

* **BRAZILIAN NATIONAL
VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY**
to achieve the SDGs



* Introduction / Objective

Atados was founded in 2012 out of the desire to connect those who want to contribute with those on the front lines, working directly with social causes within communities.

For us, **volunteering means sharing the best each of us has to offer, learning along the way, and creating real impact in people's lives and in communities.** There are already many great people making it happen; however, if we truly want to transform Brazil, we need even more people with us in this movement.

According to [IBGE's Continuous PNAD \(2022\)](#), around 7.3 million people carry out some type of volunteer work in the country, representing 4.2% of the population aged 14 or older. **Our invitation is ambitious and very clear: to double this rate by 2035, reaching 8% of volunteers**, around 14 million people aged 14 or older engaged in causes, projects, and organizations across Brazil. We know the challenge is big, and we need a collective effort to make it happen.

👉 **This material is a call to action. We want to bring together individuals, institutions, and public authorities to build, with us, a National Volunteering Strategy for the SDGs.**

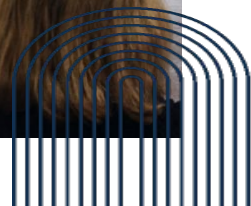
And we have an important milestone in our favor: the UN has declared 2026 the International Year of Volunteering for Sustainable Development (IVY 2026). It is a global call for countries to recognize and expand the contribution of volunteering to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Here in Brazil, Atados intends to respond to this call by bringing together those who already drive the field of social engagement: companies, nonprofit organizations, public institutions, schools and universities, collectives, the press, and citizens in general. Each with their own strengths and experience, to connect those who want to act with those who are already acting. We aim to organize this energy into a network and amplify its impact, ensuring that anyone, anywhere, can engage socially in a feasible and meaningful way.

*Context

Brazil is going through a moment in which challenges are complex and felt by everyone, shaping how we see ourselves as a society and gradually wearing down the ties that connect us to one another.

At the same time, we see income concentration increasing, inequality deepening, violence rising, and historically excluded groups still lacking access to basic rights. Added to this are climate crises, which bring a sense of uncertainty about the future. When political polarization enters the equation, the scenario becomes even more difficult. Dialogue weakens, common ground seems to disappear, and we start to focus mainly on what divides us, while loneliness grows as a quiet social challenge, breaking bonds and pushing people even further apart.



👤 At the individual level, volunteering:

- Promotes well-being and emotional health;
- Develops skills;
- Strengthens a sense of belonging and purpose;
- Expands networks of connection and support;
- Boosts personal growth and career development.

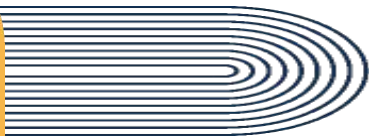
👥 At the collective level, volunteering:

- Creates and strengthens community ties, connecting people from different realities and worldviews, breaking out of bubbles;
- Complements and strengthens public policies;
- Brings citizens, companies, civil society organizations, and government closer together;
- Generates economic value, with millions of hours donated for the common good;
- Contributes to a more participatory and vibrant democracy.




Volunteering can be an antidote to social segmentation and apathy.

Through social engagement, people and institutions move out of a place of powerlessness and into action to eradicate poverty, promote quality education, reduce inequalities, tackle climate change, and build a more sustainable future. These challenges can be overcome if we work collectively, building a support network and partnerships across different sectors of society. It is in this context that the National Volunteering Strategy seeks to organize, recognize, and expand volunteering in the country.






*Global reference

 People around the world are already organizing national volunteering strategies connected to the SDGs.

Two important and inspiring references for the creation of Brazil's National Volunteering Strategy were Canada and Ireland, as they show that it is possible to have a living national strategy—co-created by different audiences (government, organizations, and volunteer centres) and, more than that, one that places volunteering at the heart of the sustainable development agenda as a key pillar of national well-being.

Ireland's National Volunteering Strategy

Ireland's National Volunteering Strategy (2021–2025), the country's first national volunteering strategy, was developed collaboratively by government, the voluntary/third sector, volunteer centres, and other stakeholders from the community and voluntary sector, and was launched with five main strategic objectives: (i) to increase participation and diversity in volunteering; (ii) to enable, develop, and support the volunteering environment in order to strengthen vibrant and sustainable communities; (iii) to recognize, celebrate, and communicate the value and impact of volunteers and volunteering in all its forms; (v) to promote ethical and skills-based international volunteering; and (vi) to improve coherence across public policies related to volunteering.



Since 2021, annual updates (“Annual Updates”) have been released each year on the progress of implementing the strategy, and these data are expected to inform public policies and the development of next steps. In Ireland, monitoring has been strengthened, and the official 2022 data indicate that 14% of the population volunteers regularly, and 27% engaged in volunteering over the year.

There is also Volunteer Ireland, the national volunteering development organization and the support body for all Local Volunteer Centres, which serves as the main entry point for people who want to get involved and for organizations that need support. It offers a platform to find opportunities, resources, and training; volunteering management conferences; and services such as quality assessments. In addition, it leads campaigns, research, and initiatives such as National Volunteering Week and the National Volunteering Awards, playing a central role in advocacy and in connecting government, volunteer centres, and communities across the country.

Canada’s National Volunteering Strategy

Volunteer Canada released in 2023 the document “A Roadmap for This Moment: Co-creating a National Action Strategy for Volunteering in Canada,” the result of research, consultations, and roundtable conversations held across different regions of the country. The strategy also frames volunteering as a response to loneliness, declining public participation, rising demand for essential services, and weakening social bonds. It proposes positioning volunteering as a central pillar to strengthen belonging and inclusion, address loneliness and the civic participation crisis, and support communities in responding to challenges such as poverty, inequality, climate change, and emergencies.

