual.

They also do not show a clear global psychosocial support pathway for volunteers after critical incidents or prolonged exposure to distressing work.

4. Training and development

4.1 Stress Management for Staff (one-day training programme)

- This training package is an important addition. Its aim is to empower participants to recognise signs and symptoms of stress, explore ways of reducing stress and provide peer support. It covers types of stress, cumulative stress, burnout, critical incident stress, secondary traumatisation, and over- and under-involvement. Although designed for staff, it provides one of the clearest concrete wellbeing curricula in the attached Save the Children materials.

4.2 Safeguarding training for all representatives

- The SCI Child Safeguarding Policy makes safeguarding awareness and response a universal obligation, and the UK and Norway volunteer documents operationalise this through mandatory induction and safeguarding training. The Norway agreement requires safeguarding e-learning before volunteers begin activities with children, while the UK handbook states that safeguarding takes precedence over all other considerations and that all concerns should be reported immediately.

4.3 Code of Conduct and workplace behaviour training

- The SCUUK Code of Conduct states that Save the Children UK is committed to providing all relevant policies, training and guidance to enable staff and volunteers to meet expected standards. The UK handbook also links volunteers explicitly to the Code of Conduct, the Respect policy and the Workplace Behaviours framework, and explains that support and training are provided so that staff and volunteers share a common understanding of what a safe, kind and inclusive environment looks like.

4.4 Managerial and organisational capability-building

- The 2019 report highlights that line managers are expected to help staff identify what they need for wellbeing, to discuss performance, development and wellbeing in regular reviews, and to respond to signs of stress, especially during remote working. The report also notes the roll-out of mandatory anti-harassment and anti-bullying training for SCI staff.

4.5 Volunteer capability and confidence-building

- The national volunteer materials emphasise that good training is part of feeling prepared and confident in the role. This matters because the attached documents repeatedly connect confidence, clarity and preparedness with safer and more fulfilling volunteering.

Gaps. There is no movement-wide training curriculum designed specifically for volunteer wellbeing. The most developed training materials are still staff-focused, with volunteer learning concentrated on induction, safeguarding and role-specific preparation.

5. Monitoring, evaluation and indicators

5.1 Global Staff Engagement Survey

- The survey pack is a major source for this section. It shows that SCI and National Organisations could use a standardised engagement survey with core mandatory questions and benchmarking. The survey includes a dedicated wellbeing domain with questions on happiness at work, working environment, team environment, work-life balance, organisational priority to employee wellbeing, manageable workload, access to support for pressure and stress, safety and security, and stress at work. It also includes safeguarding questions on bullying, harassment, assault, reporting confidence and retaliation.

5.2 Accountability reporting and Health of the Movement

- The 2022 Accountability Report shows that Save the Children uses multiple accountability mechanisms to monitor people-related issues: the Mutual Accountability Protocol, the internal Health of the Movement report, and staff surveys. "People and Organisation" is an explicit standard, and the report also publishes data on safeguarding of adults, safety and security of staff, diversity and inclusion, and employee engagement.

5.3 Share Your View and wider employee engagement data

- The 2022 report states that SCI's Share Your View survey had an 84% response rate, with an engagement score of 88%, and reports wider Movement findings such as 87% of staff feeling part of an inclusive organisation and 85% recommending Save the Children as a good place to work. The 2019 report also refers to engagement surveys, pulse surveys during COVID-19, and their use in establishing action plans around wellbeing.

5.4 Safeguarding data as a monitoring tool

- The 2019 and 2022 accountability reports publish detailed safeguarding data, including adult safeguarding concerns, reporting volumes, outcomes of investigations, disciplinary action, referral to authorities and support to survivors. This shows a relatively advanced culture of measurement and transparency around safeguarding and safety.

Gaps. The materials still do not show a parallel, systematic wellbeing survey or KPI framework for volunteers specifically. Volunteer retention, satisfaction, workload and psychosocial wellbeing are not monitored in the same transparent and standardised way as staff engagement and safeguarding.

6. Recognition and motivation

6.1 Recognition commitments

- The UK handbook explicitly promises to recognise and celebrate the contribution of volunteers. It also offers opportunities to take on different or additional roles and to grow through volunteering. This makes recognition both symbolic and developmental.

6.2 Meaningful experience and personal development

- The UK handbook states that volunteers should benefit from the experience just as the organisation benefits from their time, commitment and skills. The Norway agreement likewise presents volunteering as valuable experience, offering opportunities for self-development, professional input and engagement with others committed to the same cause.

6.3 Supportive relationships and voice

- The combination of a named volunteer manager, clear expectations, accessible complaint procedures and safe reporting channels signals that volunteers are treated as participants whose experience matters. In Norway, membership is also required for volunteering, which gives volunteers the right to influence the organisation and take part in democratic member meetings.

6.4 Culture of respect, kindness and inclusion

- The UK Workplace Behaviours framework is a strong motivational and wellbeing tool. It defines expectations for how people speak, listen, challenge and act, emphasising kindness, openness, respect, accountability and safe challenge. This helps create a volunteer experience rooted in humane relationships rather than merely task delivery.

