

UX Research by Neda Mokarami

Product: Voluntary services App (Kian)
Company: MehrAfarin Charity in Tehran, Iran



Berlin, Oct 2023

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UX Research Method

1. Qualitative research (Interview)

The qualitative research method is employed to gain a nuanced understanding of the needs of both children and volunteers.

Thematic analysis is employed to analyze qualitative data obtained from several interviews. This involves identifying patterns, themes, and relationships within the data to gain deeper insights into the research questions.

1.1. Interviews

A: Understanding children's needs

This section focuses on gaining insights into the specific challenges faced by children in deprived areas of Iran and the potential role of volunteer services in addressing these challenges.

- Children aged: 5-18

- Aims of interviews

1. To understand the socio-economic challenges faced by children in deprived areas and the impact on their well-being.
2. To identify the key needs of these children and explore how they may vary across different demographic groups.
3. To explore potential strategies or initiatives for fostering greater community engagement and participation in supporting the well-being of Iranian children.

- **Interviews result:** The interviews were conducted with three female professionals from Iran, each bringing unique perspectives and expertise to the discussion. The participants included a 28-year-old NGO representative from Mehr Afarin charity, a 45-year-old educational specialist focused on children, and a 55-year-old children's sociologist. The results and findings from these expert interviews are summarized and grouped into the following key insights:

1. Socio-Economic challenges faced by children

- Poverty:
 - Limited access to basic necessities (food, clothing, shelter)
 - Inadequate educational opportunities
- Health issues:
 - Poor access to healthcare services
 - Prevalence of malnutrition and related health problems
- Social and emotional challenges:
 - Psychological stress from family financial struggles
 - Lack of safe recreational and educational spaces

2. Primary needs of children

- Basic needs:
 - Access to nutritious food
 - Reliable healthcare services

- Educational needs:
 - Quality education and school supplies
 - Extracurricular activities and after-school programs
- Emotional and psychological support:
 - Counseling and mental health services
 - Safe and supportive environments for development
- Fun and recreational activities
 - Access to play areas and recreational activities
 - Engagement in creative and sports activities for holistic development

3. Effective strategies for promoting community engagement

- Community-based programs:
 - Involvement of local families and leaders
 - Culturally relevant initiatives
- Incentives for participation: Providing tangible benefits like health check-ups and educational workshops
- Community events: Combining fun activities for children with informational sessions for parents
- Awareness campaigns: Utilizing social media and local influencers to spread awareness

4. Importance of training and support for volunteers

- Enhanced competence: Well-prepared volunteers leading to better outcomes for children
- Confidence building: Volunteers feeling more capable and motivated
- Long-term engagement: Support promoting sustained volunteer participation and satisfaction
- Mental health resources
- Volunteer forums for sharing experiences and advice

5. Community engagement and participation

- Effective strategies for promoting engagement include:
 - Raising awareness about the impact of volunteer efforts.
 - Encouraging community involvement through local events and online campaigns.
- Offering flexible volunteer opportunities to accommodate different schedules and commitments.

B: Understanding volunteers' needs

The target group and product users for this research comprise of individuals residing in Iran who are interested in or have the potential to engage in volunteer activities aimed at supporting children. These individuals come from diverse backgrounds and possess varied experiences. To gain deeper insights into their experiences, perceptions, and suggestions regarding the utilization of digital platforms for volunteer services, focus group discussions were organized with volunteers. These discussions aim to explore potential barriers and opportunities for enhancing volunteer engagement and participation.

- Age: 18 – 60

- **Aims of interviews:** These interviews aim to gather valuable insights from volunteers regarding their motivations, perceptions, and suggestions for utilizing digital platforms for volunteer services, as well as, to identify potential challenges and opportunities for enhancing volunteer engagement and participation.

- **Interviews result:** The interviews were conducted with three individuals from Iran, including two males and one female. The participants were a 46-year-old English teacher, a 25-year-old art student with master's degree, and a 38-year-old musician. The results and findings from these expert interviews are summarized and grouped into the following key insights:

1. Motivations for volunteering

- Desire to make a positive impact on children's lives.
- Personal fulfillment from seeing children's joy and happiness.
- Passion for sharing skills and talents, such as art and music, with children.

2. Barriers to community engagement and participation

- Lack of awareness: Limited information on volunteer opportunities
- Cultural stigmas: Misconceptions about certain types of assistance
- Logistical Challenges:
 - Transportation issues for volunteers
 - Scheduling conflicts and time constraints

3. Approaches to overcome barriers

- Awareness campaigns: Targeted efforts to highlight volunteer benefits
- Volunteer support: Comprehensive training and ongoing support
- Flexible opportunities: Accommodating different schedules and providing virtual options
- Recognition and networking: Building supportive networks and acknowledging volunteer efforts

4. Perceived role of digital platforms

Digital platforms can enhance the reach and coordination of volunteer services. Important features include:

- Volunteer opportunities listing.
- Scheduling tools for organizing events and workshops.
- Virtual performance spaces and live streaming capabilities for music-related activities.
- Interactive forums for volunteers to share experiences and tips.
- Impact tracking and feedback systems for volunteers and participants.

- User-friendly registration and matching systems
- Training resources for volunteers
- Features facilitating communication between volunteers and organizers (messaging/chat, email, phone calls)

5. Challenges and barriers

- Digital divides: not all volunteers or children have access to reliable internet or devices.
- Maintaining personal connections in a digital space.
- Need for clear guidance on using the platform and available technical support.
- Time constraints: struggle to find time for volunteer activities due to their personal and professional commitments.
- Transportation resources: Lack of reliable transportation can hinder volunteers' ability to reach certain locations where their help is needed.
- Detailed information on opportunities: Volunteers often lack detailed information about available opportunities, which can discourage them from participating.
- Timely information: There is a need for a more efficient system to inform potential volunteers about new opportunities quickly.

6. Suggestions for improving platform design and usability

- Simple, intuitive, and user-friendly design.
- Visual aids such as icons and video tutorials for easier navigation.
- Interactive features like live chat and forums to enhance engagement.
- Personalization options, including volunteer profiles and participation tracking.
- Sections for success stories and feedback to motivate volunteers.

7. Support and resources for volunteers

- Access to necessary materials and supplies
- Provision of resources such as lesson plans and activity guides.
- Feedback and recognition, such as certificates or thank-you notes.
- Opportunities for networking with other volunteers.
- Professional development opportunities, including workshops and seminars.
- Creation of a community for volunteers to share experiences and collaborate on future projects.

2. Quantitative research (Survey)

Survey to collect data on preferences and expectations of potential volunteers in Iran, serving as the app's end-users.

- **Aims of the survey:** The primary aims of the survey in this research are to gather detailed insights into the needs and challenges faced by children in deprived areas of Iran, understand the motivations and barriers experienced by volunteers, and identify key features and functionalities that would enhance the effectiveness and engagement of a digital platform designed to support volunteer services for children. These tools will provide essential data to inform the design and development of a user-centered, impactful digital app.

Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses will be conducted on survey data to identify trends, associations, and correlations.

2.1 Survey results

Twenty-five individuals participated in this online survey, all originally from Iran but currently residing in various countries such as Iran, Germany, the UK, Spain, and Australia. Of the respondents, 56% are in the 31-40 age range, 72% are female, and 28% are male. Additionally, 72% have previous volunteering experience, and 60% have specifically volunteered for children's causes. Also, some product designers and computer engineers were among the responders, who provided expert and valuable insights. The results and findings from the survey are summarized and grouped into the following key insights:

1. Volunteer experience

- **Volunteer motivation:** respondents expressed a strong desire to volunteer again due to:

- Emotional and personal fulfillment
- Humanitarian and social responsibility
- Children support and assistance
- Feeling impactful and humanitarian
- Happiness and positive emotions
- Making connections and learning
- Feeling of usefulness and responsibility
- Empowerment of self-esteem
- Social engagement and making friends

- **Barriers to volunteering:**

- Despite the desire to volunteer, some respondents mentioned being too busy or not having the opportunity or time to volunteer at the moment.
- There is an indication that with better circumstances or more available time, these individuals would actively engage in volunteering.

- **Motivation for future volunteering:**

- The rewarding nature of seeing the positive impact on the community and feeling part of something larger is a strong motivator for future volunteering.
- Respondents mentioned that volunteering makes them feel good about themselves, reinforcing their desire to continue helping.

- Volunteers' Contributions and their Impact:

- Significant impact: Most respondents believe volunteering significantly helps people in need, particularly children, by fulfilling basic needs and offering emotional support.
- Short-term impact: Financial aid, food, shelter, and childcare.
- Long-term impact: Role modeling, fostering self-esteem, and education for better futures.
- Emotional support: Volunteering provides companionship and encouragement, making those in need feel valued and hopeful.
- Empowerment: Many respondents emphasized the importance of empowering individuals through education, entrepreneurship, and skill development to promote self-sufficiency.
- Community and hope: Volunteering fosters a sense of community and hope, creating positive memories and moments for children that have lasting impacts.
- Mutual benefits: Volunteering benefits volunteers by contributing to their personal growth and fulfillment.

2. Digital app usage

- High frequency of mobile app usage (96%): the platform should be a mobile app.

- The most frequently selected types of apps: Social media, messaging, and education.

3. Needs assessment

- Specific services or support for children in Iran:

- Education
- Mental health and psychological support
- Recreational and fun activities
- Basic needs
- Skill development
- Communication and social skills

- Variation in needs compared to other countries: while some needs of Iranian children may overlap with those of children in other countries (like basic education and healthcare), there are distinct challenges and limitations specific to Iran that necessitate tailored interventions and support strategies:

- Cultural and political context
- Access to resources
- Education system
- Basic human rights
- Global connectivity

- Tomorrow's actions to help Iranian children:

- Education and knowledge
- Basic needs and support
- Healthcare and well-being
- Social and emotional development
- Community engagement and advocacy

- Solutions to address Iranian children's needs:

- Education and support:
 - Enhance educational programs to discover children's talents.
 - Improve school infrastructure and provide resources.
 - Offer scholarships and financial aid.
 - Train teachers and update curriculum.
 - Integrate technology in education.
- Basic needs:
 - Support through community and charity initiatives.
 - Establish reliable organizations for effective aid distribution.
 - Implement school feeding programs and community gardens.
 - Partner for sustainable food donations.
- Healthcare:
 - Expand healthcare facilities, especially in remote areas.
 - Provide mobile units for accessible healthcare.
 - Offer free or subsidized medical services.
 - Promote preventive healthcare education.
- Psychosocial well-being:
 - Establish school and community counselling services.
 - Train educators and healthcare providers in mental health.
 - Organize support groups for children in distress.
- Child protection:
 - Strengthen and enforce child protection laws.
 - Establish child helplines for abuse reporting.
 - Provide legal aid for vulnerable children.
- Recreation and culture
 - Build community centres and youth clubs.
 - Organize cultural events and workshops.
 - Engage children in creative activities.
- Family empowerment
 - Educate parents on child development and positive parenting.
 - Provide vocational training and economic support.
- Technological solutions
 - Develop educational apps for Iranian children.
 - Use social media for community engagement.
 - Offer virtual learning opportunities.