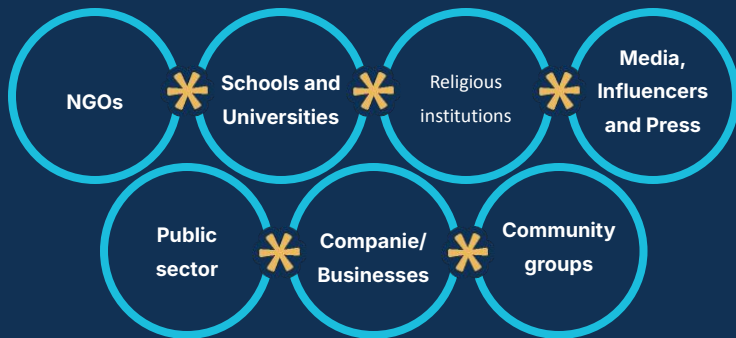
Nigeria’s National Volunteering Strategy

In Nigeria, the National Volunteering Strategy is implemented primarily through the National Volunteer Incentive Program, which brings together the federal government, states, the private sector, the diaspora, and civil society organizations to mobilize volunteers for social action and humanitarian assistance, including in emergency situations. Beyond connecting people to initiatives in vulnerable communities, the policy treats volunteering as a tool to fight poverty, strengthen national unity in the face of ethnic, religious, and political divisions, and support youth programs and corporate social responsibility initiatives across the country.

*Stakeholders

To turn the **National Volunteering Strategy for the SDGs** into reality, we need a strong network.

It is the sum of different stakeholders who believe in transform... taking the country to a new level of participation and engagement.



NGOs

They are also known as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) or third sector organizations. They are private, non-profit entities created when people come together with the desire to generate positive change. They play a fundamental role in complementing and strengthening public policies and in supporting those who still do not have full access to basic rights.

Why can NGOs transform volunteering in Brazil?

Social organizations structure, guide, and give direction so that volunteering responds to real problems. They are closely familiar with the needs of communities: who is hungry, which school needs support, which community is affected by flooding, and which families lack access to basic rights.



Within these organizations is where most volunteering actually happens in practice. According to PNAD (2022), these institutions are the second most common place where people volunteer in Brazil, behind only religious institutions. Because they mobilize so many volunteers, they learn day by day how to welcome, train, and support those who get involved—and they have a lot to teach about how to educate volunteers regarding their role as active citizens.

One essential type of social organization for transforming volunteering in Brazil is foundations. These nonprofit institutions, dedicated to causes of public interest such as philanthropy, science, innovation, education, and others, are designed to manage a pre-existing endowment, with resources allocated to fund social projects. Foundations can financially invest in organizations that operate directly in communities, channeling resources to project implementation and to strengthening these organizations institutionally—including volunteer management. In addition, foundations can act as facilitators, connecting NGOs and volunteers with other institutions, schools, and companies, thereby expanding the reach and effectiveness of volunteering actions.



Over the last 10 years, major foundations have come together and played an essential role in strengthening Brazil's culture of giving. The issue became a cause. With the National Volunteering Strategy, we want to make volunteering a relevant investment front for society. With so many direct and indirect benefits, investing in volunteering can generate impact at scale for social causes, strengthen the culture of philanthropy, and build a more engaged and vibrant society.



What is the impact of volunteering for NGOs?

For many social organizations, volunteering is the foundation of their existence, with their activities carried out by people who donate their time and skills without any financial compensation. When an NGO has more volunteers, it can reach more communities, support more families, and improve the quality of the services it provides—whether through greater care and support or through specialized technical expertise. This increases implementation capacity and the direct impact on the causes it stands for.

Volunteering also strengthens the sustainability and legitimacy of organizations. An NGO with an active volunteer network amplifies its voice and influence in dialogue with companies, governments, funders, and the broader community.

In addition, volunteer engagement drives institutional development—people can contribute in areas such as communications, management, technology, governance, fundraising, data tracking, and results monitoring. They bring new ideas, different perspectives, and technical knowledge that help professionalize the organization.

How can NGOs contribute to a National Volunteering Strategy?

NGOs can:

Ensure follow-up and care for the experience of volunteers... A key framework for this is the 6Cs methodology developed by Atados.

- Provide specific training so that each volunteer can perform their duties safely, with quality, and in alignment with the cause .
- Create engagement opportunities at different levels—such as one-off actions, ongoing activities, online formats, skills-based/pro bono volunteering, and more. This way, each person can find the opportunity that best fits their reality, while also advancing diversity in volunteering.
- Promote civic education, not just project execution. For example, offer workshops, discussion circles, and trainings on rights, the SDGs, and the local community context.
- Invest in communications to mobilize more and more people, and tell the stories of real volunteers, with different ages, backgrounds, and ways of getting involved.
- Evaluate and monitor volunteering activities. By recording data on volunteers' profiles, the hours contributed, and the impacts generated, NGOs can improve internal management and the quality of their actions, also increasing their potential for mobilization and enabling more partnerships.
- Build local networks through volunteering, connecting other organizations, schools, neighborhood groups, and companies, and strengthening the territory's transformative power.
- Strengthen the culture of volunteering, replacing the idea of a "favor" with the right to participate.
- Foundations can provide financial or logistical support for the development of platforms and technological tools that make volunteer management easier.
- Foundations can use their visibility and networks to promote a culture of volunteering.
- Foundations can encourage corporate volunteering, which is an excellent way to engage companies in social action and strengthen volunteering impact. They can create programs and partnerships with companies, offering employees opportunities to get involved in social causes.

Who is already making it happen?

Some examples of institutions that use volunteering and contribute to its development:

Keralty Association

The Keralty Association's mission is to promote the well-being of patients receiving palliative care through a simple but powerful gesture: exchanging letters between them and volunteers. These messages of affection are delivered during visits to hospitals, homes, and communities, bringing comfort and care.