Gaps. The attached materials do not show a detailed movement-wide recognition system for volunteers. Volunteer voice is visible in national practices but not clearly embedded in a global governance or accountability mechanism in the attached documents.

7. Concrete experiences and good practices

7.1 Volunteer-centred environment (SCUK Volunteer Handbook)

- The handbook remains the strongest volunteer wellbeing document in the package. Its explicit commitment that volunteering should be enjoyable and fulfilling, and that volunteers should benefit from the experience, is matched by practical measures: named support, clear role descriptions, induction, ongoing guidance, flexible role changes, right to withdraw without guilt, and sensitive handling of concerns.

7.2 Volunteer agreement with practical and psychosocial protections

- The Norway volunteer agreement adds concrete safeguards that strengthen the overall picture: police certificate checks, mandatory training, contingency planning, incident reporting, accident insurance, and access to psychologists if difficult situations arise. This is one of the most complete examples in the attached materials of operational volunteer care.

7.3 Staff health and wellbeing as a formal accountability theme

- The 2019 Accountability Report makes staff wellbeing an explicit focus of organisational accountability and defines wellbeing in multi-dimensional terms. It also documents concrete actions such as pulse surveys, wellbeing plans, mental health champions, employee assistance support and insurance extension during COVID-19. This shows organisational maturity in the wellbeing field, even though the main beneficiary is staff rather than volunteers.

7.4 Safeguarding culture with prevention, reporting and survivor support

- The 2022 report shows a strong safeguarding architecture: global safeguarding professionals, investigators, a survivor-centred approach, safer partnerships, core operational safeguarding activities, and efforts to strengthen volunteer engagement practices and record keeping. This is one of Save the Children's clearest organisational strengths and provides a strong protective foundation for volunteer wellbeing.

7.5 Evidence-based people monitoring

- The agenda survey framework and SCI's engagement surveys show a serious commitment to measuring people experience. The inclusion of wellbeing, work-life balance, support under stress, safety and safeguarding questions is a notable strength, even if volunteers are not yet systematically included.

Gaps. Across the materials, volunteer-specific wellbeing remains strongest in national operational documents, not in movement-wide policy. The Movement shows more maturity in safeguarding and staff wellbeing than in an integrated volunteer wellbeing framework.

8. Summary

Strengths.

- Robust safeguarding and conduct frameworks that explicitly include volunteers or representatives.
- Strong national volunteer management standards in the UK and Norway, with clear emphasis on safety, support, guidance and beneficial volunteering.
- A comparatively mature staff wellbeing infrastructure, including stress management training, pulse surveys, staff engagement surveys and accountability reporting.

- A strong culture of reporting, investigation, survivor support and prevention in safeguarding.

Limitations / gaps for a volunteer-wellbeing lens

- Volunteer wellbeing is still more implied than formally defined at Movement level.
- The clearest global commitments concern staff wellbeing and safeguarding rather than volunteers as a distinct group.
- Volunteer-specific monitoring, psychosocial support pathways and recognition systems are not yet developed with the same consistency or transparency as staff-focused systems.

Main sources

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- Open Badge “FIELD Staff Care and Wellbeing” <https://openbadgefactory.com/obv3/credentials/e16141bd0f17240cd526733316d87c4e6975b83f.html>

- Save the Children Staff Engagement Survey Information Pack. (20199. <https://www.agendaconsulting.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/SCI-Information-Pack.pdf>)
- <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net>

10.5. Full analysis: World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)

1. Policies and formal frameworks

1.1 Safeguarding Policy

- Governance policy approved by the World Board, applying to the WAGGGS Global Team and to Member Organisations when they deliver written contracted activities with WAGGGS. It covers staff, volunteers, partners and, where relevant, vulnerable adults as well as children and young people.
- Safeguarding is defined as the action WAGGGS takes to prevent harm and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, while creating safe, supportive and brave spaces for participation.
- Volunteer wellbeing focus. Standard 3 states that WAGGGS has a duty of care towards youth volunteers, any volunteer under 30 years of age, and vulnerable adult volunteers, whose safety, well-being and satisfaction are of great importance.
- The policy requires safe recruitment and onboarding, risk-assessed volunteer roles, clear safeguarding responsibilities in Terms of Reference, safeguarding and behaviours training, regular check-ins covering safety and wellbeing, buddy or peer support, designated staff focal points, feedback on diversity, inclusion, safety and wellbeing, and clear reporting lines to Safeguarding Focal Points.

1.2 Compass 2032 – Vision for the Movement

- Twelve-year vision for the Girl Guide and Girl Scout Movement built around an equal world where all girls can thrive and a girl-led Movement where every and any girl feels confident to lead and empowered to create a better world together.
- Volunteer relevance. Compass 2032 explicitly states that the WAGGGS Global Team includes staff and volunteers at world and regional level, and that Member Organisations and the Global Team share responsibility for aligning their strategies to this long-term vision.
- Wellbeing relevance. The Compass conversations call for more spaces where girls feel brave, inclusive and connected communities, leaders ready for the future, and rewarding, accessible roles for volunteers and staff. These themes position volunteer support, inclusion and accessibility as part of the Movement WAGGGS must become.

