

Volunteering in addressing the UN Sustainable Development Goals

In December of 2017, Russia's President Vladimir Putin signed a decree about conduction of Volunteer's Year in Russia in 2018. Russia always has a strong tradition of volunteer movement: in Tsarist Russia, in USSR and at present. But in recent years the movement has become even stronger and more active. Mostly it is due to several international events held in the country such as The 2013 Summer Universiade, the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics, the FIFA Confederations Cup, etc.

A friend of mine, her name is Alina, participated in many events as a volunteer, she was also awarded for her volunteering project, and was a part of the Russian delegation to The First Global Youth Festival for SDGS 2018 in October. Thanks to her, I learned new information about the volunteer movement and how it relates to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. To be honest I have never think of volunteering as an effective tool for the implementation of the SDG projects. But personal experience and an experience of my friend shows me how much and how effectively volunteering can make huge contribution into it.

It is a well-known fact that UN is a very, if not the most, respectable organization in the world. It began its work way back in 1945, and as time goes by, the world has drastically changed and it is sad to say but despite of all its power the UN is no longer as influential as it was before, and the problem is many people just do not aware of its activities.

Over recent years, it is common to hear a lot about so-called 'soft power', a policy strategy of a government to extend its influence at the international level by using cultural content, especially digital content. Such a strategy promotes country's economy as well. South Korea is a good example of successful implementing of 'soft power' through "Hallyu". Volunteering can become a kind of 'soft power', that can be used by governments as well as the United Nations. And the UN by using

this new kind of 'soft power' can easily achieve most of the Sustainable Development Goals.

It has been already stated by the UN that sustainable development cannot be achieved without people's engagement in all stages and volunteer groups were named as actors in their own right among the means of implementation. The only thing left is to continue developing volunteering programs aimed at achieving the SDGs and raising awareness of the SDGs projects, especially among young people who are considered as the major part of the volunteering movement.