Volunteering is at the heart of our work. Without volunteers, this connection would not exist. People who don't know each other begin to connect and share experiences. For patients, each letter brings companionship; for volunteers, it is an experience of solidarity. Because the letters can be written remotely, more people are able to participate and make a difference, wherever they are.

Themis Furigo Institute

Volunteering is at the heart of the Themis Furigo Institute, which began with Themis's individual engagement and is now sustained by a network of more than 150 volunteers who make continuous action possible on multiple fronts. They are the ones who carry out projects such as *Saúde para Todos*, *Florescer*, *Hortifruti Solidário*, *Capacita+*, and *Curió Look*, providing services, food, emotional support, and income-generation opportunities. Operating 100% through volunteer work, the Institute shows in practice how the combined time, talent, and commitment of many people can turn causes into concrete impact.



Schools and Universities

They are institutions that educate people and broaden horizons. While schools are the foundation of education by helping children and adolescents take their first steps, universities produce scientific research, develop professional talent, and bring knowledge beyond campus walls through projects carried out with the community..

Why can schools and universities transform volunteering in Brazil?

Schools and universities are essential to volunteering because they are where the next generations of volunteers. Children, adolescents, and young adults spend a large part of their time in these spaces, which makes these institutions a privileged place to introduce, from an early age, what it means to act as an engaged and active citizen.



When someone is invited to experience volunteering at school or university; through solidarity actions, outreach/extension programs, student councils, academic centers, or student-led initiatives they are more likely to stay engaged in adulthood and spread that culture within their own networks. A 2021 study conducted by Atados found that 16% of people in our network had their first volunteering experience through school, second only to religious institutions (17%).

Whether in basic education or higher education, students learn values and skills that are important for the job market and for personal life, while also broadening their perspective on the country's social reality. These spaces help "break out of bubbles," bring different worlds closer together, and strengthen the awareness that we are all responsible for building solutions to collective problems.

What is the impact of volunteering for schools and universities?

When a school or university encourages volunteering, it is shaping more well-rounded people—who understand their role in society and feel they are part of the solution. Taking part in volunteer activities gives students the opportunity to develop, in practice, skills such as teamwork, communication, leadership, problem-solving, and management time.

Instead of learning these topics only in theory, they experience them by working with people in real contexts, facing real challenges. For university students, volunteering can also make it easier to enter the job market by serving as a "first professional experience," especially when the activities are connected to their field of study—for example, an Education major providing tutoring, a Law student supporting community legal aid, or a Communications student helping an NGO with its digital strategy.

When schools and universities encourage volunteering, they are shaping the leaders of the future. By living real experiences in social projects, students expand their understanding of themselves, others, and the world. These spaces help connect theory and practice, bring the classroom closer to the country's reality, break out of bubbles, and build the awareness that everyone can (and should) take part in collective solutions.

Institutional impact: by supporting volunteering, schools and universities gain greater public relevance, strengthen their ties to the local community, and expand opportunities for partnerships with companies, civil society organizations, and government. Volunteering projects can improve their own physical spaces, while also enhancing outreach/extension programs, applied research, and interdisciplinary initiatives.



How can schools and universities contribute to a National Volunteering Strategy?

Schools can:

- Include volunteering in pedagogical projects, connecting the BNCC... (Brazil's National Common Core Curriculum) with actions in their communities.
- Create "clubs" or "student councils" focused on social engagement.
- Promote activities on thematic days and weeks, such as Brazil's National Volunteer Day on August 28 or International Volunteer Day on December 5.
- Invite families to also participate in trainings and volunteer activities.
- Turn the school into a meeting point for community actions.
- Strengthen partnerships with local organizations and connect students who can volunteer through visiting these spaces.
- Invite students to co-design volunteer actions, they can bring neighborhood challenges and possible solutions.
- Offer learning tracks for teachers, coordinators, and student leaders on volunteering.

Universities can:

- Implement service-learning programs in which actions aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) count as part of students' education and can be recognized as elective/extra credit hours or as curricular components within outreach/extension projects.
- Encourage required internships and the completion of complementary hours to take place in activities connected to social impact. For example, medical students would have to complete at least one (1) internship within Brazil's Unified Health System (SUS), future lawyers would have to dedicate a set number of pro bono hours to graduate, and so on.
- Formally recognize volunteering hours within complementary activities, scholarship programs, teaching assistantships, and internships—valuing social engagement as an important dimension of the academic journey.
- Develop research on volunteering in Brazil and support the monitoring and evaluation of the National Volunteering Strategy itself, contributing to the design of targets, indicators, impact evaluation methodologies, and knowledge production that strengthens public policies and practices in the field of social engagement.

Who is already making it happen?

Some examples of institutions that use volunteering and contribute to its development:

FEA Social

FEA Social promotes volunteering by building bridges between the university, social organizations, and people who want to get involved. As a student-led organization at FEA-USP, it provides free consulting to NGOs and social impact businesses, strengthening the management and impact of initiatives that rely heavily on volunteer work. It also organizes events to connect students with socio-environmental sector opportunities for internships and volunteering in a range of organizations.

All universities could come together to create similar entities, where students volunteer to generate social impact.



Educational volunteering programs in public schools

Marista Escola Social Ecológica, in Almirante Tamandaré (PR), is an example of educational volunteering and social engagement through the project “Anti-Racist Education: Education and Ancestry,” which has already involved around one thousand students, educators, families, and local residents. Through training sessions, workshops, discussion circles, literary cafés, cultural showcases, and activities connected to Afro-Brazilian culture, the school mobilizes its community, through volunteering, to confront structural racism, celebrate Black ancestry, and strengthen ties between the school and the local community. Schools can educate about different causes and involve the neighborhood in volunteer activities.

Religious institutions

They are made up of groups of people who share common beliefs, values, and spiritual practices. Beyond their spiritual role, many of them engage in philanthropic and volunteer efforts, supporting those in need, strengthening bonds of solidarity, and contributing directly to social well-being.