1.3 WAGGGS Global Strategy 2024–2029

- Six-year strategy for the WAGGGS Global Team, developed through consultation with Member Organisations, staff, young women and volunteers, and designed to deliver Compass 2032 through the 12-6-3 strategic cycle.
- Volunteer wellbeing focus. The strategy identifies post-pandemic difficulties in recruiting and retaining youth members and volunteers as a major challenge and describes the dedicated pool of volunteers who give their time, skills and tremendous energy as a vital component of the WAGGGS model.

- The strategy links the Movement's purpose with girls being able to feel safe, included, happy, connected, empowered and confident, and notes that global volunteering opportunities and leadership events support Member Organisations to recruit and retain members and to build the capacity of young women and volunteers.

1.4 Adult Training, Learning, and Development Policy and Guidelines

- Global policy and detailed guidance for the training, learning and development of adult members, including leaders and adult volunteers.
- Each National Association is expected to design and implement a national Adult Training, Learning and Development Framework aligned with WAGGGS policy and to submit it for accreditation.
- Wellbeing relevance. The policy promotes learner-centred training, meaningful personal development, supportive learning environments, new technologies, trainer or facilitator support, and monitoring and evaluation systems. It remains the principal global framework for strengthening adult volunteers' competence and growth.

1.5 Volunteerism Resources and supporting volunteer-management tools (2011–2016)

- The Volunteerism Resources collection states that WAGGGS recognises volunteers as the key drivers of the Movement and is fully committed to developing volunteer skills, capacity and capabilities.
- The collection brings together knowledge products on recruitment, retention and the status of volunteers, and points Member Organisations towards the 2012 volunteering toolkit and the 2011 succession planning toolkit as core support resources.
- Together, these resources frame volunteerism as a strategic priority, emphasise the need to improve the image and perception of volunteerism, and provide structured approaches to volunteer management, recognition and leadership continuity.

Gap. Across these formal frameworks there is still no separate, named global Volunteer Wellbeing Policy. Wellbeing is built mainly through safeguarding, adult learning, strategic vision and volunteer-management guidance rather than through one dedicated holistic instrument.

2. Institutional strategies

2.1 Compass 2032 – vision and conversations

- Compass 2032 describes the Movement WAGGGS must become: girl-led, inclusive, connected, brave, future-ready and agile.
- Wellbeing signal. Its conversations on brave spaces, inclusive communities and rewarding, accessible roles for volunteers and staff imply that volunteers themselves must be supported, included and equipped if they are to create the conditions girls need.
- Shared responsibility. Compass 2032 states that working towards the vision is a shared responsibility of the WAGGGS Global Team and all Member Organisations, to be embedded in strategies and work plans across the Movement.

2.2 Global Strategy 2024–2029

- The Global Strategy diagnoses increasing mental health issues, gender-based discrimination and violence, climate anxiety and post-pandemic disruption as major challenges affecting girls and young women and the Movement.
- Volunteer dimension. It commits WAGGGS to supporting Member Organisations to recruit and retain youth members and volunteers, to connect volunteers and young

people across the Movement, and to strengthen the capacity of young women and volunteers through international experiences and leadership opportunities.

- WAGGGS presents volunteers as central to the Global Team's capacity, expertise and sustainability, and treats safety, confidence, inclusion and connection as core outcomes for the Movement.

2.3 Regional strategy – Europe Triennial Action Plan 2026–2028

- The Europe Region action plan translates the Global Strategy into regional objectives and KPIs. It explicitly recognises that current global challenges have had a negative impact on mental health and on organisational capacity.
- Volunteer wellbeing focus. The plan commits the Region to ensuring that volunteers feel safe, included and able to flourish through their role, with a focus on flexibility, inclusivity, personal development and community. It also states that volunteers and staff should thrive and excel through robust recruitment, induction, learning and development, and performance-management processes.
- Concrete regional commitments. By the end of 2026, a forum for all regional volunteers should be established; by 2028, at least 90% of regional volunteers and staff should report increased value and support in their roles, 75% of volunteers should report a stronger understanding of global and regional initiatives, and at least 70% of staff and volunteers in the region should have been offered training within their field of expertise.

WAGGGS integrates volunteer wellbeing strategically through its long-term vision, its six-year global strategy and an updated regional operational plan. Wellbeing is not a stand-alone pillar, but it is now more visibly connected to safety, inclusion, mental health, flexibility, community, leadership and retention.

