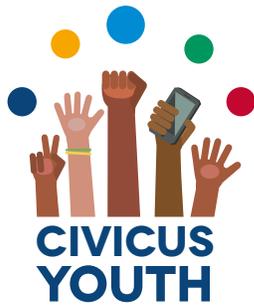


**RESTLESS
DEVELOPMENT**



MAXIMISING BENEFITS:

A RECOMMENDED FRAMEWORK
FOR VOLUNTEERISM AND
COMPENSATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

CRISTINA BACALSO &
DR. DAN MOXON

Collaborating Organisations:
Civics and Restless
Development

This scoping document outlines the problems surrounding volunteering and compensation and provides **recommendations**, to any organisation wishing to develop a volunteering framework. It does not reflect our current policies and practices. We are committed to reflecting on these recommendations in our organisations and agreeing how to apply them, where relevant, to our work in the future. We encourage others to do the same, as relevant and appropriate for your organisations, and to share your insights and lessons learned with others in the sector.

INTRODUCTION AND APPROACH

This document aims to provide concise, practical guidance on volunteerism and compensation for young people. It is based on a document review of relevant internal policies on volunteering, compensation and reimbursement, and consultation meetings with CIVICUS and Restless Development staff and select partner INGOs that work with youth. Special consultation meetings were held with young leaders working with INGOs without the presence of supervisory staff to yield honest inputs.¹ As this is a scoping document and not a piece of research, the consultation groups did not aim for representativeness, though the consultants adhered to all safeguarding and informed consent protocols in the meetings with young leaders.

The principles of this document are influenced by **Ethical Research Involving Children (ERIC)** (2013), a compendium of ethical guidelines developed by UNICEF Innocenti and partners, which is instructive for all types of participation by young people. “Participation” in the context of this guidance is meant broadly as any engagement a young person has with an organisation. This document takes a rights-based approach rooted in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and relevant General Comments such as No. 12 on the right to be heard and No. 20 on adolescence. It recognises children and young people’s **agency** and **participation rights** while also giving attention to their **provision** and **protection rights**.² It also relies on international instruments and definitions on labour, work, and volunteer work from the ILO and other volunteer standards organisations, such as the National Council for Voluntary Organisations in the UK.

AS THIS IS A SCOPING DOCUMENT AND NOT A PIECE OF RESEARCH, THE CONSULTATION GROUPS DID NOT AIM FOR REPRESENTATIVENESS, THOUGH THE CONSULTANTS ADHERED TO ALL SAFEGUARDING AND INFORMED CONSENT PROTOCOLS IN THE MEETINGS WITH YOUNG LEADERS.

1 One safeguarding focal point from Plan International was present but did not have a direct supervisory role with any young people participating

2 Graham, A., Powell, M., Taylor, N., Anderson, D. & Fitzgerald, R. (2013). Ethical Research Involving Children. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research- Innocenti. <https://childethics.com/>

This document has the following sections:

- **SECTION 1:** Outcomes of desktop review and consultations with INGO staff and young leaders who volunteer with them
- **SECTION 2:** A recommended framework for volunteerism and compensation for young people
- **SECTION 3:** Next steps for INGOs

This document is not intended to be a volunteering policy nor a comprehensive compensation package, but instead hopes to spur new thinking and discussions on volunteerism and compensation for young people in INGOs to lay the groundwork for establishing best practices for the sector in the future. The terms “organisation” and “INGO” are used interchangeably in this document, though the audience for this guidance is any non-profit organisation that engages young people.

SECTION 1:

OUTCOMES OF DESKTOP REVIEW AND CONSULTATIONS WITH INGO STAFF AND YOUNG LEADERS WHO VOLUNTEER WITH THEM

The consultation and desktop review revealed the following:

INGO staff and young leaders observed that young people increasingly are “**partners**” and “**leaders**” rather than only “beneficiaries” of programmes. This trend has also coincided with:

- Young people having higher levels of responsibility, in more decision-making roles, and with more influence;
- Recognition for young people’s expertise in its own right, without which a project may not be successful;
- Young people engaging in more continuous, rather than one-off, activities;
- Young people’s time commitment with organisations becoming more intensive;
- Young people becoming more “visible” as representatives or spokespersons for the organisation, which gives the organisation legitimacy and also access (e.g., to decision-makers, fundraising opportunities)

While a welcome shift in the sector, this has also led to tensions and challenges. Chief among them is that some young leaders feel that **organisations ask for too much and that young leaders receive too little in return**. Some young leaders see less benefit

THE FINDINGS SHARED IN THIS DOCUMENT DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE VIEWS OF CIVICUS, RESTLESS DEVELOPMENT NOR ITS PARTNERS.

to their participation, and in some cases, **bearing costs**. Staff in INGOs **want to be fair to young people relating to compensation but face constraints**. Constraints include practical operational/legal constraints and safeguarding considerations, such as backlash in the community when young people receive pay. Staff in INGOs are also concerned about the effect compensation may have on **volunteering** and **civic participation**. There is a worry about creating an **“economy around participation”** where young people will only contribute their time and efforts when paid, challenging the INGO’s ability to deliver some projects at scale.