- Blockers to achieving Iranian children's needs:

- Political and socioeconomic instability
 - Political conflicts divert resources.
 - Economic downturns affect funding.
- Lack of funding and resources
 - Insufficient government funding.
 - Limited infrastructure development.

- Inadequate infrastructure
 - Poor transportation.
 - Limited electricity and internet.
- Cultural and societal norms
 - Barriers to girls' education.
 - Traditional beliefs affecting healthcare.
- Health challenges
- Educational challenges
 - Shortage of teachers and materials.
 - Language barriers.
- Legal and regulatory issues
- External factors
 - International sanctions.
 - Government restrictions on online access.

4. App features

- Most desired features for a volunteer services app:

- Volunteer opportunities listing
- Donation platform
- Event calendar
- Resources and information hub for volunteers
- Tracking and reporting of volunteer hours
- Messaging/chat functionality
- Volunteer profile creation

- Additional features and functionalities suggestions:

- Notifications
- Educational resources
- Healthcare information
- Language support
- Cultural sensitivity
- Sharing pictures about inspiring moments and activities
- Integration with social media
- Volunteering categories
- Environmental awareness feature
- Farsi educational apps
- Community education about social issues and volunteerism.

- Perception of app's impact on Iranian children:

- Positive Impact: 72% of respondents believe the app could significantly benefit Iranian children.

5. User experience

- Importance of user-friendly design in mobile apps:

- High Importance: 88% of respondents consider user-friendly design very important when using a mobile app.

- Aspects of user experience important in mobile apps:

- User engagement: Prioritizing engagement over governmental concerns.

- Clear and user-friendly
- Simplicity and functionality
- Ease of use and availability: Accessibility and ease of navigation.
- Filtering and browsing
- Clarity in user interface design (UI)
- Speed and performance
- Attractive graphics and visual appeal.
- Reliability and security
- Conciseness and accessibility: Minimalistic design with accessible features.
- Useful content: Providing relevant and valuable information.
- Fast launching: Quick startup of the application.
- Entertaining features
- Easy access to features and content

- Aspects of user experience least important in mobile apps:

- Less emphasis on social interaction features.
- Lower priority on designs centered solely on human aspects.
- Minimal focus on fancy aesthetics.
- Avoiding overly complex or detailed settings.
- Less importance placed on animated features.
- Lower priority on highly personalized features.
- Limited integration with external applications.
- Minimal emphasis on gamifying the user experience.
- features focused solely on entertainment.
- Limited focus on in-depth analytics.
- Lower priority on visual appeal over functionality.
- Not concerned with specific language or terminology.
- Prioritizing functionality aligned with core needs rather than user-driven development.

6. Volunteers challenges

- Barriers encountered when volunteering:

- Uncertainty about where and how to volunteer.
- Difficulty in finding suitable times due to busy schedules.
- Challenges in building connections and sustainable plans.
- Issues arising from misunderstandings.
- Financial difficulties impacting ability to volunteer or donate.
- Difficulty with access or verification processes, especially for volunteers abroad.
- Restrictions on financial transactions affecting donations.
- Need for patience and time management.
- Difficulties due to language differences.
- Concerns about trustworthiness to organizations.
- Challenges from children or legal restrictions.
- Uncertainty about the best use of resources.
- Limited personal experience in volunteering.
- Difficulty in identifying and addressing specific needs.

- Logistical challenges in sending goods or materials.
- Lack of training or required skills for volunteering.
- Need for strategies to prevent burnout.

- Difficulties finding volunteer opportunities aligned with interests and skills:

- Location and accessibility: Challenges in reaching remote or distant volunteer locations safely.
- Specific skills: Limited opportunities that align with specific skills, such as education or art, due to local demand or organizational focus.
- Artistic skills: Lack of opportunities that value artistic skills like painting in the local context.
- Translation and teaching: Skills like translation and teaching are not always in demand or available for volunteering.
- Trust and independence: Few independent and trustworthy organizations offering diverse volunteer opportunities.
- Broad opportunities: Difficulty in finding a comprehensive range of volunteer opportunities that match personal interests and skills.
- Skill development: Desire for volunteer opportunities that aid personal skill development but limited availability.
- Information access: Lack of awareness or communication about available volunteer opportunities.

7. Volunteer preferences

- Most important preference factors in choosing volunteer opportunities:

- Alignment with personal values and beliefs
- Flexibility in terms of time commitment
- Opportunities for skill development and learning
- Opportunity to make a tangible impact

- Main reasons for feeling discouraged or demotivated while volunteering:

- Time constraints and difficulty managing commitments.
- Feeling like efforts are not impactful or effective.
- Organizational challenges or inefficiencies.
- Personal fatigue or burnout.
- Conflicts with others or within the organization.
- Resource limitations or lack of support.
- Children's resistance or government restrictions.

8. Preferred communication preferences

- Messaging/chat
- Email
- Face-to-face meetings
- In-app messaging
- Social media platforms

9. Long-term engagement

- **Continuing to use the app long-term:** Respondents show a strong likelihood of reflecting their commitment and positive engagement with the platform.

- **Most important encourage factors to continued engagement:**

- Regular updates and new volunteer opportunities
- Opportunities for skill development and learning
- Easy-to-use and reliable app interface
- Support and resources for volunteers
- Flexibility in volunteer commitments
- Impact tracking and reporting to see the results of your efforts

3. Evaluation of the Findings

This section evaluates the findings from both the qualitative and quantitative research, focusing on addressing the needs and pain points of both children and volunteers that need to be implemented in the app design. The evaluation is listed based on all necessary needs and sorted into three parts:

1. Doable actions to translate into the digital platform
2. Challenges due to time and equipment constraints
3. Undoable actions due to political constraints

3.1 Target groups' needs

- **Children’s needs:** In the following table, all needs of children that should be addressed in the digital app are evaluated and categorized into three groups. These needs could be considered in lists of volunteer opportunities in the mobile app. (Table 1)

Children's needs	Doable	Challenging	Undoable
1. Basic needs			
2. Healthcare and well-being services			
3. Emotional and psychological support			
4. Educational services			
5. Virtual learning opportunities			
6. Fun and recreational activities			
7. Sports activities			
8. Art and creative activities			
9. Access to the Internet and digital devices			
10. Social and emotional development			
11. Discovering children's talents			
12. Community-based programs			
13. Offer scholarships and financial aid			
14. Incentives for participation			
15. Training teachers and updating curriculum			
16. Awareness campaigns			
17. Building community centers and youth clubs			
18. Family empowerment			

Table. 1: Evaluation findings: Children’s needs

- **Volunteers' needs:** In the following table, all needs of volunteers that should be addressed in the digital app are evaluated and categorized into three groups: (Table 5)

Volunteers' needs	Doable	Challenging	Undoable
1. Available volunteering opportunities list	Doable		
2. Match mechanism with interests and personal skills	Doable		
3. Categorizing opportunities by location feature	Doable		
4. Flexible time opportunities	Doable		
5. Event calendar	Doable		
6. Donation platform	Doable		
7. Detailed information and criteria list for opportunities	Doable		
8. Training resources and sessions		Challenging	
9. Impact tracking and results for volunteers		Challenging	
10. Volunteer forums for sharing experiences and advice		Challenging	
11. User-friendly registration and matching systems	Doable		
12. Visual aids such as video tutorials		Challenging	
13. Online opportunities	Doable		
14. Personalization options and profile creation	Doable		
15. Environmental awareness feature		Challenging	
16. Awareness campaigns to highlight volunteer benefits		Challenging	
17. Building supportive networks and acknowledging efforts		Challenging	
18. Virtual performance spaces		Challenging	
19. Facilitating volunteers' and organizers' communication		Challenging	
20. Maintaining privacy in a digital space	Doable		
21. Long-term engagement by emotional support		Challenging	
22. Sharing and displaying success stories and feedback		Challenging	
23. Language and cultural sensitivity support			Undoable
24. Transportation resources			Undoable
25. Creating an education community and networking			Undoable
26. Professional development opportunities for volunteers			Undoable
27. Support and available resources for each service			Undoable
28. Integration app with social media			Undoable

Table 5: Evaluation findings: Volunteers' needs

3.2 Ideation and Requirements

Based on the Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) methodology, the evaluated qualitative and quantitative findings, from both doable and challenging parts, are defined and translated into mobile app features. These features are then systematically grouped and classified into different pages of the mobile app, ensuring an intuitive and user-friendly interface.

3.2.1 App features list

1. Children's needs in the form of opportunities list:

The key metrics of children's needs and their pain points are translated into opportunity lists for a mobile app. Based on the research findings and to ensure a user-friendly experience, these opportunities will be displayed with the following icons on the mobile app: (Fig 1)

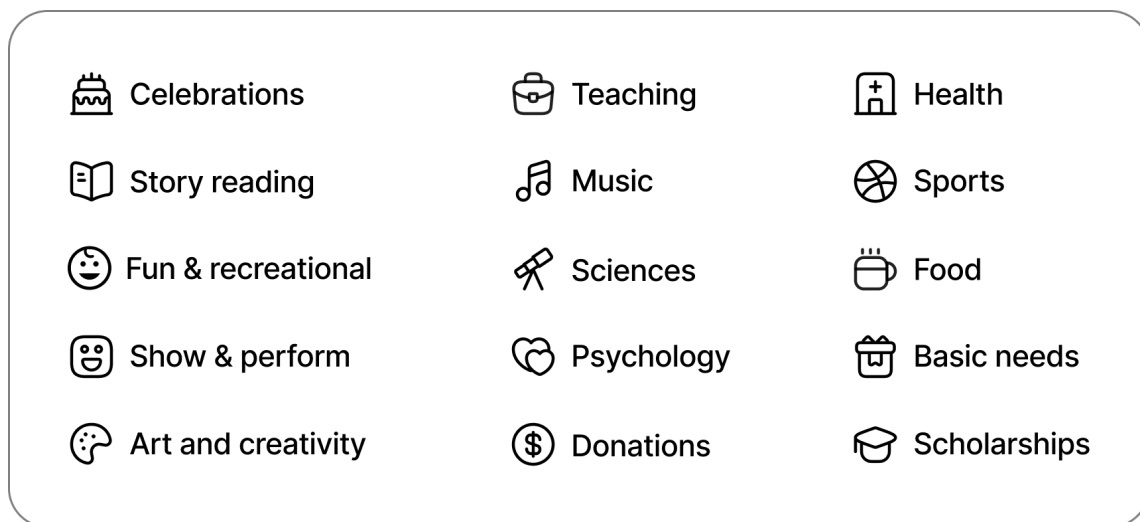


Fig1: Opportunities list with icons

2. Volunteers' needs in the form of app features:

- **Main features lists:** The key metrics of volunteers' needs and their pain points, which were evaluated as both doable and challenging, are defined to be translated into app features as follows:

1. Customised profile for users
2. Information card for each opportunity
3. Search tools such as filter
4. Adding an emotional story as the app identity to motivate volunteers' engagement
5. Tracking and displaying activities feature
6. Notification for new available and matched opportunity
7. Map to access nearby opportunities
8. Booking feature
9. Details of required service

10. Contact information
11. Volunteers' criteria information
12. Inviting friends to opportunities
13. Rewarding volunteers through displaying favorite poems (cultural motivation)

- **Type of opportunities:** To make it easy for volunteers to use and find matched opportunities, and based on the research findings, opportunities are grouped into two types on information cards:

1. Events: held at a specific time
2. Positions: requiring several sessions to be booked for the users' preferred times.

These opportunities in the shape of events and positions are displayed with the following features:

1. Onsite or online
2. Calendar and time
3. Location of services

4. Interview Questions & Answers

4.1 Questions for understanding children's needs

1. Please introduce yourself briefly. (age, profession, background)
2. Can you describe some of the most pressing socio-economic challenges faced by children in deprived areas of Iran?
3. In your opinion, what are the primary needs of these children,
4. How do these primary needs vary among different demographic groups?
5. What do you believe are the most effective strategies or initiatives for promoting community engagement and participation?
6. Do you believe a centralized digital platform can promote volunteer services? What features or functionalities do you think would be most beneficial? Would those services be for the adult community or the children? How do you envision making a change to benefit Iranian children?
7. Based on your experience, what barriers exist in promoting community engagement and participation in offering voluntary assistance?
8. What approaches could be employed to overcome these barriers?
9. How important is it for you to provide access to training, guidance, and support resources for volunteers? What topics would the training cover?

4.2 Interviewees' answers

The interviews were conducted in Farsi and subsequently translated into English. Below are the summaries and key points derived from the responses.

1. Mrs. Fatemeh.M, 28 years old, from NGO representative at Mehr Afarin charity, in Thehran, Iran.

In deprived areas of Iran, children face numerous socio-economic challenges. Poverty affects their access to basic needs like nutritious food, clean water, and proper healthcare. Many also struggle with inadequate educational opportunities due to underfunded schools and a lack of qualified teachers. Additionally, social issues such as child labor and early marriage further hinder their development and well-being.

These children primarily need access to quality education, healthcare services, and proper nutrition. Needs can vary significantly among different demographic groups. For example, girls in rural areas often face more barriers to education compared to boys. Children from minority ethnic groups may encounter discrimination and cultural barriers that affect their access to services. Additionally, children with disabilities require specialized support and resources that are often lacking in deprived areas.

Promoting community engagement requires a multifaceted approach. Effective strategies include awareness campaigns highlighting the importance of supporting children's well-being, community-based programs encouraging local participation, and partnerships with local organizations to build trust and

cooperation. Initiatives offering tangible benefits, such as skill development workshops or community events, can also foster greater engagement and commitment.

A centralized digital platform could revolutionize volunteer services by streamlining the process of matching volunteers with opportunities. Essential features should include a user-friendly interface, detailed profiles for both volunteers and opportunities, and communication tools for seamless coordination. Additionally, incorporating a training and resources section to prepare volunteers for their roles, as well as a feedback system to monitor progress and impact, would be highly beneficial. To make a meaningful change for Iranian children, the focus should be on fostering collaboration and community engagement through the platform, ensuring that volunteers have access to diverse opportunities that align with their interests and skills. By empowering volunteers with the tools and resources they need, we can create a network of dedicated individuals committed to making a positive impact on the lives of children in Iran.

As an NGO representative, I've encountered various challenges when it comes to promoting community engagement in voluntary assistance. One significant hurdle is the lack of awareness among community members about available volunteer opportunities and their potential impact. Additionally, limited resources, such as time, finances, and transportation, often deter individuals from actively participating in volunteer activities. Language and cultural differences further complicate communication and understanding within diverse communities. Moreover, there can be an inherent mistrust or skepticism towards NGOs or the effectiveness of volunteer efforts, which undermines engagement efforts. To address these barriers, it's essential to focus on education and outreach initiatives to raise awareness about volunteer opportunities. We also need to make these opportunities more accessible and inclusive, considering factors like scheduling flexibility and language support. Building trust through transparency and engagement with local leaders is crucial, along with empowering community members to take ownership of initiatives. Celebrating the impact of volunteer efforts can also inspire greater involvement and contribution from the community.

Providing access to training, guidance, and support resources is critical. Well-trained volunteers are more effective and confident in their roles, directly impacting the quality of support provided to children. Comprehensive training programs ensure that volunteers understand the specific needs of the children they are helping and are equipped with the skills to address these needs.

2. Hoda. M, 45 years old, Educational Specialist children, Karaj, Iran.

Children in deprived areas of Iran face numerous socio-economic challenges. High poverty rates and financial strain often lead to poor living conditions, negatively impacting a child's physical and mental health. Additionally, educational facilities in these areas are typically under-resourced, with a shortage of qualified teachers, insufficient educational materials, and inadequate infrastructure, making it difficult for children to receive a quality education.

These children primarily need access to nutritious food, healthcare, quality education, and a safe environment. Needs can vary based on factors such as

gender, location, and socio-economic status. For example, girls in rural areas often have less access to education due to cultural norms and safety concerns. Children from ethnic minority groups may face language barriers and discrimination that further hinder their access to services.

Effective strategies for promoting community engagement include creating awareness through education campaigns that highlight the importance of supporting children's well-being. Partnering with local leaders, schools, and religious organizations to promote volunteerism can build trust and encourage participation. Offering incentives such as recognition, certificates, or skill development opportunities can further motivate individuals to get involved.

As an educational specialist working with children, I strongly believe that a centralized digital platform has the potential to significantly promote volunteer services. One of the key features that would be most beneficial is a comprehensive volunteer opportunities listing, providing volunteers with easy access to various projects and initiatives. Additionally, features such as volunteer profile creation and messaging/chat functionality can facilitate communication and collaboration among volunteers. These services would primarily be for the adult community, as they would be the ones engaging directly in volunteer activities. However, the ultimate beneficiaries would be the children, as the volunteer services provided through the platform would aim to support and empower them. To make a change to benefit Iranian children, the platform could focus on addressing specific needs identified through research and collaboration with relevant organizations. It could also incorporate features for tracking and reporting volunteer hours, allowing for greater accountability and impact assessment. Overall, by leveraging technology and community engagement, this platform has the potential to make a meaningful difference in the lives of Iranian children.

Barriers to community engagement include a lack of awareness about volunteer opportunities, cultural resistance to certain types of volunteer work, and practical challenges such as time constraints and transportation issues. To overcome these barriers, it's essential to conduct widespread awareness campaigns that educate the public about the benefits and importance of volunteering. Creating flexible volunteering opportunities that fit into people's schedules and providing logistical support, like transportation, can also help. Building a supportive community network where volunteers can connect and share experiences can encourage ongoing engagement.

Providing access to training, guidance, and support resources for volunteers is essential for ensuring they are effective and motivated. As an educational specialist, I believe comprehensive training helps volunteers feel more confident and engaged in their roles.

Key training topics should include:

- Volunteer Roles and Responsibilities: Clear understanding of what is expected.
- Communication Skills: Effective ways to communicate with children and other volunteers.
- Cultural Sensitivity: Awareness of and respect for diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Safeguarding: Recognizing and responding to signs of abuse or neglect.
- Educational Techniques: Methods for supporting children's learning and development.

- First Aid: Basic first aid and emergency procedures.
- Emotional and Social Support: Providing support to children and handling emotional situations.
- Use of Digital Tools: Utilizing online platforms and educational apps effectively

3. Dr. Zahra M, 55 years old, Children's sociologist, Karaj, Iran.

Poverty is a significant issue, leading to malnutrition, poor health, and limited access to education. Many children also endure unstable home environments due to financial stress, resulting in psychological issues like anxiety and depression. The lack of recreational and educational facilities further compounds these problems, leaving children with fewer opportunities for healthy development and social interaction.

The primary needs of these children are multifaceted. They require access to basic necessities along with emotional and psychological support. Safe and stimulating environments for play and learning are crucial for their development. Needs vary widely; younger children may benefit from early childhood education and play-based learning, while older children may need mentorship programs and mental health support. Children in rural areas face additional barriers like limited access to educational resources and extracurricular and fun activities.

Effective strategies involve creating community-based programs that involve local families and leaders, building trust and ensuring cultural relevance. Providing tangible benefits like free health check-ups or educational workshops can encourage participation. Community events combining fun activities for children with informational sessions for adults can also promote engagement. Leveraging social media and local influencers to spread awareness and share success stories further motivates community involvement.

I strongly believe that a centralized digital platform can indeed promote volunteer services effectively. Such a platform has the potential to connect volunteers with children in need, facilitating communication, coordination, and resource sharing. Key features that would be beneficial include a user-friendly interface, comprehensive volunteer opportunities listing, secure messaging/chat functionality, and a centralized repository of resources and information for both volunteers and children. These services would primarily target the adult community, empowering them to contribute meaningfully to the well-being of Iranian children. To make a change that truly benefits Iranian children, it's crucial to ensure the platform addresses their specific needs and challenges. This can be achieved by conducting thorough needs assessments, involving children in the design process, and providing tailored support and resources to address their multifaceted needs effectively. Additionally, fostering partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including NGOs, government agencies, and educational institutions, can amplify the platform's impact and ensure sustainable change for the betterment of Iranian children's lives. Sections dedicated to children's activities, mental health resources, and volunteer forums would be beneficial.