Why can religious institutions transform volunteering in Brazil?

Solidarity and faith are everyday values within religious institutions and take shape in concrete practices of care and mutual support. In many churches, temples, Spiritist centers, and terreiros, volunteering is the foundation of the activities carried out: community members organize campaigns, prepare spaces, conduct rituals, welcome others, and sustain community life day by day.



Looking back at the history of volunteering in Brazil, we arrive at the *Santas Casas de Misericórdia*, which began their charitable work in 1543. Today, beyond them, there are many other initiatives linked to religious traditions that promote social assistance and protection. These spaces also play a fundamental role in caring for their communities and territories. People find a place, beyond work and family, where they can exist, be recognized, and actively participate in collective life.



They become spaces where meaning is created, each person realizes they have something to contribute and that they are not alone. In this environment, volunteering can establish itself as a “third place.” And unlike informal initiatives, religious communities usually have a fixed schedule, leadership, physical space, and routine, which helps volunteering happen on an ongoing basis.

This consistency is linked to the trust that the population places in religions and, often, in their religious leaders personally. Few institutions in Brazil bring together, at the same time, this level of credibility, reach, and presence in everyday life. This is a strategic asset for expanding volunteering, because it makes it easier to mobilize people around causes and sustain their commitment.

These institutions also foster a certain degree of diversity, as children, youth, adults, and older people coexist, although there may be subgroups with specific activities. Volunteering can grow even further by promoting this intergenerational experience.

Therefore, recognizing and supporting the role of religious institutions and helping them develop their volunteering programs and connecting them with public policies and other civil society organizations is essential to expand the reach and strengthen the impact of volunteering in the country.

What is the impact of volunteering for religious institutions?

Believers find in volunteering a way to put their faith into practice, since religions continuously reinforce the importance of helping others. Often, it is through a campaign at a parish, a Spiritist center, an evangelical church, or a *terreiro* that a person has their first contact with volunteering.

And when it is well structured as a program with recurring activities, volunteering strengthens people's bond with their faith community. Volunteers can organize everything from material support (food baskets, clothing, referrals to public services) to emotional and spiritual care (listening, visits, prayer, discussion circles).

Volunteering also helps prevent conflicts within and beyond the religious community. By creating spaces for coexistence, listening, and working together, institutions reduce tensions and bring closer people who may disagree on certain issues but still find shared values—supporting a culture of dialogue and reconciliation.

INSTITUTIONAL IMPACT:

Well-structured programs make philanthropic actions more effective and sustainable over the long term, reinforce their relevance, strengthen the bond between believers and their faith community, and attract new potential members. Volunteering generates direct benefits for religious organizations.



How can faith-based institutions contribute to a National Volunteering Strategy?

Religious institutions can:

- Provide physical space, equipment, and basic infrastructure for activities..
- Values such as solidarity, justice, and care for people in vulnerable situations can turn into volunteer actions in the territory.
- Turn one-off campaigns (food baskets, clothing, drives, workdays, community meals) into ongoing volunteering programs.
- Organize an annual calendar of actions aligned with the SDGs, including causes such as health, peace, youth, women, people experiencing homelessness, etc.).
- Create permanent volunteer groups within the faith community..
- Include volunteering in leadership development and youth groups, dedicating hours to volunteer work as part of the formation.
- Value the preservation of culture and religious identity, recording community history and caring for sacred spaces.
- Actively combat religious racism and other forms using volunteering to promote respect and dialogue.
- Map the territory's needs and possible partnerships (so actions respond to real demands, not only internal ideas).
- Designate one person or a small team as a "volunteering coordination" to help organizing actions, bridging with other organizations, and following up.
- Establish clear ethical principles for faith-based volunteering ... not imposing faith on those who participate in social protection activities. And to also record and communicate results.
- Use celebrations and key community moments to publicly recognize volunteers.

Who is already making it happen?

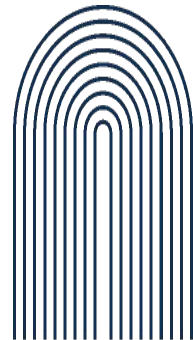
Some examples of institutions that use volunteering and contribute to its development:

Catholic Church Pastoral Ministries (e.g., Pastoral da Criança, Prison Pastoral Care, Education Pastoral, Youth Pastoral, Elderly Pastoral Care, etc.).

The Catholic Church's pastoral ministries are one of the largest examples of organized volunteering and social engagement in Brazil. They mobilize thousands of volunteers in communities, parishes, schools, prisons, and underserved areas to support families, promote health and education initiatives, assist children and adolescents, visit people deprived of liberty, listen, provide guidance, and connect support networks. By combining faith, community commitment, and concrete action, the pastoral ministries show—in practice—how volunteer engagement can strengthen social bonds, defend rights, and transform realities across different territories.

National Network of Afro-Brazilian Religions and Health (RENAFRO)

RENAFRO is a case of network-based social engagement. Created in 2003, it brings together terreiro leaders, practitioners of Afro-Brazilian religions, health professionals, researchers, civil society organizations, and the Black movement to promote the right to health for terreiro communities and surrounding neighborhoods. Through hubs across the country, RENAFRO organizes training activities, dialogue with Brazil's Unified Health System (SUS), action against religious racism, and efforts to confront racism, sexism, and LGBTphobia—while also recognizing terreiros as spaces that promote health, care, and protection.

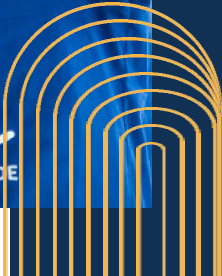


Media, Influencers and Press

They form a diverse ecosystem of communicators with great power to influence public opinion. This group includes everything from traditional channels, such as TV and radio, to digital outlets, social media, and content creators who, through their opinions, stories, and recommendations, help shape conversations, behaviors, and perceptions across society..

Why can the media transform volunteering in Brazil?

