



# Become a Volunteer Today

## End Conflict in Karachi Tomorrow



Karachi has one of the largest populations amongst the cities in the world. Currently it has been taken over by a narrative of disturbing conflicts. These conflicts include increasing levels of violent extremism, characterized by violent protests, inter-ethnic, political and religious struggles, record breaking murder rates and terrorist activity.

In 2013, more than 3,500 people died in violence in Karachi which the media called a record high. In 2012, the figure was 2,124. The figure for 2014 is likely to match these figures for the previous years.

The killings and constant violent incidents have the potential to instill hatred, intolerance and further crystallize sectarian/ethnic/religious divides especially in young developing impressionable minds.

Two-thirds of Pakistan's population are under the age of 30 which means that the youth constitute a large segment of Karachi's population. It is this very youth which is the beacon of hope for Karachi; they are its future.

One way that this beacon of hope can bring an end to this down spiral in Karachi is through VOLUNTEERISM. By volunteering Karachi's youth will be working together to counter the violence in their city and this can lead to instilling noble values such as tolerance, inclusiveness and cooperation.

### **What Exactly is Volunteerism**

By definition, a volunteer is a person who expresses a willingness to undertake to provide a service free of charge for a specific event or cause.

Volunteerism strengthens trust, solidarity and reciprocity among citizens, by purposefully creating opportunities for participation.

It benefits all parts of society- this includes women, children, young persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, minorities and those who remain excluded for social or economic reasons.



Volunteering brings people together, uniting people from diverse backgrounds, all working toward a common goal. Volunteerism is a powerful means of engaging people in tackling the challenges that have befallen on Karachi.

Everyone can contribute their time, skills and knowledge through volunteer action, and their combined efforts can be a significant force for achieving peace in Karachi. It can make important economic and social contributions, leading to a more cohesive society by building trust and reciprocity among citizens.

It can be both challenging and rewarding and requires one to use his or her skills in a new context. One can also transfer his or her useful knowledge while gaining a greater understanding of the issues affecting other people. By volunteering in different areas within the government, civil society, public or private sectors it is possible to fill the gaps within each system, to gain an understanding and of course to help solve the downtrodden.

Volunteerism is a source of community strength, resilience, solidarity and social cohesion. It can bring positive social change by fostering respect for diversity, equality and the participation of all. It is among society's most vital assets. It is accordingly imperative that all of us try to get involved by volunteering our time, energy and talent, to help the society and the community move forward.

## Areas of Focus & Examples of Volunteering

- Poverty Reduction
- Sustainable Development
- Health
- Youth Empowerment
- Working with Children
- Climate Change
- Disaster Prevention and Management
- Social Integration
- Humanitarian Action
- Working to Promote Animal Rights
- Family Support Systems- Daycares and Eldercare Centers
- Education, Tutors
- Community Cleanups

As Karachiites and Pakistanis, we all can come up with creative ways to build bridges within our community. These diverse forms and areas of volunteering are examples of the range of ways by which we can reach out and participate in actions of solidarity, development and social change, all leading to a peaceful narrative within Karachi.

Taking into account basic human rights as expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the principles of volunteering and the responsibilities of volunteers and the organisations in which they are involved, we call on all volunteers to proclaim their belief in volunteer action as a creative and mediating force which:

- Builds healthy, sustainable communities that respect the dignity of all people;
- Empowers people to exercise their rights as human beings and thus improving their lives;
- Helps solve social, cultural, economic and environmental problems;
- Build a more humane and just society through cooperation.



## Outcome & Benefits

Apart from making Karachi safer, volunteerism is an investment in your city, the people who live in it and yourself.

- **Self:** Volunteers discover hidden talents that may change their view on self-worth.
- **Government:** Through working with local non-profit agencies, volunteers learn about the functions and operation of their government.
- **Community:** Volunteers gain knowledge of local resources available to solve community needs.
- **Happiness Effect:** Helping others kindles happiness. The more people volunteer, the happier they are.

## If you have...

### If you have 5 minutes

You could give blood.

You could start and/ or sign an online petition.

You could donate money for a cause.

### If you have 1 hour

You could read stories or play games with children in hospitals.

### If you have 5 hours

You could clean up a park or public area.

You could plant trees.

### If you have 5 days

You could launch a book drive.

You could run a campaign against animal cruelty.

### If you have 1 month

You could raise funds and collect or deliver goods for those in need.

### If you have a summer

You could give administrative support at free health clinics.

You could start a sports camp, arrange activities and sports competitions.

### If you have 1 year

You could volunteer to help teach children at a public school or orphanage.

You could volunteer at social welfare and/ or development organizations.

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