3. Concrete tools and processes

3.1 Safeguarding – Standard 3: Working with Volunteers

- Key processes to protect and support volunteers include risk-assessed roles, endorsement by the Member Organisation or the Global Team, role descriptions and Terms of Reference that state safeguarding responsibilities, and discussion of the policy with every new volunteer during onboarding.
- When volunteers work directly with children and young people, the policy requires clear boundaries, the two-adult rule, no unsupervised contact, familiarity with the risk assessment, knowledge of emergency contacts and safeguarding contacts, and compliance with the Code of Conduct in and beyond official duties.
- For youth volunteers and vulnerable adult volunteers, the policy requires appropriate support and training, regular check-ins covering safety and wellbeing, support systems such as buddy or peer arrangements, sensitivity to power dynamics and intersecting identities, feedback and reflection on inclusion and wellbeing, and clear reporting procedures for concerns.
- Standard 3 is considered met when volunteers feel confident and supported to keep others safe, and when youth and vulnerable adult volunteers feel safe and supported and able to raise issues relating to participation and wellbeing.

3.2 Volunteer management and the volunteer journey

- The Europe Region action plan commits to supporting Member Organisations with critical organisational needs such as the volunteer journey, membership growth and retention,

and to creating learning spaces where Member Organisations can develop and share work on the volunteer journey.

- The 2012 volunteering toolkit provides a practical five-step volunteer management programme: planning, recruiting, induction and training, supervision and support, and evaluation and recognition. It makes clear that good volunteer management means volunteers know their role, their training expectations, how their contribution fits organisational goals, who to approach for help and support, and that they receive validation and recognition.
- The toolkit also states that quality volunteering requires understanding volunteers' motivations and needs, creating job descriptions, identifying success indicators, setting appointment and renewal guidelines, and ensuring supervision, support, coaching, mentoring and evaluation throughout the experience.

3.3 Volunteer-support resource systems

- The Volunteerism Resources collection acts as a curated support system for Member Organisations, bringing together tools and research on recruitment, retention, status and management of volunteers in response to an increasingly time-poor context.
- The succession planning toolkit complements this by helping volunteer-led organisations identify critical roles, assess potential successors, analyse required skills, provide development activities, and build leadership continuity at all levels. It links succession planning to risk reduction, continuity, morale, commitment and retention.

Gap. The documents provide rich guidance on volunteer management, succession and safeguarding, but they say relatively little about formal psychosocial services such as counselling or debriefing after crisis exposure at global level.

4. Training and development

4.1 Adult Training, Learning and Development

- WAGGGS actively promotes the training, learning and development of adult members to fulfil their roles and achieve the Mission of WAGGGS.
- The Adult Training, Learning and Development Framework promotes learner-centred approaches, reflective practice, whole-person development, support for trainers and facilitators, and a learning-organisation culture. National Associations are expected to identify needs, create supportive learning environments and establish systems for monitoring and evaluating effectiveness.
- Training is therefore framed not only as competence-building but also as a means of helping adult volunteers reach their full potential as individuals and leaders.

4.2 Safeguarding-related training

- Safeguarding is embedded into relevant human resource processes. All members of the WAGGGS Global Team complete safeguarding induction training within their first three months and refresher training as required, with enhanced training recommended for Designated Safeguarding Leads, Focal Points and personnel with specific safeguarding responsibilities.
- For volunteers, the policy requires safeguarding training, Behaviours of WAGGGS Volunteers training, clear reporting and response guidance, and integration of safeguarding practices into volunteer appraisal and learning discussions.

- For youth and vulnerable adult volunteers, relevant support and training must be in place before responsibilities are assigned.

4.3 Regional and volunteerism-related capacity building

- The Europe Region action plan includes concrete training and development measures: all regional volunteers complete onboarding training, at least 70% of staff and volunteers are offered training within their field of expertise by 2027, and the Region will continue to create opportunities for personal development.
- The activity planner includes a Volunteers Meeting to provide training, team-building and planning, and the Scout and Guide Academy as an integrated annual event for training and sharing experience. The plan also includes annual opportunities for Member Organisations to develop and share practice on the volunteer journey.

Gap. There is still no single global curriculum explicitly labelled volunteer wellbeing, self-care, stress, burnout or trauma. These themes remain distributed across safeguarding, adult development, volunteer management and regional operational plans.

5. Monitoring, evaluation and indicators

5.1 Safeguarding standards as a monitoring framework

- Safeguarding Standard 1 requires clear roles and responsibilities, safeguarding champions, an action plan for implementation, and risk management at all levels. Standard 3 includes qualitative markers such as volunteers feeling confident and supported, and youth and vulnerable adult volunteers feeling safe and able to raise participation and wellbeing issues.
- These standards create an organisational review framework that links governance, risk management and volunteer experience.

5.2 Adult training monitoring and evaluation

- The Adult Training Guidelines require National Associations to identify needs and expectations for learning, monitor and evaluate training and development, and establish indicators and systems to measure whether outcomes are achieved.
- The accreditation process, essential elements and considerations for excellence all reinforce the expectation that adult learning frameworks should be systematically reviewed and improved.

5.3 Regional volunteer wellbeing indicators – Europe

- The Europe Region action plan introduces concrete indicators directly relevant to volunteer experience: by 2028, at least 90% of regional volunteers and staff should report increased value and support in their roles; by 2028, 75% of volunteers should report a stronger understanding of global and regional initiatives; all regional volunteers should complete onboarding training; and event assessments and incident response evaluations should show that safeguarding training is being applied effectively.
- The plan also uses operational indicators such as transparency reporting, annual impact reporting and Member Organisation satisfaction, which strengthen accountability for the regional offer.