The media is essential to volunteering because it has the ability to popularize this practice as a tool for social transformation, making it more visible, understandable, and accessible to millions of people. Here, we understand “the media” as a broad set of communication actors, including journalists, influencers, and traditional and digital outlets.



The media helps refute some common myths about volunteering: that you need a lot of free time to volunteer, that volunteers are there to “save” someone, or that you must have very specific knowledge in order to contribute.

Media outlets and influencers have the power to motivate people to become volunteers by portraying volunteering as something enjoyable and accessible, sharing real stories of impact, showing the “before and after” of an action, telling volunteers’ journeys, and giving visibility to causes.

Volunteering narratives the media can amplify

Volunteering offers the media a deeper kind of engagement. People who share their day-to-day lives on social media can also take practical action like sharing campaigns and initiatives they participate in and mobilizing other potential volunteers. This can scale up, reaching more people and increasing engagement metrics for media outlets. Using these channels as tools for concrete action creates content built on real stories of transformation, an extremely valuable asset for content marketing.



For the media, press, and influencers, getting involved with volunteering also means reinforcing their positioning: beyond informing and entertaining, they strengthen their reputation, build brand recall, and position themselves as actors committed to society.

When they cover volunteer actions, they also acknowledge the communities involved, give visibility to local agendas, elevate local actors, and reinforce their role as partners in community development.

How can the media contribute to a National Volunteering Strategy?

The media can:

- Create segments, series, podcasts, and specials about volunteering stories and SDG-aligned causes.
 - Adapt content about social engagement and volunteering in a more engaging way, connected to pop culture and everyday life.
 - Reinforce key messages about accessible volunteering: different formats, diverse institutions, realizable schedules.
 - Support national volunteering campaigns (especially in 2026) and invite the public to participate, offering practical guidance.
 - Provide a recurring space in programming/networks for success stories.
 - Serve as spokespersons for specific causes, such as fighting hunger, children's rights, the environment, disasters, anti-racism, etc.
 - Integrate volunteering into entertainment products: feature variety shows, include NGOs in talk shows, and more.
- Promote annual awards and recognitions for initiatives that communicate about social engagement.
 - Produce local guides to volunteering opportunities, including location, contacts, and activity types.
 - Deliver special coverage during emergencies, countering misinformation and focusing efforts on credible initiatives.
 - Provide basic training for communicators on volunteering, including the ethical use of images (not portraying volunteers as heroes).
 - Open space for the voices of volunteers and. in interviews, columns, short videos featuring "people on the ground".
 - Inspire internal volunteering within newsrooms and teams showing behind-the-scenes mobilizations led by the outlets themselves.

Who is already making it happen?

Some examples of institutions that use their communication power to inspire social transformation:

MOL Journalism Award (Prêmio MOL de Jornalismo)

Held annually by Instituto MOL, the award recognizes communication initiatives that inspire a culture of giving. Alongside the award, the MOL Course in Journalism for Solidarity is offered free of charge to journalism professionals and students. Works are recognized in the categories of text, audio, video, and photography, published over the year in professional, academic, or community media outlets.

A similar initiative is the FEAC Foundation Journalism Award (Prêmio Fundação FEAC de Jornalismo), but with a focus on territorial development. Communicators are expected to address how this process happens in practice, whether through local initiatives, successful public policies, or community movements that generate real impact.

Projects like these give greater visibility to social causes, the work of social organizations, and, above all, the importance of giving.

Déia Freitas and Não Inviabilize

Déia Freitas hosts one of the most-listened-to podcasts on the internet, Não Inviabilize, where she tells real stories submitted by listeners. Active in the animal welfare cause, she has repeatedly used one of the show's segments to champion it. In a humorous and engaging way, she has brought visibility to issues such as combating animal abandonment during the Dezembro Verde campaign and shared moving adoption stories.

In her episodes, she has also addressed social topics such as the defense of Indigenous peoples, gender equality, and anti-racism. In addition, the program has sponsored organizations such as UniFavela, a socio-educational organization located in Complexo da Maré, Rio de Janeiro. We need more people who, like Déia, use their public platform to support transformative causes.

Public sector

(municipal, state, and national)

Made up of government institutions and bodies creates the conditions for life in society to work better.

Why can the public sector transform volunteering in Brazil?

Public authorities are responsible for delivering services that guarantee the basic rights established by law. To do so, they operate a network of institutions present across the entire national territory, such as city halls/municipal governments, schools, health units, CRAS social assistance centers, and protected areas—and manage the public budget, material resources, and technical teams required. Beyond providing essential services, this network also has the capacity to bring together different actors and align efforts around a shared agenda. For this reason, the public sector can play a strategic role in developing volunteering in Brazil, ensuring that civic action is strengthened through public policies that promote social engagement.





Today, volunteering is already present in spaces closely connected to public sector action, such as child protection councils (conselhos tutelares), rights councils (conselhos de direitos), social participation committees, environmental protection groups, and school, health, and social assistance management committees. In many of these bodies, volunteer work is crucial for communities to gain access to basic rights.

Including volunteering on the public sector agenda is also a way to strengthen the path toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), since governments (municipal, state, and federal) have the institutional legitimacy to create legal frameworks and guidelines that scale up impact initiatives originally carried out by volunteers in their communities.

What is the impact of volunteering for the public sector?

Volunteering strengthens public institutions and helps improve the quality of policies and services delivered to the population. By working within public agencies and facilities—supporting services such as public schools, CEUs, libraries, museums, primary health care units, hospitals, shelters and social assistance centers, municipal parks, and sports facilities—volunteers can contribute both to administrative tasks and to educational, cultural, environmental, and community activities.

It also brings the public sector closer to the population and to territories facing social vulnerability. This proximity deepens understanding of local challenges, specific needs, and potential solutions, enabling policies and programs to become more innovative, responsive, and aligned with real-world conditions.