Within the current arrangements identified by the consultation, **reimbursement for costs incurred** is the most common type of compensation offered for obvious expenses related to young people’s participation (e.g., travel costs, data costs). Reimbursement is the least controversial type of compensation among INGO staff.

- Young leaders remarked that there are less obvious or unforeseen costs that are not covered, including wear and tear over time of their computers or the cost of their absence to family members.
- Some INGO staff and most youth leaders prefer per diems rather than reimbursements tied to receipts. Per diems give young people more freedom to choose what to spend the money on, including saving the money for themselves. However, now that participation is online, and organisations no longer give per diems for travel, youth leaders feel they are not receiving the same benefit.

THERE IS A WORRY ABOUT CREATING AN “ECONOMY AROUND PARTICIPATION” WHERE YOUNG PEOPLE WILL ONLY CONTRIBUTE THEIR TIME AND EFFORTS WHEN PAID, CHALLENGING THE INGO’S ABILITY TO DELIVER SOME PROJECTS AT SCALE.

Payment for work or services (e.g., lump-sum tied to a project deliverable, an hourly or day-base salary similar to consultancies, or employment contracts) is the least common form of compensation and the most controversial among staff.

- Concerns around payment relate to the sustainability of projects (e.g., unable to deliver at-scale if an organisation paid all its volunteers), protection (e.g., backlash from the community when organisations pay some youth but not others; young people with sudden large sums of money becoming targets), perverse incentives (creating an “economy around participation” where young people will not want to do community work without getting paid, or where young people will choose to work with an INGO instead of going to school), and operational/legal (e.g., employment laws, NGO funding laws, practicalities of transferring money)

Financial compensation beyond reimbursement, for example, **honorariums** (e.g., a token payment to say thanks) or **“enhanced stipends”** which go beyond the obvious reimbursement costs to be covered, are sometimes used in place of “payment.”

- Reasons for doing this include saving on paperwork, getting around tricky contracting procedures, or budgetary constraints.
- Some INGO staff are concerned that the rates are not fair (e.g., not on par with living or even minimum wages), and there is a “double standard” when consultants are paid more for the same work.

The youth leaders consulted say they never went into volunteer work with the expectation of “getting paid,” but it helps and means a lot when they do. However, there are instances where **youth leaders feel that it is unfair** that they do not receive compensation beyond basic reimbursement of costs (e.g., pay):

- When the role has a lot of responsibility or takes a lot of time;
- When they do not design the position or its tasks, but they are fulfilling duties prescribed by the organisation;
- When the main benefit does not feel like it is for them, but instead for the organisation;
- When they know that in other circumstances the tasks are completed by staff or consultants;
- When it is high-profile, and can lead to many gains for the organisation (e.g., access to funding) but not necessarily for themselves.

Youth leaders always appreciate non-financial compensation (e.g., certificate at the end of participation), which can help with CVs, but many organisations often forget them.

- Some INGOs’ non-financial compensation includes mentorship opportunities, access to training opportunities (not related to the role the young person is fulfilling), or online classes.

SECTION 2:

A RECOMMENDED FRAMEWORK FOR VOLUNTEERISM AND COMPENSATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The following is a recommended framework for approaching volunteerism and compensation for young people, produced by the consultants. The framework does not intend to describe current practices but rather a set of standards or guidelines to be worked towards to resolve current challenges.

Ideally, INGOs should apply this framework before engaging a young person, building it into the project planning or design stage. It is essential to be clear about what role the young person will be undertaking and the type of compensation related to it to set expectations and plan your project accordingly. Even after a project has started, it is essential to reassess their roles throughout, as they might change regularly.

When a change in role occurs (e.g., from volunteer to worker), there are two choices: Either change the compensation to reflect the new role or change the activities involved to return the role to its original status.

A NOTE ON ENGAGEMENT WITH INDIVIDUAL YOUNG PEOPLE VS. YOUTH ORGANISATIONS:

In the consultation, many INGOs mentioned that they have two primary modalities through which they engage young people: Directly with individual young people or through youth organisations (e.g., “youth partners”). Youth organisations sometimes bring their volunteer group of young people who interact and engage with the INGO in various activities.

The following framework intends to guide engagement by an INGO directly with individual young people. In the case of partner youth organisations, the duty to manage their volunteerism and compensation rests with that organisation.

However, INGOs must keep an eye out for when the duty shifts and the individual young person moves from being a volunteer of the partner organisation to that of the INGO. In that case, the INGO becomes responsible for managing that young person concerning volunteerism and compensation.

The consultants recommend that INGOs encourage partner organisations to adopt similar guidelines on volunteerism and compensation, similar to how INGOs ensure that partners adhere to the INGOs safeguarding guidelines, to provide standard and fair treatment of young people throughout the sector.

