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THE SOCIAL AND PERSONAL BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING.

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**MAQOLA
MALUMOTI**

ANNOTATSIYA:

MAQOLA TARIXI:

Received: 01.01.2026

Revised: 02.01.2026

Accepted: 03.01.2026

This article explores the role of volunteering and its positive sides in promoting social development and individual well-being. It indicates that not only does volunteering enhance personal skills such as communication, leadership and problem solving, but also it is more likely to be linked to improved mental and physical health.

KALIT SO'ZLAR:

*volunteering,
community service,
health benefits, mental
and physical well-
being, lifelong
learning, active aging,
skill development, work
experience, social
engagement, quality of
life*

Since volunteering opens great doors of opportunities, there is a significant growth in it, with people each year giving their effort and time without any expectation of compensation. Around the world over 860 million people volunteer at least once a month approximately 15% of the global population aged 15 or older. In fact, there are various types of volunteering areas by sectors which include community services (working with children, youth and senior), environment (clean-up activities), health (blood donation), animals (wildlife conservation) and education (tutoring). Although it can be hard for people to find time for volunteering, the benefits of it might be enormous.

In later stages of life course, volunteering is prevalent among the people as it assists them to be the part of self-reinforcing cycle with lower risk of poor mental and physical health. The reason is that those who participate volunteering actively are more likely to have not only lower mortality rates but also lower rates of depression, leading to greater functional ability. The findings regarding the health benefits of volunteering indicate that people who

devote a considerable amount of time (approximately 100 hours) and energy to volunteering activities exhibited positive health outcomes. According to the research done by scientists a great example of living longer, healthier and more active with healthy retirement period is Baby Boomer generation who were born between 1945-1963. They always seek opportunities related to volunteering with the purpose of being healthy, staying active, contributing to their community and spending quality time. They put first the quality over the quantity as a means of understanding the impact of their time for volunteering rather than receiving a reward for the time they served.

Moreover, volunteering is an excellent way for gaining valuable experiences, including leadership, problem-solving, project planning and task management skills. One who volunteers not having a desire for payment but the knowledge that they will acquire is most probably offered hands-on experiences, providing opportunity to practice their important skills in their desired field. Jenny Pelling, Apprenticeship Partnership Director at Kaplan Financial and a Career Ready mentor serves as an example of this phenomenon. Having worked as a mentor at a financial office, she started volunteering to help a young person for two years. As a result, not only did she witness the impact of her work, but also it enriches her own sense of purpose. Therefore, the more people take part in volunteering activities, the more knowledge and experience can be reaped by them.

On top of that volunteerism may build social skills as it is considered to be a path to improved networking abilities. It brings people of different background together which is why people who are engaging in different activities may do a cooperation work so that they can strengthen their teamworking and social skills. Florence, a city in Kentucky (KY), is well-known for its vibrant community spirit that offers people (whether they are newcomer or residents of that country) chances to assist at events, clean-up challenges or support charitable organizations, while making positive impact. This, in turn, results in cultivating a sense of belonging. Therefore, collaborating toward good deeds are more likely to be helpful for enhancing their social cohesion and while assisting them to improve their communication.

In conclusion, volunteering is a sphere that provides valuable opportunities with the aim of fostering people's interaction skills, improving health condition and enriching experiences which is powerful in both personal and professional life. Thus, volunteerism should be encouraged as much as possible as it plays a vital role building active life and society.

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