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Review of Best Practices in Volunteerism in CICA Member States



2026

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FOREWORD

Volunteerism has always reflected the finest human qualities — solidarity, mutual assistance, civic responsibility and, above all, selfless commitment to serving society. In today's world, volunteerism has acquired particular significance as an important tool for strengthening social resilience, developing human capital, and promoting a culture of trust and mutual understanding among peoples and nations.

This e-publication, prepared under the auspices of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), showcases the best practices of its Member States in the field of volunteerism. It reflects the diversity of national experiences, innovative initiatives, and community-driven approaches undertaken across the region. It clearly demonstrates that, despite differences in cultures, languages, and traditions, the nations of the region are united by a common aspiration to strengthen mutual understanding, social responsibility and sustainable development through volunteerism.

Within CICA, promoting volunteerism and strengthening cooperation in this area have received increasing attention in recent years. Recognizing the transformative power of volunteerism, particularly among young people, as a driver of social cohesion, resilience and sustainable development, the CICA Ministerial Council adopted the Statement on Promoting Volunteerism for Sustainable Development in 2023. Building on this momentum, volunteerism was subsequently included in the CICA Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures, reflecting its growing recognition as an important instrument of confidence building and civic engagement. The Rally of Volunteer Movement Leaders initiative, implemented under the auspices of the CICA Youth Council through two successful gatherings in Astana in 2024 and Baku in 2025, has further advanced this agenda by fostering dialogue, the exchange of experience and cooperation among young volunteers across the region.



This publication comes at a particularly significant time, as the international community commemorates the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development 2026, proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly at the initiative of the Republic of Kazakhstan and co-sponsored by 54 Member States, including CICA Member States — Iraq, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, the United Arab Emirates and Uzbekistan. This important achievement reflects the growing international recognition of volunteerism as a powerful force for sustainable development, social cohesion, human solidarity and community resilience.

I would like to thank all the CICA Member States, partner organizations and contributors who shared their valuable experiences and best practices for this publication. Special thanks go to the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) for their cooperation and continued partnership in advancing volunteerism in the CICA region.

I am confident that this Review will contribute to a broader exchange of experience, the development of partnerships and the promotion of new joint initiatives in the field of volunteerism, with a view to empowering people — especially youth — and strengthening trust, dialogue, and cooperation across the CICA region

Ambassador Kairat Sarybay
Secretary General
Conference on Interaction and
Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)

PREFACE

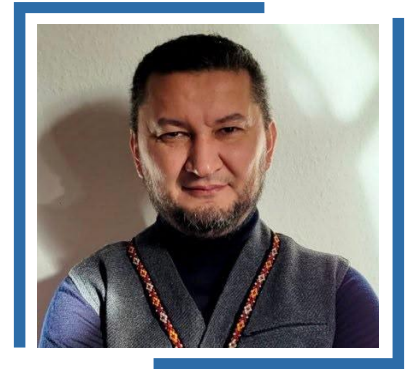
Across Asia, a quiet force is taking shape.

In communities preserving tradition while adapting to change, people are stepping forward to support one another. They care, organize, and act — making a difference. Yet much of their contribution remains under-documented and under-recognized.

Review of Best Volunteerism Practices in CICA Member States brings these efforts into focus. It highlights practical examples—from social inclusion to disaster response — showing how volunteerism strengthens communities. In doing so, it helps close an important evidence gap.

Published during the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development 2026, this publication is a milestone and a call to action: to recognize, measure, and invest in volunteerism across the region.

Because lasting change begins when people choose to act, connect, and care—one community at a time.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Toily Kurbanov".

Toily Kurbanov
Executive Coordinator
United Nations Volunteers (UNV)

The full publication will be available through this link on 21 August 2026, after its presentation at the United Nations Headquarters on 14 July 2026, in accordance with the relevant CICA procedures.