The framework has the following components:

- A. Understanding the **key ethical principles on volunteerism and compensation for young people**
- B. Understanding when the young person’s role is one of a **Participant, Volunteer, or Worker**, including a decision tree and illustrative profiles
- C. Understanding the different types of compensation: Payment, Reimbursement, (Financial or in-kind) Appreciation/Incentivisation and how they link to the various roles
- D. Key considerations for volunteerism and compensation for young people

A. KEY ETHICAL PRINCIPLES ON VOLUNTEERISM AND COMPENSATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

In general, young people should be **properly acknowledged, adequately recompensed, and given fair returns for their involvement**, following the guiding ethical principles of **justice/fairness, benefit, respect, and Do No Harm**³. INGOs should take extra care if any compensation potentially causes **economic or social tensions** or creates **perverse incentives**. INGOs should mitigate these harms and should not use this as a rationale for non-compensation when asking young people

³ Graham, A. et al. (2013).

to contribute their time, skills, and effort. Moreover, young people's volunteerism and participation should not **displace paid employment** nor **undermine labour standards or rights**⁴.

The following are the key ethical considerations when setting volunteering and compensation policies:

- **Justice/Fairness:** Is there a balance between the benefits of participation and the burdens placed on the young person? To what extent are the contributions of the young person recognised and treated fairly? For example, are young people treated fairly compared to other people who undertake work on behalf of the organisation? When does volunteering turn into unpaid work? Are the labour rights of young people being respected and upheld?
- **Beneficence (Benefit):** To what extent does a young person's participation provide/lead to improving the young person's status, rights, and well-being involved and their immediate community? Can this be clearly articulated? Is the benefit of the activity primarily directed towards the young person? Or does the activity primarily service the purposes of the organisation and its mission?
- **Non-maleficence (Do No Harm):** To what extent are potential harms from participation (for example, loss of income, reputational costs) assessed and minimised or eliminated? Does taking part in activities have a negative financial impact on young people, where they have to pay out of pocket? Are expectations managed, and disappointment as to the level of benefit, avoided? Are possibilities for backlash or tensions created within the community considered, addressed, and minimised? Conducting a risk assessment could help understand potential risks and harms, as well as how to mitigate them.
- **Respect:** Are the unequal relationships of power between individuals and INGOs, and between young people and staff, acknowledged and taken into consideration, and are they supported in deciding to participate (or not) without coercion and with respect for their dignity?
- **Agency:** To what extent is the young person able to direct their involvement and the tasks they undertake or initiate? Are they able to highly influence the scope of their contribution (as in volunteering), or are they fulfilling prescribed duties with little flexibility (as in work)? Are they easily able to withdraw from tasks without penalisation, real or perceived?
- **Access and non-discrimination:** To what extent are the barriers to participation assessed, and how can compensation help reduce or eliminate them? Are financial or non-financial compensation helpful/necessary to ensure there is equitable access to the project? Can they help to avoid indirect discrimination by removing barriers to access?

INGOS SHOULD TAKE EXTRA CARE IF ANY COMPENSATION POTENTIALLY CAUSES ECONOMIC OR SOCIAL TENSIONS OR CREATES PERVERSE INCENTIVES.

4 Adapted from definitions given in Graham, A. et al. (2013).

B. DIFFERENT TYPES OF ROLES: PARTICIPANT, VOLUNTEER, WORKER

INGOs need to determine the role and tasks the young person is undertaking when setting a volunteering and compensation policy. After an INGO determines the roles, it can then apply a consistent and fair compensation policy to each one. For this framework, we can divide the types of roles a young person can have when engaging with INGOs into three categories: **Participant**, **Volunteer**, or **Worker**.

Regardless of what title an organisation gives to the role, it is the nature of the role, its relationship with the organisation; and the primary benefit (the young person, the organisation, or both); that determines its actual status.

Identifying suitable compensation involves carefully considering what activities the young person undertakes with the organisation and what role they are fulfilling when they engage in each activity. INGOs should regularly assess the role, as roles may change over time. For example, an organisation might *intend* to work with young people as volunteers but find their role evolves to a worker over time and needs to be reassessed. This assessment might lead to a change in compensation or a change in the role itself (e.g., back to a volunteer)

Participant: A participant is someone who takes part in an activity where the primary purpose of the activity is for the personal and social benefit of the participant. Personal and social benefits can include the opportunity to learn and develop new skills, have fun and enjoyment, develop valued relationships, and access support. These benefits are the immediate and direct outcome of participation to the young people participating.

Volunteer: A volunteer is someone who undertakes a non-compulsory activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to improve the environment, community, groups, or individuals.⁵ Activities may include volunteering to support the organisation's programs or mission, or "organisation-based" volunteering⁶, which is the focus of this document.