I've observed several barriers to promoting community engagement and participation in offering voluntary assistance. One significant challenge is the lack of awareness or understanding of the importance of volunteerism, especially concerning its impact on children's well-being. Additionally, socioeconomic

factors such as poverty and inequality can limit individuals' ability to volunteer due to competing priorities and resource constraints. Cultural norms and societal attitudes towards volunteering may also play a role, as some communities may not prioritize or value volunteer work as highly as others. To overcome these barriers, a multifaceted approach is needed. Firstly, raising awareness about the benefits of volunteering, particularly in terms of its positive impact on children, is crucial. Additionally, creating flexible volunteer opportunities that accommodate varying schedules and commitments can help overcome barriers related to time constraints. Finally, fostering a culture of volunteerism through community events, celebrations, and storytelling can shift societal attitudes and norms towards valuing and prioritizing volunteer work.

As a children's sociologist, I cannot emphasize enough the importance of providing volunteers with access to training, guidance, and support resources. Volunteers play a crucial role in shaping the well-being and development of children, and ensuring they are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills is paramount. The training would cover a wide range of topics tailored to the specific needs of the children and the nature of the volunteer activities. This might include understanding child development and behavior, techniques for effective communication with children, strategies for addressing diverse needs and challenges, and guidance on creating a safe and inclusive environment. Additionally, training on recognizing signs of distress or abuse and knowing how to respond appropriately would be essential. Ultimately, the goal is to empower volunteers with the tools and knowledge they need to make a positive and meaningful impact on the lives of children.

4.3 Questions for understanding volunteers' needs

1. Please introduce yourself briefly. (age, profession, background)
2. Can you describe your previous experiences, if any, with volunteering or participating in community service activities?
3. What motivates you to engage in volunteer activities?
4. What activities have you joined in? Were any of those related to supporting children in Iran?
5. How do you perceive the role of digital platforms in facilitating volunteer services for children?
6. What specific features or functionalities do you believe would enhance their effectiveness?
7. In your opinion, what are some of the potential challenges or barriers that volunteers may encounter when using digital platforms for volunteer services?
8. How can these potential challenges be addressed?
9. Based on your experiences, what suggestions do you have for improving the design and usability of digital platforms to encourage greater volunteer engagement and participation?
10. What types of support or resources would be helpful for you as a volunteer, both during and after participating in volunteer activities?

4.4 Interviewees' answers

The interviews were conducted in Farsi and subsequently translated into English. Below are the summaries and key points derived from the responses.

1. Mrs. Shabnam, F, 46 years old, English teacher, Tehran, Iran.

I've been involved in various volunteer activities for over 10 years, ranging from teaching English to underprivileged children to organizing community health camps for both adults and kids. In Iran, I've worked with NGOs focused on child welfare and education, providing educational support and recreational activities to children in deprived areas.

My primary motivation comes from a deep belief in the power of education and support to transform lives. I've seen firsthand how providing resources and care can significantly impact a child's future. Many children in Iran face serious socio-economic challenges, and being able to help them is incredibly fulfilling for me. Additionally, I feel a strong sense of community and responsibility to give back to society.

Digital platforms can revolutionize volunteer services by streamlining the process of matching volunteers with opportunities, providing training and resources, and facilitating communication among volunteers and organizers. Effective features include a comprehensive database of opportunities, easy-to-use registration and matching systems, real-time communication tools, and sections for volunteer

training and support. Impact tracking and feedback mechanisms would help evaluate the success of initiatives and guide improvements.

One main challenge is the digital divide; not all volunteers, especially in rural or underserved areas, have reliable internet access or are comfortable using digital platforms. This can be addressed by making the platform mobile-friendly and accessible on low-bandwidth connections. Another challenge is ensuring personalization so that volunteers don't feel like just another number. This requires advanced matching algorithms and personalized engagement strategies. Clear communication and continuous support are crucial to keep volunteers motivated and engaged.

The platform should have an intuitive and user-friendly interface. Simplifying the registration process and providing clear instructions can reduce entry barriers. Including volunteer testimonials, success stories, and interactive content can make the platform more engaging. Regular updates and notifications about new opportunities and the impact of ongoing projects can keep volunteers informed and motivated. Providing a way for volunteers to connect and share their experiences can foster a sense of community and belonging.

During volunteer activities, access to training resources, clear guidelines, and a point of contact for questions or issues are essential. Logistical support, such as transportation or accommodation for remote volunteering, can also be very helpful. After participating, receiving feedback and recognition for my contributions would be appreciated. Opportunities for further involvement and continuous learning, such as workshops or advanced training sessions, would keep me engaged and improve my effectiveness as a volunteer.

2. Mr. Amirhossein, 25 years old, Art student, Karaj, Iran.

As an art student, I've volunteered in various community art projects and workshops. I've worked with children in underserved communities, teaching them basic art techniques and helping them express themselves creatively. I've also organized art exhibitions and fundraising events to support local charities.

I believe art is a powerful tool for healing and self-expression. Many children in Iran face challenging circumstances, and providing them with a creative outlet can be incredibly beneficial. It helps them develop emotional resilience and gives them a sense of accomplishment and joy. Knowing that I can positively impact their lives through art motivates me to keep volunteering.

Digital platforms can play a crucial role in connecting volunteers with opportunities and resources. For art-related volunteer activities, features like virtual workshops, a gallery to showcase children's artwork, and a resource library with tutorials and project ideas would be very beneficial. Additionally, having a platform where volunteers can share their experiences, collaborate on projects, and receive feedback would greatly enhance the overall effectiveness of the services.

One challenge is maintaining engagement and motivation over time. Regular updates, interactive content, and a system for recognizing volunteers' efforts can help keep them motivated. Providing clear and concise information about volunteer opportunities and ensuring effective communication channels are also

essential. For me, the most important challenge is managing my time to balance volunteer activities with my professional work plan.

To improve design and usability, the platform should have a clean, intuitive interface with easy navigation. Visual elements, such as icons and images, can make the platform more engaging. Including interactive elements like quizzes, challenges, and live Q&A sessions can also enhance user engagement. It's important to provide clear instructions and support, such as FAQs and a help desk. Incorporating a social component where volunteers can connect, share their work, and support each other can foster a sense of community.

During volunteer activities, access to art supplies and materials, as well as guidance on organizing and conducting workshops, would be very helpful. Providing templates, lesson plans, and activity ideas can also support volunteers in their efforts. After participating in volunteer activities, receiving feedback, certificates, and recognition for my work would be appreciated.

3. Mr. Mehdi. A, 38 years old, Musician, Sari, Iran.

I've been volunteering as a musician for several years now. My most rewarding experiences have been playing music at various events for children, especially in hospitals and orphanages. I've also conducted music workshops and participated in charity concerts to raise funds for children's programs.

Music has a unique ability to uplift spirits and bring joy, and seeing the smiles on children's faces when I perform is incredibly fulfilling. Many children in Iran face tough situations, and I believe music can offer them a moment of happiness and an emotional outlet. Knowing that I can make a difference in their lives, even if it's just for a short time, motivates me to continue volunteering.

Digital platforms can significantly enhance the reach and coordination of volunteer services. For music-related activities, features like virtual performance spaces, and live streaming capabilities would be great. A scheduling tool for organizing events and workshops, and a forum for volunteers to share their experiences and tips, would also be beneficial. Additionally, integrating a feedback system where volunteers and participants can share their thoughts would be valuable.

One of the main challenges is time, I need to do performing music at different events based on my schedule since I am working with so many customers. Another challenge is location, most of the time, we need to carry our instruments, which means I need also to select an event that is nearby me. For me, finding a voluntary opportunity with a flexible schedule and location is the most important challenge and need, the second thing that I need is to know some basic info about the children and their situation. I don't care if I don't get any certificate, it's ok, I just want to see children's smiles and happiness, and be a part of that. Opportunities for networking with other volunteers and participating in professional development, like music workshops or seminars, would be beneficial. Creating a community where volunteers can share their experiences and collaborate on future projects would also be valuable. Finally, having access to an updated list of opportunities with times and locations would help me make a schedule and participate more frequently.

5. Survey Questions and Responses

5.1 Surveys questions

Title: Designing a digital app for volunteer services to empower children's lives in Iran

Thank you for participating in our survey! Your feedback is invaluable as we work to develop a digital app to support volunteer services for children in Iran. Please consider that this app will only be used by adults, to support children.(13 questions categories)

1. Personal information (Optional)

Age:

- 18-25
- 26-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60

Gender:

- Male,
- Female,
- Prefer not to say

Location (City/Province):

Occupation:

2. Volunteer experience

a) Have you volunteered before?

- Yes
- No

b) Have you volunteered for children before?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please describe:

c) What made the biggest impression on you when you started volunteering?

d) Would you volunteer again?

- If yes, why?
- If not, why not?

e) Do you think volunteering has a big impact on the people in need?

- If yes, what exactly?
- If not, what do you think can be changed to make a bigger impact for people in need?

3. Digital app usage

a) How frequently do you use mobile apps?

- Multiple times a day
- Once a day
- A few times a week
- Rarely
- Never

b) What types of apps do you typically use? (Select all that apply)

- Social media
- Messaging
- Entertainment
- Productivity
- Health and fitness
- Education
- Other (please specify)

4. Needs assessment

a) What specific services or support do you think would be most beneficial for children in Iran?

b) Do you think the needs of Iranian children vary compared to children in other countries?

- If yes, describe how?
- If no, describe how?

c) What would you do tomorrow to help Iranian children?

- Please list all the needs you think Iranian children have.
- Please list all possible solutions to those needs.
- Please list all possible blockers to achieve those needs.

5. App features

a) What features would you like to see in a digital app for volunteer services aimed at supporting children in Iran? (Select all that apply)

- Volunteer opportunities listing
- Volunteer profile creation
- Messaging/chat functionality
- Donation platform
- Event calendar
- Resources and information hub for volunteers
- Tracking and reporting of volunteer hours
- Other (please specify)

b) Are there any additional features or functionalities you would like to suggest?

c) On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you think an app would help Iranian children?

6. User experience

a) How important is user-friendly design to you when using a mobile app?

- Very important
- Important
- Neutral
- Not very important
- Not important at all

b) What aspects of user experience are most important to you when using a mobile app?

c) What aspects are the least important?

7. Volunteer challenges

a) What challenges or barriers have you encountered when trying to volunteer in the past?

b) Have you ever experienced difficulties finding volunteer opportunities that align with your interests and skills? If so, please describe.

8. Volunteer preferences

a) What factors are most important to you when considering volunteer opportunities? (Select all that apply)

- Alignment with personal values and beliefs
- Opportunity to make a tangible impact
- Flexibility in terms of time commitment
- Opportunities for skill development and learning
- Social interaction and community engagement
- Other (please specify)

b) Are there specific types of volunteer opportunities or causes that you are particularly interested in?

9. Motivations for volunteering

a) What motivates you to volunteer or engage in volunteer activities?

b) Have you ever felt discouraged or demotivated while volunteering? If so, what were the reasons?

