

Culture making of volunteer activities and UN Sustainable Development Goals

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SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) that were adopted as a follow-up goal for MDGs (New Millennium Development Goals) that expired in 2015 and implemented from 2016 have set development goals and set 169 detailed goals for 17 major areas, including international poverty, health, economic development, and environmental protection. SDGs is basically pursuing international cooperation and development to build a better global village and is also called the "development agenda."

SDGs shows some differences from MDGs, the biggest difference between them is that SDGs heavily emphasized the importance of sustainable development and an active role in environmental protection compared to the MDGs that focused on poverty reduction, education, health and the environment. Also, if MDGs was project centered on developing countries and its Development, SDGs has a perception that both advanced and developing countries should cooperate together. But more than that, SDGs is sharply different from MDGs in the process of adoption of the agenda, which actively encouraged participation in the private sector, including civic groups, away from the bureaucratic practice that the MDSs received much criticism in the past.

This reflects the views of the parties that the SDGs were born on the basis of citizens' participation and that ordinary citizens are required to participate in the SDG's success.

In this context, volunteering for the public good of the local/global community can be considered an important factor in SDG's success. In fact, the efforts of countless volunteers have played a major role in realizing the value of SDGs.

SDGs are not goals that can be achieved by a country or a small number of people as it is a goal to solve the complex problems facing humanity. In order to reach the goals set by SDGs, the goals can only be achieved if countries and citizens around the world actively participate in it. In this context, volunteer work plays a major role in SDGs' achievements and serves as a practical support factor for SDGs to be realized. Volunteer activities across a number of fields is active. including health, education, and the environment, and this can include international activities beyond the country. For example, the development cooperation project through the dispatch volunteers to overseas by the Korea International Cooperation Agency is an appropriate example of providing the recipient country with support across borders in areas of need, such as medical, education, environment, and information support.

Still, the perception of volunteer activities is not recognized as a natural part of everyday life but as a career-building activity or one-off activity centered on the younger generation. Therefore, it is necessary to take the concept of volunteering to the next level and encourage more people to actively participate. In order to achieve its goals, it is essential to induce global citizens to participate through the promotion of volunteer activities.

I think 'culture making of volunteer work' is necessary to overcome these limitations. The 'culturalization' of volunteer activities is a change in which the public can remove stereotypes against the age limits or the scope of volunteer activities and naturally engage in related activities on a daily basis. Such a change could start in an atmosphere where social values are placed in respect of the value of the public good and the movement to realize it. Korea's first volunteer movement was publicly recognized and activated by the people when Asian Games and Olympic Games took place in the 1980s, in another word, when social values for volunteer activities were established, the change could begin.

Today, the Republic of Korea grew as a competitive country in Northeast Asia. I think our value for volunteerism could go a step further. The areas in which we must address in order to achieve SDGs are truly wide and complex. It is almost impossible for the government and some social organizations to resolve the issue. In other words, SDGs can be achieved through public participation in volunteer work and attention and support, One of the qualities of volunteerism is altruism and publicness. And they precisely in line with the value of SDGs. The belief that we should close the gap between developing countries and advanced countries and move to the future that everyone dreams about which is SDG's key principle, in lines with these two principles of Altruism and publicness. The expansion of volunteer activities are an indicator that mankind is getting closer to the value of SDGs.