There exist legal standards⁷ as to when roles are "genuine volunteer roles" and when roles should be for paid workers (more below):

- Volunteer hours undertaken are not imposed on individual volunteers but mutually agreed based on their availability and around their other commitments;
- While an organisation can agree on reasonable expectations of a volunteer, organisations cannot compel volunteers to turn up at a certain time or at all;
- Volunteers are free to leave a volunteering placement whenever they wish – for example; they cannot be obliged to volunteer for a certain number of months or to give notice.⁸

5 National Council of Voluntary Organizations (NCVO), 2015, *Voluntary internships in the voluntary sector: Review and guidance*, <https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/your-team/volunteers-and-your-organisation/volunteering-internships>

6 Organisation-based volunteering contrasts with "direct" volunteering, that is, "volunteer activities engaged in directly for other households." ILO, 2011, *Manual on the measurement of volunteer work*, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/publication/wcms_162119.pdf

7 These standards for volunteer work are derived from UK labour law, as described in NCVO (2015). While the specifics of the law and its obligations do not apply in other jurisdictions, the definition illustrates fair treatment concerning paid and unpaid work in a legal context.

8 Ibid.

These standards illustrate the way volunteers have a higher degree of agency and choice over the tasks they undertake compared to workers (below).

Beyond the minimum legal requirements, a volunteer role should also have personal and social benefits for the volunteer (e.g. the opportunity to learn and develop new skills, have fun and enjoyment, develop valued relationships, and access support). The volunteer should also derive benefits from realising a project or goal or implementing something that directly and immediately improves their community. In volunteer roles, the young person derives benefits as well as providing benefits to the organisation.

Worker: In the context of this document, a worker is someone who undertakes an activity to produce goods or provide services for the primary benefit of the organisation.⁹ An organisational benefit contributes to achieving the organisation's goals and mission or delivering its services and programmes. While these, in turn, may still help to improve the lives of young people in general, this impact occurs in a more indirect, abstract, or long-term way. Organisational benefits are not immediately yielded to the young people who contribute to them, if at all.

A worker may also have a lower degree of agency than other roles. They perform tasks under certain conditions in return for remuneration, which is directly linked to the tasks. The organisation sets a clear expectation of the work and exercises a degree of control over the worker by specifying one or more of the following:

- the worker's tasks;
- the goods to be produced;
- the services to be provided;
- the timeframe; or
- the working hours

The relationship between the organisation and the worker includes a degree of compulsion for the worker to undertake the work in a specified manner. The worker can expect to receive some form of penalty if work is not performed as specified, such as loss of work or non-payment. Employment is one form of work, but other forms include self-employment, 'gig' or freelance work, casual work, or self-production of goods.¹⁰¹¹ The precise definitions of worker status are country-specific and governed by national labor standards, and ideally in

THE WORKER CAN EXPECT TO RECEIVE SOME FORM OF PENALTY IF WORK IS NOT PERFORMED AS SPECIFIED, SUCH AS LOSS OF WORK OR NON-PAYMENT.

9 ILO, n.d., *ILO Glossary of Statistical Terms*, http://www.ilo.ch/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/normativeinstrument/wcms_230304.pdf

10 Ibid.

11 This guidance does not cover internships given the lack of a universally accepted definition and variability depending on the legal context, link to education, and active labour market policies. However, most internships, irrespective of the arrangement, should be subject to the same entitlements and protections as "ordinary" employment relationships, including minimum wage laws. Stewart, A., Owens, R., Hewitt, A. and Nikoloudakis, I., 2018, "The regulation of internships: A comparative study," ILO Employment Working Paper No. 240, https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_635740.pdf

line with international labour standards¹². However, most national employment law typically divides workers into employed and self-employed categories. Employment is accompanied by greater access to labor rights. Various types of contracting and labor rights will exist depending on the worker's status and the territory. These might include the right to a working contract, minimum wage, or sickness benefits.

DECISION TREE: IS THE ROLE FOR A PARTICIPANT, VOLUNTEER, OR WORKER?

The following decision tree aims to illustrate the differences between a **participant**, **volunteer**, or **worker**. When a current role cannot be easily categorised, the guidance recommends the INGO reconfigure the role to create more explicit expectations for the young person and the organisation.

The first step (1) is to identify where the primary benefit of the young person's engagement lies. If the primary benefit of the activity is for the young person, they are a **participant**. Activities whose main purpose is to advance the work of the organisation is typically done by **workers**. A young person may receive some personal and social benefit, but this is not a condition. The time invested by the young person as a worker typically outweighs the personal & social benefits.

Volunteer work provides both benefits to the young person and the organisation. Good quality volunteering opportunities should enable the young person to gain *substantial* personal and social benefits, like the opportunity to learn and develop new skills, have fun and enjoyment, develop valued relationships, and access support. Volunteers also benefit from realising a project or goal or implementing something that creates a direct and immediate improvement to their community.

Organisations gain benefits, too. Volunteers' time and skill help the organisation achieve its goals and mission or deliver its services and programmes. In youth organisations, this can be symbiotic – helping organisations reach their goals and mission helps elevate young people's status and well-being, which indirectly benefits the young person volunteering.

However, even when a young person gains benefits from a role, this alone does not make them a volunteer. Volunteering requires that a person give their time and engage in the manner they wish, without creating or having a strong obligation to fulfill duties to the organisation. It is also important to consider who decides the tasks, hours, and timeframe (2). As per the NCVO (2015) legal definition, the agency and choice must lie mainly with the volunteer. Otherwise, they are a worker.