Institutional impact: The public sector can expand its activities without relying only on paid civil servants by also engaging volunteers (something that is provided for under Brazilian law). Governments can use volunteering to reach communities and territories that the current public structure cannot adequately cover, and to improve the quality of service delivery where it already operates. One way to achieve this is by connecting residents within the same region to work together on shared challenges. Finally, as the connection between the population and public authorities grows and mutual trust is strengthened the democratic system also becomes stronger. Volunteering encourages civic participation beyond voting and fosters a sense of belonging.

How can the public sector contribute to a National Volunteering Strategy?

The public sector can:

- Integrate volunteering into ongoing public policies, such as programs in education, health, public safety, social assistance, the environment, culture, and sports.
- Increase transparency and visibility for local thematic councils, informing the public about what is being done and encouraging communication among territories themselves.
- Structure volunteering programs within public facilities, such as primary health care units (UBS), hospitals, psychosocial care centers (CAPS), CRAS/CREAS social assistance centers, shelters, cultural centers, libraries, museums, parks, sports centers, and others. These programs need dedicated management to define volunteer-appropriate activities, train volunteers, and support them throughout the process. As part of this effort, it is important to develop national guidelines for volunteering programs in public institutions.
- Encourage rights councils and sectoral policy councils (Children and Adolescents, Social Assistance, Health, Education, Environment, Culture, Youth, etc.) to invite organizations with volunteering expertise.
- Include volunteering in plans and planning instruments by defining volunteering targets, actions, and indicators for example, Municipal and State SDG Plans, multi-year plans (PPAs), and sectoral plans.
- Make available physical infrastructure, equipment, and resources that the government already has to support volunteering initiatives.

- Review Brazil's Volunteer Law (Law No. 9,608/1998) and propose changes that benefit companies, CSOs, and community groups through volunteering.
- Create training programs for public managers of volunteering with courses, guides, and learning tracks.
- Establish funds, calls for proposals, and support lines for volunteering.
- Develop public digital platforms or public-partnership platforms in order to simplify access, and the public sector could leverage the data generated.
- Include volunteering in institutional campaigns, themed weeks, thematic materials, and official reports on the SDGs.
- Strengthen emergency response capacity through organized volunteering.
- Connect Brazil to global volunteering and SDG initiatives.



Who is already making it happen?

Some examples of public sector initiatives that use volunteering and contribute to its development:

São Paulo Municipal Health Volunteers Program

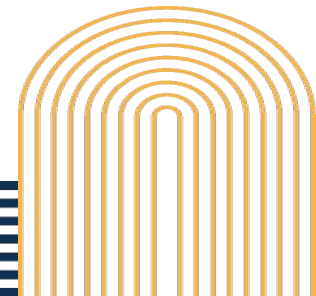
The São Paulo City Department of Health's Health Volunteers Program is an example of volunteering as a public policy. It is governed by Municipal Decree No. 57,839 of August 2017 and regulated by SMS Ordinance No. 314 of July 2023.

The program is linked to the People Management Coordination Office and uses an online portal to register and monitor volunteers across the entire network, while also providing guidelines, legislation, manuals, training information, and entry pathways for new volunteers. To volunteer, interested individuals must choose the area of activity and the health unit within the city's municipal health network where they wish to volunteer, contact the designated focal points, and present the activity they would like to carry out.*

* Source: https://prefeitura.sp.gov.br/web/saude/w/cogep/portal_do_voluntariado

Bahia State Volunteering Program

Program is an initiative of the Government of Bahia aimed at encouraging volunteer action across the state by building and strengthening solidarity networks. Through an interactive platform, the program connects people's interests and profiles with volunteer service opportunities, bringing together volunteers, entities, civil society organizations (CSOs), and government bodies to participate in projects. The program also monitors volunteering indicators (e.g., number of registered volunteers; number of projects, campaigns, and actions, etc.).



Companies/ Businesses

They are organizations that produce and sell goods or services for profit. They are present across all sectors of the economy, creating jobs, driving innovation, and contributing to economic and social development. Whether a large corporation or a small neighborhood business, both are important and keep the economy moving.

Why can companies transform volunteering in Brazil?

Companies are essential actors in expanding volunteering because they have a direct influence on the territories where they operate and are responsible for the impacts—positive and negative—of their activities. Beyond mitigating potential harm, they can go further and take intentional action to strengthen local communities. In this context, corporate volunteering becomes a strategic tool, as it brings companies and communities closer together, creating real channels for dialogue and a deeper understanding of local needs.



One of company's' greatest assets is their people, professionals with technical knowledge and specific skills. Skills-based volunteering programs can mobilize this potential through mentoring, consulting, leadership training, and support for civil society organizations across the country. This raises the quality of social initiatives and contributes to solutions that are more sustainable, innovative, and results-oriented.

Just as schools and universities are central spaces in the formation of children and young people, the workplace is the main space of social interaction for adults. When volunteering is embedded in corporate culture, it reinforces values such as collaboration, empathy, and social responsibility. Also, values tend to carry over into private life, contributing to a broader culture of civic participation.

In addition, companies have valuable capabilities: efficient management, planning, targets, indicators, and the ability to operate at scale. By applying these practices to volunteering, it is possible to expand impact, ensure continuity, improve governance, and professionalize initiatives that directly benefit people, organizations, and communities.



What is the impact of volunteering for companies?

Corporate volunteering offers employees concrete opportunities to develop new skills, such as leadership, communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. While also building stronger bonds with one another. These experiences enhance a sense of belonging, improve mental health, and boost engagement, as people feel more connected to the organization's purpose and proud to be part of it.

Volunteering also brings the company closer to the territories where it operates. By engaging with local communities, the organization deepens its understanding of the surrounding realities, strengthens trust-based relationships, and connects with potential talent, consumers, and partners. This active presence in the territories supports the consistent implementation of ESG strategies, while also reinforcing the company's reputation and social legitimacy..