10. Impact and recognition

a) How important is it for you to receive recognition or acknowledgment for your volunteer efforts?

- Very important
- Important
- Neutral
- Not very important

- Not important at all

11. Communication preferences

How do you prefer to communicate with other volunteers or organizers when participating in volunteer activities? (Select all that apply)

- Messaging/chat (e.g., WhatsApp, Telegram)
- Email
- Phone calls
- Video calls (e.g., Zoom, Skype)
- Social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram)
- In-app messaging
- Face-to-face meetings
- SMS/text messages
- Other

12. Long-Term Engagement

a) How likely are you to continue volunteering or using the digital app on a long-term basis?

- Very unlikely
- Unlikely
- Neutral
- Likely
- Very likely

b) What factors would encourage you to remain engaged with volunteer opportunities and the digital app over time? (Select all that apply)

- Regular updates and new volunteer opportunities
- Recognition and rewards for volunteering efforts
- Opportunities for skill development and learning
- Positive feedback and appreciation from the community
- Easy-to-use and reliable app interface
- Support and resources for volunteers
- Community-building features (e.g., forums, events)
- Personal connection to the cause or organization
- Flexibility in volunteer commitments
- Impact tracking and reporting to see the results of your efforts
- Other, (please describe)

13. Feedback and suggestions

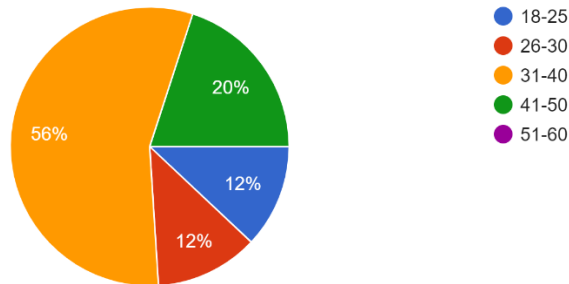
Do you have any additional feedback, suggestions, or comments about the concept of a digital app for volunteer services in Iran?

5.2 Survey responses (25 responses)

1. Personal information (optional)

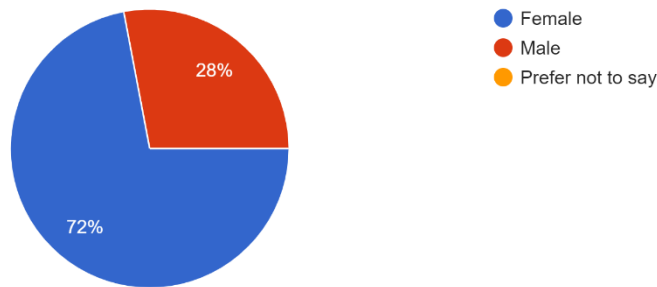
1. Personal information (Optional) a) What is your age?

25 responses



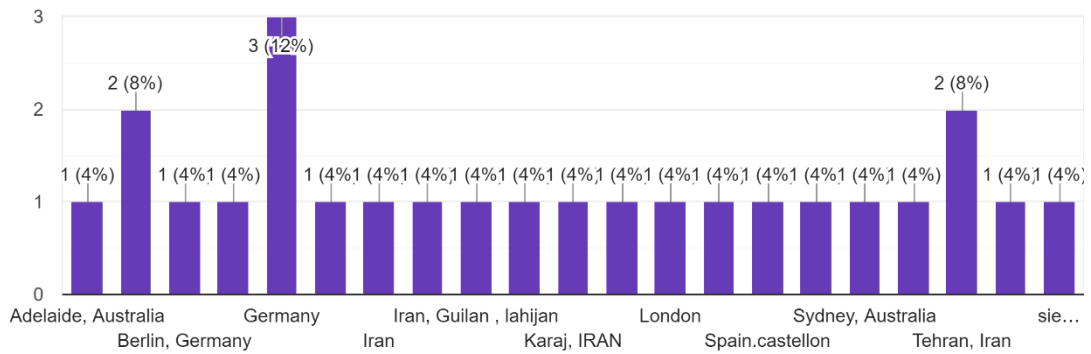
b) What is your gender?

25 responses



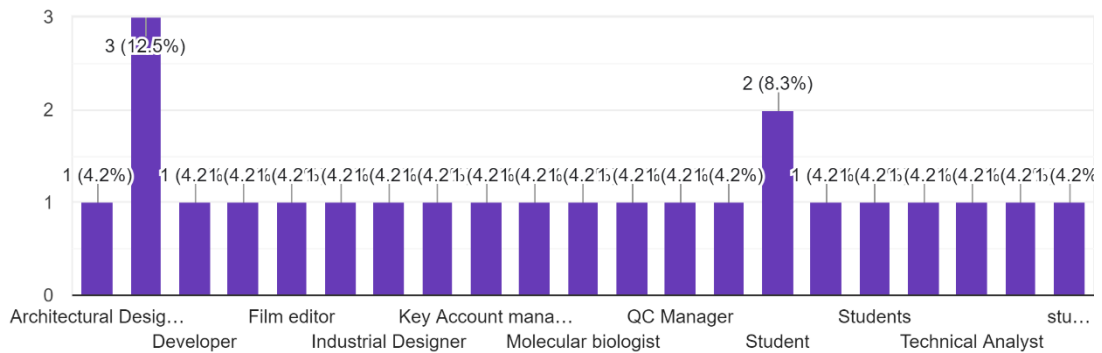
c) What is your location?(City and Country)

25 responses



d) What is your job?

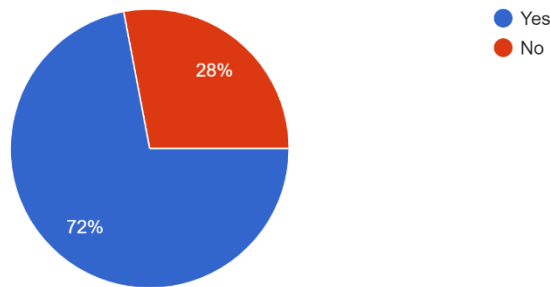
24 responses



2. Volunteer experience

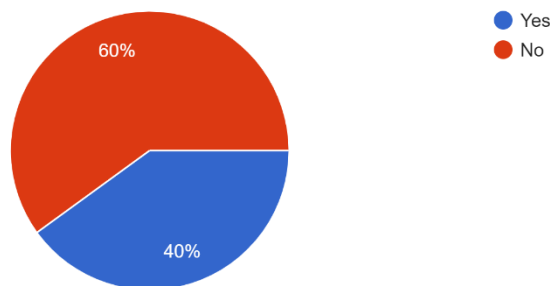
a) Have you volunteered before?

25 responses



b) Have you volunteered for children before?

25 responses



c) What made the biggest impression on you when you started volunteering?

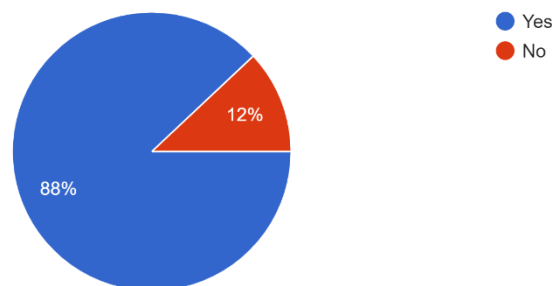
25 responses

- Be with children
- communicating
- Because of the humanitarian sense and children are innocence
- Sympathy and feelings like I did my social responsibilities

- I have no experience
- It makes me feel good knowing I can give my time to help others
- Passion for children
-
-
- I felt happy and satisfied that I could help people
- I find it to be quite fulfilling. And the people you help are always so grateful which makes it all more of a satisfying act.
- Although I really admire volunteering for children, I haven't done that before. I believe helping those in need can be a deeply rewarding experience, giving you a sense of purpose and boosting your own happiness.
- Feel better when see smile on their face
- Making connection
- Not volunteered before
- Helping to the people
- What made the biggest impression on me when I started volunteering was the overwhelming sense of community and the genuine gratitude from those I helped. It was inspiring to see how small acts of kindness could significantly impact others' lives.
- I never had the opportunity to do so, but I always wanted to. The main issue was that I never know where and how I can do volunteering activities.
- It is so sad to see children in poverty. When you help them you can see the happiness and smile in their eyes. I myself feel satisfied and I am a good and useful person.
- Helping
- Did not volunteer for children
- Helping a friend achieve her goal
- The feeling of being able to do something for them
- I would like to help and support people when a problem happened. In this case a massive earthquake happened and many people died that is why I feel sadness about that.
- I always wanted to do something for my community. I wanted to help undocumented to go to school.

d) Would you volunteer again?

25 responses



For previous question, please describe your main reason briefly:

19 responses

- I want to see their smile
- being helpful and effective
- I would generally like to spend my spare time helping others doing volunteer work

- Children are innocent and I love them.
-
- I have not had the time or opportunity yet but I will try in a good situation
- As a mom, I would love to make a direct impact on a child's life, especially the ones who facing issues like poverty, hunger, or lack of access to education. These are my biggest concerns for children all over the world.
- It is really interesting and enjoyable being reason for people happiness
- In general I eager for valunteering work but at this moment I am very busy for my stuff, it seems impossible to find time for being volunteer
- Achieve a sense of fulfilment to be able to help other humans
- Helping makes me feel very good
- I would volunteer again because it was incredibly rewarding to see the positive impact my efforts had on the community and to feel a part of something larger than myself.
- I feel happy to be helpful.
- Volentteeing can improve the life of innocent children. Even one joyful day can have a great impact on those children and build beautiful moments for them. In my country there are so many children working in streets and small factories. I hope this can save them from the poverty and help them to make a better future. Volunteering in sports and games can help them stay away from drug and crime. They feel that there are people who are kind and think about them which helps to empower them and build their self-steem. It also makes me feel better and satisfied. That I am a better person and I feel I am useful for the society and can have a good impact on the world around me.
- It feels nice when I can be effective in making the world a better place to live.
- By participating in this survey, maybe I can do part of my human duty to the society.
- It makes me feel so good
- I think as a part of society it is my duty as a human.
- Feeling happy of making impact and helping poor kids to learn

e) Do you think volunteering has a big impact on the people in need?

- If yes, what exactly?
- If not, what do you think can be changed to make a bigger impact for people in need?