VOLUNTEERING REQUIRES THAT A PERSON GIVE THEIR TIME AND ENGAGE IN THE MANNER THEY WISH, WITHOUT CREATING OR HAVING A STRONG OBLIGATION TO FULFILL DUTIES TO THE ORGANISATION.

12 ILO, n.d., Conventions and Recommendations, <https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/introduction-to-international-labour-standards/conventions-and-recommendations/lang--en/index.htm#:~:text=The%20ILO%20Govern-ing%20Body%20has,forced%20or%20compulsory%20labour%3B%20the>

Determining how much agency a young person has can be complex. While all would agree that INGOs should not coerce a young person into volunteering, they might legitimately encourage, persuade and support. This can create real or perceived expectations and obligations on the young person, particularly within complex power relations between INGOs and staff and young people.

An additional question to ask oneself to distinguish between a volunteer and a worker is to compare if a paid worker would typically do the activities in your organisation or a similar one (3). Is the young person completing tasks employees or consultants get paid for have been paid for in the past? Is the title of their role the same or similar to that of paid employees or consultants? Are these tasks necessary for the core functioning of the organisation? This question helps determine if the role is closer to unpaid work than volunteering. If yes, a worker should likely do this role.

WHEN VOLUNTEERING FEELS LIKE WORK:

A 2019 survey of 10,000 adults in the UK revealed that the top three perceived benefits from volunteering are enjoyment, having a sense of personal achievement, and feeling like they are making a difference.

People who reported that their volunteering was becoming “too much like paid work” felt the organisation had unreasonable expectations of their time, a sense of obligation to give more time to the organisation, and a lack of appreciation or being valued, which diminished their enjoyment of their roles.

Even if a volunteer role meets the legal criteria of being a volunteer (see NCVO, 2015), it is still possible that volunteer work can feel like a paid job – meaning that volunteers perceive fewer benefits from their contribution and only feeling the costs. This situation leaves volunteers unhappy, dissatisfied, and looking elsewhere to spend their time and efforts, reducing overall engagement and compromising projects’ sustainability.

In these instances, it’s essential to revisit the volunteer roles to maximise the benefits for young people. In addition to meeting the legal criteria for a volunteer (a high degree of flexibility, agency, and choice over the tasks they undertake, including the amount of time they commit), ask yourself: Is this young person having fun? Are they learning new skills? Are they developing valuable relationships? Are they being appreciated? Do they feel valued?

A 2019 SURVEY OF 10,000 ADULTS IN THE UK REVEALED THAT THE TOP THREE PERCEIVED BENEFITS FROM VOLUNTEERING ARE ENJOYMENT, HAVING A SENSE OF PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT, AND FEELING LIKE THEY ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE.

DECISION TREE TO DETERMINE IF A ROLE IS FOR A PARTICIPANT, VOLUNTEER, OR WORKER

1 IS THE PURPOSE OF THE ACTIVITY TO PRIMARILY BENEFIT THE YOUNG PERSON OR THE ORGANISATION?

YOUNG PERSON	BOTH	ORGANISATION
The primary purpose of the activity is to provide personal & social benefits for the young person	The activity provides benefits to the organisation & provides substantial personal and social benefits to the young person	The primary purpose of the activity is to help the organisation fulfill its mission & goals. Personal and social benefits to the young person are a plus, but not a necessary condition. Time and effort invested by the young person typically outweighs the personal & social benefits.

2 WHO HAS CONTROL TO DECIDE THE TASKS, HOURS, TIMEFRAME, ETC.?

YOUNG PERSON	UNCLEAR/BOTH	ORGANISATION
The young person can give their time and engage in the manner they wish, without creating or having a strong obligation to fulfill duties to the organisation		The organisation determines specific responsibilities and tasks, within a specific time frame or working hours, to which a young person commits and is obliged to fulfill

3 DO THE ACTIVITIES INVOLVE TASKS THAT A PAID WORKER WOULD TYPICALLY DO?

NO → Tasks are auxiliary to the functioning of the organisation

YES → Tasks are necessary for the core functioning of the organisation

This person is a Participant

See compensation type:
Reimbursement (optional)
(Financial or in-kind) Appreciation / Incentivisation (optional)

This person is a Volunteer

See compensation type:
Reimbursement (required)
(Financial or in-kind) Appreciation / Incentivisation (optional)

This person is a Worker

See compensation type:
Payment (required)