INSTITUTIONAL IMPACT:

Corporate volunteering creates brand value and strengthens an organization's positioning both internally and externally. It supports talent attraction and retention, reinforces a culture of responsibility and innovation, and establishes the company as a relevant agent of social impact. By bringing together business outcomes and community commitment, corporate volunteering benefits the company, employees, and society.

How can companies contribute to a National Volunteering Strategy?

Companies can:

- Create or strengthen corporate volunteering programs focused on priority SDGs (education, climate, equity, health, etc.).
- Encourage and promote skills-based/pro bono volunteering (finance, legal, communications, technology) to support CSOs with their challenges.
- Mobilize direct financial resources or tax incentives for volunteering initiatives, including the creation of corporate funds for social initiatives.
- Promote a culture of volunteering internally, encouraging employees to become volunteers, for example: lawyers who can support CSO legal compliance; HR professionals who can help NGOs structure processes, volunteering, and people management; communicators who can improve campaigns and narratives; tech professionals who can help build websites, databases, and simple platforms; and finance and planning professionals who can help organize budgets, indicators, and governance.
- Recognize and reward employees who stand out in these volunteering actions which encourage more people to engage in the future.
- Support local actions by civil society organizations (sharing campaigns, providing space, donating supplies).
- Expand the partnership network, bringing companies closer to CSOs, the public sector, faith-based institutions, and local collectives.



Who is already making it happen?

Some examples of institutions that use volunteering and contribute to their development:

Heineken

The HEINEKEN Group Brazil is an example of strategic corporate volunteering. In partnership with Atados, the company structured the HNK Volunteering Program to engage its more than 14,000 employees, across 15 territories nationwide, in the company's social strategy. Sharing its values and culture with surrounding communities and positioning its brands within the ESG and sustainable development agenda.

The HNK Volunteering Program was formalized through a policy and a volunteer handbook and is managed through an exclusive platform that centralizes opportunities, content, documents, and metrics. Its strategy is to mobilize all territories where the company operates nationwide through institutional volunteering actions and by managing local groups and volunteering program ambassadors. To support this, HNK Volunteering Week was created and takes place annually, along with close collaboration with strategic areas of the company, such as the HNK Institute, HR, Culture, Diversity and the engagement of leadership. In 2025, more than 2,000 employees volunteered in actions carried out across more than 20 territories in Brazil.

Prudential Prudential

Prudential is another example of strategic volunteering. Although it is a smaller company, it remains committed to social issues, employee development through volunteering, and the impact of its initiatives. In partnership with Atados, Prudential created a calendar with five small actions to connect volunteering with the company's Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) focused on race, gender equity, LGBTI+ inclusion, people with disabilities, and generations. The actions were co-created with the ERGs, encouraging connections with local NGOs and aligning employees with the company's global social engagement goals.

The company also has a structured global Pro Bono program aimed at strengthening social organizations in the territories where it operates.

Community groups

(neighborhood associations, interest-based communities such as carnival groups, running and cycling groups, sports teams and fan clubs, and more)

Collectives are groups formed by individuals who share similar interests, values, identities, or goals. They can include, for example, neighborhood associations, carnival blocs and collectives, running groups, or any other group that organizes to advance causes, strengthen social bonds, and mobilize action around what brings them together..

Why can groups of people and communities transform volunteering in Brazil?

Thematic groups and communities are essential to volunteering because they are born from something very powerful: a shared purpose. People who come together around a passion, whether it's road running, cycling tourism, soccer, culture, faith, or any other interest are already used to collaborating and self-organizing to meet a need or follow an agreement within the group. This creates fertile ground to connect these people to social causes and turn gatherings into impact.



Many of these groups already run activities that are real opportunities for mobilization (charity runs, fundraising bike rides, campaigns during soccer matches, and donation drives at local events);

These initiatives can be connected to volunteering in a more structured way, gaining reach, consistency, and impact.

Neighborhood associations across Brazil are a good example of this: they organize community clean-up efforts, painting and revitalizing public squares, renovating schools, and carrying out education, health, and support actions in underserved or vulnerable areas. Their strength lies precisely in the fact that they bring together people of different ages, social classes, and life stories. When volunteering grows out of collectives like these, it gains legitimacy through proximity to the territory and shows, in practice, that no one transforms anything alone.

What is the impact of volunteering for groups of people and communities?

Volunteering has a multiplier effect when experienced as a group. A 2021 study conducted by Atados found that 82% of volunteers in our network had their first volunteering experience because they were invited by someone. When people organize around a cause, they begin to see that acting collectively makes it possible to solve local problems collaboratively. This strengthens the unity of these groups and individuals' engagement with their communities.

Another positive outcome of this collaboration is the strengthening of bonds of trust, friendship, and mutual support, which improves well-being and mental health. By feeling a sense of belonging and connection with others who share the same values, each individual finds meaning, emotional support, and motivation to keep going. Collective activities help reduce feelings of loneliness, foster empathy, and create safe spaces for community life.



How can groups of people and communities contribute to a National Volunteering Strategy?

Groups of people can:

- Connect their passions to causes by linking a collective hobby (run... community cooking class, a parade group with an awareness theme).
- Organize neighborhood improvement workdays, solidarity events, and actions to care for public spaces.
- Support specific local causes in the territory, such as adopting a health clinic, a small neighborhood NGO, a cultural center.
- Mobilize internal talents to share knowledge.
- Participate in councils and events with the public sector, bringing the territory's voice to policy spaces.
- Serve as a bridge between people and volunteering opportunities shared in WhatsApp groups, social networks, and in-person meetups.
- Support communications for local social projects, giving visibility to smaller initiatives through the group's networks.