23 responses

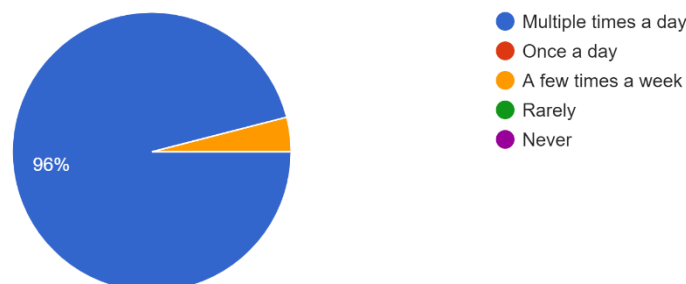
- Yes,
- not so big
- it might have an impact, the impact might be short term or long term, short impact like financial aid for the short term of famine and hunger but long term impact might be, you be a role model for one of them and change her/his future
- Yes , to provide more opportunities for people who need some help we can have more hands
- Yes it does, volunteering allows for organizations and events to take place quicker with the help of the community
- Yes.easpecially poor children
-
- Yes. I think it's a more intimate way of giving or getting help.
- I think that people in need can always use a helping hand and the more the merrier. We live in a society where we're shamed for needing others or help from the government but it doesn't have to be this way.

- Of course it has. Volunteering can fulfill basic needs, providing some essential services like food distribution, shelter assistance, or childcare to children in need. This direct support can make a critical difference in someone's life, especially during difficult times.
- Volunteering can also include emotional support offering companionship and encouragement. This can help those children feel less alone, valued, and more hopeful.
- Ofcourse yes. When we talk about people in need it means they have a essential shortage in life. Therefore, it will have such a big impact and it is kind of mean world for them.
- Yes, With volunteer work, they can achieve what they want and gain relevant experience in the field they like and provide services to other people.
- Yes
- Yes, makes them feel very good
- Yes, volunteering has a big impact on people in need. It provides essential support and resources, offers emotional encouragement, and fosters a sense of community and hope for those who are struggling.
- Yes it can, but I also believe that empowering people themselves could be the best activities of volunteers. I mean, I believe we should help people in ways that they can solve their problems by their own power, entrepreneurship, teaching and learning can be one of those ways.
- As I said before, making good memories and moments for the children, even for one day, can have a great impact on their life. They can remember them and enjoy. Games and sports can empower them and build their self -steem. Education can make a better future and help them stay away from drug and crime. Those children with usually poor parenting when see that are being cared, and recieve hugs and smiles can feel that they are important, so empowered and become a good person in society. Moreover, some big impacts may cause them and their families to overcome poverty and start having a normal life.
- Yes, it has a big impact on sympathy and mental and physical well-being of both side. Well it depends , I am not really sure in which context do you mean now
- Yes, When you volunteer to help people, you actually grow and develop yourself.
- Yes I think it would be helpful for them
- Yes, I agree. I think by helping to volunteer you feel close to the people and in sensitive cases, like people in danger we must do what we can do.
- Yes, because they don't have choice and power of adults.

3. Digital app usage

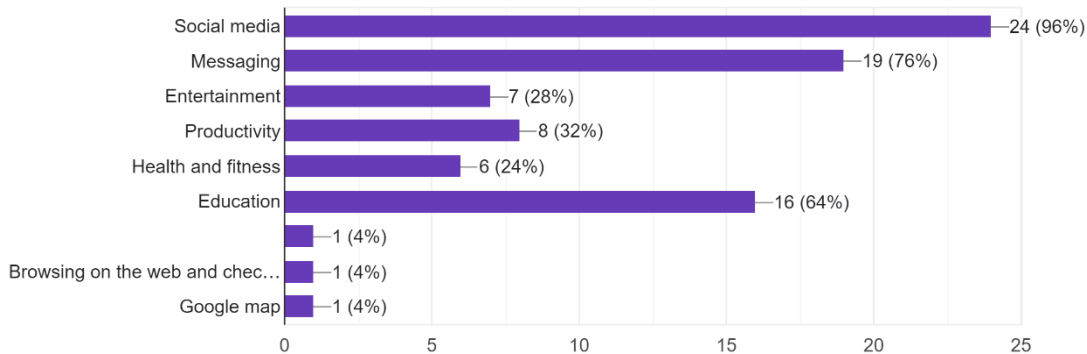
a) How frequently do you use mobile apps?

25 responses



b) What types of apps do you typically use? (Select all that apply)

25 responses



4. Needs assessment

a) What specific services or support do you think would be most beneficial for children in Iran?

25 responses

- Education
- Fun, playing with children, education, mental course, art
- establishing school
- educational aid for non ID children that they are deprived of the right to education
- Giving them the freedom of thinking and doing what they are passionate about
- YouTube
- Education, fun, event
- English language and critical thinking
- Financial and educational
- I think that our school system is failing rapidly and i have witnessed it first hand. People who are not wealthy don't get access to the same teachers, programs or study material and that has a devastating effect on the youth. A service that would remedy this could be very intriguing.
- First of all the services that can provide basic needs like food, clothing and shelter for children in poverty. And after that healthcare, and education are very important as well.
- Strengthen their productivity, giving them freedom, creating a situation in which you could help them find and follow their own journey.
- Game
- Financial and educational support
- Some Apps that help them to study better
- Access to quality education, healthcare services, nutritional support, psychosocial support, child protection, and recreational activities would be most beneficial for children in Iran.
- Learning English so they can communicate the world and access many educational sources worldwide, self development information and activities.
- Games and sports, education (literacy, mathematics, ...) for children that are not good enough at school, children psychology and trauma therapy, health care services, social skills empowering their compatibility in the society, such as fun gathering,

going to nature and so on. For poor parenting there should be shelters with volunteers to help and protect children.

- Psychological services is the most essential. and economic helps.
- Well only financial support comes to mind
- Educational applications in Farsi language
- I think supporting education and academics wat
- Education and shelter

b) Do you think the needs of Iranian children vary compared to children in other countries? please describe your answer briefly.

21 responses

- Yes, more than germany
- no children need almost same need
- it might have some similarities, like: poverty, deprivation of education, unstable condition of health and hygiene, no parents and raising in an orphanage
- Level of international awareness and knowledge about other cultures and languages
- Yes, since the environment Iranian children live in is different, they need different things.
- Yes,because Internet is filtered.
- Yes
- They, like some other countries, suffer from freedom of liberal educational access
- Yes, as children in other countries have more equipments to use in their lives, but unfortunately Iranian children are more limited in many matters
- I'm not fully aware of other countries education systems but i know that compared to them the education ministry is failing us. I think that the focus is now more on religion than on the actual study materials. Their allotted times are not balanced at all. We don't have enough teachers and they are not well paid at all. The books are boring and tiresome. The school is supposed to be a sanctuary for the youth but they're tired of it.
- I believe it can depend on the country's political system. For example access to healthcare, educational centres, or child support payments are accessible to all children - in Australia, but these are highly affected by economic and political factors in Iran, and are not accessible to all families.
- Kind of yes. As they are scrimmaging with lots of dilemma including education system, sanction, religious laws and ... , they are in need such a real supports .
- Not so different but in terms of cultural education yes
- Many children in Iran live in extreme poverty and are not supported by the government/ regime, so they help much more than children in other countries whose wellbeing is part of the government support.
- Yes, They cannot do whatever they want
- Yes, the needs of Iranian children may vary compared to children in other countries due to factors such as cultural context, economic conditions, healthcare infrastructure, and access to education. Understanding these differences is crucial in tailoring effective support and interventions to meet the specific needs of Iranian children.
- It totally depends on the country, but I think Iranian children need to be more connected to the world to be able to get rid of ideological education and ristrictions that they have.

- Mostly yes. All children need good education Healthcare and social skills to make them a better future. Differences: In some cases, in Iran there should be more strict rules for children protection from child working and poor parenting. Volunteers can also inform governments for the necessity of enforcing such laws that are now established in developed countries. The age of marriage for both girls and boys should be increased to 18 at least and arranged marriages for children should be lawfully prevented. Volunteers can have a great impact in this regard too.
- I am not familiar with other countries system for education.
- In my opinion, Iranian children are no different from other countries and only because of the limitations they have in the educational environment, they are deprived of many facilities.
- Yes, in Iran many people specifically children and women has a basic human needs like playing in safe way, interacting with environment and learning in a good way. Or for example searching on the internet because of filtering is difficult for many people. So of course is different.

c) What would you do tomorrow to help Iranian children?

Please list all the needs you think Iranian children have.

25 responses

- Friendship
- charity of building school, suppling tablet
- I don't have time to do it tomorrow but If I had any chance I would like to help them, to gain the basic knowledge of education
- Education
- Education, peace
- Educate them about the importance of speaking your mind and believing in what you want. I think Iranian children need the freedom to be able to learn in an environment which is open and accepting of their difference. They need to learn that studies are not the most important thing in life. They need to learn how to have a balance between studying and their spare time. This is often neglected in the system and kids are often forced to study things they are not interested in.
- Free Internet, free education
- Sport, donation
- Have no idea. If in short time, I'd consult domestic experts or teachers
- I usually pay a specific amount on the first day of each month to the accounts of children under my protection.
- More creative way to make school and studying enjoyable. The books need to be rewritten as soon as possible. Younger people need to be in charge of writing the material.
- As I mentioned above, I believe the main needs for Iranian children are accessing to food, clothing, shelter, healthcare, and a quality education system for children's growth and development.
- Freedom Happiness Follow dreams
- Training living independently
- Financial support School supplies Clothes
- Kind parents, money, friend
- Access to Quality Education: Support initiatives that improve educational opportunities and infrastructure. Healthcare Access: Promote access to healthcare services, including vaccinations and medical check-ups. Nutritional Support:

Advocate for programs ensuring children have access to nutritious food. Psychosocial Support: Develop initiatives that address emotional and psychological well-being. Child Protection: Support efforts to safeguard children from exploitation and abuse. Recreational and Cultural Activities: Promote activities fostering creativity and social skills.

- Self development information Reading and Speaking English abilities Anything that can help them feel more safe (Economical, mental, social, ...)
- Healthcare access Sports access (there are limited places for children especially girls to play) Volunteers to educate children (literacy, mathematics, physics, ...) Child abuse shelters and protection Child marriage prevention Social skill learning for social compatibility Trauma therapy Psychology treatments and access Friendship and care provided by volunteers Tours to nature and sightseeing Empowering children's families to save them from poverty such as vocational training for their parents to have a stable - - income
- I can imagine that if I could provide couples with consultant to facilitate their ability in handling their challenges with their children and also their relationship. Also sending money or provide high speed internet, and educational equipment.
- As of now I can say with my current situation of living , nothing
- The need to learn different languages from childhood, the need for effective teaching using modern facilities.
- Help in the process of getting educated
- Access free internet Create a website for education them Make virtual tour
- I'm not sure what is the priority so I would find people inside the country that are more familiar with the kids' problems.

For previous question, please list all possible solutions to those needs.