GENERIC PROFILES OF PARTICIPANT, VOLUNTEER, AND WORKER

PARTICIPANT 	VOLUNTEER 	WORKER 
<p>Features of the activity:</p> <p>A young person attends, takes part in, engages in, uses support from an activity hosted by the organisation.</p>	<p>Features of the activity:</p> <p>A young person helps out, supports, contributes time and effort to an activity based around their availability, in a timeframe that works for them, with agreement on the tasks they want to undertake (or not)</p>	<p>Features of the activity:</p> <p>A young person commits to specific responsibilities and tasks within a specific time frame or working hours determined by the <i>organisation</i></p>
<p>Benefits to the young person:</p> <p>Personal and social benefits (Fun, skill learning, building relationships) Immediate & direct outcome of participating</p>	<p>Benefits to the young person:</p> <p><i>Substantial</i> personal and social benefits (Fun, skill learning, building relationships + sense of accomplishment from realising a goal). Benefits outweigh the time & effort put in.</p>	<p>Benefits to the young person:</p> <p>Financial remuneration in exchange for their labour. Additional personal and social benefits are a plus but not a necessary condition. Time invested by the young person typically outweighs the personal and social benefits.</p>
<p>Benefits to the organisation:</p> <p>Little to none – the organisation provides a service to the young person and bears the activity’s cost.</p>	<p>Benefits to the organisation:</p> <p>Organisation is helped with achieving its goals and mission or deliver its services and programmes. The core functioning of the organisation is not contingent on the successful completion of tasks by its volunteers. Volunteers offer support that is ancillary to the core functioning of the organisation.</p>	<p>Benefits to the organisation:</p> <p>Organisation can achieve its goals and mission or deliver its services and programmes. The core functioning of the organisation is contingent on the successful completion of tasks by its workers.</p>

C. DIFFERENT TYPE OF COMPENSATION: PAYMENT, REIMBURSEMENT, (FINANCIAL OR IN-KIND) APPRECIATION/INCENTIVISATION

FINANCIAL OR IN-KIND) APPRECIATION/ INCENTIVISATION	REIMBURSEMENT	PAYMENT
<p>DEFINITION</p> <p>Appreciation bonuses are tokens given after participation to acknowledge contribution, and incentives are offered before to encourage participation.</p>	<p>Reimbursement compensates for direct out-of-pocket expenses related to participation (e.g., travel costs, cost of equipment).</p>	<p>Payment is the remuneration given to a worker by an enterprise or organisation in exchange for tasks undertaken.</p>
<p>WHAT IT IS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can take the form of symbolic financial or in-kind gifts or benefits • If financial should be a nominal amount so as not to be confused with payment <p>EXAMPLES: t-shirts, gift cards, celebration events, paid online classes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial reimbursement is given before the young person incurs expenses or back to the young person after they covered the upfront cost • Can be a stipend reflecting the estimated expenses incurred, or can be tied to receipts • Reflective of all reasonable costs <p>EXAMPLES: Travel costs, data costs, childcare costs, contribution to wear and tear of equipment (e.g., laptops)</p> <p>NOTE: INGOs can minimise reimbursements by directly paying for the costs associated with completing tasks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wage or lump sum payments in exchange for services and conditional on completing tasks as agreed • Tasks and financial remuneration specified (ideally in writing) in an agreement drawn up at the start of work • In line with the organisation’s existing employment/ contracting policies & practices where young people are paid to the same standard as other workers who undertake comparable tasks • In compliance with local employment & tax laws and international standards

FINANCIAL OR IN-KIND) APPRECIATION/ INCENTIVISATION

REIMBURSEMENT

PAYMENT

WHAT IT IS NOT

- Should not be used to coerce, bribe, or control
- Should not be used as a form of payment (excessively high and used as a method of avoiding a defined working agreement or circumventing employment & tax laws)
- It does not include things required for the completion of the work (e.g., health insurance, training)

- Gifts
- Should not be used as a form of payment (excessively high and used as a method of avoiding a defined working agreement or circumventing employment & tax laws)
- Not conditional upon the quality of the tasks completed

- Gifts
- Honorarium (significant financial gift, not linked to a defined working agreement and employment & tax law)
- Stipends (intended to reimburse out-of-pocket expenses)

ROLE

- Optional for **volunteers** & participants (can be used to encourage participation, say thank you)
- **Workers** may receive appreciation/incentivisation in line with the organisation's existing gift policies for workers or staff. (e.g., office parties, employee performance bonuses, or leaving gifts)

Required for **volunteers**

Optional for **participants** (can be used to help decrease barriers to access, if an issue, although good practice is to design projects so that participants incur minimal costs)

Workers may receive reimbursements in line with the organisation's existing reimbursement packages for workers and staff (including with policies on location-based vs. international pay levels)

Required for **workers** in line with the organisation's existing compensation packages (including with policies on location-based vs. international pay levels)

Not required for **volunteers** and **participants**

NON-FINANCIAL APPRECIATION/INCENTIVES

Non-financial appreciation/incentives should be a base-level requirement for **all participation/empowerment work with young people**. Non-financial appreciation can be as simple as staff saying thank you and making young people feel valued. However, concrete tokens of appreciation, such as certificates and personalised letters of recommendation, go a long way and have value for the young person's future employment. Additional non-financial appreciation given by some INGOs includes mentorship opportunities or access to training opportunities (not related to the role the young person is fulfilling). Non-financial incentives include ensuring that the activity is designed in a fun and engaging way, have social opportunities for connection and networking, and articulate and communicate the advantages of participating.

A note on governance roles: Governance roles may appear to be closer to a worker role than a volunteer – benefits for both the organisation and the young person, highly circumscribed tasks, fixed time commitment, and terms of engagement. Many legal contexts specify that organisations cannot pay governance roles (such as trustees) beyond reasonable expenses.¹³ However, the debate on this is evolving, particularly concerning diversifying board roles and increasing access.¹⁴ Therefore the issue of compensation for governance roles depends on your local laws and internal INGO governance policies.