Gap. The documents still do not provide a single, world-level quantitative framework for volunteer wellbeing covering burnout, stress, retention drivers or psychological safety across the whole Movement.

6. Recognition, motivation and volunteer voice

6.1 Strategic recognition of volunteers

- The Global Strategy describes Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting as the world's largest voluntary movement dedicated to empowering girls and young women and presents the dedicated pool of volunteers as a vital component of the model that strengthens WAGGS capacity and expertise.
- The Europe Region principles further state that the Region will be volunteer-driven, benefiting from the collective expertise and different perspectives of volunteers and staff working in partnership, and that priorities and decision-making processes should be accessible and understandable to Member Organisations, volunteers, girls and young women.

6.2 Feeling valued and motivated – Europe Region

- The Europe Region plan seeks to ensure that volunteers feel safe, included, able to flourish, appreciated and connected. It includes a forum for all regional volunteers, opportunities for training and personal development, and commitments to building a strong bond between volunteers and staff with a focus on wellbeing, mental health, purpose and community.
- The plan also strengthens volunteer voice through concrete participation targets: 30% of working group members should be under 30, all regional initiatives should involve volunteers of different age groups working together, and 2028 reporting should show that young people's input directly influenced decision-making, policy or programme outputs in the Region.

6.3 Recognition through skills, competencies and development

- The volunteering toolkit makes recognition a core step in the volunteer management cycle. It links recognition not only to awards but also to performance review, validation of contributions, and acknowledgement of the skills and competences volunteers gain.
- The Volunteerism Resources collection notes that volunteers value sociability, leadership opportunities, structured support on time management and certification or accreditation that recognises their contribution. The succession planning toolkit adds that succession systems motivate members and leaders, improve support and retention, and create opportunities for others.

Gap. The attached documents show growing commitment to participation and recognition, but they do not yet evidence a formal global volunteer voice mechanism dedicated specifically to wellbeing.

7. Experiences and good practices

7.1 Safeguarding Standard 3 – a structured duty of care for volunteers

- WAGGS stands out in explicitly naming a duty of care towards youth volunteers and vulnerable adult volunteers in a global safeguarding policy.
- Good practices include embedding wellbeing into routine management through onboarding, check-ins, buddy systems, named focal points, attention to power and participation, and feedback and reporting arrangements that ask volunteers directly about diversity, inclusion, safety and wellbeing.

7.2 Europe Region – a volunteer operational model focused on flourishing

- The 2026–2028 Europe Region action plan provides a strong practice example of how strategy can be translated into a volunteer operational model. It aims for volunteers to feel safe, included and able to flourish, and links this to flexibility, personal development, community, onboarding, training, transparency, appreciation and annual learning spaces on the volunteer journey.
- This is a more operational and measurable regional model than the earlier material, because it combines success statements, KPIs and a concrete activity planner.

7.3 Adult Training Framework – systemic support for adult volunteers

- The Adult Training, Learning and Development Framework remains a significant good practice because it obliges National Associations to create structured, learner-centred, monitored and accredited systems for the development of adult volunteers.
- It supports wellbeing indirectly but significantly by ensuring volunteers are not left to improvise their growth and by requiring supportive learning environments and regular evaluation.

7.4 Volunteerism, volunteer-management and succession-planning toolkits

- The combination of the Volunteerism Resources collection, the 2012 volunteering toolkit and the 2011 succession planning toolkit offers Member Organisations a practical ecosystem for strengthening volunteer experience.
- Together these resources address recruitment, retention, role clarity, supervision, mentoring, evaluation, recognition, continuity of leadership, morale and the prevention of burnout through better structures and support.

8. Overall diagnosis

The attached suggest that WAGGGS already has substantial building blocks for volunteer wellbeing through safeguarding, adult development, volunteer management, succession planning and a stronger regional operational model. The next step would be to connect these elements more explicitly into a single global volunteer experience and wellbeing framework that Member Organisations can adapt.

Main resources

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10.6. Full analysis: Young Men's Christian Association

1. Policies and formal frameworks

1.1 World YMCA Safeguarding; Policy and Procedure

- Applies to World YMCA staff, volunteers, Executive Committee members, contractors, consultants, third parties, and staff or volunteers of national or local movements taking part in World YMCA events.
- Protects children, young people and vulnerable adults from physical and mental abuse, discrimination, exploitation and violence. Wellbeing is framed primarily as safety, inclusion, empowerment and care.
- Establishes principles, code of conduct, recruitment and screening procedures, orientation requirements, accountability arrangements, risk assessment standards, reporting procedures for abuse, injuries and accidents, and annual/four-yearly policy review cycles.
- Relevance to volunteer wellbeing. Volunteers are explicitly within scope: they must be screened, oriented, trained, supervised and supported, and they are expected to report concerns within a clear safeguarding chain.