17 responses

- App
- creating strong community to organize
- online application
- Solutions could be to start with educational programs, educate children in tasks which allow them to understand what their passion is in order for them to have a better future
- Supporting financially and emotionally
-
- Charities funded by public donations can effectively provide these necessities with proper oversight.
- Freedom, it is related to government Happiness, again. Follow dream, establish such a perfect educational system for giving them an opportunity to find their talent.
- Games that encourage them to solve problems and deal with problems in real life
- A trustworthy organisation to manage help and support received and makes sure it reaches children in need.
- Friend
- Access to Quality Education: Expand school infrastructure and ensure adequate resources. Provide scholarships or financial aid for disadvantaged children. Improve teacher training and curriculum development. Implement technology in education to enhance learning outcomes. Healthcare Access: Increase the number of healthcare facilities and clinics. Provide mobile healthcare units to reach remote areas. Offer free or subsidized healthcare services for children. Educate communities on preventive healthcare measures. Nutritional Support: Implement school feeding programs to ensure children receive nutritious meals. Support community gardens or agricultural programs for sustainable food production. Partner with local businesses or NGOs to

donate food supplies. Psychosocial Support: Establish counseling services in schools and communities. Train educators and healthcare providers in mental health support. Organize support groups for children facing trauma or stress. Child Protection: Strengthen child protection laws and enforcement. Establish child helplines or hotlines for reporting abuse or exploitation. Provide legal aid and support services for vulnerable children. Recreational and Cultural Activities: Build community centers or youth clubs offering recreational activities. Organize cultural workshops or events to celebrate diversity and heritage. Partner with local artists or performers to engage children in creative activities.

- Developing education and all the ways their global information can increase. By having classes, interesting seminars and meetings for children, fun education, using apps, using social media.

- Medical personnel volunteers and building more medical buildings. Sports trainers and building places to do sport especially for the girls. Volunteers can go among the poor families and educate them about unnecessary thoughts and traditions especially for the girls. Helping parents to learn a skill for a stable income. Psychologists volunteers to help both parents and children. Educate parent for better behavior with children and teaching them to avoid for child marriages disadvantages. Volunteers to make joyful moments for the children. Building shelters and organizations for abused children or children with no parents or poor parenting. And so on

- We need teamwork. Teamwork for every essential area, first is education system and economic help. Program to increase self-awareness and self-esteem among parents, it works like a domino and will be transferred to the children.

- Creating Iranian educational applications for the age group of children and also providing educational facilities such as computers and tablets from the school and the government for children to learn more and better.

- Create an application or social media and a group is a best way

For previous question , please list all possible blockers to achieve those needs.

14 responses

- Location and time

- government, lack of communities and team working

- poor children don't have access to the smart phone

- Blockers could be the closed mindsets of society. The negligence of parents and no open communication between parents and children

- Government, government

-

- IRAN

- Corrupt government/ regime Charity organisations not trustworthy Money spent for supporter of the regime inside and outside the country instead of supporting children in need

- Government and family

- Political and Socioeconomic Instability: Political instability or conflicts may divert resources away from children's needs. Economic downturns could impact funding for education, healthcare, and social services. Lack of Funding and Resources: Insufficient government funding for education and healthcare programs. Limited resources for infrastructure development, such as schools and healthcare facilities. Inadequate Infrastructure: Poor road networks and transportation systems may hinder access to schools and healthcare. Limited availability of electricity or internet connectivity affects educational resources and online learning. Cultural and Societal Norms: Cultural barriers may affect access to education for girls or certain

marginalized groups. Traditional beliefs or practices could influence attitudes towards healthcare or child protection. Health Challenges: High prevalence of diseases or epidemics affecting children's health and well-being. Lack of trained healthcare professionals in remote or underserved areas. Educational Challenges: Shortage of qualified teachers or educational materials. Language barriers or inadequate curriculum adapted to diverse cultural backgrounds. --Legal and Regulatory Issues: Complex legal frameworks or bureaucracy delaying implementation of child protection measures. Lack of enforcement of child rights laws or policies.

- US sanctions against Iran Iran's government blocking online sources and social medias, Poverty, Children parents who may be against western education for their children

- Government laws which are currently no in favor of children. Some laws are enforced but are not implemented. Old traditions and tribal traditions. Religious thoughts and believes Gender inequality with less facilities for the girls and stricter rules and tradition for them

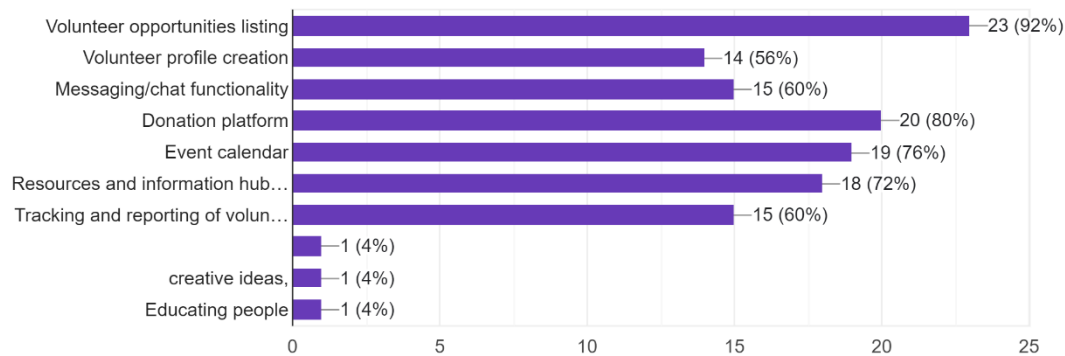
- Totaliter government is controlling people by intentional economic inflammation.

- Child access to different applications should be by makers in such a way that parents can easily control them.

5. App features

a) What features would you like to see in a digital app for volunteer services aimed at supporting children in Iran? (Select all that apply)

25 responses



b) Are there any additional features or functionalities you would like to suggest?

10 responses

- No

- Notifications

-

- Educational Resources, Healthcare Information, Language Support, Cultural Sensitivity

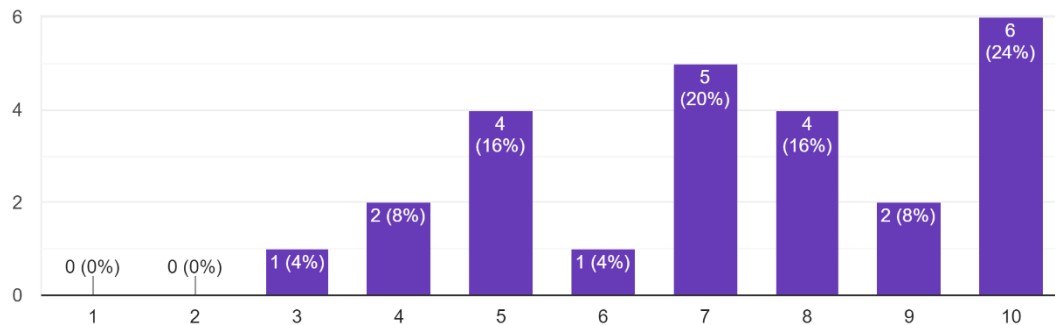
- Sharing interesting pictures and images, making interesting and helpful games, linking the app to other social medias

- Categories for the type volunteering. For example: sports, psychology, touring, game, Healthcare, education, ...

- a feature divar mehrabani, to protect the environment and helping poor childre, teaching donation, teaching them to recycle their damage objects into something useful
- Making more Farsi educational apps
- Educating people

c) On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you think an app would help Iranian children?

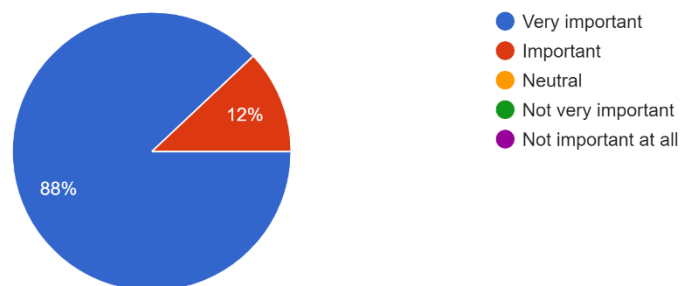
25 responses



6. User experience

a) How important is user-friendly design to you when using a mobile app?

25 responses



b) What aspects of user experience are most important to you when using a mobile app?

19 responses

- User engagement , not from government
- clear and playful
- being simple and functional and easy to use, not time wasting with bugs
- Easy to use,availability
- Filter feature
- Browsability
- The UI should be understandable and easy to use
- It has to be simple yet captivating. it has to be easy to navigate not just for children but also the older generations who want to help.

- Simplicity and ease of use with short navigations, speed and performance are important to all users.
- Simple-handling,
- Simplicity Enough info
- The designs of the app and speed
- Ease of use, performance, reliability, visual design, and security are the most important aspects of user experience for me when using a mobile app.
- Attractive graphic design, being friendly, ease of use, launching fast, entertaining.
- Being concise, not complicated, interesting features and options, photos, fast downloading
- minimal design, accessibility,
- Attractive appearance, easy access, easy to use, useful content
- Easy to navigate and use it
- Easy to use and user-friendly interface

c) What aspects are the least important?

15 responses

- Communication with others
- human center
- I don't care how pretty it is
- Beauty
- Fancy look
- Too detailed settings
- Animations
- Focus too much on aesthetics over usability.
- Making it up.
- Visual appeal
- Type of word
- The least important aspects are advanced personalization, extensive integration with other apps, gamification, entertainment features, and advanced analytics. The focus should be on core functionalities that support volunteer engagement and child empowerment effectively.
- Have no idea.
- Program volume
- Developing function based on user needs

7. Volunteer challenges

a) What challenges or barriers have you encountered when trying to volunteer in the past?

25 responses

- I didn't know where I can go, and how I can help
- timing
- lack of time
- Networking and sustainable growth and plan
- I was not a volunteer
- There was a lot of miscommunication
- Difficulty

- No address, no time, no information
-
- Financial problems mostly
- Finding time in your day to day life can be challenging. Flexible hours are definitely - needed.
- I tried using some Iranian apps which always ask for a phone number from Iran to send - the verification codes, it's really annoying for people leaving abroad. And the other problem is the Impact of banking sanctions on Iranians' financial transactions, which is not possible with common bank cards in other countries.
- You have to be a little bit more patient.
- Taking more time
- Not enough info Not having enough time
- Lack of time
- Challenges when volunteering include limited time, finding suitable opportunities, accessibility issues, financial constraints, required skills or training, organizational requirements, language barriers, and avoiding burnout.
- Finding a trustable and easy accessible source for it.
- Resistance from the children who are scared of you especially If you are not from a renowned organization. Law troubles can affect both children and volunteers due to stricted government who see volunteer work as a threat. Confusion in what really the child needs and the priorities at that moment.
- When I want to send money to Iran, this money is going to be injected into economy cycle and I dont want make sepah stronger. Also I dont trust the institutes to spend the money for children. These are my concerns, one solution could be sending goods, cloths, books and digital equipments and this one also is expensive because of the expensive weight of the flights. The other solution is to stablsh local workplace to produce their needed good.
- Well I have not much experience
- Answers to explanatory questions and additional explanations
- Any specific
- Finding a specific organization responsible for that
- Lack of trust to the organization

b) Have you ever experienced difficulties finding volunteer opportunities that align with your interests and skills? If so, please describe.