NON-FINANCIAL APPRECIATION CAN BE AS SIMPLE AS STAFF SAYING THANK YOU AND MAKING YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL VALUED. HOWEVER, CONCRETE TOKENS OF APPRECIATION, SUCH AS CERTIFICATES AND PERSONALISED LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION, GO A LONG WAY AND HAVE VALUE FOR THE YOUNG PERSON'S FUTURE EMPLOYMENT.

D. KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR VOLUNTEERING AND COMPENSATION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Avoid turning volunteering into 'unpaid work.' If volunteer roles offer little agency or personal and social benefit to the young person, reconsider the scope of work and ensure it is a good quality volunteer role: An INGO may not have the budget to add on additional worker roles, a programme may be unsustainable without large numbers of volunteers, or it may cause operational, legal, or safeguarding challenges to start to pay a volunteer as a worker. In these cases, reconfigure the role's scope to ensure they meet the "genuine volunteer" criteria above – maximal flexibility, control, and agency of the role and time commitment in the volunteer's hands. Ensure that it is a good quality volunteer role with maximum personal and social benefits (e.g., opportunity to learn and develop new skills, have fun and enjoyment, develop valued relationships, access support).

¹³ UK Charity Commission, 2014, "Trustee board: people and skills," *Guidance*, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/trustee-board-people-and-skills>

¹⁴ Schwarz, D., 2018 4 April, "The Pros and Cons of Non-for-Profit Board Member Remuneration," Board Direction, <https://boarddirection.com.au/payment-not-for-profit-board-members/>

Does the project rely heavily on fixed time and task commitments, within a specific time frame? Is there a significant time commitment? The time and effort put in by the young person may start to outweigh the benefits. It might be necessary to consider switching them from a volunteer to a worker: When the project needs a fixed time and task commitment from the young person to be successful, the young person has less agency. They cannot give their time and engage in the manner they wish, and the time pressure can make the activity start to feel like an obligation. Any benefits they gain from this project may start to be outweighed by the time and effort they put in. If additionally, there is a significant time commitment, this means that they have less time for other activities (including getting a paid job elsewhere). It may be necessary to consider the young person a worker.

Avoid perpetuating disguised employment¹⁵, “gig economy,” and precarious work: Even if young people are brought on as independent contractors or on short-term worker assignments, ensure that the terms and level of pay and conditions are sufficient. Consider not only minimum wage obligations but also living and fair wage levels. Avoid repeatedly contracting for small engagements and creating gig economy-style roles when an ongoing role could be made. This means considering employing a young person in a stable position, enabling that young person to have better access to social security benefits, health care, and other labour rights, protections, and benefits. Ensure that short-term contracting roles are not used to avoid or minimise labour rights and obligations.

AVOID REPEATEDLY CONTRACTING FOR SMALL ENGAGEMENTS AND CREATING GIG ECONOMY-STYLE ROLES WHEN AN ONGOING ROLE COULD BE MADE.

Do not circumvent local and international labour laws and workers protection rights and tax obligations through stipends or honorariums: Paying large reimbursements, such as stipends which are significantly in excess of costs incurred, or honorariums which are not clearly defined as payments for work, may be an appealing way to pay a young person for their time informally. However, looked at from another angle, this is also poor labour practice which may circumvent fair pay, labor protections, and taxes. When worker roles require payments, this should be done correctly, legally, and fairly in line with local law and international standards and governed by an (ideally written) agreement. Doing this requires investing time and resources to cross the necessary administrative and legal hurdles. If this is not possible, consider reconfiguring the role to meet the “genuine volunteer” criteria instead.

Volunteer roles that are one-off or limited length are easier for young people to see the benefit and help ensure they don’t veer into worker roles: Personal and social benefits are closely linked to the personal growth and development of the young person, and may diminish over time, especially for a young volunteer who does the same role regularly. Repeating the same activities may not always lead to the

¹⁵ ILO, 2021, *Disguised employment / Dependent self-employment*, https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/non-standard-employment/WCMS_534833/lang-en/index.htm

same benefits. For example, facilitating an event or conference for the first time may provide a substantial opportunity to grow confidence and communication skills. However, a young person who does this regularly is unlikely to have the same opportunity for growth from doing so. A young person can, and should, move from role to role as their leadership journey progresses, with different roles and expectations transparently communicated and discussed. They can make clear choices about the length of their commitment and take on new or follow-on volunteer roles if these roles are well defined. Consider new volunteer roles for this young person, such as a mentor for those who come in their place. Does your organisation need that person to continue in the same role, despite the diminishing benefits gained to them personally? This role may need to be a worker role.

Exposure or experience alone is not enough benefits for a young person: In the current economic climate, many young people may be seeking to gain as much experience as possible to compete in a tough employment market. This is especially true if they wish to work in the non-profit or international development sectors. INGOs should not allow themselves to take advantage of young people's enthusiasm and need to gain work experience, even if they offer to take on unpaid worker roles. A young person's willingness to work unpaid does not alone make it ethical, but rather where the primary benefit lies.