1.2 Constitution of the World Alliance of YMCAs

- Foundational governance document defining the purposes, membership rules, governing bodies, voting representation, executive functions and financial structure of the World Alliance.
- Wellbeing angle. It does not define wellbeing directly, but it establishes a normative base centred on unity in diversity, humanitarian welfare work, mutual respect and cooperation. It also gives formal place to voluntary workers in governance, since World Council representation should, as far as possible, be composed of voluntary workers, and Executive Committee members serve on an unpaid basis.

1.3 World YMCA Privacy Policy

- Sets rules for collecting, storing, using and sharing personal data gathered through websites, events, programmes and services, with reference to Swiss law and the GDPR.
- Wellbeing link. Privacy protection contributes to trust and psychological safety, especially where safeguarding, complaints or participation data involve sensitive personal information.

1.4 World YMCA Whistle-Blower Policy

- Establishes routes for employees, Executive Committee members and others to report suspected violations of the Code, fraud or unethical conduct, and commits the organisation to confidentiality, investigation and protection from retaliation.
- Wellbeing link. It strengthens psychological safety by giving staff and volunteers a protected way to speak up about misconduct, abuse, misuse of resources or unsafe practice.

1.5 Vision 2030 – official text, Essentials and Practical Guide (2022–2025)

- Vision 2030 is the first collective global strategy of the YMCA Movement. The official endorsed text sets out the vision, mission, pillars, beliefs, pledges and strategic goals; the Essentials version summarises the approved core elements; the 2025 Practical Guide explains how YMCAs can align strategy, operations and reporting to the framework.
- Vision 2030 was adopted by the 20th World Council in 2022. The Practical Guide is an implementation support document for use across the Movement.
- Wellbeing focus. Under the Community Wellbeing pillar, the YMCA commits to co-create and advocate sustainable health and wellbeing solutions, and states that the Movement will review and develop policies and practices so that staff and volunteers at all levels work in a culture where individual, organisational and community wellbeing is a fundamental priority.

1.6 World YMCA Strategic Plan 2025–2028

- Executive Committee-approved strategic plan describing the role of World YMCA in serving the wider Movement through four strategic directions.
- Wellbeing elements. It includes the goal of preparing the next generation of YMCA leadership for staff and volunteers, strengthening governance and risk management, and pursuing internal efficiency and sustainability. One of its success indicators is that staff and volunteers feel a high level of satisfaction and purpose in their roles.

1.7 Meaningful Work Programming Approach

- A detailed operational playbook for national and local YMCA staff and volunteers to design, align and strengthen Meaningful Work programming.
- Relevance to wellbeing. While it is primarily a programming document, it introduces a 'Thrive' component centred on wraparound support and explicitly notes that the programming approach should offer targeted programmes to develop resilience and support wellbeing needs. It therefore adds an operational guidance layer to the wider Vision 2030 architecture.

Gap. There is still no single, explicit global volunteer wellbeing policy. Across the attached World YMCA documents, wellbeing is treated mainly through safeguarding, Vision 2030 internal transformation, organisational culture, leadership preparation and protected reporting channels.

2. Institutional strategies

2.1 Vision 2030

- Frames the YMCA's collective mission as empowering young people and communities to build a just, sustainable, equitable and inclusive world where every person can thrive in body, mind and spirit.

- Within the Community Wellbeing pillar, the most direct internal goal is that the YMCA Movement will review and develop policies and practices so that staff and volunteers at all levels work in a culture where individual, organisational and community wellbeing is a fundamental priority.
- Vision 2030 also links wellbeing to safe spaces, mental health, resilience, inclusion and protection from harm. In this sense, wellbeing is not peripheral; it is embedded in the Movement's understanding of internal transformation, community empowerment and advocacy.

2.2 World YMCA Strategic Plan 2025–2028

- Positions World YMCA as serving the wider Movement through four strategic directions: strengthening the global YMCA Movement, strengthening collective YMCA impact, strengthening global youth voice and YMCA profile, and strengthening World YMCA's efficiency and sustainability.
- Volunteer-related strategy. The plan explicitly includes preparing the next generation of YMCA leadership for staff and volunteers, providing relevant platforms and channels for young people's and communities' voices to influence change, and building the infrastructure and culture for an impactful and future-ready Movement.
- Wellbeing reference. Under Direction 4, success is partly defined by whether staff and volunteers feel a high level of satisfaction and purpose in their roles.

2.3 Vision 2030 implementation architecture and movement support

- The Practical Guide sets out a structured alignment journey: commitment by the relevant governing body, integration of Vision 2030 into strategy, and implementation through action plans. It also clarifies roles for World, Area, National and Local YMCAs.
- Supporting this, the 2023 Vision 2030 status report describes four Movement Support Functions: Strategic Alignment and Movement Strengthening; Learning, Innovation and Impact; Advocacy and Influence; and Resource Development and Partnerships.
- These support functions include practical measures relevant to wellbeing and volunteer systems, such as surveys on Vision 2030 adoption, coaching circles for National General Secretaries, creation of Pillar Teams, and the preparation of a Targets and Indicators Framework for the 12 Strategic Goals.