- Act in emergency situations (floods, extreme cold, local crises) quickly organizing support networks, donations, and welcoming.
- Create “volunteering ambassadors” within the group, responsible for organizing actions, maintaining a calendar, connecting with brands and the public sector.
- Build networks with other thematic groups (other fan clubs, colleagues, community centers) for joint actions at a larger scale.
- Use symbolic dates important to the group as moments ... big games, traditional celebrations, Carnival, June festivals.

Who is already making it happen?

Some examples of groups and communities that use volunteering and contribute to their development:

Gaviões da Fiel

Gaviões da Fiel is an organized supporters' group that engages in volunteering and social action. With a structured Social Department, the collective maintains an ongoing year-round calendar of solidarity initiatives that mobilize fans, families, and entire communities.

Among its traditional initiatives are the Winter Clothing Drive, the Solidarity Christmas campaign, Easter actions, and Children's Day celebrations, which involve collecting donations, organizing events, and having volunteers actively present on the ground. Even though soccer is not directly linked to social impact, it serves as the unifying force that brings this group together.

Paraisópolis Residents and Commerce Association In São Paul

In São Paulo, an active group that engages in volunteering around a shared interest is the Paraisópolis Residents' and Business Association. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the association built a large volunteer network in the community, creating a system of "street presidents": volunteer residents responsible for supporting around 50 families each, helping with health guidance, symptom monitoring, and connecting people to local services.

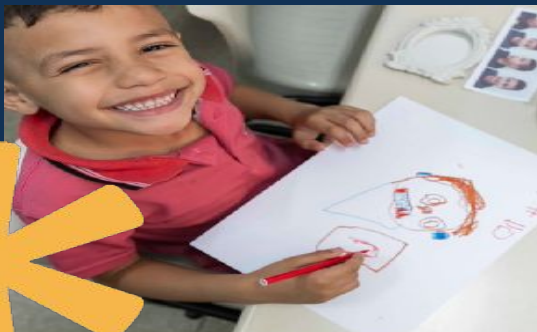
In addition, through volunteer work, the community organized the distribution of food baskets, prepared meals, masks, and hygiene kits, as well as the hiring of ambulances.



*Let's do this together?

Atados believes in the power of volunteering to generate positive transformations and sustainable development.

This material was created as a call to action. We hope it has inspired you to engage socially—but above all, to be part of this movement. 🧡



Throughout 2026, we want to mobilize all stakeholders who already volunteer so that we can double the number of volunteers in 10 years!

If you represent an organization, company, religious institution or public sector, and want to be part of the movement, [fill out our form](#).

If you are an individual and would like to collaborate, join our [WhatsApp group](#) and stay tuned for updates.



*Manifesto

**Moving Brazil starts with
connected people.**

**We believe in connection, in the
collective, and in active
participation. This is what the
National Volunteering Strategy is
built on.**

CONNECTION

No one transforms anything alone.

Brazil has a tremendous energy of solidarity.

It is in homes, in streets, in organizations, in churches, in collectives, in companies.

What is missing is not willingness.

It is bridges.

Bridges that connect those who want to help with those who are already doing it.

Bridges that bring territories, causes, cultures, and people closer together.

The National Volunteering Strategy is born to build these bridges.

To make volunteering not a loose act, but an articulated force.



NGOs

Also known as Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) or the third sector, they are ... precisely those who still do not have full access to basic rights.

Schools and Universities

Institutions that educate people and broaden horizons. While ... beyond campus walls through projects with the community.

Faith-based institutions

Made up of groups of people who share beliefs, values... solidarity and contributing directly to social well-being.

Media /Influencers/Press

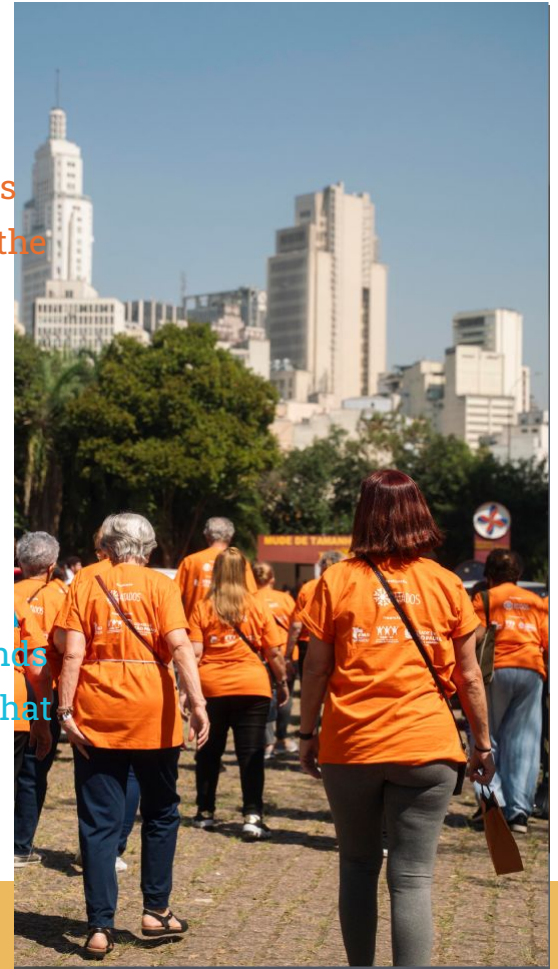
A diverse communications ecosystem with strong power of infl... shape conversations, behaviors, and perceptions across society.

Public sector

Made up of government institutions and bodies that care for what is ... creates the conditions for life in society to work better.

Companies Organizations that produce and sell goods or services for profit. ... and each helps drive the economy within its reach.

Community groups Collectives formed by individuals who share interests, values,... strengthen bonds and set actions in motion from what unites them.



* Detailed strategy by stakeholder

6.1 NGOs

Why can NGOs transform volunteering in Brazil?

Social organizations organize, guide, and provide direction for ... floods, which families lack access to basic rights.

It is within these organizations that most volunteering happens ... how to educate volunteers about their role as civic actors.