Reimbursements are helpful to ensure access for participants. However, it is better to design participation opportunities in a way that has no or minimal costs to the participants: A participant is someone who takes part in an activity where the activity's primary purpose is for the personal and social benefit of the participant. These activities should be made available to as many young people as possible, with few obstacles. Reimbursement can certainly help reduce barriers, but ideally, activities should be designed to maximise access. For example, instead of one international training that requires multi-day travel and high expenses, consider multiple satellite trainings in several regions that require less travel.

A PARTICIPANT IS SOMEONE WHO TAKES PART IN AN ACTIVITY WHERE THE ACTIVITY'S PRIMARY PURPOSE IS FOR THE PERSONAL AND SOCIAL BENEFIT OF THE PARTICIPANT.

Careful consideration of local social and cultural context is crucial in determining the nature of any role or compensation: In some contexts, particularly those in which young people are involved in the economic support of their family or live in poverty situations, volunteer work takes young people away from productive work that contributes to family well-being, especially if it is time-intensive. In these instances, the direct benefit to the young person as a volunteer is less clear, and treating the role as one of a worker may be more appropriate. Else, volunteer work should be very time-limited, have clear personal and social benefits, and not interfere with the young person's ability to work elsewhere.

There are trade-offs when deciding if pay should be the same level internationally or pegged to local costs:

There is no straightforward way to determine if payment should be tied to local costs or if it should be one rate internationally¹⁶. An obvious upside to location-based pay is that people living in areas with lower costs of living get paid less, and the organisation saves on costs. A downside is the costs to staff harmony, where colleagues getting paid less for the same work may feel that it is unfair. However, even if the INGO sets one rate internationally, that rate may go further in cheaper areas than in more expensive ones. If your INGO has existing policies for local versus international staff regarding pay differentials, these can also be relied on with youth workers. Reimbursements, however, should always be paid to local costs as a reflection of the actual expenses incurred by a volunteer. Excessive reimbursements should not be used as a form of informal payment (see above).

Backlash & safeguarding considerations when deciding level of compensation: In any case of compensation, whether it is payment, reimbursement, or financial/in-kind appreciation/incentive, they should be at a level that is adequate and fair, and not be at a level that is excessively high for the local market value, which could cause social tensions (e.g., jealousy, backlash from the community) and safeguarding issues. In participating in research, ERIC suggests considering compensation to groups such as the school or community to help reduce the potential for resentment, rather than to individual children or families. However, this relies on local knowledge and discussion with a broad representation of community members and stakeholders to ensure fair distribution.¹⁷

SECTION 3:

NEXT STEPS FOR INGOS

1 When designing new roles, be clear whether the role is for a participant, volunteer, or worker:

In advance for each role, INGOS must think through:

- the intended purpose of the role
- the overall nature of the role
- the intended obligations expected of the organisation and the role
- the hours and commitment required to fulfill the role properly
- whether similar roles in the organisation are paid or voluntary – organisations should not use volunteer roles to displace paid staff or undercut their pay and conditions of service.¹⁸

¹⁶ Ro, C., 2020 5 October, "Should you get paid based on where you live?", *BBC Worklife*, <https://www.bbc.com/work-life/article/20200928-should-you-get-paid-based-on-where-you-live>

¹⁷ Graham, A. et al. (2013).

¹⁸ NCVO (2015)

2 Revisit volunteer roles that already exist to ensure that they are “genuine volunteer opportunities”:

It is also important to reassess roles regularly. They can accidentally slip into worker roles over time or as a project changes. Use the NVCO (2015) criteria to ensure the role meets the legal requirements and evaluate the young person’s personal and social benefits to ensure they are substantial and outweigh the costs.

3 If not in place already, consider developing a volunteer policy:

A volunteer policy would help create guidelines for engaging young people as volunteers. It could cover internal policies on:

- how to prioritise benefits to the young person
- how to design projects that maximise young people’s flexibility in shaping their volunteer roles, including task and time commitment
- how to manage power relations to ensure young people can exercise their agency in shaping their volunteer roles
- how to communicate and manage expectations with volunteers
- how to determine actual costs to the young person and reimbursements
- how to continually reassess roles to ensure they do not unintentionally veer into worker roles

4 Create clear guidance on reimbursement for volunteers and participants:

Existing INGO reimbursement policies already have guidelines for travel, food, and data plans.

However, consider additional costs to young people that may be less obvious:

- clothing costs for youth speakers (so that they can participate in high-profile events with dignity)
- childcare costs for young parents when they travel away from home
- contribution to wear and tear of equipment (e.g., laptops)
- contribution to internet costs from home

5 Assess your existing compensation policy to ensure that it does not have double standards for young people:

If a young person’s role is deemed to be that of a worker, ensure that they are compensated in the same way, rate, and level as other workers (employees or consultants) with comparable tasks and required expertise/skills to complete those tasks.