Gap. The strategic documents are strong on direction, alignment and internal transformation, but they remain relatively light on concrete, standardised global requirements for volunteer wellbeing systems.

3. Tools and concrete processes

3.1 Recruitment, screening and onboarding of volunteers

- The Safeguarding Policy requires application forms, formal interviews, a minimum of three professional reference checks, and satisfactory background checks where relevant for those working with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- Offers of staff or volunteer positions are conditional upon candidates signing a statement that they have read, understood and will adhere to the policy, code of conduct and related operating practices.
- Orientation must familiarise new staff and volunteers with their safeguarding responsibilities and with the designated safeguarding person.

3.2 Safeguarding-centred duty of care

- The policy sets out clear behavioural expectations: staff and volunteers must interact based on equality, trust, respect and honesty, create safe and welcoming spaces, and avoid unsafe, abusive, discriminatory, humiliating or sexually provocative conduct.
- Covered persons are expected to be alert to risks, manage them where possible, and ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults feel empowered and confident to raise concerns.
- This creates a concrete, organisation-wide duty of care that protects both beneficiaries and the volunteers and staff working with them.

3.3 Risk assessment and event management

- A risk assessment is required before any event, meeting or overnight programme involving children or young people, including international gatherings hosted by World YMCA.
- Risk assessments must explore participant safety risks, clarify roles and responsibilities, and ensure that appropriate insurance is in place. Swimming, outdoor fires, indoor cooking and hiking/camping are specifically identified as activities requiring thorough preparation.
- A designated Safeguarding Manager must be appointed for each event and work with the host national or local YMCA to ensure compliance with local law.

3.4 Reporting abuse, injuries and incidents

- The policy requires immediate reporting of allegations or complaints of abuse to the appropriate child protection authority, followed by escalation through supervisors and executive leadership.
- Injuries or accidents that cause, or could cause, physical or emotional harm must be recorded, reviewed by executive staff and used for organisational learning and risk reduction.
- This establishes a formal incident-management cycle based on prompt reporting, documentation, review and corrective action.

3.5 Programme design and implementation tools relevant to wellbeing

- The 2025 Meaningful Work Programming Approach provides operational tools for staff and volunteers at national and local level, including a Programming Framework, a program design canvas, governance and impact-measurement templates, risk-and-mitigation planning and implementation checklists.
- Although its primary focus is youth programming, it includes a 'Thrive' component that emphasises wraparound support, supportive wellbeing policies and processes, and additional layers of support that enable participants to continue education, skilling and work pathways.
- It also requires attention to approvals, policy and compliance, resourcing, training, ecosystem coordination and monitoring, which strengthens the organisational conditions in which staff and volunteers deliver programmes.

Gap. The global documents do not yet describe a dedicated volunteer-specific psychosocial support pathway, such as formal debriefing, counselling access or a standard crisis-support model for volunteers.

4. Training and development

4.1 Safeguarding and induction training

- The Safeguarding Policy requires training and education so that staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities, know their duty to report concerns, and can handle other obligations arising from the policy.
- New staff and volunteers receive training as they begin their time with the YMCA, and all staff and volunteers are to be reminded of the policy, code of conduct and practices at least annually.

4.2 Leadership development and movement learning spaces

- The World YMCA Strategic Plan 2025–2028 commits the organisation to preparing the next generation of YMCA leadership for staff and volunteers.
- The 2023 Vision 2030 status report shows this being operationalised through movement-wide learning spaces and leadership initiatives, including the fifth cohort of the YMCA Change Agents programme, launched with 115 participants from 56 countries and delivered through six months of training modules.
- These materials show stronger evidence for leadership formation, peer learning and movement connection than for a formal global volunteer wellbeing curriculum.

4.3 Capacity-building and programme guidance under Vision 2030

- The Practical Guide supports YMCAs at all levels to understand Vision 2030, choose pillars and goals, align their own strategies, and implement them according to context.
- The Meaningful Work Programming Approach is specifically designed for national and local YMCA staff and volunteers and provides programme design guidance, development stages, learning resources, implementation steps and support options through World YMCA, Area Alliances and peer learning.
- Together, these documents show a growing ecosystem of movement learning and implementation support, including guidance on resilience and wellbeing needs within programming design.

Gap. There is no single World YMCA-mandated curriculum specifically focused on volunteer wellbeing, mental health or self-care across the Movement.

5. Monitoring, evaluation and indicators

5.1 Safeguarding monitoring

- The Safeguarding Policy requires ongoing supervision and monitoring of programmes, regular checks of programme areas and facilities, annual monitoring by the Executive Committee, and a full review every four years to maintain relevance and effectiveness.
- It also requires incidents, injuries and accidents to be recorded and reviewed so that future risk can be reduced.

5.2 Vision 2030 impact and measurement architecture

- The Strategic Plan 2025–2028 states that World YMCA aims to clearly measure and articulate the collective impact of the Movement under Vision 2030.
- The 2023 status report adds that the Learning, Innovation and Impact support function was preparing a Targets and Indicators Framework for the 12 Strategic Goals, along with a Learning and Innovation Hub.