25 responses

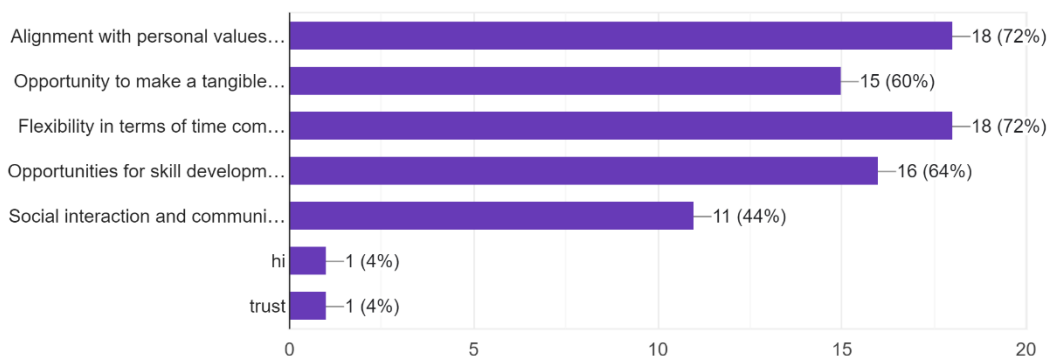
- No
- Yes, location and time
- it was far away me
- very impossible to get to the remote places and find the children and being safe
- Yes , in education field
- Yes, location
-
- Unfortunately in our country Art is not valued enough, so I never had the opportunity to use my skills (painting) to do a volunteered work
- I'm a translator/teacher/ part-time photographer and these are not skill that are always needed. They have their moments.
- I have never been looking for them, but it's important to be able to trust all the organisations working on them.

- There are not many volunteer opportunities/ organisations that would be allowed to operate independently and trustworthy
- Yes, at times I've faced difficulties finding volunteer opportunities that perfectly aligned with both my interests and skills. For example, I've encountered situations where local volunteer opportunities were limited in specific areas of expertise or required skills that I hadn't yet developed. This led me to explore broader volunteer networks and seek out opportunities that offered flexibility in matching my capabilities with meaningful volunteer roles.
- Yes. Even if I want to be volunteered, I don't know where I can go and how I should do it.
- Volunteer announcement are not common. I usually don't receive any announcement for volunteering work. Transportation (the volunteering places are usually far from the places that volunteers live. A solution can be online education providing for the children in some cases). Finding spare time to do volunteer work
- no
- Yes , I mostly like to volunteer for my personal skill development, which are not very helpful for other people !
- Unfortunately, this opportunity has not come to me yet.
- Yes , i like to have access to a complete collection of opportunities
- Yes, I would like educating to other people in my field but finding a place for the case needs a physical space so it is not possible for me based on my time limitations
- Yes

8. Volunteer preferences

a) What factors are most important to you when considering volunteer opportunities? (Select all that apply)

25 responses



b) Are there specific types of volunteer opportunities or causes that you are particularly interested in?

25 responses

- No
- Yes
- Sport
- no

- yes, teaching the new languages for example
- Giving food to the needy
- Teaching, art
-
- I am mostly interested in volunteer opportunities that is relevant to my skills so it can be more effective
- If they are related to my major yes I'm intrigued
- Education opportunities are my favourite.
- Create a situation where children could find their own way.
- Volunteering for orphans and animals in shelters
- Yes, I'm interested in volunteer opportunities related to education, environmental conservation, community development.
- I might be able to run creativity workshops
- Games and education
- help their mental and physical well-being
- Again , as I have never done this before , I really don't know
- Certainly, because of my education and growth in a place like Iran, these opportunities have come to you.
- Working with kids
- Education

9. Motivations for volunteering

a) What motivates you to volunteer or engage in volunteer activities?

18 responses

- Children,
- supporting
- Humanitarian sense, being impactful
- Engagements and results
- Passion,need
- Flexibel time
- The feeling og being of a help for the future generation
- The good feeling of helping others and seeing people happy
- It's fulfilling. And i like to spend my time doing things that make me feel like I'm not wasting my life away.
- Happiness.
- Make connections and know more about that work in real life
- Sense of fulfilment and usefulness and being able to help
- Have a high percentage of importance
- I volunteer because it allows me to make a positive impact, feel fulfilled, learn and grow, connect with others, and align with shared values and missions.
- Good feeling of helping others and feeling of responsibility to make a better world.
- Empowering my Self-esteem and feeling being useful in my life. Social activity and making friends.
- Working in a friendly environment
- When I need help I expect led someone to help me so that is why I would like to help people who need help

b) Have you ever felt discouraged or demotivated while volunteering? If so, what were the reasons?

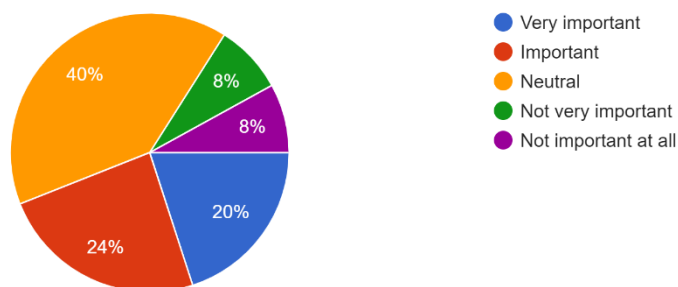
15 responses

- No
- Yes, time
- yes lack of managing time
- i couldn't do it, because of the aforementioned points.
- Lack of knowledge
-
- Did not volunteer before
- Yes, at times I've felt discouraged when volunteering due to feeling like my efforts weren't impactful, organizational challenges, personal fatigue, conflicts, or resource limitations.
- I am always very busy and tired. So I may not have much time to be commitment.
- Children's resistance to accept services and law limitations from government
- Helping each other, building and developing our dear country as much as possible

10. Impact and recognition

a) How important is it for you to receive recognition or acknowledgment for your volunteer efforts?

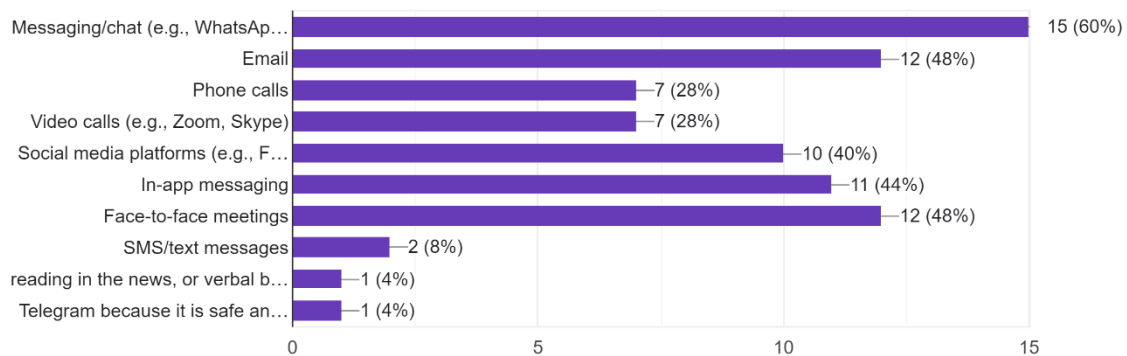
25 responses



11. Communication preference

11. Communication preferences How do you prefer to communicate with other volunteers or organizers when participating in volunteer activities? (Select all that apply)

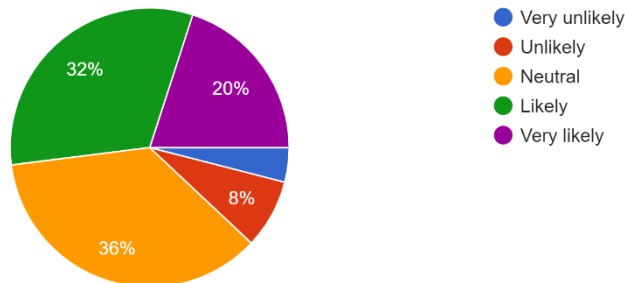
25 responses



12. Long-Term Engagement

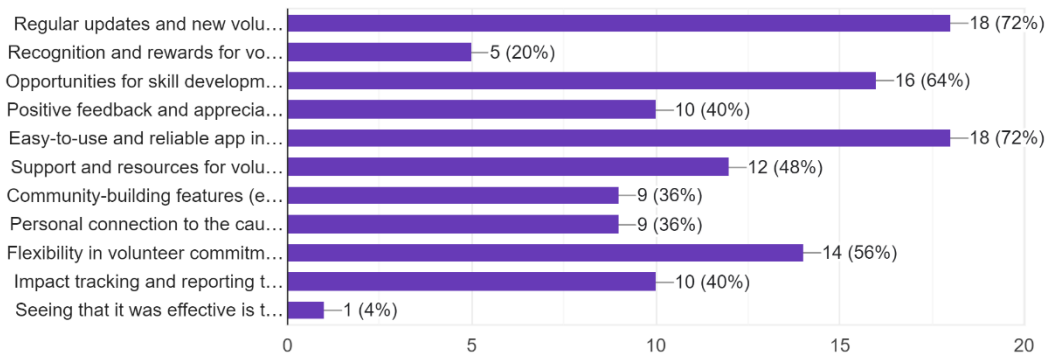
a) How likely are you to continue volunteering or using the digital app on a long-term basis?

25 responses



b) What factors would encourage you to remain engaged with volunteer opportunities and the digital app over time? (Select all that apply)

25 responses



13. Feedback and suggestions

Do you have any additional feedback, suggestions, or comments about the concept of a digital app for volunteer services in Iran?

6 responses

- I'm wondering how the poor children can have access to the online application
- No
-
- Ensure the app is culturally sensitive, accessible, and secure, foster local partnerships, gather user feedback for continuous improvement, include educational resources, and offer flexibility in volunteer engagement options.
- No good luck.
- In my opinion, experts can give a better opinion in this field.

