

# New *Momentum Metropolitan Volunteerism Report* unpacks local state of volunteerism

Following a decline during the Covid-19 pandemic, corporate volunteerism is once again thriving in the South African private sector<sup>1,2</sup>. Given the surge of activity in this space, Momentum Metropolitan recently commissioned a research study, the [\*Momentum Metropolitan Volunteerism Report\*](#), which delves deeper into the post-pandemic state of volunteerism in South Africa.



Source: Gallo/Getty

Driven by Momentum Metropolitan's corporate social investment (CSI) arm, the research was conducted among its employees, employees from other major corporations and representatives from various local non-profit organisations (NPOs).

The *Momentum Metropolitan Volunteerism Report* identified a number of pertinent findings, under three main themes:

## 1. Different motives for volunteering

The study highlights that different motives existed for volunteers of different age groups. Of those surveyed (n=157), individuals aged 25-34 represented the bulk of volunteers in this study, and they indicated their need to set a good example as a key driver of their volunteering efforts. In addition, this group was also more likely than other groups to volunteer their time, which encompassed their skills and services.

Older volunteers (ages 45 to 64), on the other hand, noted the desire to empower people and feel a sense of pride as primary drivers. "With these subtle differences in mind, it becomes necessary for EVPs to consider how existing programmes allow for the expression of these needs," says Tshego Bokaba, CSI manager at Momentum Metropolitan.



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## 2. Empathy and open-mindedness: the essence of volunteerism

Empathy and open-mindedness were the key personality traits demonstrated by volunteers who participated in this study.

A further noteworthy observation was the substantial over-representation of women in the data, with 83% of the participants being female. This observation fits well with established research that suggests women to be generally more empathetic than men<sup>3,4</sup>.

“From the perspective of EVPs, this finding asks us to think carefully about what we can do to bring more balance and impact to volunteerism by increasing men’s interest and involvement,” says Bokaba.



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## 3. Key barriers to volunteerism

Typically, the biggest frustrations for both volunteers and NPOs seem to revolve around limited time and resources. “However, data from the research suggests that whilst employees are strapped for time, a further challenge resides in a mismatch between what corporates currently offer and what employees would like them to offer as volunteer support,” explains Bokaba.

For example, 41% of respondents indicated that they need to know more about a variety of volunteering opportunities to which they can culturally and socially relate. In this regard, the research revealed the four causes most important to volunteers to be (in order of priority):

- community development;
- children and babies;
- schools; and
- women empowerment.

Bokaba says that these findings reflect the social ills that the country is currently grappling with. “As unemployment rises and growing need erodes funding allocated for socioeconomic development, people are stepping in to support their

communities.”

She adds that while volunteering plays an important role in addressing these challenges, they still require targeted interventions from government and private sector if SA is to see meaningful and sustainable change.

*References:*

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