EFFECTS THAT RADIATE THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORIES, HERE AND THERE

Reciprocity in international volunteering acts as a lever for promoting mobility and solidarity in territories here and there. In young people's home territories and associations, the study highlighted **the emergence of new leaders**. On their return from France, international volunteers get back involved in the associations in which they were active (50% of them) or in new associations (65% of them, some of them even setting up new associations). This commitment often takes on a new dimension, with young people reinvesting the skills they acquired during their experience and becoming driving forces in taking on new responsibilities.

In France, the major impact is in the **fight against prejudice and xenophobia** in a context of inward-looking attitudes and mistrust towards migration. By encouraging openness to the world and to other cultures, international volunteers are formidable ambassadors for Education for Citizenship and International Solidarity (ECIS). In landlocked territories, it is a good thing that they are in contact with internationals. For example, here it is important **to show that there are differences among Africans, that not all of them are illegal migrants** trying to reach Great Britain...

Extract from an interview with a French host organisation



A cross-analysis of the effects on the career paths of young people who left to volunteer in France generally shows **positive changes and major transformations both at a personal and professional level, as well as in terms of commitment**. These effects are described by the volunteers themselves and corroborated by their tutors who observe significant progress between the time international volunteers arrive and the time they leave.

The particularity of hosting international volunteers in France – as opposed to sending them – lies particularly in the effects generated on the people concerned, organisations and territories in France. Indeed, volunteers hosted in France are offered an intense and rich intercultural experience, even if it is not always



Word cloud characterising effects of reciprocity based based on verbatims

Study Team (consultants): Noémie Do Linh, Arnaud Laaban, Gaia Sangiorgi Yosanira Corso (Ecuador/ Peru), Ali Edjaré (Togo), Samar Tilii (Tunisia)



www.france-volontaires.org

6, rue Truillot 94200 Ivry-sur-Seine 95, avenue de France 75013 Paris

RENEWED PARTNERSHIPS AND COOPERATION STRATEGIES IN THE TERRITORIES



Volunteering helps in strengthening the synergies **between actors working** on the same issues **in each territory**. Volunteers are "ambassadors" for cooperation, helping to establish partnerships. The City's approach to cooperation is generally based on reciprocity: **the aim is to get two territories**

> to work together on joint actions.



Extract from an interview with a host local authority in France

France is committed to fostering more balanced and reciprocal cooperation relations. In several countries, including Senegal, Togo and Ecuador, French diplomacy has made the principle of reciprocity in international volunteering an important line of its partnership. In terms of decentralised cooperation, the Delegation for the External Action of Local Authorities of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) encourages these reciprocal partnerships every year through its "Youth" calls for projects designed to support youth-related projects between local authorities here and there. Through these exchanges of young volunteers between two territories, and the hosting of international volunteers "on the basis of reciprocity", the cooperation relationship is embodied in a more concrete and tangible way.

CONCLUSION

easy, with many positive effects: deconstruction of prejudices, cultural enrichment, questioning one's own practices in order to improve them, remobilisation of teams, etc.

The presence of international volunteers also makes it possible **to better embody ECIS' actions** conducted in the territory and to **give concrete expression to the cooperation partnerships** that local authorities and associations may have.

However, these effects are also limited by reality of flows: the number of volunteers hosted remains small and the practice of hosting is fragile because it depends on the personal commitment of a limited number of individuals and on external funding.



www.service-civique.gouv.fr



www.f3e.asso.fr

17, rue de Châteaudun 75009 Paris





Reciprocity in

international exchange

and solidarity volunteering

SUMMARY:

THE EFFECTS OF RECIPROCITY IN INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERING





ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTS

The analysis of the effects is based on the testimonies and sources collected below:



CONSULTATION OF DOCUMENTS

(databases, policy, legal and programmatic documents)

EFFECTS ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S CAREER PATHS

Increased personal skills

1. Improved self-confidence and ability to build relationships. 83% of the participants in the survey feel that their self-confidence has increased "a lot", and 78% have greatly improved their ability to build relationships.

2. Again in autonomy and greater responsibility. Young people experience independence by moving away from their families and managing their own day-to-day material and financial affairs, which is not always easy at first.

3. A greater openness and an understanding of the world transformed by confrontation with otherness. Immersion in a new country also helps to demystify some realities, as well as revalue the aspects of one's home country.

4. Improved communication skills as a result of the assignments entrusted to the young people, including testimonies, raising awareness and, more generally, public speaking.



Being a citizen of the world

means saying and thinking that there are no borders and that we all must **be** tolerant towards different culture.

Extracts from an interview with a former volunteer

Stimulated and consolidated commitments in France and in the countries of origin

Prior associative commitment is an important characteristic of international civic service volunteers coming to France. For 91% of respondents to the survey, this commitment is strengthened through volunteering in France and is a long-term project. When they return, young people also tend to diversify their commitments and take on more responsibility.

The opinions of those involved were unanimous in stating that the volunteering **experience** in France was an asset in the young people's career path and on their CVs: it facilitated their access to responsibilities and, more generally, to employment. The vast majority of volunteers felt that their international experience was rewarding and made a difference to potential recruiters in their home countries. When it includes the right support, it helps them to clarify their plans and to project themselves professionally or academically.

Moreover, for many young people, this experience of volunteering in France is a stepping stone towards an international career. Nearly one in two of the respondents to the survey (46%) would like to continue their professional or educational career in France, and 12% would like to do so in a third country.

However, the effects of volunteering on integration are not immediate and there may be a time lag,

83 %

of survey participants believe that their self-confidence has increased "a lot"





have their ability to build relationship improved «a lot»





POSITIVE IMPACT ON TUTORS AND HOSTING STRUCTURES

The results show that 98% of the tutors have developed both personally and professionally, and that this is reflected in their increased ability to get out of their "comfort zone", question their support, leadership and working practices, and also more naturally take a step back and gain a better understanding of the cultural context of the people around them.



This creates a sense of solidarity that goes beyond work: employees take an interest in young people who have come from far away. Hosting and supporting young people are at the heart of our work, because we're proud to know that they come from far and wide to work with us. It brings us back to our individual humanity.

> Extract from the verbatim of the questionnaire for tutors of international volunteers hosted in France



The effects could be multiplied by the practice of double tutoring (in France and in the volunteers' country of origin), in other words **the** cross-fertilisation of peer-to-peer practices, but also by more systematic sharing of experiences in the territories, for example.

The hosting of international volunteers on the basis of reciprocity remains relatively sporadic within each structure, or even each territory: very few structures host more than one or two international volunteers a year, and then maintain annual or biannual regularity, particularly because of the personal investment required to support the young people.

A clear impact on professional integration, a major challenge for young people and partner countries

of varying length, between returning and entering the labour market or returning to education. In addition, it is sometimes difficult to find a job that matches both professional aspirations (particularly if they are centred on commitment) and remuneration expectations.



Reciprocity enabled the volunteer to discover his field of training and to be spotted by an employer in France, who took him on when he returned from his assignment. This experience enabled the young person to realise his potential and get noticed.



Extract from an interview with a Togolese association





 \sum