- The Meaningful Work Programming Approach translates this logic into programme practice: YMCAs are asked to define expected outcomes, success measures, monitoring mechanisms, risks, governance and resourcing needs, and to monitor and continuously improve their programmes.

Gaps. The documents do not provide a publicly standardised set of global indicators specifically for volunteer wellbeing, such as burnout, satisfaction, retention or psychological safety. Monitoring is stronger for safeguarding compliance, movement alignment and programme impact than for volunteer wellbeing as a distinct domain.

6. Recognition, motivation and volunteer voice

6.1 Volunteer representation in governance

- The Constitution gives an important place to voluntary leadership in formal governance. It states that World Council representation should, as far as possible, be composed of voluntary workers and be representative of the various sections of aggregate membership.
- It also states that Executive Committee members perform their duties exclusively on a voluntary, unpaid basis. This means volunteer service is not merely operational; it is structurally embedded in governance and leadership.

6.2 Youth and volunteer voice in strategy and movement life

- The Strategic Plan includes the objective of preparing the next generation of YMCA leadership for staff and volunteers and of providing platforms and channels for young people's and communities' voices to influence change.
- The Vision 2030 Practical Guide consistently frames the movement as 'one movement, many journeys', encouraging YMCAs to connect local, national, area and world-level work within a shared collective journey.
- The Meaningful Work Programming Approach goes further in programme design terms: its 'Engage' component calls for young people to shape programmes, influence decisions and access representation opportunities across the ecosystem.

6.3 Movement identity, belonging and visibility

- The 2023 status report shows that World YMCA has invested in movement-wide communication and engagement spaces such as The Ignite Show, Vision 2030 newsletters, global events and youth-facing advocacy platforms.
- These do not amount to a formal recognition policy, but they do reinforce belonging, movement identity and the visibility of young leaders and volunteers.

Gap. The global documents provide a stronger basis for participation and representation than for formal volunteer recognition policies or structured volunteer feedback loops specifically linked to wellbeing.

7. Concrete experiences and good practices

7.1 Vision 2030 – explicit internal commitment to staff and volunteers' wellbeing

- A major strength is that the official Vision 2030 text explicitly states that the YMCA Movement will review and develop policies and practices so that staff and volunteers at

all levels work in a culture where individual, organisational and community wellbeing is a fundamental priority.

- This makes wellbeing a strategic internal transformation commitment, not a secondary aspiration.

7.2 Comprehensive safeguarding approach

- The Safeguarding Policy combines principles, behavioural standards, recruitment and screening, orientation, training, accountability, risk assessment, reporting, event management and monitoring in one coherent system.
- This is the clearest and most operationalised global World YMCA framework relevant to volunteer wellbeing because it creates concrete expectations, protected reporting routes and safer conditions for service.

7.3 Governance model that values voluntary leadership

- The Constitution does more than permit volunteer participation: it expects World Council representation, as far as possible, to include voluntary workers, and it defines Executive Committee service as unpaid.
- This is a strong governance signal that volunteers are central actors in the identity and decision-making of the Movement.

7.4 Movement support architecture for alignment, learning and measurement

- The Practical Guide and the 2023 status report show a maturing implementation architecture: strategic alignment support, coaching circles, movement surveys, pillar teams, a planned indicators framework and a Learning and Innovation Hub.
- These elements create the foundations on which a more explicit volunteer wellbeing system could later be built.

7.5 Meaningful Work programming tools with wellbeing-sensitive design

- The 2025 Programming Approach introduces practical tools that require programme designers to consider governance, risks, training, resourcing, monitoring and stakeholder management. Its 'Thrive' component explicitly includes supportive wellbeing policies and processes and additional layers of support.
- Although designed mainly for young people's pathways into meaningful work, it demonstrates how World YMCA is beginning to embed wellbeing-sensitive design into implementation tools used by staff and volunteers.

Systemic gaps and opportunities. The documents show clear progress in safeguarding, internal strategic language and movement support. However, they still do not amount to a fully codified global volunteer wellbeing system. The main gaps are the absence of a dedicated volunteer wellbeing policy, limited visibility of volunteer-specific psychosocial support pathways, and the lack of standardised global indicators focused specifically on volunteer wellbeing.

8. Overall diagnosis

The World Alliance of YMCAs integrates volunteer wellbeing most clearly through its safeguarding system, its Vision 2030 commitment to internal transformation, and its growing movement-support architecture. Compared with the previous version of this analysis, the attached documents show a stronger and more current basis for three things: first, an explicit strategic commitment to prioritising staff and volunteers' wellbeing; second, a formal governance culture in which voluntary leadership is structurally recognised; and third, a more developed

implementation ecosystem through the Practical Guide, Strategic Plan, status reporting and the 2025 Meaningful Work Programming Approach. Even so, the overall model remains more implicit than codified: wellbeing is embedded across safeguarding, strategy, governance and programme guidance, but has not yet been consolidated into a single global volunteer wellbeing framework with clear rights, minimum standards, support pathways and indicators.

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